Chess Room Newsletter

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Recent Tournaments at the Mechanics’ Institute
FA, SrTD Scott Mason

On April 20, Mechanics’ Institute hosted our monthly duo of Scholastic Swiss in the morning and Quads in the afternoon.

The April monthly Scholastic Swiss had 28 players competing in two sections. This recurring event gives scholastic players a chance to compete in a fun and friendly environment while earning a rating and getting accustomed to tournament conditions.

In the 600+ section five players tied for 1st-5th with 3 points out of the 4 rounds. Taking the 1st place trophy on tiebreaks was Neha Sharan (1338). In 2nd to 5th place were Miles Krepelka (803), Dylan Wan (822), Bailey Shapiro (880), and Bryn Killingsworth (623).

The u600 section was won with a perfect score by Sicheng Ao (479) going 4-0. Tied for 2nd and 3rd places with 3 points each were Liam Creasey (unr.) and Oscar Von Brockdorff (unr.). Topping a 2-way tie for 4th and 5th place on tie-breaks was Nicholas Sun (593) and Adrian Levy (583) with 2.5 points.

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

We had another great turnout for the Quads! A total of 65 players competed in 16 sections. The top Quad had two players tie for 1st place with 2 points. They are Daniel Cremisi (2391) and Rohan Das (2098).

Complete results for the April Quads can be found here.

Both the April Quads and the April Scholastic Swiss were directed by Local TD Arthur Liou with volunteer TD Neha Sharan.

An amazingly strong field of players participated in the 2024 Spring Splash Blitz held on Tuesday evening, April 23. GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez (2630) took clear 1st place with 9.5/10 points just edging out GM Christopher Yoo by a half point. With 9/10 points, GM Christopher Woojin Yoo (2660) took clear 2nd with 9/10 points. Three players tied for 3rd place with 8.5/10 points. They are IM Josiah Stearman (2510), NM Daniel Cremisi (2389), and FM Arun Dixit (2225).
There was a tie for best u1800 with **Hayes Marvin** (1752) and **Joshua Lamstein** (1733) each scoring 6/10. Clear winner of the u1300 prize was **Phineas Horowitz** (1209) with 5/10 points.

Complete results for the 2024 Spring Splash Blitz can be found [here](#).

The 2024 Spring Splash Blitz was directed by International Arbiter **Judit Sztaray** and FIDE Arbiter **Scott Mason**. Judit also ran the DGT Boards during the event allowing the top six boards to be broadcast on [Chess.com](#).

GM Christopher Yoo (front right) battles Max Hao (front left) on Board 1 while GM Fidel Corrales (rear left) plays Mika Elias Laitinen (rear right) on Board 2 in Round 2 of the 2024 Spring Splash Blitz.

The **23rd William Addison Memorial Tournament** was held over the weekend of April 27-28, 2024. This four round FIDE-rated Swiss with a time control of G/90+30 had a turnout of 67 players competing in three sections.
**Daniel Cremisi** (2389) scored a perfect 4-0 to take clear 1st in the 2000+ section. Trailing a full point behind at 3 points each in a four-way split of 2nd, 3rd, and best u2200 were **Theodore Biyiasas** (2142), **Abhishek Mallela** (2168), **Neil S. Bhaduri** (2096), and **Max Hao** (2079).

**Caleb Martinez Cespedes** (1830) and **Adam Mercado** (1781) each scored 3.5 points to share 1st and 2nd in the 1600-1999 section. Tied for 3rd place and best u1800 with 3 points were **Ansh Shrivastava** (1703), **Sean X Zhang** (1701), and **Rehaan Malhorta** (1662). **Ethan Ma** (1455) won the best u1600 prize with 3 points.

With a perfect score of 4/4 the u1600 section saw **Angela Zixi Wang** (1293) win clear 1st place. Four players tied for 2nd place, 3rd place, Best u1400, and Best u1200 with a score of 3 points. They were **Dev Sangal Lopez** (1259), **Pedraam Nikzad** (unr.), **Binh Khac Nguyen** (1206), and **Fadi Arodaki** (1101).

Complete results for the 23rd William Addison Memorial can be found [here](#).

The top six boards were broadcast on [Chess.com](#).
The 23rd William Addison Memorial Tournament was directed by FIDE Arbiter Scott Mason.

On May 4, Mechanics’ Institute hosted the 2nd Ray Conway Memorial tournament. It was a full house with 81 players competing in four sections.

The 2000+ section was won by Jiangwei Yu (2267) with an undefeated 3.5 points from 4 games. Sharing 2nd and 3rd place were Ethan Guo (2239) and Kanwar Sethi (2015), each posting up a 3 point score.

Mathew Ma (1707) took clear first in the 1600-1999 section scoring a perfect 4 points. There was a 2-way split for 2nd and 3rd, with Tapas Natraj (1785) and Ansh Shrivastava (1703) scoring 3.5 points each.

Shane Cueva (1532) scored a perfect 4-0 to take 1st place in the 1200-1599 section. In clear 2nd scoring 3.5 points was Derek Lin (1187). Three players ended in a 3-way tie for 3rd place between Steven Whitney (1357), Vedant Verma (1336), and Nicholas Delateur (1325).

The top prize in the under 1200 section went to Aaron Rumph (unr.) who scored 3.5 points remaining undefeated during the event. Three players tied for 2nd and 3rd place. These prizes were split between Pedraam Nikzad (unr.), Jean-Marc Ruffalo-Burgat (unr.), and Justin Rezende (unr.) who all scored 3 points.

Complete results for the 2nd Ray Conway Memorial can be found here.

The 2nd Ray Conway Memorial was directed by Local TD Arthur Liou.

