Paul Whitehead (left) and Jay Whitehead at the Mechanics’ Institute Chess Club, 1972.

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It’s been an incredible run, but after nearly 13 years I am retiring from my position as Chess Room Coordinator at the Mechanics’ Institute, and as the contributing editor of this newsletter started by IM John Donaldson in 1990.

I joined the Mechanics’ Institute in late 1972 along with my brother, Jay, at the height of the “Fischer-boom.” We were crazy about chess, and spent as much time as we could at the chess club, playing in tournaments and immersing ourselves in the colorful chess culture here. Forty years later(!) I was hired by John to succeed Steve Brandwein as the Chess Room Coordinator.

This decades-long association with Mechanics’ Institute has brought me not only professional satisfaction, it has led to life-long friendships and memories I will carry forever. Much of this I have written about in the past, but playing the legendary Mikhail Tal three blitz games at the club back in 1991 must stand out above all else.

And with that said - the play’s the thing! I will end this short farewell with some pictures taken from my scrapbook, plus a small collection of memorable games I’ve played over the years at the Mechanics’ Institute.

May we all meet again someday soon.
Paul Whitehead's retirement and story of Mechanics' Institute

It is with deep appreciation, recognition, and admiration that I share this message about Paul Whitehead's upcoming retirement from Mechanics' Institute on April 22. Paul has worked for Mechanics' Institute since 2012 and was first introduced to the Chess Club in 1972!

Paul shares, “I’ve had a fantastic time working here. It’s unexpected to work here. I had taken a wide turn away from chess for many, many years. So to come back and be submerged into the chess world was surprising to me in a way, but it felt like home. I still find it remarkable that I still get to come in here.”

Paul's family had been living in Europe and during a trip to New York City, Paul and his younger brother Jay were introduced to chess. This was at the height of the 1972 Fischer-Spassky match and influence. When the family moved to San Francisco, Paul and Jay immediately joined the chess club at Mechanics' Institute - which Paul says, "was like a dream, filled with fantastic characters and interesting people. The community was very welcoming."

Paul's chess talent was undeniable, and he won his US Junior Chess Champion title in 1978 and became a FIDE Master in 1983. Paul joined the staff at the personal request of Steve Brandwein and former Chess Director IM John Donaldson, following Steve’s retirement. Paul had been living in Virginia at the time and knew this was an exciting opportunity to take.

During his years at Mechanics' Institute, Paul has kept the chess room humming - welcoming players and guests from all around the world on a daily basis, being a font of knowledge and current events, teaching classes, facilitating pre-TNM lectures, ensuring tournaments and activities run smoothly and professionally, producing the chess newsletter, supporting players and families, being the indefatigable simul master, and so much more.

Paul's absolute favorite highlight of Mechanics' Institute was playing against Mikhail Tal here, sharing that it was "just incredible." Among chess players, Tal is a legendary chess player and World Champion in 1960. Paul got to play him in three games during a blitz tournament and drew him in one game - a feat!

Paul will be moving to Virginia to be nearer to family on the East Coast, and looks forward to new adventures.

Please join me in congratulating and thanking Paul for all he has added to our Mechanics' Institute community! There’s no one like Paul, and we are incredibly grateful for all you’ve done.

PS: Check out this film Paul wrote and directed in 2009 called *The Charlottesville Kitchen Killers* showing another creative side of our colleague! Paul shared that the Virginia Film Festival selected this feature and screened the film alongside fellow luminaries like John Waters!! Please be aware it’s R-rated and contains violence.

-Alyssa Stone
Chess Voice 1974, with Jeremy Silman.


My daughters playing at the club, 2003.
2014: Playing blitz with WIM Iryna Zenyuk (above) and a young Hans Niemann (below).
Tournament Directors seemed to get a particular delight out of pairing Jay and I - we played probably a dozen games together, with Jay + 1 or 2 at the end. This was our first game.


[9...0-0]  [9...Rc8]  10.Bb3

Qb8!?N This seems to be the only time this move has ever been played!

11.0-0-0 b5 12.h4  [12.Bh6!±]


(Diagram)

23...e5! 24.Nc2 f5!± was the way to go.

24.exd5  [24.e5! Bxe5 25.g4 would have given white lots of play.]

24...Qxd5 25.Qd2 Rb7 26.Rf1

White drifts, and black steadily gains a decisive advantage.

26...Rfb8 27.Rf2 Rxb2 28.Qxb2 Rxb2 29.Rxb2 e5 30.Ne2 Ba4 31.Rd2 Qe6 32.Rc1 Qe7 33.g3 Qxa3+ 34.Ra2 Qd6

35.Rxa4 Qd3 36.Ng1 Qxe3 37.Kb1 Bh6 38.f4 exf4 39.Ra1 f3 40.Ka2
The f-pawn queens.

1-0

□ Waterman,Dennis
■ Whitehead,Paul
3rd Mechanics’ Institute Marathon 1974

This game is seared into my memory - it made me a fighting, competitive player. Dennis Waterman was a strong master, and finding himself in a hopeless position pulled a draw offer out of his hat. He was the best player I had played up to that point, and I took the draw - which I regretted immediately. From that point on I was resolved to give no quarter, no matter who I was playing. 1.e4 c5

The longest game I have ever played, featuring the 50-move rule (and its reset!) and the notorious two knights vs pawn ending. I was lucky to escape with a draw. IM Elliott Winslow analyses the ending in some depth here: Mechanics' Institute Newsletter #852.


(Diagram)


Kh8

[ 35...Qd3!± keeps white tied up. ]

36.Rf3 Qd7 37.Be2 b4 38.Rf2 Qb7 39.Rg2 Qb6 40.Kh1 Qd6 41.Qxd6 Rxd6 42.Bc4 Kg8 43.Nf5 Rd1+ 44.Kh2 Kf8 45.Nxb4 Ra1 46.Nc2 Rac1 47.Nce3 Rh1+ 48.Kg3 h5 49.Ra2 Ra1 50.Rxa1 Rxal
The position is equal.

51. b4 Rb1 52. b5 Ne4+ 53. Kf4 Nc3 54. Nd4 Ke7
Rxc4+ 58. Nxc4 Nxb5 59. Ne5+ g6
60. Nd7+ Ke6 61. Nce5 Nd6 62. Nc5+ Kf6 63. Nf3 Nf5 64. Ne4+ Kg7 65. Kg5

Nxh4? Completely unnecessary - now white is winning!
66. Nxh4 Kf8 67. Kf6
Ke8 68. Ng5 Kd7 69. Ng2 Kd6 70. Nh4
Kd5 71. Nxf7 Ke4 72. Kg5 Kd4 73. Nd8
Ke4 74. Nb7 Kd5 75. Na5 Ke4 76. Nc4
Kd4 77. Nd2 Ke3 78. Nb3 Ke4
82. Nfxg6+ Ke4 83. Kf6 Kd5 84. Kf5

Kd4 85. Nf4 Ke3 86. Ke5 Kf2 87. Nfg2
Kf1 88. Ke4 Kf2 89. Ne3 Kg3 90. Nf5+
Kg4 91. Ke3 Kg5 92. Kf3 Kf6 93. Kf4
Ke6 94. Ne3 Kf6 95. Nxd5 Ke6 96. Ke4
Kc6 100. Ke5 Kc5 101. Nd3+ Kc4
102. Ke4 Kc3 103. Ne5 Kc2 104. Nc4
Kc3 105. Nd6 Kc2 106. Kd4 Kd2
Kb3 110. Kd3 Kb4 111. Kd4 Kb3
Kb2 115. Kc4 Kc2 116. Ne3+ Kd2
117. Nf5 Kc2

118. Nf3! Now the 50-move rule starts up again after black's next pawn push...
118... h4 119. Ne3+ Kb2 120. Kb4 h3
121. Nh2 Ka2 122. Nc4 Ka1 123. Kc3
Kb1 124. Kd2 Ka1 125. Kc1 Ka2
126. Kc2 Ka1 127. Kb3 Kb1 128. Nb2
[ 128. Nd2+! is mate in 36 moves! ]
128... Kc1 129. Kc3 Kb1 130. Nd3 Ka2
131. Kb4 Kb1 132. Kb3 Ka1 133. Nf4
Kb1 134. Ne2 Ka1 135. Nc1 Kb1
136. Nd3 Ka1 137. Nb4 Kb1 138. Na2
Ka1 139. Nf3 h2

(Diagram)
A long roller-coaster ride of a game! ½-½

Whitehead, Paul A
McCambridge, Vincent
San Francisco Bagby 1982

I had a good overall score against Vince, and always enjoyed playing against the French Defense. This game features a nice king walk up the g and h files. 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Nf3 Bd7 8.dxc5 Qc7 9.Bd3 Nbc6 10.Bf4 Ng6

(Diagram)

11.Bxg6

f5?!
28...Bd7 was a better way to stop white from playing f5.

29.exf6+ gxf6 30.Nf3 Rhf8 31.h4 Rf7
32.g5 f5 33.h5! Thematic, and completely decisive. 33...gxh5 34.Kh4! Rg8 35.Rg1 Nxa3 36.g6 Rff8 37.Kxh5+-

Nc4 38.Ne5 Nxe5 39.Bxe5 Ra8 40.Kg5 a5 41.Rh2 Rae8 42.Rh7+ Kd8 43.Bc7+ Takes care of the a-pawn... 43...Kc8 44.Bxa5 e5 45.fxe5 Rxe5 46.Rc7+ Kb8 47.Rf7 f4+ 48.Kf6 Ree8 49.Bc7+ ...takes care of the f-pawn! 49...Kc8 50.Bxf4 Bd7 51.g7 Kd8 52.Bd6 Re6+ 53.Kg5 Be8 54.Rgf1! Re2 55.Rxb7 Rg2+ 56.Kh6 Rg6+ 57.Kh7!

(Diagram)

White wins a rook.
1-0

C85

Whitehead, Paul A
Kane, George Francis
San Francisco Bagby 1982

Chess is a game of ideas, and this game (and the next, vs Richard Lobo) pick up the thread of a fantastic attacking idea first played by Paul Morphy in 1857, and then resurrected by Bobby Fischer more than 100 years later. The idea is Kh1, Rg1, followed by g4 (or with black, ...Kh8, ...Rg8, ...g5.) 1.e4


(Diagram)
13.Kh1!  Qd7  14.Rg1  Rad8  15.Ne4  Qf7  16.g4  g6  17.Rg3  Bg7  18.Rag1  Nb6  19.Nc5  Bc8  20.Nh4  Nd7  
Kh7  38.Bf7  Rg8  39.Qg4  Rd8  40.Qg6  Rf8  41.Qxf6  Kg7  42.Qf7+  Kg8  43.Bd6+  Kh7  44.Qf7+  Kg8  45.Bd8+  
Kf7  46.Qxh7#  Kg7  47.Qg7+  Kh6  48.Qh7#  Kg6  49.Bxf6+  Kg7  50.Qf5  Rh8  51.Qf6+  Kg7  52.Qf7+  Kg8  53.Qf8+  
Kf8  54.Qf7+  Kg8  55.Qb7#  Kg7  56.Qc6#  Kg6  57.Qe4+  Kh5  58.Qc4+  Kg6  59.Qe6#  Kg5  60.Qe7+  Kh6  61.Qg7#  

1-0 (43) Fischer,R-Andersson,U  
Siegen 1970 ]


White opens the h-file. Black is curiously helpless against white's slow build-up.  18...Rg8  19.Qf3  Bc5  20.hxg5  
fxg5  21.Rg3  Ng6  22.Kg2  Nf8  23.Rh1  Nf4+  24.Kf1  Rg6  25.Ng2  Rd8  26.Bc3  

(Diagram)
The companion game to the previous - I think they were played in consecutive rounds!  

1.c4


Nxd3 Desperation.  27.cxd3 Rxd3 28.Qxd3! Bc4 29.Qxc4 bxc4 30.Rgh3 Bf8 31.Rxh7+ Kg8 32.Ne7+[The simplest. After 32.Ne7+ Bxe7 33.Rh8+ Kf7 34.Rh7+ white is a rook and a piece ahead.]


1-0


A difficult position to evaluate. White should be no worse, but he fails to find a plan of action, whereas black has a clear goal: attack down the g-file.

16...Nd7 17.Qd2 Be5 18.Nd4 Nb6 19.a4 Be6 20.b3 Qf6 21.Rac1 Nc8

Black prepares his assault down the g-file, while white drifts. 25.Nxe6 Nxe6 26.Rc2 Rg8 27.Qe3 g4 28.fxg4 Rxe4 29.g3 Qg6 30.Re1 f5 31.exf5 Nxf5 32.Qd3 Nf4 33.Qd1 Rg8 34.Kh1

With every black piece pointed toward the white king, it's not surprising the game is about to end. 34...Nxg3+!

35.hxg3 Rxg3 36.Bxg3 Qxg3 37.Bg2 Nxg2 38.Rxe5 Qh4+ 39.Kg1 Ne3+

(Diagram)
Whitehead, Paul A
Rey, Guillermo
San Francisco Bagby 1985

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5
5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Nf3 Qa5
[Keeping the tension with 9...Bd7 is also possible.]
10.Be2 Bd7 11.Ng5

Black's main issue is that he's 2 pawns down! He tries to seek refuge in a bishops of opposite colors ending.
21...Qe4 22.Qxe4 dxe4 23.d5!
The 1st line-clearing move. 23...exd5
27.Ke2 Ke6 28.h3 Ra8 29.Ra1 Ba4
30.Rhb1 Rf7 31.Rb6+ Bc6 32.a4 Ra5
33.Ke3 Rf8 34.f3 exf3 35.gxf3 Rh8
36.Rg1 Kf7

(Diagram)
A curious game where white sacrifices a pawn in the opening and then just keeps trading down at every opportunity - to a winning position! The real culprit here is black's exceedingly passive play.


[6.c3 is far more common here.]

6...Nf6 7.Re1 b5 8.Bb3 Nxd4 9.Nxd4 exd4

37.e6+! The 2nd line-clearing move.

37...Kxe6 38.Rxg7 Rxh3 39.Rgxh7 Kd6 40.Bf6! Threatens 41.Be7+. Black is caught in a mating net. 40...Rh6

41.Be7+ Ke5 42.Rc7 d4+ 43.cxd4+ Kd5 44.Rd7+ Bxd7 45.Rxh6

Nothing can be done against the dual threats of 46.Rd6 mate, or 46. Rh5+, winning black's rook.

1-0
18...Qxc6 19.Rxc6 Bf6 20.b3 g5 21.Be3 Bd8?
   [ 21...Kg7= ]
   [ 21...Kf8= ]
   [ 21...a5= ]

22.Bd4! f6?
   [ 22...h5 23.Re8+ Kh7 holds. ]

Black has ruined his position with his last two moves. 23.f4! Opening up a path for the white king. Black is now in serious trouble.

23...gxf4 24.Kf2 Rcb8 25.a3 a5 26.Kf3 Rb7 27.Kxf4 a4 28.b4 Kf7 29.Kf5+-

Be7 30.g4 Rg8 31.h4 h5 32.gxh5 Rg3 33.Rc3 Rxc3 34.Bxc3 Rb8 35.h6 Bf8 36.Bxf6 Bxh6 37.Re7+ Kg8 38.Kg6 Rf8 39.Rxc7Bg5 A joke move before resigning. 40.Rg7+

1-0
The opportunity of a life-time arose in 1991, when I found out that a big blitz tournament was being held at the Mechanics' Institute in conjunction with the Pan-Pacific GM Tournament (organized by the Mechanics' Institute and won by Eugenio Torre) - and the "Magician from Riga" Mikhail Tal was playing! I was fortunate enough to play 3 games with the former World Champion, and luckier still to draw a game - although I had my chances...

