Chess Room Newsletter
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2023 San Francisco Scholastic Championship
Alex Robins

As our readers may already know, last month we held our annual San Francisco Scholastic Chess Championship on March 4th 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, Abhinav Penagalapati, Ricky Cheung, Dennis Tocol, Jaysen Shi, Dawson Wu, Aaron Tam, and IM Guillermo Rey. We could not put on a tournament without them. We are also extremely grateful to our volunteers Morsy Cheikhrouhou, Edwin Ng, Brian Wei, Christian Brickhouse, Danny Cao, Richard Hack, Nick Hollon, Kathryn Appleton, Kathy Bella, Kory Cogdill, Mary Risala Laird, Matthew Fitzgerald, and Michael Bragg. We had 274 players show up with their families from all around the Bay Area and it was a lot of fun! Players received T-shirts, medals – and if they were lucky – brought home a trophy, as well. It was great to see the tournament hall full of eager players.

The competition was stiff at the top of each section and had to be decided by tiebreaks. We would like to offer 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’ll share a message from Judit that this is another great reminder to be sincere when you wish your opponent good luck!

The 1st place trophy in the 800+ Section went to Cody Kletter (1422) with a perfect score of 4 out of 4. Congratulations as well to Tapas Natraj (1396) who also went 4 for 4 but got edged out in the tiebreak and finished in 2nd. The 3rd through 6th place players were tied with 3.5 points each and in order went to: Tejas Kunduru (1202), Yali Dancig-Perlman (1706), Calvin Rummens (1570), and Zlata Butenko (1550). All the players at 7th through 10th place scored 3 points out of 4 and went to: Ethan Redlin (1051), Tejaswini Viswanath (1004), Gogo Dancig-Perlman (1457), and Ikshit Gupta (1441). The 800+ winner Cody Kletter is also currently organizing another scholastic tournament – check out the end of the newsletter for details.

In the u800 Section, we had three players with a perfect score who were placed according to tiebreak rules. They were, Akhil Veeravali (611), Harrison Qian (unr.), and Bradley Harger III (617). Congratulations to all three for a perfect score! In 4th through 6th place with 3.5 points each were Zi
Zheng Ng (698), Hubert Wang (175), and Mowen Sun (719). The players finishing in 7th through 10th each scored 3 out of 4 and were: Keshav Raman (619), Alen Sabitov (659), Sebastian Ghoussaini (781), and Aaron Chen (763). Congrats to all and a special shout out to our winter camper Keshav Raman!

The Grade 6-12 Unrated Section also had three perfect scores that had to be placed by tiebreaks, with Tyler Wong in 1st, Sahiti Namburu in 2nd, and Muhammad Fatonie in 3rd. The players in 4th through 10th place all scored 3 out of 4 for the day. They were, in order: Maclain Wells, Justin Huang, Yen Wen Jasmine Ho, Carson Zhen, James Guleno, Rhianna Lope, and Kyle Yu.

The Grade 4-5 Unrated Section had an undisputed winner and the only player with 4 out of 4 in their section Altair Sabitov. April Ni finished in 2nd with 3.5 out of 4. Afran Pasha, Jack Abrams, Jayden Huang, Leo Schmeling, and Samuel Davies were ranked 3rd through 8th place and all came in with 3 out of 4 points. The 9th place went to Mendel Jew, one of the students in our scholastic program, and 10th went to Samantha Lee.
In the Grade 2-3 Grade Unrated Section Leo Ni was the winner, just barely sneaking past Kepler McTiernan, both of whom had perfect scores. One of our winter campers, Jimmy Harvey, came in 3rd with a respectable 3.5 out of 4. The 4th through 10th place players all scored 3 out of 4 and included, in order: Derek Ko, Wesley Wongchenko, Ronan Peterson, Dylan Carter, Jasper Zerr, Thomas Jue, and Angela Alcantara.

In the K-1 Grade Unrated Section we had Youcheng Zhang in 1st and Rosalyn Chu in 2nd, both with a perfect score. Our winter camper Charlotte Cella had a strong performance in 3rd with 3.5 out of 4. Our 4th place winner also had 3.5 points – congratulations to Jalen Young. The 5th place through 9th place players each had 3 points and went to, in order: Matthew Tang, Eric Shi, Hudson Kim, Asher Bluestein, and Neel Mehta. In 10th place was Brian Luo with 2.5 out of 4 points. Congratulations to all of our K-1 players – it’s great to see children starting in tournaments so young!

Finally, in addition to our individual sections we also had school and chess clubs competing with their players in our Combined Team Competition. The 1st place trophy went to the Bernal Chess Club. We are big fans of the Bernal Chess Club here at Mechanics’ Institute, so go check them out at Higher Grounds on Saturdays at 3pm. In 2nd place was Fallon Middle School, 3rd place went to the Town
School for Boys, 4th place went to Hamilton, led by former Mechanics’ Institute Chess Room Director Abel Talamantez, 5th place went to one of our scholastic program schools Alice Fong Yu, led by Mechanics’ Institute coaches Otto Schmidt and Marcie Yang – big congratulations to the whole team! The 6th place went to Junipero Serra Elementary School, 7th place went to Francisco Middle School, one of our scholastic program schools led by coach George Sanguinetti. Congratulations to all of the players from Francisco and to their organizer Wilson Skinner. In 8th place was Children’s Day School, 9th place went to Holy Name, and finally we had Mountain House High School in 10th. We’d also like to give a special shout out to our scholastic program school West Portal Elementary, led by Mechanics’ Institute coaches Danny Cao, George Sanguinetti, and Alex Robins, who finished in 11th place.

During the tournament we also had Mechanics’ Institute’s very own and your chess room newsletter editor, FM Paul Whitehead deliver a simul. Paul wasn’t the only titled player present. We also had a surprise guest appearance from IM Ladia Jirasek who was generous enough to give Paul a break from the nonstop action of 20 concurrent games. IM Keaton Kiewra also made an appearance and showed some puzzles and strategies in the courtyard. Keaton recently moved to the Bay Area and is currently offering private and group chess lessons. We were also lucky to have IM Guillermo Rey as one of our tournament directors. Quite a few titled players for a scholastic tournament!

We would like to congratulate all our players and their families, as well as thank our staff and volunteers, for helping us to put on a great tournament. We are already looking forward to hosting it again next year!
Unfortunately, not all of the students in our scholastic program could make it, so some of our students at Good Samaritans thought they would put on their own tournament and even supplied their
own prizes. Check out their trophy below – which the students generously have allowed us to share. We think we may have some future TNM players and Tournament Directors in our midst.

Finally, [here](#) is a video created by the Bright Knights Chess Club on the event, to which we extend another heartfelt thanks!
Scholastic Chess Camps

Mechanics’ Institute camps are an opportunity for beginner 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!

Intermediate 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.

Find Out More and Register at:

milibrary.org/chess/scholastic-chess
For More Information Contact:
415-393-0110
chessroom@milibrary.org

Spring Break Camp
March 27-31
from 9:30am-3:30pm

Summer Camps
June 12-16 (All Ages)
June 26-30 (All Ages)
July 10-14 (Grades K-5)
July 17-21 (Grades 6-12)
July 24-28 (All Ages)
July 31-Aug 4 (All Ages)
Aug 7-11 (All Ages)
All camps run from 9:30am-3:30pm

Cost: $500 (Pro-rated Half-Days Are Available)
The Simultaneous Exhibition
FM Paul Whitehead

A simultaneous exhibition is a subject of fascination to the general public. If playing just one game of chess is difficult, how can someone possibly play 20 people at once – or even double that number? The first (and only!) simultaneous exhibition I ever played in was against a Scottish International Master – whose name I can’t recall – way back in 1972, as my interest in chess surged. I remember it was a Sicilian Dragon, and I lost. In the years following I have given a few simuls myself, most memorably a 20 board simul at San Quentin State Prison in 1976, a simul at the Virginia Scholastic State Championship in the late 1990’s where I took on hundreds of kids in an all-day marathon, and a three-board blindfold simul in Ireland in 1983.

The simultaneous exhibition put on at the County Fair Building in Golden Gate Park, as part of this year’s San Francisco Scholastic Championship, fell into my hands this year. The simuls in years past were given by GM Daniel Naroditsky in an open courtyard, but rain forced us indoors this year. Everyone was welcome to play – casual onlookers, the children participating in the tournament and their siblings, parents, and grandparents.
I stood on my feet (no mean feat!) for about five hours taking on all comers, with a few quick breaks here and there. About half-way through I was joined by International Master Ladia Jirasek, who graciously jumped in to spell me, and for a while we also played in tandem. This led to some amusing moments, where I would come back to a board and try to figure out what Ladia was up to. I was not always up to the task, and made a few outrageous moves that led to trouble for both of us. But, unlike a "serious" simul, where folks pay to play and the reputation of the exhibitor is (sort of) on the line, this was all in great fun. Games were abandoned in the middle, or after a few moves when the children had to go play their rounds, and a new crop of kids or adults would take their places. Players consulted with each other, took moves back. Sometimes I would return to a board and find my opponent had made two or even three moves in a row!

Some regulars at the club also sat down and faced off with Ladia and me, including Renate Otterbach, Morsy Cheikhrouhou (who notched the only win by a participant), and Mechanics’ Institute scholastic coaches Richard Hack and Danny Cao.

Danny was kind enough to record his game and share it with us:

FM Paul Whitehead 2317 / IM Ladia Jirasek 2361 – Danny Cao 1178
Tandem Simul, SF Scholastic Chess Championship, County Fair Building, March 4, 2023.
Caro Kann Defense

30.Qxg7+! Ladia is as sharp as a tack! 30...Kxg7 31.f8=Q+ Kg6 32.Rf6+ Kh7 33.Rh6# 1-0.

The 2023 San Francisco Scholastic Chess Championship was a spectacular event, held in a perfect setting, and organized with barely a hitch. Kudos to all who made this event possible, and to those who participated.

At the end of the day I was happy to have played my part. The rain had stopped, and I decided to take the long way home, walking through the park. Later that evening I found myself more tired than usual, and as I sank into sleep I found myself playing over that typical chess player’s refrain:

How could I have lost that game to Morsy?

In line with this, our “scholastic issue” of the Mechanic’s Institute Chess Club Newsletter, we are more than pleased to publish the following story, serialized in two parts, by our lead coach Danny Du Uy Cao.

Consider it another episode of “Confessions of a Chess Coach.”

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Chess Room Fairytale
Danny Cao

Preface

Late in 2018, I googled "Chess San Francisco". The Mechanics’ Institute was prominent in the search results.

I had been playing daily (1 move per day) games on chess.com while commuting on BART (the regional San Francisco subway system) and had been making steady improvement; however pressing the button that said 15+10 (or less) yielded disastrous results. The next logical step it seemed would be to start playing in-person chess at a time control somewhere between 1 move per day and 60 moves in a combined 30 minutes. If you had told me in 2018, that I’d be teaching at a scholastic winter chess camp at the Mechanics’ Institute in December 2022 I would have thought that you had taken a few too many of the green pills.

And yet here I was, lying in bed the night before the last day of chess camp thinking, "What am I going to teach about/lecture on tomorrow." My previous lecture that afternoon had come after an exciting simul given by chess master/monster Paul Whitehead. Paul’s emergence from the chess office, and quick dispatch of the young challengers had left quite an impression, and holding the kids attention at the end of the afternoon with a collection of checkmate miniatures from 100 years ago didn't quite cut it (two kids were already familiar with a couple of the games).

As I lay in bed, with Paul’s simul fresh in my mind, I thought of my own journey at the Mechanics Institute; from googling “chess SF”, taking a noontime time tour in November 2018, being gifted a membership in December 2018, my first over the board tournament in February 2019 and later
tournaments and visits to the library through March 2020, the pandemic from 2020-2021; and then being hired as a scholastic coach in September 2021.

As a new assistant coach, I remembered lead coach and former Mechanics' Institute chess director Abel Talamantez bringing in a "chess word jumble" puzzle sheet to a class of 40 kids as opposed to a more usual worksheet of puzzles with chess diagrams or PGNs. The worksheet had more in common with a crossword puzzle than with the usual graded tactics sheet. It was easily the most popular handout of the semester and provided a nice change of pace from the usual lesson to begin the class.

Seeking to present a final morning lecture with my own change of pace; the reflections and images from my own time at the Mechanics' Institute through to Paul's impressive simul earlier in the day began to take shape on the ceiling over my bed as I dozed into a deep sleep.... And when I awoke on the morning of Thursday December 22, 2022, the framework for the lecture/fairytale was fully formed in my mind.

I hope the "word jumble" below is as fun for you to read as it was fun for me to conceive and write.

The Final Day of Chess Camp

At 9:15am on the final day of camp, as I sharpened pencils in the office in anticipation of handing out an end-of-camp chess puzzle competition worksheet, a freshly sharpened pencil somehow caught momentum and rolled away from the cadre of its compatriots, toward, then over the edge of the top of the heavy shelf upon which the sharpened pencils had been placed.

Upon reaching behind the shelf to retrieve the runaway, my hand came upon papers, a manuscript, damp with the feel of mold and time. I was able to grab simultaneously the pencil and mysterious papers. Upon pulling them from behind the shelf, I was taken aback by what I had found. A damp, old, worn manuscript on an ancient parchment culled from ancient times: "The Untold Secret History of the Mechanics' Institute Chess Room."

The title beckoned me to investigate the pages beyond the front cover. At a glance I quickly realized that the manuscript held more than just the history of the chess room, but a story so wondrous and spectacular that the laws of man and science could not explain.

The implications were profound. So profound as to challenge the world order as we know it. But who to share this with. People at the Mechanics' Institute: Colleagues? Management? The Board of Trustees? The press? Local, state, or national government? The scientific community? OR... the young impressionable children who would start arriving in 15 minutes for their final day of winter chess camp.

I chose the chess campers.

The Untold Secret History of the Mechanics' Institute Chess Room

The Mechanics' Institute building at 57 Post Street in San Francisco in ancient times bore a remarkable resemblance to the building in modern times. There were of course no elevators, but the marvelous spiral staircase "spine" of the building would greet visitors long ago as it still does today. The staircase ascended to the second floor library entrance and then third floor library entrance just
as it does today. And climbing farther, one reached the fourth floor to a floor-plan remarkably similar to current times.

Today the chess room door and doorway comfortably accommodate most human size visitors; but back then, a larger, taller, and wider door and frame existed to allow passage of much larger creatures as we shall see. The large heavy door was quite intimidating and even the fresh pelts/hides/furs/skins of the morning hunt which were affixed to the door and frame could barely mute the thunderous sound of the door slamming shut with the entrance or exit of beings both great and small.

It was through this doorway that on one morning, at 9:30am, on a dark and cloudy day similar to Thursday December 22, 2022, but in the far off past, young children began streaming in for the last day of chess camp. As the children and parents entered the chess room, the view, feel, and size of the room were also quite similar to what one experiences today. The view of the sturdy wooden tables, the floor tiles and the door on the opposite end leading to the men's restroom (and another smaller "forbidden" spiral staircase) all remarkably similar. Out of view as one enters the chess room, to the right of the entrance, was what is now the door leading to the chess room office, but in those days the door was much larger and wider, and had many latches and locks and metal slats reinforcing the door. Quite the foreboding and intimidating display. A dungeon door, behind which lurked mystery.

As parents dropped their children off, the children greeted one another and began warm-up games or simply chatted, as coaches Malyssa and Manny began preparations for camp. During these preparations, the coaches realized that the casks in the corner of the room were bone dry and would need to be replenished. One cask was regularly filled with the healing, desalinated, purifying waters of the (then) unpolluted San Francisco Bay and served most visitors (and children). In the other cask, an old San Francisco specialty: an aged iced brew of hazelnut caramel cappullatecino which could be stomached only by the strongest and fittest of chess players, coaches, and other warriors. The children would certainly need water, and the coaches would need the ice-cold hazelnut caramel caffeine brew before beginning their day. A quick expedition would need to be made by the coaches, thus leaving the children alone in the chess room for a brief time (in modern times children are never left unattended at Mechanics' Institute chess camps).

"Listen children and listen close, for our message to you is important the most: Don't stack chess pieces, this rule you must follow, lest you disturb the beasts, the beasts that will swallow. Swallow you whole with one single bite. If you are not careful, they just might, charge through the dungeon door wanting more than a nibble, devouring children and chess pieces like kibble. If the monsters should hear, a piece fall on the floor, they will for surely for surely, storm through that door. So don't stack chess pieces, this rule you now know. Off to get beverages, we coaches now go!"

The coaches departed, and as soon as the chess room door slammed closed behind them the children erupted in laughter.

"What a ridiculous story they told;"
all it will do is make us more bold.
Bold to stack pieces higher and higher;
no monsters exist, chess coaches are liars.
Let's have a contest, a contest to see;
who can stack pieces as high as can be.
That ridiculous story, we're not believing;
let's stack the pieces as high as the ceiling."