Annotated Games from the TNM  
IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated games from round one of the 2024 Summer 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.
Here we go, Round 1 of the Summer Tuesday Night Marathon! Well, at least it ends close to Summer (June 18). Then again, with Ozone depletion and carbon emissions, Summer came early this year! Anyway, the first round often has the most unbalanced pairups, but with sections it's not so drastic. On Board 1 though, it did seem that top-rated Archit Dasika out-classed Sivavishnu Srinivasan in an epic, one might say too-epic battle. In his typical style, Dasika played Pressure Chess, and indeed the boy slipped up positionally, letting his pawns be damaged -- although it was ultimately his c-pawn that cost him. There was a chance, though, when Sivavishnu missed a fine shot that would have brought the balance back to the fore; after that was missed, it was the Long Over.

1.e4 10:34  c6 24  2.Nc3 5  d5 19  3.Nf3 5  Bg4 29  4.h3 7  Bxf3 43  5.Qxf3 8  e6 32  6.g3 13  Nf6 45  7.Bg2 14  Bc5 54


13.Rd1N 1:26


13...a4 5:19  14.Be3 52  Qc7 7:52  15.Rd2 2:03  Qb6 4:30  16.Bxc5 7:30  Nxc5 13

(Diagram)
This reminds me of the first game in Michael Stean's excellent "Simple Chess" (by the way, chess isn't): Botvinnik-Szilagyi, Amsterdam 1966. Extremely instructive how he makes something out of nothing. 17.Rb1 1:26 Ne6 3:44


b5? 1:21 Ooops.  
[ 23...Nc5= ]  
[ 23...h5= ]

24.Na2? 7:49  
[ 24.Nd5+! cures a lot of problems! Black's advantage is now merely in the ð range, i.e. symbolic. cxd5 25.exd5 Rc8 26.dxe6 Kxe6 27.Kd1 ]


Rb6?! 2:07
31.c3? 5:12
[31.Nc1! Nd6 (31...Kf6!? 32.h4 g5 33.h5 a3!?) 32.Nd3! a3!? (32...Nxd3 33.Kxd3 similar)
  A) 33.Nxc5 Rxb2 34.Ra1 (34.Rc1 a2 35Nb3 Rb1) 34...Rxc2+
  B) 33.b3 Nxd3 34.Kxd3 Ra6 35.Ra1]
31...Nd6 3:38 32Nb4 9 Nc4 7:29
[35...Nba5+]
36.Ra1 50 c5 24 37.Nd5 22 Rxb2 4:03
38.Rxa4 15 Nd6 1:09 39.Ra8+ 2:12
Kd7 10 40.Ra7+ 3 Kd8 11:11 41.Ra8+ 1:37 Nc8 10 42.Ke2 5:07 Nxe4+ 1:49
43.Kf3 6 Ned6 1:18 44.Kg3 2:42 e4 34
[44...g5!? not the easiest move to believe in.]
45.Ra5 2:25 c4 1:03

46.Rc5?! 1:45 The rook was well placed, stopping ...Nb6-a4.
[46.Bf1! Rd2 (46...Nb6 47.Ra6!?) 47.Nb4]
46...Rd2! 59 47.Nb4 3:45 Kd7?! 1:23
[Black should get right to the point: 47...Nb6! and I get to play with circles and arrows (for those who can't see them: "intending ...Na4xc3, and queen the c-pawn")]}

48.Bf1 1:17
[48.h4!?]
48...Nb6! 1:04

49.Nc6? 2:47
[49.Ra5! when Stockfish can't decide if it's best to play Rd3!? (There are also 49...Rd1; and 49...g5) 50.Bxd3 cxd3 51.Ra7+ Ke6 52.Kf2 Ndc4+]
49...Rc2 3:39
[49...Rd3! when taking is a subtle suicide, and in fact Stockfish 16.1 puts it 10th or so (!) on its list of losing moves. 50.Kf2 comes out "best" but after Na4! (50...Rxc3 51.Ne5+ Ke6 52.Nc6 Rc1 works but for some reason not as well) 51.Ra5 Nxc3 and again, taking the rook, either way (Ne5+xd3) gives Black that monster.]

50.Ne5+?! 59
[50.Nb8+ Ke7 51.Nc6+ Ke8 and the c-pawn goes anyway, with a likely win.]
50...Ke6 1:02 51.Nc6 3:58 Rxc3 29 "and Black won." Young Sivavishnu is definitely not a "play till mate" youngster, but he definitely wastes a scoresheet on
Newly minted National Master Alex Shrauger is finding out: it's not so easy to *keep* the rating up there. Here he is nicely undone by Women's FIDE Master Olivia Smith of Wales (!) -- what brings her to the Bay Area I don't know yet, but she's played a few tournaments here over the last year. The finish to this game is just splendid (unless you're Alex!), and worth seeing how it came out of nowhere. 1.e4 7 e5 2.Nf3 8 Nf6 6 dxc3 4 Nxe4 10 h3 2:45
3.Nc5 18 Nxc3 7 6.dxc3 7 Be7 12 7.Be3 22 Nd7 58 8.Qd2 3:09 Ne4+ 111.Rb3 2 Ra5+ 2 112.Kf6 2 Qg5+ 0-1

Around here even the DGT board loses its way -- giving 83.Ra6(!). The players had bare seconds (plus the delay, for what that's worth), so we can just say Sivavishnu "didn't have time to resign." I'm guessing on how the game proceeded for the next couple moves, but then it's back on track. 83.Ra5+ Kd6 84.Ra6+ Ke7 85.Ra7+ Kf8 86.Ra8+ Kf7 87.Ra7+ 2 Re7 88.Ra3 Ne5+ 1 89.Kg3 Kg6 2 90.Ra6 1 Rc7 3 91.Ra3 3 Rc4 2 92.Ra8 2 Rxg4+ 1 93.Kh3 1 94.Rg8+ 1 Kf5 1 95.Ra8 g4+ 1 96.Kh2 Rf3 1 97.Ra2 3 g3+ 6 98.Kh3