1.Nf3

Tal lit my cigarette before I played this move!


(Diagram)

9.Be3

[I've also played 9.Bg5 here, and if h6 then 10.Be3 b5 11.Qd2 hits the h-pawn.]

9...b5 10.Qd2 Re8

[If 10...b4 white can move the knight to d1, e2, or d5.]

11.Bh6 Bh8 12.Rae1 b4 13.Nd1

[13.Ne2]

[13.Nd5]
13...Qa5
[ 13...Ba6 14.Ng5 c4 15.f4 cxd3
16.cxd3 Qb6+ 17.Kh2 e6 18.e5 Nd7
24.exf6+ Kd7 25.Qxf5+ Kc7
26.Qxh7+ 1-0 (26) Lutikov,A-Vladimirov,B Sverdlovsk 1957 ]

14.Ng5 Sacrificing a pawn vs Tal seemed to fit the occasion. 14...Nd4
[ Maybe he should take it. But after
14...Qxa2 15.f4 Nd4 16.Ne3! Qxb2
17.e5 white has a strong initiative for
the 2 pawns. ]

15.f4 Bb7 16.a3 I didn't want to give him a second chance! 16...Qb6 17.Ne3 a5
[ Black should consider 17...c4!
mixing it up. ]

18.a4 Bc6
[ 18...c4! ]

19.b3

With the queenside locked down, white can go all-out on the kingside, but black's position is quite resilient. 19...Nd7
20.Kh1 Qc7 21.f5 A bit hasty, perhaps.
21...Ne5 22.fxg6 hxg6 23.Nd5

Bxd5 Maybe black shouldn't part with the bishop here.
[ The cold-blooded 23...Qd8!
intending ...e6 looks better. ]

24.exd5 Bf6 25.Ne4Bg7 26.Bf4 Qd7
27.Ng5 Bf6 28.Ne4Bg7 29.Ng5 Bf6
30.Ne4Bg7 31.Ng5 I was content to repeat moves, and when Tal offered a
A nice thematic win against a very strong junior. 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 A move that has brought me some memorable victories. 3...g6 4.0-0 Bg7 5.Re1 Nf6 6.Nc3 0-0 7.Bxc6 dxc6 8.e5 Nd5 9.Ne4 b6 10.h3

Qc7

[ 10...c4!= ]
[ 10...Nc7 11.d3 Ne6∞ ]

11.d3 f5 12.Ng3 f4 13.Ne4
White is ready to boot the black knight around with c4, but black's next is an overreaction.

[ 13.Nf1?! clearly misplaces the knight, but 1-0 (60) Cvorovic,D (2425) - Degraeve,J (2540) Makarska 1997 ]

13...Bxe5?!

[ 13...Qb8! 14.c4 Nc7 15.Bd2± ]


23.Qd1! Preparing to triple the major pieces on the e-file. 23...Qc7 24.R1e2 Bf6 25.Qe1 Kg7 26.a3 a5 27.Bxe5+- Finally cashing in. 27...Bxe5 28.Rxe5 Rfxe5 29.Rxe5 Rxe5 30.Qxe5+ Qxe5 31.Nxe5
The pawn up knight ending should be a relatively straight-forward win, but black makes white's task easier with...

31...a4?! This pawn now becomes a fixed target. 32.c4! Ne7

[ 32...Nb4!? doesn't quite work:
   33.axb4 cxb4 34.Nf3! a3 35.bxa3 bxa3 36.Nd4+- ]

33.Kf1 Nc8 34.Ke2 Kf6 35.Nf3 Nd6
36.Nd2 Nf5 37.Nb1 Now targeting the pawn at a4. 37...Nd4+ 38.Kf1 Nb3

39.Nc3 Nc1 40.Nxa4 The b6 pawn is also about to fall. 40...Nxd3 41.Ke2 Nc1+ 42.Kd2 Nb3+ 43.Kd3 Ke5

44.Nxb6 g5 45.Nd7+ Kd6 46.Nf6 h6 47.Ng4 Now black loses a king-side pawn as well. Mild time-pressure on my part was black's reason for prolonging the game. 47...h5 48.Nf6 Ke5 49.Nxh5 Three pawns ahead should do the trick.

49...Nc1+ 50.Kd2 Nb3+ 51.Kc3 Nd4 52.b4 cxb4+ 53.axb4 Ne2+ 54.Kd3 Nd4 55.Ng7 Nc6 56.b5 Ne7 57.Ne8

(Diagram)

The white knight reaches the 8th rank (!), so black resigns.

1-0
Recent Tournaments at Mechanics’ Institute

On March 16, Mechanics’ Institute hosted our monthly double-header of Scholastic Swiss in the morning, Quads in the afternoon.

We had a great turnout for the Quads, with 69 players competing in 17 sections. The top Quad was won by Daniel Cremisi (2387) with a score of 2.5 points.

Complete results for the March Quads can be found here.

The monthly Scholastic Swiss had 19 players competing in two sections.

The 500+ section was won by Yen Wen Jasmine Ho (711) with a perfect 4-0 score. Tied for 2nd and 3rd places with 3 points apiece were Kepler McTiernan (1135) and Aiden Lau (626), while Zane Chu (794) and Miles Lee (560) split 4th and 5th with 2 points apiece.

The u500 section also saw a perfect score, with Caleb Martinez (unr.) going four-zip. Tied for 2nd, 3rd, and 4th places with 3 points each were Sicheng Ao (101), Bryn Killingsworth (unr.), and Adrian Levy (326). Topping a 5-way tie for 5th place on tie-breaks was Theodore Linehan (374) with 2 points.

Complete results for the March Scholastic Swiss can be found here.

Both the March Quads and the March Scholastic Swiss were directed by Local TD Arthur Liou.

On March 23, we hosted our second ALTO (At Least Twenty One) Tournament, with 32 players competing in two sections.

Daniel Cremisi (2387) scored a perfect 3-0 to take the top spot in the 1600+ section. Finishing in clear 2nd with 2.5 points was Andy Applebaum (2241). Tied for 3rd, best u2000, and best u1800 were Jimmy Heiserman (2322), Ako Heidari (1849), Christopher Powers (834), Marlon Rigel (1824), and Robert Crompton (1539) with 2 points apiece.

The u1600 section also saw a perfect score, with Robert Turner (1235) going 3-0. Tied for 2nd and 3rd were Steven Whitney (1246) and Charlie Schaezlein (1154) with 2.5 points each, Bennett McCutcheon (1154) and Sawyer Stulfs (1088) tied for best u1200 with 2 points apiece.

Complete results for the March ALTO (At Least Twenty One) Tournament can be found here.

The March ALTO (At Least Twenty One) Tournament was directed by FIDE Arbiter Scott Mason.

On April 13, we hosted the 1st Richard Shorman Memorial, honoring the much beloved Bay Area chess teacher, columnist and photographer who passed away last year.

A large turnout of 76 players competed in three sections, and a brilliancy prize in Shorman’s name of
$150 was gifted to Hayden Karkainen and Svivavishnu Srinivasan by his long-time friend Kenn Fong and judged by IM John Donaldson. Details in next month’s newsletter.

The 2000+ section was won jointly by Dylan Tang (2267) and Laurie Qiu (2068), both scoring an undefeated 3.5 points from four games. Sharing 3rd place in a 4-way split were Daniel Cremisi (2389), Jacob Chiang (2270), Vishva Nanugonda (2150), and Kanwar Sethi (1940), each posting up a 3-1 score.

The 1600-1999 section saw a 2-way split for 1st and 2nd, with Jeremy Cawthon (1989) and Rehaan Malhotra (1662) scoring 3.5 points each. There was a 4-way split for 3rd place between Zhuoyuan Wu (1789), Adam Mercado (1781), Tapas Natraj (1780), and Bowen Gui (1639). All scored 3 points.

Tingshun Liu (1240) scored a perfect 4-0 to take 1st place in the under 1599 section. Scoring 3 points each, there was a 5-way split for 2nd and 3rd places between Louka Waharte (1416), Stanley Kwok (1236), Noah Math (1229), Steven Whitney (1195), and Loida Guo (1188). The top under 1200 prize went to Ammar Alquatali (unr.) who scored 2.5 points, while the 2nd place u1200 prize was split between Joylin Li (unr.) and Rick Davis (unr.) who both scored 2 points.

Complete results for the 1st Richard Shorman Memorial can be found here.

The 1st Richard Shorman Memorial was directed by Local TD Arthur Liou.

The 2024 Spring Tuesday Night Marathon ran from March 5 and ended on April 16. This FIDE rated 7-round Swiss had 89 players competing in four sections.

In the 2000+ section FM Ruiyang Yan (2349) joined Alex Shrager (2158) in a tie for 1st and 2nd places with a clutch last-round victory over IM Elliott Winslow (2197). Both players scored 5.5 points. A full point back with 4.5 points, Winslow shared 3rd and best u2200 with Archit Dasika (2220) and WFM Natalya Tsodikova (2149).

Michael Walder (1911) turned in a dominating performance in the 1600-1999 section. His perfect 7-0 score was a full point ahead of 2nd place finisher Hayes Marvin (1752), Wilson Wong (1928) and Christopher Powers (1834) shared 3rd place with 5 points apiece. Tied for best u1800 with 4.5 points apiece were Anubhav Maheshwari (1458), Yonathan Admas (1670), and Hoa Long Tam (1647).

Bennett McCutcheon (1154) scored 5.5 points in the 1200-1599 section to take clear 1st, and Mechanics’ Institute chess coach Danny Cao (1174) took clear 2nd with 5 points. Tied for 3rd and best u1400 were Dominic Vazquez (1005) and Romeo Barreyro (1514) with 4.5 points each.

In the u1200 section Sanjay D’Mello (unr.) scored an impressive 6.5 points to take clear 1st. In clear 2nd with 6 points was Charlie Schaezlein (1154), while William Dillon (800) and Adeline Christiana Ell (594) shared 3rd and best u1000.

We are broadcasting our top six boards to the world! Follow the 2024 Spring Tuesday Night Marathon on chess.com here.

Information and final standings for the 2024 Spring Tuesday Night Marathon can be found here.
The 2024 Spring Tuesday Night Marathon was co-directed by FIDE Arbiter Scott Mason and International Arbiter Judit Sztaray.

FM Ruiyang Yan vs IM Elliott Winslow (foreground), and Marlon Rigel vs WIM Natalya Tsodikova.

Rayna Yan vs Jason Wang.

IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated games from rounds two through seven of the 2024 Spring TNM annotated by IM Elliott Winslow and the players. All the games from the current TNM can be found here, and games from previous TNMs are in the Tournament Archive.
1.d4 6:17 Nf6 3 2.c4 5 g6 2 3.Nc3 6 Be7 1 4.e4 7 d6 2 5.Nf3 6 0-0 3 6.Be2 5 e5 3 7.0-0 7 Nc6 2 8.d5 7 Ne7 3 9.b4 a5 2 10.bxa5 49 Rxa5 4 11.a4 36 Black has a pretty wide choice here. White's plan is enforce a5, get Black to play ...bxa5, then play on the dark squares. (c4-c5, xc7) 11...Ra8 2 11...b6 is a sort of all-purpose move. [Then there was this: 11...Nh5 12.Re1 f5 13.Bd2 Nf6 At least Black gets the kingside play going, at least topically. 14.Bd3 h6 15.Qb3 Kh8 16.Nh4 f4 17.Nb5 Ra6 18.c5 g5 19.Nf5 Nxf5 20.exf5 e4 21.cxd6 exd3+ 1-0 Nepomniachtchi,I (2782)-Grischuk, A (2763) Wch Blitz Almaty 2022 (19) but ] 11...Ne8 thinks about both attack (...f7-f5) and defence (xc7, d6) and has been seen in a hundred games. ]

12.Ra3 7:56 Heading across the 3rd? There were other moves to further the plan (Ba3-b4, Nd2-b3, Be3/c5) 12...b6 6:21 12...Nd7?!N New and interesting. 13.Ne1 f5 14.Nd3 Nf6 15.f3 f4 Now it's looking a bit more like a traditional Mar Del Plata variation, with the massive pawn-storm! 16.Rb3 g5 17.c5 Ng6 18.Ba3 Rf7 19.cxd6 cxd6 20.Nb2 h5 21.Nc4 Ra6 22Nb5 White is doing well, but loses the way in a few moves. Bf8 23.Rc3 (Stockfish at first prefers the plan seen recently in the MDP (9.Ne1): 23.Kh1!? but then fades on g4!: 23.Ncxd6 Bxd6 24.Nxd6 Rxd6 25.Bxd6 Qxd6 26.Qc1± when the rook and pawn (think of it as the one on d5!) create more threats than the two knights.) 23...Ne8± 24.Kh1 Rh7 25.Bb4 Bd7 26Nb2 White has slowed down g4!= 27.fxg4 Nf6? (27...hxg4!) 28.gxh5+- Nh4 29.Rc4?! (29.Qc2; 29.g3 ) 29...Nhx5! 30.Bxh5 Qg5 31.Bf3?? (31.Rg1! Rxh5 32.g3!± That same plan mentioned above -- White hides behind the little h-pawn and uses the openings on the kingside (g-file mostly) better than Black. ) 31...Qg3!! Nice! 32.Kg1 Qxh2+ 33.Kf2 Nxf3 34.Qxf3 Rh3 0-1 Esipenko,A (2680)-Perez Ponsa,F (2532) Chessable Masters Play In Chess.com INT rapid 2023 (5) [A high-level game: 12...Kh8 13.Re1 Nd7 14.h3 Ng8 15.Bg5 Bf6 16.Be3 Kg7 17.Qc1 f5 18.exf5 gxf5 19.Bg5 1-0 (42) Vidit,S (2726)-Adhiban,B (2660) chess24.com INT 2021 ]

13.Bd2 5:35

13...Nd7 36

[One 2600 player made it this far: One
14.Re1 Nc5 (14...f5) 15.Be3 f5
16.Bxc5 dxc5 17.Ng5 Rf6 18.Bf3
Rd6 19.Nb5 Rf6 20.exf5 Bb7
21.Ne6 Qc8 22.Nxc7 gxf5 23.d6
Bxf3 24.Rxf3 e4 25.dxe7
1-0 Chigaev,M (2632)-Petrovskiy,V
(2239) Wch Blitz Warsaw 2021 (19) ]
[ 14.a5! ]
14...Nc5 2:15 15.Be3 16:23 f5
[ 15...Nb7!? ]
16.Bxc5 2:39 bxc5 8 17.Rb1± 5:06
4:45
[ 19.a5! ]
19...Bh6 14:06 20.Ne6 3:15 Sometimes
this is the main theme in the Bayonet
Attack -- not so convincing here.
20...Bxe6 6 21.dxe6 5 Qc8 4:19
22.Bd3 2:10 Ne7 40
[ 22...c6! ]
23.a5 7:03 Qxe6 18:49 24.Be4 4:05 c6
47 25.Rb6 43 Qd7 4:41
[ 25...Qc8! 26.g3 d5 ]
26.Qd3 5:03
[ 26.Qb1! ]
26...Qc7 3:09

27.Qb1?! 12:21
[ 27.Qb3!? covers d5 and a3 ]
27...d5† 8:05 When the center gets
rolling, it can turn to Black's favor quickly.
28.Rb7 5:35 Qd6 1:34 29.cxd5? 2:55
[ 29.Qd1 Rfd8 30.Ne1!?± ]
29...cxd5 59 30.Rb6 4:37 Qd8+ 1:23
31.Rd3 3:45
[ Stockfish shows as "best" 31.Bxg6
Nxg6 32.Nxe5 Nxe5 33.Rxh6 Qe7+ but Black should make it work in his
favor. ]
31...Rxa5 1:43 32.h4 2:07
[ 32.Nxe5?? Qxb6 ]
32...Qa8 3:04
[ 32...Ra4 ]
33.Qb3? 1:33

(Diagram)
12 Who is pinning whom? Black is now up a clear piece, but there's more to it than that.

