

# About MACA

**The Massachusetts Chess Association** is an educational non-profit organization whose purpose is to promote chess in Massachusetts and represent the interest of chess players within the state to the governing body of chess in the United States, **The United States Chess Federation (USCF)**.

As part of its role as a state organization, MACA has programs in place to support the existing chess community as well as promote chess among schools and the general public. Highlights of these programs are:



**Providing at least four major tournaments each year:**

Massachusetts Open (State Championship)  
Massachusetts Game/60 Championship  
Greater Boston Open  
Pillsbury Memorial



Running a scholastic program, which consists of a series of tournaments to determine the state's scholastic champions as well as "warm up" tournaments throughout the year. Free boards and sets are provided to schools and clubs through MACA's **Living Memorial Chess Fund (LMCF)**.

Quarterly publication of the award winning **Chess Horizons**, a journal of regional, national and international chess news and features.

Promotion and development of chess in correctional institutions through our Prison Chess program.

We hope you will chose to join MACA and enjoy the benefits of membership while knowing that you are helping to promote chess throughout Massachusetts.

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP RATES

(Includes Subscription to Chess Horizons unless otherwise noted.)

*Adult: \$12.00; Life: \$175.00; Life (age 65 or older): \$100.00; Junior (under age 18): \$6.00.*

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**Dues are non-refundable**

# The Dark Horse Theory

**Zackary Stephen and  
Steven Cramton**



Shredder 8 and Fritz 8 were the main focal engines used for consultation. As well as Junior 7 and Gambit Tiger on very rare occasions. We also used a database for some statistical research and opening analysis. Opening selection was based on our own preference and personal repertoires. As white we played mainly 1.e4 and strictly played the Grünfeld when facing 1.d4.

Just to set the record straight, we did not have the help of any GM's, IM's or any titled players or any other players for that matter. However, I should note that it is sincerely flattering to read that some people perhaps thought that Garry Kasparov or other grandmasters might have played a part on our team.

From the start Zack and I chose to remain anonymous for the pure reason of wanting our competitors to take us seriously...

I think that we have always had a slightly different approach to chess than most others and we are not afraid to condemn certain respected positions after extensive analysis and we often find ourselves searching for the truth of many different openings. We are both very passionate about this and despite our low tournament ratings we are actually, at times, able to create surprisingly good chess on our own even without computer assistance. I can remember recently posting a controversial bust to a line in the Sicilian Dragon (Yugoslav Attack) on a chess website.

People were really upset with me because I didn't want to reveal the promising line for White. I was actually hoping to use my novelty in this tournament, but

never got the chance. They couldn't believe that someone from New Hampshire even knew how to play chess!

I certainly didn't want this attitude from any of our competitors... We decided it was best to let our chess do the talking. On a last note: Everything that we have written is 100% true.

## Move Selection

Candidate moves were usually chosen based on our own experience in certain types of positions or by the consensus of the computer engines. Once we established our possible candidate moves (usually three or less, but sometimes more)

The PAL/CSS Freestyle Tournament began on Saturday, May 28 and was played on consecutive weekends until June 19, 2005. In Freestyle Chess the players can work as a team with other players, consult reference literature, and use computers.

It consisted of a seven round Swiss Qualifier, in which anyone could participate, then an eight round Swiss main tournament with GMs and IMs joining the qualified players, and the final phase in which the eight top scorers play a knock-out tournament for the title and their share of the \$20,000 prize fund (1st \$10,000; 2nd \$5,000; and 3rd \$3,000). There were also special software prizes totaling \$2,700 for the places 4-8. The prize fund was provided by the PAL Group in the United Arab Emirates. They're the company that is behind the Hydra chess project, which just recently crushed GM Michael Adams 5½-½ in a six game match.

Two versions of Hydra played in the Freestyle tournament. The 16 processor version played under the handle of Zor\_Champ without human involvement and the 32 processor machine played as Ares01 with human participation. However, both were eliminated from the competition during the main tournament.

A total of 48 players from 20 different countries entered the Qualifier, which was won by the team ZackS from New Hampshire with 6/7 - a full point ahead of the nearest rival. ZachS repeated this feat in the main tournament with a score of 6½-8, again a full point ahead of the field. In the end ZackS defeated 14-year-old Russian GM Vladimir Dobrov, working together with a 2600+ colleague and various computers, with a 2½-½ score.

This achievement even captured the attention of Garry Kasparov, who wrote in *New in Chess* 2005/5, "three of the four semifinalists were grandmasters working with friends and computers. The fourth 'mystery' player, 'ZachS', had dominated the event and was assumed to be another GM. Therefore it was a considerable shock when, after ZachS won the tournament, it was revealed to be two American amateurs - Zackary Stephen and Steven Cramton, both rated under 1700 - working with several ordinary computers."

Zackary Stephen (above left) provided the following information and games for this report. He is a 24-year-old database administrator, who maintains a website devoted to the Pirc defense and other openings at <http://alumni.plymouth.edu/~zrststephen02/home.htm>.

Steven Cramton (above right) is twenty eight years old and works at the New Hampton Preparatory School as a Soccer Coach, who also runs the Schools Snowboarding program and coaches a small competitive chess team. Steven has been playing chess for approximately 9 years; his favorite players include Kasparov, Anand, Topalov, Shirov, Judit Polgar and Magnus Carlsen. Aside from chess his interests include photography, cycling, music & motion pictures, and motorcycles.



we began to investigate the lines extensively. Zack would analyze a few lines and I would analyze a couple of different lines. When either of us found a strong continuation we then looked at it together, comparing the lines mainly between Shredder8 and Fritz 8.

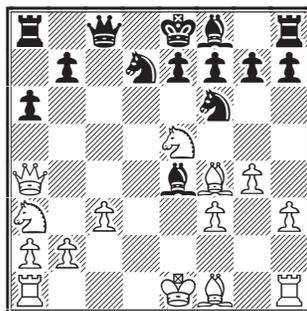
I believe this method of move selection, along with our opening preparation and specific knowledge of the chess playing programs, provided us with a solid foundation in which to move forward during our games. However, I would also like to add that I am extremely proud of the way we played; this was by no means an easy ride for us. There were many times that we had to play creatively to solve specific problems or to tackle certain opponents. With a few exceptions we always played for the win and after each game we were both physically and mentally exhausted.

### Strengths & Weaknesses

Our main strengths included extensive opening preparation, extensive knowledge of each chess engine used and how they evaluate certain types of positions as well as extensive database knowledge. Move selection criteria and an ability to surpass the horizon effect which seems to be the major weakness of most, if not all, chess playing programs.

Our main weaknesses shone through in extremely complex positions... as it was often not easy or even possible to solve some of the problems we faced with the rather short time control. A good example of this can be found in our match

against Rentner2. Before this match even started we had it in our minds that we were paired with Volkov. Only minutes before our match started did we learn that we would be playing Rentner2. We knew that he played the 2.c3 Sicilian very well and we were planning to prepare for this line especially for him! Unfortunately, with 5 minutes until the game started we didn't have time.