Kg5 99.Ra5 2 Kf4 14 100.Ra4+ 2 Ke3 1 101.Ra3+ 1 Nd3 102.Ra8 2 f5 103.Re8+ Kf2 1 104.Ra8 2 f4 3 105.Ra2+ 1 Ke3 1 106.Ra3 4 Rf2 1 107.Kg4 4 g2 2 108.Ra1 Rf1 1 109.Ra3 g1Q+ 4 110.Kf5 Ra1 4 111.Rb3 2 Ra5+ 2 112.Kf6 2 Qg5+ 0-1

Suarez,Sebastian 2209
Smith,Olivia 2013
2024 Summer TNM: 2000+ (1.2) 07.05.24

10...c5 1:48 11.g4 13:48 Be6 3:18
12.Kb1 1:02 Qa5 1:51 13.c4 9:59

[Predecessor: 13...Qb6 14.Bd3 d5
15.cxd5 Nxd5 16.Ne5 Bf6 17.Nc4
Qa6 18.Na3 Qa4 19.Bb5 Qb4
Bxd7 23.Rxd5 Bc6 24.Rhd1 Bxd5
Bf6 28.Rxd8 Rxd8 29.Kc1 g6
Bd4 33.b3 a5 34.Bg5 Re8 35.Nd6

Qa6N 5:14

19...d4! 9:48

[ 19.h5! d4! 20.h6!
A) 20...dxe3?? 21.Qc3 f6
( 21...gxh6 22.gxh6 f6 23.Qxe3
is, so I'm informed by Stockfish 16.
1, winning for White. );
B) 20...g6!? 21.Nxd4! cxd4
22.Qxd4 f6 23.Bg4 Bxg4 24.Qxg4
fxg5 25.Qe6+ Rf7 26.c4= 
White has pawns! Lots of pawns!;
C) 20...Rfd8! 21.g6!? ( 21.Bf4 g6=
/= White's attack is shut down,
although there is still the pawn up
business. ) 21...fxg6! 22.Bg5 Nd5!
23.Rde1 Nc3+ 24.Kb2= ]
11.e4! 9:50
clearly favors Black ("a piece is" to imagine Giri in Clockwork Orange).
But the game continuation is swiftly destroyed: ]
20...c4! 1:05 I don't know how early she saw how strong this is, but it's an "only move" and a winner. 21.Qb2 2:22
cxb3 2:12 22.axb3 50 Bf5+ 1:21
23.Ka1 1:14 a6! 3:18 24.bxa6 15
Rxax6+ 22 25.Bxa6 21 Ra8 56
[25...Ra8 26.Qe2 Rxax6+ 27.Kb2 Ba3+ is actually mate in a few. ]

(Diagram)

0-1

Jones, James E 2000
Winslow, Elliott 2178
2024 Summer TNM: 2000+ (1.3) 07.05.24
[Winslow, Elliott]

Yet another fishy win by Winslow! (oh, that's me...)
1.e4 3 c5 7 2.c3 7 Nf6 4 3.e5 14 Nd5 5 4.d4 9 cxd4 7 5.cxd4
8:07 e6 31
[For years I've been a big fan of 7...dxe5!? when the three central captures are the lines.

A) 8.Bxd5 Qxd5 9.Nc3 Qd6!
10.d5 Nd4! 11.Nxd4 exd4
12.Qxd4 e5! can be blinding to a player of White if they have no idea what's going on: Black is thinking ...f5 and ...Kf7 (!);

B) 8.Nxe5;

C) 8.dxe5 Ndb4?! (8...Be6 9.0-0 Nc7 isn't so bad) 9.Qb3 e6 10.0-0 Na5! doesn't lose and even turns out okay. I saw this in an "SOS" opening book years ago. :-);
**D)** 8.Nxe5 was also covered (and might be best), when Black just plays e6 9.Nxc6 bxc6 10.0-0 Bd6 (or 10...Be7);

**E)** 8.--

8.0-0 22 Be7 10 The preferred way to play Black in Kotronias's "Grandmaster Repertoire 6A: Beating the Anti-Sicilians. " Yes, it's that esoteric! But that's what it's come to these days. **9.Re1** 50 There are a *lot* of moves here for White!

[ 9.Qe2 is the main line, when White still can play the rook to d1 -- or, for that matter any of the other plans. ]

[Those plans are such as 9.exd6 ]

[ 9.a3 (intending an unharassed Bd3) ]

[ 9.Nc3 bringing about some unique pawn structures, ]

[and 9.Bd2 , presumably to be able to recapture on c3 with the bishop (not that that's any hot piece there). ]

9...0-0 1:00 **10.a3** 4:10


10...dxe5 4:43

[ 10...Bd7 ]

[ 10...a6!? ]

[ 10...b6 is clearly the favored move. ]


16.Nbd4 Nxd4 17.Nxd4 ( 17.Qxd4 Bxf3= ) 17...Qd7 18.Be3 Rc4 as often in these Alapin lines, two bishops are adequate compensation for the pawn.;


11.dxe5 12 Nb6? 1:51 As often in theoretical openings, if I haven't gone over the material a dozen times, I don't remember anything. (Of course the position is right in front of me...)

[ 11...b6 12.Bd3 Bb7 13.Qa4 could be problems associated with Qg4, but objectively Black is okay. ]

12.Bd3+ 2:49

![Chess Board](image-url)
little too brilliant.


[ 12...Kh8!? ]

13.Qc2 1:23 g6 1:35

[ 13...h6 ]

14.Nc3 45 Nd5? 3:30


15.Nxd5 3:13 Stockfish has a number of moves as winning:

[ 15.h4 ]
[ 15.Bh6 ]
[ 15.Be4 ]
[ 15.Ne4 ]

15...exd5 3:25 16.Bh6 1:01 And this.

