

Chess Horizons

The Magazine of the Massachusetts Chess Association

Ivanov *and* Foygel

1st

in the 79th
Massachusetts
Open

July-September 2010
\$3.95



70th New England Open

3-day, 1-day, Blitz & Scholastics

Sheraton Bradley Airport, 1 Bradley International Airport, Windsor Locks, CT 06096

\$8,000 In Guaranteed Prizes

GPP 100 (Enhanced), JGP & FIDE rated

NEO 3-Day: 6-round Swiss: 40/90, SD/30 +30 sec (analog clocks play 40/90, SD/60, Chronos CH-P6)
 Sept 4-6 6 sections: Championship, U2100, U1900, U1700, U1500, U1300
Championship: \$1000-\$600-\$400-\$300-\$250-\$250-\$200, U2400: \$250 bonus, U2300
 \$400-\$250-\$150; **U2100:** \$400-\$250-\$150; **U1900:** \$400-\$250-\$150; **U1700:** \$400-\$250-\$150; **U1500:** \$400-\$250-\$150; **U1300:** \$250-\$150-\$100, U1100 \$150-\$100
 Unrated may enter any section but may win only 50% of place prizes in under sections
 Rounds: Sat. 11:30 & 5:00, Sun. 10:00 & 4:00, Mon. 10:00 & 4:00 (Registration, Sat: 10-10:45) One 1/2-point bye available rounds 1-5, must request before round 2
Championship - \$78, U1900 \$118, free to 2400 & above by August 25th, \$7 more at site
U2100, U1900, U1700 & U1500 sections entry - \$68 by August 25th, \$7 more at site;
U1300 section entry (adult unrated may not enter) - \$53 by August 25th, \$7 more at site

Blitz: 5-round DBLSS (game as both white & black). 1st round at 9pm, next rounds ASAP,
 Sun., Sept. 5th **\$\$GTD:** \$200-\$100, U2000 \$100 & U1600 \$100, GPP: 10 (enhanced)
Entry Fee: \$20 for players in any NEO section, \$25 otherwise

NEO Quads: 3-round Round-Robin: Game/90, **\$\$GTD: \$50 1st each quad**
 Sat., Sept. 4th Rounds at 11:30 - 3:30 - 7:00, no byes or withdraws allowed, **Entry Fee: \$20**

Sun 1-Day: 4-round Swiss: Game/60, Sections: U2000 and U1600, **\$\$\$ Prizes based on entries**
 Sun., Sept. 5th Rounds at 10:00 - 1:00 - 3:15 - 5:30, **Entry Fee: \$20 by August 25th, \$25 at site**

Mon 1-Day: 5-round Swiss: Game/45, Sections: U2200 and U1800, **\$\$\$ Prizes based on entries**
 Mon., Sept. 6th Rounds at 10:00 - 12:30 - 2:15 - 4:00 - 6:00, **Entry Fee: \$20 by August 25th, \$25 at site**

K-12: 4-round, USCF-rated Swiss, Game/30, Sections: U1400 and U800,
 Sat., Sept. 4th Trophies to top three in each section
 1st round at 10:30 AM, then ASAP, **Entry Fee: \$20 by September 1st, \$25 at site**

K-6: 4-round, USCF-rated Swiss, Game/30, Sections: U1350 and U700
 Sun., Sept. 5th Trophies to top three in each section
 1st round at 10:30 AM, then ASAP, **Entry Fee: \$20 by September 1st, \$25 at site**

K-3: 4-round, USCF-rated Swiss, Game/30, Sections: U1200 and U600
 Mon., Sept. 6th Trophies to top three in each section
 1st round at 10:30 AM, then ASAP, **Entry Fee: \$20 by September 1st, \$25 at site**

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 860-627-5311, *Rate: \$99 by August 20th, Complimentary Parking, mention Relyea Chess*

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Additional details available on USCF website

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Cover photos by Tony Cortizas, composed by Warner Smith.

The next deadline for submissions is Sept. 1, 2010.

All submissions are accepted and appreciated. Submissions are preferred via e-mail and in ChessBase, PGN or MS Word formats.

Chess Horizons

July-September 2010
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MACA Election Results 2010

by Beebe Wiegand and Bob Messenger

Candidates with vote totals. Candidates with sufficient votes to be elected are marked in **bold**.

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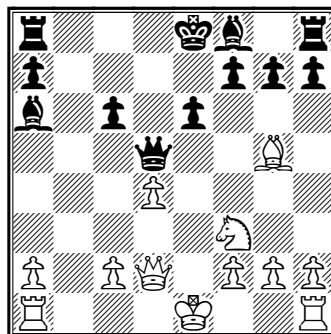
Ratification #1 (Section 7.2)

Yes: 100
No: 6

Ratification #2 (Section 4.6)

Yes: 91
No: 20

Correction



Correction to the initial position of the Shmelov-Astrachan game in the Surviving Bad Positions article on page 15 of the April-June 2010 issue.

Ivanov and Foygel 1st at 79th Massachusetts Open

by David Yasinovsky

It was a beautiful, sunny Saturday and the late spring breeze blew across the barren landscape of the airstrip behind the Four Points Sheraton in Leominster. Amid the teenage girls in lime green soccer jerseys parading through the lobby of the hotel, a congregation of nervous men with mysterious bags began to form. Some paced back and forth, some fiddled with their pens or attempted to drink the sordid cups of aged coffee they carried in their hands. Their attention seemed to shift unanimously towards the door as it swung open, revealing a stocky figure carrying a printer and yellow paper.

Ken Ballou, the soon-to-be president of the Massachusetts Chess Association, muttered to himself as he plopped the printer on its perch atop a desk placed in the middle of the conference hallway. He could look forward to another weekend spent enjoying the sunshine from inside the overheating room as players bombarded him with questions and grievances. As he sauntered back out to his car to get the trophy collection he would give away to smiling, prize-thirsty children he smiled; to him, there was nothing like the Massachusetts Open which was about to begin.

This year, the tournament promised to be an exciting race to the finish line; not only had perennial winner Grandmaster Alexander Ivanov made his usual appearance, but the strength of the field was fortified by Igor Foygel, a reclusive International Master who only plays a few tournaments a year. These two big names were joined by David



GM Alexander Ivanov and expert Patrick Sciacca. Photo by Bob Oresick

Vigorito, Christopher Chase, Bill Kelleher, and the unbelievable John Curdo, who has been playing at the highest level in New England circles for more than five decades.

As early as the first round, however, upsets seemed to be the theme of the section as Kapil Chandran, rated barely above 2100, managed to hold Ivanov to a draw. Vigorito and Foygel seemed to make much smoother progress, both winning their first two games, but Vigorito stumbled against Chase in the third round and dropped out of the event. Ivanov, meanwhile, clawed his way back, beating Kelleher in the fourth round to position himself just half a point behind Foygel going into the final day. Foygel had a bye for the fifth round, so Ivanov was given the opportunity to catch up to him if he could beat his opponent, John Curdo,

against whom he had an overwhelmingly positive record. Although Curdo put up a brave fight, history could not be stopped from repeating itself and Ivanov caught up first place. In the final round, Ivanov and Foygel drew, putting each on 5/6.

It was now up to Stuart Finney, a youngster who had taken two byes in the first two rounds and then stormed through the field with three wins, to attempt to disrupt the stranglehold of the two titled players over the top rankings. At 4/5, Stuart had to win against Hal Terrie in order to claim a split of the first prize, but the pressure got to him and his careful play allowed Hal to produce a brilliant game which catapulted him into third place and Stuart out of the money. Stuart did, however, receive some consolation in the form of the best U2250 prize, which he split



Kapil Chandran drew with GM Alexander Ivanov at the Mass Open. Photo by Bob Oresick

with John Curdo and Patrick Sciacca.

In the U2000 section, Dragan Vidanovic began the tournament firing on all cylinders, winning his first four games. He built up such an unassailable lead by doing so that even a fifth-round loss to Stephen Brudno couldn't remove him from the top spot, and as he held on to draw his last game against third-placed Robert J. King [*not to be confused with MACA presidential candidate Robert E. King - ed.*] and Brudno, who had a chance at a split if he beat Reilly Nathans, also played to a draw, Dragan ended up winning the section with 4.5/6. Charlie Fauman deserves a special salute; the 11-year old's excitement rose with every game he won and even though he lost his fourth-round game to Vidanovic two half point byes in the last rounds were enough to give him a split of second place. Charlie, like his brothers Jacob, who played in the Open section, and Alex, who played the octads on Sunday, has an incredibly bright future and it is almost certain that the last name Fauman will soon appear on the State Scholastic Championship trophy.

The U1800 section was won by a trio: Mike Griffin, who overcame a fourth-round hiccup to finish strongly, Thomas Provost Sr., and Alexander Wei, who scored 3.5/4 and coasted



IM Igor Foygel at the Mass Open. Photo by Mark Kaprielian

on two half-point byes to 4.5/6.

Both Daniel Tiedemann, a provisional player, and Harold Dondis recovered well from first-round losses, Tiedemann to take fourth place with 4/6 and Dondis to take 5th place with 3.5 points. Harold has been writing about and playing chess for as long as most of us can remember and despite recent health troubles he has always been a guaranteed entrant at any Massachusetts tournament. His love of chess is incredible and his ability to keep falling in love with the game and its competitive aspect even though age is catching up to him is truly inspirational.

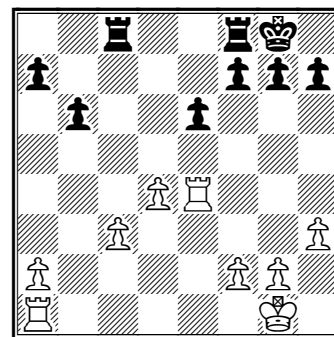
Buddhadeb Biswas scored 5/6 to triumph undisputedly in the U1600 section, and Bruce Fulton and Brian Furtado scored an undefeated 4/4 to sweep the one-day U2000 and U1600 sections, respectively. Nicholas Zhang and Michael Manisy continued the perfect scores on Saturday, winning their octads with 3/3 each. The Monday octads were very competitive, with Predrag Cicovacki scoring 2.5 points to win the top section and Tony Carpentito needing the same score to take home the prize for the bottom section. Ken Ballou directed the tournament, assisted by Alex Relyea, Nita Patel, Nicholas Sterling (who directed the scholastic side events),

Steve Frymer, and Bob Messenger.

White: Xu, Grant (2040)
Terrie, Hal (2200)
[B22] Sicilian Defense: Alapin Var.
Annotated by David Yasinovsky

Although Hal Terrie's tournament was marred by the loss he suffered at the hands of Ivanov in the fourth round, he recovered very well to finish with two wins to cement his name in the prizes amongst very respectable company. Here is the game he played in the fifth round, an example of crystal-clear endgame technique and utilizing an opponent's minute mistakes to convert a small advantage.