So the children started stacking pieces. One child was quick to realize that the rooks were the most easily stackable of all the pieces. After grabbing as many rooks from as many tables as he could; he soon had the tallest rook tower in the room. As the children marveled at the impressive rook tower, a soft breeze blew through the open window along with perhaps a bit of bee pollen and fairy dust; and while the breeze was not enough to topple the rook spectacle, the dust and pollen wafted into the children's noses and CACHOO. All the children sneezed at once and the rooks cascaded down, bouncing off the table and onto the floor.

A SLAM!!! Not at the main door to the chess room, but at the dungeon door to the immediate left. Another SLAM!!! The hinges and locks loosening. SLAM!!!! The door blowing wide open, and storming through two huge beasts. HEADWHITE the Dragonmaster and RALEX OBINS the Dungeonmaster!

(To be continued in next month’s newsletter…)

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**Recent Tournaments at Mechanics’ Institute**

The A.J. Fink Memorial (u2200) was held on March 11, with 81 players competing in three sections.

**Tony Kukavica** (2193) and **Chawit Asavasaetakul** (2148) tied for 1st and 2nd places in the 1900-2199 section with 3.5 out of 4, while 3rd place was split between **Aryan Achuthan** (2091), **Quincy Chen** (1983), and **Adam Stevens** (1838), each scoring 3 points.

**Jacob Goldman** (1681) was the clear winner of the 1600-1899 section with 3.5 points, followed closely by **William Hamill** (1706), **Christopher Powers** (1704), and **Axel Joseph** (1478), with 3 points each.

**Ray Smets** (1192) scored a perfect 4-0 in the u1600 section, and took 1st place. **Connor Galvin** (1590) and **Austin Wong** tied for 2nd and 3rd places with 3.5 points apiece.

Complete results for the A.J. Fink Memorial can be found [here](#).

The A.J. Fink Memorial was directed by International Arbiter **Judit Sztaray**.

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On March 18, the Mechanics’ Institute hosted its monthly double-header of Scholastic Swiss in the morning, and Quads Championship in the afternoon.
The Quads saw a nice turnout of 68 players, with Aryan Achuthan (2103) winning the top quad with a perfect 3-0.

Complete results for the March Quads can be found here.

The Scholastic Swiss had 25 players competing in two groups, with Arav Munjal (838) scoring 3.5 from 4 games and winning the 400+ section, while Maclain Wells (unr.) swept the u400 section with a perfect 4-0.

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

Both Quads and Scholastic Swiss were directed by Local TD Arthur Liou, assisted by Local TD Michael Hsu.

| From February 12 to March 18 the Mechanics’ Institute hosted the 2023 Spring Online Women’s Tournament, in conjunction with FIDE Trainer Sophie Adams’ free online Women’s Class. The tournament was held on the chess.com platform, and the prizes for the top three finishers were free entries to one of our tournaments.

Sixteen players participated, and Ruyi Hu (1414) took clear 1st place with a perfect 5-0 score. In 2nd place was Christina Madrid (1332) with 4 points, and 3rd place was taken by 10-year old Pranavi Pramod (1547) who wrote:

"I had an amazing experience playing in the women's tournament and I learnt a lot. I thank Mechanics’ Institute for giving me this wonderful opportunity and I hope there are more such tournaments in the future."

Complete results for the 2023 Spring Online Women’s Tournament can be found here.

The 2023 Spring Online Women’s Tournament was directed by International Arbiter Judit Sztaray.

The F.I.D.E. rated 20th Max Wilkerson Memorial u2200 was held over the weekend of March 25 and 26, with 81 players competing in three sections.

Niko Pompe (2176) went a perfect 4-0 in the 2000+ section, taking clear 1st place, with Nikhil Parvathaneni (1919) right behind in clear 2nd place at 3.5 points. Splitting the prizes for 3rd, best under 2200, and best under 2000 with 3 points each, were Alexander Charles Su (1920), Ethan Sun (1854), and Austin Jin (1863).

The 1600-1999 section also saw a perfect score and a clear winner in Christopher Powers (1704). Following right behind with 3.5 points and taking clear 2nd was NM Michael Walder (1954). There was a five-way tie for 3rd place, best under 1800, and best under 1600, between Zee Chin (1710), Henry Lien (1573), Felix Macnee (1692), Sivavishnu Srinivasan (1668), and Leo Ni (1406), each scoring 3 points.
Anirudh R. Seshadri (1241) took clear 1st in the under 1600 section with 3.5 points. There was a four-way tie for 2nd and 3rd places, best under 1400, and best under 1200, between Taewoo Lumen King (1319), Lalitha Sasidhar Upadrasta (unr.), Hayes Alexander Marvin (1310), and Aradhana Arivoli (1127), each with 3 points.

Complete results for the 20th Max Wilkerson Memorial can be found here.

The 20th Max Wilkerson Memorial was directed by Senior Tournament Director Scott Mason.

On April 1 the Mechanics’ Institute hosted the 21st Konig Memorial Tournament with 70 players competing in four sections.

Siddharth Arun (2201) took clear 1st in the 2000+ section with a perfect 4-0 score. Tied for 2nd and 3rd places with 3 points each were Sebastian Suarez (2037) and Ivan Zhou (1833).

Pranavi Promod (1468) and Leo Ni (1434) both played up and tied for 1st and 2nd places in the 1600-1999 section with 3.5 points apiece. Frederic Dutter (1900) and Yali Dancig-Perlman (1689) tied for 3rd place with 3 points each.

Mechanics’ Institute stalwart Samuel Agdamag (1482) swept the 1200-1599 section, scoring a perfect 4-0. A full point behind, tied for 2nd and 3rd places were Adam Ginzberg (1538), Alex Dean (1334), Ishan Goteti (1315), Vasisht Nishtala (1290), and Tao Ni (1198).

Darren Sadr (unr.) also scored a perfect 4-0 to win the under 1200 section. Herman Mendoza (unr.) and Noah Yang (unr.) tied for 2nd and 3rd places with 3 points apiece.

Complete results for the 21st Konig Memorial can be found here.

The 21st Konig Memorial was directed by Local TD Arthur Liou, assisted by Local TD Michael Hsu.

The Spring Tuesday Night Marathon kicked off on March 7 with 95 players competing in three sections.

Information, standings, and results can be found here.

The Spring TNM is being directed by Senior Tournament Director Scott Mason, FIDE Arbiter Richard Koepcke, and International Arbiter Judit Sztaray.

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IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated Games from rounds two through five of the Spring TNM.


[37.Kf4 g5+ 38.Ke3= (38.Kg4?? Kg6 39.g3 Nf6+ 40.Kh3 Nxd5+)]
37...Ke5 38.Ra7 Nf6 39.Nd3= Kxd5= 40.Rf7 Rb6 41.Kf3

[41.Kd2 c4 (41...g5)]
41...c4+

[41...Kc4!]
42.Nf4+ Kc5?!

[42...Ke5 43.Re7+ Kf5 44.g3 Rb3+]
43.Nf2?

[43.g4=]
[43.h4=]
43...Rb3+ 44.Kf4

[44.Kf2 Ne4+ 45.Kg1 Rb2 (45...Rb1+ 46.Rf1 Rxf1+ 47.Kxf1 c3)]
44...Nd5+ 45.Kg4 Rb2?!

[45...Re3 46.Rf2 (46.Nc1 Re1 47.Na2 Re2) 46...Nb4 (46...Re4+ 47.Kg5 Re5+) 47.g3 Nd3 48.Rg2 Re5]
46.Ng3?  [46.Kf3 h5 (46...g5 47.Rf5 h6) 47.Rf8 g5 48.Rc8+ Kb4!+]  
46...Rxg2+ 47.Rxh7? c3  [47...Nf6+ 48.Kf3 Rxg3+]  
48.Rf7 Here my scoresheet (Jashith stopped around move 37) loses it, which is odd since I had time (he was almost completely out of time). 48...Kc4  
I'm not certain I played this. My scoresheet say "48...Nd5".  
[ I had meant to play 48...c2 which is very straightforward: 49.Rf8 (49.Rf1 Ne3+) 49...Kc6! 50.Rc8+ Nc7 51.Kf3 Rxg3+ ]  
[ If it was 48...Kd4?! then it could have been very close: 49.Kf3 Rxh2 50.Ne2+ Kd3 51.Nc1+ Kc2 52.Ne2 (52.Na2 Kb2) 52...Kd2 53.Nxc3 Kxc3 54.Rg7 Rh6 55.Kg4 (55.Ke4 Kc4 56.Ke5 Rh5+ 57.Ke4 Nf6+ 58.Kf4 Rf5+ 59.Ke3 g5) 55...Rh1 wins but just barely! ]  
49.Kg5 (and it says "49.Kxg6" -- so I've left some moves out...) 49...c2 50.Rf1 Ne3 51.Rc1 Rxh2 52.Kxg6 Kd3 53.Ra1 Rd2 (his king is already on g5) 54.Ra3+ Kc4 55.Ra4+ Kb5 56.Ra1 Rd1 57.Ra3 c1Q 58.Rb3+ Kc4 59.Ne2 Kxb3 60.Nxc1+ Rxc1 and he resigned after a couple more moves 0-1

Tournament, it has developed a significant bed of theory over time. It's considered a critical line at top level these days. The point is that the knight is currently overburdened having to protect both the d5/h5 at the same time so this move poses a question in how Black is going to resolve it. While looking through NM Snyder's games, I had noticed he had never played it before OTB, so I was expecting this to lead to an interesting game. 5...h5?! A shame! The critical lines of this variation can lead to wild positions, but this isn't one of them. In fact, despite looking natural at first glance -- blockading the advance of the h-pawn -- it opens up quite a large hole on the K-side. Black has already committed four pawns to the light squares, so White easily makes use of the open dark squares. The following moves are considered critical: the first two especially!


[ 5...c5 ]
[ 5...0-0 ]

6.Bg5 White's already making use of the outpost to secure his bishop. White's now threatening to remove the d5-pawn defender. 6...c6 The most common try, but if Black was going to attempt this, he would've done better without weakening his K-side structure with ...h5. This is a lot less stable than 5...c6.
[ 6...dxc4 is the most challenging option and leads to interesting lines:
7.e4 c5 8.dxc5 Qa5 9.Bxc4 Nxe4 10.0-0 Nxc3 11.bxc3 Nc6 12.Bxe7 Nxe7 13.Qd6± and both sides have achieved dynamic equality, but there're still a lot of nuances at play in this position. ]

6...cxd5 7.cxd5 8.e3 Nc6 White okayed by engine, I feel like this move just gives more options for White and isn't as concise as the following move, which will be seen in the game:
[ 8...0-0 9.Qb3 e6 10.Be2 Nc6 11.0-0± White still has an easier game though: his pieces are brimming with activity and all he needs to do is to activate his majors on the c-file. ]

9.Qb3 Posing the d5/b7 question to Black, which is typical in d4-systems. 9...e6 Necessary, but does sting. Black has entombed his bishop for the near future. 10.Bb5!?N The rationale was as follows: since Black has spent this many moves setting up his pawns on the light squares, so why not trade off the light-squared bishop for a Q-side defender and potentially set up a backwards c-pawn to play off? However, turns out that isn't much of note according to my engine, as Black fends off the attempt rather easily.
[ Instead, Stockfish takes a more methodical approach: 10.Be2 0-0 11.0-0 Qc7 12.Rfc1 Nc4 13.Bf4 Qe7 14.a3 Bh6 15.Bg3± Recognizing that Black's terrible pieces aren't going anywhere and slowly improving piece placement. This is an effective, if not yawn-inducing strategy, but I must admit the silicon's prowess. ]

10...0-0?! Black just needlessly complicated the game for himself.

11.Bxc6 bxc6 12.0-0 [ I was tempted, but quickly realized I needed to resolve my king safety: 12.Na4? Qa5+! ]

12...Qb6 Somehow I missed this move... although it's not as scary as it first seemed. 13.Na4! The knight aims for the c5-outpost. 13...Qxb3 14.axb3 Ba6 15.Rfc1 Only move. 15...Bb5 16.Nc3! White recognizes the need to dislodge the bishop prior to pushing his Q-side activity. 16...a6 17.Nxb5?! It's interesting how much move order matters sometimes: White needed to temporarily keep his knight to guard e4 while maneuvering his f3-knight through
treacherous waters to reposition it more actively. This is a little too quick on the trigger.

[ 17.Ne5 Ng4 18.Nd7 Rfe8 19.Nxb5 cxb5 20.Rc7± and White's pieces end up much more active. ]

17...axb5?! Fortunately, Black returns the misstep back.

[ 17...cxb5!? 18.Rc6 ( 18.Ne5 Ne4!= ) 18...a5 19.Rb6 Ne4 20.Rxb5 Rfb8 21.Rxb8+ Rxb8 22.Rxa5 Rc8= White's doubled pawns aren't enough to bring him a significant advantage in this endgame. ]

18.Ne5! Instantly snapped. I remember Elliot walking by and stopping at this move to evaluate. White doesn't want to allow Black to infiltrate the open files, so he should use his minors to do the dirty work.

18...Ne4 19.Nxc6 Nxg5?? Black just completely loses the plot: trading away his very active minor for our lonesome bishop... to improve White's pawn structure!? This ends up sealing the game.

[ I was only scared by the following move and it turns out I was right in my assessment: 19...f6 20.Bf4 g5 21.Bc7 gxh4± and while the engine prefers White, Black is starting to see some play. ]

[ 19...Nd2 was what I was expecting, but it turns out fine for White: 20.b4 (However, I was also seriously considering this: 20.Ra3?! Rxa3 21.bxa3 Ra8!= is what I had missed, expecting ...Nxb3. ) 20...Nb3 21.Rxa8 Rxa8 22.Ne7+ Kh7 23.Rc7± ]

20.hxg5 Rfe8 21.f4 Played after a half-hour of thought and thank Lord I did as I was seriously considering a dubious move. However, as I couldn't find a forcing win, I fell back onto this line, as it's a nice consolidation maneuver and stops ...e5.

[ 21.Ra7? was what I considered and while still winning, it just makes White's life excessively difficult. Rxa7 22.Nxa7 Ra8 23.Nxb5 Rb8 24.Nc3 Rxb3± White is still a pawn up but he'll have to work for that pawn. ]

[ 21.b4! on the other hand, is completely crushing: fixing the pawn to a light square, away from the bishop's protection. How did I miss this move when I spotted the concept already? Don't ask me... Bf8 22.Ra5+- ]

21...Bf8 22.Ne5 White's taking his knight for a little maneuver: Nc6-e5-d7-c5, where it's perched much better to blockade Black's pieces. It also has the added threat of Rxa8-Rc7 -- targeting the f7-pawn. 22...Bd6 23.Nd7 Threatening the fork to win a tempo. 23...Kg7 24.Nc5 Kf8

[ 24...b4 was Black's chance to bring about any difficulty. 25.Kf2 Rec8 26.Ke2 Rxa1 27.Rxa1 Rc7 28.Ra5+- ]

25.b4! ends up of Black's chances to achieve play. The rest is simple.

25...Kd7 26.Ra5 Rxa5 27.bxa5 Finally undoubling the b-pawns. 27...b4 28.Ra1 Ra8 29.Ra4 Kd8 30Nb7+ Kc7 31.Nxd6 Kxd6 32.Rxb4 Rxa5 33.Rb7 And the game's over: Black's f7-and then g6-pawns are dropping like flies. 33...Ra2 34.Rxf7 Rxb2 35.Kf1 Last precise move required, not allowing any counterplay against the e3-pawn. With this, Black could safely resign.