16...Rd8 1:06

17.e6! 3:44 Best of many 17...fxe6 5:14

20...Rxf3?? 4:11 /!? (I have to give myself at least one exclamation point among all the question marks!) Actually I blame John Donaldson. He did the pregame lecture, and showed some game by Axel Smith where Smith sacrificed a rook for a bishop seemingly unnecessarily. And won nicely! I was "influenced."

[ 20...Qg7! is actually just fine! Look at this line: 21.Qe2 e5! 22.Nxe5 Bh3! 23.g3 Rae8 24.f4 Rxe5! 25.fxe5 Nd4 26.Qd1 Nf3+ 27.Kh1 Nxe1 28.Qxe1 Rf3= Just like that. ]

21.gxf3+- 1:18 This reminds me of the
Tarrasch French with 3...Nf6, where Black also sacrifices the exchange on f3. Very similar. Shaw (my main repertoire man) gives some convincing analysis showing how to crush the sac -- but it's hard to remember, and indeed when Doug Root surprised me and played into it, I quickly fumbled and lost (Senior Tournament of Champions, Cherry Hill NJ 2021).

21...Nd4 28

[21...Qf7 ]

22.Qd1 59

[22.Qc5! Nxf3+?! 23.Kh1 Nxe1 24.Rxe1+ Black is really dead here! I hardly even considered it (or any) alternative to the move played (which is still good). ]

22...e5 2:57

This is a classic: "Resigning in a won position." I'll give the whole game, but really it's the final position that matters. Neither player thought there was anything going on, that White had played a nice combination. When Dominic sent me the game he alerted me that something was going on without being specific, and I confess I didn't notice either! 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.h4 h6 5.g4 Bd7 6.c3


(Diagram)
6...f6N
[Predecessor: 6...e6 7.h5 c5 8.f4
11.Na3 Qb6 12.dxc5 Bxc5 13.b4
Be3 14.Qd3 Bxc1 15.Rxc1 a6 16.f5
Ne7 17.Rh2 exf5 18.gxf5 f6 19.Rg2
22.Rcg1 Rf2+ 23.Kc1 Rxf2 24.Rxf2
Qf6 25.Ng6 Nbc6 26.Nc2 Rd8
Kh8 30.Qg3 Nc6 31.Nf5 d4 32.cxd4
Nxd4 33.Qxg7+ Qxg7 34.Nxg7 Rg8
35.Rd2 Nf3 36.Rf2 0-1 Kotronias,V
(2626)-David,A (2560) EU-chT (Men)
14th Plovdiv 2003 (8.1) ]
7.Bd3 Be6 8.Qe2 fxe5 9.Qxe5 Bf7
10.Bf4 Nd7 11.Qe3 Ndf6 12.f3 e6
16Nb3 0-0-0 17.Nc5 Nd7 18.Nxd7
Qxd7 19.Nf4 Ne7 20.Qe2 h5 21.g5
Nf5 22.Ng2 Rg8 23.Ne3 g6 24.Nxf5
exf5 25.f4 Bd6 26.0-0-0 Rge8 27.Qc2
b5 28.Rhe1 a5 29.Kb1 Qa7 30.Re2
a4 31.Rde1 Kd7 32.Bxf5+ gxf5
33.Qxf5+ Be6 34.Qh7+ Re7

35.Qxh5?= [ 35.Bg7!! Kc8! 36.Rxe6 Rg7
37.Qd3± and White's pawns are worth
more than a bishop! ]
35...Bf5+ 36.Ka1 Rh7! 37.Qf3 Rxh4
38.Qf2?! [ 38.Bf6= ]
[ 38.g6= ]
[ 38.Bxd6 Kxd6± ]
38...Rh7?!
[ 38...Rh3! ]
39.Rg1?
[ 39.Bxd6 Kxd6 40.g6 Bxg6
41.Re6+± ]
39...Rg8+ (Diagram)
The game now wobbles between drawn and winning for Black, at least half a dozen times, until the final "ultimate error...

40. Ree1 a3 41. b3 Rg6
42. Rh1 Rf7 43. Rh2 Bxe5 44. Rxe5 Re6 45. Rxe6 Kxe6 46. Rh6+ Kd7
47. g6 Rg7 48. Qg3 Ke6 49. Qe3+ Be4 50. Qh3+ Kf6 51. Qh4+ Ke6 52. Qg5
Qe7 53. Qe5+ Kd7 54. f5 Qf7 55. Qxg7?

[ 55. Qb8!= with a perpetual. ]
[ 55. Qxg7 The players might not have realized that *Black* is winning now! Qxg7 56. Rh7 and now the move they both missed at the board: Qe7!+- and Black stops the pawns! Note 57. f6 Qxh7 58. gxh7 Bxh7 ]

I will note that if there is anyone who would take this with a good nature, it's Mike. I don't even know if he's seen it yet!

1-0
Richard Shorman Memorial Brilliance Prize Winning Games
Notes by IM John Donaldson (unless otherwise indicated)

We were excited to have seven submissions for the Shorman Brilliance Award, made possible by the generous support of Kenn Fong. The winning prize was shared by Sivavishnu Srinivasan and Hayden Karkainen for each of their round 4 games. Additional submissions were received from Vedant Verma, Sarvagnya Brahmanapally, Rehaan Malhotra, Charles James, and Veera Nanugonda. We applaud all players for their brilliance! - Alyssa Stone

Sicilian Richter Rauzer B67
Sivavishnu Srinivasan (2029) - Jacob Chiang (2270)
1st Richard Sherman Memorial San Francisco (4) 2024

I think this game should win because it shows how even a 2270 rated player can be in deep trouble when they forget the theory in an attacking line like the Richter-Rauzer. Black plays 9...Nxd4 when normally he plays this move earlier.

