



NORTHERN VIRGINIA OPEN

by Mike Atkins

THE 5th BEST WESTERN NORTHERN VIRGINIA OPEN WAS A SUCCESS in every way that a chess tournament can be a success. Sixty-two players competed over the November 7-8 weekend at the Mt Vernon Best Western. GM Michael Rohde became the first grandmaster to play in a Mt Vernon event. Contestants seemed generally happy, except for the occasional hard-to-please scholastic player...

NM and correspondence GM Dmitrij Barash took clear first with 5½ out of 6, finishing ahead of Rohde, NM Ray Kaufman and Alex Passov, all with 5-1. This was an impressive victory by Barash, surpassing two internationally titled players. He proved that postal players are equally hard to beat over the board!

Rohde was held to a draw in the third round by Yu Zhong Lu, which made it impossible for him to win the tournament. During his game with Lu, Rohde ran back and forth between the tournament game and an Internet hookup in the next room where he was providing commentary for the USCF website's coverage of the US Championship! His responsibilities in this endeavor forced him to furthermore take a 6th round bye, thus dropping his maximum score to 5 points. A pity — the match up between Rohde and Barash on board one in the last round would have been a classic!

There were certainly other stories in the tournament. After 3 rounds, US Chess Center teacher Peter Schadler, rated 1834, was 3-0, having decisively beaten IM Larry Kaufman and Alex Passov in the two previous rounds. In the fourth round Peter ran into a major Rohde block and remained

at 3. After defeating the tough Edgar Inocencio, he lost to Tim Hamilton in the last round, compiling an impressive 2250 performance rating.

Teenager Yu Zhong Lu also had a great tournament. Undefeated in 5 rounds, drawing only with Rohde, he turned in a 2334 performance. Lu, who entered as a Scholastic player ineligible for cash prizes, had to take a zero in the final round — he asked for a half point bye too late in order to do homework!

A “touch-move” incident in the 5th round speaks to the point that one must never trust or believe one's opponent — *get a director!* I was watching a game in which White had 4 minutes left, Black 25. I'd been alerted that there had already been several minor disputes during this game. In a critical position — White had one move which won and everything else drew or lost — a herky-jerky, tentative initial move (which would have lost) was retracted in favor of the correct play, which produced two connected passed pawns unstoppable by Black's lone rook. Black protested, “You let go of the piece,” meaning the losing move, to which White replied, “No.” Black played a couple more moves, belatedly realized his position had gone from winning to lost, and then began protesting the violation in a way that became very distracting to his opponent and the room in general. The moral, of course, is that



Dmitrij Barash
photo: Mike Atkins



Peter Schadler vs Alex Passov
Photo: Mike Atkins



Northern Virginia Open (continued)

Black should have summoned the director — me — who just happened to be watching when his opponent originally said, “No.” By playing on for a few moves, Black lost the right to make a claim.

VCF President Catherine Clark organized for the VCF and Michael Atkins directed. The tournament web page is <http://www.wizard.net/~matkins/nova.htm> for more games and a crosstable.

The complete list of prize winners: 1st - Dmitrij Barash; 2nd-3rd - Michael Rohde, Ray Kaufman & Alex Passov; Top Expert - Alex Passov; Top Class A - Virgilio Rollamas; Top Class B - Chris Sevilla & Joe Faires; Top Class C - Lindy Ergino; Top Class D - Raoul Dalusung; Top under 1200 - Josh Specht; Top Scholastic - Yu Zhong Lu.

Ray Kaufman - Dmitrij Barash
King's Indian

Notes by Macon Shibut

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 Ne1 Ne8 10 f4!? Kh8 11 fxe5 dxe5 12 Kh1 f5 13 Bg5 Nf6 14 Nd3 Nxe4 15 Nxe4 fxe4 16 Nc5 Qe8 17 Rxf8+ Qxf8 18 d6 cxd6 19 Qxd6 Nc6 20 Nxe4 Bf5 21 Rf1 Qxd6 22 Nxd6 Nd4 23 Bd1 b6 24 b4 Bd3 25 Re1 Rf8 26 c5 bxc5 27 bxc5 h6 28 Be3 Nf5 29 Nxf5 gxf5 30 Ba4 f4 31 Bf2 e4 32 c6 e3 33 Bh4 Re8 34 Rd1 Be4 35 Rd8 (Why do I have a feeling there was time trouble in the mix? I don't know what's going on here, but 35 c7 sure looks good. If 35... e2 36 Rd8 is stronger than in the game. Or if 35... Rg8 — not-so-subtly eying g2 — then again White can go 36 Rd8 and after 36... Bf5 37 Bb3) 35... Rxd8 36 Bxd8 e2 37 Ba5 f3! (Reminding White that the object of chess is *not* to queen a pawn: 38 c7 fxe2+ 39 Kg1 Bd4 and 38 gxf3 Bxf3+ 39 Kg1 Bd4 are both mate!) 0-1



Peter Schadler - Larry Kaufman
Sicilian

Notes by Macon Shibut

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 Nf6 4 Nc3 cxd4 5 Nxd4 a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Be3 b5 8 Bb3 b4 (In this and similar positions the pawn grab precipitated by this move is critical for the Najdorf Sozin, but most often it seems to recoil on Black in practice. Or perhaps it's precisely those games where White wins brilliantly that tend to get published... At any rate, the text is better than what Inocencio tried versus Schadler in their 5th round game: 8... Nbd7 {almost certainly a “book” mistake; try 8... Be7} 9 Bxe6 fxe6 10 Nxe6 Qa5 11 Nxf8 Rxf8 12 Qxd6 b4 13 Qe6+ Kd8 14 0-0-0 {Δ Bb6+} Rb8 15 Qd6 Ke8 16 Qe6+ Kd8 17 Nd5 Re8 18 Qc6 Nxe4 19 Bb6+ Rxb6 1-0, not waiting for Qc7mate) 9 Na4 Nxe4 10 0-0 Nf6 11 Re1 Be7 12 Nb6! Qxb6 (forced; 12... Ra7 13 Nxc8 Qxc8 14 Nxe6 fxe6 15 Bxa7) 13 Nxe6 Qc6 14 Nxe7+ Kd8 15 Qe2 (Here too White threatens Bb6+) Bb7 16 f3 Nbd7 17 Bg5 Qc5+ 18 Be3 Qb5 (18... Qc6 19 Rad1 might conceivably transpose to the game, although Black might be less inclined towards 19... Ne5 with White's bishop on b3 instead of c4) 19 Bc4 Qc6