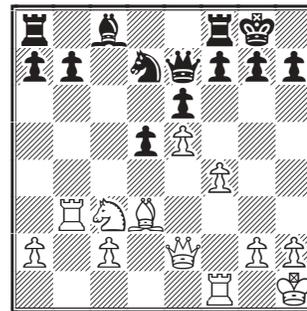


In game two of our match we could not come to a clear conclusion of 14...b5. We spent a lot of time looking at the possible knight sac on b5 and the passed pawns he got in return (not to mention our lack of development). So we opted for 14...Bd5? And were soon on the edge of defeat, probably even lost, although we still managed to draw after 15.c4 b5 16.cxb5 Nxe5 17.Bxe5 Qe6 18.bxa6+ Nd7 19.O-O-O Qxe5 20.Bb5 Qc7+ 21.Nc4 e6 22.Rxd5 exd5 23.Bxd7+ Qxd7 24.Re1+ Be7 25.Nd6+ Kd8 26.Nxf7+ Ke8 27.Nd6+ Kd8 28.Nf7+ Ke8 29.Nd6+ Kd8 30.Nf7+ 1/2-1/2.

In the very next game we had him on the ropes after he repeated the same opening from game 1. And again we had a de-

cision to make... after a little arguing we failed to find the best continuation and the game soon became dead level after only a few moves. This was very unfortunate for us because he had so little time remaining on his clock.

In game four we switched defenses and opted for 2...Nf6 instead of 2...d5 and we were eventually able to win the game.



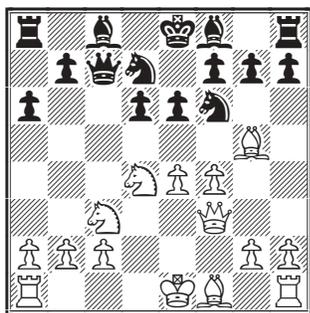
18.Bxh7+ Kxh7 19.Qh5+ Kg8 20.Nb5 f5 21.Rh3 Nf6

White was threatening 22.Qh7+ Kf7 23.Nd6+. (Dieter Steinwender)  
 22.exf6 Qxf6 23.Nc7 Rb8 24.Ne8 Qh6 25.Qf3 Qg6 26.Nxg7 Kf7 27.Rg3 Qh6 28.Qc3 Bd7 29.Qc7 Rfd8 30.Rg5 Rbc8 31.Qxb7 Rc4 32.Rg1! Ke7  
 32...Rxf4 33.Nxe6 Qxe6 (33...Kxe6 34.Qa6+!) 34.Qc7! forking the two rooks! (Dieter Steinwender)  
 33.Re1 1-0

We have briefly annotated three games from the tournament. Zack and I would both like to publicly thank the organizers of this event and the chess fans who followed us throughout this tournament. We would also like to thank our closest friends and family for their support. Special thanks to Steven's father Bill Cramton for the use of his computer and Zack's parents for the air conditioner!

Before I get into the game notes, I'd like to explain the circumstances leading up to this game. This was the third game of the finals match vs. Vladimir. We had white in our first game, but only managed a draw because of Vladimir's skillful move order in the Bg5 Najdorf Sicilian. To my knowledge, the only way to take advantage of his 8...Qc7 is to play the bishop sacrifice on b5, as we did in the game.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Hardware</b>  |
| 1. Dell Pentium 4 @2.8 GHz 512MB RAM   |
| 1. Dell Pentium 3 @1.6 GHz 256MB RAM   |
| 1. AMD 3200+   |
| <b>Computer Specs</b>  |
| HP AMD 3200+ 64 bit computer. 384 ram All 5 piece tablebases and 15gig of selected 6piece tablebases, usually running Fritz 8 or Junior 7. |
| Dell Intel Pentium 2.8 no HT 512 ram, all 5 piece tablebases, running Shredder 8.  |
| Dell Intel Pentium 1.6 256 ram, no tablebases, usually Running Junior 7.   |
| <b>Chess Software</b>  |
| Shredder 8   |
| Fritz 8  |
| (Junior 7)   |
| (Gambit Tiger)   |
| Endgame table-base with 5-piece endings  |



However, at the board we couldn't find anything better than the endgame we reached, which was probably only a draw.  
**9.O-O-O b5 10.Bxb5 axb5 11.Ndxb5 Qb8 12.e5 Ra5 13.exf6 gxf6 14.Bh6 Bxh6 15.Nxd6+ Ke7 16.Kb1 Rd8 17.Rhe1 Nb6 18.Ncb5 Ba6 19.Nf5+ Kf8 20.Qc3 Rxb5 21.Qxf6 Rxb2+ 22.Qxb2 Nd5 23.Rxd5 Qxb2+ 24.Kxb2 Bg7+ 25.Nxg7 Rxd5 26.Nxe6+ fxe6 27.Rxe6 Bf1 28.g4 Rb5+ 29.Kc3 Rc5+ 30.Kd2 Bc4 31.Rd6 Bxa2 32.f5 ½-½**

Therefore, after drawing our second game with black, we had the white pieces again and had to make a choice of how to play for a win.

Since we had no solution to his move order against Bg5, we switched to the Sozin. In our preparation for this match, we were not expecting the Najdorf, as Vladimir usually plays the classical or Sveshnikov Sicilian according to the ChessBase database. So we knew it would not be wise to repeat the Bg5 line. However, although Vladimir won the opening battle in our first game, he had no idea we were going to play the Sozin in the second, or more importantly that I had played hundreds of games in the engine room with it, testing out ideas.

**White: ZackS**

**Black: V\_Dobrov (GM Vladimir Dobrov)**  
 CSS PAL Freestyle Tournament Finals (Game 3) 60m + 15s, 19.06.2005 [B87]  
*[Zackary Stephen]*

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bc4 e6 7.Bb3**

Just a little nuance about this position: normally I play 7.0-0 here as it limits Black's options to ...Be7 or ...b5. 7...Be7 is not an easy move to get an advantage against; however, I consider it easier to deal with than 7.Bb3 Nbd7.

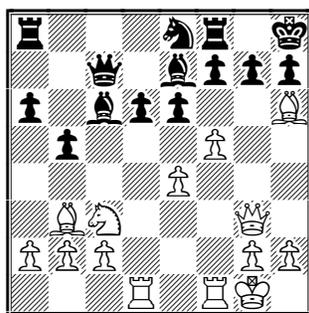
Most of my analysis from my Playchess engine matches was based on 7...b5, so our challenge was to play the move which we thought he would most likely respond with 7...b5.

Of course only after the match did we find out that Vladimir was working with someone else, but before the game we felt that Vladimir would most likely go into the main line without hesitating too much if we played the normal move 7.Bb3, whereas if we played a somewhat less played move 7.0-0, he might start to think about it and play 7...Be7. It would be interesting to hear our opponent's thoughts at this juncture...

**7...b5 8.0-0 Be7 9.Qf3 Qc7**

Even though we could not see Vladimir or his expressions, the fact that he blitzed out the first five-six moves, but was now spending at least 2-3 minutes per move, told us he was not fully prepared for this line. Also, as many know, 9...Qb6 is a more double edged move (better than ...Qc7 in my opinion), and his avoidance of it told us that he was possibly just playing to get to a middlegame position.