[ 36...Bf4+ is more accurate, but hey. ]

37.Rbb3 2:02

[ 37.Rd4 best try Qxc4 38.Rxc4 Nf5 ]

37...Bf4+! 24 38.g3 1:16 Qxf2+ 14

39.Kh1 15 Qf1+ 35 40.Kh2 3

Bxg3+! 24 with a nice checkmate coming.

0-1
still thinking I had it... <cough> 6.Be2

12:26
[ 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 Nc6 8.Qd2 0-0 ]

9.0-0-0

6...Bg7 41 7.0-0 5 0-0 5 8.Re1 3

Her favorite line. 8...Nc6 9 9Nb3 4

a5 21 Is this too soon? Possibly.
[ 9...a6 could have come from a Najdorf, and so that position has been played quite a few times. ]
[ 9...Be6 10.Bf1 when *now* a5!

11.a4 is the perfect time to play the "freeing" (it's never that simple though) d5! The best line is the sharp 12.Nc5 Qb6 13.exd5 Rad8 14.Be3 Qxb2 15.Qc1 Qxc1 16.Rxc1 Nxd5 17.Nxe6 fxe6 with plenty of play for both sides, but nobody stands better. That's one of the things I'd looked at and promptly misremembered. ]
[ 9...b6!? is another way to go. ]

10.a4 2:49 The "automatic" response.


32.Kg2 Qe3 33.Rb8 Qd2+ 34.Kh3 Kg7 35.Qe4 Bd6 36.Rb3 f5 37.Qd3 Qf2 38.Rb1 Kf6 39.Rf1 Qa2 40.Re1 Rb7 41.Re2 Qxa4 42.Nxe5 Qa1 43.Kg2 Bc5 44.Qa6+ Rb6 45.Nd7+ Kg5 46.Qc8 Qg1+ 47.Kh3 Qf1+ 48.Rg2 Qxf3 49.Qd8+ Kh6 50.Qh4+ Kg7 51.Nxb6 h5 52.d6 Qg4+ 0-1 Kovalenko,I (2640)-Fridman,D (2640) Liepajas Rokade Super rapid 2017 (7) ]

10...Nb4!? 1:43 I thought it was bad after I played it
[ 10...Be6 when 11.Bb5!? is unique. But 11... Nb4 might be best anyway! ]

[ 12.Nd5 ]

12...Bc4 1:43

13.b3?! 8:40 Too loose, and subject to tactics!
[ 13.Bg5 ]
[ 13.Ndb5 ]

13...e5!? 2:08
[ Stockfish considers equally good (and
15...Nd7 first is maybe better, so I can get to e5 in a hurry. 16.Nxd6??
[ 16.Bf4!± Rxc4 17.Nxd6!?]
16...Rxc4?! 1:23 as was this!
[Again 16...Nd7 is best; I had a hard time believing 17.Nxd6 Rc7! 18Nb5 Rxc4=]
17.Nxd4?! 1:33
[17.Na3! and 18.Bxd4 is some plus for White.]

17...d5! 2:55 Typical Sicilian. 18.Be2
17:35 Best again -- but these moves are costing her even more time. She had 28:16 left to my 1:32:55. Over an hour advantage! 18...Rc8 2:40 19.c3 5 Nc6
1:06
[ 19...Na6!? some little plus. ]
20.Nxc6?! 1:51
[ 20.exd5 Nxd4 21.cxd4 Nxd5= ]
20...bxc6 19 21.e5 48
[ 21.exd5 Qb6! ]
21...Ne4?! 5:24 22.c4 32
[ △22.Bf3 ]
22...Rb8!? 7:35 (clock: 1:18:50 remaining) I was envisioning some wild tactics but couldn't see them through to clarity...
so that ...d4 can be played ) 23...c5 and ...d4 24.Rb1! Qc7 25.Ba1 Bxe5
( 25...d4?? 26.Bg4+- ) 26.Bxe5 Qxe5?! ]
23.Ra2! 8:54 (clock: 16:33 remaining)
Confession: I didn't expect this at all! Could she be thinking Qd1-a1, a la the famous Reti Opening maneuver!?
[I expected 23.Rb1 which should (<ahem>) just transpose... ]
23...Re8?! 16:26
[Compy considers 23...Rb4!? 2nd best. Ayaa! ]
[Meanwhile, 23...Rxb2! Well of course that is what I was thinking about all that time! (and I had lots of extra time to think) 24.Rxb2 Bxe5
A) After a while I was even more worried about 25.Rb3 since I thought Bxh2+ failed. Just a moment though...
  A1) 26.Kf1?? Qh4 27.Rg3 (27.Rf3? See 25.Rc2 below :) ) 27...Bxg3;
  A2) 26.Kxh2! Black get a lot of pawns, and the e-file pin is quite annoying, and -- Black comes out okay! It *is* a Dragon after all...
26...Qh4+ 27.Rh3 Qf4+ 28.Kg1 Qxf2+ 29.Kh1 Ng5 It turns out that Black has compensation for a rook! 30.Ra3! (30.Rh2! Re8 31.cxd5 cxd5 32.g3! Ne4 33.Rg2 Qe3 34.Qc1 Nxe3+ 35.Kh2 Nf5 36.Qxe3 Nxe3 (!) 37.Rgg1 Nc2 38.Rc1 Rxe2+ 39.Rg2 Rxe2+ 40.Kxe2 Ne3+ 41.Kf1 Nc4 42.Rb1= )
B) But after all this is said and done, there's 25.Rc2 Bc3!± (never even imagined I should be going in that direction)
  B1) 26.Rf1 d4 27.Bd3 (27.Bf3?! Nc5 28.Bxc6 Qf6 29.Qf3 Qxf3±/† 30.Bxf3 Rd8 and it's really all about that d-pawn. ) 27...Nc5±;
  B2) 26.cxd5! Bxe1 27.Qxe1 cxd5;
C) 25.Rb3 Bc3!± is even stronger than on 25.Rc2 since ...Nc5 will hit the rook.;
D) 25.Rc2
  D1) Again: Black keeps it going (but eventually just equality) with:
25...Bc3!± 26.cxd5! (26.Rf1 d4! 27.Bd3 Nc5 )
  D2) 25...Bxh2+!? This is of course the exciting line.
I just couldn't see it through, plus it lets White take a draw. But there was a fair possibility that Ruiyang would be affected by her time shortage. Would it encourage her to take the draw on that alone? Had she seen there was no choice?? **[** certainly hadn't, and thought there was!
  D2a) 26.Kf1?? This is what worried me -- I hadn't noticed that this flat-out LOSES. Qh4
27.Bf3  (27.Qd4 Ng3+ 28.fxg3 Qxd4 mate soon.)

and now what I missed:
27...Qxf2+!!  28.Rxf2  Ng3#;  
D2b) 26.Kxh2! Qh4+  27.Kg1 Qxf2+□= Black has a perpetual but nothing more. ]


26.dxc6? 1:25
[26.Qa1!  Qxd5  27.Bc4!  Qc5  28.Rc2  Qb4!  29.g3!  Ree8= ]
[26.Rc2 ]
[26.Qc1 ]
[26.Qd4 ]

26...Qb6+ 1:05  27.c7! 3:21  Qxf2+! 8:52

Rbe8??+- 2:05 I'd forgotten the value of the classic line by Nimzovich in his opus My System: “The passed Pawn is a criminal, who should be kept under lock and key. Mild measures, such as police surveillance, are not sufficient.” Indeed. Frankly, it's the best thing in the book. Nimzovich felt compelled to state his concepts so strongly, and some of them are bunk -- but it's a great read regardless.

[28...Rc8!+ 29.Rf1 (best) when any of the queen retreats c5, b6 or a7 would be a clear plus. ]

29.Rc2 3:15 and Black falls apart.

29...Qe3 25:53 Sure, *now* I use my time.

[29...Qh4  30.Bf1!  Rc8  31.Kg1  Rxc7  32.Rxe4!  Rxe4  33.Rxc7  Rxa4+- ]

30.Rf1 25  Nc3 4:22 31.Qd7 51  Nxe2 1:18 32.Qxf7+ 2  Kh8 33.Qf6+ 2  Kg8 1 34.c8Q 26  Rf5 3:43 35.Qc4+ 1 Yech. 1-0
1. Nf3  d5  2.e3  Nf6  3.c4  c6  4.Nc3

Ed Lewis variation  4...g6 Transpose
5. cxd5  cxd5  6.Qb3

[Relevant: 6.Bb5+  Nc6  7.Ne5  Bd7
14.0-0  h5  15.h3  Ne4  16.Qe2  Bb8
17.Be1  Qd6  18.f4  Qe7  19.Nc5  Nxc5
20.Rxc5  Bd6  21.Rc2  c5  22.Bc3  c4
23.e4  dxe4  24.Qxe4  Rfd8  25.Kh1
Bb4  26.g4  Bxc3  27.bxc3  Qh4
28.Rg1  hxg4  29.Rh2  g3  30.Qe1
Qxf4  31.Rxg3  Rc6  32.Rhg2  Rb8
33.Rg4  Qd6  34.Qe4  Kf8  35.Rxg6
Ke7  1-0  Bachmann,A (2604)-Sasikiran,
K (2604) Chessable Masters Play In
Chess.com INT rapid 2023 (4) ]

6...Bg7  7.Bb5+ Not needed here,
wastes time, Black is slightly better
7...Nc6  8.Ne5  Qd6  9.Qa4?  Bd7?
[ 9...0-0  10.Nxc6  bxc6  11.Bxc6  Rb8!
  -2.00 White is up a pawn but not
castled, Black is better here ]
10.Nxd7  Qxd7  11.d4  0-0  12.0-0

Diagram: [Predecessor: 12...Rfc8  13.Bd2  a6
14.Bxc6  Rxc6  15.Rac1  Rac8  16.a3
Qf5  17.Qd1  b5  18.Qe2  Ne8  19.h3
Nd6  20.g4  Qe6  21.b3  R8c7  22.Qd3
h5  23.f3  f5  24.Ne2  Bh6  25.gxh5
 gxh5  26.Rxc6  Rxc6  27.Kf2  Kf7
28.Rg1  Qf6  29.Kg2  Ne4  30.Be1
Rc8  31.Kf1  Rg8  32.Rxg8  Kxg8
33.a4  Nd6  34.axb5  axb5  35.Nc3
Qe6  36.f4  Kf7  37.Bd2  b4  38.Na2
Ne4  39.Nxb4  Qg6  40.Be1  h4
41.Nxd5  Ng3+  42.Bxg3  1-0  Duda,K
(1572)-Potempa,D (2031) Duisburg
Grossenbaum op 2005 (2) ]
Pivotal moment **13.Bd3??**

Wrong answer **13...b5?! 14.Qd1 e5!**

(Diagram)

**15.dxe5 Nxe5 16.Be2 Rfd8±**

**17.Bf3?** Black is better, White is trying to ease the position and find a scope of freedom that he had when he should have taken the knight on c6 and broken Black's pawn structure. **17...b4?!**

[ 17...Rac8 ]
[ 17...Qf5 ]

**18.Ne2**

Nxf3+ **19.gxf3 Qh3**

(Diagram)
Black is relentless in his pursuit of the king's crown 20.Nf4


Finally gaining some freedom and taking over the white squares, black is still better in this position 29...Re8
30.b4 White is finally trying to make space but black is precise in cramming the attempt. 30...Re4 31.Qg2 Qh4 [(ew) Off and on, Stockfish has 31...Nf4! as the best move.]
32.Nf3 Qg4 33.Rb1 Qf5 34.h3 NM Archit Dasika is a positional player with deep insight but the schematics of the squares in this position cannot be exploited by mere will 34...Rf4?!!

Fancy and forceful, but is it the right path to take? 35.exf4! Qxb1 36.Ng5?! [36.Ne5 is Stockfish's best, with good chances of achieving a balance. Bxe5

37.fxe5 Qd3!?

White attempts to distort the field, sacs are looming, but NM Dasika is not having any of it 36...Rd8 37.Be3 Qb3 [(ew) 37...Qa2! is better, for some reason I can't ascertain at first, but it's control of d2.]
38.f5!

White is trying to mix it up and press forward in a worse position 38...d4 [38...Bf6!?]
39.Bd2 Qc2 Just pure positional strength and awareness. Hitting the
Bd2 and the f5 pawn as punishment for distorting the field and being aggressive. So:  

40. Ne4 Tosses some more wood on the fire and distort the field even more!  

40...Re8?  

[ 40...Bf8!  

XIIIIIIIIY  
9-+-+r+k+({  
9+-+-+pvl-’  
9p+-+-snp+&  
9zP-sNn+-+-%  
9-zP-zp-+-zP$  
9+-+-+P+-#  
9q+-vL-+Q+”  
9+-+-tR-mK-!  
xabcdefghy  

Qc4 (ew) Seems sensible to hang on to the a-pawn,  
[ but 44...Qf5! 45.Nxa6 Nd5+- starts to get nasty. ]  

45.Rc1  Qa2  46.Re1?!  

[ 46.Qf2 ]  

46...Rc8?!  

[ 46...Rxe1+ 47.Bxe1 Qb1 48.Qe2 Bh6+- ]  

47.a5!? Nd5?!  

[ 47...Nh5 48.f4 Bh6# ]  

48.h4#  

Qc4 (ew) Seems sensible to hang on to the a-pawn,  
[ but 44...Qf5! 45.Nxa6 Nd5+- starts to get nasty. ]  

45.Rc1  Qa2  46.Re1?!  

[ 46.Qf2 ]  

46...Rc8?!  

[ 46...Rxe1+ 47.Bxe1 Qb1 48.Qe2 Bh6+- ]  

47.a5!? Nd5?!  

[ 47...Nh5 48.f4 Bh6# ]  

48.h4#  

Qa3?  49.Qg4  

[ 49.Qh3!± even ]
49...Rf8 = 50.h5?
[ 50.Qe4! Nc3 51.Qf4 = ]

Hard to believe that black is STILL better here 50...gxh5? Finally a mistake from the positional monster
[ 50...Nf6 -0.97 51.Qxd4 Nhx5 52.Qd5 Qb2 53.Ne4! White holds together. ]
51.Qxh5± 1.50 White is better! 51...Ne3 52.Kh1! Preparing to attack *Black's* king with everything left. 52...Rd8?!
[ 52...Rc8! 53.Rg1! Rc6! 54.Nd7! Nc4! 55.Qd5!± ]

(Diagram)

53.Ne4+- Qb3 54.Rg1 Qe6

(Diagram)

can you find the combo? 55.Bxe3 dxe3 56.Rxg7+! Kxg7 57.Qg5+ Qg6 58.Qxd8+- e2

(Diagram)
59. Qd4+! (only move!) 59... Kh7
60. Qe3??
[ 60.Qf2! Again, the only move -- but it's a win. No more tricks! ]

White resigns. Good game, interesting ideas.