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Newsletter

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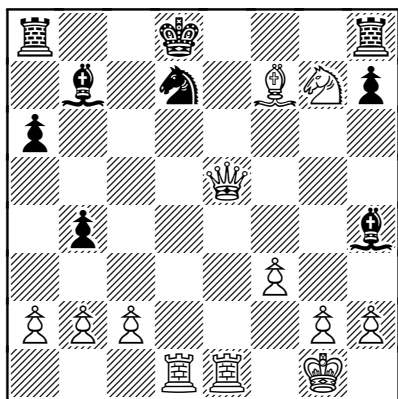
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20 Rad1 Ne5 (20...d5!?) 21 Bf4 Nfd7 22 Bxf7
Bh4 23 Bxe5 dxe5 24 Qxe5!



(Is this good? Who can say? It's certainly a consistent and dangerous continuation. One way or another, Schadler's active play succeeds in pushing his highly-rated opponent over the edge.) 24...Bxe1 25 Ne6+ Ke7 (forced, to connect the rooks) 26 Qg7! (but this sets up the extremely unpleasant menace Bg8+ and mate) Bf2+ (31...Bxc3!?! but still 27 bxc3

Qxc3 28 Nd4 with dangerous threats) 27 Kxf2 (Wow! He just takes it and weathers the checks... 27 Kh1 would have been safer, still posing difficult problems for Black despite the "beautiful ...Qxf3" motif in some variations.) Qxc2+ 28 Ke1 Bd5 29 Rxd5 Qc1+ 30 Rd1 Qe3+ 31 Kf1 Qe5 32 Rxd7+ 1-0 Bravo!

Yu Zhong Lu - Michael Rohde
Panov

1 e4 c5 2 c3 g6 3 d4 cxd4 4 cxd4 d5 5 exd5 Nf6 6 Nc3 Nxd5 7 Bc4 Nb6 8 Bb3 Bg7 9 Nf3 0-0 10 h3 Nc6 11 Be3 Na5 12 0-0 Nxb3 13 axb3 Nd5 14 Qe2 Be6 15 Qb5 Qb6 16 Ra5 Nxe3 17 fxe3 Bxb3 18 Rfa1 Qe6 19 e4 Bc4 20 d5 Bxb5 21 dxe6 Ba6 22 exf7+ Rxf7 23 e5 Rc8 24 Rd1 Bh6 25 Kf2 Kf8 26 Ra4 Rf4 27 Rxf4+ Bxf4 28 g3 Bh6 29 Nd4 Ke8 30 Kf3 b6 31 Ra1 Bb7+ 32 Ke2 a6 33 Kd3 Kd7 34 Rf1 Bg7 35 Na4 Rd8 36 Nxb6+ Kc7 37 Nc4 Bd5 38 Ra1 Kb7 39 Ra5 e6 ½-½



READERS' GAMES & ANALYSIS



David Sands - Tim Hamilton
DC Chess League 1998
English

Notes by Tim Hamilton

1. c4 Nc6
2. Nc3 e5
3. g3 f5
4. Bg2 Nf6
5. d3 Bb4
6. e4

My opponent finds a new idea in a position known since the days of Joseph Blackburne, who played 6. Bd2 here against Schiffers. 6 e4 is consistent with his plan of controlling d5, but the resulting pawn on e4 blocks his king bishop for

much of the game. He also gives me a half-open f-file and weakens his pawn structure.

6... fxe4
7. dxe4 Bxc3+
8. bxc3 0-0
9. Ba3 Rf7

9...d6 10. c5

10. Ne2 b6
11. c5 Qe7
12. Qb3 Na5

12...bxc5 13. Qb5 Rb8 14. Qxc5 Qxc5 15. Bxc5 Ba6 looks okay for Black.

13. Qa4 Qe6

14. 0-0 Ba6

I thought a little development was in order, but 14...Qc4 was worth a good look since Black wins the c-pawn. I didn't like the fact that White gets some play after 15. Qd1 bxc5 since Black's knight is offside, but White's minor pieces are at least as badly placed.

15. Rfe1 Ng4

Fritz's 15...Bxe2 16. Rxe2 Qc4 17. Qd1 bxc5 18. Bf1 Qxc3 19. Re3 Qd4 20. Rd3 Qc4 21. Rxd7 Qe6 22. Rxf7 is hardly what Black wants.



Readers' Games (continued)

16. f3

If 16. Bh3 Qc4 17. Qxc4 Nxc4 18. Bxg4 Nxa3 19. Red1 bxc5 20. Kf1 Raf8 21. f3 Nc2 22. Rab1 Ne3+ (Fritz)

16... Nxh2

This introduces some wild complications but going to e3 instead was certainly possible, as was 16...Qh6.

17. Kxh2 Qh6+

18. Bh3

If 18. Kg1 Qe3+19.Kf1 Bxe2+ 20. Rxe2 Rxf3+ — ouch!

18... Rxf3

19. Qxd7 Rf2+

20. Kh1

If 20. Kg1 Qe3 21. Qd5+ (21. Nf4 Rf1+ 22. Kh2 Qg1#) Rf7+ 22. Kh1 Bb7.

20... Kh8

A rather quiet follow-up. Nevertheless, it is difficult for White to find a plan here. In any case 20...Bc8 would have run into 21. Qd5+ Rf7 22. Rf1 Qxh3+ 23. Kg1 Qd7 24. Qxa8.