1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3 Nf6 4.e5 Nd5 5.Nf3 e6 6.cxd4 d6 7.Nc3 Nxc3 8.bxc3 Qc7 9.Bd2 Nd7 10.exd6 Bxd6 11.Bd3 b6 12.0-0 Bb7 Black, who knew this line well, played all of this in about a minute. **13.h3 0-0 14.Re1 Bf4** This move kills all of White's attacking hopes. **15.Bxf4 Qxf4 16.Qd2 Qxd2 17.Nxd2 Nf6 18.Ne4 Nxe4 19.Bxe4 Bxe4 20.Rxe4 Rac8** Although the ending is equal,



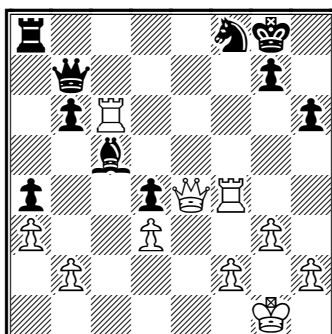
White has some serious problems which he needs to solve and he immediately goes wrong. **21.Rc1?** [21.Re3 would have been better, but after 21...Rc4 Black has some chances to play against the weak c3 and a2 pawns.] **21...Rc4 22.Kf1 Rfc8 23.f4** White looks for counterplay on the kingside, but the simple Ke2, acti-

vating the king at the cost of the already-lost c3 pawn, would have been stronger. 23...Kf8! [Accurate play by Black, as after 23...Rxc3 24.Rxc3 Rxc3 25.f5 Black will have a much trickier endgame to win.] **24.Re2?!** Giving up the c3 pawn would have been better. **24...Rxd4 25.Rf2 Rdc4 26.Rf3 R8c5 27.g3 Ra4 28.Rc2 Ra3 29.Rd3 Ke7** The white rooks are overloaded, and eventually something will have to give. 30.Ke2 b5 31.Ke3 Rd5 32.Rd4 Rxd4 33.Kxd4 Kd6 34.Rd2 Ra4+ 35.Ke3+ Ke7 36.g4? Once again White plays for activity, but by doing so creates targets on both f4 and h3, resulting in the loss of another pawn. **36...Rc4 37.Rd3 a6 38.Kf3 Ra4 39.Rd2 Ra3 40.Rc2 b4 41.Ke4 Rxc3 42.Rxc3?** [42.Rb2 a5 43.Rh2 was necessary to allow White to keep struggling.] **42...bxc3 43.Kd3 Kd6 44.Kxc3 Kd5** As we all know, once in a king and pawn endgame there is no backpadding; Black has calculated exactly and wins this easily. **45.Kb4 f6 46.Ka5 e5 47.fxe5 fxe5 48.Kxa6 e4 49.a4 e3 50.a5 e2** [50...Kc6 would have announced mate in 5.] **51.Kb7 e1Q 52.a6 Qb4+ 53.Kc7 Qa5+ 54.Kb7 Qb5+ 55.Ka7 Kc6 0-1**

White: Chase, Chris (2377)
Black: Plotkin, David (2113)
[B10] Caro-Kann
Annotated by David Yasinovsky

Chris Chase finished solidly in the Open section, but his main distinction was his triumph in the blitz event held on Sunday night. Chris scored an undefeated 9/10, and although the fatigue from the blitz showed in his 5th round loss to Finney he was able to play tough in the following game, which secured him fourth place. **1.e4 c6 2.d3 d5**

3.Nd2 e5 4.Ng3 Bd6 5.g3 Nf6 6.Bg2 0-0 7.0-0 Nbd7 8.exd5 cxd5 9.c4 d4 10.Re1 Qc7 11.Nb3 Re8 12.Bg5 a5 13.Bxf6 Nxf6 14.c5 Bf8 15.Rc1 Ra6 16.a3 a4 17.Nbd2 Bxc5 18.Nc4 Nd7 19.Qc2 b6 20.Nfxe5 Rxe5! [20...Nxe5 21.f4 Bb7 22.Rxe5 Rxe5 23.Nxe5 is equal.] **21.Nxe5 Nxe5 22.Qe2 Ng6 23.Qe8+ Nf8 24.Bd5** Threatening both Bxf7+ Qxf7 Qxc8 and Rxc5 bxc5 Re7 **24...Be6??** This flips the advantage; up to this point White had solidly been getting outplayed. [24...Ra7 25.Bxf7+ Qxf7 26.Qxc8 and Black is much better.] **25.Bxe6?!** [Much better was 25.Rxe6 fxe6 26.Bxe6+ Kh8 27.Qxf8+ Bxf8 28.Rxc7 and the rooks give White some small chances to win.] **25...fxe6 26.Rxe6 Qf7 27.Rce1 Ra7 28.R1e4 h6 29.Rf4 Qb7?** [29...Qxe8 30.Rxe8 Ra5 and Black is slightly better.] **30.Rc6 Ra8 31.Qe4** White has some

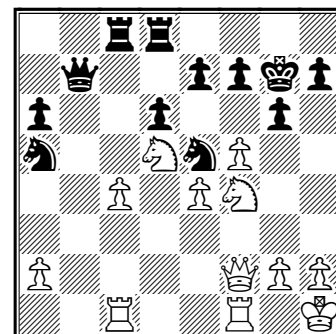


attacking ideas but Black is slightly better here. Until, that is, Plotkin miscalculates: **31...Qd7?? 32.Rxc5** On Re8 White plays Qc6, and it's game. **1-0**

White: Jiang, Fangru (1906)
Black: Yuan, Zongyuan (2069)
[B52] Sicilian, Canal-Sokolsky
Annotated by David Yasinovsky

With the Open section of the tournament as strong as it was, many players who could have qualified to play in a lower section chose to com-

pete at the top level in order to have a chance to play against players much better than their usual opponents. Many, like Chandran, created very strong positions, but like Kapil, who was better against Ivanov before time pressure told, most of these players were unable to keep the quality of their game to the needed level as time pressure set in. The following game, from the second round, is an unfortunate example of the ease with which a winning position can become a lost one. **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+ Bd7 4.Bxd7+ Qxd7 5.c4 Nc6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.0-0 g6 8.d4 cxd4 9.Nxd4 Bg7 10.Nde2 0-0 11.f3 Rac8** This takes the game out of book; the main move for Black here is a6. **12.Be3 b6 13.b3 Rfd8 14.Qe1 Qb7 15.Qg3 Nb4 16.Rac1 Qa6 17.Kh1 Nd7 18.f4 Nc5 19.Bd4 Qb7?!** [This move misses a chance to swing the game in Black's favor: 19...Nxa2! 20.Ra1 Nxc3 and after 21.Rxa6 Nxe2 22.Qh4 Nxd4 23.Rxa7 Nc6 Black has three pieces for the queen and White will face problems coordinating his heavy artillery.] **20.Bxg7 Kxg7 21.Qe3 a6 22.f5 Ncd3 23.Qd4+?!** Not the best choice; Rcd1 immediately, preparing f6+, was stronger. **23...Ne5 24.Nf4** Perhaps better was Nd5, exchanging off the knight on b4. **24...Nbc6 25.Qe3 b5 26.Ncd5** [The direct 26.f6+ exf6 27.Qg3 Nd7 28.Nh5+ Kh8 29.Nxf6 Nxf6 30.Rxf6 was stronger.] **26...bxc4 27.bxc4 Na5 28.Qf2** [White is afraid

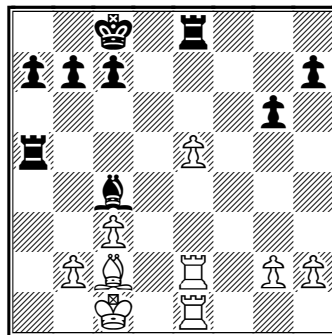


of losing the c4 pawn, but 28.Rb1 Qd7 29.Qg3 Naxc4 30.f6+ Kh8 (30...exf6 31.Nh5+ Kf8 32.Nhxf6) 31.fxe7 is all but winning.] **28...Naxc4?** Black doesn't appear to see White's kingside threats. Kh8 was required. **29.Nxe7!?** [Flashy, but surprisingly not the best shot. Patience could have been White's virtue in this position: 29.Qh4! Re8 30.Nxe7 Rxe7 (30...Qxe7 31.f6+ Qxf6 32.Nh5+) 31.f6+ Kf8 32.Qxh7 Ke8 33.fxe7 and Black is lost.] **29...Qxe4 30.Nxc8?** [30.Qh4! would now have won Black's queen: 30...Rb8 31.f6+ Kh8 32.Nfxg6+] **30...Rxc8 31.fxg6 hxg6 32.Nh3** [Now that he is up the exchange, White attempts to safeguard his pieces, but the openness of Black's king prompts activity: 32.Ne6+! fxe6 (32...Kh6 33.Rc3) 33.Qf6+ Kh7 34.Rf4 Qxf4 35.Qxf4 and the game is over.] **32...f5** This gifts the advantage back to White; Black is aiming to win back the exchange on d3, but the weakening of his kingside is very dangerous. **33.Qa7+ Kf6** Here, any piece to f4 gives White a comfortable edge, but he is determined to find a way to lose... **34.Qf2?? Nd3 35.Qg3 Nxc1 36.Rxc1 Re8 37.Qc3+ Ne5 38.Qa3 Qd3 39.Qb2 Qe3 40.Rc6 Qe1+ 41.Ng1 Re6 42.Rxa6 Kg5 43.Ra3** White has played his way back to equality but now two unassuming moves afford Black the chance to finish the game with a flourish: **43...Ng4 44.h3??** [44.g3 held relative equality.] **44...Qxg1+!** And it's mate next move. **0-1**

White: Yasinovsky, David (1848)
Black: Cicovacki, Predrag (2256)
[B02] Alekhine's Defense
Annotated by David Yasinovsky

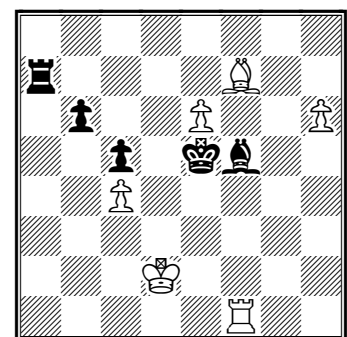
I myself am guilty of playing up above my usual level, but this was not by my own choice. In the

top Octad on Monday, I was paired in the first round against Predrag Cicovacki, a man whose rating was more than 400 points above mine. My hands damp with sweat, I wrote my opponent's rating on my score-sheet and prepared myself for the inevitable. **1.e4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.exd5 Nxd5 4.Nxd5 Qxd5 5.d4 Nc6 6.c3 e5 7.Qf3 Be6 8.Qxd5 Bxd5 9.dxe5 Nxe5 10.Bf4 Bd6** [I had calculated 10...Nd3+ 11.Bxd3 Bxg2 12.Be4 Bxe4 13.f3 Bd5 14.Bxc7 Kd7 15.0-0-0 and had decided that the activity of my pieces would provide sufficient counterplay for the turgid pawn structure, but it was obvious to me that Black was better; I was simply looking for the best way to trade pieces and hope.] **11.Bxe5 Bxe5 12.Nf3 0-0-0 13.Nxe5 Rhe8 14.f4 f6 15.0-0-0 fxe5 16.fxe5 Bxa2!?** [Incredibly, Black has let his advantage slip and now his best idea is to take on e5 and submit to trades on d8 and equality: 16...Rxe5 17.c4 Bc6 18.Rxd8+ Kxd8 19.Bd3 Rh5 20.h4 Bxg2 21.Rg1 Bh3 22.Rxg7 h6 23.Rg1= However, he of course wants more than an equal endgame against a player 400 points his "junior", so he tries for complications.] **17.Bd3 g6 18.Rhe1 Bb3 19.Rd2 Rd5 20.Bc2 Ra5 21.Rde2 Bc4** Black has stirred



up some threats against my king, and in my time trouble (I had about 8 minutes left at this point) I hallucinated that both Re3 and Re4 were

impossible on account of Ra1+ Kd2 Rd8+. Of course, after Re4 I have Rd4, and after Re3 I have Bb1 on Ra1+ and Ba2 doesn't get Black anywhere on Kc2. So I played the only move I saw, which turned out to be the best move in the position. **22.b4 Bxe2 23.bxa5 Bc4** Both my opponent and I agreed after the game that it seemed as though White was worse here, but in retrospect the strength of the e5 pawn and the inability of the black king to become active bode well in my favor. **24.h4 Bd5 25.g4 Bf3 26.h5 gxh5 27.gxh5 h6 28.Bg6 Re7 29.e6** Here I breathed a sigh of relief: Black no longer has any winning chances at all. But the seconds on my clock were erasing fast, and anything could happen in time trouble. **29...Bg4 30.Bf7 c5 31.Re5 b6 32.axb6 axb6 33.c4 Kc7 34.Kd2 Bf3?** I offered a draw after Kd2, and my opponent, desperate to find a win, banged out Bf3, which allows me to win the h6 pawn. Talk about a well-timed draw offer. :) [34...Bxe6 35.Rxe6 Rd7+ 36.Kc3 Rxf7 37.Rxh6] **35.Rf5 Bg4 36.Rf6 Kd6 37.Rxh6 Ke5 38.Rg6 Bf5 39.Rg5 Kf6 40.Rg1 Ra7 41.Rf1 Ke5 42.h6** White is on the verge of



victory, but with 30 seconds left on my clock it began to weigh on me that I had never drawn, never mind beaten, a player of my opponent's strength before. With my seconds ticking down, I looked for a way to

win but my mind was clouded. Finally, with 8 seconds (and delay) left, I gave my two kingside pawns in order to exchange rooks and leave myself in a position I knew I wouldn't blunder away. My opponent played on, and after pawns were exchanged on b5 I blockaded his pawn on c4 by placing my king on c3 and began moving my bishop around the board. The move counter piled up, and my time didn't change... Finally, my nerves on the edge of snapping, I screamed for the tournament director: "Ken, insufficient losing chances; this is ridiculous." Of course, I should not have said the last part of that phrase; there was nothing ridiculous about my opponent's behavior. Had I been in my opponent's shoes, I too would probably have played on in the hope that my opponent would blunder into a lost king vs. king and pawn endgame. But I obviously had no intent of trading bishops, and though with delay I couldn't claim insufficient losing chances, my opponent graciously offered me a draw before the director could approach our board.