0-1

NM Archit Dasika has one last trick to save himself, 1 min on clock, and he finds it. 60... Qh6+! 61. Qxh6+ Kxh6

(Diagram)
9.Bb5?

9...Nxc3
[ 9...exf4= ]

10.bxc3 Bxc3! 11.Bxc6+ bxc6


f6!?= Looks almost suicidal at first, but Black keeps it together.
[ 16...Qd5!? 17.Rb7 c5 18.Rxc7 Qd6 19.Qf3 Qxc7! 20.Qxa8+ Qc8 21.Qd5 0-0 22.f6 Bc6 23.Qxe5 Qg4= sharp! ]

17.Rb4 Qd5 18.Qh5+? Qf7 19.Qf3 0-0
[ 19...Qxa2!? ]

20.Rg4 Kh7 21.Qh3 Rh8

(Qdiagram)
22.Rh4?! Qf8?! 23.Qg3 Be8 24.Qe3 Rb8 25.Qxa7 Rb2\(=\) 26.Rc4 Bf7 
[ 26...Qd6 ]
27.Bc1? 
[ 27.Rxc6= ]
27...Bxc4\(=\) 28.Bxb2 Bd5 29.c4 Bf7 
30.Qxc7 Bh5 31.h3 Be2 
[ 31...Qc5? ]
32.Rf2 Bxd3 33.Qxc6 Qb4 
[ 33...Qb8! ]
34.Kh2 Qxc4 35.Qf3 Rb8 
[ 35...Rc8 ]
36.Qh5 Qc5 37.Rd2 e4 38.g3 Qb4 
39.Rg2 Qb6 40.Bc1 e3 41.Rb2 Qc7 
42.Rxb8 Qxb8 43.Bxe3 Qb2+ 44.Kg1 Qb1+ 45.Kg2 Qc2+ 46.Bf2 Be4+ 
47.Kf1 Qb1+ 48.Be1 Bxf5 49.Qf3 Bxh3+ 50.Kf2 Qxa2+ 51.Kg1 Qb1 
52.Kf2 Qc2+ 53.Kg1 Bf5 54.Qf2 Qb1 
55.Kh2 Be4 56.g4 Qd1 57.Qg3 Qe2+ 
58.Bf2 Bf3 59.Kg1 Bxg4 60.Be3 Bf5 
61.Qf4 Bg6 62.Bd2 Qd1+ 63.Kf2 Bd3 
64.Ke3 Qe2+ 65.Kd4 Bg6 66.Kc5 Qe7+ 67.Kc4 Qe6+ 68.Kb4 Qc6 
69.Bc3 Qd5 70.Bb2 h5 71.Bd4 Qg5 
72.Qf2 h4 73.Be3 Qg4+ 74.Bf4 Bf5 
75.Qh2 Kg6 76.Kc5 Kh5 77.Bd6 h3 
78.Bf8 Qg2 79.Qf4 h2 80.Qe3 
0-1

In the 1600-1999 section it was Michael Walder from start to finish -- the ride was bumpy, critical mistakes were made in many games by both sides, but in the end he won *every* game to score the only 7-0 we've seen in a while (or at least that I can remember!). I asked for his best game from the tournament and this was one of his picks. It's quintessential Walder. 1.c4 e5 2.g3 A move order Mike favors, to get to fianchetto (or "reversed Dragon") lines while avoiding the quixotic 2.Nc3 Bb4!? (which has been slightly suspicious these days). 2...d5?! 
[ 2...Nc6 ] 
[ 2...Nf6 ] 
[ 2...c6!? ]
3.cxd5 Nf6 4.Nc3 
[ 4.e4?! c6! gets more than enough for the pawn. ]
[ Trap 4.e4 Nxe4?? 5.Qa4+ ]
4...Nxd5 5.Bg2 Nxc3?! A few 2700s have played this, but it's rare. (Dubov being the standout, but Xiong a few times as well.) 
[ 5...Nb6 is way more common, 12587 to 2263 in Mega 2023 (need to upgrade before 2024 is over :-). And even has a tiny plus score! A consistent 49.2% for White. (6.Nh3 scored 65.8% over 19 games -- could that mean anything?) ]
6.bxc3 c6?! Looks like a good idea, blunting the fianchetto, but passive and adevelopmental. (I try to coin a new word every submission.) 7.Nf3 Bd6 
8.0-0 
[ 8.d4± might well be superior, putting it to Black directly. ]
8...0-0  9.d3 Mike tries to keep it British, but
   [again, 9.d4 Nd7 10.Qc2 Re8
   11.a4± ]
9...Nd7
10.a4
   [No, wait -- here are some GMs! For a few moves at least. 10.Qc2 Qe7 11.Nd2 f5 12.Nc4 Bc5 13.Rb1 ½-½ Adorjan,A (2570)-Mikhalchishin,A (2480) Dortmunder Schachtage-12 1984 (3) ]
10...Qe7?
   [ 10...a5 11.Qc2± ]
11.a5

   (Diagram)
Black's queenside is compromised, but how to break in? 14.Nb6 A choice of bishops for the knight.

[Stockfish finally goes with 14.Nxd6 Qxd6 15.Qc2± when a central/kingside pawn expansion (e2-e4, f2-f4) will leave White with positional advantages everywhere (central pawns, dark-square control, latent kingside attack).]

[Actually it was a tie -- waiting for the decision with 14.Qc2 is also excellent.]

14...Rb8 15.Nxc8 Rbxc8± So Mike rids Black of the bishop that would otherwise be holding up b7. 16.Qb3 Rc7 17.Ba3? 0.09/29 Throws away the advantage! Here's how to look at it: White's central advance could overrun Black; the only stop to e2-e4 and d3-d4 (after rooks to the center of course) is ...c5 -- and then Black's bishop starts to look rather bad -- and f2-f4 could still take over anyway.

[17.Rd1± 0.95/28]
[17.Rb1]
[17.e4!?]

17...Bxa3= 18.Rxa3 [18.Qxa3 Qe6!= Black still has counterplay.]

18...Qe6?! "If White doesn't want to trade queens, then I'll offer the trade" looks good on paper...

[18...e4!= Stockfish is adamant: this is one of those "everywhere it's 0.00" positions.]

19.Qxe6± "On second thought..."

19...Rxe6 20.Rb1 Ne8 21.Rab3 Nd6 22.e3 g6 There have been lots of alternatives, all similarly evaluated in the "+0.15 to +0.22" range. 23.d4

Mike makes his move. 23...exd4? 0.58/28 Black should just sit tight. King up or over, maybe rook back.

[23...Rd7± 0.13/32 should be considered. (TA)]

24.cxd4± The difference is d4-d5 and ...cxd5 won't leave a weak pawn on c3.

24...Re8 25.Rc1 f5 26.Rc5 Rec8?! 1.19/27

[26...Ree7 0.68/29 27.h3± (TA). Well, maybe. There are plenty of maneuvers to be tried along with some kingside expansion.]

(Diagram)
27.\textbf{Rb6±} Strongly threatening d5.
27...\textbf{Nb5?} 2.83/28

[ 27...\textbf{Rf7} 0.97/28 when somewhat surprising is 28.\textbf{Bd5!? cxd5} 29.\textbf{Rxd6} The TA gave this "+-" but maybe Black can hold on after Rxc5 30.\textbf{dxc5 Rc7} 31.\textbf{Rxd5 Kf7} 32.\textbf{f4 Ke6} 33.\textbf{Re5+ Kd7} 34.\textbf{h3 Kc6} 35.g4 \textbf{Rf7} It's no fun for Black! And Stockfish finally concedes: +- it is. 36.\textbf{Kf2 Kb5} 37.\textbf{Rxe6}! Kxc5 38.\textbf{Rb6 Rd7} 39.\textbf{Kg3} Still, I'm skeptical. But still not having fun. ]

\textbf{Black cannot hold the game after this. 28.d5+-} That's it. Black crumbles. The partnership of rook, bishop on the long diagonal, and passed a-pawn (when all the pawns are traded off or fall) is too much. 28...\textbf{cxd5} 29.\textbf{Bxd5+ Kf8} 30.\textbf{Rxc7 Rxc7} 31.\textbf{Bxb7 Rc2?!} 4.70/28

[ 31...\textbf{Rc1+} 3.03/34 was worth a try. 32.\textbf{Kg2 Nc7} 33.\textbf{Bxa6 Rc5} 34.\textbf{Rb8+ Ke7} 35.\textbf{Bd3 Rxa5} 36.\textbf{Rh8 h5} 37.\textbf{Rh7+ Kd8} 38.\textbf{Rh6+-} (38...\textbf{Ra6} 39. \textbf{Bxf5}) ]

32.\textbf{Bxa6 Nc3} 33.\textbf{Rb8+ Kg7} 34.\textbf{Rc8}
Natalya tied for 3rd-5th and might have finished higher had she held it together against me (I was worse). Here’s her last-round win against Marlon Rigel, in one of her favorite openings, the King’s Indian, Panno Fianchetto.

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(EW) This was Hayes's tournament, were it not for the little detail of Walder running over everyone including him. He won the rest of his games, though, taking clear second, a healthy prize -- plus 89 rating points. He's an enthusiastic player, often seen before the round playing speed chess in the Annex, and attends advanced camps at the Mechanics. We must take him and his Center Counter seriously! His last-round opponent, prolific chess annotator (Botvinnik: best way to improve is write up your games) Nicolas Horde, sent in his game just as I was writing this up, the last game for the Newsletter. I'll add more than a few comments, mostly the opening...