1-0
A hard-fought battle, in which Max eventually came out on top. 1.d4 d5
Bxf6 12.Be4 Bb7 13.Qa4 Rc8 14.dxc5 bxc5 15.Rd1 Qb6 16.0-0 Rfd8 17.h4 Ne7


(Diagram)

Qxb2!† Hardly poisoned -- in fact White's queenside comes undone. But the win is another matter, still far off...
[24...c4 ]
[24...Qxa2 ]
25.Rb7 Qxc7 26.Rxc7 Nd5 27.Rxc5

Be7
[27...Nc3! 28.Re1 Nxa2 ]
[31.Ra4 ]
31...Bc5 32.a4 Ra2
33. Rc1  Bb6  34. Bb8?!
34...h5?
[ 34...Bxf2+  35.Kh2  h5-+ ]
35. Rc8+  Kh7  36. Rx7f+  Kg6
[ 36...Ra1+  37.Kh2  Rxa4= ]

37. Rb7?
[ 37.Rf4= ]
37...Bxf2++ Finally -- leading to fairly clear sailing. 38. Kf1  Bxh4  39. Rc6
Rxa4  40. Rxe6+  Bf6  41. Ke2  Ra2+
42. Kf3  Kf5  43. Re3  a6  44. Rb4  g5
45. Rd3  g4+  46. Ke3 Bg5+  47. Kd4
Rxg2  48. Kd5  Rd2  49. Kc4  Rxd3
50. Kxd3  h4  51. Ke2  Be7  52. Rb7  a5
53. Rb5+  Kg6  54. Ke3  a4  55. Rb6+  Kf7
56. Ke4  a3  57. Be5  Ra4+  58. Kf5  a2
59. Ba1  g3  60. Rh6  Ra5+  61. Kg4
Rg5+  62. Kh3  g2  63. Bd4  Rg3+
64. Kh2  a1Q  65. Rh7+  Ke8  66. Rh8+
Kd7  67. Rxh4  g1Q+  68. Bxg1  Qxg1# 0-1

8. Ng5!  Qd7  9. d5!  e5  10. Bg3
[ The computer gives the following variation, however White did not feel so bold this day. 10. Ne6  exf4
11. Nxg7+!  Kd8!  12. Bd3  Ne4
13. Nxe4  fxe4  14. Bxe4 where Black will have trouble finding safety for his king. ]
10... Na6
[ Don't try 10... Nxd5?  11. cxd5  Bxg5
Nxc6  15. Qh5+!  wins a piece.  g6
16. Qxg5 ]
11.Ne6! For now, Black's king will remain in the center of the board. 11...Rg8
Winslow,Elliott: '?!'
[ 11...g6 ]
12.Qc2 Winslow,Elliott: '± Not bad, at all - - but White had all sorts of "strike while the iron is hot" moves:'
[ 12.b4 Here b4 should be considered to stop the knight from coming to c5 and removing White's excellent e6 knight, but the followup was missed from White otb. Winslow,Elliott: '!' Nxb4 13.Qb1 The computer does not miss though. a5 14.Qxf5 g6 15.Qb1 ]
[ 12.f4! Winslow,Elliott ]
[ 12.e4! Winslow,Elliott ]
12...g6 13.Rd1?!
[ 13.f4! Winslow,Elliott ]
13...c6?! Now the knight's anchor is in jeopardy...
[ 13...Nc5! (Winslow,Elliott) For an up-to-the-minute analogy: that pothole needs filling! ]
14.Qb3
[ 14.e4! Winslow,Elliott f4 15.Bh4 Kf7 16.g3 ]
14...Nc7 15.Nxc7+ Qxc7 16.dxc6
Bxc6 17.Nb5! This series of trades proves favorable for White, even if he loses his great outpost. 17...Qb7??
18.c5!? A tricky move, but the straightforward Nxd6 should have been preferred.
[ 18.Nxd6+! Bxd6 19.Rxd6 Ne4 ( 19...Ke7?! 20.c5 ) 20.c5!!
The point of this variation.
A) 20...Nxd6? 21.cxd6 ( 21.Qxg8+ );
B) 20...Kf8 21.Bxe5!! Re8 22.Re6 ]
18...0-0-0? This is a bit too much, as the king is even less safe. 19.Nxd6+?!  
[ 19.cxd6 Would again have been more straightforward. Bf8 ( 19...Bxb5 20.Bxb5 ) 20.Bxe5 ]
19...Bxd6 20.cxd6 Rge8 21.Qa3?
Making the superficial threat of Ba6 to win the queen, but Black had shown up late to this game and as a result was very low on time at this point.
[ 21.Bh4 Keeps things difficult for Black. ]
21...Ne4?? 22.Ba6! Nothing else can be tried.
1-0

29.d4!+- Nce4 30.f3 Nxe3

(Diagram)
31. Qxf5?
   \[31...Nxe3+ 32. Kh1 Nxd1 34. Bd4 Bb4 35. Nd3 Nh5 \[35...Nd7 \]
   36. Bxb6 Nc3 37. Nb2 Ba3 38. Bc7 Ng3+ [38...Nx b5 39.axb5 Bxb2 40.b6 Bd4 41.b7 Ba7]
39. Kg2

Bxb2?? Probably completely out of time, Black just doesn't force himself to stop the pawn. (I've lost dozens of blitz games the same way.)

39... Nf5! It's *this* knight that will deal with that dangerous passed pawn.

[39...Nxb5! 40.axb5 Bxb2 41.b6 Bd4 ... or this bishop (when Black has a couple extra pawns, and a solid win).]

40. b6+- Nd1 41.b7 Ne3+ 42. Kf2 Nd1+ 43. Ke1 Ne3 44. b8Q+ Kh7

45. Qxb2 Ng2+ 46. Qxg2

1-0
[ 15.Nf4 is also pretty good -- the e6 square is a gold mine. ]
[And best of all (not by too much): 15.Rhe1! threatens various sacrifices, winning. Admittedly it's hard not to grab the h-pawn! ]

15...Rxh7

16.Qxe7??
[ 16.Qe6+! sets up a draw, but who would think!
A) 16...Be7 17.Qg8+ Bf8  
( 17...Kd7 18.Qxh7 White is even going to be a bit better, says Stockfish ) 18.Qe6+=;
B) 16...Kf8 17.Nf4 Rh6!  
(The threat was 18.Ng6+ Nxe6 19. Qf7#) 18.Qg8+ Ke7 19.Qe6+ ]

16...Nxc4 17.Qg8+

(Diagram)

19.Rxd4?
[ 19.Rh1! and mate next! ]

19...Nd6?
20.Rh4?
  [ 20.Nxf6+! gxf6  ( 20...Kf8  21.Qg8# )  
    21.Rg4 and mate! ]
20...Ne5 21.Re4 Ne5 22.g4?
  [ 22.Nxe7 Qxe7□  23.Qg8+ Qf8
    24.Qe6+= ]
22...c6 23.Nc3 Kf8 24.g5 Qd6 25.Qh3
Rd8 26.g6 Qd2+ Black gets the last
word, and it's mate on d1.
0-1

Diaz,Conrado 2262
Bambou,Christophe 2058
2023 Spring TNM: 2000+ (3.2) 21.03.23
[Winslow,Elliott]

c5 5.c3 cxd4 6.cxd4 Nc6 7.e3 Qa5+
8.Nfd2

(Diagram)
19.Qb3

19.Qe2 Rd4?!  
[ 19...Rd8 20.a3 Rb3 ]

20.Nb5 Qa5+ 21.Rc3 Kb8  
[ 21...Rd3!  
A) 22.Nd6+ Kb8 23.Nxf5 Rxc3  
24.bxc3 Qxc3+  
( 26.Kc2 Qxa2+ ) 26...Rd8+  
A2) 25.Qd2;  
B) 22.a3 Qxb5 23.Qd2 Rxd2  
24.Bxb5 Rxb2 25.Rxc5+ Kb8  
(Two threats: 26...b6 and 26...Rb1+) 26.e6 Bxe6 27.0-0-+ ]

22.Nxd4!± Bxd4

23.Qb5?  
[ 23.Qd2! Bxc3  
A) 24.bxc3 Rd8 25.Qc1 Rc8  
( 25...Qxa2 );  
B) 24.Qxc3! ]

23...Bxc3+ 24.bxc3 Qxc3+ 25.Kf2

Qd4+ 26.Kg3  
[ 26.Ke1 Rc8! mate is coming ]

26...g5  
[ 26...Rc8!? ]

27.h3  
[ 27.h4 gxh4+ 28.Kh2 Qf4+ 29.Kg1  
Rc8 ]

27...Rc8 28.Kh2 a6 29.Qa5

Bxh3! 30.Rg1  
[ 30.Qa3 Bxg2! 31.Bxg2 Qf4+  
32.Kg1 Rc1+ 33.Qxc1 Qxc1+-+ ]

30...Bd7  
[ 30...Rc2 ]

31.g3  
[ 31.Qe1 ]

31...h5!?  
[ 31...Rc1 32.Qd8+ Ka7 33.Qxg5  
Qf2+ 34.Rg2 Qxf1 ]

32.Bg2?!  
[ 32.e6 Bxe6 ( 32...h4! ) 33.Qxg5 h4  
34.gxh4 Rh8 35.Qg3+ Ka8 36.Kg2  
f6 ]

32...h4!  

(Diagram)
Computers see mate now (in 15 though)

33.g4 h3?! Can't call it "bad" when it's completely winning

[ 33...Qf4+ 34.Kh1 h3 wins a bishop (which means long diagonal), opens the h-file, the end is near. 35.Qa3 hgx2+ 36.Rxg2 Rh8+ 37.Kg1 Qd4+ 38.Rf2 Qa1+ 39.Rf1 Qxe5 and into g3. ]

34.Bxh3 Rh8?!

[ 34...Rc2+
  A) 35.Rg2 Qf4+ 36.Kg1 (36.Kh1 Qxf3) 36...Rc1+ 37.Kf2 Bb5;
  B) 35.Bg2 ]

35.Qe1 Bc6 Bambou stopped keeping score, which tells us he was running out of time. 36.Qg3

[ △36.Rf1 ]

36...Qe3?! Black is *still* winning, but letting White trade off that weak pawn makes it a tougher go.

[ 36...Ka8! ]

37.e6+ Ka8 38.exf7 Qe7 After picking up the f-pawn Black is still winning, but there is still work to do... (-3 on the computer) 39.Rf1 Qxf7 40.Rf2 Re8 Sending the queen to e3 or e1 would probably send White into Zugzwang.

41.Bg2 Re1?! 42.Rd2?!

[ 42.f4! Bxg2! 43.Kxg2 (forced) Qd5+

44.Qf3 Re4! keeps Q+R on the board so that White's king is *still* a target, with Stockfish 15.1 suspecting a win for Black. 45.fxg5?! Rxg4+ 46.Kh3 Qxf3+ 47.Rxf3 Rxg5 is a big win -- White's king stuck on the h-file makes it easy -- even 48.Rf4 Ka7 49.a4 Kb6 50.Rb4+ Ka5 51.Rxb7 Kxa4 is routine.]

42...Qh7+

[ 42...Re8! ]

43.Bh3 Qe7

[ 43...Re8 ]

44.Bg2 Qh7+ 45.Qh3 Qe7

[ 45...Qg7! 46.Rd8+ Ka7 47.Qh8 Qxh8+ 48.Rxh8 Ra1+- ]

46.Qh8+ Somewhere around here on a queen check Black made a rook move; White was awarded a two-minute penalty. Black was already down to maybe five seconds (plus delay) at that point, while White had more than a few minutes.

46...Ka7 47.Qd4+

48.Qd8+ Qxd8 49.Rxd8+ Ka7

In this quite even position Black lost on

Rxe5 32.Rxc5 bxc5 33.Bxe8 Rxe8 34.Rc5 Ra8 35.Rc3 a4 36.Ra3 (Diagram)
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 The moment I saw this move on the board, I knew things were starting to heat up. In all my preparation, I had only observed my opponent going into the main 1.d4 lines once or twice (and almost always against Elliott!), so my curiosity began to peak. 2...g6 3.Nc3 d5 Deja vu, I have been in this place before! For the third time straight, the Grunfeld Defense appears onto the board. In my previous two games, Black had failed to materialize anything out of it. Perhaps third time's the charm? 4.Bg5 What the...? Even though I had a nagging suspicion that the Grunfeld may appear on the board tonight, there was no way I would've predicted that it would be the Stockholm variation with Bg5. The fight is on! 4...Bg7 The Svidler system, popularized by the godfather of the modern day Grunfeld! I had briefly considered playing the main line, but I quickly realized three things: my opponent would've certainly examined it in detail, he could easily play one of the more solid variants like 5.Bf4 and my position on the leaderboard necessitated a win to be in the running, and finally, I wasn't certainly if I could fully recall the theory for some of the more critical lines like 5.h4, so I settled on this line. The point of it is rather simple: Black is offering a pawn in exchange for a huge boost in dynamic activity, which Grunfeld players always strive for. 

[The main line is 4...Ne4 after which White has a wide variety of choices ranging from solid lines to more aggressive ones. Here's an example of a sharp line: 5.Bh4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 dxc4 7.e3 Be6 8.Nf3 Bg7 9.Qb1 Qd5 10.Be2 Bf5 11.Qb4 c5 12.Qb5+ Bd7 13.Qxc4 Bc6 14.Qb3 e6 15.c4 Qd7 16.Ne5 Qc7 17.0-0 0-0 18.Bg3 Qb6 19.Rfd1 Qa6 20.a4 Nd7 21.Nxc6 bxc6 22.Rab1 cxd4 23.exd4 Nb6 24.Ra1 Rfd8 25.a5 Nc8 26.Ra2 Ne7 27.d5 exd5 28.cxd5 Qc8 29.Bh4 Qc7 30.Bxe7 Qxe7 31.dxc6 Rxd1+ 32.Qxd1 Rd8 33.Qc2 Be5 34.g3 Rb8 35.Kg2 Kg7 36.Qc1 Rb3 37.Bf3 Bc7 38.Qc4 Ra3 39.Qd4+ Be5 40.Re2 Rxa5 ½-½ Wei,Y (2743)-Svidler,P (2768) Tata Steel-A 80th Wijk aan Zee 2018 (2) and Svidler was lucky to escape with a draw later on...
]

(ew): I think this 4...Bg7 line has in fact become the modern main line! It definitely happened while *I* was sleeping (probably a time zone thing). It's
a wonderful example of the Gruenfeld, where so often it's not about material (a pawn here or there) but the Initiative.

Very instructive! 5.Bxf6 The main try, White has to accept the challenge!

[White may also transpose back to the main variant with 5.Nf3 Ne4 but with Bg7 and Nf3 on the board, White's flexibility is severely lessened, so this isn't too bad for Black.]

5...Bxf6  6.cxd5 The players have reached the tabiya of the Svidler system and now Black has a choice. 6...c5!? An interesting idea that had begun to appear in the early 2010's when Topalov and Giri began to play it and is considered the modern way to play this system! Black's idea is to prevent White's consolidation in the center via e2-e4 by temporarily sacrificing a second pawn in order to directly attack White's dark squares. 7.Nf3! Second main move and quite reasonable, but I feel that White is obligated to accept the gauntlet if he wants to pose a challenge to Black.


7...cxd4 [7...0-0!? ]

8.Nxd4 Qb6! Black's attacking the knight to gain development tempi and drive it to a place where it can be attacked further. 9Nb3!


9...a5!? [9...0-0 has been the main try by top players in this position, but I believed the text move is more forcing when I was building my repertoire.]

(Diagram)
10.Qd2?! is the novelty of this game and a bit of a surprising one to say the least. The point is obviously to defend the b2-pawn, but I feel as if 10.Qc1 is better for that task as it leaves Nd2 open (and obviously not 10.Qc2 which is met with 10...Bf5). But White's main try should've been to counter-play against Black's light squares instead!

[ 10.e3! ]

A) 10...a4 11.Bb5+ Bd7


Black attempts to punish White's choice of queen placement by marching the rook's pawn straight down the isle! (ew: "aisle" :-) With White's knight blocking Rc1, his pawn is chained to b2.


[ 10.Nd2!?N can lead to some very interesting positions. ]

10...a4 11.Nc1 a3!!

[ 11...0-0 ]
demonstrates the razor-sharp nature of the Grunfeld, instantly dropping the engine's evaluation to -3.3

[White's only attempt to save the position was 12.Rb1!=/ 0-0 13.bxa3 Qc7 14.Nb5 Qxe5 15.e3 Rd8 16.d6! Bd7=} and while my engine may claim parity, White's position is not pleasant at all. ]

[ 12.b3?? or 12.bxa3 Qa5 13.b4 Qxb4 14.Nd3 Qxc3+ ]

12...axb2 13.Qxb2 Qb4?! A little too hasty from my end and demonstrates my need to spend more time evaluating these critical positions. It may look natural but wastes a vital tempo: White is intending Rc1ΔQd2 anyway and this move even puts the unprotected queen in the line of fire.

[(EW): 13...0-0 followed by 14...Bf5 is *winning* acc. to Stockfish 15.1 !?!
14.Rc1 Bf5 15.Qd2 Rc8 I left my computer running while having dinner, and it's -3.58 at depth 46(!). ]

[ Better was 13...Bf5 14.Rc1 ]

14.Rc1!+ Bf5 Developing to an active diagonal and opening the square for Rc8. 15.e3?!-+ Thankfully for me, White gives back the vital tempo to Black.

[The only way to remain in the game is 15.Qd2 0-0 16.Nd1 Qa3 17.e3 Qxa2 18.Qxa2 Rxa2+ and while Black regains the pawn and White is stuck with passive pieces, Black doesn't have enough active pieces to shut out White from the game completely. ]

15...0-0 16.Qd2 Rc8 17.Nd1
To be honest, I didn't expect this move at all, the knight just looks so unnatural on d1.

[ 17.Ne2 was my expectation, after which Rxc1+ 18Nbxc1 Qb1 19.Nd4 Bxd4 20.exd4 Be4+- made me confident in my position. ]

[ 17Nb5?! Qxd2+ 18.Kxd2 Rxa2+ 19.Ke1 Rxc1+ 20.Nxc1 Ra1 21.Kd2 Rb1+- Δb2+ and White's Δb5 is looking a bit stranded. ]

17...Qxd2+ 18.Kxd2 Rxa2+ 19.Ke1 Rxc1
[ I had thought of 19...Rcc2 20.Rxc2 Bxc2 21.Nd4 Bxd4 22.exd4 Bxd1 23.Kxd1 Nd7+- but I stylistically preferred the text move. ]

20.Nxc1 Rc2!
[ I had pondered about 20...Ra1 as well, but after 21Nb3 Ra3 22.Nd4 Be4+- I couldn't find anything concretely winning, so decided against it despite the move being as good as the text move. ]

This position instantly screamed "Karpovian" — the great World Champion had a tendency to strangle his opponent's pieces in this manner. (ew: usually as *White* *against* the Grunfeld!) Despite material parity, White's Nd1, Rh1, and even Bf1 are completely pacified at the moment and his king is stuck on the back rank! Though already winning for Black, even I felt a psychological torture just looking at this position from White's point of view! 21.Nd3
[My expectation was 21.Ne2 although after Na6 22.Ng3 Bd7+ White isn't faring much better than before.]