Three days after we arrived in Leominster, we pile all our things back into the car and jump onto Route 2 to drive home. The Massachusetts Chess Association has a new president, with the power and responsibility personified beautifully by President-Elect Ken Ballou, and the trophy for State Champion is once again, as it has been so many times, split between the never-ceasing dominants Ivanov and Foygel. We can relax in the familiarity of our old association and its established champions, but also look forward to a new year, a year full of change and improvements stewarded in by the new government of our proud and unique organization. **1/2-1/2**

79th Massachusetts Open Scholastics

by Ken Ballou

The 79th Massachusetts Open Scholastics events were held Saturday, May 29, through Monday, May 31 at the Four Points by Sheraton in Leominster. A total of 94 players participated in the tournament. The chief tournament director was Nicholas Sterling, assisted by Steve Frymer and Nita Patel.

K-12 Under 1500 (18 players):

1st: Daniel Blessing of Medfield, MA (4-0)
2nd: Devin Rosen of Newton, MA (3.5-0.5)
3rd: Nithin Kavi of Acton, MA (3-1)

Medals awarded to:

Loring Lauretti of Cohasset, MA (3-1)
James Zhou of Andover, MA (3-1)

K-12 Under 900 (13 players):

1st: Justin Wu of Littleton, MA (4-0)
2nd: Stephen Yu of Chestnut Hill, MA (3-1)
3rd: Michael Shulman of Auburndale, MA (3-1)

Medal awarded to:

Benjamin Hansel of Cape Elizabeth, ME (3-1)

K-6 Under 1400 (21 players):

1st: Evan Meyer of Newton, MA (4-0)
2nd: Jesse Sun of Sudbury, MA (3-1)
3rd: Michael Isakov of Sudbury, MA (3-1)

Medals awarded to:

Brandon Wu of Littleton, MA (3-1)
Christopher Wang of Lexington, MA (3-1)

K-6 Under 800 (16 players):

1st: Kira Porter of Southboro, MA (3.5-0.5)
2nd: David Yashgur of Longmeadow, MA (3.5-0.5)
3rd: Andrew The of Lexington, MA (3-1)

Medals awarded to:

Matthew Ding of Westford, MA (3-1)
Eric Feng of Sudbury, MA (3-1)

K-3 Under 1200 (11 players):

1st: Anton Barash of Brighton, MA (3-1)
2nd: Sandeep Shankar of Sudbury, MA (3-1)
3rd: Conway Xu of Lexington, MA (3-1)

K-3 Under 600 (15 players):

1st: Matthew Ding of Westford, MA (4-0)
2nd: Shubhum Giroti of Wellesley, MA (3.5-0.5)
3rd: Benjamin Fauman of Newton, MA (3-1)

Medal awarded to:

Maxwell Wang of Acton, MA (3-1)

"One doesn't have to play well, it's enough to play better than your opponent"

— Siegbert Tarrasch

2009 Boston Blitz Recap

by Matt Phelps

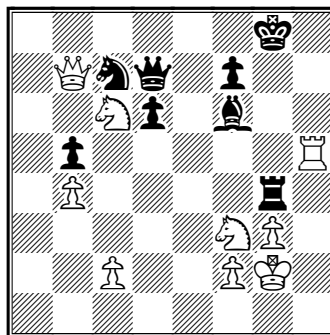
February 7th, 2005. A date which will live in infamy, for Boston area chess that is. IM Greg Shahade sent an email to the MetroWest Chess Club that began with, "Hello, I'm starting something called the United States Chess League." Thus began an odyssey that has changed the area chess scene, and incidentally this life-long class-player's life, mostly for the better. Soon the involvement of the likes of GMs Larry Christiansen and Eugene Perelshteyn, along with future-GM Friedel, and stalwart area masters MacIntyre, Riordan, and Kelleher added a huge degree of legitimacy to the endeavor. Having recently enabled wireless network access at the Natick Senior Center (MetroWest CC's playing site), and since the leagues' games would all be played "live" on the Internet Chess Club, I volunteered to help run the team. Five seasons, four playoff appearances, two final matches, and countless tense (and just as many hilarious) moments later, I'm still at it. As we prepare for our sixth campaign, fundamental changes loom; but more on that later.

The 2008-2009 off-season brought a few changes of its own. Jorge Sammour-Hasbun took over as team manager. After the inaugural 2005 season we moved to my workplace, the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, so I acted as the de facto team manager. The irony of a Class B player choosing lineups involving grandmasters did not escape me, nor did it escape countless commentators on the various blogs covering the league. I must have been doing something right as

we made the playoffs in all my years at the helm, and made the finals in the last two. However, it was a relief to me to have a 2600-rated player choosing who to face players like Nakamura. "Assistant Manager" (but not "Assistant to the Manager") was good enough for me.

2009 also brought two new players to the team's regular roster: expert (and now master) Andrew Wang and WGM Anya Corke. Also changing were the ratings of two of our board three weapons, Marc Esserman and Denys Shmelov. They both were now solidly in the 2400+ area, which made lineup choices (the average rating for each match cannot exceed 2400) challenging. What has never changed is the highly spirited Ilya Krasik. Still the "soul" of the team; still offering excitement on board four.

The first week of the season brought immediate intrigue. After two victories versus Queens were in the bag, including a nice win by newcomer Andrew Wang, it all came down to Stripunsky – Christiansen on board one. It wasn't looking good for the home team when in the following position:



Stripunsky's move came up on the screen, Qa8+. I dutifully relayed the move and Larry automatically went to move the knight to e8. He paused, sat for a second, then reached for the same knight and played Nxa8! A few seconds of shock passed, then we all burst into laughter. Clearly this was an example of that creature of chess-on-the-Internet, the "mouselip." I, and others, fully expected the queen move would be allowed to be retracted, however I remembered that there was a league rule that mouselips would not be retracted if either player was under five minutes, which both players were. Indeed, the requested takeback by Stripunsky was denied so he resigned. We went on to win the match 3-1. Afterward I pointed out that Stripunsky's move would appear in "This Week in Chess," and eventually in the ChessBase database and we all felt bad for him. It's unfortunate that a game, and match, has to be decided this way, but those are the rules. We took the win.

Week two versus Carolina saw the best game of the year for the Blitz.

White: Esserman, Marc (2453)

Black: Simpson, Ron (2290)

[C78] Ruy Lopez

Annotated by IM Marc Esserman

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 A surprise. Simpson was probably expecting the Four Knights. **3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 b5 6.Bb3 Nxe4?!** A counter-surprise. Simpson is attempting to play the open variation of the Ruy Lopez (5...Nxe4), but with the moves b5 and Bb3 thrown in the mix. **7.Re1!**

6.Re1 does not offer White any advantage in the open Ruy Lopez, but with the pawn on b5 and bishop on b3, the situation changes dramatically. The Lopez bishop is now reposted to the Italian a2-g8 diagonal, putting excessive pressure on Black's center, king, and now fragile black queenside for the rest of the game. [Most players here ignore the move order nuance and transpose to the open Ruy Lopez as follows: 7.d4?! d5 8.dxe5 Be6] **7...d5** [7...Nc5 8.Bd5 exploits the inaccurate b5, pinning the knight and threatening to end things quickly with the king on e8.] **8.Nc3!** White now proceeds in true gambit style. [8.d3 Nf6 9.Nxe5 Nxe5 10.Rxe5+ (or 10.d4 Ne4 11.dxe5 Be6 where Black again obtains an open Ruy Lopez structure) 10...Be6 does not offer White much.] **8...Nxc3** **9.dxc3** The b3 bishop is now ideally placed for a central assault. **9...Be6** **10.a4!** Increasing pressure on the compromised Black queenside in addition to the tension in the center. [Again White can regain the pawn with 10.Nxe5 if he likes, but this would allow Black to mobilize his pieces quickly and solve all his problems: 10...Nxe5 11.Rxe5 c6 with a quick Bb6.] **10...Rb8** [Trying to close the a-file with 10...b4 does not save Black as the bishop reappears on the Lopez diagonal, this time with greater force. 11.a5! Qd6 12.Ba4 f6 13.cxb4 Be7 14.Be3+/- d4 15.Bxd4 illustrates this concept: 15...exd4 16.Nxd4 Bd7 17.Nxc6 Bxc6 18.Qxd6] **11.axb5 axb5** **12.Ra6** Attacking from the front, side, and now behind enemy lines. Black's defensive resources are stretched thin. **12...Qd7** [12...Rb6 13.Rxb6 cxb6 14.Qe2+/-] **13.Rxc6!** White offers the exchange to make sure that the black king never escapes. [White can proceed simply with 13.Nxe5 but this would

not be the best. 13...Nxe5 14.Rxe5 Bd6 15.Bxd5 0-0 (15...Bxe5 16.Bc6+/-) 16.Bxe6 fxe6 17.Re1+/-] **13...Qxc6** **14.Nxe5 Qc5?!** [If 14...Qd6 15.Bf4 Be7 16.Ng6+/-; 14...Qb6!? is a move that would have led to greater complications: 15.Nxf7! Bc5! The idea — Black scrambles for a counterattack on f2. (If 15...Kxf7 16.Qf3+ Kg6 17.Re5! and the Black king cannot find safety in time: 17...h6 18.Bxd5 Bxd5 19.Qf5# denying the h7 retreat) 16.Kh1!! 0-0! The king can castle! — it did not pass through check! (If instead 16...Bxf2 17.Re5! (even stronger than 17.Re2 Kxf7 (if 17...0-0 18.Ng5) 18.Rxe6! as it does not block the queen's path) 17...Kxf7 18.Qf3+ Kg8 (if 18...Ke7 19.Qxd5+/-) 19.Bxd5 Re8 20.Rxe6 Rxe6 21.Qf5! A pretty picture. 21...h6 22.Bxe6+ All of these tactics are a result of Black's inaccurate opening move order, repositioning the bishop to the dangerous diagonal.) 17.Ng5!+- Bf5 (17...Bf7 18.Nxf7 Rxf7 19.Qxd5 Rb7 20.Re8) 18.Qxd5+ Kh8 19.Qg8+ Rxc8 20.Nf7#] **15.Nxf7!** A Fried Liver coming from the Ruy Lopez! 15...Kxf7 16.Qf3+ Ke7 17.Bxd5 Rb6 White is winning; it is now a question of which way is fastest. **18.Bg5+** [18.b4?! Qd6 19.Bxe6 Qxe6 20.Rxe6+ Rxe6 and Black, although lost, can play on for some moves.] **18...Kd7** **19.Bxe6+ Rxe6** **20.Qf7+ Re7** [After 20...Qe7 White is lost unless he now finds 21.Rd1+ Rd6 22.Rxd6+!+- and the queen cannot recapture.] **21.Bxe7 Bxe7** **22.Qe6+** Here Black resigned, as White has two ways to win: [22.Qe6+ Kd8 (22...Ke8 23.Qc8+/-) 23.Ra1! and the black forces cannot reach the a8 square. It is fitting that the final two white moves exploit Black's weakened central and queenside position stemming from the inaccurate opening moves b5 and Ne4.