21. Ng1 Qg5

22. Qg4

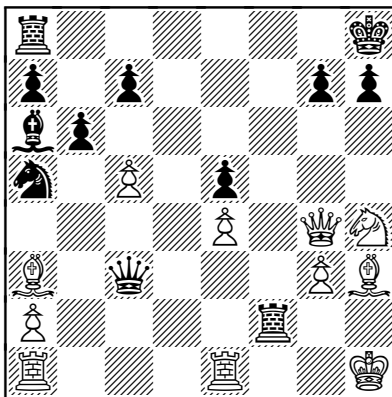
If 22. g4 Qf4; or 22. Bg4 Bb5 23. Qd5 Raf8 24. Qe6 Qd2 25. Nf3 R8xf3

22... Qd2

23. Nf3 Qxc3

24. Nh4

A really interesting try which convinced me during the game not to take the bishop.



24... Be2

This at least stops the scary knight check, as the bishop could interpose after a queen check on the h-file. It also sets a fairly obvious trap since if rook takes bishop Black mates in four.

But what about 24...Qxa3? After 25. Ng6+ hxg6 26. Qh4+ Kg8 27. Be6+ Kf8 28. Qh8+ Ke7 29. Qxg7+ Kxe6 30. Qxg6+ this is the position I didn't exactly like the looks of, but Fritz continues 30...Kd7 and says: "See if I care." Amazingly, White runs out of checks: 31. Qg4+Kc6 32. cxb6 Rh8+ (of course a human would be content to play two pieces up with 32...Qf3+ etc -ed) 33. Kg1 Qb2 34. Rac1+ Kxb6 35. Qe6+ c6 and mate is threatened on g2.

25. Bb4

We both had under five minutes to get to move 40; he had less than two. I admit I missed this shot, but things are under control.

25... Bxg4

26. Bxc3 Bxh3

27. Bxe5 Nc4

28. Bxc7 bxc5

29. Rac1 Nb2

30. Rb1 Nd3

31. Red1 c4

32. Bb8 Bg4

33. Rf1

The final blunder, but time was short.

33... Rxf1+

34. Rxf1 Rxb8

0-1

GARY MCGOWAN ranks as one of the premier players in the Hampton Roads area. Lately he has been taking on lots of international masters and grandmasters on the Internet. Here is one of his smashes against the 1997 Icelandic champ, GM Helgi Olafsson.

Helgi Olafsson - Gary McGowan ICC 1998

Notes by Bob Collins

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5

a6 5.f3 (This is a very sharp system to play against the Benko Gambit) 5...e6 6.e4 c4!?

(And here is Black's sharpest reply!! 6...exd5 7.exd5 Qe7+ (7...Nh5 8.Qe2+ Qe7 9.b6) 8.Kf2 axb5 is another line.) 7.bxa6?! (7.dxe6 fxe6 8.Bxc4 axb5 9.Bxb5 Qb6 10.Nc3 Bc5 11.Nh3 ⇌) 7...Bxa6 8.Nc3 Bc5 9.Nh3 0-0 (Note that Black has already castled and his Bishops are ready to rake White's position, while White has one developed piece. The cost: just 2 pawns!!) 10.Be2 Qb6 11.Kf1 Bd4 12.g4



exd5 13.g5 Bxc3 14.bxc3 Nxe4!

(Bam!! And now Black comes charging in. The cost: just a knight!!) **15.fx4 dxe4 16.Nf4**

(If 16.Qd4 Qxd4 17.cxd4 c3 18.Be3 (18.Bxa6 Rxa6 19.Be3 Nc6) f6) **16...Qa5 17.Be3**

(Watch how quickly the knight comes and helps the queen.)

17...Nc6 18.Qxd7 Qxc3 19.Kf2 Nb4 20.Bd4 Qd2 21.Nh5 Rad8 22.Rad1 Nd3+ 23.Kf1 Rxd7 0-1

If you get to play on ICC (the Internet Chess Club), look up "Gowanov" — that's Gary!

THE EDITOR apologizes to readers, and especially to my friend and opponent in the following game, Steve Greanias, for reprinting this game. It already appeared in the previous issue of *Virginia Chess*. I had composed my annotations at that time, but while doing the actual newsletter layout under "time pressure" I accidentally inserted an older version of the file with only a few sparse notes and no commentary.

Steve Greanias - Macon Shibus
1998 Virginia Closed
King's Indian

Notes by Macon Shibus

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 d6 3 Nf3 g6 4 g3 Bg7 5 Bg2 0-0 6 0-0 Nc6 7 d5 Na5 8 Nfd2 c6 9 a3 (Clearing a2 so that his rook may step off the long diagonal and thereby threaten Black's knight with b4 etc. Steve and I had played this variation previously. At the

1999 VIRGINIA OPEN

Jan 22-24, 1999

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30 Grand Prix Points

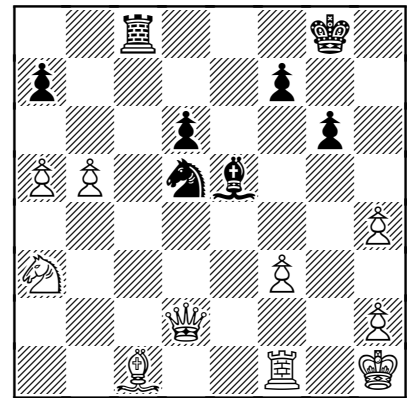


Readers' Games (continued)

1995 Atlantic Open, in Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, he chose 9 Qc2 and the game continued 9...cxd5 10 cxd5 Bd7 11 Nc3 Rc8 12 Rb1 b5 13 Qd3 b4 14 Nce4 Qb6 15 Nxf6+ Bxf6 16 Ne4 Bg7 17 Be3 Qb7 18 b3 Bb5 19 Qd2 Qa6 20 Qxb4 Bxe2 21 Bd2 Nb7 22 Rfe1 Nc5 23 Nxc5 Rxc5 24 Rbc1 Rxc1 25 Rxc1 Qxa2 26 Re1 Bd3 27 Rxe7 Be5 28 f4 Qa1+ 29 Be1 Bd4+ 30 Kh1 Bc5 31 Qd2 Qd4 0-1) **9...cxd5 10 cxd5 Qc7 11 Ra2 Bd7 12 b4 Nc4 13 Rc2 b5 14 a4 Bf5** (White's idea is that if 14...a6 15 Na3 would be awkward for Black. I worked out a sequence for getting my queen out of the pin on the c-line.) **15 e4 Bg4 16 Qe1** (Of course not 16 f3? Qb6+) **16...Qd7 17 Nxc4 bxc4** (Here's the point. If now 18 Rxc4 Qxa4) **18 b5 Rfc8** (18...a6 would probably lead to complete vaporization of the queenside and eventually a draw.) **19 f3?** (A nervous sort of move; the bishop was irritating just by its presence but there is no clear value forcing Bh3. Indeed, White's own king is per-