**10.Qg3 0-0 11.Bh6 Ne8 12.Rad1 Bd7 13.f4 Nc6 14.Nxc6 Bxc6 15.f5 Kh8**



**16.f6**

Up until this move, you could find this position in the opening books as okay for Black, because White usually retreats the bishop to e3. I found this move while playing in a correspondence game. It gives Black many tactical and positional problems to solve. Since we were still in my preparation, we had actually gained 2 minutes on the clock since the game started, whereas Vladimir had roughly 54 minutes left.

**16...gxh6 17.fxe7 Qxe7 18.Qf4**

The first new move not in my preparation; I had prepared Qe3, but on double checking, we found that 18.Qf4 kept

Black's rook off g8, which seemed to be his only way of obtaining counter play.

**18...b4**

We couldn't find any move that helped Black's position. The candidate moves by the computer: ...f5, ...a5 and others, all fail to solve the many weaknesses around Black's king and in the center. It's possible that Black is already lost here from a practical point of view.

**19.Ne2 e5**

Again it's not easy to suggest a move for Black. We were expecting 19...Bb5, which was one of the top moves by Fritz and Shredder, although in reality if Black ever exchanges his bishop for our knight, the position only gets worse for him in principle.

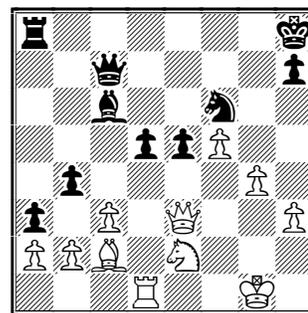
**20.Qxh6 f5 21.Rxf5 Rxf5 22.exf5 Nf6 23.Qe3**

We spent some time on 23.h3, which was almost universally the top engine move. However we felt that 23.Qe3 made him displace his queen to advance his center pawns, which was the only strategy that made sense for him.

**23...Qc7 24.h3 d5 25.g4**

At this point, Vladimir had caught up on time because we were using our time advantage to probe into the position and understand the various subtleties about what plans worked and which didn't.

**25...a5 26.c3 a4 27.Bc2 a3**



In hindsight, opening up this side of the board enabled us to exploit his hanging pawns better because we could attack them from either side. However, during the game this wasn't clear, especially because Fritz 8 calculates slightly better for Black.

**28.bxa3 bxc3 29.Qxc3 Qb6+ 30.Kf1 d4 31.Qb3 Qc5 32.Rc1 Bd5 33.Qb4 Qc6 34.Bd3 Qd7**

After this move, you can see with almost any engine, White is winning by force.



35.Qb6 Qe7 36.Rc7 Qd8 37.Qc5 h6 38.a4 Rb8 39.Bb5 h5 40.g5 Ne4 41.Qe7 Qxe7 42.Rxe7 Nxe5 43.Rxe5 Rd8 44.Nxd4 Kg7 45.h4 Nf7 46.Re6 Bxa2 47.Rg6+ Kf8 48.Ne6+ Bxe6 49.fxe6 Nd6 50.Bd7 Ke7 51.Rg7+ Kf6 52.Rh7 Kg6 53.Rf7 Rb8 54.Rf4 Rb1+ 55.Ke2 Rb2+ 56.Kd3 Rb1 57.Kd4 Rd1+ 58.Ke5 1-0

After this win, Vladimir had to win the next to force a tie break. He played an unusual variation against our Grünfeld and we were able to obtain a position that Fritz 8 evaluated as slightly better for us. Therefore, he offered us a draw which gave us the victory.

**White: Zacks**

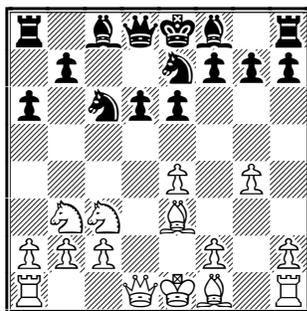
**Black: V\_Dobrov (GM Vladimir Dobrov)**  
CSS PAL Freestyle Main Tournament (6), 60m + 15s, 05.06.2005 [B54]  
[Steve Cramton]

This game has to be one of my favorites from the tournament. Right out of the opening we were out of “book” and forced to play creative chess. Throughout the whole opening we were following an actual grandmaster line of play, yet we had no idea this was the case! Only a few days later did we discover that up until move 12, it had all been played before!

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 d6

Here we were out of book and opening preparation, so after having a general look at the position we asked ourselves what Vladimir was trying to do? It seemed to me that he was trying for a Schevenigen type set up while trying to sidestep the Keres attack. Perhaps this is a valid idea since the knight on g8 hasn't entered the game. In any event we decided to play what we considered a purely psychological move.

6.g4!? a6 7.Be3 Nge7 8.Nb3!



An instructive move that avoids the liquidation on d4.

8...b5

8...Ng6!?

9.f4 Bb7 10.Qd2 Na5 11.Nxa5 Qxa5 12.Bg2

A few days after this game I found this position in *The Taimanov Sicilian* by Graham Burgess.

12...h5

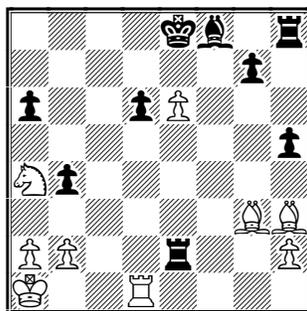
12...d5?! was played previously.

13.Qf2 Qc7 14.g5 Rc8 15.0-0 Qd7 16.f5 Nc6 17.Bh3 Qe7 18.g6?!

18.Bf4! Sometimes it's hard to play a quiet positional move when you're trying to blow your opponent off the board. 18...b4 19.Na4 Ne5 20.Qg2 Rc4 21.Bd4 fxg6

Here the evaluation of the computer started to rapidly drop. I remember we were starting to run low on time and at one point I became pretty discouraged. I kept thinking we had missed a forced win!

22.Bxe5 Bxe4 23.Qxg6+ Qf7 24.Qxf7+ Kxf7 25.fxe6+ Ke8 26.Rhe1 Rxc2+ 27.Kb1 Re2+ 28.Ka1 Bc2 29.Bg3 Bxd1 30.Rxd1



Now the evaluation was starting to rise again and to be honest we felt extremely lucky that this ending also promised us a great advantage.

30...h4 31.Bf4 Be7 32.Rc1 g5 33.Rc8+ Bd8 34.Bxg5 Re1+ 35.Rc1 Rxc1+ 36.Bxc1 Rf8 37.Kb1 Rf2 38.Bg4 Rxh2

The dynamics of 12...h5 were starting to kick in! We were both on the edge of our seats, not sure if we could stop the h-pawn and still be able to win the game!

39.Bh5+ Ke7 40.Bg5+ Kxe6 41.Bxd8 h3 42.Bf3 Kf5 43.Bc7 Rd2 44.Nb6 Rd4 45.Nc8 Ke6 46.Bxd6 Kf6 47.Bc7 Rd3 48.Bc6 Rd2 49.Nd6 Re2 50.Ne4+ Kg6 51.Ng3 Re6 52.Bd5 Re1+ 53.Kc2 h2

54.Nh1 Re3 55.Bf4 Rh3 56.Bg2 Rh4 57.Bg3 Rh5 58.Kb3 1-0

White has everything under control and we could finally breathe.