(Another way for White to win is 23.Re5 and the queen cannot save herself and hold the bishop: 23...Qc4 (if 23...Qd6 24.Rd5) 24.Qxe7+ Kc8 25.Rc5 Qf4 26.g3 and mate is unstoppable.)] **1-0**

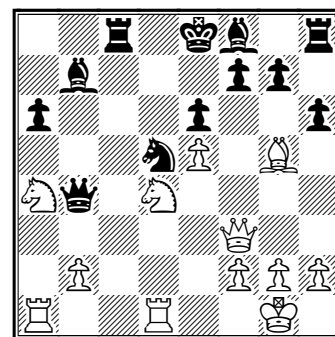
After the game finished second in the league's Game of the Week voting I went off on the judges, mostly because one gave the game zero points, then said in his comments how the game was the best of the week. I was vindicated when the game appeared as a wild card in Game of the Year and ended up finishing in third place! Part of being a good manager is knowing when to get yourself thrown out of a game arguing with the umpires.

Ilya also had a nice finish on board four.

White: Jones, Craig (2275)

Black: Krasik, Ilya (2252)

Annotated by NM Ilya Krasik



21.Qh3? Black has been suffering all game, due to a huge loss of tempo in the opening. Black's king has taken walks to d7 and back to e8, but after White's last move, finally Black gets to have some fun too. Of course, this was more an intuitive sacrifice, since the position is too complex to see it all the way through. **21...hxg5!** "And I thought my jokes were bad", to quote the Joker or Mr.

Esserman for that matter. **22.Qxh8** The queen is completely out of play. **22...Nf4 23.f3** [23.Nf3 Bxf3 24.gxf3 Qb7! 25.Ra3 g4 with an attack.] **23...Rc4!+-** I am guessing that the idea that his knight has nowhere to go didn't occur to White before. I noticed this idea earlier also in part because Rc4 is eyeing the queen on h8 by threatening to come to h4 in some lines. **24.Nb3 Rc2** [In this position I could have won the knight by playing 24...Ng6 25.Qh5 Qxb3+- but I decided I had bigger fish to fry; There was no need to allow 24...Qxb3 25.Rd8+ Kxd8 26.Qxf8+ where Black is still winning, but why let White get excited at all?] **25.Nac5 Rxc2+ 26.Kh1 Ng6 27.Qh3 g4!** [27...Bxc5 was simpler, but my my move was, well... sexier.] **28.Nxa6 gxh3 29.Nxb4 Bxb4 30.Rac1 Rxb2 31.Nd4 Nxe5 32.Rb1 Bc3 33.Nb5 Bxf3+ 34.Kg1 Rg2+** White resigns. **0-1**

This gave us an easy 3.5 - .5 match victory.

Week three on the schedule featured the marquee match-up of Boston vs. Dallas. The previous two seasons saw these clubs face off in the championship match. Both of them went into an "overtime" series of blitz games, and both were won by Dallas. I jokingly predicted a 4-0 win for the Blitz on a league blog days before the match. This came back to haunt me in a big way as we were swept 0-4, the exact opposite of my "prediction." I will never attempt the art of prophecy again.

The middle of the season featured a nice streak of match wins for the team. Week four was a nice rebound versus Philly with a great win over GM Kudrin by Jorge and none other than a Smith-Morra Gambit victory for Esserman. This time he did win

Game of the Week, though some felt it was a "make up call" for the week two snub. Week five was a squeaker featuring a miracle save by Christiansen over GM Kritz of Baltimore. A rematch with Carolina in week six found the Blitz on the correct side of a 4-0 sweep. This week featured the debut of WGM Anya Corke, and another win from Krasik, against Udayan Bapat.

In our second meeting with Queens things weren't looking good when we only got a half point from our two GMs on boards one and two. Fortunately the tandem of Esserman and Andrew Wang swept the bottom boards bringing victory to the home team.

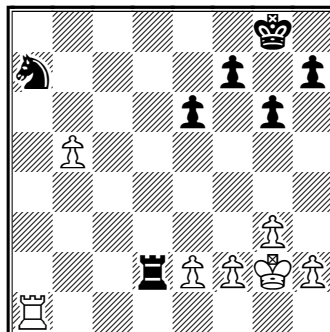
Meanwhile the New Jersey Knockouts were keeping pace with the Blitz and both teams were at 6-1 going into their week eight match-up. Much fanfare preceded the match with all predictions calling for a tight contest. The result was an anticlimactic 0-4 sweep by the team from the Garden State. Not even Esserman's newly acquired IM title could save him.

Week nine brought a rare match-up with Miami who, by the oddity of scheduling, were in the Western division. The match ended in a 2-2 draw. Ilya played well again, but apparently missed a win on board four.

White: Rodriguez, Eric (2290)

Black: Krasik, Ilya (2252)

Annotated by NM Ilya Krasik



34.Rxa7 After a fairly sloppy game by both sides we reached the following position; objectively it's a simple draw, but White's inaccurate play gives Black chances. **34...Rb2 35.Rb7** [35.Kf3 Rxb5=] **35...Rxe2 36.Kf3 Rb2 37.b6 g5 38.h3 Kg7 39.Ke3 h5 40.Rb8 Kf6 41.Rb7 h4** Trying to create a protected passer, the pawn on e6. **42.Kf3 Rb3+ 43.Kg2 Kg6 44.Rb8 hxg3 45.fxg3 Kf5 46.Kf2** [46.h4 gxh4 47.gxh4 Kf6 48.b7 Kg7 49.h5 Kh7 50.Kf2 f5] 46...Ke4 Black has achieved considerable progress, but is it enough to win? 47.b7? A terrible move, locking in his rook, showing a complete lack of rook endgame understanding. [47.h4 Rb2+ 48.Ke1 gxh4 49.gxh4 Ke3 50.Kd1 (50.Kf1 f5 51.Kg1 f4 52.b7 Ke2 53.Re8 Rxb7 54.Rxe6+ Kf3 55.Kh2 Kg4 56.Rg6+ Kxh4 57.Kg2=) 50...Rd2+ 51.Kc1 Rd3 52.h5 e5 53.b7 Rd7 54.h6 f5 55.Rf8 Rxb7 56.Rxf5] **47...Rb2+ 48.Kg1 Kf3 49.Rg8 Rxb7 50.Rxc5 Rb1+ 51.Kh2 Rb2+ 52.Kh1 Rb1+** [52...Rb6 53.Kg1 f6 54.Rg7 e5; 52...Kf2 53.h4 Rb1+ 54.Kh2; 52...Rb7 53.h4 Re7] **53.Kh2 Rb2+ 54.Kh1 f5?** This only leads to simplifications and a draw. Black is clearly better, but can I win this? Turns out the answer is yes, but it wasn't easy to find, and in fact all my teammates watching this in the analysis room also missed the neat winning idea: [54...Rb6! This strange-looking move is in fact winning. The idea is simply to play f6 and then e5, and the pawn is simply unstoppable. 55.Kh2 (55.h4 f6 56.Rg8 e5; 55.Rc5 Kxg3) 55...f6 56.Ra5 (56.Rg6 e5 57.h4 e4 58.h5 e3 59.h6 e2 60.h7 e1Q 61.h8Q Rb2+ 62.Kh3 Qh1#) 56...Rb2+ 57.Kh1 Kxg3; If instead 54...Rb7 55.Kg1 Re7 56.h4 e5 (56...f6 57.Rg6! f5 58.Rg5=) 57.Kh2 e4 58.Rf5+ Ke2 59.h5 e3 60.h6=] **55.h4= Rb7 56.Kh2 Rb2+** [56...Re7 57.Kh3]

57.Kh1 e5 58.Rxf5+ Kxg3 59.Kg1 e4 [59...Rb1+ 60.Rf1 Rxf1+ 61.Kxf1 Kxh4 62.Ke2 Kg4 63.Ke3 Kf5 64.Kf3 Ke6 65.Ke4=] **60.Kf1 Kg4 61.Rf8 Rh2 62.h5 Rxh5 63.Ke2 Rh3 64.Rg8+ Kf4 65.Rf8+ Ke5 66.Re8+ Kd5 67.Rd8+ Kc4 68.Rc8+ Kd4** Game drawn by mutual agreement. 1/2-1/2

After this the final standings were already determined. We would be facing New York in the quarter finals, and as luck would have it, we had them in the final week of the regular season too. Though the match meant nothing, of course it meant everything. We wanted to send a clear message to our hated rivals that we meant business and were going to fight tooth and nail for an advantage going into the playoffs. A fine win by Vadim Martirosov on board four was complemented by SM Denys Shmelov's defeat of former US Women's Champion IM Irina Krush. A solid draw by WGM Corke sealed the deal.

White: Krush, Irina (2478)

Black: Shmelov, Denys (2474)

[E52] Nimzo-Indian

Annotated by SM Denys Shmelov

How quickly my USCL luck has turned around. Only two years ago I was on a warm and cozy third board, racking up MVP and playing in almost every match. Now I find myself on a cold and windy second board, slugging it out against GMs and IMs and feeling thankful for every draw I am fortunate enough to snatch. Second board has been the weakest spot in the Boston armor, and I myself have greatly contributed to it, scoring only one point in four games going into the last round. I felt the need to finish the regular season on a high note, especially playing against our

bitter rival - the New York Knights.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3

The first surprise. My preparation consisted of going through 4.Qc2 lines and convincing myself that Black could play a slightly worse ending for a win. **4...b6 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3 0-0 7.0-0 d5 8.cxd5 exd5**

9.Ne5 This shows that Irina is in an aggressive mood. White is going to reinforce her knight with f2-f4, then bring her queen or rook along the third rank and attempt to checkmate me. It's time to take measures. **9...Bd6 10.f4 c5** Black strikes back in the center, reminding White that the aggressive plunge Nf3-e5 left d4 a bit weak. **11.Qf3 Nc6 12.Qh3** White carries on with her plan. Right now she is threatening Nc3xd5 or Ne5-d7. **12...g6** Chess engine considers the cheeky 12...Nb4, but I want to keep my eyes on d4. **13.Bd2 cxd4 14.Nxc6** Alas, White can't keep her strong knight. **14...Bxc6 15.exd4 Ne4** I remember feeling very happy about my position. White's dark squared bishop is en prise, and if White retreats, I reinforce my knight with f7-f5. Taking on e4 leaves the d-pawn isolated and weak. Little did I know that I was in for a nasty surprise. **16.Bxe4!** This move keeps tension on the board. **16...dxe4 17.f5!** This move puts Black under a lot of pressure. White is opening a diagonal for her bishop, and the f-file for her rook. The pawn on f5 can either go to f6, creating mating threats, or exchange itself on g6, weakening my king. The knight is waiting for a good moment to snack on my e4 pawn and also jump into the attack. **17...Re8** Played after 40 minutes of thinking, leaving Black with about 14 minutes for the rest of the game. [17...Bd7 seems like the most obvious reply, but White has what seems like a Krushing attack after 18.Nxe4 Bxf5