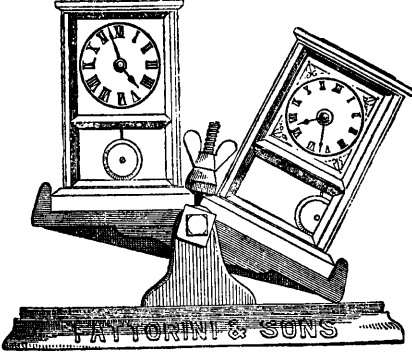
ceptibly weakened by the trade of light square bishops and opening of his second rank and diagonal a7-g1.) **19...Bh3 20 Qb4 Bxg2 21 Kxg2 e6!** (I also considered the pawn sacrifice 21...h5, but it's important to take on White's pawn bridge-head. Otherwise White anchors a piece on c6 after taking the c-pawn.) **22 Rxc4** (22 dxe6 was also possible and perhaps preferable, but after 22...Qxe6 Δ d5 Black's pieces enjoy harmonious activity and the opening of the game does not bode well for White's king.) **22...exd5 23 exd5 Nxd5 24 Rxc8+ Rxc8 25 Qb3 Qe6** (Threatening to win the queen by Nf4+, but 25...Qf5 also came into consideration, Δ Rc2. During the game I could not decide between these two moves and essentially just picked one.) **26 Kh1** (I expected 26 Qd1) **26...Qe2 27 Qd1 Qa2 28 Na3 h5** (The dual purpose of this move was to use the h-pawn to create threats around White's king and to provide luft for myself, specifically in the variation 29 Re1

Kh7! and White cannot play 30 Re2 because of 30...Rxc1, a variation that does not work so long as my king is still on the back rank since White can interpolate Re8+ and then take the rook.) **29 a5 29...h4 30 gxf4** (Otherwise I might either push the pawn again or trade on g3 Δ Be5, Kg7, Rh8+) **30...Be5 31 Qd2?**



I analyzed 31 f4 Nxf4 32 Bxf4 Bxf4 33 Rxf4 Qxa3 as winning for Black because White's king is too exposed. However, the text is a blunder that allows Black to close out the game immediately and with style!

31...Rxc1! 32 Qxa2 Rxf1+ 33 Kg2 Ne3+ 34 Kh3 Rxf3 mate 0-1



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25th annual...

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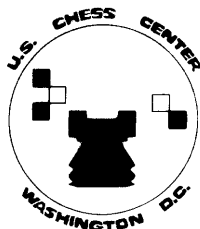
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100 Grand Prix Points



MICHAEL ROHDE SIMULTANEOUS EXHIBITION AT ARLINGTON CHESS CLUB

based on material provided by Mike Atkins

GM Michael Rohde visited the Arlington Chess Club on Friday, November 6, for a lecture and simultaneous exhibition that almost didn't happen. The club's host, Central United Methodist Church, had their annual Fall Bazaar set for the next day and, through a series of miscommunications, the club organizers arrived to set up for the simul only to discover that nearly all of the church's tables had been put into service for the Bazaar!

Scrounging throughout the building, they managed to get enough playing space for the 26 people who eventually challenged the grandmaster. Rohde tallied 24 wins and 2 draws, David Slack, of DC, and John Burton, of Virginia, scoring the half points.

Rohde gave an informative lecture prior to the simul, showing his game against Susan Polgar that popular *Chess Life* columnist GM Andrew Soltis ranked as the 19th best game of the 20th century. There was also a short question and answer period.

GM Michael Rohde - John Burton Simultaneous Exhibition, Arlington CC 1998

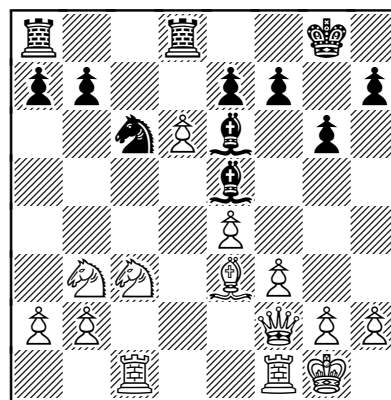
Maróczy Bind

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 d4 0-0 6 Be2 c5 7 0-0 cxd4
8 Nxd4 Nc6 9 Be3 Bd7 10 Qd2 Ng4 11 Bxg4 Bxg4 12 f3 Bd7 13
Rac1 Qa5 14 Nb3 Qh5 15 c5 Rfd8 16 cxd6 Be6 17 Qf2 Be5

(diagram)

18 g4 Qh3 19 dxe7
Nxe7 20 Nc5 Bc4 21
Rfd1 b6 22 Nb3 Nc6
23 Nd5 Bxd5 24 exd5
Nb4 25 Rd2 Rxd5 26
Rcd1 Rad8 27 Rxd5
Rxd5 28 Rxd5 Nxd5
29 Bd4 Bxd4 30 Nxd4
h5 31 gxh5 Qxh5 32
Qg3 Kg7 33 h4 Ne3
34 Qg5 Qxg5+ 35
hxg5 Nc4 36 b3 Ne5

1/2-1/2





A "WON GAME"

WHY YOUR BEST ENDING MAY BE THE MIDDLEGAME

by Robert Fischer

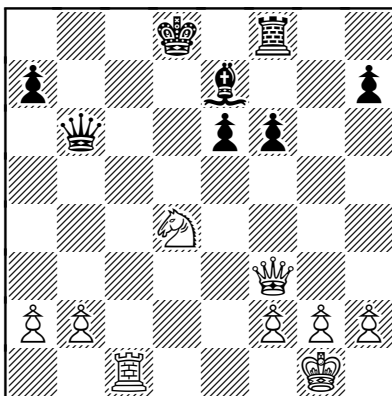
ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING PARTS OF CHESS is learning how to win a won game. About four years ago I asked GM Edmar Mednis to put together a training program for me based on an analysis of my games. One of the weakness he pointed out was poor technique in winning positions. I had to agree. Many times I had failed to win from very advantageous positions.