**White: Tank1 (GM Vladimir Kosyrev)**

**Black: Zacks**

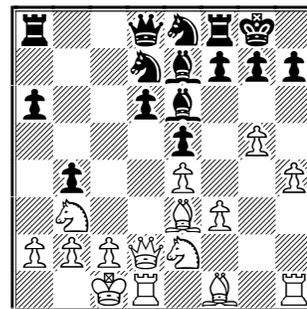
CSS PAL Freestyle Semifinals (Game 4), 60m + 15s, 18.06.2005 [B90]  
[Steve Cramton]

The English Attack or perhaps the English Defense?

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.f3 e5 7.Nb3 7...Be6 8.Be3 Be7 9.Qd2 0-0 10.0-0 b5 11.g4 Nbd7 12.g5 b4 13.Ne2 Ne8

Usually we see the knight going to h5 and at some point even f4, but here the idea is to transfer the knight to the queenside in order to aid Black's attack. Now White is at an important crossroads; of the three critical plans starting with move 14, only one will promise fighting chances.

14.h4?!



14.f4! a5 I'm still not totally convinced that this is Black's best way of handling the position. Once White gets in f5 the position remains very unclear. 14...exf4!? should also be considered. 15.f5 a4 16.Nbd4 exd4 17.Nxd4 b3 18.Kb1 bxc2+ 19.Nxc2 Bb3 20.axb3 axb3 21.Na3 Ne5 so far we have been following Peter Leko - Vallejo Pons 2005.03.19 Monte Carlo, Amber Rapid 22.Qg2! Qc8?! (22...Qb8!) 23.f6 Bd8 24.Rc1 Qb7 25.Bc4 Nxc4 26.Rxc4 Nc7 27.Bd2 Nb5 28.Rb4 Rxa3 29.bxa3 Ba5 30.Rxb3 Bxd2 31.Qxd2 Nxa3+ 32.Ka2 Qxe4 33.Re1 Nc4 34.Rxe4 Nxd2 35.Rd4 Nxb3 36.Kxb3 gxf6 37.gxf6 h5 38.Rxd6 Kh7 39.Kc3 Re8 40.Kd4 Kg6 41.h4 Re6

Continued on page 40

# Bakker Ties for First at Denker

## Joshua Bakker

Although my adventure was not quite as spectacular, memorable, or entertaining as Tim Taylor's Hungarian Adventure (May 2005, *Chess Life*), it did have its highpoints, and perhaps a little more chess. It began on August 4th, with a two hour drive to Providence followed by a flight to Washington D.C., a connection at Pittsburgh, and a final flight to Phoenix. Now why they held the 2005 US Open and Denker in Phoenix is beyond me, but the venue was superb. The Biltmore Resort & Spa is a world class hotel that has catered to every president since Herbert Hoover and was built in a style reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright.

After finally meeting up with my brother Andrew at the airport, having waited about an hour, we took a taxi to the Biltmore. There, further complications arose as we had to wait an hour for our room and then we spent forty minutes or so actually searching for the room as the outside area was poorly lit and the place was designed like a maze.

The tournament was a six round Swiss that attracted high school representatives with an average rating of over 1920 from forty-five different states. For six days, there was one round in the morning at 11AM allowing the players to also compete in the 9-day schedule of the US Open. The final results in the Denker ended with a three-way tie for first with 5.0/6 between Trevor Jackson, Zhi-Ya Hu, and myself.

The first round was a surprise for me as I ended up playing someone 100 points or so higher than I expected. I was black against Andrew Kobalka from Ohio, rated 1938. Perhaps a bigger surprise was his choice of opening.

**White: Andrew Kobalka**

**Black: Joshua Bakker**

2005 Denker (1), 07.08.2005 [A03]

**1.f4 d5 2.Nf3 c5 3.g3 Nc6 4.Bg2 g6 5.d3 Bg7 6.c3**

White is playing very passively with a position resembling a stonewall.

**6...Nf6 7.0-0 0-0 8.Qe1?!**



Perhaps trying to go to f2.

**8...d4 9.a4**

White is digging himself in a hole with backward moves. 9...a4 prevents my covering his N/c4 with ...b5, but too many moves are wasted.

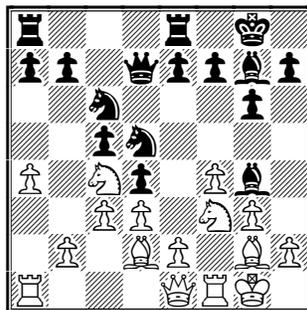
**9...Nd5 10.Bd2 Re8**

10...Qb6 looks strong, but becomes null after 11.Na3.

**11.Na3 Bg4**

11...e5 12.fxe5 Nxe5 13.Nxe5 Rxe5 14.Nc4 Re8 15.Qf2 Be6=.

**12.Nc4 Qd7?**



Forty-five high school champions gathered in Phoenix, Arizona from August 6 through 14 to participate in the GM Arnold Denker Tournament of High School Champions. When it was all over, Josh Bakker, from Massachusetts, Zhi-Ya Hu, from Maryland, and Trevor H. Jackson, from Louisiana, became co-champions. All three finished with five points; Bakker's loss was to Jackson, but he recovered nicely by winning his final three games, Hu and Jackson drew with each other in round four. With first place on the line, Hu was nicked by a draw in round six by Nicolas A. Yap, from California, who finished with 4½ points and Jackson was slowed down with only a half point by drawing Deepyaman Datta, from Texas, who also finished with 4½ points. Jackson was awarded the four-year college scholarship from the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) on tie-breaks. (Source: USChess.org, Press Release)

I have now doomed myself to trading off my black bishop and knight.

**13.Nce5 Nxe5 14.Nxe5 Bxe5 15.fxe5 Be6**

After a series of five or so inaccurate moves I am in a constricted position which should be bound to lose. 15...Ne3 16.Bxe3 dxe3 17.Rf4 f6 18.a5 Rad8 19.exf6±.

**16.c4 Nc7 17.b4 Rab8 18.Qf2 Red8**

My goal is to reposition my knight to g7. Although it is seemingly taking many moves, there is nothing else really worth doing in this position.

**19.b5 Ne8?!**

19...f6 20.exf6 Rf8 21.Qf4 Rxf6±.

**20.Bg5**

Not White's most accurate move, but he is dominating most of the board. 20.a5 Ng7 21.Rab1 Rf8 22.Bf4 Nh5 23.Bh6 Ng7 24.e3±.

**20...Ng7 21.g4 Rf8 22.Qh4**

White has given away most of his advantage if I choose to exchange down.

**22...Bxg4?!**

But I didn't. 22...f6 23.exf6 exf6 24.Rxf6 Rxf6 25.Bxf6 Bxg4±.

**23.Bxe7 Bxe2 24.Bh3**

For some reason, when I had calculated the complications of ...Bxg4 I missed the obvious Bh3 which completely refutes any compensation I was trying to achieve.

**24...Qc7 25.Bf6 h5 26.Qg5 Kh7**

Although I am not in that bad of a position, the important aspect is the psychological one. Black is under a heavy kingside attack which will need to be dealt with by a series of flawless moves.

**27.Rf2**



White makes it easier for Black by needlessly sacking two pawns in a row. Interestingly, White must win by his immediate kingside attack and cannot let Black survive into an endgame.