21...Na6 22.Nf4 Nc5
[I was debating between this move and 22...Nb4 Both turn out to be fine, but I did enjoy having my knight a little closer to the center action.]

23.Bb5
I hesitate to give this move an inaccuracy since only my silicon friend could realistically continue struggling in this position, but it does allow the final nail in the coffin. 23...g5! Knocking the knight away from protection of the d3-square. 24.Nh5 Bd3? (△Re2)
[I will be completely honest — the engine's declaration of an error confused me for quite a bit, but it turns out 24...Be5 was a necessary intermezzo in this position, after which 25.Ng3 Bd3 26.Bxd3 Nxd3+ 27.Kf1 Rd2+ leads to the resulting text position.]

25.Nxf6+?
[Fortunately, my opponent also missed the insane defense that slightly keeps White in the game: 25.Bxd3 Nxd3+ 26.Kf1 Rd2 and after 27.d6!! (which I completely missed), Black's king cannot actually reach the pawn due to being blocked by his own e7-pawn, so he is forced to give up on the piece advantage: exd6 28.Nxf6+ Kf8 29.Nc3 Rxf2+ 30.Kg1 Rxf6+ and White still has some juice left in the tank — although with two extra pawns and the entombed Rh1, Black should still have no difficulty converting this position. (ew: Maybe some of those "?"s should be "?!" since it still looks pretty bad for White... )]

[I was prepared for 28.d6 Kf8 29.d7 Ke7 30.Nc3 Rxf2+ 31.Kg1 Rc2 32.Nd5+ Kxd7+ and White can't take due to threat of ...Rc1#.]

28...Rxf2+ 29.Kg1 Rc2

Threatening both ...Rxc3 and ...Rc1#

30.h4 Rxc3 31.Kh2 Rc1 Not giving White a morsel of reprieve and simply trading down to a completely won endgame. 32.Rxc1 Nxc1 Even without the N/c1, Black still wins this endgame. 33.hxg5 fxg5 34.Kg3 b5 35.Kg4 b4 36.Kf5 b3 37.d6 b2 38.Kf6 b1Q 39.d7 Qg6+ 40.Ke7 Qe6+ 0-1

Walder,Michael 1954
Parsons,Stephen 1780
2023 Spring TNM: 1600-1999 (3.8) [TA/Walder,Michael/Winslow,Elliott]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Nd5 This less tactical line got a good going over in the Carlsen World Championship matches with Caruana and Karjakin, and there are still some interesting ideas to be found. 7...Nxd5 8.exd5 Nb8 [8...Ne7]
9.a4 This is now debated instead of 9.c4.
9...Be7 10.Be2 0-0 11.Bd2
[ 11.0-0 Nd7 12.Bd2 f5 13.a5 a6
  1-0 Kriebel,T (2515)-Lewtak,D (2411)
  Legnica Voivoda Cup 34th 2018 (4)
  was the order for ]
11...a6 12.Na3 Nd7 13.a5± White is slightly better. 13...f5 0.85/29
  [ 13...Nf6± 0.35/31 ]
14.0-0 0.36/32
  [ 14.Nc4± 0.85/29 ]
14...Bg5 1.67/25
  [Black should try 14...e4± 0.36/32 ]

15.Bb4N 1.21/28
  [The precedent game was a quintessential positional grind:
   15.Nc4+- 1.67/25 Bxd2 16.Qxd2 Rf6
   17.f4 Rh6 18.Ra3 Rook Lift vs. Rook Lift! Rb8 19.b4 Kh8 20.Re3 e4
   21.Qd4 b5 22.axb6 Qf6 23.Qxf6
   Rxf6 24.Rc3 Bb7 25.Rd1 Kg8
   Rb7 31.c4 Nd7 32.Ra1 Ke7
   33.Rca6 1-0 Kriebel,T (2515)-Lewtak,
   D (2411) Legnica Voivoda Cup 34th 2018 (4) ]
15...Qc7 1.89/28
  [ 15...Be7± 1.21/28 is a better defense,
  says Mike's cloud analysis, but who's going to retreat now? ]
16.Nc4+- Be7 Black is, is who. 17.Qd3 b5?! 2.28/28
  [ 17...Rf6± 1.46/27 18.Qc3 Rh6 ]
18.axb6! Nxb6

19.Nxe5! Bb7 6.52/27
  [ 19...dxe5? 20.d6 Bxd6 21.Bxd6+-
  19...a5 2.32/29 ]
20.Nc6 Qd7 21.Nxe7+ Qxe7 22.c4
  With an extra pawn, the Two Bishops, healthier pawns (two pawn islands vs.
  three), Black's bishop restrained -- White must just be winning. 22...Nd7
23.Bc3 Nc5 24.Qd1 Rae8 25.Bh5
  Rc8 26.b3 Ne4 27.Bb2 Qg5 28.Re1
  Rc7 29.Bf3 Rcf7 30.Qd4 Bc8 31.Re2
22...Nc5 32.Qc3 f4 6.91/26
  [ ∆32...Qg6 4.74/29 33.Ree1 h6 ]
33.b4 Nd7 34.c5 Ne5
  (Diagram)
40.Qxg7+!

[ 40.Qe6+ is just as good, if you notice
Kh8 41.c7 Bxg2 42.h4! ]

40...Qxg7 41.Bxg7 Bxg2 42.Kxg2
Rg5+ 43.Kf1 Kxg7 44.Rxa6
Endgame KRR-KRB 44...Kf6 45.c7+
Kd7 46.Rh6 Black must now prevent
d6+. 46...Rg7 47.d6+ The computer
says "White mates." 47...Kd7 48.b5
Rf5g8 49.Bc6+ Kc8 50.b6 White must
have enjoyed that. Certainly an

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5
Nfd7 5.Nce2 c5 6.f4!? I needed a
wrinkle to play against the French in this
game, and I decided to go with an early
f4. 6...Nc6 7.Nf3 Bc7 8.c3 0-0 9.a3
Nb6 10.dxc5 Bxc5 11.b4 Be7
12.Ned4?!  
[ 12.a4 Nc4 13.Ng3 with a balanced
position ]

12...Bd7 13.Bd3 Rc8 14.0-0
and White is slightly better ]

14...Nxd4 15.cxd4 Ba4 16.Qe2 Nc4
17.Bd2? The start of White's problems.
My thinking here was to prepare to put a
rook on c1. I figured White was fine after
Nxd2 but I didn't pay sufficient attention
to Nb2.

[ 17.g4 ]

17...Qd7 18.g4? A logical continuation
of my plan in this game after 6. f4, but
allows Black to slip in the knife on b2.
[ 18.Be1 is the engine
recommendation but wasn't easy to
find. The bishop is not doing much on
d2 but it will take precious time to
rotate it to the kingside. ]

18...Nb2 At this point Black's idea was
clear to me: 19...Nxd3, 20. Qxd3 Bb5
wins the exchange. 19.Ne1

[ 19.Rf1 Nxd3 20.Qxd3 Rc4
is not as bad for White ]

19...Nxd3 20.Nxd3 Bb5 21.Rf3 B6
22.Qf2 Rc4?! This move doesn't do
much. There is no reason for White not
to proceed with f5. My fear was

[ 40.Qe6+ is just as good, if you notice
Kh8 41.c7 Bxg2 42.h4! ]

40...Qxg7 41.Bxg7 Bxg2 42.Kxg2
Rg5+ 43.Kf1 Kxg7 44.Rxa6
Endgame KRR-KRB 44...Kf6 45.c7+
Kd7 46.Rh6 Black must now prevent
d6+. 46...Rg7 47.d6+ The computer
says "White mates." 47...Kd7 48.b5
Rf5g8 49.Bc6+ Kc8 50.b6 White must
have enjoyed that. Certainly an
something like 23. f5 Rc2 after which Black can threaten Bg5, creating a double attack on the bishop on d2. However, this was a hallucination I could have avoided with more precise calculation. 23.Be3? jumping at shadows. 23...Rc3 24.Ne1 Rfc8 25.Bd2 R3c7? After Black incorrectly declines the rook trade, White is totally fine! The pawn push on the kingside can resume, but I was imprecise in executing it. 26.h4 Ba4 27.g5? Bc2! Threatening Be4, which White cannot afford. The exchange is forced and Black once again gains entry on the queenside. 28.Nxc2 Rxc2 29.f5? ironically, there were many earlier opportunities for me to play f5, which I'd prepared with my choice of 6.f4. However, at this point in the game it sets up the fatal blunder. 29...exf5 30.Rxf5?? "Overloaded defenders" is a motif I am now going to drill alongside forks and skewers. 30...Rxd2 31.Qxd2 Qxf5 32.Qf2 Qd3 33.Rf1 Qg6 34.Qf5 Qxf5 35.Rxf5 Rc4 36.Rf4 Rc3 0-1

(ew: Nice game by Hoa-Long! I've wondered why so many Mechanics' player play 3...c5 against the Advanced Variation Caro Kann; this game shows at least one good reason. If Black gets going, it can be White caught in the center...) 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.dxc5 e6 5.Be3 Nd7 threatens both pawns 6.Nd2?! defends neither pawn. If White wants to give up the e pawn for activity, I think White should go for a more active move. 6...Nxe5 7.Ngf3 Nd7?! I wanted to keep pressure on the c5 pawn and stay solid, but I'm going to wind up too far behind in development. 7...Nxf3+ 8.Nxf3 Qa5+- and Black is just up a pawn ] 8.Nb3 This solidly defends c5 but the knight stands in the way of White's 4-on-2 QS pawn majority. [ 8.b4 a5 9.c3 b6= ] 8...Ne7 [ 8...Ngf6 Instead of going after the bishop, I could try to develop more actively and pick up the c-pawn later by pushing a7-a5-a4. However, maneuvering the knight to f5 is very thematic and I didn't consider this. 9.c4= is not a threat because I can recapture with the knight ] 9.c4!? This looked like a very strong move during the game, as my development is awful and if I trade my center pawns then only White will be playing for a win. However, White will be forced to accept an isolated e3 pawn, keeping me in the game. 9...Nf5 [ 9...dxc4 10.Bxc4± ] 10.cxd5 1:49 [ 10.Bd4? trying to prevent the isolated e pawn doesn't work for White Nxd4 11.Nfxd4 ( 11.Qxd4 Bxc5! 12.Nxc5 Qa5+; 11Nbxd4 e5 12Nb3 d4+= c4 has turned into a liability and c5 is lost ) 11...Nxc5= ] 10...Nxe3 1:53 11.fxe3 Nxc5 keeping my bishop un-developed, but I want to go after the b3 knight to give my queen access to a5. 12.Nxc5 [ 12.dxe6? Qxd1+ 13.Rxd1 Nxb3 14.axb3 Bxe6= ] 12...Bxc5 13.Bb5+ Bd7? [ 13...Ke7!? 14.Bc4 getting out of a queen fork on a5. Bxe3= ] 14.dxe6? [ 14.Qa4 my king and queen are tied down to d7, so must force a trade
before White can build any additional pressure a6 15.Bxd7+ Qxd7 16.Qxd7+ Kxd7 17.dxe6+ Kxe6 18.Nd4+† White has an isolated pawn and Black has better king activity. If we trade on d4 then White's isolated pawn will be passed and defended easily with O-O-O, but if we don't then my king is too exposed to deal with the coming knight and rook checks. Running to f8 will block in my rook 14...Bxb5 [14...Qa5+ 15.Kf2 Bxb5 16.exf7+ Kf8 (16...Kxf7 17.Qd5±)] 15.exf7+ 1:32 Kxf7?? 1:37 [15...Kf8† My rook is blocked in but I'm up a bishop and should be able to grab the pawn and connect my rooks as soon as I can force a queen trade. ] 16.Qb3+ Ke7 17.Qxb5 Qb6 offering a queen trade, but any other attempt to defend the bishop will run into White's rooks coming to c1 or d1. I don't want to retreat the bishop to b6 and open myself up to a bunch of queen checks. [17...Bxe3 18.Qe5++-] 18.Qc4? [18.Qxb6 Bxb6 19.Kf2±] 18...Bxe3? I completely missed that my b7 pawn hangs after this [18...Qb4+ 19.Qxb4 Bxb6+ 20.Kf2±] 19.Qe4+ Qe6 20.Qxb7+? 1:17. Lucky for me, this pawn is quite poisonous [20.Qh4+? g5! 21.Qh5 (21.Qh3 g4++; 21.Qg3 Bf4++; 21.Nxg5 Bxg5++; 21.Qb4+ Bc5++) 21...Bf4+†] 20...Kf6 1:21. White is in a tough spot. White's king is very vulnerable and cannot access the dark squares because of my discovery threats along the e file. I'm also threatening ...Rab8, after which White's queen has no light escape squares. 21.Rf1?? this looks like the most natural move by far, but it blunders mate! [21.Qb3 Bc5+ (21...Qxb3 22.axb3=) 22.Kf1 Qa6+ 23.Ke1 Rhe8+ 24.Kd1 Qe2+ 25.Kc1 Rac8†] [21.Qb5 Rhe8†] 21...Bf4+ 22.Kd1 [22.Kf2 Qe3#] 22...Rhd8+ 23.Kc2 [23.Nd2 Rxd2+ 24.Kc1 Qc4+ 25.Kb1 Qxf1#] 23...Qc4+ 24.Kb1 Qd3# 0-1

The lines start to clear up at the top of the field. Dasika riskily lets Widjaja set up an imposing pawn attack against his castled king, but somewhere in there it goes wrong for White. 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.h3 Bxf3 5.Qxf3 e6 6.g3 Nf6 7.Bg2 Bc5 8.0-0 Nbd7 9.d3 0-0 10.Qe2 dxe4 11.dxe4 e5 12.Na4 Bd6 13.f4 Qc7 14.f5 Rfe8 15.g4 Nc5 16.Nxc5 Bxc5+ 17.Kh2 Rad8 18.g5 Nd7 (Diagram)
19.g6? Breaking too soon! There was no urgency, no danger of Black counter-attacking.

[The computer offers 19.h4 with Bh3 and h5 to tighten the screws before jumping in. Black might be nicely centralized, but there’s nothing to do but await White’s break.]


21...Kh7 22.Rf7 Qd6?! [22...Re7 leaves White wondering just what he’s doing there.]

23.Bg5 Nb6 24.Qe2

[24.Qb3±]

24...Rd7 25.Raf1 Qe6 26.Rxd7?! [26.Rf7f3! Regroup!]

26...Nxd7 27.h4 Rf8= 28.Bh3 Qe8

29.h5 gxh5 [29...Rxf1!]

30.Bf5+ Kh8 31.Qg2? Nf6! 32.Rd1 g6! 33.Bh3 Nh7 Black pushes White out. 34.Rf1?!

[34.Rd8 Qf7 35.Rd7 Qxd7! 36.Bxd7 Rf2]

34...Rxf1 35.Qxf1 Nxg5 36.Qf6+ Kh7 37.Qxg5 Qf8 38.Qg2

(Diagram) Qf2 Dasika trusts that the opposite colored bishop ending with two extra healthy pawns is won -- and it is.

39.Qxf2

[39.Bc8 Qh4+ 40.Qh3 Qxe4]

39...Bxf2 40.Kg2 Be3 41.Kf3 Bc1 42.b3 g5 43.Bf5+ Kh6 44.a4 g4+ Black smoothly avoids any hint of blockade by White’s bishop and king.

45.Kg2 Kg5 46.c4 c5 47.a5 h4 48.Bc8 h3+ 49.Kh1 Kh4 50.b4 g3

Defence is often said to be harder than attack -- but in this game it was the other way around; Black defended well, and White’s attack was inconsistent and premature.

0-1

Hao,Max 2047
Diaz,Conrado 2262

2023 Spring TNM: 2000+ (4.2) 28.03.23 [Winslow,Elliott]

Another bumpy ride. Conrado’s offbeat Budapest Gambit didn’t seem to faze Max too much, but into an ending set up the classic experienced endgame master vs. expert unclear on the concepts.
Black almost blew it at one point, but White matched Black's error with his own, and Diaz was able to put all his small advantages together for the point.. $1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 Budapest Gambit -- not common.  3.dxe5 Ne4 The Fajrowicz Variation -- *definitely* not common at all! 4.a3 d6 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Qd5 Nc5 7.Bg5 f6 8.exf6 gxf6 This just has to be good for White, but there is a development problem that needs to be resolved before that extra pawn will matter. And White's queen keeps getting kicked around... 9.Bh4 Be6 10.Qh5+ Bf7 11.Qf5 Bg7 12.Nc3 0-0 13.e3

XIIIIIIIIY

9r+-+-tr-mk({
9+pzpq+-+p'
9-+nzp-+lvL&
9zp-+-+-+-%
9-+P+-zp-+$
9zPPsn-zPN+-#
9-+-+LzPPzP"'
9wQ-+-mK-+R!
}xabcdefghy

fxe3 23.Qxc3+ Kg8 24.Bxf8 exf2+ 25.Kxf2 Rxf8 26.Re1 Qg7 27.Qxg7+ Kxg7 28.Bd1 b6 29.Ke3 Re8+ 30.Kd2 Ne5 31.Kc3 c5 Computers say: dead drawn. But with fixed pawns on the bishops' color, there are latent possibilities... 32.h3 Another pawn on light?! Max probably had the thought "I'll keep my pawns where they can be guarded by my bishop." Suicide. 32...Nxf3 33.Rxe8 Bxe8 34.Bxf3 Bg6 Still "0.00"... 35.Be2 Be4 36.Bf3 Is Max sure about that king and pawn ending?