Edmar suggested some excellent books on the subject, including his own *From The Middlegame To The Endgame*. We also did some extensive work on my games. Eventually my technique began to improve and I started to win more of my won positions. What's more, I started to defend better in bad positions and was able to save more of them.

Knowing when to transition from a favorable middlegame into a favorable ending is a very important part of good technique. I'd like to share a few of my games with readers of the *Virginia Chess* on this topic. But first a quote from page 153 of the aforementioned book: "A saying from long ago is, 'Strike while the iron is hot.' You always want to keep this in mind when playing a superior middlegame. It is surely much safer to gain a quick middlegame victory than to go through a laborious, though superior, endgame. The key guideline for evaluating

whether to continue in the middlegame rather than simplifying into a superior endgame is: *stay in the middlegame if you have a massive near term superiority or you opponent has a massive immediate problem.*"

Macon Shibut - Robert Fischer 1995 Emporia Open



White to Play

Playing Black here, I am in a bad way. My king is very exposed whereas White's king is completely safe. The Black rook on f8 does nothing while the White rook is aggressively

posted ready to support the centralized knight or join the attack with a well timed move to the 6th, 7th, or 8th rank. The White knight is superior to the Black bishop. Plus, Black is a pawn down.

1 Qc6

Seeing the opportunity to win another pawn, Macon forces the exchange of queens.

1... Qxc6
2 Nxc6+ Kd7
3 Nxe7 Kxe7
4 Rc7+ Kd6
5 Rxa7 Rc8
6 g3 Rc2
7 b4

7 Rb7

7... Rb2
8 a3

So White has won a second pawn, but let's evaluate this position. Objectively Black is lost, but he is not without trumps: his do-nothing rook of a few moves ago has taken up a very active post; White's rook is improperly placed in front of the passed pawns; Black's king, which was very weak, is now superior to White's king; and

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White no longer has a better minor piece. Overall, *White has decreased many of his advantages to win a pawn and get a technically won endgame.*

8... Rb3
9 Ra5

Preparing to gradually begin pushing his queenside pawns.

9... h5
10 b5 f5
11 a4 f4
12 gxf4 h4

Suddenly, White begins to feel the effects of the poor position of his king and rook. Black's rook, king, and h-pawn combine to fashion a dangerous attack.

13 b6

In time trouble White decides to head for a simpler position with excellent practical chances. In fact 13 Ra6+ Kd5 14 b6 Ke4 15 Kf1 (15 b7 Kf3 16 b8=Q Rxb8 17 h3 Rb1+ with a probable draw.) 15...Kf3 16 Ke1 Kg2 17 a5 Kxh2 18 Ra7 h3 19 Rg7! (but not 19. b7 Kg2 20. a6 h2) was winning, but these variations give an idea of what problems White faced. With your flag horizontal, it can be difficult to see six moves deep in a rook endgame and there is always the chance you will overlook something.

13... Rxb6
14 Rh5 Rb4
15 Rxh4 Rxa4
16 Kg2

With the Black king on g7 and the e6 and f4 pawns exchanged, Black has a theoretical draw. It is however, one of the most difficult games to draw. Normally, Black will keep his rook on a1 or a2 and be ready to harass the White king as he advances to support the pawns.

16... Ke7
17 Kg3 Kf6
18 Rh6+ Kf7
19 Rh5 Ra1
20 Rg5 Kf6
21 Re5 Rb1
22 Re3 Ra1
23 Kg4 Ra2
24 Rf3 Kg6
25 h4 Rb2
26 Kg3 Rb1
27 Re3 Rg1+
28 Kh2 Rg4
29 Rg3 Kh5
30 Rxc4 Kxc4
31 Kg2 Kxh4
32 Kf3 Kh3!

Counterattack is an important defensive resource in king a pawn endgames. If you can't successfully defend your pawns, sometimes you can draw by attacking you opponents. 32...Kh5?? 33 Ke4 Kg6 34 Ke5 Kf7 35 f5 winning. This was the line Macon was counting on when he went into this line.

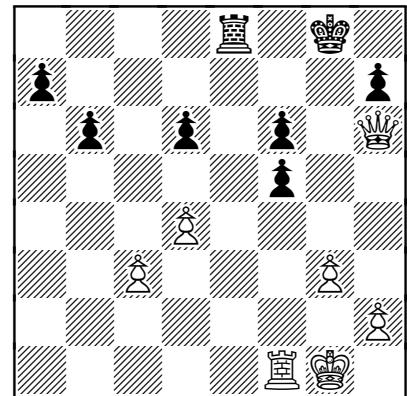
33 Ke2 Kg2
34 Ke3 Kf1
 $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

An amazing escape. Now let's recall the quote from Mednis's book — "*stay in the middlegame if you have a massive near term*

superiority..." — and take another look at the first diagram. How should White have played? If he said, "My advantages include an extra pawn, better placed pieces, and a weak Black king; what moves exploit all these?" White would have found 24 Qd3! After this White can either win in the middlegame or force an endgame that is significantly better than the one he actually got.

Here's another game in which a player gives up part of his advantage to reach a technically won endgame.

Robert Fischer - Vann Alan Patrick 1998 Emporia Open



Black to Play

I'd made some mistakes earlier and had to sacrifice material to get things going on the kingside. Unfortunately, in this position my attack has run out of steam and in fact it is White's king that is the more exposed. Moreover, Black has two extra pawns. It does not look good for the home team.

1... Qe3+?



I was hoping for this. He gives up a pawn to go to an endgame that gives White excellent practical chances. Since White's king is actually looser than Black's, this move decreases his advantage.