His position further deteriorates after 10...Be7, which is too passive. I punish it with 11.e5! breaking open the center before he can castle. He then falls into a trap after 14.Ne4 as Black's king can't escape with 14...0–0 (which he played) because of 15.c4! winning a piece in any variation or even more.

After this, things went downhill for me. On the 18th move, I meant to take on a4 and then play Qb2, but instead accidentally played Qb2 first, losing most of my advantage. Even after that, I should have played 21.Nd6!, then captured on f1, which would have at least given me a rook for a piece and a pawn. Then I tried to get an advantage with g4–g5.

This failed really badly as he got one rook to d2 and another to f2, pinning my knight. I thought I was going to lose my knight and lost all hope, but 28.Nd3!! would have saved it - I am still losing, but still have some chances. After that he converted his advantage to a win quite easily.

Sivavishnu Srinivasan

9...Be7 10.Nf3 b5 11.Bxf6 gxf6 is a well-tested line that offers equal chances.

10.Qxd4 Be7?

10...Qc7 had to be played.


White has played wonderfully to this point and reached a winning position.

14...0–0 15.c4 Rfc8 16.Kb1 Ba4 17.b3 Qa3 18.Qb2 Qxb2+ 19.Kxb2 Ne3 20.Rd3 Nxf1

21.bxa4?


21...Rxc4 22.Nf2

22.Nd6 Rf4 rescues the knight.

22...Nxe2 23.Rxh2 Rxa4 24.Rdh3 h6 25.g4 Rd8 26.g5?

26...Rd2+ 27.Kb1 Rf4 28.gxh6?


28...Rxf2 29.h7+ Kh8 30.Rh1 Rb2+ 31.Kc1 Rxa2 32.Kb1 Rfb2+ 33.Kc1 Rb5 34.Rh4 Ra1+ 0–1

Benko Gambit E60
Arvin Agrawal (1888) - Hayden Karkainen (2051)
1st Richard Shorman Memorial (4) 2024

I'm submitting this game because I think it was interesting tactical battle which started with the opening. It switched from an intended Grunfeld to a Benko Gambit like position because of White's early h4.

The concept of seeing the idea of ...Qxb5 after 10...axb5 showed some nice calculation. My ...Qxb5 was both a queen sacrifice and an exchange sac with the important move 15...Qd3.

Hayden Karkainen

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.h4 c5 4.d5 b5 5.cxb5 a6 6.e3 d6 7.a4 Bg7 8.Nc3 0–0 9.Nf3 e6 10.Bc4


14.Qd2 Nc6 15.0–0 was correct with equal chances.

14...Qxb5!! 15.Qxa8

15.axb5 Rxa1+ 16.Ke2 Rhx1 17.Qxd6 Bg4 and Black has way too much material for the queen.

15...Qd3 16.Ng1

16.Qxb8 Ba6 17.Qxf8+ Kxf8 18.0–0–0 Qb3 wins.

16...Bxb2 17.Rc1 Ba6 18.Kd1 Bxc1 19.Kxc1 Qa3+ 20.Kd1 Qxa4+

20...Qb3+ 21.Kc1 Bd3 was an alternative I saw after taking on a4. It wins faster, but taking the queen is equally game over - Karkainen.

Richard Shorman (1938-2023) was a legend as a stalwart member of the San Francisco Bay Area chess community. He was known for his tactical and aggressive approach to chess, which he developed and taught to thousands of past and current students. His impact went beyond chess lessons, as he also imparted valuable life lessons to his students. Richard's contributions to the chess community earned him numerous friends and admirers both within and outside the chess world.

Richard was an inspiring member of the Mechanics' Institute chess community and a prolific chronicler of chess events across the Bay Area and major contributor of photographs to most of the Northern California chess magazines.
Celebrating Judy Viertel
Finalist for the Andy Lerner Award for Excellence in Chess Education
Alex Robins

Our Chess Team would like to give a warm congratulations to Judy Viertel, Teacher/Librarian and Chess Coordinator at Marshall Elementary, for being a finalist for the Andy Lerner Award for Excellence in Chess Education. This annual award is given by Chess in the Schools, a nonprofit in New York that does fantastic work, you can find out more about them here. Mr. Lerner, the award’s namesake, seems like a swell guy, and established the award in the “hope that this award will highlight the invaluable work that chess educators are doing in underserved communities across the US.” I can assure Mr. Lerner that awarding Judy Viertel as a finalist fits his vision perfectly.

I nominated Judy for this award in the previous cycle as the work she does with her students at Marshall Elementary is phenomenal and she really works to spread the joy of chess to students who may otherwise not have this opportunity. I’m glad to see that her work is being officially recognized and am proud to be associated with her!

In addition to being flown out and put up in New York City, Judy was also awarded $2000 to split with an institution of her choice, which she has generously donated to our Scholastic Chess Program. Judy shared the honor of being a finalist for the award with former Chess Room Director Abel Talamantez, the Lerner Award committee clearly knows how to pick them!

Another big congratulations to Judy Viertel, we hope this is the first of many awards for her work proselytizing for the Royal Game!

Judy Viertel receiving her Lerner award and with NM Bruce Pandofini
I Play Chess. Chess Doesn’t Play Me.

Zorba Hughes

I play chess. Chess doesn’t play me. I am meticulous when it comes to chess. I make people with OCD look like Oscar the Grouch. Why? Because I’m addicted to the game. Read bios on grandmasters like I’m producing a Ken Burns documentary. Study chess games like I’m taking the S.A.T. openings for white/black. Anything I can use to check my opponent like a ballot box.

Having said that, I make sure to take time out for life. Smell the roses. Enjoy the little moments. Although I walk around with a chess set in a chess bag slung over my shoulder like a mercenary prepared for battle, I realize there are more important things in life than chess (heaven forbid), like relationships.