**27...Bxd3 28.Ra3 Bxc4**

At this point Black is in the Elysian Fields if the position is defended.

**29.Rg3**

29.Be7 Ne6 30.Bxe6 Bxe6 31.Bd6 Qa5±.

**29...Rbe8 30.Bf5 Nxf5 31.Rxf5 Be2**

Black has not only been able to trade down a set of pieces, but get his bishop on the powerful e2-square which can be protected by d3.

**32.h3 Qd7 33.e6 Qxe6 34.Re5 Qd6?**

Although still winning, I made a foolish mistake with this move as I overestimated my time advantage and the d- and c-pawns.

**35.Be7 Rxe7 36.Qxe7 Qxe7 37.Rxe7 d3 38.Kf2 Kg7 0-1**

The game went on a few more moves after which White lost on time although it was probably winning for Black.

I had expected that this tournament would be challenging because of both the ratings and the ages of the players (younger players seem to have the tendency of being underrated) and after my first game this feeling was reinforced. My next opponent was Ben Inskeep from Indiana. Although ranked higher than Kobalka, the game was much easier as I developed a strong attack on the kingside early in the game out of a bizarre Closed Sicilian.

**White: Joshua Bakker**

**Black: Ben Inskeep**

2005 Denker (2), [B23]

**1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Bc4 g6 4.d3 Bg7 5.Nge2 e6 6.0-0 Nge7 7.Bg5 0-0 8.f4 f5?!**

8...f6 9.Bh4 d5 10.exd5 exd5 11.Bb3=.

**9.Bb3?!**

For some reason I was afraid of playing the much stronger e5 and thought that Bb3 was a move I would eventually have to play, so why not play it now? 9.e5 a6 10.a4 d5 11.exd6 Qxd6∞.

**9...d6**

Slightly better is 9...h6.

**10.Rf3**

Aggressive as almost always, I went for an attack on the kingside hoping for Rh3, ef, Ng3 and a miracle to get my queen on h4.

**10...Nd4**

10...h6 11.Bh4 Nd4 12.Nxd4 cxd4 13.Ne2 Qc7 14.Bf2=.

**11.Nxd4 cxd4 12.Ne2 Qc7**

Transposing into the earlier line by playing ...h6 here would have been the best way to deal with White's attempt at a kingside attack

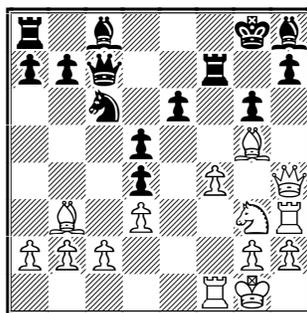
**13.Rh3 Nc6**

Three strikes and you're out! Black had his final chance to prevent an attack from forming and even helps White by moving his knight away from the action and unable to protect the f5-square.

**14.exf5 Rxf5 15.Ng3 Rf7 16.Qg4 d5**

The only move. If Black tries to be clever with counterplay, he will find himself in Dante's Inferno: 16...Nb4 17.Qh4! Bf8 18.Bd8 Be7 19.Bxc7 Bxh4 20.Bxd6 Be7+; 16...h5 17.Qe2 d5 18.f5 gxf5 19.Qxh5±.

**17.Qh4 Bh8 18.Rf1**



A pity, the only time I shy away from the complexities of an open sacrifice, it happens to be the decisive move: 18.f5 Ne5 (18...gxf5 19.Nh5 Ne5 20.Nf6+ Bxf6 21.Bxf6±) 19.Rf1 Bd7 20.Ne4 Re8 (20...dxe4? 21.fxe6! Rxf1+ 22.Kxf1+-) 21.Nf6+±.

**18...Qd6**

A solid move that not only centralizes the queen, but blocks the threats of f5.

**19.Ne2**

Wishful thinking. The idea of g4, Ng3 and f5 looked too good to pass up.

**19...Na5**

Moving the knight further away from the action is not going to help Black, better is ...Bd7 or actually moving the knight back to e7.

**20.Ba4 Bd7 21.Bxd7 Qxd7 22.g4?**

My position is beginning to spiral downward because of my foolhardy attempts to attack Black's kingside. 22.f5 exf5 (22...gxf5 23.Rg3 and Black will be in a world of pain) 23.Nf4 Be5 24.Re1 Bxf4 25.Bxf4 Rc8 26.Re2±.

**22...Raf8 23.Ng3?! Nc6 24.f5 exf5 25.gxf5 Ne5 26.Bh6 Bg7?**

This completely reverses what ...Rc8 would have accomplished. Interestingly enough, Black can move the rook anywhere and have a fine game: 26...Rc8 27.fxg6 Rxf1+ 28.Nxf1 Nxc6 29.Qg5±. **27.Bxg7 Rxc7 28.Qxd4 Nc6 29.Qf4 gxf5 30.Rh5 Ne7 31.Kh1?!**

31.Rg5 Rg6 32.Kh1 d4 33.Nxf5 Nxf5 34.Rxf5 Rxf5 35.Qxf5 Qxf5 36.Rxf5± Perhaps in retrospect, Kh1 is better because it doesn't force a tradeoff of all but one of the major pieces.

**31...Ng6?!**

Black missed yet another chance to cash in on White's mistakes and makes an even bigger mistake. 31...Qc6 32.Rg5 d4+ 33.Kg1 Qh6 34.Rxc7+ Qxc7±.

**32.Qf3 Ne5?**

This move pretty much caps it off for Black as it gives White a clear and decisive advantage. 32...Ne7 33.c3 (33.Nxf5? Kh8! =) 33...f4 34.Ne2 Qd6 35.Nd4±.

**33.Qe2 Nc6? 34.Nxf5 Re8 35.Qf3 Rg6 36.Nh6+ Kg7 37.Rxd5 Qe6 38.Nf5+**

38.Rd6! Kxh6 39.Rxe6 Rxe6 40.d4+-

**38...Kg8 39.Rd6 Qe2 40.Rxc6+ hxc6**

**41.Qd5+ Kh8 42.Ng3 Qxc2??**

Black is desperately trying to regain material and hoping for drawing chances. But in doing so, he seals his fate.

**43.Qf7 Rg8 44.Qf6+ Kh7? 45.Qh4+ Kg7 46.Nh5+ 1-0**

Mate in 3 is coming, so Black resigns.

After winning my second game in the Denker, things were going nicely. I was also playing in the US Open and had 2-0, plus I had found a very reasonable Mexican restaurant, but then things took a turn for the worse. That night I got slaughtered in the US Open and my next game in the Denker against Trevor Jackson from Louisiana was just humiliating.

**White: Trevor Jackson**

**Black: Joshua Bakker**

2005 Denker (3), 08.2005 [A51]

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ne4 4.a3 Nc6**

**5.Nf3 d6 6.Qc2**

One of Black's most difficult trials in the entire opening, Qc2 not only actively develops White's queen, but puts pressure on Black with the intention of e3 and Bd3.

**6...d5**

Although seemingly wasting a move, this is Black's only defense. 6...Bf5 7.Nc3! Ng3 (7...Nxf2 8.Qxf5 Nxf1 9.e6±; 7...Nxc3 8.Qxf5 Na4+-) 8.e4± Nxf1 9.exf5 dxe5±.