- 2 Qxe3 Rxe3
- 3 Rxf5 Kf7
- 4 Rh5 Kg6
- 5 Rd5 Rxc3
- 6 Rxd6 Rc7
- 7 Rd8 Kf7

7...Rb7 was also possible.

- 8 Kf2

The best practical chance. If 8 Rb8 Ke6 9 Kf2 Kd5 10 Ke3 Kc4 Black wins.

- 8... Rb7
- 9 Ke3 b5
- 10 Kd3 b4

10...a5 11 Ra8 a4 wins. I think this is a much better way to play. By separating his pawns Patrick squanders his advantage.

- 11 Kc2 b3+
- 12 Kb2 Ke7



- 13 Rd5 Ke6
- 14 Ra5

I felt sure I could hold the draw now.

- 14... Kd6
- 15 g4 Kc7
- 16 Ra6 Kb8
- 17 Rxf6 a5
- 18 g5 a4
- 19 Rf2!

Equal game. But 19 Ra6? Rb4 20 d5 Kb7 21 Ra5 Kb6 22 Ra8 Kc5 would have lost.

- 19... Rb4
- 20 Rd2 Kc7
- 21 Ka3 Rc4
- 22 h4 Kd6
- 23 h5 Ke6
- 24 d5+ Kd6

After the game we found this amusing variation that we think leads to a draw also: 24...Kf5 25 d6 Rc8 26 d7 Rd8 27 g6 hxg6 28 h6 Kf6 29 Rf2+ Kg5 (29...Ke7 30 h7) 30 Rh2 Rxd7 31 h7 Rd8 32 h8=Q Rxh8 33 Rxh8 Kf4 34 Kxa4 b2 35 Rb8 g5 36 Rxb2 g4. But Black does not have to go for all this excitement.

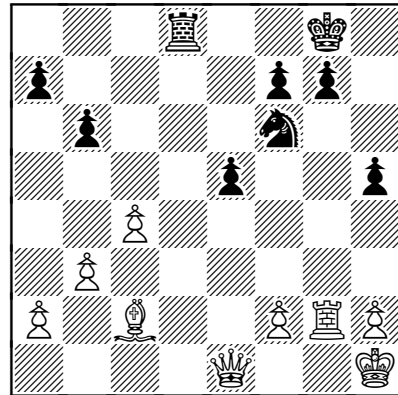
- 25 g6 hxg6
 - 26 hxg6 Rg4
 - 27 g7 Rgx7
 - 28 Kxa4
- 1/2-1/2

Another narrow escape. If we go back to the first diagram we see that White's king is so much weaker than Black's, exchanging into the endgame (even, with best play, a *won*

endgame) made Black's job much harder. Again returning to the initial position and analyzing with the Mednis' quote in mind, we simply cannot play 33...Qe3+. Instead we might play 33...Rc8. Then White would have to deal with the threat to his c-pawn; the advance of Black's a-pawn; and also a timely ...f4 (if the queen gives up defense of the f4 square). Here too it is likely Black could later force an endgame under far more advantageous circumstances than what he got.

Let's look at another game from the same tournament, with the same theme.

**Terry Newman - Robert Fischer
1998 Emporia Open**



White to Play

Black is a solid pawn ahead. A rook + knight *vs* rook + bishop endgame would be completely winning. Nevertheless, exchanging queens is the last thing on Black's mind. The important thing in this position is not that Black has an extra pawn, but that the missing pawn is White's g-pawn, leaving his king vulnerable.



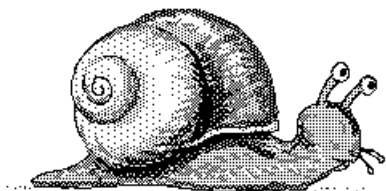
Blindfold Chess, part 2

SINCE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF ALEKHINE, in Chicago, 1933, of 32 games played without sight of the board, three outstanding figures have vied for the record of most simultaneous blindfold games: George Koltanowski, Miguel Najdorf, and Janos Flesch.

In 1937, in Edinburgh, Koltanowski set a new mark, playing 34 games with a score of 24 wins, no losses, and 10 draws. One decade later, in Sao Paolo, Najdorf upped the ante by playing 35 games. He scored 29 wins, 2 losses, 4 draws. Najdorf's record stood only four years, until Koltanowski answered in San Francisco, 1951, with no less than 50 opponents, fifteen more than Najdorf, including 43 wins, 2 losses and 5 draws. Then in 1960, in Budapest, the Hungarian Janos Flesch played a total of 52 games, scoring 31 wins, 3 losses, and 18 draws. (One of these games, Flesch-Hrumo, appeared in *The Gambiteer of Virginia Chess 1198/3*)

Koltanowski possesses a fabulous memory and photographic recall. In my humble opinion, he is the "World Champion" of blindfold chess. I had the pleasure of observing Koltanowski in action in 1981, at an exhibition in Richmond. On that occasion he performed his famous "Knight's Tour." On a blackboard diagram, all squares of a "chessboard" were filled in with bits of information — names of players, cities, countries, a couple states, one county, one college, etc — solicited at random from the audience. (The Gambiteer's name graced f7.) Koltanowski took a minute to study the board and memorize the data on each square. Then, without further sight of the diagram, he demonstrated the Knight's Tour, hopping by a knight's step from square to square, never touching the same square twice, recalling in turn the data from all 64.