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1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qd8 4.d4 Nf6 5.Nf3 Bg4 6.h3 Bxf3 7.Qxf3 c6
```
8...e6
[8...Qxd4? 9.Nb5! Shaw, in *his* Grandmaster Repertoire book (2016), had this as a novelty; White is 9-0 in the database since then.]

9.0-0-0 Nbd7
[Okay, I thought to click on "Novelty Annotation" and *this* is what comes up under "Relevant": a Bullet game! Oh come ON! Oh, wait, it's Magnus (vs. Vietnamese superstar Tuan Le)...

9...Bb4 is the "theoretical" move; both books continue:

A) 10.Ne4?! Nxe4 11.Qxe4 Qd5

is fine for Black and even 5-4 in the database;

B) Shaw gives 10.Ne2 "!?±" (that's += if you can't see it) Qd5! 11.Qxd5 (11.Qb3!? Qxb3 12.axb3 Nd5 13.Be5± 16.01 (+0.21/d42)

Stockfish) 11...cxd5 12.c3 Be7 13.Ng3 (△13.Kb1 Ne4 14.Be3 but not by much) 13...Nc6 14.Bd3 0-0?! (14...a6= quite even, thinking ...b5, ...h5, even ...Kd7) 15.Rhe1 Rfc8 16.Kb1 Ne8 17.Nf1± Bd6 18.Bc1 Rab8 19.Nd2?! (19.a4) 19...Na5?! (19...b5) 20.b4?? (20.Nb3±) 20...Rxc3+ 0-1 Sethuraman,S (2623)-Bartholomew,J (2447) PRO League Stage Chess.com INT rapid 2017 (5);

C) 10.Kb1 Bxc3 11.Qxc3 (11.bxc3!? Qd5 12.c4 Qxf3 13.gxf3± with quite an unbalanced position. (+0.28/d35) 11...Nd5 12.Qg3 Nxf4 13.Qxf4 Nd7

and here *both* books have their say: Negi (he gave this to show why he preferred 8.Be3!) says: "13...Nd7= when there is no reason why White should be better with so many minor pieces having been exchanged"... while Shaw gives 14.g4 and: "White has more space and a bishop against a knight. There is no way for Black to claim equality, so he will have to suffer for a long time. I know a lot of 1.d4 players who would sell their grannies to get such a position out of the opening." Interesting! We haven't been getting the *latest* 1.e4 repertoire books, so I don't know the end of this paper war. But Stockfish (16.1) has it at 0.16/d30. And praxis: not much in the database, but Bartholomew, a major Center Counter proponent,
drew as Black vs. J.Jackson (2371).]

10.g4

More forthright than the usual 10.Kb1.

10...Be7N


(ew) And now I leave it to Nicolas (so I can get these games in the Newsletter!)... 11.Bg2?! (NH) The incorrect plan, the bishop is much better on d3 if White castles kingside.

[11.g5 The first move I considered but I decided to develop a piece instead. Nd5 12.Nxd5 cxd5 13.h4 And it's an improvement of our game]

11...Nd5 12.Bg3 The idea is just to vacate the f file to continue the pawn storm

[12.Nxd5 cxd5]

12...Qa5 13.Nxd5 cxd5 14.Qb3 b5 15.f4 0-0 16.f5 Nb6

Nothing outstanding, both sides are attacking where the pawn structure dictates 17.fxe6?! It's not bad but it stops White's attack on the kingside in favor of central play. I was not too convinced it was the right idea.

[17.h4 I seriously considered the h4-g5-f6 plan which I think was the best "practical" idea. White does not mind getting rid of all the kingside pawns to open all the files. But today I decided to make my life complicated.]

17...fxe6 18.Be1 I could not find a plan for White, while Black's attack plays by itself. I decided to trade the minor pieces to enter the endgame where Black has a structural weakness but it's too easy to play for them.

[18.Rhe1 Rae8 19.h4 And the game continues.]

18...Qa6 19.Kb1 Nc4 20.Bb4 Bxb4 21.Qxb4 Qc6 22.Rhe1 Rac8!
White's idea was Qc5 to offer an exchange of queens so this prevents it.

23.c3??
[ 23.Qc5? Qb7! 24.Qb4 a5 White has just lost a tempo ]
[ 23.Re2! Ne3 24.Rc1! There are back rank mate threats. Nxa2 25.Rxa2 Rf3 I thought I was too passive and Black can simply double on the f-file so I discarded that variation but it was White's only defense (!). ]

23...Rf2! Hence why Re2 was critical, I overlooked that move under pressure and now White's position collapses

29.Kb4 Setting up one last trick

29...Rxc2
[ 29...Rxh2 30.Rxe7 dxe7 31.Kxc2 Black is still winning ]

30.Kxb5 Rxa2 31.Kb4 Rb2 32.Rc1 Rxb3+ 33.Ka4 Nc3+ I wanted to resign but I was impressed with how he played 34.Ka5 Ra3#
0-1

Bennett McCutcheon (but for a "missing" 'a' a very chess-famous name!) had a splendid result. Four wins and a draw from the first five games put him in ahead of the field, then he happened to have an opponent who couldn't make the game -- and even with an unplayed last round he took clear first when Danny Cao couldn't convert a pawn up out of the opening. Bennett takes home the tournament win, a chunk of change, and an impressive 224 rating point gain! This first round win was a bumpy start though... A *very* interesting game -- it wasn't so clear who was attacking whom! Throwing your pawns up at your opponent's king, when they're in front of *your* king, always ask for trouble. But McCutcheon managed to survive, Fitzgerald, in spite of some nice moves, couldn't come up with the accuracy needed to make the counterattack work, and --somehow-- White won. Ignore the missed mate in two. :-) 1.e4 c6 2.g3
2...d5 3.exd5 Qxd5!? [ 3...cxd5 ]

4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Bg2 While this is rare for the Caro Kann, consider the similar line in the Sicilian, with Black's c-pawn on c5. That position is noteworthy. 5...Qe4+?! Discourages 6.Qe2 as the c-pawn hangs (although White gets some sort of weird development comp with 7.Na3), but loses time itself to Nc3 or d3.
[ 5...Qe6+ minimizes White's edge, such as it is: 6.Kf1 Bh3± (+0.39 or so -- Stockfish 16.1) ]

6.Kf1 Nf6 7.d3 Bxf3?! Sure White's bishop will be "biting on granite" (c6),
but the Two Bishops are capitalized for a reason. Any queen move is somewhat better.

[Then again, SF's preferred retreat is 7...Qf5 when 8.h3 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 happens anyway. (h2-h3 is useful) e5 10.Kg2 Nbd7 11.Nd2 Bc5]

11.Nd2 Be7
[ 11...Nd5= A bishop comes off. ]

[ 14.Nd6 Bxd6! 15.Bxd6 Rfd8 16.Qf4!? Qg6=/± (0.28/23) (16...Nbd5!? 17.Qxf5 exf5 is playable too, but a smidgeon worse than that)]

14...Qg6 15.h4!?

Nh5?! A knight to d5 initiates another trade, minimizing any attack. ± 16.Bxh5?
[ 16.Bg5= ]
[ 16.Bc7! Nd5 17.Nxd5 cxd5 (17...exd5?? 18.Qe2+- wins a piece! ) 18.Qe2 Nf6 19.c4± and the bishops have a say, especially the UB (unopposed bishop, on f3). And don't forget h4-h5-h6 for kingside annoyance. ]

16...Qxh5 17.g4?!
[ 17.Qd1 equal, whether exchanging or not. ]

17...Qg6?? Certainly precarious, but White's king could end up on the wrong side of this -- those pawns are only so stable. This is more Stockfish's "opinion" than mine -- I'd be concerned for Black's safety too! 18.g5?!
[ 18.Qe2! f5 (18...Qf6?? 19.Bg5) 19.h5 Qf6 (19...Qf7) 20.gxf6!? exf5 21.a4! a5 22.Qf3 Black is still fine (but anyone's game to play for). ]

18...h5! William goes for locking it up, although it does limit his queen for a bit.
[Maybe right away 18...e5! 19.Bg3 (19.Bxe5 f6!?) 19...h5! (19...f5 20.gxf6 Qxf6 21.Rae1 Bd6) ]

21.Bxb6?!
[ 21.Bg3 ]

21...axb6

22.Nc4? So enticing! But it's *lost* ?!?!?

22...Bc5?±
[ 22...Rd5? ]
23.Qe2
[ 23.Ne5?

Qe4+! A very nice point! 24.dxe4 (24.Nf3? Qg4+) 24...Rxd2 25.Nd3 Rxc2 26.Rc1! Rd2! makes the most of it. Black is close to winning (but not quite! says Stockfish 16.1 at first, but at depth 31: -+!).]

23...Bd4?
[ 23...Rd4! ]

24.b3?
[ 24.Re1= /× -- time to give up on the g-file! ]

24...b5
[ 24...Rd5! ]

 Perhaps time trouble was affecting the play now. 25.Nd2?! [25.Ne5! Bxe5 26.Qxe5 Rd5† 27.Qe4 (27.Qe3)]

25...Rfd8?!
[ 25...Ra8!? - It's not so much the pawn as the access. ]
[ 25...b4! locks down the a-pawn for taking and appears best. ]

26.Nf1

26...Ra8 The move lost is a big difference!
[ 26...Qf5! 27.Ng3 Qd5+ 28.Qf3 Ra8 29.Nxh5 Rxa2 30.Rc1 Qxf3+ 31.Kxf3 Rd5 32.Ng3 Rc5† ]

27.c4?
[ 27.Ng3! Rxa2 28.Rc1× ]

27...bxc4 28.dxc4
[ 28.bxc4 Bc5 ]

28...Qb1!?
[ 28...Rad8!+ 29.Ng3?! ]

(Diagram)
This battle, critical for the standings, was no boring Slav or Catalan (Sorry, Slav and Catalan fans. :-))

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.g3 Bf5 5.Bg2 e6 6.0-0 h6 7.Nc3 Nbd7 8.Qb3 Qb6 9.Qxb6?!

[9.c5! is often best in this sort of standoff, and this one is no exception - except there is no advantage. Qxb3 (9...Qa6!?=) 10.axb3 a6 11.b4 Rd8= The point is White can't get in b4-b5, creating weaknesses in the}
Black pawns, because Black has already played ...Nbd7 so he can dodge the pin of the a-pawn.

9...axb6 10.b3 Bb4 11.Bd2
[ 11.Bb2 will be safer. ]

11...0-0?!  
[ 11...Ne4? 12.Nxe4 ]  
[ 11...Ba3 ]  
[ 11...dxc4! 12.bxc4 Ba3 13.Bc1 Ne4? Black is still pressing. ]

12.Rfe1? Bad on its own,  
[but also because White might have restabilized after the tactical 12.Nxd5!  
A) A bit more complicated is 12...Nxd5 13.cxd5 Bxd2 14.dxc6! but Bc3! 15.cxb7! (15.cxd7 Bxa1 16.Rxa1 Rad8 17.Ne5 f6 18.Nc4 Rxd7 and that's why the a-rook to d8, else now White would have a knight fork. ) 15...Rab8! 16.Rac1 Bb2 17.Rc7 Rfd8 and it's -- even!;  
B) 12...exd5 13.Bxb4 Rfe8 14.e3 dxc4 15.bxc4 Ra4 16.a3 c5= and the pawn at c4 falls. ]

12...Ba5?! 1:32  
[ 12...Ne4? 13.Nxe4 ]  
[ 12...Bxc3 13.Bxc3 Ne4 14.Bb2 ]  
[ 12...Ba3! ]  
[ 12...dxc4 13.bxc4 Ra7!  
when pressure on White's pawns yields a clear advantage. ]

(Diagram)
Unrated Sanjay D'Mello has been dutifully sending in his moves for the bulletin -- No annotations, or rather very few, but something is right: he had a 5-0 surge after a 2nd-round draw to edge out Charlie Schaezlein and William Dillon by a half point, beating them both along the way -- and 4th-5th players Sawyer Stultz and Paul Blum as well! His provisional rating is 1422 -- no more under 1200 section for him! Well done!

1.e4 This was the other win in that 5-0 series. In a wild and confusing game, he launched a sacrificial kingside assault that came through after a few testy moments!

1...e5 2.Bc4 Nc6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.d3 h6 6.h3 0-0 7.Be3 b6 8.Qd2 Bb7

9.Bxh6!?


9...gxh6

[ 9...Na5?! 10.Qg5 Ne8 11.Qg4 Nxc4 12.dxc4 Bb4 13.Nh4!± Kh8 ( 13...Bxc3+ 14.bxc3 Kh8 15.Bg5 ]
Nh7?

[10...d5!

A) 11.Qg5+ Kh8 (11...Kh7
12.exd5) 12.Nxd5 (12.exd5 Nd4?) 12...Nxd5 13.Qh5+ Kg7
14.Bxd5 Qd6;

B) 11.Nxd5 Nxd5 12.Bxd5 Qd6
13.Qh5 Kg7 14.h4 Qg6 15.Qxg6+ fxg6 16.Bxc6 Bxc6 17.Nxe5

11.Qg6+??

[11.h4!+- Stockfish 16.1 sees "Mate in

Eight" unless Black gives up bishop, then queen(!) on h4. And I'm sure that will eventually pop up with a "#" and a number after it.]

11...Kh8 12.Bxf7 Rg8?
[12...Bb4! 13.Qh5 Qe7 14.Bd5
(14.Bg6 Rf6! pushes White back.)
14...Qe8!±]

13.Bxg8 Qxg8 14.Qh5!

Keeping queens on the board even with rook and *three* pawns for bishop and knight -- after all, whose king is exposed?

[14.Qxg8+± is still pretty good!]

14...Nb4?! 15.Nxe5! Rf8 16.Ng6++-

Kg7 17.Nxe7 White is up an awful lot of material now, and wins routinely.

17...Qe6 18.Nf5+ Kh8 19.Kd2 Rf6
20.g4 Nc6 21.g5 Rg6 22.h4 Ne5
23.f4 Nf7 24.Ne7 Rh6 25.gxh6 Qxe7
26.Rhg1 Qf6 27.Rg4 Nh6 28.Rag1
Nxg4 29.Rxg4 Qe6 30.Nd5 Bxd5
31.exd5 Qf6 32.f5 Qe5 33.Qg6
1-0

□ Vandenhoven, Clarke 1629
■ Babayan, Gagik 1683

2024 Spring TNM: 1600-1999 (7.16)
[Winslow, Elliott]

(Diagram)
I have to give this ending from the last round for its instructional value. There are a lot of chess proverbs, and this game hit quite a few in just a few moves.  

46...Rd7+ 47.Kc3=

Rxd2?? "All rook endings are drawn" is the old joke, obviously not true. But a better one is "Don't go into a pawn ending unless you know the result." (Or something like that.) In other words, Calculate! In fact *any* rook move along the 7th rank would draw. Any.  

48.Kxd2+ The problem is another "proverbial" advantage in the ending: the Outside Majority -- which if played right becomes an Outside Passed Pawn. *If*. 48...f4 49.Kd3! White starts out excellently! Another ending proverb: Centralize the King. White gets there first. 49...Kg6 50.Ke4 h5 White's king stops Black's kingside majority from healthily turning into a passed pawn.

51.a3?? Ayaaa! Another proverb: Push the Candidate First. Or some version of Don't Allow One Holding Two. 

[ 51.b3+- is the almost automatic method, FOLLOWED by 52.a3 and 53. b4. ]  
[ 51.h4+- ]  
[ 51.Ke5+- ]  

51...a4!-+ (only move) And there it is. Suddenly *BLACK* is winning! 52.Ke5 [ 52.h4 Kf6! (only move again) (note that Chessbase weirdly doesn't allow one to put "!") and "box" (the "only move" symbol) in the same suffix to a move. Sure I could put it in a note...) 53.hxg5+ Kxg5 54.Kf3 Kf5 55.g3 ( 55.Kf2 Kg4 56.Ke2 Kg3 57.Kf1 f3 58.gxf3 Kxf3 59.Kg1 Kg3 Black can just play ...h4-h3-h2, "stalemate" the White king -- except then the b-pawn must move, ...axb3 (don't forget en passant if b2-b4!), and ...b3-b2-b1Q
checkmate. ) 55...fxg3  56.Kxg3 Kg5+
White could run to the kingside, but
it's pitifully slow. ]
52...h4!! (Only move) The amazing thing
is that the path to victory for Black is
also to seemingly cripple the majority as
well! But Gagik finds the way! It is
actually Zugzwang -- if it were Black's
move instead of White's, it would be a
draw.  53.Ke4
[ 53.Ke6 doesn't help:  g4! (only move)
queens a pawn.  54.hxg4 Kg5!
(mate in 16) happens to be faster than
...h3 or ...f3 right away. ]
[ 53.--  Kh6  54.Kf5  (or  54.Ke4= )
54...Kh5 and now  55.Ke4!
is yet another only move -- and it
draws. ]
53...Kf6 (once again the only move,
but totally won.  54.Kf3 Kf5  55.Kf2  g4
and if nothing else, that same
pseudostalemate forcing White to move
the b-pawn. Very instructional!
0-1
As our diligent readers may already know, last month we held our annual San Francisco Scholastic Championship on March 30th and it was a great success. We all want to give a huge thank you to our Chief Arbiter Judit Sztaray and Tournament Directors Scott Mason, Richard Koepcke, Arthur Liou, Vincent Ng, Michael Hsu, IM Guillermo Rey, Borbala “Bori” Sztaray, Neha Sharan, Eric Lai, Dawson Wu, Sheng Jian, Kenn Fong, Yinze Tan, Bily Yu, Dennis Tocol, Hong Guan, Jaime Ng, Kenneth Fung, Duane Miller, Michelle Woo, Mariela Haro, Claude Matthew Lucero Villamor, and Kumiko Komori. We could not put on a tournament without them. We are also extremely grateful to our volunteers. We had 348 players show up with their families from all around the Bay! In addition to the tournament itself, IM Ladia Jirasek and Lauren Goodkind volunteered their time and expertise to give players games and provided game analysis to our lucky scholastic players. FM Paul Whitehead also headed the simul with special guest appearances from IM Ladia Jirasek and Leon Alston, and help from David Olson. We are also deeply appreciative to all our support volunteers including Trustees Lindsey Tonsager and IM John Donaldson, Edwin Ng, Gabriel Ortega Tanguay, Paul Blum, Christian Brickhouse, Kory Cogdill, Korey Reynolds, Lilli Paratore, Chris Robins, and all the Bright Knights volunteers; and staff including Alex Robins, Andy Talajkowsi, Nico Chen, Phin Horowitz, Jimmy de Guzman, Zorba Hughes, Tina Ahn, Kathy Bella, and event organizer Alyssa Stone.

The event also received a wonderful write up in the San Francisco Chronicle and we had an extra special visit from San Francisco Mayor London Breed!

The competition was stiff at the top of each section and had to be decided by tiebreaks. We would like to offer sincere congratulations to all of our players who were just barely edged out of the top 10 in each section. Tiebreaks are decided by the strength of opponents in the tournament - so we would like to loosely quote our colleague Judit Sztaray that this is another great reminder to be sincere when you wish your opponent good luck!

First place in the +1000 Section went to FM Shawnak Shivakumar (2326) with a perfect score of 4 out of 4. Hayes Marvin (1752) came in a close second with 3.5. Third place through tenth place had 3 points each and had to be decided by tiebreaks and went in order to: Harrison Qian (1351), John Wang Xia (920), Richard Jiang (1175), Ethan Wangche Gao (1473), Kanav Maheshwari (1005),