19.Rxf5 gxf5 20.Qxf5; 17...Bc5 is recommended in Dearing's book on the Nimzo Indian (I suspected it was all theory during the game, but it was a theory I didn't know.) During the game I didn't like the idea of the white pawn sneaking into f6 after 18.dxc5 Qxd2 Dearing is confident of Black's chances, to the point that he doesn't even consider f5-f6. Then again, it's one thing analyzing this position at home with a chess engine and a cup of hot tea, wearing your piggy slippers, and entirely different - playing it against a former U.S. champion anxious to stomp the living daylights out of your king.] **18.Bh6** [I have spent a great deal of time thinking of what might happen to my poor king after 18.fxg6 hxg6 19.Rxf7, but evidently Irina thought she might get more out of her position without taking drastic steps.] **18...Bf8** Seems like a sturdy move - I trade bishops and decrease White's attacking chances. Unfortunately, I also drop my central pawn in the process. 19.d5! A strong in-between move. [19.Bxf8 allows Black to recover with **19...Qxd4+ 20.Kh1 Rxf8 21.f6 Qd2 19...Bd7 20.Bxf8 Rxf8 21.Nxe4** So the central pawn is gone, and all I can do is to recapture on f5, setting the stage for a very obvious exchange sac. **21...Bxf5 22.Rxf5 gxf5 23.Qxf5** By this time the other games in the match were all but decided. Vadim Martirosov had won a very nice game on the fourth board, Anya Corke split a point on the third, and Jorge was scrambling to find some compensation for two pawns he has sacked. With what looked like a 1.5 - 1.5 score, second board had become critical. Unfortunately, I had no good news for my teammates - White has a pawn for the exchange and a dominant position. **23...f6 24.Rf1 Qe7** Black can't even hold on to his f6 pawn -

putting the king on g7 would further weaken h7. White would have a chance to pounce with Rf1-f3-h3, after which the game would be over. **25.d6 Qf7 26.Nxf6+ Kh8 27.Qe5 Qg7 28.d7** Jorge resigned at about this time. All of my teammates and most of the spectators retreated to the back room to watch the game through the ICC broadcast, leaving me alone in the big playing hall. I sank in my chair determined to mount a last line of defense on the last rank and sell my life as dearly as possible. **28...Rad8 29.h4** Evidently the pressure had gotten to Irina as well (at this point we were both down to about 5 minutes, which was still plenty of time considering the 30 second increment.) This pawn plunge doesn't spoil anything yet, but it slightly weakens White's king. Who knows, maybe Black will find some lucky perpetual in a time scramble? **29...Rf7 30.Rf4??** Could it be? Is it? What have I done to deserve such a generous gift? Down to her last minutes, Irina overlooks a very simple tactic, wasting a very well played game. **30...Rdxd7** Very simple, yet effective. The knight, which has been White's main trump card, becomes the biggest weakness, as it is pinned in all possible ways. **31.Rf5 Rde7 32.Qf4 Re6** This forces White to exchange her rook, and White's attack fizzles out. **33.Nh5 Rxf5 34.Qxf5 Qd4+** Judging from the muffled cheers coming from the back room, this move was as good as I thought it was. **35.Kf1 Qd1+ 36.Kf2 Qe1+ 37.Kf3 Qe3+** White resigned and I joined my teammates, who quickly informed me that I was the luckiest player they had ever seen (or something to that effect.) I guess I am not in any position to argue with that statement. I only wish I was this lucky more often during the session... **0-1**

So, another year, another playoff run. Unfortunately for your Boston Blitz, New York got hot at just the right time. Though we had draw odds thanks to our regular season standing, we couldn't pull it off in '09 as their GMs (including the Boston-killer GM Pascal Charbonneau) beat both of our GMs. A typical grinding win by Vadim over Herman gave us hope. It was all up to Krasik, who was facing the notorious Internet blitz specialist Yaacov Norowitz. He very nearly pulled it off.

White: Krasik, Ilya (2252)

Black: Norowitz, Yaacov (2354)

[D37] Queen's Gambit Declined

Annotated by NM Ilya Krasik

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bf4 0-0 6.e3 Nbd7 7.a3 c5 8.dxc5 Nxc5 9.cxd5 Nxd5 10.Nxd5 exd5 11.Be5 Bf6 12.Bxf6 Qxf6 13.Qd4 Qe7 14.Rd1 Bf5 15.b4 Ne6 16.Qxd5 Bc2 17.Rc1 Rac8 18.Be2 Rfd8 19.Qa5? [19.Qa2 Bb3 20.Qa1 and White is just a pawn up.] **19...Bd3! 20.Rxc8 Rxc8 21.Qe5 Qd7 22.Bd1 Qc6 23.Qb2 Qe4 24.Qe5 Qc4 25.Qb2 Qe4 26.Qe5 Qg4 27.h3 Qxg2 28.Rg1 Qxh3 29.Nd4 Bg6?** This natural-looking move is a huge mistake. Now White is basically winning. [29...g6 -/+] **30.Bg4 Qh6 31.Nxe6 Re8 32.Bf5?** [32.Bf3! This move simply traps the queen. Now we see the problem with White's 29th move. I saw this move but either nerves or time pressure made me unsure that it works, and I passed it up. What a shame, since had I played it we would have tied N.Y. 2-2, thus eliminating them from the playoffs. After 32...fxe6 (or 32...Kh8 33.Rh1 Bh5 34.Bd5!) 33.Rh1 wins.] **32...fxe6 33.Bxg6 hxg6** At this point I wasn't too thrilled. I knew I had messed up and I was down to about 2 min. vs.

9 for my opponent, who is known as a great blitz specialist. Luckily, we had the 30 sec. increment and the position is roughly equal so it is hard to lose. **34.Qe4 g5 35.Qxb7 Qf6 36.Qc6 Rd8 37.Ke2 Qf5 38.Rg3! g4** Nastiness in time pressure, as it sets up mating threats. **39.e4=** The only move. **39...Rd2+ 40.Kxd2 Qxf2+ 41.Kd1 Qxg3 42.Qe8+** Drawn by mutual agreement. **1/2-1/2**

Despite the disappointment of getting knocked out in the first round, it was another successful season for the Blitz. Great performances by everyone on the team, particularly Perelshteyn, Esserman, newcomers Corke and Wang, and the always exciting Ilya Krasik thrilled the fans all year. Despite calls for his head after the playoff loss, Jorge's first year of managing went well. He will be back in 2010. And my annual threats to quit notwithstanding, I also will be back as Assistant Manager.

As alluded to in the introduction, 2010 is bringing fundamental changes to the USCL. Perennial also-rans Tennessee have left the league and are being replaced by a team from Los Angeles, the "Vibe." Two new teams are joining this year also. One from the latest chess hot spot in the country, Saint Louis. New residents GM Ben Finegold and 2009 US Champion GM Hikaru Nakamura anchor what is sure to be a strong team. The other new team, of much more interest to local fans, is the New England Nor'Easters, featuring none other than former Blitz members IM David Vigorito and SM Charles Riordan (as of this writing). Clearly a cross-town rivalry will add even more excitement to this coming season!

I'd like to thank Blitz supporters Bill MacLellan, MasterOfChess.com,

the Boylston Chess Foundation, Blackstone Chess, Tony Cortizas, Ross Eldridge, Mark LaRocca, Harvey Reed and Derek Slater. A special thanks are due to MACA who have been generous sponsors the last two seasons, and Chris Bird who donates time and web server space! Also thanks are due to the US Chess League, its founder and Commissioner Greg Shahade, and their main sponsors PokerStars.com and the Internet Chess Club without whom the league wouldn't exist. Those interested in sponsoring the 2010 season can contact manager@boston-blitz.com.

Follow the Boston Blitz's 2010 quest for the USCL championship at <http://www.Boston-Blitz.com>.

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Contact Walter Driscoll at 857-928-2752.

20th Massachusetts Game/60 Championship

by **Bob Messenger**

For the 20th edition of this championship event, MACA tried an experiment. Instead of the traditional format of four games in one day with multiple sections, this year's event was seven rounds played over two days, with all the players in a single section, and with higher entry fees and prizes compared to previous years. The results were a little disappointing, with only 42 players entering the tournament, but this might have been because of scheduling conflicts with other events on the same weekend. A gas leak in the kitchen forced the evacuation of the playing site (the Kennedy Senior Center in Natick) for a few minutes until the fire department showed up, but apart from that the event ran smoothly.

GM Alexander Ivanov added another title to his resume, allowing draws against SM Denys Shmelov in round 4 and FM Bill Kelleher in round 6 and winning his other games to finish clear 1st with 6-1. Shmelov and Kelleher tied for second, along with NM Vadim Martirosov, all of whom scored 5.5-1.5. New York expert Sam Barsky won the U2200 prize with 5-2, Shrirangnath Havale was the top U2000 with 4.5-2.5, Jenshiang Hong won the U1800 prize with 4-3, Timothy Lavoie and Andrew Crotty split the U1600 and U1400 prizes with 3.5-3.5, and Brian Lafferty, Kevin Hu and Daniel Plotkin shared the U1200 prize with 3-4. Alex Relyea directed the tournament, assisted by Nita Patel, Ken Ballou and Bob Messenger.

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Ivanov Annotates

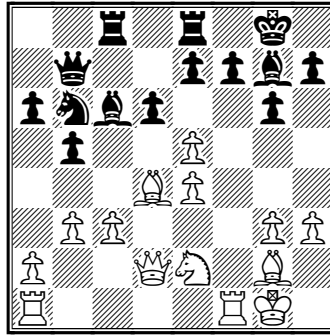
by GM Alexander Ivanov

White: Ivanov (2597)

Black: Esserman (2507)

[B91] Sicilian Najdorf Defence,
Zagreb (fianchetto)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 exd4
4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.g3 My
favorite move. Objectively White
doesn't get much in this system.
6...g6 This is less common than
6...e5 or 6...e6, but perhaps just as
good. 7.Bg2 Bg7 8.h3 Usually
White castles first. 8...0-0 9.0-0
Nc6 10.Be3 [10.Nde2 Ne5 is
unclear.] 10...Bd7 11.Nd5 Rc8
[After 11...Nxd5 12.exd5 Nxd4
13.Bxd4 Bxd4 14.Qxd4 Qc8 White
still has a plus after 15.Rfe1 Re8
16.g4, for example, 16...Qxc2
17.Rac1 Qa4 18.Qxa4 Bxa4 19.Rc7
, but; 11...e6 was playable:
12.Nxf6+ Qxf6 13.c3 Qe7 14.Qd2
Rfd8=] 12.Ne2 White tries to avoid
exchanges to use his space advan-
tage. The alternatives were:
[12.Nb3 b5 (12...Nxd5 13.exd5 Na5
14.Nxa5 Qxa5 15.c3) 13.Nb6
a)13.a4?! Nxd5 14.exd5 Ne5
15.axb5 Bxb5 16.Re1 Nc4;
b)13.Bb6 Qe8 14.Qe2 (b)14.Nc7
Qd8 15.Nd5=) 14...Ne5 15.Bd4
Nc4!? 16.Nxf6+ Bxf6 17.Bxf6 exf6
and Black has time to get rid of the
weakness on d6 18.Rab1 d5
19.Rfe1=; 13...Rb8 14.Nxd7 Nxd7
15.c3 Nde5=; 12.c3 Ne5!?) 12...b5
13.c3 Ne5 14.b3 Bc6 15.Qd2
Re8?! It was safer to avoid the fol-
lowing tactical exchange by
[15...Ned7!?=] 16.Bb6 Qd7 17.f4
Qb7 The only move 18.fxe5 Nxd5
[18...Bxd5? 19.exf6 Qxb6+ 20.Kh1
loses a piece] 19.Bd4 Nb6?!