But now it is time to sample some blindfold chess games:



Koltanowski - Burnett

Edinburgh 1937 (1 of 34 blindfold games)

Max Lange

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5 4. 0-0 Nf6 5. d4 exd4 6. e5 d5 7. exf6 dxc4 8. Re1+ Be6 9. Ng5 Qd5 10. Nc3 Qf5 11. Nce4 Bf8 12. Nxf7 Kxf7 13. Ng5+ Kg6 14. Nxe6 gxf6 15. g4 Qa5 16. Bd2 Qb6 17. Qf3 Be7 18. Qf5+ Kf7 19. Qh5+ Kg8 20. Qh6 Bf8 21. Qxf6 Ne7 22. Bh6 Bxh6 23. Qxh6 1-0

Miguel Najdorf - Ma. Lagazzi, H. Mendes & Mi. Lagazzi French

1. e4 e6 2. d4 Qe7 3. Nf3 d6 4. Bd3 e5 5. 0-0 Nf6 6. b3 c6 7. Bb2 Nbd7 8. Nbd2 h6 9. dxe5 Nxe5 10. Nxe5 dxe5 11. Nc4 Nd7 12. f4 exf4 13. e5 Qc5+ 14. Kh1 b5 15. Ba3 Qd5 16. Nd6+ Bxd6 17. Bxd6 Nb6 18. Rxf4 Bb7 19. Qg4 Qe6 20. Qxg7 (There is no good move available to Black.) Kd7 (20... Kd8 can be met prosaically by 21. Qxh8+ — finally — Kd7 22. Qxa8 Bxa8 23. Bf5) 21. Bf5 1-0

Here is a very pretty game by an endgame expert:

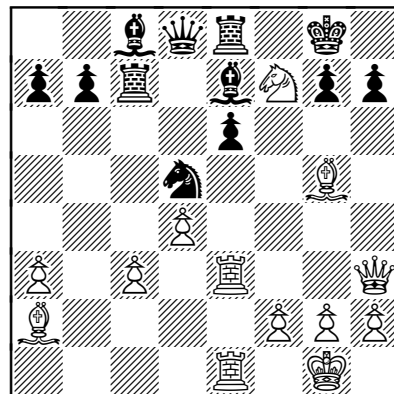
Hort - Scotland

Caro-Kann Defense, 1 of 10 games, 1980

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. exd5 cxd5 4. c4 Nf6 5. Nc3 e6 6. Nf3 Be7 7. Bg5 0-0 8. a3 dxc4 9. Bxc4 Nbd7 10. 0-0 Nb6 11. Ba2 Nbd5 12. Ne5 Bd7 13. Qd3 Re8 14. Rae1 Rc8 15. Qh3 Nxc3 16. bxc3 Rc7 17. Re3 Bc8 18. Rfe1 Nd5 19. Nxf7

(diagram)

19...Kf7 20. Rf3+ Kg8 21. Bb1 g6 22. Rf7 h5 23. Qd3 1-0



**Gambiteer (continued)**

My source for the scores of these three games was *Phanomen Blind-Schach*, by Ludwig Steinkohl, Edition Madler, Rau Verlag, Dusseldorf, 1992.

Paul Morphy & Thomas Barnes

We cannot leave the realm of blindfold chess without a glimpse back to the days of Paul Morphy. For the following game score I am indebted to the book *Paul Morphy and the Evolution of Chess Theory*, by Macon Shibut, Caissa Editions, Yorklyn, DE, 1993. In a chapter dealing with Thomas Barnes, Shibut notes that "...with at least eight wins to his credit, Barnes took more full points off Morphy than any other European master."

Morphy - Barnes**London, 1859 (Morphy blindfolded)****Petroff**

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 d4 d5 6 Bd3 Bd6 7 0-0 0-0 8 c4 Nf6 9 Bg5 Be6 10 Qb3 dxc4 11 Bxc4 Bxc4 12 Qxc4 Nc6 13 Nc3 h6 14 Bh4 g5 15 Bg3 Qd7 16 Ne5 Qe6 17 Qxe6 fxe6 18 Nxc6 bxc6 19 Rfe1 Rfe8 20 Rac1 Rab8 21 b3 Re7 22 Na4 Rb4 23 Be5 Bxe5 24 dxe5 Nd5 25 Rxc6 Rd4 26 Rc2 Nb4 27 Rce2 Nd3 28 Rd2 Rxa4 29 Rxd3 Rxa2 30 Rc1 Rf7 31 f3 ½-½



That's Morphy, still trying to get a game with Staunton!

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non-members, Reg 9-9:45am 12/13, rds 10-4, 9:30-3:30. One 1/2 pt bye allowed, rds 4 or 5 must declare before rd 2. Accelerated pairings possible in first two rounds.

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PLAYING AGAINST LOWER-RATED OPPONENTS

By Roger Mahach

SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES to remember when facing lower-rated players:

∂ Stick to what works. If you are a positional player, fight the urge to try out the King's Gambit instead of the boring old English. You'd be surprised how quickly you can get into trouble when you start swimming in unfamiliar waters. Chances are really good that you will know as little as your opponent and will have to resort to all kinds of tricks to win.

∑ Do not resort to tricks to win. Chances are if you had followed rule # 1 you wouldn't be in the mess you now find yourself in. Okay, so you made a blunder or you fell asleep. You find yourself a pawn or two down and you don't have much room to breath. Your first instinct is to sac a knight for two pawns. Breath deeply, focus and don't panic. One of the real advantages that higher rated players have over lower rated ones is experience. I cannot even begin to count the number of games that I've lost against higher rated players when I was winning outright. What happened? Several years of therapy later, I think I have the answer. While I lacked the skill to convert a winning endgame, my opponents had the knowledge to look for cheapos, traps, and how to take advantages of the opportunities that I let pass.

Π Manage your clock. Nope, I'm not talking about getting into time trouble. I'm talking about the really bad habit that many players exhibit when they sit down against a "fish:" They hardly spend any time at the board. Suddenly the A player who is faced with the D player in the first round decides that he can play the game while lounging around at the

book store and chatting up the waitress at Denny's across town. Sit down and think the way you would against Kasparov. Play chess the way you normally would. Don't relax until there's a "1" next to your name.

π Refuse draws. For some of the reasons mentioned above, you now find yourself in a hopelessly drawn position. Your opponent offers a draw. In your heart of hearts you know that the position is a draw. You will have two reactions, both wrong. The first will be to lash out in some inane manner. Once upon a time, faced with this situation, I decided that the only thing to do was to march my king from g1 to g6 and mate my opponent. I can still hear my confused opponent announce "I think that's mate, isn't it?" as he trapped my king with a knight and two pawns. The second reaction will be to accept the draw. You should really concentrate on your third option: playing on. Many times the very fact that you've chosen to continue will confuse your opponent. He'll think that he must be missing something, giving you the chance that you need.