I once played a Filipino guy in the park. His wife called him during our game. She was snapping like a turtle. I didn't understand the language, but I do know an angry woman when I hear it. Didn't bother him in the least. He hung up on her mid-sentence. Fellas: don't ever do that!! Come home and find out you've been replaced like double AA batteries by a guy named Armando Dela Vega.

I know you have passion for the game. Others may not get that. But keep your priorities in check (pun intended). Some people will think you're wasting time playing chess. Doing something irrelevant...like voting. Not everyone will get the sweet science of attacking a king/queen and rook with knight knowing the king must move and the queen shall be relieved of her duties like a soldier standing post. Or a smothered mate, fork, pin, the bishops from a distance keeping the king from escaping.

Only people who play enjoy things of that nature. Nonetheless, take a break. I knew I had to stop playing for awhile when I couldn't look at a checkerboard floor without thinking e4/d4 or the kings Indian opening for black. Some of my friends stopped talking to me because of my love for the game. When something overwhelms your very being, you may want to reevaluate that. Step back from it. Check yourself (again, pun intended). I'm not saying quit playing. That's never an option nor should it be. But remember: you play chess, chess doesn't play you.
Bobby Fischer is on the short list of contenders vying for the title of the greatest chess player who ever lived, with Magnus Carlsen and Garry Kasparov his principal competitors. One can argue who should be the king, but there is one area where Bobby dominates his rivals – the number of books written about him.

Judging by the list compiled by Edward Winter at his website it’s not close. Well over 100 books have been written on the 11th World Champion and the number continues to grow although Fischer’s career effectively ended over 50 years ago. The latest book on Bobby, The Unknown Fischer (Everyman Chess, 2024, 384 pages, paperback, figurine algebraic, $29.95), is International Master Cyrus Lakdawala’s second book on the American World Champion, following his 2015 work Fischer: Move by Move.

Fischer wrote two books on his games. The first, Bobby Fischer’s Games of Chess, is a slim volume that was published early in his career and the only annotated games are from the 1957/58 U.S. Championship and his win over Donald Byrne in the so-called Game of the Century played in the 1956 Rosenwald Trophy tournament. That book was published in 1959 and ten years later Bobby produced his magnum opus, My 60 Memorable Games, which brought his career up to the end of 1967. Sadly, Fischer never wrote about the period in the early 1970s when he climbed the mountain and became World Champion.

Books on Fischer’s games tend to be of two types. The first are giant tomes that aim to present all his games. Among the titles in this category are The Games of Robert J. Fischer by Wade and O’Connell and Bobby Fischer: Complete Games of the World Chess Champion by Lou Hays. These books did the heavy lifting of assembling all known Fischer games. A three volume languageless work edited by a team of Russian Grandmasters published in 1992 and Bobby Fischer: The Career and Complete Games of the American World Chess Champion by Karsten Mueller provide not only Fischer's games, but many with annotations.

The second type of book, not as encyclopedic in scope, examines Fischer games not covered in My 60 Memorable Games. This approach got a boost with Andy Soltis’ Bobby Fischer Rediscovered. It is in this group that Lakdawala’s two books on Bobby belong.

Fischer’s active playing career was primarily between 1955 and 1972 during which time he played roughly 800 tournament games. This modest number by today’s standards
can be attributed to many fewer events being held in the 1950s to 1970s and Bobby taking a break from competition several times during his career.

These points are mentioned because the number of games Lakdawala had to choose from for his latest book is smaller than one might initially suspect. The introduction to *The Unknown Fischer* (not to be confused with this reviewer and Eric Tangborn’s 1999 work *The Unknown Bobby Fischer*) mentions the author’s aim is to find fresh examples, not selecting from the same 150 games, classics from the Fischer canon, that tend to appear again and again.

The good news for Lakdawala was that Fischer made few short draws in his career, the bad news was that until the summer of 1956 he was not a rated master. Generally speaking, until Fischer won his first U.S. Championship a year and a half later, Bobby was not yet Bobby and his play was understandably inconsistent.

Taking this into account an alternate title for this book could potentially have been the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly, with an emphasis on the latter two. Fortunately, that is not the case. Lakdawala has done an excellent job of selecting 81 interesting games and game fragments, most of which will be new for all but the most ardent Fischer fan.

All of the games are carefully annotated in the author’s engaging style which combines first rate instruction with humor. While there are no new Fischer games (they are lesser known, not unknown), Lakdawala in some cases has fresh information to offer about Bobby’s opponents. This is particularly true about those he faced in his 1964 exhibition in Montreal, the city where the author started his chess career.

Fischer has been called the first professional chess player by no less than Garry Kasparov and his approach to the game is still felt today. One example was his aversion to draws, even when playing Black. Fischer played until there were only kings left, plugging away in equal endgames that his contemporaries dismissed as drawn. If one wants to see a direct similarity between Bobby and Magnus check out Szabo-Fischer, Buenos Aires 1970 (game 26), where Fischer wins two rooks and a knight versus two rooks and a bishop with 4 pawns apiece on the kingside. Another example of their being kindred spirits is Yanofsky-Fischer, Stockholm (Interzonal) 1962 (game 39), a 112-move marathon where Bobby wins rook, knight, and three pawns on the kingside versus rook, bishop, and two kingside pawns. Fischer could grind! Magnus has been quoted as saying he would happily play an extra two hours if it increased his chances of winning by two percent. He and Bobby would have been in total agreement.

Invariably in a work of this length a few technical errors are bound to creep in. The first of these can be blamed on Mega Database 2024. It is an indispensable resource but occasionally falls short when it comes to small details.