Benjamin Quach (1237), Asher Ruiqing Luo (1306), Kingsley King (1353). A special shout out to Hayes as he regularly plays in our tournaments and has participated in our camps – good job Hayes!

First place in the 500-999 Section was a tie all the way down and was awarded jointly to Kyle Tega Yu (555) and Emanuel Cabrera (797) who both scored a perfect tournament. Third place through sixth place were tied with 3.5 points each and in order went to Zane Chu (794) Wesley Wongchenko (816), Naman Jain (861), Noah T Chiu (773). All the players at seventh through tenth place scored 3 points out of four and went to: Dylan Wan (822), Alessandro Huerta (804), Sairaghav Kumar (600), and Emily Shiyuan Liu (832). Wesley has been in our scholastic program and we’d like to congratulate him for a strong showing!

In the under 500 Section, we had two players with a perfect score who were placed according to tiebreak rules. They were Sanvi Singh (245) and Matthew Tang (338). Congratulations to both for a perfect score! In third through tenth place with 3.5 points each were Brian Luo (241), Kriss Diaz (480), Raymond Liu (368), Ivan Pershin (462), Sриніkет Sриkanti (433) Si Hao Huang (unr.), Anis Rebouth (unr.), Edwin Mazariegos (381). We’d like to personally say congratulations to Matthew Tang who has been in our scholastic program for a few years now!

The 9th-12th Grade Non-Rated Section also had a two way tie with a perfect score that had to be
decided by tiebreak, with Changlin Zeng in first and John Diepenbrock in second. In third through sixth all the players had 3 out of 4. They went in order to: Anthony Alvarez, Alex Yuen, Hans Barrueto-Zhao, and Leonard Isakov. In seventh with 2.5 points came Preston Cheng. The players in eighth through tenth place all scored 2 out of 4 for the day. They were, in order: Aiden Yuen, Ryder Kalengkongan, and Axel Pilette.

The grade 6th-8th Grade Non-Rated Section had an undisputed winner and the only player with 4 out of 4 in their section, Sahil Shivakumar. Ruyi Hu and Julian Reddick finished in second and third with 3.5 out of 4. Smaidh Saxena, Phenix Liang, Snehin Shankar Dasgupta, Ansh Shenvi Priolkar, James Moore, Nolan Woo, and Jalen Wong were ranked fourth through tenth and all came in with 3 out of 4 points. Congratulations to all of our scholastic program participants in this section!

In the 3rd-5th Grade Non-Rated Section Sicheng Ao was the winner, just barely sneaking past Yinou Hu and our camper Derek Ko, both of whom had perfect scores. Linus Dow and Archer Lee came in fourth and fifth with a respectable 3.5 out of 4. Sixth through tenth place players all scored 3 out of a possible 4 and included, in order: Joshua Gonzalez, Santiago Echevarria, Siyuan Li, Ronald Zeng and Ronan Peterson. Derek, Ronald, and Ronan have all been playing in our scholastic program and I see a bright future in tournaments for all of them!

In the K-2nd Grade Non-Rated Section we had Byron Li in first and Raam Prasannakumar in second,
both with a perfect score. James Rodnick and Hudson Kim had a strong performance in third and fourth with 3.5 out of 4. Fifth place through tenth place, each with 3 points and in order: Hunter Indelicato, Charlotte Cella, Andrew Lo, Matthias Wassman, Edward Chiang and Kara Won. Congratulations to all of our K-2nd players - it's great to see children starting in tournaments so young! A special congratulation to Charlotte Cella who regularly comes to our camps!

Finally, in addition to our individual sections we also had school and chess clubs competing with their players in our Combined Team Competition. First place went to Starr King Elementary. Second place went to Menlo-Atherton High School. Third place went to Fallon Middle School. Fourth place went to the Sanger Chess Team. Fifth place went to one of our scholastic program schools Alice Fong Yu - big congratulations to the whole team! Sixth place went to the Town School for Boys. Seventh place went to Hamilton K-8, led by former MI Chess Room Director Abel Talamantez. Congratulations to all of the players from Francisco and to their organizer Wilson Skinner. Eighth place went to Children's Day School. Ninth place went to Holy Name. Last, but not least, we had West Portal Elementary in tenth. We'd also like to give a special shout out to our scholastic program school Francisco Middle School, who finished in eleventh place.

Overall, we would like to thank all of our staff and volunteers, as well as all of our players and their families for helping us to put on a great tournament. We are already looking forward to hosting it again next year!
Alyssa Stone

Report From San Quentin

On Tuesday, March 5, a small group of Mechanics’ Institute staff including CEO Kathy Bella, Lead Tournament Director Judit Sztaray, Chess Room Coordinator Paul Whitehead, Senior Director of Advancement Tina Ahn, and myself arrived at an unexpected place: San Quentin Rehabilitation Center to the north of San Francisco.

We joined San Quentin SkunkWorks in hosting the first organized chess tournament - called Pawns to Progress - held within the carceral facility and California’s oldest prison. About 50 players formed teams of two - one incarcerated resident with one San Quentin staff member - for a three-round tournament. Well over 100 spectators joined to watch, analyze, and discuss the event.

IA Judit Sztaray ran the tournament brilliantly and smoothly, all while having to manually pair the rounds by hand since computers are not allowed by outside visitors. Suffice to say, this was not our usual tournament flow. Judit skillfully and seamlessly wove between players ensuring games were fair and completed properly. Brava to Judit!

There was so much excitement in the giant auditorium throughout the event.

Much of the excitement was also for incarcerated residents to see FM Paul Whitehead again, who had taught a chess class the week prior to a group of close to 60 in the dining hall. Over the din of a busy kitchen and surrounded by six 20-foot sepia-toned murals depicting California history, the participants sat in absolutely rapt concentration, hanging on every tactic and tip that Paul shared in hopes of improving their game. Individuals asked for clarification on the regulations and strategies of chess and as Paul confirmed a variety of game rules, turned to buddies across the hall to call out, “See! I told you so!”

"At its core, Pawns to Progress is more than an event. It’s an avenue where incarcerated people, corrections officers, and members of the broader community collaborate," said Kyle Winchell, a co-founder of SkunkWorks, formerly incarcerated at San Quentin. Unlike traditional chess tournaments, the event featured an innovative format where prison staff and community members were paired with an incarcerated person to form a team. Each team then competed against similar pairs. This setup, informed by SkunkWorks’ research on the effects of games in carceral settings, is designed to break down barriers, promote mutual respect, and encourage a spirit of positive interactions in a competitive yet friendly environment.

San Quentin SkunkWorks is an innovation lab powered by incarcerated people that researches, crafts, and builds transformative criminal justice programs. This event, part of SkunkWorks' transformative gaming initiative, seeks to transform prison culture and improve rehabilitative outcomes by using the power of gameplay to transcend traditional barriers.

Following the tournament, all attendees gathered in small group discussion circles to reflect on the day, engage in conversation, and consider the impact of bringing together individuals from all walks of life over the chess board.

The feedback we received from incarcerated residents, officers and staff, and fellow visitors was overwhelmingly positive and appreciative.
A short video of the event here was created by Forward This Productions, an incarcerated film crew dedicated to changing hearts and minds from San Quentin Rehabilitation Center.

While this might have been the first official chess tournament at San Quentin Rehabilitation Center, our institutional histories have interesting parallels. Mechanics’ Institute and San Quentin both opened in 1854 - being a reaction to the Gold Rush era, albeit taking different forks in the road. Mechanics’ Institute was founded as an educational and cultural center for out-of-work gold miners to receive vocational and skills training for new career pathways, as well as being a place to stay out of trouble.

We are proud to have partnered with San Quentin for this program and share in the transformative power of chess.

In 1975, right around my 15th birthday, I gave a 20-board simultaneous exhibition at San Quentin. Accompanied by my father (who had arranged the event) and good friend Jeremy Silman, the experience left a powerful and indelible impression on me.

Returning almost 50 years later, to play chess and converse freely with incarcerated individuals and correction officers, to listen to their stories and see the circumstances in which they live and work, was an honor and privilege. Many of the men I spoke with expressed a desire to play chess ‘outside’.

I believe one day we will see a fair few of them at the Mechanics’ Institute.

- Paul Whitehead
The Chess Scuttlebutt

Links to some of the news that make up our world.

EvoChess is a website where you can play numerous variations of the Royal Game.

Garry Kasparov is listed as a terrorist by Moscow.

A stroke survivor uses chess to rehabilitate.

WGM Jennifer Shahade will enter into mediation with the USCF after massive fallout from her resignation as Director of the US Chess Women's Program.

More articles here and here on the impact of AI on chess, on learning, and its influence on humanity.

Eleven-year old prodigy Devanshi Chowdada taught a chess workshop at a library in Illinois.

Can chess help in staving off dementia?

Hamilton K-8 School in Novato (whose chess program is coached by former Mechanics’ Institute Chess Room Director Abel Talamantez) is one of 10 schools receiving Title 1 Grants from the USCF.

A chess set was designed to honor two famous Hungarians: actress Zsa Zsa Gabor and escape artist Harry Houdini.

Paralyzed man plays chess with a brain-chip.

Chess phenom Lisa Lane passes away aged 90. Was she the inspiration for the Queen's Gambit?

The Gift of Chess raises over $10,000 in a 13-mile charity walk across New York City.

The chess-themed War Is Over! Inspired by the Music of John & Yoko, won the 2024 Oscar for Best Animated Short. Watch the trailer here.

The San Francisco Giants have caught “chess fever”.

You are what you eat in “Echo Chess”.

Magnus Carlsen sensationally loses to 10 year-old Argentinian FM Faustino Oro, the ‘Messi of Chess’.

A classic example of the pot calling the kettle black: former World Champion Vladimir Kramnik has been caught cheating on Titled Tuesday and was subsequently banned on chess.com.

“Chess has spoken.” GM Hans Niemann wins the 2024 Grenke Open.

Really Bad Chess is yet another variant, with totally random starting positions - including pawns on the back rank.

Ranae Bartlett chosen as the new USCF Executive Director.
Check out a new chess-themed fragrance, designed to make “intellectuals smell good.”

A new TV series starring Al Pacino is lambasted for depicting inmates at Auschwitz taking part in a gruesome human chess game.

12-year old Yagiz Erdogmus from Turkey becomes the fourth youngest Grandmaster in history.

Igor Rausis, infamous for having been caught cheating and subsequently stripped of the GM title, has died.

Find your “mate” at the Los Angeles Chess Club.

A chess club was kicked out of a rented venue for bringing their own sets.

“Chess is not a gendered sport.” Actress who posted a picture playing chess is trolled online.

FIDE turns 100 years old on July 29, and will attempt a Guinness World Record.

“Shoegate” scandal engulfs the 2024 Candidates Tournament in Toronto.

Watching GM Hikaru Nakamura replay his games from the Candidates is a must-see.


Finally, a terrific write-up in the San Francisco Chronicle on the 2024 Scholastic Championship held in Golden Gate Park on March 30. See above for our report.

Recent Games

A selection of games played around the world that have caught our attention.

Black is in trouble, therefore: 27...Bxg5!? 28.Nxc8 Bxh4 29.Bxh4 Qxh4 30.Bxa6?!  
[ 30.Nxd6!+- ]


Black's 36th move gets him out of a tight spot. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.f3 c5 4.d5
A pretty breakthrough sacrifice leads to a vicious attack and a winning endgame.


1-0
21. c4 Ne5 22. h3 Qe7 23. Rf1 Re8
24. Ng3 Qf8 25. Nf5 Kh8 26. Qh5 b5
27. Nh6 Kg7 28. cxb5 c4 29. Ng4 Qe7
30. Nxe5 c3 31. Bxc3 Qc7 32. Nc6 Rxe4
33. Qg5+ Kf8 34. Bxf6 Rf4
1-0

A razor-sharp struggle with a sudden end.

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 d5
4. cxd5 exd5 5. Bg5 c6 6. e3 Bf5
7. Nge2 h6 8. Bf4 Nbd7 9. Ng3 Bh7
10. h4 Bb4 11. Bd3 Bxd3 12. Qxd3 0-0
13. f3 Re8 14. a3 Bf8 15. Kf2 g6
16. Nxe2Bg7 17. g4 h5 18. Rg1 hxg4
19. fxg4 c5 20. h5 cxd4 21. exd4 Ne4+
22. Nxe4 Rxe4 23. Qf3 Qb6 24. Kg3
Qxb2 25. Rg2 Rc8 26. h6 Bxd4
27. Nxd4 Qxd4 28. Rd1 Qf6 29. g5 Qf5
30. Rc1 Rce8 31. Bd2 Qe6 32. Rh1 Kh7
33. Rh4 Qd6+ 34. Bf4 Ne5 35. Qb3 Re7
36. Rf2 Qc6 37. Rh1 Nc4 38. Rf3 Ne5
39. Rf2 Qe6 40. Rh4 Nc4 41. Rf3 Nd6
42. Bxd6 Qxd6+ 43. Rf4 Qxf4 44. Rxf4

A rook sacrifice leads to a light-square mating net.

11. Nf1 Ng6 12. Ng3 c6 13. Ba4 d5
14. exd5 Nxd5 15. d4 exd4 16. Nxd4
Qc7 17. Nf5 Rae8 18. Bb3 Bd7
Bxd4 25. Nxd4 f3 26. g3 Qd6 27. b3
Qh5 31. h4 Re8 32. Be3 Re4 33. Rd1

(Diagram)
The white knight has the final say.

1. Nf3 d5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 e6 4.0-0 Be7 5.d3 0-0 6.Nbd2 c5 7.e4 Nc6 8.Re1 a6
9.e5 Nd7 10.Nf1 b5 11.h4 Bb7
12.N1h2 Rc8 13.Ng4 c4 14.d4 c3
15.b3 a5 16.a3 Qe8 17.Qd3 h5
18.Ngh2 b4 19.a4 Nd8 20.Bg5 f5
21.exf6 Nxf6 22.Ne5 Ne4 23.Bxe7
Qxe7 24.f4 Rf6 25.Nf1 Nf7 26.Qe2 g6
27.Bxe4 dxe4 28.Ne3 Nxe5 29.dxe5
Rf7 30.Rad1 Rd8 31.Kh2 Kg7 32.Nc4
Rxd1 33.Rxd1 Rf8 34.Nd6 Rd8
35.Qb5 e3 36.Re1 Bd5 37.Qxa5 Ra8
38.Qxb4 g5

(Diagram)


(Diagram)
Alice Lee breaks through the fortress and wins the Women's American Cup.


33.Rxb2! Rxa6 34.Rb8+ Kg7 35.Ne6+ 1-0

American Cup Women Champions 2024 (4.3)

Aronian wins the American Cup Open in a tense final game.


33.Rxb2! Rxa6 34.Rb8+ Kg7 35.Ne6+ 1-0

American Cup Open Champions 2024 (4.4)
A slaughter from beginning to end.  


(Diagram)

A lovely exchange sacrifice for dark square dominance and a sustained initiative.  


(Diagram)

[Diagram]

(C54)

Livaic, Leon 2558
Vitiugov, Nikita 2688

Austrian Bundesliga 2023-24 (9.27)


(C54)

Faustino Oro 2955
Magnus Carlsen 3246

Live Chess Chess.com 23.03.2024


(Diagram)

(Diagram)
Qd5!  26.Bxd8  Qxb3  27.axb3  Rxd8  
31.Rc5  Rd5  32.Rc4  a5  33.Be4  Rd6  
34.Rc5  b6  35.Rc4  e5  36.Rxb4  axb4  
Bc1  40.Kc4  Kc7  41.Kd5  Kd7  42.Kxe5  
Ke7  43.Kf5  Bd2  44.Kg6  Kf8  45.Bd5  
Bc1  46.Bc4  Bd2  47.Bd5  Bc1  48.Bc4  
Bd2  
½-½  

ding,Liren  
keymer,Vincent  
GRENKE Chess Classic 2024 (4.3)  

Even the world’s strongest Grandmasters can misplay king and pawn endings.  
1.d4  Nf6  2.c4  e6  
10.Nxd4  e5  11.Nf5  Bxf5  12.exf5  Nc6  
13.0-0-0  Rc8  14.Qd3  Qc7  15.Qxd6  
Qxd6  16.Rxd6  Ne4  17.Rd7  Nxc3  
18.bxc3  Rfd8  19.Rxd8+  Nxd8  20.Be2  
Kf8  21.Rd1  Ke7  22.Rd5  f6  23.Kc2  
Nb7  24.Kb3  Nc5+  25.Kb4  Rd8  26.a4  
Ne4  27.f3  a5+  28.Kb3  Nc5+  29.Ka3  
Rd6  30.Bd1  Na6  31.Bc2  Nc7

32.Rxd6  Kxd6  33.Be4  Na6  34.g4  Nc5  
35.h4  h5  36.gxh5  Ke7  37.Bc6  e4  
38.fx e4  Kd6  39.Bd5  Ke5  40.Bc6  
Nxe4  41.Bxe4  Kxe4  42.Kb3  Kxf5  
43.c5  bxc5  44.Kc4

Ke4?  
[ 44...Kg4!  45.Kxc5  f5  46.c4  f4  
47.Kb6  f3  48.c5  f2  49.c6  f1Q  50.c7  