**7.e3 g5??**

A major blunder that leaves Black with an unsalvagable position. The correct move was ...Bg4, but for some reason I imagined that it loses a piece after 8.cxd5 Qxd5 9.Bc4 Qa5+ 10.b4 Bxb4+ 11.axb4 Qxa1 12.Qxe4 Bxf3 13.gxf3 Qxe5± but also very unclear.

**8.cxd5**

White sees the combination, there is no way Black can prevent it, and there is no reason to comment any further.

**8...Qxd5 9.Bc4 Qa5+ 10.b4 Nxb4 11.Qxe4 Nc2+ 12.Ke2 Nxa1 13.Bb2 Be6 14.Bxe6 Qb5+ 15.Bc4 Qxb2+ 16.Nbd2 Be7 17.Rb1 Qxa3 18.Rxb7 Bd8 19.Qc6+ Kf8 20.Qh6+ 1-0**

If losing the previous game wasn't bad enough, I drew to a 1900 that night (Abby Marshall who tied for first in the Polgar Tournament) bringing my total for the past three games to ½. At this point I knew I had to win the rest of my games in the Denker to have any chance of first place, but by my calculations the chances were slim. My game next morning against Kayin Barclay from Illinois renewed my spirits as I thoroughly outplayed him. Another Closed Sicilian, if you thought the first was a bit strange, this definitely trumped it.

**White: Joshua Bakker**

**Black: Kayem Barclay**

2005 Denker (4) [B23]

**1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 a6 3.a4**

I'm sure that by this game the reader has a good idea of what I play in the opening: junk.

**3...Nc6 4.Bc4 e6 5.d3 Nf6**

I prefer ...Nge7 here simply because it makes Bg5 much less effective.

**6.Bg5 Be7 7.Nge2 h6**

7...d6 is slightly better. 7...Nxe4? 8.Bxe7 Nxc3 9.Bxd8 Nxd1 10.Bb6 Nxb2 11.Bb3±.

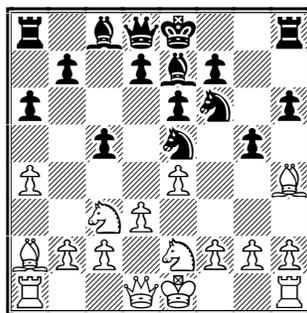
**8.Bh4 Ne5?!**

Again, ...d6 would have been the best move. The text misplaces Black's knight and signals his intent is to misplace it further on g6, then f4 becomes powerful.

**9.Ba2**

There are two paths of action and in neither was Ba2 the correct move. If I wanted to keep the bishop Bb3 is much stronger as the threat of ...b5 is not as imminent. If I wanted a strong center I simply could have castled and if Black takes the bishop then White is dominant in the center.

**9...g5?!**



Black is overextending his pawn structure with no chance to castle on either side now. Either ...d6, ...Ng6 or castling would have been equal.

**10.Bg3 Ng6 11.Qd2**

11.d4 Nh5 12.0-0 Nxc3 13.Nxc3±.

**11...h5 12.f4 h4 13.f5!? hxc3?!**

13...Nf8 14.Bf2 Ng4 15.Bg1 h3 16.g3 Ne5 (16...exf5 17.Nd5!±) 17.0-0=.

**14.fxg6 gxh2**

14...Rxf2 15.0-0-0 Nh5 16.gxf7+ Kxf7 17.Nxc3 Rxf1 18.Rxf1 Nxc3 19.Qf2±±; 14...fxg6 15.Qxc5 Rg8 16.Qxc3 Nh5 17.Qe3±.

**15.gxf7+**

At this point my calculating abilities failed me and I missed Black's best move.

**15...Kf8?**

15...Kxf7 16.Qxc5 Qg8 (16...Nxe4?! 17.Qf4+ Nf6±) 17.Qxc8+ Kxc8 18.Kf2 Kg7±.

**16.Qxc5 Qc7?!**

16...Nxe4 17.Qe5 Nf6 18.Rxf2 Rxf2 19.Qxh2 Kxf7 20.0-0-0±.

**17.Qe3?!**

Not the best move, but I have a little room for error. 17.Nf4 Kxf7 18.Qg6+ Kf8 19.Qg3±.

**17...Ng4 18.Qf3 Ne5 19.Qf4 Rh4?**

19...Bd6 20.Qf6 Nxf7 21.0-0-0 Be5±.

**20.Qg3 Rh8??**

A wasted move for him and a missed opportunity for me.

**21.0-0-0**

21.Rxf2 Nxd3+ 22.Kf1 Qxc3 23.Rxf8+ Kxf7 24.Nxc3+-.

**21...Bh4 22.Qf4 Nxd3+??**

Obviously Black thought that he would be able to win my knight.

**23.Rxd3 Qxf4+ 24.Nxf4 Bg5 25.g3 e5 26.Rd5**

Black is a full piece down with no compensation except for a pawn on h2.

**26...d6 27.Kb1 Bg4 28.Ng6+ Kg7 29.Nxh8 Rxh8 30.Rd3 b5 31.axb5 axb5 32.Nxb5 Be2 33.Nxd6 Bxd3 34.Nf5+ Kf8 35.cxd3 c4 36.Bxc4 Bd8 37.Nh4 Bxh4 38.gxh4 Rxh4 39.Kc2 Kg7 40.Kd2 1-0**

And so the comeback began as my first of three needed victories was achieved. My next game was against David Wyde of Washington. Having learned that I was going to play him the night before, I was nervous after seeing the tremendous opening preparation he seemed to have done when playing second ranked seed Nicholas Yap. I woke up an hour early and tried to prepare with my brother, which also allowed me to actually arrive on time for the game. By far my coolest game in the tournament, the game was a crowd-pleaser (had there been one).

**White: David Wyde**

**Black: Joshua Bakker**

2005 Denker (5), 11.08.2005 [A51]

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 Ne4 4.a3**

Despite the passive nature of this move, many experts recommend it for White as it stops ...Bb4+, Black's main tool in the Fajarowicz.

**4...Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.exd6?!**

This allows a great deal of counterplay for Black as it opens up the d-file and develops Black's dark-colored bishop, better is Qc2 which keeps the pressure.

**6...Bxd6 7.Nbd2 Bf5 8.e3 Qe7 9.Be2**

Too passive, leaving Black with good winning chances, Nxe4 significantly reduces Black's attacking chances

**9...0-0-0 10.Nxe4 Bxe4 11.Qa4 g5**

White's position seems to be falling

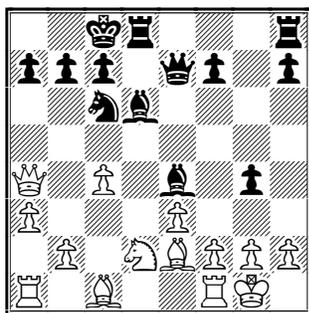


apart and 12.c5 Bxc5 13.Nxg5! seems to be White's only try.

12.0-0?

White now loses by force.

12...g4 13.Nd2



13...Bxh2+! 14.Kxh2

14.Kh1 Qh4+-.

14...Qh4+ 15.Kg1 Bxg2!!

The infamous double bishop sacrifice!