∫ Resign gracefully. Okay, you tried everything but you still went down like an intern in the Oval Office. There's nothing wrong with losing; it happens to everyone, it's part of the game. Show your class and congratulate your opponent. You have been kind enough to give him one of his best chess memories to date. I once witnessed a Senior Master lose to a low expert. The expert put his hand out to shake hands and the SM just brushed him away and stormed out of the hall. After a brief moment the tournament hall just broke out in laughter. The expert got a round of applause.





EMPORIA OPEN

Matthew Noble and Virginia's own Bobby Fischer scored 4½ each to tie for first at the 14th edition of Woody Harris' annual chess and victuals fest. Both conceded draws to the tournament's other undefeated contestant, Vann Alan Patrick, who headed a group of four (Jimmy Hare, Rodney Fett & Harvey Jenkins were the others) who finished just off the pace at 4-1.

Here is Noble's penultimate round game. His opponent had started the tournament 3-0 but then, in consecutive rounds, ran into both of the eventual co-winners.

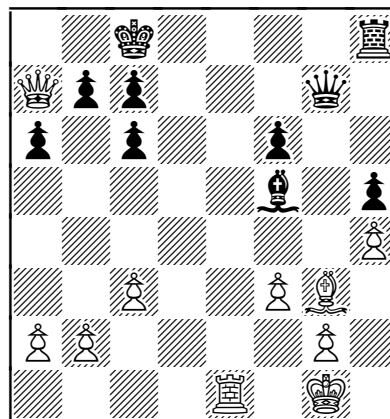
Matthew Noble - Terry Newman English

1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 Nf3 d6 4 d4 exd4 5 Nxd4 g6 6 g3 Bg7 7 Nxc6 bxc6 8 Bg2 Bd7 9 0-0 Ne7 10 Qc2 0-0 11 b3 Qc8 12 Rd1 Rb8 13 Bb2 Re8 14 Ne4 Bf5? 15 Bxg7 Bxe4 (15...Kxg7 16 Qb2+) 16 Qb2 (The dark squares around his king will be the death of Black.) Nf5 17 Bh3 Re6 18 Bc3 c5 19 f3 Bc6 20 e4 Ne3 21 Re1 Nxc4 22 Qc1 Nb6 23 Bxe6 fxe6 24 Bb2 Qf8 25 Qc3 e5 26 Rf1 Nd7 27 Qa5 Qd8 28 Rae1 c4 29 Qc3 Nc5 30 Qxc4+ Kg7 31 Bxe5+ 1-0

Jimmy Hare - Harvey Jenkins Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Bxc6 dxc6 5 0-0 Bd6 6 d4 Bg4 7 c3 Qf6 8 Nbd2 0-0-0 9 Qb3 Be6 10 Qc2 g5 11 dxe5 Bxe5 12 Nxe5 Qxe5 13 Nf3 Qg7 14 Bxg5 f6 15 Bf4 Ne7 16 Bg3 h5 17 Nh4 Ng6 18

Nxg6 Qxg6 19 h4? Bd5! 20 Rfe1 Rde8 21 Qd2 Bxe4 (21...Rxe4) 22 Qf4 Qh7 23 f3 Bf5 24 Qd4 (A double threat—the queen will either take the f-pawn or, even worse, intrude at a7. Black's relative best would be 24...Kb8) 24...Qg7 25 Qa7 Rxe1+ 26 Rxe1



26...Rg8 (Black ignores the basic problem, which is Rd1 Δ Qa8mate. But there was not much to be done about it anyway. For example 26...Qxg3 27 Rd1 Bd3, hoping for perpetual check at e1/h4 if White takes the bishop, runs into 28 Qa8+ Kd7 and now 29 Rxd3+ takes it with check, then 29...Ke7 30 Re3+ stops the perpetual again with check, and finally White takes the rook. Similarly, if 26...Bc2 27 Re2 (Δ Rd2) Bd3 28 Rd2 Qxg3 29 Qa8+ Kd7 30 Rxd3+ Ke7 31 Re3+) 27 Rd1 1-0

(See also Bobby Fischer's article on page 8 of this issue for analysis from his games versus Vann Alan Patrick and Terry Newman.)

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In This Issue:

Tournaments		
Northern Virginia Open	1	♠
Emporia Open	15	♠
Features		
Readers' Games & Analysis	3	♠
Rohde Simul	7	♠
A "Won Game" (Fischer)	8	♠
The Gambiteer	12	♠
Lower Rated Opponents (Mahach)	14	♠
Odds & Ends		
Upcoming Events	5, 6, 7, 11, 13	♠
Personal & General	11	♠
VCF Info	15	♠

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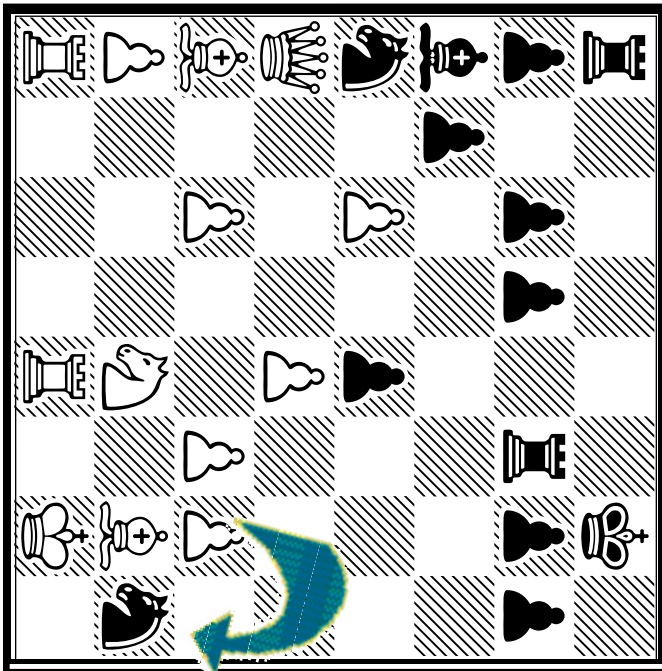
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Newsletter

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1998 - #6

Here we go!



Tim Hamilton leaps into the unknown, page 8.