[ 36.g3 keeps it "normal" ]
36...Bg6 I guess not just now. 37.Be2 h6 38.Bd3 Be8 39.Be4 Kf6 (Diagram)

16.b3 There. White should just let ...a4 happen, get castled and mobilized.

(Diagram)
40.Kd3?! It's not too late to control squares nicely with
[ 40.g3 and h3-h4 ]
40...Ke5 41.Ke3 b5!

This could just be too much to think about in time pressure. 42.Bd5?? b4??
[ 42...a4+- sets up connected passed pawns, which as usual sweep down the board. White's outside passed pawn remains insignificant. 43.bxa4 bxc4! 44.Bxc4 Bxa4 ]
43.a4??
[ 43.axb4! cxb4 44.g3 a4 ( 44...Bg6 45.Bc6 Bc2 46.Ba4 White can tap the bishop with Kd2 and get back to e3 right after. ) 45.bxa4 Bxa4 46.Kd3= easily stops the b-pawn. ]
43...Bg6+ This isn't the same at all.
44.Kd2 Kf4 45.Bf3 Kg3 46.Bd5 h5 47.Bf3 h4 48.Bd5 Kf2 Diaz takes a detour from the winning plan, but happens onto it soon enough (and there's nothing Hao can do about it, with the b-pawn to tend to). 49.Bf3 Kg3 50.Bd5 Kf4 51.Bf3 Be4!

The key. Black can use his extra pawn on the queenside, while White's majority is stuck.
52.Bxe4 Kxe4 53.Ke2
Ivanenko, Anthony Vladimir 2147
Winslow, Elliott 2219

B99

2023 Spring TNM: 2000+ (4.3) 28.03.23
[Ivanenko, Tony/(Winslow, Elliott)]

6...e6 7.f4

(EW): This game is very annoying for me. I've played into this line before, *and* I know how to meet it, **and** I've even written it up that previous time in the TNM archive! ***AND***, I spent all my pregame time investigating the *other* line, 10...b5 11.Bxf6 Nxf6 12.g5 Nd7 13.f5 0-0!, which I've analyzed before, and then just had a spurious change of mind. This is not the way to do things. In any case, Ivanenko plays an exemplary game, plus his copious notes, including opening references, engine analysis, and thoughts before, during, and after the game, are a tour de force. 1.e4 c5
5.Nc3 a6 Sicilian Defense: Najdorf Variation. Win or lose, I'm always excited to see this opening show up on the board -- with a rich history and many theoretical ideas, it is 1.e4 opening of champions (alongside the Spanish Opening) and was favored by Fischer and Kasparov in their heyday. 6.Bg5

The old main line, although that title belongs to the English Attack (6.Be3) these days. I was deliberating on whether I wanted to go into this or not, as I had already played this once before and my opponent had undoubtedly prepared for it. However, I decided to bite the bullet and see what he had in store for me. As a show of display, here're the numerous options White had played at top level over the past few years:

- 6.Be3
- 6.h3
- 6.Be2
- 6.Bc4
- 6.g3
- 6.a4
- 6.Bd3!

7.Qf3 Nbd7 8.0-0-0 Qc7 has also been tested at top level in recent years, for example: 9.Qg3 h6
34.Re1 Nf4 35.Nc4 f6 36.a5 Nxf2
37.Ra1 g4 38.hxg4 h3 39.a6 Ba8
40.b6+ Kb8 41.Na5 Nf4 42.Rb1 Ne2+ 43.Kc4 Rd7 44.a7+ Kc8
45.b7+ Rxb7 46.Nxb7 Bxb7 47.Rh1
48.Nf4 49.Kd4 e5+ 49.Ke3 Kc7 50.Ra1 Ba8 51.Rb1 Bb7 52.Kf2 Ne6
53.Kg3 Nd4 54.Ra1 Ba8 55.Rh1
1-0 Niemann, H (2637)-Albornoz Cabrera, C (2574) Capablanca Memorial Elite 55th Havana 2022 (7)

7...Be7 8.Qf3 Qc7 9.0-0-0 Nbd7

The Three-Piece System. I had previously played this in my very first game at the last TNM so I was a bit hesitant in repeating it, knowing full well that my opponent looked over it, but then I realized that I couldn't remember the 10.Bd3 lines very well when I was recounting them... 10.g4 ...so I decided to stick with the traditional main line. It's amazing how this position has shown up in over 5000 games at this point and yet it never gets boring!

[10.Bd3]
10...h6!?  
[ 10...b5 11.Bxf6 Nxf6 12.g5 Nd7 13.f5 is the traditional main line and was featured in one of my games: Bxg5+ 14.Kb1 Ne5 15.Qh5 Qd8 16.Nxe6 Bxe6 17.fxe6 0-0 18.h4 Be7 19.Bh3 f6 20.Nd5 Rc8 21.Bf5 g6 22.Rdg1 Qe8 23.Qh6 Kh8 24.h5 1-0 Ivanenko,A (1712)-Gu,C (1525) New Year's TNM (1) ]

This has definitely become one of the major tests to 10.g4 these days, played almost as frequently as the traditional 10...b5 line. The ...h6 here is quite different to the typical three-piece system with ...h6 -- White has already committed to the pawn storm by playing g2-g4 and thus has to play more actively to unearth the Black king. On the other hand, because Black waited so long to kick the bishop, White has already gathered enough resources to release the tension along the h4-d8 diagonal and trade off the dark squared bishop.

11.Bxf6 (EW): 'The big theoretical line, but hardly the only way to go.'  
[ 11.Bh4 (EW): '(which could have happened earlier, had Black tossed in ...h6)' has also been tried, but not to great success as it scores rather poorly. For example: g5  
A) (EW): 12.e5!?  
A1) 12...gxf4 13.exf6 Nxf6 (13...Bxf6!? ) 14.g5 pushes through when Black's king is in danger.;  
A2) 12...dxe5 13.fxg5 hxg5 14.Bg3 is also quite a dangerous pawn sacrifice (and sometimes more!), with White scoring well.;  
B) (EW) So many players have sleepwalked into 12.fxg5 Ne5 where Black has scored very well, but it's not so simple either.;  

[ 11.Qh3!? has to be investigated further. ]
[ Even 11.h4!? can't be brushed off so
No point in beating around the bush -- White has already played g2-g4, intending the pawn storm, so the best way is forward, adding more fuel to the fire and targeting the g5-square.

12...Qb6 (EW): '?' This is the "old main line" in the 10...h6 variation, attacking the white knight to drive it from the center and then placing the knight on the nice c5-square. However, recent practice has shown that Black exerts more pressure with the c5/b6 pieces swapped.


13...Nc5

[13...Be7 14.g5 Nf8!? is an idea that still hasn't been tested at high level, where Black intends to play ...d7/ g6 and control the critical f4/e6 squares. It isn't scary, but does require rather precise play from White to counter. 15.Kb1 Bd7 16.Nd4 hxg5 17.hxg5 Rxh1 18.Qxh1 0-0-0]
19.Qh8 Ng6 20.Qxg7 Nxf4
21.Nce2+ and the engine tends to favor White in this position, although proving that advantage is a task in and of itself.]

14.g5 Be7

I had been slightly worried since the 10th move since I realized that my memory of this sideline was ending in this position, which is still very much critical and not easy to play. However, due to calculating it out ahead of time, I didn't panic and simply stopped myself for a deep think in this position. Black's plan is quite evident: he wants to play ...♗d7, followed by ...♖c8, and then bust open White's ♖-side with ...♘a4. But what about White? Where does his advantage lay? Well for starters, he has a massive ♕-side space advantage. But how does he use it? 15.g6 is main try and it is engine-approved, but I found it releases the tension too quickly. White would very much like to play 15.f5, but it runs into 15...hxg5. After struggling to figure out how to fit in the move, lo and behold...! 15.Qh5!?±

[ 15.f5!? ]
[ 15.g6!? ]

Out of the 37 games in my Mega Database, several of which were played by top GMs, this engine-preferred move was shockingly only played twice! The concept behind it is relatively simple: White wants to force f4-f5 by pinning the h6-pawn to ♖h8. In addition, there's also the added bonus of threatening the f7-pawn, which means it's not so easy for Black to castle ♕-side anymore. (EW) '?! This vies for top spot with 15.f5!? and 15.g6!?'' 15...g6 Only move really, f4-f5 was being threatened and Black couldn't really afford it.

[ For an example line if Black allows: 15...Bd7?! 16.f5 exf5? ( 16...Bc6 would be Black's best try: 17.fxe6 Nxe6 18.g6!! 0-0-0 19.gxf7+ Δ♗h3 and Black's position is looking rather porous. ) 17.Nd5! That's the point! White opens up d5-square for his knight, which quickly becomes powerful in the center. Qa5 18.exf5 Bxf5 19.Nec3+- And while Black may have a pawn advantage, his loose pawns and pieces pose the question of how he will be solving the dilemma of the unsafe king. ]

16.Qf3 The queen sulkingly retreats back to its original position, but the
objective has been achieved: Black weakened his ♕-side pawn structure and introduced a second "hook" on g6. The second prong of this attack has been revealed. 16...Bd7?!± I feel as if my opponent might have misjudged the dynamics of this position and thought he had more time to parry the ♕-side assault. Unfortunately, it turns out that he was just one tempo too short to afford this.

[Black's best try was 16...hxg5 (EW): "!?” although after 17.hxg5 Rxh1 18.Qxh1 Bd7 19.Qh8+ Bf8 20.Nd4 Black is practically forced to resort to the sad-looking (EW) 20.Qg8?! Bc6! intending ...Qc7 and ...0-0-0. ) 20...Qd8± to defend his position, with the intention of ...♕e7. Black doesn't have any obvious weaknesses to play against, but it does leave a sour taste having to give up all your initiative and erect a barricade this early into the game. (20...0-0-0? 21.Qf6 White's activity on the ♕-side is too overwhelming for White and the pawns will begin falling in short order. )]

17.h5! Only move. It's now or never for White, he must use the ♕-side initiative before Black castles and firmly consolidates his pieces in the center. (EW): ‘+!’ 17...hxg5? Another misstep, perhaps not realizing how necessary it is to keep the h-file closed as Black's ♖h8 is a much more useful defender than White's ♖h1 an attacker.

[Black needed to give up on the pawn: Winslow,Elliott: 'Black could try to hold with' 17...0-0-0 18.hxg6 fxg6 19.gxh6 ( or 19.Rxh6 Winslow,Elliott Rxh6 20.gxh6 Rh8 ) 19...Bf8 ( 19...Rh7 Winslow,Elliott ) 20.h7 Bg7 21.Bg2± and while h7 will remain a thorn in Black's side for many moves to come, his pieces at least enjoy activity. ]

18.hxg6 0-0-0 At this point, it was really a matter of picking the lesser of two evils for Black and I agree with it, as the other move provides White with many choices.

[Worse is 18...Rhxh1? 19.Qxh1 ( Or White could elect to drag the Black king out of safety: 19.gxf7+ Kxf7 20.Qxh1 gxh4? 21.Nxf4+- where Black has a daunting task of defending his king. ) 19...0-0-0 20.Qh7! ( Even 20.g7 looked scary to my eye with Rg8 21.Qh7 Qd8 22.b4 Na4 23.Nxa4 Bxa4 24.f5± where White's g7-pawn is secured by Black's own interfering pawn structure, although I couldn't find anything concrete after this during the game. ) 20...Re8 21.Qxf7+ ]

19.Rhxh8 Rxh8 20.gxf7 Rf8 21.fxg5 Bxg5+ 22.Kb1 And after a quick series
of moves between us — Black is struck with a decision: how should he continue? I was already enjoying my position with the extra pawn and was planning on consolidating via ♘h3-♖f1/g1-g8. Thus, Black's biggest challenge to White would be challenging the f7-pawn's presence...

22...Qd8

...which my opponent wisely chooses to do. 23.b4!? It seems as if I must play at least one flashy, yet completely unnecessary move every single game. While pondering over 22...♗d8, I realized that the move isn't quite as innocuous as it first seemed, so I was trying to work out every variation for 23. ♘h3 and was getting close but hadn't solve every issue with it. Likewise, I tried 23.e5 and was still unsatisfied with it. Dismayed, I asked myself, "What would Stockfish do?" And came up with the solution: whole board play! Now that my opponent has focused his attention onto the ♔-side pawn, I can shift mine to the ♖-side to rattle his loose knight. My point is clear: bring back the queen and lose your tempo or lose your knight. And now here I am, sitting in front of Stockfish as my engine shakes his head at me. (EW): '?!'

23.Bh3! where I wasn't certain about Qf6 ( 23...Bf6 had an easy solution in 24.b4!!+- and now both ♖d8 and ♕d7 are overloaded with squares they need to protect.; 23...Qe7 presented no problems either after 24.Rf1+- when the pawn is protected and White gets to consolidate his advantage. )

24.Qh5 Rxf7 and now this was the sequence I missed: 25.e5! dxe5 26.b4 Na4 27.Ne4+- ♘d6+/♕xf7, winning the exchange. ]

[Turns out 23.e5 works too: dxe5 24.Bg2 Qf6 25.Qg4! Sidestepping the challenge and threatening ♗g5. Rxf7 26.b4 Na4 27.Ne4+- with similar ideas as before. ]

24.a3 a5 25.Na2

[ I had briefly considered 25.Rd4? but realized that after axb4 26.axb4 Na6= The rook is just awfully placed. ]

25...axb4

[ 25...Na4!? Winslow,Elliott ]

26.axb4!! White needs to commit to the b4-pawn as a2 serves the important role of guarding both the c3- and b4-squares.

[ 26.Nxb4? just runs into Na4 ( or 26...Qd8 where 27.Bh3 Qf6= ) 27.Bh3 Qb5 28.Bg4 Qxe2 29.Qxe2 Nc3+= where Black's active bishops means that the 3P vs 2P endgame is just a dead draw. ]

26...Na6

[ 26...Na4 runs into a long, almost forced sequence: 27.Nd4 e5 28.Nf5 Rxf7 29.Bc4! Taking control of the key a2-g8 diagonal. Rf8 30.Bb3 Kb8 31.Qg2 Bf6 32.Nxd6+- where White's...
more active and better placed minors provides the full compensation he needs to convert the pawn-up endgame. ]

27.Nd4

White plays the last necessary move of the sequence and emerges with a very nice position. All that's left is to trade a few pieces off the board to consolidate and press the pawn advantage into a winning endgame. (EW): '!' 27...e5 (EW): '?!' 28.Bxa6?! I would hesitate to call this a mistake as White retains the advantage but it unnecessarily complicates the position. Fortunately, my opponent was in time trouble by now, so he didn't notice the proper continuation (or perhaps unfortunately(?)), as I was pressured to prevent him from thinking on my time — I should've spent more than 3 minutes on this move!

[ 28.Nf5 Winslow,Elliott ]

28...bxa6?