Game 48 in *The Unknown Bobby Fischer* is from a simultaneous exhibition in Houston and gives Fischer’s opponent as J. N. Jacobs. This is very likely a reference to John N. Jacobs of Dallas who was born in 1951 and developed into a strong master in the 1970s. It’s conceivable his parents drove him the 300 miles from Dallas to the exhibition in Houston and he played Bobby as a 13-year-old, but not likely.

*Bobby Fischer: Complete Games of the American World Chess Champion* by Lou Hays provides a more plausible explanation. It was not J.N. Jacobs but S. Jacobs who faced Bobby. Hays obtained Fischer-Jacobs and other Houston exhibition games scores from the late Billy Patteson in the early 1990s. Patteson, who played in the exhibition and preserved the games from it, was known for his attention to detail thanks to a series of booklets on Bobby Fischer he edited for *Chess Digest* in the 1970s.

This is one other good reason for believing S. Jacobs and not J.N. Jacobs played Bobby. S. Jacobs of Texas (rated 1716) appears on the US Chess Federation's fall rating list that appeared in the October 1964 issue of *Chess Life* and the name of J.N. Jacobs is nowhere to be found. The evidence, while not 100 percent conclusive, strongly suggests S. Jacobs was Bobby’s opponent.

The game Bandal-Fischer, Manila 1967 (page 119) is given as having been played in a simul, but this is definitely not the case. Instead, it was played one on one, part of an event called “Beat Bobby Fischer”.

As Jimmy Adams writes in the June 1980 issue of the *British Chess Magazine*: "These games - previously unpublished in the West - were played directly after Bobby's victory in the strong Monte Carlo tournament of 1967. Fischer had flown on from the French Riviera thousands of miles to the Philippines, in anticipation of competing in an
international tournament in Manila. However, the failure of grandmasters Boris Ivkov and Arturo Pomar to arrive gave the sponsors an alternative brainwave to hold a “Beat Bobby Fischer” contest instead. This was a series of individual games, mostly held under proper international match conditions with a time limit of 40 moves in 2.5 hours, in which Bobby would face some of the best Filipino players. This fascinating event was staged and sponsored by Meralco, the Manila Electric Company......"

These two technicalities are small potatoes but Bobby’s performance in game 19 of his 1992 rematch with Boris Spassky (game 37) deserves a little more explanation than is given in The Unknown Fischer. Bobby played the first part of this game brilliantly but then collapsed, failing to convert a queen and pawn endgame two pawns up. Lakdawala praises Bobby’s creativity early on but then, like most other commentators, attributes Fischer’s running out of gas to his age. While it is true Fischer was 49 there is another consideration to factor in.

The 1992 match between Spassky and Fischer was the first major chess event to use an increment time control and they were guinea pigs. Today, game in 90 minutes plus 30 seconds a move increment from the start is the standard time control. Sometimes an extra 30 minutes are given to both sides at move 40. Games normally last no more than four hours with five hours being a long one. Exceptionally long games lasting over 100 moves will go six hours, but this is very rare.

Prior to the use of the increment clock, the introduction of which was essential with the evolution of ever stronger chess engines, high level chess was played at a time control of 40 moves in 2 ½ hours. This was the time control Bobby and Boris used in 1972. It was not what they used in 1992. The time control for the rematch was:

- Each player starts with 110 minutes
- After each move 1 minute is added
- After move 40, 40 minutes are added
- After move 60, 30 minutes are added
- After move 80, 20 minutes are added

This meant that each player had 150 minutes, or two-and-half hours, for the first 40 moves. A 60-move game would give each player three-and-a-half hours each; an 80-move game four hours and twenty minutes apiece.

Fischer and Spassky played games that were 84, 80, 68, 67, 61, 59, 58, 54, 50, and 50 moves long. Game 19, which appears in The Unknown Bobby Fischer, went almost nine hours!
By comparison Garry Kasparov, who retired at forty-one, never came close to playing a game as long as the ones Boris and Bobby, nor did all of the World Champions who came before him. Their maximum time spent in one sitting would have been no more than 5 ½ hours.

No one would claim Fischer and Spassky played better in 1992 than they did twenty years earlier, but the time control they played with should be factored in when evaluating the quality of their play. Bobby was not tired at the end of game 19 - he was totally exhausted. Top grandmasters today would be as well.

Serious Fischer’s fans who want to expand their knowledge of his games beyond the well-known classics will find The Unknown Fischer a fascinating read.
Chess Chatter

With the departure of Paul Whitehead, The Chess Scuttlebutt has been renamed and rebranded, but not reconceptualized. Check out below for links to some of the chess news that makes up our world. - Alex Robins & Alyssa Stone


Dommaraju Gukesh was also trained in a new and increasingly rare way: unplugged.

While elsewhere, FIDE's Call For World Championship Bids Sparks Reactions.

Daniel Dardha wins the Sardinia World Chess Festival - which we screened in the chess room. Who wants to visit beautiful Sardinia?! We think a chess team retreat is in order!

Coming to the silver screen: Emma Stone and Nathan Fielder partner with A24 for Ben Mezrich’s Carlsen-Niemann Chess Scandal Story as reported in numerous sources including The Hollywood Reporter, Rolling Stone, Variety, and more.

Chess tables each costing £2,500 have been installed in parks across the North West in England as part of the government’s leveling up investment program. If anyone is visiting England soon, please let us know how the tables are working out.

Carlsen, Nakamura, Anand, and Amin set for an epic showdown in Casablanca, playing positions from historic games. They've missed an opportunity to invite Shankland, “play it again Sam!”

Controversial League of Legends streamer Tyler1 crosses 1900 on chess.com and explains how chess makes him a better father.

Business Insider’s journey into the heart of darkness of contemporary chess starts with losing to kids at our favorite chess club (ours).

Ted Cruz, Josh Hawley, and our other politicos duke it out at a congressional tournament. Maybe next year they opt for a congressional tightrope race over a volcano.