16.Kxg2

16.f4 g3+-.

16...Qh3+ 17.Kg1 g3 18.Bg4+

18.fxg3 Qxg3+ 19.Kh1 Rdg8 20.Bg4+ Rxg4 21.Rg1 Qh3#; 18.Nf3 Ne5 19.fxg3 Rhg8 with mate.

18...Qxg4 19.Kg2 gxf2+ 20.Kxf2 Ne5 21.Rd1

21.Rg1 Rxd2+ 22.Bxd2 Qf3+ 23.Ke1 Nd3#.

21...Nd3+ 22.Kf1 Qh3+ 0-1

I also prepared before my final round. Having seen that Tyler answers 1.e4 with 1...e5, I studied the Vienna and reviewed a line that I had only drawn with against Abby Marshall, which happened to be the line that Tyler played. The round was decisive, I had to win, and some other results had to happen for me to even tie for first. Going into the round there were two people with 4½. Furthermore, I had the highest tiebreaks of everyone except Trevor Jackson, thus I needed him to lose. Wanting to play one of the 4½'s, I was disappointed when I was paired against Tyler Hughes from Colorado, one of the four 4's.

White: Joshua Bakker

Black: Tyler Hughes

2005 Denker (6), 11.08.2005 [C28]

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bc4 Nc6 4.d3 Bb4 5.Bg5 h6 6.Bxf6 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 Qxf6 8.Ne2 Ne7

8...d6 9.0-0 g5 10.d4=.

9.0-0 g5 10.Rb1

With the idea of d4 and Rb5 or simply pushing the a-pawn.

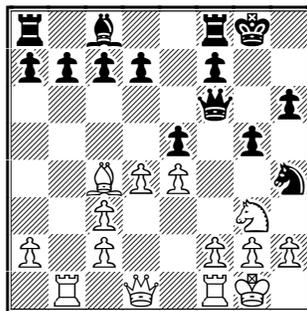
10...Ng6

Although this seems strong with the threat of Nf4. 10...d6 is better.

11.Ng3

Weaker than Qd2, but I had seen Tyler play before and correctly gambled that he wouldn't play the risky 11...Nf4.

11...Nh4 12.d4 0-0?



Black has now lost not only any play he had, but any structural advantage. His pieces are uncoordinated and undeveloped against White's very active pieces. 12...d6 13.Nh5 Qg6 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.Rb5 Qd6 16.Rd5±.

13.Nh5 Qe7 14.dxe5 Qxe5 15.f4! Qc5+?

15...Qxc3 16.Qe2±; 15...gxf4 16.Nxf4±. 16.Qd4 Qxd4+ 17.cxd4 d6?? 18.f5 g4 19.Rf4 Kh8 20.Rxg4 Ng6 21.fxg6 Bxg4 22.g7+ 1-0

After the round I went over the game with Tyler, watched a few games and relaxed as I thought I was going to get first. Nicholas Yap looked like he had a drawn position against Hu Zhi-Ya and Datta Deepyaman seemed to be winning against Trevor Jackson. I left for my room after maybe an hour and watched TV for about four hours straight, only to discover when I came down for my US Open round that not only did Trevor actually draw the game, but that I had missed the closing ceremony with me being announced as tied for first and co-champion.

Sadly every single one of the thirty points that I gained in the Denker were lost in the US Open. In fact, if I had won my last game in the US Open I would have won over a thousand dollars and still lost rating points. To borrow a phrase, my eleven days in Phoenix were both the best of times and the worst of times. Dickens must have been a chess player.

## United States Chess League

White: Perelshteyn (2576)

Black: Stripunsky (2663)

[B43] USCL ICC, 90/30, 31.08.2005

[Christiansen]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.g3 Bb4 7.Bd2 Nc6 8.Nb3 Be7 9.Bg2 Ne5 10.0-0 d6 11.Nd4 Nf6

Maybe Black should play 11...Nc4 12 Bc1 Nf6 13 b3 Ne5 here followed soon by Rb8 striving for ...b5.

12.b3 Bd7 13.a4 Rc8 14.a5 0-0 15.Na4 Nc6 16.Nxc6 Bxc6 17.Nb6 Rcd8 18.Qe2

Eugene has managed to obtain a nice space edge. Stripunsky lashes out in search of counterplay.

18...d5!? 19.Bf4 e5 20.exd5 exf4 21.dxc6 bxc6 22.Qxa6 fvg3 23.hxg3 Bc5 24.Na4 Ba7

24...Bd4 25 c3! is good for White.

25.Nb6 Rb8 26.Qc4 Bxb6 27.axb6 Rxb6 28.Rfe1 c5 29.Qc3

29 Ra5 Re6! eases the pressure.

29...h5 30.Re5 c4 31.bxc4 Rfb8 32.Rae1 Rb1 33.Bf3 Rxe1+ 34.Rxe1 Rc8 35.Rd1 Qc5

Naturally not 35...Qxc4 36 Rd8+ and wins.

36.Kg2 Qf5 37.Rd4 Qg5 38.Qd3 Qa5 39.Bd5

White's extra pawn enables him to build up a strong centralized position. Black's king is under fire on f7 and on the back-rank.

39...Re8 40.Rf4! Qa1 41.c3

White threatens Rxf6 now.

41...Qa6 42.Qd4 Re1 43.Qc5 Qa1

43...Qa4 is tougher, but White should win after 44 Qd6 Qe8 45 Rxf6 gxf6 46 Qxf6 and Black will soon loses both his kingside pawns.

44.Qc7! Qxc3 45.Qxf7+ Kh7 46.Rf5 Kh6 47.Bf3 Re5 48.Bxh5! Kh7 49.Rxf6 Rg5 50.Rf5 1-0

White: Jay Bonin (2335)

Black: Paul MacIntyre (2262)

[E97] USCL ICC INT (1), 31.08.2005

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 e5 7.0-0 Nc6 8.d5 Ne7 9.Nd2 c6 10.b4 a5 11.bxa5 Qxa5 12.Bb2 c5 13.Nb5 Ne8 14.f4 exf4 15.Bxg7 Kxg7 16.Rxf4 Bd7 17.a4 f6 18.Qc2 Ng8 19.Qb2 Nh6 20.Rff1 Nf7 21.Nf3 Bc8 22.h3 Qd8 23.Bd3 Qe7 24.Bc2 Ne5 25.Nxe5 Qxe5 26.Qxe5 fxe5 27.Rxf8 Kxf8 28.Rb1 Ke7 29.Nc3 Nc7 30.Rb6 Ra6 31.Rxa6 Nxa6 32.a5 Bd7 33.Ba4 Bxa4 34.Nxa4 Nb4 35.Kf2 Nc2 36.Ke2 Nd4+ 37.Kd3 Nb3 38.Kc3 Nxa5 39.Nb6 Kd8 40.g4 g5 41.Na8 Kc8 42.Nb6+ Kc7 43.Na8+ Kb8 44.Nb6 Kc7 45.Na8+ Kb8 46.Nb6 Kc7 ½-½



each other in the final round, and **GM Alexander Ivanov** and **GM Aleks Wojtkiewicz** of Maryland, who also played to a draw in the final round, tied for 1st-4th place with scores of 4½-1½. Runners-up with 4-2 tallies were **GM Dmitry Gurevich** of Illinois, **FM Paul MacIntyre**, and national masters **Erez Klein** of New York and **Gregory Markzon** of New Jersey. The tournament drew 226 players in seven sections and was directed by **William Goichberg**. He was assisted by **Brenda Goichberg** and **Robert Messenger**.