[At first I was worried that I didn’t account for 28...exd4 but after 29.Bc4+ I realized the position is actually good for White. ]

[However, I really started to panic when I saw that after 28...Qxa6 Winslow,Elliott: '!' ]

A) I didn't see 29.b5 at the time, which requires quite a precise series of moves: (EW): '!' 30.Nb3 Qc4 31.Qg3 Bd8 (31...Be7 Winslow,Elliott 32.Nc3+ ) 32.Rxd6 Rxf7 33.Rd5+- where White is compensated by the pressure against the loose bishops and unsafe king.;

B) 29.Nf5? Black had the superb defense of 29...Be6! targeting ♘a2 30.Nxd6+ Kb8 31.Nc1 Be7= and White cannot actually hold onto the f7-pawn. ]

29.Nf5 Rx7 30.Qh5

[And obviously not 30.Nxd6+?? Qxd6+ where it is Black's turn to play for a win. ]

[Turns out my other consideration was just as good: 30.Rxd6 Rxf5 31.Qc3+ Qc7 32.exf5+- ]

30...Bxf7 31.Qxf7

[ I had also considered 31.exf5!? which after Rx7 32.Qg6!+- is just as winning for White. ]

31...Bxe4 32.Qg8+ Qd8

[ 32...Bd8 33.Qg4++- ]

33.Qc4+

1-0
[ 13.Qe3!? ]
13...e5! 14.d5
[ 14.dxe5! dxe5 15.Ne1± ]
14...Ne7
[ 14...Nd8!? 15.e3 b6 ]
[ 14...Nb4! 15.a3 Na6 16.Qxa5 f4 ]
15.Ng5?
[ 15.c5 Qh5 ]
[ 15.e3 Bd7 ( 15...Ng6; 15...Qh5 )]

15...f4?
[ 15...Bxg5 *MUST* be taken before it lands on e6! 16.Qxg5 f4± Now it's just about Black's moving forward on the kingside, with no distractions. ]
16.Ne6! Bxe6 17.dxe6 Qh5?!
[ 17...Qc8 18.e3 fxg3 19.hxg3 a4 ( 19...Qxe6 20.Bxb7± )]
18.Bxb7 Bg5?!
[ 18...Rab8 ]
[ 18...Rae8 ]
22.Rh1
[ 22.h4! is a tactical defense, leading to a trade of queens and a won game: Bxh4 23.Rh1 Qg4 24.Qf3! Qxf3+ ( 24...Qg5 25.Bc1!) 25.exf3! Bg5 26.Rxh6 Bxh6 27.Bc3+- ]
22...Qh3++ 23.Kg1 Rf8 24.Bg2

Yes, White really did castle on move six!
[ 24.Bc3!+- ]
24...Qh5 25.h4! fxg3

26.hxg5??
[ 26.fxg3+- ]
26...gxf2+ 27.Kf1 Qxh1+ 28.Bxh1 Rhx1+ 29.Kg2

Rxd1?
[ 29...f1Q++ ]
[ 29...Re1+- by a LOT ]
30.Qxd1?/ 30...f1Q+ 31.Qxf1 Rxf1
32.Kxf1

(Diagram)
38.e3?
[ 38.a4= ]  
[ 38.Bc3= ]
38...Kd7=  
[ 38...Nd8! 39.Bc3 Nf7 40.Bxa5 Nxb6+ 41.Kd3 h5 42.Ke2 (42.Bd8 h4) 42...Ne4+= after ...g5 Black's kingside takes care of itself, while the king stops the a-pawn. 43.Kf3 d5! 44.a4 g5+= (44...Ng5+=)]
[42...e4 43.Kd5 Kd7 44.Kxe4 Ke6= ]
38.e4 (only move for White) 43...Ke7 44.Kc7! Ke6!

(Diagram)
45.\textit{Kd8?} \\
\[ 45.\textit{Kc6=} \]
45...\textit{Kf7}!-+ \\
\[ 45...\textit{h6}!-+ \] \\
\[ 45...\textit{h5}!-+ \]
46.\textit{Kd7 Kg7??} This loses a result-changing tempo to check! \\
\[ 46...\textit{h5}!-+ 47.gxh6 g5! 48.Kxd6 g4 49.Kxe5 g3 50.h7 Kg7 51.Kd5 g2 52.Kxc5 g1Q+ 53.Kxb4+- Yes, White takes all of Black's remaining pawns -- but the queens handles the little White guys handily. White can drag it out, but no draw (remember, every pawn move starts the 50-move count over again.). \]
\[ 46...\textit{h6}!-+ \]
47.\textit{Kxd6 h5} 48.gxh6+ \textit{Kxh6} 49.Kxe5 Kg7 50.\textit{Ke6}! g5 51.\textit{Kf5} Kf7 52.Kxg5 Ke6 53.Kf4 Kd6 54.e5+ Ke6 55.Ke4 Ke7 56.Kd5 A catastrophe for Fernando, so close! But credit to Yonathan for hanging in there. One can see the influence of his compatriot from Stockton, Ed Lewis, the "objective reality be damned" approach. 
1-0

6.\textit{b4}?! Although this succeeds in defending the pawn, Black can strike at the pawn and leave White with a permanent weakness on b4. 6...\textit{a5} 7.\textit{c3 axb4} \\
\[ 7...\textit{Bd7} Slightly more accurate, forcing White to immediately give up his good LSB to try to keep the pawn (both of which are very important because they're either central pawns OR defend a central pawn). \]
8.\textit{cxb4 Nge7}?! 

(Diagram)
White now has time to defend both of his pawns! \(9.f4?\) White completely lets me off the hook for the opening inaccuracies.

\[9.Nf3 \text{ Bd7 } 10.Bxc6 \text{ Nxc6 } 11.Bd2\] b6?! My plan here was to go b6, but White has a powerful resource that I missed from a distance. (\(11...\text{Be7} \pm\) Have to settle for the pretty passive Be7, and White continues to maintain his extra pawn. ) \(12.b5! \text{ Na5 } 13.c6 \text{ Bc8}+\) And White keeps his extra pawn and a huge space advantage. \]

\(9...\text{Bd7}\) A move late, but it shows up

\(10.Bxc6 \text{ Nxc6 } 11.\text{Be3}\) [11.Bd2 Although this defends the pawn for now, we get an advantage by opening up the queenside.

\textbf{A)} \(11...\text{b6? } 12.b5 \text{ Nd4 } 13.c6 \text{ Bc8}\] 14.Nc3!± (14.a4? \text{Nxb5}! );

\textbf{B)} \(11...\text{Nd4}\) Black should start by moving the knight, so that White never has b5 on ...b6. \(12.Nf3 \text{ Nxf3}+\) 13.Qxf3 \text{ b6} \text{=} Black is a bit better thanks to the two bishops (especially in such an open position) and the longterm pressure against the isolated a-pawn. ]

\(11...\text{Nxb4 } 12.\text{Qb3}\) Given that hell is about to rain on White's king, he needs to get out of the centre NOW!

\[12.Nf3 \text{ Qa5 } 13.0-0 \text{ Bxc5 } 14.\text{Bxc5}\] \text{Qxc5}+ 15.Kh1+ And Black is better, but it's not immediately lost for White. ]

\(12...\text{Qa5}+\) Lining up on the White king and there's no good way to deal with what's about to happen. \(13.\text{Bd2}\) [13.Nf3 \text{ Ba4} Or just winning the Queen on the spot. (\(13...\text{Nc2}+\) 14.Kf2 \text{ Nxa1} winning a full rook if White doesn't deal with the double check threat. 15.Qb2 \text{ Qxa2 }\)] [13.Nc3 \text{ Bxc5 } 14.Bxc5

\textbf{A)} \(14...\text{Qxc5}+\) White's position doesn't make any sense AND we're up the pawn.

\textbf{A1)} \(15.Nge2 \text{ Ra3 } (15...\text{Nd3}+\]

16.Kd1 \text{ d4 } 17.Qxb7\ Text the queen isn't even threatening the rook! \text{dxc3}! 18.Qxa8+ \text{ Ke7 } 19.Qxh8 \text{ Ba4#} );

\textbf{A2)} \(15.Rd1 \text{ Ra3}!! \text{ BANG!};

\textbf{A3)} \(15.Nce2 \text{ Ra3}!! \text{ Bang, but different!};\]

\textbf{B)} \(14...\text{Nd3}+\) For style points ]

[13.Nd2 \text{ Ba4} And the Queen is lost. 14.Qb1 \text{ Bc2} ]

\(13...\text{Bxc5}\) [13...Ba4? The other move I considered, but it gives White chances with 14.Bxb4 \text{ Bxb3 } 15.Bxa5 \text{ Rxa5}\] 16.Nc3 \text{ Bxc5} \text{=} And Black is only better here ]

\(14.a3 \text{ Qb6}\) Attacking the knight in the corner and putting my queen on a better square.

\[14...\text{Ba4?? Again I considered this move, but now it leads to a worse position! } 15.axb4 \text{ Bxb3 } 16.Rxa5!\] \text{ Rxa5 } 17.bxa5 ]

\(15.\text{Nf3}\) [15.Ne2 Only move to lose more slowly. \text{Ba4 } 16.Qf3 \text{ Nc2}+\] 17.Kf1 \text{ Nxa1}+ ]

\(15...\text{Bf2}+\) White resigns, since the queen hangs no matter where the king goes
and/or White gets mated.
  [ 15...Bf2+  16.Kd1  ( 16.Kf1  Bd5+;  
     16...Ba4 ]

0-1

D37

 Chan, John  1500
 Brickhouse, Christian  1238

2023 Spring TNM: u1600 (4.32)  28.03.23
[Brickhouse, Christian]

[ew]: 1.c4  Nf6  2.Nc3  d5  3.d4  
  [ 3.cxd5  Nxd5  4.e4  Nxc3  5.bxc3  g6  
     6.d4  Bg7 and we transpose to an  
     Exchange Gruenfeld. ]

16.Kf1  Bb5+;

15.0-0  Kh8  16.Qc2  Nf6?!  
  [ 16...Ng4?!  17.Bd4  Bf5  18.Qd2  
     Rae8± Black has more piece activity. ]

17.Bf4  Qd8  18.Rad1  Bf5  19.Qc1  

Nxc3  20.bxc3  Qa5  
  [ 20...b5 mobilize the pawns sooner. ]


Rad8  
  [ 26...Qd8!? bring the queen behind  
     the pawns to prep for queen side  
     advance.  27.Bf4  c5  28.Nf3  ( 28.Nb5  
     Qb6  29.Bc7  Qc6 ) 28...b6 ]

27.Bf4  c5  28.Nb5  Rd7  29.Nd6  Ree7  

30.Qb3  c4  31.Qb2  d4?  32.Nxe4  
  [ 32.cxd4! simply loses two pawns  
     after Bc6  ( 32...c3??  
     was my intended continuation with  
     33.Rxc3  Bxd4 but missed  34.Rc8+ 
     Rd8+- and White is winning the  
     bishop. ) 33.Rxc4± ]

32...Rxe4  33.Qc2  Re8  
  [ 33...d3!  34.exd3  cxd3  35.Qd2= 
     Black has a passed pawn on the 3rd  
     rank. ]

34.cxd4  Rxd4  35.Be3  Rde4  36.Rb1  

b5  37.Rfd1  a6  38.Rd5?  Qxa3  

39.Rbd1  Qe7?! Black has a 3 on 0 and  
     should be trying to trade pieces, not  
     triple stack on the e-file (which isn't even  
     open!)
  [ 39...Qb3 ]

  [ 39...Rxe3!?  40.fxe3  Qxe3+  41.Kg2  
     and Black argues that the 3-on-0 is  
     sufficient compensation for being  
     down the exchange. ]

40.Rd7  Qe5?  41.Rd5  Qa1+  42.Kg2  

R4e6?? Black's position is mostly fine,  
     and the a6 pawn is adequately defended  
     by the queen. Black should instead work  
     to get the King out of the corner. Instead,  
     he overprotects the a6 pawn and  
     unleashes White's queen which proves  
     to be the fatal mistake of the game.
43.Rh5! Re4 44.f3 Qb2 45.Qxb2 Bxb2 46.fxe4 c3 47.Bd4 Rg8 48.Rd6 Re8 49.Rxa6 b4 50.Rg7 Rg8 51.Rb7 Ba3 52.Rc7 Black's queen side is about to fall and his defense in the corner is being swarmed. The situation is quite hopeless. 52...h6 53.Rxh6#
1-0


[9.Be2 is more popular (almost 7000 games vs. 1000), scores better (a few % points admittedly), and keeps my favorite bishop. But it needs some study. But then again, it looks like so did this line! ]

9...Nxd3 10.Qxd3 Qxd5 11.Re1 Bf5 12.Ne5


A) 13...Be6! became the standard line, simply dropping a pawn for fine play:

A1) 14.Re5!? Qc6!

A1a) 15.Qxc6+ bxc6 might even turn good for Black (many games!).

A1b) 15.Qe1!? 0-0-0

16.Bg5!? ( 16.Be3!? Bd6

17.Rc1 Qe8 18.Ra5 b6

19.d5 bxa5 20.dxe6 Bb4

21.Qf1 Qxe6 22.a3 Be7


A1c) 15.Qa5 Rd8 16.Bf4 0-0

17.Rc1 Qb6 18.Rb5 Qxa5

19.Rxa5 Ra8 20.d5 Bd7

21.Ne5 Bd6 22.Bg3 Be5

23.Bxe5 c6 24.dxc6 Bxc6

25.Bd4 a6 26.Re5 Rfe8

27.Rxe8+ Rxe8 28.Be3 Rd8

29.f3 f6 30.Kf2 Kf7 31.h4

½-½ Naiditsch,A (2678)-Kramnik,V (2772) Olympiad-38 Dresden 2008 (5);

A2) 14.Qxc7 Bd6 15.Qc2 0-0

16.Bd2 Bf5 17.Qb3 Qxb3


23.Ng3 Bd3 24.Nf1 Rd8

25.Ne3 Re8 26.Rad1 Bb5

27.Nc2 Rxe1+ 28.Rxe1 g6

29.f3 Ba4 30.Ne3 Bb3 31.Ra1 Bh6 32.Kf2 Bxe3+ 33.Kxe3 Bc4

34.Kf4 g5+ 35.Kg3 Re7 36.h4 h6 37.Rh1 Kg7 38.Rd1 Bb3

39.Rd2 Bd5 40.Kf2 Kg6 41.Rd1 Bb3 42.Rh1 Bc4 43.h5+ Kf7 44.Re1 ½-½ Huebner,R (2625)-Smyslov,V (2595) Candidates qf Huebner-Smyslov +1-1=12 Velden 1983 (3);

B) 13...c6

(Diagram)
12...h6!?? Played after a significant think. Quite a surprise for me, even knowing this is an obscure line.

[ 12...g6 was the solution I remembered from way back. It's "unnatural" thus making this 12.Ne5 a sort of trap (except for the other alternative given next!). 13.Nc3 Nxc3 14.Qxc3 0-0-0= Any pawn win involving a desperado knight and the Black dark-squared bishop results in opposite colored bishops and negligible chances. (14...0-0 )]

[ 12...0-0-0!? when both sides walk a narrow path: 13.Qf3! g6!  
A) 14.g4? Bb4! (14...Bh4

15.Nc4?!N I saw some tricks when the queens came off, but overlooked an even better continuation.

[ 15.Qe3?! 0-0 16.b4! Qa6!  
(16...Qxb4?? 17.Nd5) 17.g4 (17.a4 Be6!) 17...Bc8 (17...Bh4!) 18.Bd2 (18.Qe2!?) 18...Bh4+ 0-1 Bogatyriova, L (2219)-Goreskul,A (2162) UKR-ch U18 Girls Dnipropetrovsk 2000 (3) ]

[ 15.b4!  
A) 15...Qxb4 16.Qe3! Be6□  

15.Nc3) 15.Re3! Qxd4! 16.gxf5 Ng5 17.Qe2 f6! (17...Qd1+ 18.Qxd1 Rxd1+ 19.Kg2 Rxc1 20.h4=);
b6? This is really worse than just bad -- but White's reply must have been a stunner.

[A) 18.Nb3 b6=;

Black appears to be fine.

18.Nc6! Rhe8? Of course this is a simple blunder, but Stockfish doesn't have it giving up that much equity.

[ 18...Kxc6 19.Rxe7 would you believe (+4.00)? The threat is 20.d5+ and collapse.]

19.Ne5+ On 19...Kc8 20.Nxd3 it doesn't even get to +5, not that means anything at all. Larry resigned immediately.

1-0

Dasika, Archit 2143
Ivanenko, Anthony Vladimir 2147
2023 Spring TNM: 2000+ (5.2) 04.04.23
[Ivanenko, Tony]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5
I have now officially played more than half the tournament in the Grunfeld. I suppose I had to make up for the lack of 1.d4 games in the last TNM. One of my biggest worries was that my opponent had yet to play against the Grunfeld, so I thought he would go for one of the Exchange variations (his other openings *DO* feature main lines). However, what came next was a surprise... 4.Bg5
What the... again!? I suppose I'll have to take a closer look at the 4.Bg5 Grunfeld if it's this popular in the club as I had already played it in the third round against Ed Lewis. 4...Bg7 I was already slightly worried that he cooked something up based on observations of my third round game, but since I hadn't bothered looking at this variation before the game, I had to stick to memory.

5.Bxf6 Bxf6 6.cxd5 c5 7.dxc5
My opponent bravely goes into the main line and accepts the sacrifice. As noted
previously, Black is opening up the dark squares to use as counterplay and prevent White's consolidation in the center.

7.Nf3 was Lewis' choice, which featured another interesting game:

7...Nd7 And now there's a multitude of options for White, but I would only consider two of them critical. 8.c6
And this is one of them.


8.Qa4!? is a quirky move that is still developing in theory (and recommended by Kirill Georgiev) but I feel like it is easily defused — at the very least, here is how one high-profile game went: Qc7 9.Ne4 Bxb2 10.Rb1 Bg7 11.Nf3 0-0 12.Qa3 Ne5 13.Ned2 Nxf3+ 14.gxf3 Rd8 15.e4

8...Nc5 Black has no business in taking the pawn here. 9.e3 Shockingly, 9.e3 hasn't been played before, although this isn't a true novelty yet, as the game will transpose back into known territory. However, White certainly does have this option, even if the main text is more flexible.