Black could do better sacking a
Pawn with [19...Nc7 20.exd6 exd6
(20...Ne6) 21.Bxg7 Kxg7 22.Qxd6
Ne6 (Black has compensation for the
sacrificed material) 23.Nf4 (23.Rae1!?!
Kg8!?) 23...Nxf4 24.Rxf4 Rcd8
25.Qf6+ Kg8 26.Raf1 Rd7=] 20.e6!
This is what I prepared getting into
the complications. Black pieces are
crowded on the Queenside, White
grabs the initiative. [20.Qe3?! Nd7
21.e6 fxe6 22.Bxg7 Kxg7 23.Nd4
Nf8; 20.exd6 exd6 21.Bxg7 Kxg7=]
20...f6 Relatively the best [20...fxe6?
21.Bxg7 Kxg7 22.Nf4 Qd7 (22...Kg8!
The most stubborn defense found
by the computer. 23.Nxg6 (23.Nxe6
Bd7 24.Ng5+/=) 23...hxg6 24.Qh6
Rf8 25.Qxg6+ Kh8= 26.Rf4! Rxf4
27.gxf4 planning Kh2, Rg1, Bf3 and
White's attack decides according to
Rybka +-.) 23.Nh5+!+- this is the
point 23...gxh5 24.Qg5+ Kh8 25.Rf7
Rg8 26.Qh6+-; 20...Bxd4+! 21.Nxd4
f6+/=] 21.Nf4 Na8 22.Qe2 Nc7 23.h4
Bh6 24.Qg4 Rf8 [24...Bxf4 25.Rxf4+/=;
24...Bxe4? 25.Nxg6+-] 25.Rae1 d5?
This move loses. Humans are not
computers and it's psychologically
hard to defend passively, but after
Rybka's quiet [25...Kh8!?! direct
attempts to break through don't seem
to work for White: 26.Nxg6+ (26.h5
g5 27.Nd3+/=; 26.Rd1!?!+/=) 26...hxg6
27.Qxg6 Bg7 28.Rf5 (28.Bh3 Be8!;

28.h5 Nxe6!?! 29.h6 Rg8 30.hxg7+
Rxg7<=>) 28...Nxe6 29.Rh5+ Kg8
30.Bh3 Nxd4 31.cxd4 Bd7 32.Rh7
Rf7 33.Bxd7 Qxd7 34.h5 Rc3!?! and
35.h6? loses to (35.Kg2!?) 35...Rxg3+!
26.exd5+- Bxd5 [26...Nxd5 27.Nxg6!
hxg6 28.Qxg6+ Bg7 29.Be4+-]
27.Nxd5 Nxd5 28.h5 f5 [28...Rcd8
29.c4+-; 28...Bg5 29.hxg6 hxg6
30.Qe4+-] 29.Qf3 Rcd8 30.Re5 1-0

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2009 National Open: Last Dance in Paterland, Part II

by NM Ilya Krasik

Continued from the April-June issue.

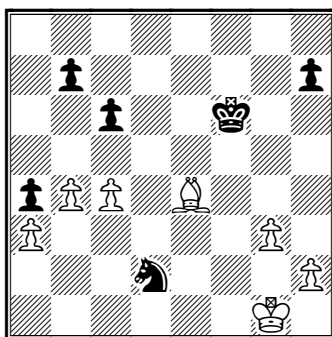
White: Krasik, I (2188)

Black: Shver, E (2175)

[D31] Queen's Gambit Declined

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6 Here I took my time, because White has several fundamentally different continuations. **4.e4!** The Marshall Gambit! As a friend of mine likes to say, "You gotta play like a mang..." At the same time I could tell by my opponent's body language that he wasn't too happy. [Other possibilities are 4.Nf3 ; 4.e3] **4...dxe4 5.Nxe4 Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Qxd4 7.Bxb4 Qxe4+ 8.Be2 Na6 9.Bc3** [9.Ba5 or; 9.Bd6 are more principled continuations, but there you also have to know more.] **9...Ne7 10.Bxg7 Rg8 11.Bf6** [11.Bc3 Qxg2 12.Qd2 Qxh1 13.0-0 Nd5 14.Nf3 is what I vaguely remembered... but I didn't know what the evaluation was, so it was best to avoid it.] **11...Rg6 12.Bxe7 Kxe7 13.Qd2 e5 14.Nf3 Bf5 15.Rd1 Kf8!** I think it's safe to say that I didn't get any advantage out of the opening. 16.g3 [16.0-0?? Bh3+] **16...Bg4 17.Qe3** The only move. [17.Qc3?? Rf6+] **17...Bxf3** [17...Qxe3 18.fxe3 Bxf3 (18...Re8 19.Nh4+/=) 19.Bxf3 Ke7=] **18.Qxf3 Qxf3 19.Bxf3 e4?! 20.Bg2 Nc5 21.0-0 a5 22.b3! Re6 23.Rd4** [23.f3 e3 24.Rfe1 Rae8~] **23...Rae8 24.Re1 Kg7 25.Re3 f5 26.f3 Kf6 27.fxe4 fxe4 28.a3!** I knew my opponent had missed this idea. **28...a4?!** [I mostly considered as the critical try 28...h6 The idea is just to tuck the pawn away from the

bishop thereby saving an important tempo after White plays b4 and trades rooks on e4. 29.b4 axb4 30.axb4 Na6; 28...Ke5 is an improvement suggested by my opponent in the postmortem. 29.Rd1 Rd6 30.Rde1 (30.Rxd6 Kxd6 31.b4 axb4 32.axb4 Na6 33.Rxe4 Rxe4 34.Bxe4 h6=) 30...Kf6 31.b4 axb4 32.axb4 Nd3 33.Rf1+ Kg7 34.Rd1 (34.Rxe4 Rxe4 35.Bxe4 Nxb4 36.Rb1 c5 37.Bxb7+/=)] **29.b4 Nb3 30.Rdxe4 Rxe4 31.Rxe4 Rxe4 32.Bxe4 Nd2**



The key moment of the game. **33.Bd3!!** I killed almost all my remaining time on this move, trying to make Bxh7 work, which only leads to a draw. (2 min left) [33.Bxh7 Nxc4 34.Bc2 b5 35.Be4 Nxa3 36.Bxc6 Nc2 37.Bxb5 a3 38.Bc4 Nxb4= This variation convinced me that the trick is to wait a bit for the black king to commit before starting to push the queen-side pawns.] **33...Ke5 34.h4?!** At first I thought this is best but... [34.Kf2! (Ivanov, A) - must be winning, he said, when I showed this position to him on the plane. 34...Kd4 (34...h6 35.Ke3 Nb3

36.Bc2 c5 37.g4 cxb4 38.axb4 b6 39.h4+-) 35.Bxh7 Nxc4 36.g4 a)36.h4 Nxa3 37.h5 (a)37.g4 Nc4 38.h5 a3 39.Bb1 Nd6 40.h6 Nf7 41.h7 Ke5 42.g5 Nh8 43.Ke2 b6 44.Ke3 c5 45.b5! Ke6 46.Kd2 Kf7 47.Kc3 Kg7 48.Kb3 Nf7 49.g6 Nd6 50.Kxa3 Nxb5+ 51.Kb3 Nd6 52.Bd3 b5 53.Bf1) 37...Nc4 38.h6 Ne5 39.Bf5 a3 40.Be6 Ng6 41.h7 Ke5 42.Bf7 Nh8 43.Ba2 Kf6 44.Ke3 Kg7 45.Kd4 Kxh7 46.Kc5 Kg6 47.Kb6 Nf7 48.Kxb7 Ne5=; b)36.Bc2 b5 37.h4 Nxa3 38.h5 Nxc2 39.h6 a3 40.h7 a2 41.h8Q+ Kd3 42.Qd8+ Kc3 43.Qf6+ Kd2 44.Qf4+ Kc3 45.Qf6+ Kd2=; 36...Ke5 (36...Nxa3 37.g5 Ke5 38.h4 Nc4 39.h5 a3 40.Bb1 Nd2 41.Kg3 Nxb1 42.h6+-) 37.g5 Nxa3 38.h4 Nb5 39.h5 a3 40.Bb1 Nc3 41.Kf3 Nxb1 42.h6 a2 43.h7+-] **34...Kd4?** [34...h6 35.Kf2 (35.c5 Kd4 36.Bc2 Nc4 37.Bxa4 Nxa3 38.g4 Nc4 39.Kf2 Ne5 40.Kg3 Kc3 41.b5 Kb4 42.bxc6 bxc6 43.Bxc6 Nxc6 44.g5 hxg5 45.h5 Kxc5 46.h6 Ne5=) 35...Kd4 36.Ke2 Nb3 (36...Nxc4 37.Bxc4 Kxc4 38.g4 Kd5 39.g5 (39.Kd3 b6 40.g5 hxg5 41.hxg5 Ke5 42.Kc4 Kf5 43.Kd4 Kxg5 44.Ke5 c5 45.bxc5 bxc5 46.Kd5 Kf5 47.Kxc5 Ke5=) 39...hxg5 40.hxg5 Ke5 41.Kd3 Kf5 42.Kd4 Kxg5 43.Kc5 Kf5 44.Kb6 Ke5 45.Kxb7 Kd6 46.Ka6 Kc7 47.Ka5 Kb7 48.Kxa4 Kb6 49.Kb3 c5 50.Kc4 cxb4 51.axb4 Kc6=) 37.Bb1 c5 (37...h5 38.c5! Ne1+ (38...Ke5 39.Bg6 Nd4+ 40.Kd3 Nb5 41.Bxh5 Nxa3 42.Bd1+-) 39.Kf2 Ke5 40.Ke3) 38.bxc5 Nxc5 39.g4 Kxc4 (39...Ke5 40.Ke3 Ne6 41.Bc2 Nc5 42.g5 hxg5 43.hxg5 b6 44.Kd2

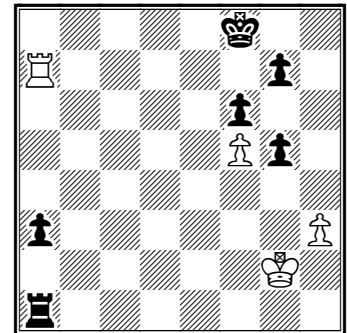
Ke6 45.Kc3+-) 40.g5 hxg5 41.hxg5 Kd4 42.g6 Ne6 43.Kd2 b5 44.Bd3 b4 45.axb4 a3 46.Kc2 a2 47.Kb2 Kxd3 48.b5+-] **35.Bxh7 Nxc4 36.Bc2 b5 37.h5 Ke5 38.h6 Kf6 39.g4!**+ - A brutal move which settles the dust, the point of White's play: the pawns are unstoppable. **39...Ne3** [39...Ne5 40.Be4+-; 39...Nxa3 40.g5+ Kf7 (40...Kxg5 41.h7+-) 41.g6+ Kg8 42.Bf5] **40.g5+ Kf7 41.Be4** After the game a funny conversation took place... My opponent said, "Why did you play the gambit? It didn't seem like you knew it too well." I said, "True, but I figured you also didn't really know it". "So why the hell did you play it?" he asked. "I thought I'd wing it," I said. "I thought you were trying to bluff me and I gambled... this is Vegas, after all." After this he looked at me very angrily, and didn't say any more. He ended up withdrawing, suffering only this one loss. **1-0**