Qc4  51.Kb7  Kxh5  52.c8Q  Qxc8+  
53.Kxc8  Kxh4+  ]

45.Kxc5  f5  46.c4  f4  47.Kb6  f3  48.c5  
f2  49.c6  f1Q  50.c7  Qf5  51.Kb7  Qd7  
52.Kb8  Qd6  53.Kb7  Qd7  54.Kb8  
Qxa4  55.c8Q  Qd4  56.Qg4+  Kd5  
57.Qd7+  Ke4  58.Qg4+  Kd5  59.Qd7+  
Ke4  
½-½  

carlsen,Magnus  
rapport,richard  
GRENKE Chess Classic-TB 2024 (2.1)  

Black is curiously helpless at the end of another Carlsen masterpiece.  
1.e4  e6  2.d4  d5  3.Nc3  Bb4  4.e5  c5  5.a3  
Bxc3+  6.bxc3  Ne7  7.Qg4  Qc7  8.Bd3  
Qa5  9.Bd2  c4  10.Be2  Rg8  11.a4  
Nbc6  12.Qh3  h6  13.Bh5  Bd7  14.Ne2
50.f7 Bd3 A joke move, but there's nothing else. 51.cxd3 1-0


(Diagram)
A wild game with both kings under fire.

Bc5 5.c3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.exd5 Qxd5
Nd5 21.Rh1+ Kg8 22.fxe5 Qg5
Nxe3 26.Qe2 Qg3+ 27.Kd2 Rad8+
28.Kc1 Qg5 29.b3 Nf1+ 0-1

35.Kd3! Rd8 36.c4 Rxd5+ 37.cxd5
Qh3 38.Ng3 Nc4 39.Qxc4 fxg3
40.fxg3 axb5 41.axb5 Rc8 42.Rh1
Qd7 43.Qe4 Kg8 44.Ke3 Nd4 45.Bxd4
1-0

A peaceful start - then white's forces gravitate towards the kingside...
1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Bf4 c5 4.e3 cxd4
5.exd4 a6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.h3 Bf5 8.Bd3
Qxd6 12.Rfe1 0-0 13.a3 Qc7 14.Na2
Rac8 15.c3 Ne4 16.Qe2 Na5 17.Nb4
Rfe8 24.Qf2 Re7 25.Re2 Rce8
26.Rde1 b6 27.g4 Nb5 28.Qh4 Qd6
29.Nh5 f6 30.g5 f5 31.Rg2 Kh8
32.Ndf4 e5

(Diagram)

33.Nf6! gxf6 34.Ng6+
1-0

FIDE Candidates 2024 (4.2) 07.04.2024


(Diagram)
A tense nail-biter, with a cute tactical finish. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6
4.d3 Bc5 5.c3 h6 6.b4 Be7 7.Qb3
0-0 8.a4 d6 9.Nbd2 Nb8 10.d4 exd4
11.cxd4 a5 12.e5 Nh5 13.b5 Nf4
14.g3 d5 15.Bf1 Ne6 16.Bg2 c6
17.0-0 Nd7 18.Bb2 Nb6 19.bxc6
bxc6 20.Bc3 c5 21.Rfb1 Ra6 22.dxc5
Bxc5 23.Qb5 Qc7 24.Rc1 Qa7
28.Rd1 Qa8 29.Bg2 Nc5 30.Nxc5
Bxc5 31.Nh4 Nb6 32.Bd4 Bxd4
33.Rxd4 Ra7 34.h3 Rc7 35.g4 Qc8
36.Qd2 Rc5 37.Qf4 Re8 38.Nf5 Bxf5
39.gxf5 Qc7 40.Re1 Nd7 41.e6 Qxf4
42.Rxf4 Nf6 43.Rd4 Kf8 44.Rd2 fxe6
45.fxe6 Ke7 46.Rb2 Rec8 47.Bf1 Ne4
48.Bd3 Nc3 49.f4 d4 50.Rg2 g5
51.f5 Nd5 52.Re4 Nb4 53.f6+ Kxf6
54.Rf2+ Rf5 55.Rxf5+ Kxf5 56.e7
41.Kf6! Be8 42.Rd8 bxa3 43.bxa3 Bd7
44.Kf7
1-0

A brilliant attacking game from start to finish. 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 e6
4.Bd3 c5 5.b3 Nc6 6.0-0 b6 7.Bb2
Bb7 8.Nbd2 Rc8 9.a3 Be7 10.Ne5
cxd4 11.exd4 Nxe5 12.dxe5 Nd7
13.Qg4 g6 14.b4 a5 15.Nf3 0-0
16.Rae1 axb4 17.axb4 Ra8 18.h4 Ra4
19.h5 Rxb4
62...g3 63.Rf8+ Ke6
[ 63...Ke6 64.Rg8 g2! 65.Rxg2 Nf4++]

62.Kxd3??
[ 62.Rf8+= ]
[ 62.Rd8= ]

60...d3 57.e8Q Rxe8 58.Rxe8 Nf4
59.Kf1 d3 60.Kf2 Nxe3+ 61.Ke3 g4

(Diagram)
White bamboozles black in mutual time trouble.


(Diagram)
Rxf5! 37.exf5
[ 37.Rxh2 g5# ]
37...Qg3+ 38.Kg5 Nh7+
0-1

Black loses focus in the middle game and white pounces. 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6
3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.d3 Bc5 6.0-0
d6 7.c3 0-0 8.Re1 Ne7 9.Nbd2 Ng6
10.Nf1 d5 11.exd5 Nxd5 12.Bb3 c6
13.d4 exd4 14.Nxd4 Nf6 15.h3 Bxd4
16.cxd4 Nd5 17.Bc2 Be6 18.Ng3
Nf6
[ 21...Qb6 ]
22.Bg5 h6 23.Bxf6 Qxf6 24.Qd2 Qg5
25.Re3 Nf4 26.h4! Qd5
[ 26...Qxh4 27.Re4 g5 28.Rae1± ]
27.Re4 Ng6 28.Rae1 Nf8 29.Re5 Qd8
30.h5 Bd7 31.Rxe8 Bxe8 32.Nf5 Qf6
33.Qb4

(Diagram)

b5? Black is busted in any case.
34.Ne7+ Kh8 35.Nd5!
1-0

A heart-breaking loss by the top seed.
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5
qxd5 5.Bf4 Nc6 6.e3 Bf5 7.Bb5 e6
8.Nf3 Nd7 9.0-0 Rc8 10.Ne5 Ndxe5
14.Bg3 Be7 15.Na4 Rxc1 16.Qxc1
Kf7 17.Qc3 h5 18.h3 h4 19.Bh2 Qd7
20Nb6 Qb5 21.Qc7 Qxb2 22.Bd6
Re8 23.Rc1 Kg6 24.Bxe7 Rxe7
25.Qc5 Kh6 26.a4 a5 27.Nc8 Rd7
28.Qc3 Qb4 29.Qc5 Kh7 30.Qe7 Qd2
31.Qc5 Bd3 32Nb6 Rd6 33.Qxd6
Qxc1+ 34.Kh2 Bf5 35.Nd7 Qc2
36.Nf8+ Kh6 37.f3 Qf2 38.Qf4+ g5
39.Qc7 Qg3+ 40.Qxg3 hxg3+
41.Kxg3 e5 42.e4 dxe4 43.fxe4 Bc8
44.d5 Kg7 45.Ne6+ Kf7 46.Kf2 b6
47.g3 Bd7 48.h4 gxh4 49.gxh4 Bxa4
50.h5 Bb5 51.Ke3 a4 52.h6 Kg6
53.Kd2 Kxh6 54.d6 Kh5 55.Nf8 Kg5
With a single stroke white solves the issue of multiple pins in the center.


(Diagram)
Recent Pictures

First Friday Chess Socials on March 1 (above) and April 5 (below).
WIM Sabrina Chevannes (far right) with the Bentley School Chess Club. The author of *The Batsford Book of Chess for Children* stopped by to play chess with the kids and attended our April Chess Social.

GM Dmytro Komorov, on vacation from Canada, also stopped by during the April Chess Social.
Clark Vandenhoven pinch hitting for FM Paul Whitehead during a recent TNM lecture.

TNM regulars Gagik Babayan and Rayna Yan.
The rise of online courses offered by Chessable and others has led some to predict the end of chess books, particularly with so many youngsters showing a marked preference for electronic learning. This may happen in the future but, for now, publishers show no signs of slowing down. Witness the bumper crop of recent offerings.

A. Russell Enterprises, Inc. (https://www.russell-enterprises.com/)

1. *Oops! I Resigned One More Time!* by Ian Rogers (paperback, 176 pages, $19.95)

One of the more original books of the last few years was *Oops! I Resigned Again!* by the Australian Grandmaster Ian Rogers. Dozens, if not hundreds, of puzzle books have been published over the years, but this one was different. It consisted solely of games where a player resigned in a position in which they were either drawing or winning when they gave up!

Mega Database, which makes millions and millions of games available with a few keystrokes, is an amazing labor-saving device, but there are no tools that could have enabled Rogers to quickly find the examples he did. Instead, he had to collect them the old-fashioned way, one at a time, over many years.

Rogers’ book, which offered interesting back stories to go with the tricky puzzles, met with a positive reception. Now we have a sequel, *Oops! I Resigned One More Time!* (Russell Enterprises 2023, 176 pages, $19.95). Like its predecessor, it is the rare book that players of all levels will appreciate.

Studying this book will undoubtedly make one more alert to the need to stay calm and collected no matter what the circumstance. Witness the following example that should be essential endgame knowledge for all:

**Hillarp Persson - Ragger**
Helsingor Politiken Cup 2015.

White resigned here, in view of ...Kg3 and ...f3 followed by marching the king to b3.

What did he miss?

7. a4! The idea to remember. 7... Kxb4 8. axb5 axb5 9. Kb2. White gains the opposition and draws. Both 5. a4! and 6. a4! also drew.

Rogers also mentions the following game, played two years earlier, where black found the saving resource:

Nesterovic - Brkic
Sarajevo, 2013.

1... a5! 66... Kc8 67. Kc6 Kb8 (67... a5! draws as well.) 68. Kb6 a5 also drew. 67. bxa5 Kc8 68. Kc6 Kb8 69. Kb6 Ka8 70. a6 Kb8 71. a7+ Ka8 72. Ka6 b4 73. axb4 ½–½
2. *Endgame Corner: 450 Instructive Endgame Exercises* by Karsten Mueller and Alex Fishbein (paperback, 336 pages, $29.95)

Twenty years ago, one could point to an absence of good books on the endgame. That is no longer the case. The 21st century has seen a number of high-level works on the final phase of the game. These have included both manuals and exercise books. The current offering, from two well-known experts in the field, belongs firmly in the latter category. The 450 positions to solve, with detailed solutions, comes with a scoring system to provide extra motivation. All players will benefit from this book, but those rated below 2200 will find it challenging.

One of the best pieces of advice ever offered was to eat more vegetables. One could add to this, solve more endgame exercises!

3. *Double Trouble Scandinavian Style: Two Repertoires for Black* by Marek Soszynski (paperback, 176 pages, $24.95)

Polish Correspondence master Marek Soszynski offers two very different repertoires using the Scandinavian Defense. The first is 1.e4 e5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qd6 followed by ...g6 and the second 1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 with 3.d4 Nxd5 4.Nf3 met by ...Bf5 and not ...g6. Earlier alternatives are covered including a transposition into the Panov-Botvinnik attack after 1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.d4 cxd5, a line that more commonly arises from the Caro-Kann. The author provides many well-annotated illustrative games.

B. Gambit Publications ([www.gambitbooks.com](http://www.gambitbooks.com))

4. *Secrets of Queen Endings* by Ferenc Berkes and Tibor Karolyi (paperback, 384 pages, $29.95)

Hungarian IM Tibor Karolyi had made a name for himself as the author of a number of outstanding game collections on World Champions including works on Kasparov, Karpov, and Tal. Here, he tackles a new subject in collaboration with his countryman, Ferenc Berkes (peak FIDE 2706).

The two have chosen to write on one of the toughest subjects, queen and pawn endgames. Why the toughest? Because these endings can be extremely complicated. It is no accident that their secrets were long hidden, emerging only with the rise of powerful chess engines. Unfortunately, while they can analyze in tremendous depth, explaining things in a way humans can understand is not currently part of their job description. Hence the need for a book of this kind, where the two Hungarians serve as interpreters. This need is especially important now in a time when games are played to a finish in one session.

Karolyi and Berkes have written the definitive work on the subject. Positions range from queen and pawn versus queen to those with queens and multiple pawns on the board. Stronger players will find the examples of queen and four pawns versus queen and three pawns on one side of the board especially valuable as they tend to crop up with some frequency and lend themselves to typical methods of play.

*Secrets of Queen Endings* is by far the best book on the subject and highly recommended with the caveat that this is a very advanced book.
C. New in Chess ([www.newinchess.com](http://www.newinchess.com))


Ivan Sokolov was a world class player whose second act as a coach and author is arguably even more impressive. He has made a reputation in the latter field for his ability to explain tough subject matter in a way that is useful to both professional players and ambitious amateurs. This is particularly true of his works devoted to the middle game and his most recent book is no exception.

*Winning Chess Middlegames: Volume 2 An Essential Guide to 1.e4 Pawn Structures* covers the Rauzer Sicilian where Black has doubled f-pawns, the Marocy Bind, the Hedgehog, the Sveshnikov as well as the Winawer variation of the French (where White plays 4.e5), the Italian, The Petroff, and the Ruy Lopez. The subject matter is dealt with through 47 well-annotated games that offer a balance between specific variations and clear explanatory prose. The book concludes with a series of exercises with detailed solutions.

Those who play either side of the lines covered in this book or have ever been curious about how to handle them will want to get this book. Sokolov is able to zero in on the essential elements of a position like few other authors. This book is highly recommended to all players from 2000 on up.

D. Thinkers Publishing ([https://thinkerspublishing.com](https://thinkerspublishing.com))


The name of Dragoljub Velimirovic (1942-2014) is synonymous with razor sharp play. He was an attacker's attacker who favored 1.e4 as White and the Modern Benoni, King's Indian, and Dragon Sicilian as Black. Like fellow Yugoslav Grandmaster Albin Planinc, it was never clear if Velimirovic realized pieces were allowed to retreat. This was seemingly never a thought for a man who lived to sacrifice pieces and pawns.

Despite playing many brilliant games, no books have been dedicated to Velimirovic but now that gap has been filled thanks to his daughter, Ana Velimirovic-Zorica, and Grandmaster Georg Mohr. The two have written a fitting tribute, aided by a manuscript Velimirovic worked on but did not live long enough to complete.

This volume, the first of two, covers the “Yugoslav Tal” from the start of his career in the 1950s to 1975 when he was a well-established Grandmaster. It features not only carefully annotated games but lots of anecdotes and stories that allow one to get to know the subject better. What shines out is Velimirovic's love for chess, hard work ethic and tremendous imagination. These characteristics made him the ideal coach and second for Svetozar Gligoric. One might not think this was a match made in heaven as the player’s styles were not identical, but the relationship was highly beneficial for both individuals.

As a youngster, this reviewer remembers reading a story that it was Velimirovic's mother who invented the famous attack (1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bc4 e6 7.Be3 Be7 8.Qe2 followed by 0-0-0 and the advance of the g-pawn) and not her son. As one might suspect, this story was inaccurate, but it had more than a grain of truth to it. As Mohr explains, it was Dragoljub's mother, Jovanka, a top Yugoslav female player between the World Wars, who first tested it in correspondence games with the encouragement of her son. We should all have such a mother!
The Life and Games of Dragoljub Velimirovic is a book that belongs in every chess player’s library.

7. DragonMasters, Volume 1 by Andrew Burnett (hardback, 404 pages, $50)

Like the Velimirovic book, this work by the Scottish Fide Master is very much a labor of love, as he pays homage to a long list of heroes who played the Dragon. The present volume, the first of a projected two-part series, covers the period from 1850-1976 through 73 well annotated games which includes the forgotten game Fischer-Munoz Leipzig 1960, likely the last time Bobby lost to a FIDE untitled player and to the Dragon. Curiously, Fischer came out of the opening and early middlegame with a clear advantage but then lost his way. In this game, the Ecuadorian master put his queen on e5, a maneuver Bobby subsequently became fond of (Larsen-Fischer 1971 from game two of their Candidates Match is probably the best-known example). Other classic Dragon games in this volume put under the microscope include Rauzer-Botvinnik, Leningrad 1933 (...e5 and ...d5!) and Karpov-Korchnoi from their 1974 Candidates Final.

If you play the Dragon, or want to, this book will provide inspiration.

8. The Modernized Trojan Knight 1.Nc3 by Bruno Dieu (hardback, 470 pages, $50)

The opening move 1.Nc3, sometimes referred to as the Van Geet or Dunst after the Dutch master Dick Van Geet and the American Theodore Dunst who both played it regularly, can go two ways. It can be used as a transpositional tool that aims to steer into other openings like the Vienna (1.Nc3 e5 2.e4), the Sicilian (1.Nc3 c5 2.e4) or the Veresov, Barry, or Jobava if White answers 1...d5 with 2.e4. It can also be an independent opening and that is what the French Fide Master Bruno Dieu advocates for in this book.

The Modernized Trojan Knight 1.Nc3 often proposes to play 1.Nc3 combined with an early d4 or e4. For example, after 1.Nc3 e5 with 2.Nf3 Nc6 or 1.Nc3 c5 2.Nf3 d5 White plays 3.d4. While after 1.Nc3 d5 White answers 2.e4. The latter is arguably the most important variation in the book and is allocated over 200 pages.

While the author’s focus is on creating an independent opening, he is also flexible enough to point out when it is better to transpose into conventional lines. For example after 1.Nc3 d5 2.e4 e6 he comes down strongly on the side of playing 3.d4 with a transposition into the French. He does examine 3.g3 as one of the marginal lines he covers, but doesn’t have much faith in it.