9.Rc1 is met far more frequently.

9...0-0 10.Bc4?!£

(Diagram)
I felt this was an inaccuracy during the game and the engine backs up my thoughts. White can certainly this move without c6, but having wasted a tempo on the pawn push is actually critical as it always is in the Grunfeld. That is not to say White is in a poor position, not at all, but Black does get a nicer game to play with. 10...bxc6

[ 10...Qb6!? might've been slightly more accurate here than the text move as it practically forces cxb7. 11.cxb7 Bxb7 12.Qd2 Qb4 13.Be2 Rfd8 14.Nf3 Ne4 15.Nxe4 Qxe4 16.0-0 Rxd5= and Black gets a very nice game where he shouldn't lose. ]

11.Nge2


12.dxc6 Qa5?!± It's not losing yet, but this move overcomplicates things far more than necessary. I should've been satisfied with taking the easy way out. Again, I thought for way too long and overthought matters.

[ 12...Rxb2! Simple and easy. 13.Qxd8 Rxd8 14.0-0 Bb6 15.0-0 Bb6 16.axb3 Rxb3 17.c7 Rd7 18.Rxa7 Bxc3 19.Rc1 Kg7 20.g4 Bb6 21.Ra8 Bxc1 22.Rxc8 Rb6 23.Rg8+ Kxg8 24.c8Q= with an easily drawn two rooks vs queen endgame. ]

12...Qxa5?!± It's not losing yet, but this move overcomplicates things far more than necessary. I should've been satisfied with taking the easy way out. Again, I thought for way too long and overthought matters.

[ 12...Rxb2! Simple and easy. 13.Qxd8 Rxd8 14.0-0 Bb6 15.0-0 Bb6 16.axb3 Rxb3 17.c7 Rd7 18.Rxa7 Bxc3 19.Rc1 Kg7 20.g4 Bb6 21.Ra8 Bxc1 22.Rxc8 Rb6 23.Rg8+ Kxg8 24.c8Q= with an easily drawn two rooks vs queen endgame. ]

13.0-0 Rxb2?!± And Black runs full force into a brick wall. Admittedly, I missed the text move and how strong it was for White. This was my last chance to divert course.

Qxc5 19.Qxc5 Bxc5 20.Rac1 Bb6= and Black's bishop pair should be enough to hold this pawn down endgame. ]

14.Nd5!
[ 14.Qc1 was my expectation, where I calculated a gorgeous stunner: Rb6 15.Nd4 Nd3!! Simplifying. 16.Bxd3 Bxd4 17.exd4 Rxc6= Black will reclaim back the piece with an even game. ]

A stunner. If White didn't have access to this immediate threat, Black would've been completely fine and in time to cut off any White counterplay. 14...Ne4?! Unfortunately, I had to keep the e7-e5 lever available for future purposes, so the strong bishop had to go.

[ 14...Be6 is the computer recommendation, though I hesitate to say it's much better than the text move. 15.Nef4 Bxd5 16.Nxd5 Rd2 17.Nxf6+ exf6 18.Qe1 Rfd8+- is quite lackluster. ]


[ 16...Rb6 17.Rc1 Kg7 18.Qe1 Qa3 19.Rc3 Qd6+- is still winning for White, but just looking at the moves necessary to hold the advantage, it's not as easy as the engine tells us. ]

17.Rc1?± Black finally gets a little reprieve as White misses a cheap tactical shot.

[ White should've played 17.Nxf5 where after Qxf5?? 18.c7 Qc8 19.Rc1+- White's c-passer is overpowering Black's pieces. ]

17...Be4! 18.Be2
[ The idea was that 18.f3? falls to Qg5! threatening both the e3- and g2-pawns. 19.Nc2 Rxc2 20.Rxc2 Bxc2 21.Qxc2 Qxe3+= Black liquidates the White's advantage into a draw. ]

18...e5?
[ 18...Rc8 19.Bf3 Bxf3 20.Qxf3 a6 21.h3 Rxa2± Qd5. Black has successfully stalled the c6-pawn and though not out of the woods, his position is looking much better. ]

Too ambitious. Black completely underestimated the speed at which the c-passer was approaching. He needed to deal with it first before getting cute with moves like these. 19.c7 Bb7?!
Black's better option was to accept the
exchange, though at that hope he's only hoping to hold the draw.

[ 19...exd4  20.c8Q  Rxc8  21.Rxc8+ Kg7  22.exd4  Rxa2+- and while White is winning, he does have to prove his advantage — if Black is able to nick the d-pawn without losses, it's starting to look like a drawn endgame. ]

20.Nb3  Qxa2  21.Bc4  Qa4
Black cannot afford to lose the queen to Ra1 here, but unfortunately his choices are sparse.

[ 21...Qa3  22.Nc5  Bc8  23.Qd8  Rb6  24.h3  Rc6  25.Ne4!+-
and the discovery threat along the a2-g8 diagonal is simply too much. ]

22.Nc5  Qc6  23.Nxb7  Qxb7
[ 23...Qxc7 was my other thought, but I quickly realized he has: 24.Nd6!  Kg7  25.Nxf7  Rxf7  26.Bxf7  Qxf7+-
and unfortunately this is too much material loss to try to hold with. ]

24.Qd8  Kg7  25.Be6!? Just brute forcing his way through.  25...fxe6

26.Qxf8+  Kxf8  27.c8Q+  Kf7
Missed the fork, but by this point the game is over anyway. A wonderful finish!

28.Rc7+ (Beauty=13.5)
1-0
The point is, White doesn't have to "encourage" ...cxd4, with Be3 or even just Be2, as Black has already played it.

5...Nc6 6.Nf3 e6 7.Nc3

It looks like best is just to retreat the queen, to d6 or d8. Then White gets to bring out the bishops more aggressively, one to d3/c4 and the other to g5 -- but it's a lesser concession. 7...Bb4

Yes and all -- but does Black really want to trade on c3? The pawn structure that results isn't so bad for White, compared to, say, certain Nimzoindians with doubled c-pawns.

[ 7...Qd8 ]
[ 7...Qd6 ]

8.Bd3 Nf6 9.0-0 Bxc3?! Sooner or later, Black had to make some concession -- here the loss of the Two Bishops. But tellingly Stockfish prefers, by half a point/pawn, all the queen moves!

[ 9...Qd6 ]
[ 9...Qd7 ]
[ 9...Qd8 ]
[ 9...Qa5 ]
[ 9...Qh5 ]

10.bxc3 0-0

[ 10...Qa5!? White could gambit that pawn on c3! (This *did* start out as a

Morra Gambit after all) 11.Rb1!? Stockfish says +-! ]

11.Re1

h6 Black stops Bg5 altogether. The good news: this move vies for best (with ...b6 and ...Ne7). The bad news: White might already be too good. (Stockfish 15.1: +2 at d24!)

[ along with 11...b6 12.Bg5 Bb7 13.Qd2+- ]
[ and 11...Ne7 12.c4 Qd6 13.Ne5 Ng6 14.Rb1 Qxd4?! 15.Ba3 Rd8 16.Bxg6 hxg6 17.Qf3+- big problem developing the queenside! ]

12.Bb2

[ 12.Rb1! ]
[ 12.Bf4! ]

12...Ne7?!

[ 12...b6 ]
[ 12...Qd6 ]
[ 12...Rd8 ]

13.Ne5

[ 13.a4! ]
[ 13.c4! ]

13...Bd7

[ 13...b5!? 14.Ba3! Bb7 15.f3 and White might even sell his bishop for a big center: Be4. ]

14.c4! Qa5

(Diagram)
White is making the move, and Black's position is critical. 15...Ba4
[15...Rad8  16.Re3 Here comes the "rook lift" and disaster.]

16.Qf3 exd5?!

Attacking both bishops... 20.Qxg6?=
/? Threatening *two* mates in one, and it forces a pendulum perpetual -- but no more!

[MUCH better is 20.Qd4!+-
Defending both bishops! And also a little mate in 1 threatened... Qxb2
21.Qxb2 Nxe7 22.Qxb7! Mopping up pawns turns out to be better -- a little! - - than winning a piece, sez Stock.
(22.Qb4 dxc4 23.Bf1 b5 24.Qxe7 c3 but of course White is winning anyway.) 22...dxc4 23.Bxc4 Rae8 24.Qxa7]

20...fxg6 21.Rxg7+ Kh8

17.Ng4! Nxe4 18.Qxe4 Ng6 19.Re7?!?
(necessary but crushing) Rf7 21.Rxf7 Kxf7 22.Qd4 (not letting the king get away) Rg8 23.Qf4+ White may not have Re1+, but between Ba3+, cxd5+ and Qb8+ depending on which square on the e-file the Black king moves to,
22.Rxg6+??
[22.Rxb7+ conveniently guarding the bishop Kg8= (22...Qxb2?! 23.Rxb2 dxc4 24.Bxc4± is not the way to play on for the win if you're Black...)]
22...Qxb2 23.Rxh6+ Kg7 24.Rh7+ Kg8 A quick count from the top down shows Black up a queen (for a pawn, but one should stop counting before that). A painful fail from Vandenhoven! What a great attacking position he had! But the lure of a brilliancy clouded his clear vision. First things first: Score the Point! 0-1

10.0-0?? It's just not worth it.
[10.Bd3]
10...Be6??
[10...axb5 11.Qxf7+ Kd7 ∓ Stockfish 15.1 doesn't want to call it a win for Black, but the advantage is solid.]
11.Bd3?
[11.Bxc6+! bxc6 12.Qg3+- is annoying -- very much so, so much so that here the engines have White with a win. It's a common French Defense story: all the defences are flawed, while giving up the pawn is "insufficient comp."]
11...Qd7 12.Bf5
[12.Nf4
(12.Nf4]
12...Bxf5 13.Qxf5 Qxf5 14.Rxf5 g6?!
[14...0-0 even favors Black a bit, with White's pawn blocking his own bishop and the c-file Black's when he is ready.]
15.Rf3± Now it favors White some -- that last move gave White's bishop somewhere to work, namely h6! 15...b5
16.Ba3?!
[16.Bh6]
16...b4 17.Bb2 c4?
18. Nf4+ Rd8 19. cxb4 Nxb4 20. c3 Nc6
[20...Nd3!? 21. Nxd3 cxd3 22. Kf2!± (or 22. Bc1!±)]

18. Nf4+ Rd8 19. cxb4 Nxb4 20. c3 Nc6
[20...Nd3!? 21. Nxd3 cxd3 22. Kf2!± (or 22. Bc1!±)]

21. Rb1?!
[21. Bc1!]

21...h5
[21...g5! 22. Nh5 Rb8]

22. Bc1 g5 23. Ne2 0-0?
Now everything wins for White.
[23...Rb8]

24. Rb6 Good But...
(29. h4+-)]

24...Nxe5!? 25. dxe5 g4
[25...Bc5+ 26. Be3+-]

[26. Rf2! is best of the lot: Bc5 27. Rg6 Bxg6+ 28. Kxf6+ The combination of White's two pieces and Black's weak pawns is too much.]

26...Bc5+ 27. Kf1 Bxb6 28. Rg5+ Kh7

[26. Rf2! is best of the lot: Bc5 27. Rg6 Bxg6+ 28. Kxf6+ The combination of White's two pieces and Black's weak pawns is too much.]

26...Bc5+ 27. Kf1 Bxb6 28. Rg5+ Kh7

[26. Rf2! is best of the lot: Bc5 27. Rg6 Bxg6+ 28. Kxf6+ The combination of White's two pieces and Black's weak pawns is too much.]

26...Bc5+ 27. Kf1 Bxb6 28. Rg5+ Kh7

29. Rxh5+ Kg8 repetition...
[29...Kg6? 30. Rh6+]

½–½
IM John Donaldson

Three New Books from Everyman Chess

*The Slav* by Cyrus Lakdawala (paperback, 448 pages, $29.95)

*The Killer Dutch Rebooted* by Simon Williams (paperback, 286 pages, $28.95)

*Squeeze Play* by Cyrus Lakdawala (paperback, 464 pages, $29.95)

Opening books currently account for roughly 75 percent of chess literature. Today, that number may be going down as more and more players use various electronic tools to either keep their repertoire up to date or expand it. That said, there is still a place for the well-executed opening book, particularly when the author is an expert on the subject and has extensive experience playing it. This is the case with two new opening books by Everyman Chess.

Cyrus Lakdawala is a well-known expert on the Slav who has used it with success for over four decades. In his third book for Everyman on this rock-solid answer to 1.d4, following on the heels of *The Slav: Move by Move* (2011) and …c6 (2017), the San Diego International Master selects lines for Black that have served him well. This includes recommending two different variations after 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 dxc4 (4…e6 was the choice in …c6 which Lakdawala co-authored with fellow International Master Keaton Kiewra) 5.a4 Bf5 6.e3 e6 7.Bxc4 Bb4 8.0-0 0-0 9.Qe2 Bg6 and 9…Bg4 (9…Nbd7 10.e4 Bg6 was preferred in *The Slav: Move by Move*). Against White’s other main choice, 6.Ne5, Lakdawala recommends 6….Nbd7 7.Nxc4 Nb6 8.Ne5 a5 which is easier to learn than Black’s other answers to 6.Ne5. This reasoning is also seen in the Lakdawala’s suggestion of 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e3 e6 5.Nc3 (or 5.Nbd2) 5…Nbd7 6.Bd3 Be7 which he used to draw Garry Kasparov in a blitz game. Theory is never going to show a preference for 6…Be7 over heading into the Meran with 6…dxc4 7.Bxc4 b5, but Lakdawala’s choice, 6…Be7, is playable and avoids a huge amount of theory.

*The Slav* covers not only 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 but also all other openings Black might face (1.c4, 1.Nf3, 1.b3, 1.f4 etc.) – except 1.e4.

*The Killer Dutch Rebooted* by Simon Williams sees the English Grandmaster focus on his favorite variation – 1.d4 f5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 Be7 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d6 7.Nc3 Ne4, a line he has used to defeat no less than the great Boris Gelfand and Polish 2700 player Radoslaw Wojtaszek!

When I first got my hands on this book, I was curious to see what Williams proposed against 7.b3, a line recommended in Christof Sielecki’s *Keep It Simple 1.d4*, and was pleasantly surprised to discover he devotes a whole page to this variation starting with 7…a5 8.Bb2 a4 9.b4 Ne4!

Both of these books are aimed at a target audience of 1800 to 2300, but stronger players will find them useful as well.

The title of Cyrus Lakdawala’s latest book, *Squeeze Play*, addresses the seemingly magical ability that top players possess to grind away and win positions that initially seem devoid of any chances. Lakdawala does this by offering 80 carefully annotated games with interactive exercises throughout. A quarter of these games are played by one of the greatest squeezers of them all, World Champion Magnus Carlsen.

While *Squeeze Play* is primarily aimed at players between 1800 and 2200 it also offers ideas that will interest stronger players. One example that was new for this reviewer was seen in the game Mamedyarov-Carlsen, Wijk aan Zee 2008, where after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 g6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 d6 6.0-0 Bg4 7.h3 Bxf3 8.Qxf3 Nf6 9.d3 0-0 10.Qd1 Nd7 11.f4.

Instead of playing the routine 11...Rb8, preparing ...b5-b4, Carlsen came up with the intriguing idea of 11...c4! accelerating play on the queenside by opening lines. The point is that after 12.dxc4 Black had 12...Na5 and White cannot keep the pawn. Carlsen slowly increased the pressure and surprised again after:

The first time I saw this idea was in the games of International Master Jeremy Silman, one of the best opening theoreticians of the late 1970s and early 1980s with major novelties in the Nimzo-Indian, Benoni, and Sicilian Accelerated Dragon. He regularly accepted double a-pawns in two different lines:


In all three cases, Black’s queenside play compensates for the doubled a-pawns which are difficult to exploit:


Everyman Chess offers not only printed books but various electronic options all of which can be found at https://everymanchess.com/.

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**The Chess Scuttlebutt**

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

Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders gets kids to play chess.

An outdoor chess club in London has 500 members.

Judit Sztaray, Lead Tournament Director for the Mechanics’ Institute, gets a well-deserved shout out.

IM Irina Bulmaga was thinking about pickles during the recent Romanian Championship.

New York City welcomes asylum seekers at the Times Square Migrant Chess Club.

Your Move MKE hosts the Hip-Hop Chess Club in Milwaukee.

Why humans don’t watch computers play chess with each other.
Check out this “Chess Club” watch.

The FIDE Women’s Grand Prix 2022-23 in New Delhi is an organizational mess...

...but has found a way to continue.

The Ukraine and the UK play a “solidarity” chess match.

Garry Kasparov doesn’t think much of the upcoming World Championship Match.

Toronto will host the 2024 Candidates Tournaments.

An article on the popularity of chess – written by A.I. technology.

Reykjavik Open boasts 400 attendees, including popular streamer Alexandra Botez and GM Vassily Ivanchuk.

San Francisco based chess player and musician Lisa Willis has a YouTube channel. Check it out here.

A chess tournament is in the works to unite historically Black colleges and universities.

GM Anish Giri is the new CEO of chess.com – or is he?