**16th Vermont Resort Open**

The 16th Vermont Resort Open took place June 10-12, 2005 at Mount Snow, Vermont. **GM Alexander Ivanov** of Newton, Massachusetts, captured first place with a perfect 5-0 score. Tied for 2nd-3rd place with 3½-1½ results were national expert **Leonid Tkach**, 65, of Amherst, Massachusetts, and Class A contestant **Jake Vogel** of Connecticut. The tournament drew 59 players in 4 sections and was directed by **Steven J. Immitt**.

**55th New Hampshire Open**

The 55th New Hampshire Open took place June 25-26, 2005 at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, New Hampshire. **GM Alexander Ivanov** and **FM Braden Bournival** of Manchester, N.H., tied for 1st-2nd place with scores of 3½-½. Runners-up with 3-1 tallies were **IM Joseph Fang** of Nashua, N.H., and Class A contestant **Scott Didham**. The tournament drew 62 players in three sections and was directed by **Robert Messenger**.

**11th Northeast Open**

The 11th Northeast Open took place July 15-17, 2005 in Stamford, Connecticut. **GM Alexander Ivanov** captured first place with a score of 4½-½. **GM Sergey Kudrin** of Connecticut and **WGM Rusudan Goletiani** of New York tied for 2nd-3rd place with 4-1 tallies. Deadlocked in 4th-5th place with 3½-1½ results were senior master **Igor Sorkin** and **IM Jay Bonin**, both from New York. A total of 131 players competed in four sections. **Steve Immitt** directed.

**MACA Scholastics Qualifier #2  
Sunday, November 13, 2005**

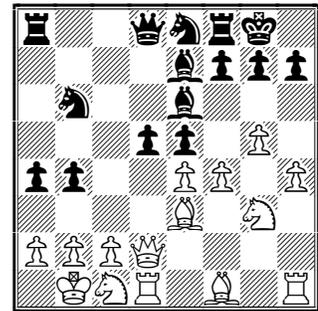
Trophies to Top 3 in each section! Medals to those who finish with at least 3 points! Lowell High School, 50 Morrisette Blvd., Lowell, MA 01852, Lowell Connector off I-495 or Rte 3, turn left at end onto Gorman St. to Central St., turn left onto Merrimack St. 4-SS USCF-rated (No elimination rounds.) Reg: Sunday, November 13, 8:15 – 9:00AM Entry: \$15 if Post-marked by November 10, 2005. \$20 at tournament site. USCF & MACA mem. req. WMCA and other home state memberships accepted. Round 1 at 9:45AM Sections may be combined. Chess Players organized into 4 Sections by age: Primary, Age 8 and under: Open (G/45) Elementary, Age 11 and under: Open (G/45) Junior High, Age 14 and under: Open (G/60) High School, Grades 9-12: Open (G/60) Players must be the ages specified for their section as of 12/31/05 "Open" sections are for more experienced players. No Byes in the Open sections!. Primary Age 8 and under, rated under 600 (G/45), Elementary Age 11 and under, rated under 800 (G/45), Junior High Age 14 and under, rated under 1000 (G/45), High School, rated under 1200, (G/45), "Under" sections are recommended for new and less experienced players. (You can play at a higher level.) A provisional rating is considered a valid rating. Special: On-site registration cut-off at 9:00 AM sharp. Late entrants will be paired in Round 2. Byes Ok in Novice Section. One half-point bye allowed if requested with entry ( Doesn't apply to players in Open section.) No Smoking. No Computers. Site is Wheelchair-accessible. Chess Equipment on Sale. Bring your own chess set, board, and chess clock (if you have one). Items not provided at tournament. Proof of current USCF, MACA (or Home State) membership required for on-site entries. Questions: Steve Frymer 781-862-3799, or email: afrymer@aol.com, www.masschess.org

According to a posting at Mig's Daily Dirt ([www.chessninja.com/dailydirt](http://www.chessninja.com/dailydirt)) the Grand Ayatollah Sistani of Iraq's website lists chess as "absolutely forbidden." He quotes:

*It is not permissible, because it is a means for Lahw (debauchery) and gambling. Many traditions have been reported from the Holy Prophet and the Imams (a.s.) that prohibit playing chess. Moreover, when we do not know the reason behind the forbiddenness of an act, we are bound to obey in absolute obedience. There is a reason for it, but we do not know it and when we do not know it, it does not mean that we should not abide by it.*

**Dark Horse continued**

42.Rd5 Rxf6 43.Rg5+ Kh6 44.Ke5 1/2-1/2, engineer-zacks/playchess.com 2005; 14.Ng3?! a5 15.Kb1 Nc7 16.f4 a4 17.Nc1 exf4 18.Bxf4 Nc5 19.Qxb4 Rb8 20.Qc3 Rb6 21.Rg1 g6 22.Bd2 Qb8 23.Qd4 Nd7 24.Bc3 Ne5 25.Qxa4 Bd7 26.Qd4 Ne6 27.Qf2 Rc8 28.Nb3 Rxc3 29.bxc3 Qa7 30.Nh1 Nc5 31.Qf4 Be6 32.Rg2 Rb8 33.h4 Ra8 34.Kc1 Qc7 35.Nxc5 Rxa2 36.Kd2 dxc5 37.Qe3 Ng4 38.Qf3 Nh2 39.Qf2 Bd6 40.Ke1 Be5 41.Qe3 Qa5 42.Rxh2 Bxh2 43.Ng3 Rxc2 44.Ne2 Be5 45.Qd3 Qa2 46.Qb5 Rxc3 47.Rd2 Rc2 48.Rxc2 Qxc2 49.Bg2 Kg7 50.Bf3 h6 51.Qa5 hxg5 52.hxg5 Qb1+ 53.Kf2 Qb4 54.Qd8 c4 0-1, team aldersbach-zacks/playchess.com.  
**14...a5 15.Kb1 Nb6 16.Ng3 a4 17.Nc1 d5 18.f4**



18.Bxb6 Qxb6 19.exd5 Rd8 20.Bc4 unclear.  
**18...exf4 19.Bxf4 Nd6 (! Kasparov) 20.Bg2 b3 (! Kasparov) 21.exd5**  
21.cxb3 axb3 22.Nxb3 doesn't help the situation as Black can now play ...Qd7 followed by swinging the f8-rook over to the queenside or throw a knight onto c4 first. The important feature of the position is that 14.h4 has failed to create any real counterplay and clearly Black's attack is striking first.  
**21...Nbc4 22.Qf2 bxc2+ 23.Kxc2 Bg4 24.Bf3 Bxf3 25.Qxf3 Rc8 26.Qf2 Nb5 27.Kb1 Ba3 28.Rd2 Bc5 29.Qf3 a3 30.b3 Nxd2+ 31.Bxd2 Qc7 0-1**

All photographs that appear in *Chess Horizons* are available for purchase. Please contact Tony Cortizas at (617) 491-1398