White: Luaces, J (2176)
Krasik, I (2188)
[A07] King's Indian Attack

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 c6 3.Bg2 Bg4 4.Ne5 Bh5 5.c4 e6 [5...Nd7!] **6.cxd5 exd5 7.0-0 Bd6 8.d4 Nf6** [8...Nd7 9.Bf4 (9.Nxd7 Qxd7=) 9...Qe7 10.Nd3 Ngf6 11.Nc3 0-0] 9.Nc3 0-0 [9...Nbd7] **10.h3 Bg6** [10...Nbd7 11.f4 looked unpleasant as well] **11.Bg5+/-** Black got into a very unpleasant position - not a pretty sight in the "money round." **11...Re8** [11...Nbd7 12.f4 Re8 13.f5 Nxe5 14.dxe5 Rxe5 15.Bxf6 Qxf6 16.fxg6 Qxg6] **12.Nxg6** [12.f4 Nbd7 13.f5 Nxe5 14.dxe5 Bxe5 15.fxg6 hxg6 and Black probably doesn't have enough for the piece.] **12...hxg6 13.e4 dxe4 14.Nxe4 Be7 15.Nc5?!** [15.Nc3!?!; I was mainly

concerned with 15.Nxf6+ Bxf6 16.Bxf6 Qxf6 17.Qb3 Re7 18.Rfe1] 15...b6 [15...Bxc5 16.dxc5 Na6 17.Qc2 Qe7 18.Rac1+/=; 15...Qb6 16.Qb3 (16.Re1 Na6!)] **16.Bxf6?** [16.Nd3! Nd5 (16...Qxd4 17.Re1! and White's initiative is hard to extinguish.) 17.Bxe7 Rxe7 18.Ne5+/-] **16...Bxf6 17.Nb3 a5!** The only move. **18.a4 Ra7 19.Rc1 Rd7!**= Black has managed to consolidate. **20.Bxc6?! Nxc6 21.Rxc6 Rd5!** Black's compensation is clear: 1. Black has play along White's weak light squares; 2. The passive position of White's knight on b3; 3. The permanent weakness on d4. [21...Bxd4 22.Nxd4 Rxd4 23.Qc2= leads to a dry, drawn position, but I wanted to try to win first place.] **22.Rc4 Rh5** There is something special about these rook lifts as rooks tend to be quite clumsy pieces. **23.Qg4 Qd5 24.Nd2 Bg5!** [24...Rg5 25.Rc8 Rxc4 26.Rxe8+ Kh7 27.hxg4] **25.f4 Bf6 26.f5?** [Better is 26.Kh2] **26...Rxf5 27.b3 Rg5?!** A mistake in time pressure. [27...Rxf1+ 28.Nxf1 Re1-+] **28.Qf4 Rf5 29.Qg4 Rg5** [29...Rxf1+ 30.Nxf1 Re1-+] **30.Qf4 Re2 31.Rf2 Re8?** [31...Re1+ 32.Nf1 (32.Rf1 Rf5 33.Qb8+ Kh7 34.Rxe1 Bxd4+-)] **32.g4! Qe6 33.Nf3 Rd5 34.Rf1 g5 35.Qd2 Qd6 36.Kg2 b5! 37.axb5 Rxb5 38.Qc2 Qd5 39.Rc5 Rxc5 40.dxc5?** [Better is 40.Qxc5] **40...Re3!** I breathed a sigh of relief. I knew I had missed winning blows earlier, but despite time pressure craziness I had managed to carry a big advantage into the second time control. 41.c6? I don't know what my opponent was thinking but perhaps he didn't understand my previous move, or just got discouraged by his position in general. **41...Rc3+ 42.Qf5 Qxf5** There is no need to complicate matters. **43.gxf5 Rxc6**

44.Rf2 Rb6 45.Nd2 Bc3 46.Kf3 Bxd2 47.Rxd2 Rxb3+ 48.Kg4 f6 49.Rd8+ Kh7 50.Rd5 Ra3 51.Rb5 Ra1 52.Kg3 Kh6 53.Rb8 Kh7 54.Rb7 Rg1+ 55.Kf2 Rc1 56.Rb5 a4 57.Ra5 Rc4 58.Kg3 Rf4 59.Ra8 Rd4 60.Kg2 Rd2+ 61.Kg3 Ra2 62.Ra7 a3 63.Kf3 Ra1 64.Kg3 Kg8 65.Kg2



What's the best way to win in this position? **65...g6!** Pretty and simple. **66.fxg6 a2! 67.Kh2 f5 68.g7 f4 69.Ra8+ Kxg7** White resigned. [Black will play f4-f3-f2 and either queen or win a rook., e.g. 69...Kxg7 70.Kg2 f3+ 71.Kf2 Rh1 72.Rxa2 Rh2+ As the other two guys who had 4.5/5 drew, I had won clear first U2200 and took home almost \$4,000. My unofficial rating was already above 2200, and later climbed above 2300. This was my last chance to win in patzerland and I didn't miss it.] **0-1**

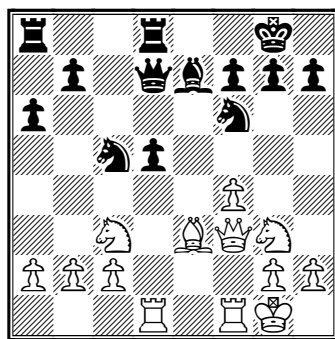
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"Good positions don't win games, good moves do"
 — Gerald Abrams

Winning the Massachusetts High School Championship

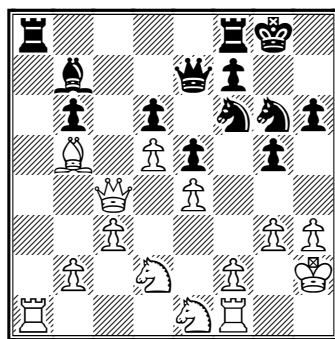
by NM Andrew Wang

For me, the Spiegel Cup was quite a chaotic tournament. The rather sunny weather provided a contrast to the stormy conditions inside the hotel. Indeed, even the first round against Jesse Nicholas proved to be difficult, as shown by this position.



Here, Jesse missed the simple **Nxd5**, and if I recapture, he can play **c4**, exploiting the pin and winning a pawn.

This was not the only problem I had. In my last round against Winston Huang, I happened to get very lucky.



Here, I played my knight to **e1** intending to play it to **g2** to reinforce **h4** from sacrifices and to go to **e3** and **f5**, which is a nice outpost. However, neither Winston nor I noticed that the rook on **a1** was hanging for two turns until I pointed it out.

In the other two games, one was

against Felix Yang, who provided a tough fight after an opening mistake I made. We went into a time scramble, and with one second left, I managed to mate him in the corner with a knight and a pawn. I consider this game to be a revenge game since I lost to Felix last year as white in this tournament. Plus, we are both rivals and go to the same school (although he is two grades older than me).

Still, I felt my best game was actually against Zaroug Jaleel, which is what I'm going to be annotating.

I had a lot of fun at the tournament site, doing what I love to do. The atmosphere was one that I hadn't visited in a while. Ken Ballou sternly telling off the troublemakers. Lou Mercuri sneaking a peak at his students. It was a great event, and I will be sure to remember it.

White: Jaleel, Zaroug
Black: Wang, Andrew
[B90] Sicilian, Najdorf

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be7 8.f3 0-0 9.Qd2 Be6 10.0-0-0 a5 I suspect that Jaleel has prepared for this line considering that he has seen me play this at the Hurvitz Cup. **11.Bb5 Na6 12.Kb1 Nc7 13.Bb6 Qc8 14.Bxc7** [14.Ba4 Nd7 15.Bxd7 (15.Bxc7 Qxc7=) 15...Qxd7=] **14...Qxc7 15.a4 Rfd8**

Here we're probably both out of theory. Since he stopped **a4**, I'm switching plans to play the equalizing **d5**. **16.Nd5 Nxd5 17.exd5 Bf5** [17...Bd7 is another interesting line. While it exchanges my good bishop, the idea is to take advantage of

the weakened **a4**. **18.Qd3 Rdc8 19.c3 Bxb5 20.Qxb5 Qc4=/+]** **18.g4 Bg6 19.h4 Rdc8 20.Rc1 h6 21.g5 h5 22.Rhe1 Bf8 23.Re2 Qb6**

Probably the wrong plan. I should have relocated my bishop instead with **Bf5** and **g6**. [23...Bf5 24.f4 g6 25.fxe5 dxe5 26.Bd3 Bg4 27.Rf2 Bg7+/=] **24.f4 exf4 25.Qxf4 Rc7** A nice attack-defense move, planning to hit **c2** and to exchange a pair of rooks. **26.Ka2 Rac8 27.c4** A mistake. **c3** is a much better positional move, covering the dark squares.

27...Re7 28.Rxe7 Bxe7 29.Re1 Bf8 30.Qe3 Qc7 31.Qc3 Ra8 32.Re3 Bf5 33.Nd4 Bg4 34.g6 Here, I was a bit nervous. **g6** weakens **e6** which looks bad, but really isn't a problem considering I still have my light-squared bishop. **34...fxg6 35.Be8 Be7 36.Nb5 Qd8 37.Bxg6 Qd7 38.Qe1 Bf6 39.Be8 Qd8 40.Bg6 Bxh4 41.Qb1 Qg5** A waste of tempo **42.Qe4 Qf6 43.Qe8+ Qf8 44.Nxd6 Bf2 45.Qf7+ Qxf7 46.Bxf7+** Here Zaroug was under time-pressure, and simply blundered a piece. **46...Kf8 47.Re4 Bg3 48.Nxb7 Kxf7 49.c5 Bf3 50.Rd4 h4 51.c6 h3 52.Rd3 Be4 53.Rxg3 Bxd5+ 54.Ka3 h2 55.Rh3 h1Q 56.Rxh1 Bxh1** And as they say, the rest was history. **57.Nd6+ Ke6 58.Nb5 Bxc6 59.Nc7+ Kf5 60.Nxa8 Bxa8 61.b4 axb4+ 62.Kxb4 g5 0-1**

"Modern Chess is too much concerned with things like Pawn structure. Forget it, Checkmate ends the game"

— Nigel Short

Spiegel Cup Tournament Report

by Ken Ballou

The 2010 Spiegel Cup Scholastic Invitational Championship was held today, Sunday, March 28, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Waltham. The chief tournament director was Ken Ballou, most ably assisted by Bob Messenger (chief assistant tournament director), Chris Bird, Maryanne Reilly, Beebe Wiegand, Steve Frymer, and Brian Lafferty. Forty players were invited to participate (ten in each section).

High School:

1st: Andrew Wang of Sharon (4-0)
2nd: James Lung of Lexington (3-1)
3rd: Winston Huang of Auburndale (2.5-1.5)

Age 14/Under:

1st: Grant Xu of Shrewsbury (3.5-0.5)
2nd: Mika Brattain of Lexington (3-1)
3rd: Zongyuan Yuan of Brookline (2.5-1.5)
Medal awarded to Ashvin Nair of Winchester (2.5-1.5)

Age 11/Under:

Co-champions:
Andrew Liu of Westborough (3-1)
Charlie Fauman of Newtonville (3-1)
3rd: Mateos Sahakian of Medford (2.5-1.5)
Medal awarded to Luke Lung of Boxborough (2.5-1.5)

Age 8/Under:

1st: Nithin Kavi of Acton (4-0)
2nd: Alan Sikarov of Newton (3-1)
3rd: Jesse Sun of Sudbury (2.5-1.5)

Ken Ballou
Chief TD

Eastern Massachusetts Grade Championship

by Bob Messenger

Since the Gus Gosselin Grade Championship was cancelled this year after MACA lost its playing site for the event, I decided to run my own tournament, the Eastern Massachusetts Grade Championship, with a similar format: one section for each grade, except that grades K-1 and 9-12 were each combined into a single section. This is a popular format in the lower grades but not so much in the High School section, which had only a single player, Mustafa Buxamusa. There were only two players in 8th grade, so I combined 7th and 8th grade into a single section, with players in each grade competing for their own prizes.