Nakamura Pushes Bullet Brawl Earnings Over $10,000.
Tony's Teasers
Tony Lama

This month's teaser comes from Irving Chernev and picked by the teaser master himself, Tony! White to play and win.
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.
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@milibary.org.

Employment Opportunities | Mechanics’ Institute (milibary.org)

Solutions

For Tony’s Teaser: Chernev, 1961. 1. d5!, Rxd5 if 1...Ka5 2.Kc4 wins 2. Kc4 and there’s no way to save the rook and prevent Ra1#

For the Puzzle in the Library:

Upcoming Events
Scholastic Summer Chess Camps
Spend your summer playing chess with Mechanics’ Institute!

Mechanics’ Institute holds Scholastic Chess Camps throughout June, July, and August for different grade groups.

Camps are an opportunity for youth chess players to join and start a lifelong appreciation of the royal game of chess and play with other kids in the historic Mechanics’ Institute Chess Room. Students will learn tactics, how to defend common opening traps, and review famous games.

Join us and start a lifelong journey through one of the world's greatest games.

Summer Camp sessions include:

- June 10-14 for Grades 1-12
- June 24-28 for Grades K-5
- July 8-12 for Grades 6-12
- July 22-26 for Grades 1-12
- July 29-August 2 for Grades K-5
- August 5-9 for Grades 6-12
- August 12-16 Grades 1-12

*Please double check grade group when registering.

Camps run from 9:30 am-3:30 pm. Full-day and half-day (pro-rated) camps available.
Cost: Member $550; Non-Member $675

Learn more and enroll at milibrary.org/chess/scholastic-chess
Questions? Call 415-393-0110 or email chessroom@milibrary.org

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Tournaments in May
Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess

<table>
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<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Rounds</th>
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<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Non-Members $50</td>
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<td>Summer Tuesday Night Marathon</td>
<td>Tuesdays, May 7-June 18</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>G/120;d5</td>
<td>Members $70</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Members $100</td>
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<td>18th Brandwein/Schutt/Whitehead Memorial</td>
<td>Saturday, May 11</td>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>DSS</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th Brandwein/Schutt/Whitehead Memorial</td>
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<td>2:00 pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>G/4+2</td>
<td>Members $70</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th Brandwein/Schutt/Whitehead Memorial</td>
<td>Saturday, May 11</td>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>G/4+2</td>
<td>Non-Members $100</td>
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<td>Monthly Scholastic Swiss</td>
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<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>G/30;d5</td>
<td>Members $30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly Scholastic Swiss</td>
<td>Saturday, May 18</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>G/30;d5</td>
<td>Non-Members $35</td>
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<td>Monthly Quads</td>
<td>Saturday, May 18</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>G/30;d5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly Quads</td>
<td>Saturday, May 18</td>
<td>3:00 pm</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>G/30;d5</td>
<td>Non-Members $40</td>
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Photos left to right: Steve Brandwein, Ray Schutt, and Jay Whitehead

Non-Profit Member-Supported Library, Chess Club, and Cultural Organization
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**Tournaments in June**

Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Day</th>
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<th>Rounds</th>
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<th>Non-Members</th>
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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 rounds</td>
<td>G/120;d5</td>
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<td>Saturday, June 1</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>4 rounds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scholastic Bughouse Tournament</strong></td>
<td>Monday, June 3</td>
<td>4:00 pm</td>
<td>4 rounds</td>
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<td><strong>Monthly Scholastic Swiss</strong></td>
<td>Saturday, June 15</td>
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<td>$35</td>
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<td><strong>Monthly Quads</strong></td>
<td>Saturday, June 15</td>
<td>3:00 pm</td>
<td>3 rounds</td>
<td>G/30;d5</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>58th Arthur Stamer Memorial (FIDE)</strong></td>
<td>Saturday-Sunday, June 22-23</td>
<td>10:00 am &amp; 2:00 pm</td>
<td>4 rounds</td>
<td>G/90+30</td>
<td>$70</td>
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<td><strong>Summer Celebration Blitz</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday, June 25</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>5 rounds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday Night Rapid</strong></td>
<td>Thursday, June 27</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>4 rounds rolling schedule</td>
<td>G/15+2inc</td>
<td>$30</td>
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<td><strong>23rd Henry Gross Memorial</strong></td>
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Arthur Stamer (left) was the Mechanics’ Institute Chess Room Director from 1951-1964.
Henry Gross (center) was California State Champion in 1952.
Charles Bagby (right) was a Board Trustee of Mechanics’ Institute.
**Tournaments in July**
Register for all tournaments at milibrary.org/chess

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Tournament</th>
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<th>Fee Non-Members</th>
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<td><strong>1st Jeremy Silman Tuesday Night Marathon</strong></td>
<td>Members $70</td>
<td>Non-Members $100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesdays, July 9-August 20</td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>7 rounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simultaneous Exhibition with GM Sam Shankland</strong></td>
<td>All $65 per board</td>
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<tr>
<td>During Open House on Saturday, July 13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 pm</td>
<td>Limited boards!</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Scholastic Swiss</strong></td>
<td>Members $30</td>
<td>Non-Members $40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, July 20</td>
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<td>4 rounds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monthly Quads</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Thursday Night Rapid</strong></td>
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<td>Non-Members $40</td>
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<td>Thursday, July 25</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>4 rounds</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>23rd Max Wilkerson Memorial (FIDE)</strong></td>
<td>Members $70</td>
<td>Non-Members $100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday-Sunday, July 27-28</td>
<td>10:00 am &amp; 2:00 pm</td>
<td>4 rounds</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Jeremy Silman (photo by James F. Perry)
Max Wilkerson is in the back row on left (photo: unknown)
Wilkerson was the Chess Room Director from 1980-1996.
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

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