1.Nc3 has not yet found a lot of love at the top level in classical chess but in blitz and rapid it has seen testing, particularly by the Azeri Grandmaster Shakhriyar Mamedyarov. One expects to see more of this opening move as elite players look for opportunities to set new problems for their opponents. The Modernized Trojan Knight 1.Nc3 breaks new ground and is currently the best guide to this unique opening.


The young Hungarian International Master and trainer has written an improvement book primarily aimed at players rated from 1800-2200. All phases of the game are covered from opening to endgame with plenty of exercises with detailed solutions.

10. Tournament Battle Plan: Outprepare Your Opponent by Danny Gormally (hardback, 349 pages, $50)
There are many authors out there but only one Danny Gormally. The former English Olympiad team member, with a peak rating of 2573 FIDE, examines topics not normally covered in chess books that some readers, especially younger ones, might not appreciate. That said, there is no denying he is an entertaining and instructive writer when it concerns matters on the chess board.

This latest book by Gormally is yet another good read which is full of instructive tips and insights that are presented in a colorful fashion. Adult players rated from 1800 on up will find Tournament Battle Plan: Outprepare Your Opponent helpful.


Many endgame books are too overwhelming for lower rated players both in the amount of material offered and its complexity. That is not the case with this book which provides a daily endgame position to solve for a year accompanied by a detailed solution. Players in the rating range 1400-2000 will find this work useful.


Those who like to play 1.d4, but don’t want to face the King’s Indian or Grunfeld, might want to consider the Barry Attack (1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Nc3). Played on and off by a number of top players including Levon Aronian, its true champion is the English Grandmaster (and KID defense devotee) Mark Hebden who has used it for over three decades with excellent results.

Here, the Ukrainian Grandmaster Vladimir Okhotnik provides a comprehensive and up to date survey of this line which ranges from the hyper aggressive to the overly positional. Those looking to take up 1.d4, but who want to limit the theory they have to master, will find this book helpful.
Adults do not like to play kids in chess. They would rather floss sharks teeth than lose to a young whippersnapper. Why? Because the idea of being outwitted by a person barely taller than a raccoon sticks in your gourd longer than government peanut butter does to your ribs. You study books like you are about to take the bar exam, only to have some young, fledgling upstart who's biggest worry in life is completing the next level of Halo come along and put more middle game combinations on you than Master Lock. You get steamed up like a pot of greens. You forget this is a child, and want more revenge than Montezuma.

But alas, it's not to be. Why? because you're old!! You forget where you placed your reading glasses. You searched high and low looking for them throughout your house. They're not on the night stand or in the breast pocket of your shirt. They didn't fall between the cushions of your couch. Just as you give up looking, you scratch your head in bewilderment and confusion, that's when you realize they've been on top of your head the whole time! And you think you're going to strategically beat a kid that has more time than a death row inmate to improve their game? The younger you start playing chess, the stronger you become. Bobby Fischer started at 6. Was a grandmaster by 15. Magnus was 13.

So take defeat in stride. Remember the next time you play a child in chess, whether you are winning or losing, don't take it personally. Remember one thing: Grow up.

Richard Hack

Tales From the Chess Café

There was once a guy who found chess to be something that brought true order into his life at an unbalanced time. When things were mixed up, and no clear move available, he wanted a retreat but couldn't stop playing altogether, there was never any good reason for that. In days of promise when the White Sox had Dick Allen at first base for almost three years, he would go to Jimmy's Woodlawn Tap on 55th St., and while sipping through a stein or two, play somebody (usually worse) two or three games if they had the spirit for it. Jimmy's was a haven when hard knocks were tapping, gently rapping on the chamber door—the chess kept Poe's raven away and kept his mind focused on what was possible, both the definite and the speculative. A departed spouse was already making room for others like and unlike her to occupy strong squares on the board of life.

He moved from the South Side to the North, from Jimmy's to the Oxford Pub on Lincoln Avenue and all kinds of coffee shops and taverns on the somewhat smaller North Side, where you could also look at life and play a good game. Then he drove way out west again to find even more chess and life in San Francisco, another cultural capital unlike no other, despite a similar unwillingness to do much about official corruption. People keep coming here every day, and their manifest dreams combine with and supplant the ones others have played out. A good deal of it continues to gather about the Mechanics’ Institute, a venerable center of knowledge and enterprise. Its Chess Social hour on April 5 again brought in two dozen animated aficionados.

Victor Korchnoi, My Best Games, Vol 2: Games with Black, opening comment on a game with Fischer from the 1962 Candidates Tournament, after 1. e4 d6: “In the years when I was beginning my chess
career, this opening was called ‘irregular.’ Later, names were conferred on it—in the USSR it was called the ‘Ufimtsev Defence,’ and in the West—the ‘Pirc Defence.’ I had occasion to meet both of these players at the board, and I can testify that they understood chess! But by virtue of originality of character, they preferred not the standard, well-tried paths, but their own, even if they were slightly dubious . . .” (Zurich: Edition Olms, 2001, p. 30.)

In life as in chess, performance ratings fluctuate with each official game. How does the ego respond? Maybe with jokes, gripes, and woodshedding. Players have the opportunity to study books in the library’s extensive chess collection and take in lectures, courses, and simul given by GMs Nick de Firmian, Alex Yermolinsky, Sam Shankland, and others; IM John Donaldson, a prolific author and scholar and former captain of the U.S. team; the irrepressible FM Paul Whitehead; and numerous guest speakers on their trips to Land’s End, which looks west to Oceania and East Asia.

The hops of a knight, or an open bishop streaking across the board; the advance of a pawn with a dagger in each hand, a simple exchange or sacrifice opening the castled king’s position. The sliding of a rook onto an open h-file, check, followed by the queen taking the lead down that file, as the team on offense begins to apply ultimate pressure. However it comes out, the loose pieces are collected again and rearranged in battle formation on some 40 chess tables.

Near the end of April we sadly bid adieu to Paul Whitehead, chess room coordinator, who began his association with Mechanics’ Institute 51 years ago, when he and his brother Jay were kids approaching expert, then master level. He has put his own stamp on the history of this cultural institution. We will miss his five-day-a-week presence, but look forward to future visits and news from the East Coast.
A New Puzzle in the Library

Every week or so Mechanics’ Institute's Head of Technical Services, Steven Dunlap, puts up a chess puzzle in the library for our members to solve.


1...Rg6! threatens 2...Rg1#, and 2.Rxg6 would drop the queen after 2....Qxe4. That leaves 2.Bg2, which loses to a pretty queen-sacrifice: 2...Qxh3+!! 3.Bxh3 Rg1#.

Seeking Scholastic Chess Coaches

Are you interested in joining the team at Mechanics’ Institute? The Institute is currently seeking Scholastic Chess Instructors for the upcoming school year. Qualified candidates should have a foundational knowledge of chess and should be familiar with or willing to learn chess instructional techniques. Candidates should also have a basic foundation in classroom management and conflict resolution strategies, particularly working with children. This is an in-person position and candidates must be able to commute to schools in San Francisco. If you’re interested follow the link below or reach out to our Chess Program Manager, Alex Robins, at arobins@milibrary.org.

Employment Opportunities | Mechanics' Institute (milibrary.org)
Tony’s Teasers

   White to play and mate in 2.

2. E. Hassberg, 1948
   White to play and mate in 2.
Tournaments, Classes, and Events

Mechanics’ Institute offers a wide range of chess tournaments, classes, and special events. Our offerings include a monthly Chess Social, free classes for women and Mechanics’ Institute members, an online Chess Café, chess camps for adults and children, and much more.

You can find a list of ongoing and upcoming tournaments here.

Offerings for adults and advanced players can be found here.
# Tournaments in May

Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Rounds</th>
<th>Time Control</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Non-Members</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd Ray Conway Memorial</strong></td>
<td>Saturday, May 4</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>G/40;d5</td>
<td>$40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summer Tuesday Night Marathon</strong></td>
<td>Tuesdays, May 7 - June 18</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>G/120;d5</td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<td><strong>18th Brandwein/Schutt/Whitehead Memorial Blitz</strong></td>
<td>Saturday, May 11</td>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>DSS /G/4+2</td>
<td>$15</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Scholastic Swiss</strong></td>
<td>Saturday, May 18</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>G30;d5</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$35</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Quads</strong></td>
<td>Saturday, May 18</td>
<td>3:00 pm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G30;d5</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$40</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Left to right: Steve Brandwein, Ray Schutt, and Jay Whitehead.

57 Post Street, San Francisco, CA 94104 | chessroom@milibrary.org | 415.393.0110
Information about scholastic events, camps, and programming can be found [here](#).

Play chess in the oldest club in the United States!
# Tournaments in June

Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tournament</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Non-Members</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summer Tuesday Night Marathon</strong></td>
<td>$70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesdays, May 7 - June 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>7 Rounds</td>
<td>G/120; d5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1st Mike Goodall Memorial</strong></td>
<td>$40</td>
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<td>Saturday, June 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4 rounds</td>
<td>G/40; d5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Scholastic Swiss</strong></td>
<td>$30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 15</td>
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<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4 Rounds</td>
<td>G30; d5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Quads</strong></td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00 pm</td>
<td>3 Rounds</td>
<td>G30; d5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>58th Arthur Stamer Memorial</strong></td>
<td>$70</td>
<td>$100</td>
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<td>Saturday &amp; Sunday, June 22 &amp; 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4 Rounds</td>
<td>G/90+30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2024 Summer Celebration Blitz</strong></td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 25</td>
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<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>5 Rounds</td>
<td>DSS</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>23rd Henry Gross Memorial</strong></td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>$50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4 rounds</td>
<td>G/40; d5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Arthur Stamer (left) was the Mechanics’ Institute Chess Room Director from 1951 to 1964.

Henry Gross (center) was California State Champion in 1952.

Charles Bagby (right) sat on the Board of Trustees of the Mechanics’ Institute.
In-Person Opening Intensive with GM Jacek Stopa:
Catalan Opening

Come and join GM Jacek Stopa for his new set of one day intensive classes on openings! For the second session, this course will explore some of the most modern lines of the very popular Catalan Opening from White's perspective. The Catalan is a rich and complex opening with a reputation for deep strategic play.

Due to the extensive nature of the opening, the focus of this session will be on the most interesting lines. The variations to be covered are useful for a player who wants to avoid the very main lines. They offer a comfortable opening edge for White, and many yield a straightforward advantage in endgames.

Strategic principles will be discussed, real game examples from both the more classical time periods as well as cutting-edge theory will be shown. This opening is a popular choice among some of the highest-rated players in the world and is therefore a good choice for club/tournament players. Time for analysis and discussion will be provided.

The course is targeted at players USCF 1600+, but all are welcome. Please note this class is geared towards experienced club players.

Saturday, May 18th
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Members: $150
Non-Members: $200
Register via the QR Code!
Or visit
milibrary.org/chess/online
Free Women's Online Chess Class by FIDE Trainer Sophie Adams

Coached by FIDE Trainer Sophie Adams, this class is for women and girls looking to develop their chess skills with a community of women. Knowledge of piece movements and mates is expected, but not required. Registration is needed so we may send the links for players to join.

Questions?
chessroom@milibrary.org / (415) 393-0110

Every Sunday
on Zoom
from
10 am to 12 pm

Register at
milibrary.org/chess
Join the Chess Room for Chess Socials!

5:00-6:00 pm
First Fridays of the month:

April 5
May 3
June 7
July 5
August 2
September 6
October 4
November 1
December 6

Unwind from the week with fellow chess players. We’ll have rousing game replays on the big screen, snacks, and lively conversation. Stick around for CinemaLit at 6:00 pm. All ages and community welcome.

Questions? Contact chessroom@milibrary.org
Solutions

Tony's Teasers:

1. E. Hassberg, 1945. 1.Rc7! Intending 2.Rxa7#. Black is pinned all over the place. If 1...a6 2.Qb4#. Or 1...Ka6 2.Rxa4#.

2. E. Hassberg, 1948. 1.Qf2! Threatens 2.Qb2#. 1...Rd2 2.Ba5#.

Contact Us

Mechanics’ Institute Chess Club is on the 4th floor at 57 Post Street, San Francisco, CA.
Our phone number is (415) 393-0110.

We welcome any feedback, articles, or "Letter to the Editor" piece. Submit yours today at chessroom@milibrary.org

With more than 3,000 books and periodicals, Mechanics’ Institute boasts one of the largest chess book collections in the U.S.

You can now access our newsletter directly from the chess home page! https://www.milibrary.org/chess