The prize winners were:

8th grade: Bowen Wang 3.5-.5 (1st in the combined section), Sean Cheng 3-1

7th grade: Varun Palnati 3-1, Nicholas Zhang 2.5-1.5, Daniel Ruttenberg, Changming Xu, Michael Shulman 2-2

6th grade: Siddharth Arun 4-0, Jenny Qiu 3-1, David Todd, Kevin Hu, James Zhou 2.5-1.5

5th grade: Arnab Ghosh 4-0, Eric Liu 3-1, Sabrina Zhang, Aashish Welling 2.5-1.5

4th grade: Sandeep Vadlamudi 4-0, Tal Puhov, Brandon Wu 3-1

3rd grade: Sandeep Shankar 4-0, Milan Rosen 3.5-.5, Christopher Wang, Jesse Sun 3-1

2nd grade: Isabella Shih, Rohan Krishnan 3.5-.5, Alexander Kohler 3-1

1st grade: Samuel Qiu 4-0, Shivan Giroti, Amrit Subramanian 3-1

Top Kindergarten: Maxwell Zhao 3-1

There were a total of 86 players in the tournament, which was held on May 16th at the Hilton Hotel in Woburn. Bob Messenger organized and directed the event, assisted by Steve Frymer and George Mirijanian.

“Alekhine is a poet who creates a work of art out of something that would hardly inspire another man to send home a picture post card” — Max Euwe

Mika Brattain Ties For First at National Elementary Championship

by Eric Fauman

Six Massachusetts youngsters were among the 2000 chess players attending this year's Burt Lerner National Elementary Championship, held in Atlanta, GA, May 7th - May 9th.

Mika Brattain, 11, of Lexington added a second national title to his chess laurels, with 5 wins and 2 draws for a total of 6 points in the top section, the K6 Championship. On tie-breaks, Mika was awarded the 2nd place trophy behind co-champion Justus Williams of New York.

Also in the K6 Championship section, Charlie Fauman, 11, of Newton scored 4 wins, 2 draws, and only one loss at the hands of another co-champion, Daniel Liu of California. With 5 points, Charlie was awarded the 19th place trophy out of a field of 189.

Rahul Krishnan, 9, of Hopkinton scored 6 points in the K6 Under 1000 section, winning the 8th place trophy out of a field of 213.

Alex Fauman, 8, of Newton, scored 5 points in the K3 Championship, placing 34th out of a field of 210 and winning a "tied for 20th" trophy.

Rohan Krishnan, 7, of Hopkinton scored 3.5 points in the K5 under 900 section, finishing 197th out of 371.

Ben Fauman, 5, of Newton scored 3.5 in the K1 section, finishing 162 out of 302.

The Youngest Champion

by Joseph Perl



Mateos Sahakian, youngest ever Winchester Chess Club Champion.
Photo by John Shawcross

On May 28, Mateos Sahakian, a ten year old, became the youngest player ever to become the Winchester Chess Club Champion. The club has been around for more than 20 years. Mateos scored five points out of five beating several formidable A players in the tournament.

Mateos began to play tournament chess at age four under the encouragement of his older brother, Arvan. Recently, Mateos has made big advancements in his playing style, and his results are reflecting that. On May 30, Mateos played in the one day tournament at the Mass Open in Leominster in the Under 2000 section and tied for second.

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*"The winner of the game is the player who
makes the next-to-last mistake"*

— Savielly Tartkover

Club News

Billerica Chess Club

by Brad Ryan

The Billerica January 4-round Friday Night Swiss ended in a 2-way tie for first. Experts **Art Nugent** and **Raymond Paulson**, each posted a strong 3.5 - .5 score. 2009 Club Champion **Pat Sciacca** and an "A" player **Fangru Jiang** tied for 2nd, each with 2.5 - 1.5. Fangru was also best under 2000. **Paul Staten** was best under 1750 with a solid 2 - 2 result. **Maurice Lessard** was best under 1250. **Nate Smith** directed the tournament.

The Billerica 3-round December Friday Swiss ended with a 3-way tie between Experts Pat Sciacca and Art Nugent and "A" player Fangru Jiang, each with 2.5 and .5 scores. Young Fangru's USCF rating has had nothing short of a meteoric rise from "D" to "A" player over the past 3 years. Nate Smith, Raymond Paulson and **Michelle Chen** tied for best under 2000 with 1.5 - 1.5 results. **Meyer Billmers** was best under 1750, also posting a 1.5 - 1.5 score. **Daniel Kilgove** was best under 1250. Nate Smith directed the tournament.

Boylston Chess Club

by Bob Messenger

Here are highlights of recent events held at the Boylston Chess Club, which is currently located at Davis Square in Somerville. For more information about the club visit its web site, boylstonchessclub.org.

On April 10th **SM Denys Shmelov** scored 3.5-.5, including a half point bye in the first round, to win the Open section of the BCF Underwater \$10 Open. The title is a reference to flooding which forced the club to close in late March and early April. Shmelov's first place finish included wins against NMs **Miro Reverby** and **Evan Rabin** (who invites you to visit his new blog, Adventuresofrabin.blogspot.com). **Michael Raphael** won the U1800 section with a score of 3.5-.5, including a last round draw against **Bernardo Iglesias**, who directed the 33 player event.

Expert William Collins had a remarkable victory at the BCF Somerville Open, held on June 12th. His 4-0 score included wins against NM **Alex Cherniack**, IM **David Vigorito** and FM **Chris Chase**. There was a three-way tie in the U1800 section between Bernardo Iglesias (who directed), **Nicholas Lesieur** and **George Duval**, all with 3-1.

MetroWest Chess Club

by Harvey Reed, Clerk & Marketing Director

MetroWest CC is starting to use social media tools to better connect with its members and players. Recent changes include using Google Calendar on the Club homepage, metrowestchess.org so that members and players can add Club events to their own calendar. The Club homepage has a Google Blog directly underneath the calendar, so that news stories in between monthly newsletters can be delivered in a timely fashion. Web savvy users can use standard blogging tools to subscribe to the Club Blog.

In addition to the Google calendar and Google blog, MetroWest Chess Club is using social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

SBCC News and Notes

by Jim Aspinall

In January the traditional Sven Brask Invitational/Howard Cook Memorial was held, commemorating 2 of the club's patriarchs. The Invitational section is open to all tournament winners from the past year, and the 8-player section was won by **Larry Dean** and **Jack Correia** with scores of 3.0/4. This was Larry's first Invitational title and Jack's second. The Memorial Section was open to all other players and ended in an unlikely 5-way tie at 2.5 points between **Carl Hess** (returning to the club after a long absence), **Paul Gavlick**, **Larry Green**, **Gerry Fortier**, and **Larry Steinberg**. This is the first Memorial title for all 5 players. All 7 winners received trophies, have their names engraved on the championship plaque, and qualify for the 2010 Invitational, to be held January 2011. **Jim Aspinall** directed.

Carl Hess continued his fine play and won the February Fianchetto 4-round Swiss topping a field of 16 with a score of 3.5 points. Jack Correia was second with 3 points. Jim Aspinall directed.

Larry Dean won the March Madness 4-round Swiss with a score of 3.5 points. Larry has recently returned to tournament chess after taking a break for several years and this victory put his rating back over the Expert level. Carl Hess and **Ken Wheeler** tied for second with 3 points. Jim Aspinall directed, assisted by Larry Dean.

The 51st Club Championship was a 7-round Swiss

held during the months of April and May, and proved to be one of the most competitive and hard-fought events in recent memory. There were several upsets early in the event, and going into the final round, 4 players were tied for first, with another only .5 point behind. In the end, Larry Dean and **Jerry Giambo** won their last-round games to share the title with 5.5 points, with Larry's game against **Jeff Hall** (a punishing Rook ending) not finishing until after midnight. This is Larry's first title and Jerry's second, both winners receiving a trophy, their names engraved on the Club Championship plaque, and a small cash prize. Jack Correia and Jim Aspinall finished only .5 point behind with 5 points. **Charlie Caranci** took the U1800 prize with 4 points, and **Larry Steinberg** took the biggest upset prize with a his victory over a player rated 340 points higher. 18 players participated, ably directed by **Gerry Plante**.

As is traditional, the Blitz Championship was held the week following the Club Championship. This was a 12-player round robin dominated by Jerry Giambo, defending his title with a crushing score of 10.5/11. Jim Aspinall finished second with 7 points, and **George Winsor** 3rd with 6.5. Ken Wheeler directed.

Wachusett Chess Club

by **George Mirijanian**

Paul Giovino attained a Class A rating for the first time in his career by winning the George O'Rourke Memorial tournament, held Feb. 17 through March 24 at the McKay Campus School at Fitchburg State College. The 24-year-old Lunenburg resident tallied 4.5-0.5 in a field of 30 players. **Geoffrey LePoer** of Westford finished second with a score of 4-1. Tying for 3rd-5th place with 3.5-1.5 results were **Larry Gladding** and **Kenneth Gurge**, both of Leominster, and **George Mirijanian** of Fitchburg. Deadlocked in 6th-9th place with 3-2 scores were **Walter Niemi** of Lunenburg, **Dave Couture** of Westminster, and Leominster players **Leonard Arsenaault** and **Tom Fratturelli**. The tournament honored the memory of club member George E. O'Rourke (1929-2007) of Concord.

The club held a 29-player championship preliminary event from March 31 through April 28. Tying for 1st-2nd place with 4-1 tallies were **Tony Cesolini** of Jaffrey, NH and **George Miller** of Ashburnham. George Mirijanian and **Bruce Felton** of Fitchburg tied for 3rd-4th place with scores of 3.5-1.5. Deadlocked in 5th-10th place with 3-2 results were **Larry Gladding**, **Glenn Rochon** of Leominster, Geoffrey LePoer, Paul Giovino, **Eduardo Valadares** of Framingham, and

Eugene Bedard of Gardner. All the aforementioned players, except LePoer (who declined) and Bedard (who lost out on tiebreak), qualified for the "A" Division of this year's eight-player round-robin club championship, which started on May 5. At press time the championship was still in progress, with Giovino and Gladding withdrawing after three rounds of play. Final results as well as results of the club's "B" Division championship will be published in the October-December issue of *Chess Horizons*. A total of 30 players were competing in both events. George Mirijanian, assisted by club Webmaster Dave Couture, is directing all tournaments.

Waltham Chess Club

by **Nicholas P. Sterling, Ph.D.**

On the Friday before Memorial Day, our club hosted a Free Pizza Night to escort in the MA Open weekend. 11 players participated and we made quick work of 3 16" pizzas. The winner of that night's 5-round G/15 was a new player for us, **Igor Gavrilov**, who comes to us from Skopje, Macedonia. He put his FIDE experience to good work that Friday night, winning the event with a score of 4.5 out of 5 points.

Some highlights from the last few months:

- Our resident master, **SM Denys Shmelov**, swept all the events that he came to since my last report, with perfect scores at several of them. Congratulations to Denys. Watch next issue for an annotated game of his.
- **Andrew Liu** deserves an honorary mention for defeating Denys at the April First Friday and drawing with him at the April G/25. In addition Andrew took sole second place at the Patriot's Day G/60, with 1.5 out of 2 points; and split second place three ways with **Glen Soucy** and **Tian Rossi** at the May First Friday, with 4.5 out of 7 points. Good job, Andrew, Glen, and Tian.
- **Lawyer Times** split first place with Denys at the Memorial Day G/60. We are glad to have him playing at our club again.
- **Edward Astrachan** and **Steve Desouza** split first prize at the March Madness G/60. (No Denys?)
- We welcomed back **Paul Sciaraffa**, **Carlos Avalos**, and **Tomas Ramirez**, and we are really pleased to have many new Scholastic and other players join us. Our numbers grew considerably these past few months, and it is all thanks to you, the players who have come to our club.

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