Popular streamer WFM Anna Cramling speaks up about women in the chess world.

WIM Alexey Root gives a shout out to the Chess Cafe and our upcoming panel discussion on the World Championship match (see attached .pdf flyer).

Science finds a new way to classify chess openings

The Factory Bar in Richmond, CA runs a blitz tournament every second Thursday of the month.

An entertaining story of a chess lesson – for $50,000.

You mean it’s not the Chess Scuttlebut? A tribute to what is surely the world’s longest running chess column – Leonard Barden of the Guardian.

Recent Games

A selection of games played around the world that have caught our attention.
Nyzhnyk, Illya 2654
Stearman, Josiah 2391
Saint Louis Super Swiss 2023 (1.1)


38.e4! dxe4 39.Bb3 Qd7 40.Rxf5 Rxf5 41.Rxf5 Qxd4+ 42.Kh1 Qd2 43.Rf6+Kh7 44.Rf2 1-0

Ivanchuk, Vasyl 2664
Muradli, Mahammad 2539
EICC 2023 Vrnjacka Banja (11.22)


31.gxh5 Rae8 32.Qf3 Kh7 33.Qg3 Kh6 34.a3 a4 35.Bc2 Re7 36.Bxa4 Bxf5 37.Rbf1 Qe6 38.e4! dxe4 39.Bb3 Qd7 40.Rxf5 Rxf5 41.Rxf5 Qxd4+ 42.Kh1 Qd2 43.Rf6+Kh7 44.Rf2 1-0

Kovalev, Vladislav 2623
Yilmazyerli, Mert 2525
EICC 2023 Vrnjacka Banja (11.30)


45.f5! gxf5 46.h5 a4 47.Bxa4 f4 48.Re2 Bxg2 49.Bd7 Bf3 50.h6 Bxe2 51.h7 Rc2 52.h8Q Bg4+ 53.Ke1 Rd1+ 54.Kd2 Rd1+ 55.Kc2 Rxd1 56.Qxf6 Bd1+ 57.Kc1 1-0


(Diagram)
A difficult struggle between these two super GM's ends in a surprise stalemate. 
11.Nxb6 axb6 12.0-0 Qd7 13.Bb2
Qxb2+! 33.Qxb2 Nxb2 34.Nd2 Bxd2+
35.Kxd2 Nc4+ 36.Ke1 Nd6 37.Bc1
Ne4 38.g5 f2+ 0-1

So,Wesley 2761
Nakamura,Hikaru 2768
American Cup | Champions (32) 26.3.23

So blunders his queen, and Nakamura wins the American Cup in an abrupt conclusion. 
1.Nf3 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.c4 e6
11.Be2 Nd5 12.0-0 Nc6 13.Qe1 Bb7
17.Ne5

(Diagram)

Under pressure, the World Champion ditches a pawn (15...Qe8 was better) and is subsequently outplayed.  1.d4  d5  2.c4  c6  3.Nf3  Nf6  4.Nc3  dxc4  5.a4  e6  6.e3  c5  7.Bxc4  cxd4  8.Nxd4  Bc5  9.0-0  0-0  10.Qe2  Nbd7  11.Rd1  Qe7  12.Nf3  b6  13.e4  Bb7  14.e5  Ng4  15.Bg5  (Diagram)
A brilliant queen sacrifice by the famous "Ginger GM" punishes black's passive play.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5
4.Nc3 Nf6 5.f3 e6 6.e4 dxe4 7.fxe4
11.0-0 Nxc3 12.bxc3 Bxc3 13.Rb1 h6
14.Ba3 a5 15.Qa4 Bd7 16.Rxb7 Nxd4

(Diagram)

Bb4 20.Rf8+
1-0

Caruana,Fabiano 2766
Le,Quang Liem 2728
Chessable Masters Div 1 2023 (1.5)

Black was unable to cope with white's incessant queenside pressure and finally cracked. 38... Qb7 would have kept the balance.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6
6.Nbd2 Be6 7.0-0 Nd7 8.Nb3 Bb6
9.Ng5 Bxb3 10.axb3 f6 11.Nf3 Nc5
12.Nd2 Ne6 13.Qh5+ g6 14.Qd1 Qd7
15.Nc4 a6 16.b4 0-0-0 17.Nxb6+ cxb6
18.Be3 c5 19.Kh1 Kb8 20.bxc5 bxc5
21.Qe1 Rc8 22.b3 Rc6 23.Ra2 Rhc8
24.h3 g5 25.b4 Nd4 26.bxc5 Rxc5
27.c4 R5c6 28.Qb4 Qd6 29.Qa5 Rb6
30.Ra1 Rb3 31.Qd2 Ne6 32.Rfb1
Rxd3 33.Qa5 Rc6 34.Kh2 Kc8 35.Ra2
Nd4 36.Rab2 Qc7 37.Qb4 b6 38.Qa4

(Diagram)

(Bigram)

(Diagram)

29.Bh6+ 1-0

Praggnanandhaa R 2691
Le,Tuan Minh 2542
Chessable Masters Div 2 2023 (1.1)


Erigaisi Arjun 2701
Abdusattorov,Nodirbek 2731
Chessable Masters Div 2 2023 (2.4)


(Diagram)
19. Nxf6!! gxf6 20. Qh5+ Kg8 21. Re3 h6 22. Qg6+Bg7 23. Re7 Rh7 24. Bxh6 1-0

White king walks a tightrope to victory in this wild, wild game.

1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e5 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.g3 Nd4 5.Bg2 Nxf3+
23.Rf1 Nc7 24.f4 exf4 25.gxf4 f6
26.Rae1 Nb5 27.e5 f5 28.Kh1 Bc7
29.Rb1 Kh8 30.Rb2 g5 31.fxg5 hxg5
32.Qd1 Qh7 33.Qe1 Rg8 34.Nc4 g4
35.Nd6 g3 36.Rf4 Bd8 37.Bd2 Bg5
38.Rf1 Qh6 39.Nxf5 Qh7 40.Nd6 Bxh3
41.Nf7+ Kg7 42.Nxg5 Bxg2+ 43.Kxg2

46.Kg4 Nc7 47.Rxb7 Kh6 48.Rxc7 Rxa5
1-0
A New Puzzle in the Library

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

White to move. From 100 Chess Puzzles (Improve Your Game), by Paul Lamford (1999). Steven says: “When you see the king boxed in, consider the possibilities for checkmate.” The solution is short and elegant: 1. Qxh7+!! Kxh7 2. Rh3+ Qh4 3. Rxh4#.

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)
Chess in Prisons
Alex Robins

Here in the chess room we often get calls and emails from all around the world. Recently, we received correspondence from a local high school student, Tilden Stadtmiller, who is doing a school project on the benefits of chess in prison. He's been talking with some people at San Quentin State Prison and found that there is no actively organized chess club there currently and is working to hopefully organize something. I've been impressed with Tilden's work and encouraged him to share some of his findings in this special Scholastic Chess issue of the MI Chess Room Newsletter, which you can find below.

The Importance of Chess Programs in Prisons and San Quentin
Tilden Stadtmiller

Chess is a beloved pastime for countless people worldwide; played by all ages, in every country, and even in prison. Chess is an increasingly popular pastime among inmates in prisons around the world, and for a good reason. Many prisoners have found that the game provides a much-needed mental escape from the stresses and anxieties of prison life. Chess helps to develop essential skills that can benefit them both during and after their time behind bars.

One of the most significant benefits of chess for prisoners is its ability to foster critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Chess requires players to think several moves ahead, analyze potential outcomes, and make strategic decisions in order to outmaneuver their opponent. For prisoners, this kind of mental stimulation can help improve cognitive function and promote intellectual growth. Additionally, the game can help prisoners build confidence and self-esteem, as they develop new skills and gain a sense of accomplishment through their victories on the chessboard.

More locally, San Quentin State Prison has a large chess community. Inmates and activity directors alike have expressed how popular chess is within the prison. With the benefits of chess for inmates being clear and the desire to play chess present within the prison, I think setting up a correspondence chess program with inmates in San Quentin would be incredibly helpful in the rehabilitation efforts and providing recreation for inmates. If this is something you think you would be at all interested in feel free to reach out.

TildenStadtmiller@gmail.com
The world of chess has many social currents in its attachments, motherboards, and applications. Like correspondence chess, or chess in the schools, chess composition is a world, if not a galaxy, unto itself. Its many products fit into a unique taxonomy, and may appeal to anyone who can play. Composers have competitions and their own high-spirited ways of collaborating and teaching.

On a very windy and rainy Wednesday, the 22nd of March, a prize-winning problemist, Gady Costeff, delivered the monthly chess presentation at the Bernal Heights Branch Library at 500 Cortland Avenue on the theme “Shocking Moves.” Each opening jugada in the 16 two-movers on his handout was awarded a well-deserved pair of !! These were endgame compositions with pieces and pawns (as few as six, as many as 11 per board).

The second one featured a knight dominating a queen. Our lecturer told us to remember that in OL blitz, there’s an advantage in having a knight. The third position was the first to be solved (by Juliana, of course, as we at the Chess Café are used to). Folks in attendance suggested plenty of moves, sometimes in free-spirited collaboration they saw most of the squares that needed to be controlled; but sometimes we all had to be led out of the mystery and into closer proximity to the final key. “When harmony happens, the pieces are very strong,” the leader said.

Juliana Gallin, the organizer of the event: “When I first started the Bernal Chess Club (June 2019) I put up flyers around the neighborhood to see if people would want to meet at a cafe once a week to play. Gady saw the flyer and showed up, which is how we first connected. Back then there weren’t too many people in our group who could give him a decent game, but he seemed to just enjoy seeing what the patzers were up to. When I started the library lectures last year he was a natural to invite as a speaker.

“Gady has given two library talks. Dan Sevall has given most, but not all, of the others. Gady’s first talk was more specifically about chess composition, which is a fascinating topic. He showed some stunning compositions; described different kinds, like helpmates and retrograde analysis; and also talked about tournaments and competition.”

Elliott Winslow adds, “Gady is an excellent blitz player, very knowledgeable about compositions, and a generally nice guy.”

One of the attendees on March 22 was Chris Cruz, who is involved in The L.A. Chess Social. He wrote back to me: “Here is the link for our ‘official’ website (although our Instagram typically has the most up-to-date information): https://www.chesssocial.org/

I went there and found about seven places where their group has gathered.

“Right now we meet once a month on a Friday or Saturday. We typically meet either at a pub, Griffins of Kinsale [RH: a truly vintage ceiling surface] or The Old Towne Pub [red-brick sections of the walls,
the band’s silver drumset visible through an open door and a large window, with about six active chessboards on white tablecloths caught in the frame], both in Pasadena. Every once in a while we choose a new venue just for fun. We usually have a turnout of about 15-20 people although on holiday weekends we sometimes get up to 30. The event tends to last from 6pm to bar closing. [They’ve posted chess action pictures here from a number of other pubs they’ve met at in the past.]

“We have live music from local bands that play while everyone plays chess. Everyone is welcome to grab a brew and play. . . Sometimes we have a fun tournament, but mostly we are about just having a good time and playing casual chess with anyone who is willing. We have beginners all the way to International Masters who come to play with us (sometimes some Grandmasters too, but far less often). My buddy Karl is the main organizer.

“As far as other casual chess clubs in LA, there are a few that I love to go to: Highland Park Chess Club, Loz Feliz Chess Club, DTLA Chess at Il Caffé, 9th St. and Broadway downtown. All of which are run by great people, are very welcoming, and have strong players.”

The ARVES Chess End Game Study Association site (https://arves.org), names an original founder, then says on the next line, “Improved by: Gady Costeff.”

“ARVES Association has made its goal to encourage the composing, solving, and replaying of chess endgame studies and the development of chess endgame theory, especially in The Netherlands and Flanders.”

There’s a note on the ARVES book of the year in 2003: Depth and Beauty: The Chess Endgame Studies of Artur Mandler. “No longer available to purchase, but on the website of John Beasley a scanned version of this book can be found!” Check it out: http://www.jsbeasley.co.uk/ochess/mand029042.pdf.

In a related abstract there is more specialized lingo: “We prove PSPACE-completeness of two classic types of chess problems when generalized to n-by-n boards. . . Our PSPACE-hardness reductions are from a variant of a puzzle game called Subway Shuffle.”

Another composition site talks of edge gadgets and vertex gadgets, showing a 15x13-square chessboard with a five-square check mark in the southwest quadrant containing red bishops, that is diagonally linked to a four-square pillar of three red rooks and a red knight topped by a white pawn and bishop, with long dense lines of bishops and pawns and other pieces in four colors in a large complex that has open spaces, and there are different-sized boards with different arrangements. I read: “Now we have to implement the Subway Shuffle target edge. This means making a win gadget which checks whether a particular edge is used.”

It’s fitting to conclude here a perceptive and ironically humorous article by our March 22 lecturer. And his own site is here.

(Information about joining the weekly Chess Café can be found here.)
Join us for a special edition of the Chess Cafe on Monday, April 10 at 4pm PT, where we will be taking a look at the historic World Chess Championship match between Ding Liren from China and Ian Nepomniachtchi from Russia.

This is China's first crack at the World Chess Championship match, and our panel of experts include:

- International Master John Donaldson
- FIDE Master Paul Whitehead
- International Master and Marshall Chess Club Vice President Sal Matera

The panel will review the match up between Liren and Nepomniachtchi, analyze championship games, and share stories of chess world championships.

**A Virtual Event on Zoom**

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To register: milibrary.org/Events
FREE TO ALL

Questions? Call Pam Troy at 415-393-0116
Tony’s Teasers

White mates in 2 moves.

2. W. Shinkman, 1890.
White mates in 3 moves.
Tournaments, Classes, and Events

The 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’ 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](#).
Information about scholastic events, camps, and programming can be found [here](#).

Play chess in the oldest club in the United States!
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with  
**FM Paul Whitehead**

![Chess Diagram](image)

**Korchnoi–Petrosian**  
1974.  
White to play and win.

April 13 - June 1, 2023  
8 Classes

**Thursdays in the Chess Room**  
Annex 4th Floor  
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Register here:  
milibrary.org/chess

In this eight week course, FM Paul Whitehead will lead a discussion covering basic and intermediate endings, including reviewing the participant’s knowledge of basic checkmates, principals and terminology – opposition, centralization, zugzwang. We will discuss and review the theory and practice of king and pawn endings, rook endings, minor piece endings, queen endings, and various material imbalances.

chessroom@milibrary.org

(415) 393-0110 l 57 Post Street, San Francisco CA 94104
Solutions
Tony’s Teasers

1. **M. Wrobel**, 1953. **1.Qc5!** Zugzwang. If 1...**Nb6 2.Qb4#**. Or 1...**Ra6 2.b6#**. Or 1...**Rh8 2.Qa7#**. Finally, 1...**Nc3 2.Qc7#**.

2. **W. Shinkman**, 1890. **1.Qd6!** Leaves black helpless: **1...b2 2.Qb4! b1=Q 3.Qa4#** is the main idea. Nothing else helps: 1...**Nd2 2.Qxd2+ Ka3 3.Qa5#**. Or 1...**Ne3 2.Qe5! Nc4 3.Qa1#**.

Contact Us

The 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, The 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](https://www.milibrary.org/chess)
Join the Chess Room for Chess Socials!
Free and encouraged for MI Members

5-6pm
First Fridays of the month:
April 7th
May 5th
June 2
July 7
August 4
September 1

Unwind from the week with fellow chess players. We’ll have rousing game replays on the big screen, snacks, and lively conversation. Wine available for purchase in the Meeting Room provided before the CinemaLit program. Stick around for CinemaLit at 6pm!

Questions?
Contact chessroom@milibrary.org
SAT, APRIL 22ND
1:00 PM
MENLO SCHOOL

Contact the following for details and questions:
Armin Hamrah (SHP '23) at ahamrah23@shschools.org
Cody Kletter (Menlo '25) at cody.kletter@menloschool.org
Rohan Dalal (Crystal '25) at rdalal25@csus.org

Entry Fee: $10 (payable at the door with cash or Venmo)
Register here to guarantee spot: https://forms.gle/pUPduvDvr4ryktt18

NORCAL HIGH SCHOOL CHESS ASSOCIATION
END OF SCHOOL CHESS TOURNAMENT

Tournament Format
FOUR GAMES PER PERSON (15 MINUTES + 3 SECOND DELAY)
INDIVIDUAL TOURNAMENT
USCF RATED AND UNRATED BRACKETS
PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN CLOCKS IF YOU HAVE

Aragon • Archbishop Mitty • Bellarmine • Branham • Burlingame • Carlmont • Castilleja • Crystal Springs • Evergreen Valley • Gunn • Homestead • Irvington • JCHS • Kehillah • Lick-Wilmerding • Los Altos • Los Gatos • Lowell • Lynbrook • Menlo • Menlo-Atherton • Mercy • Miramonte • Monta Vista • Mountain View • Notre Dame • Belmont • Nueva • Palo Alto High School • Piedmont Hills • Sacred Heart Prep • Saint Francis • Sequoia • Serra • Silver Creek • Valley Christian • Woodside • Woodside Priory