



GEORGE MASON OPEN

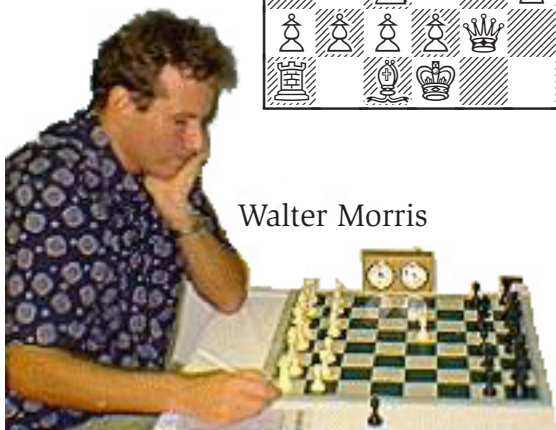
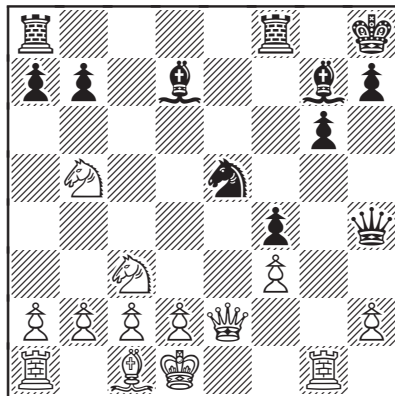
by Mike Atkins

SEVENTY-FIVE players turned out for the 2nd George Mason Open April 26-27 in Arlington. IM Walter Morris, our GMU sponsor for the event, took home a share of the four-way tie for 1st place. Joining him in the winners square were John Meyer, Ray Kaufman & Alex Passov.

Chris Sevilla - Walter Morris Sicilian

Notes by Walter Morris/Fritz

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 e5 dxe5 5 Nxe5 Nfd7 6 Bb5 e6 (6...Qc7 7 d4 cxd4 8 Bf4 dxc3 (8...Qc5 9 Qd3 dxc3?? (9...a6 10 Bxd7+ Nxd7 11 Nxd7 Bxd7 12 0-0-0 f6 13 Qxd4 Qxd4 14 Rxd4 e5 15 Re1 Bc6) 10 Rd1) 9 Nxd7 Qxf4 10 Nf6 mate) 7 Qh5 g6 8 Qf3 f5 9 g4 Bg7 10 gxf5 exf5 11 Nc4 0-0 12 Qd5+ Kh8 13 Nd6 Qe7+ 14 Kd1 Nf6 15 Qxc5 Nbd7 16 Bxd7 Nxd7 17 Qc7 Qh4 18 Qc4 Qf6 19 Ndb5 Ne5 20 Qe2 f4 21 f3 Qh4 22 Rg1 Bd7



Walter Morris



23 Nd6? (With this move White's small advantage disappears. 23 d4 Rad8 24 Bd2 Nc6 25 d5 was better.) 23...Qh5 24 Nde4 Nxf3 25 Rg2 Rae8 26 d3 Bh3 27 Rf2 Bg4 28 Rg2 Nxf3 29 Rxf2 Nxf3 30 Qf3 Ne3+ 31 Ke2 Qxf3+ 32 Kxf3 Nxc2 33 Rb1 Nd4+ 34 Kf2 h6 35 b3 g5 36 Ba3 Rg8 37 Rh1 Ne6 38 Kf3 Kh7 39 Nd5 Kg6 40 Ne7+ Rxe7 41 Bxe7 Rc8 42 Rh2 h5 43 Rd2 g4+ 44 Kg2 Bd4 45 Bh4 Rc1 46 Bf2 Be3 47 Re2 f3+ 0-1

Morris and Kaufman streaked out to 4-0 starts and drew quietly in the final round. Meyer, on the other hand, employed a "Swiss gambit" after being held to a draw in round 1 by fast-improving Patrick Ray.

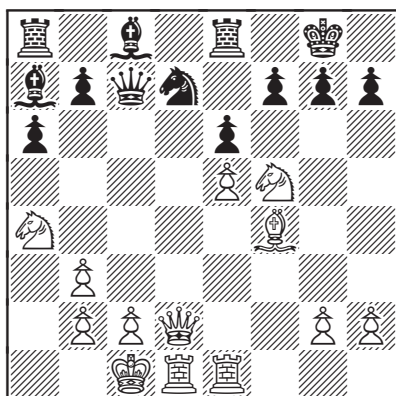
Patrick Ray - John Meyer Sicilian

Notes by Macon Shibut

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 Nbd7 8 f4 Nc5 9 e5 Nxb3 10 axb3 dxe5 11 fxe5 Nd7 12 Bf4 Bc5 13 Na4 Ba7 14 Qd2 0-0 15 0-0-0 Qc7 16 Rhe1 Re8 17 Nf5! (see diagram next page)



John Meyer



17...Nf8

White may have been bluffing: 17...exf5 18 e6 Qc6 19 exd7 Bxd7 20 Rxe8+ (or 20 Qxd7 Qxd7 21 Rxd7 Rxe1+) 20...Bxe8 looks fine.

18 Nxg7 (following up in the right spirit!) Kxg7 19 Bh6+ Kh8 20 Qg5 f5 21 exf6 Ng6 22 Bg7+ Kg8 23 Rf1 Qf7 24 h4 e5 25 h5 Be6 26 Kb1

A really surprising choice, but not a bad one; White outrated by 600 points, is not afraid of the knight running away since there would be an immediate draw available with Bh6+ etc, so he just improves the position.

26...e4 27 Rd6 e3 28 Nc3

But here maybe there was a chance for more by 28 hxg6 Qxg6 29 f7+

28...Nf8 29 Bh6+ ½-½

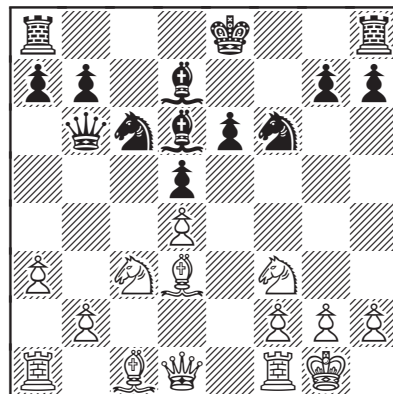


Passov was held to a 2nd round draw and then pulled off an opening trap versus NM Floyd Boudreaux in the final round.

Floyd Boudreaux - Alexander Passov French

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nf6 4 e5 Nfd7 5 Bd3 c5 6 c3 Nc6 7 Ne2 cxd4 8 cxd4 Qb6 9 Nf3 f6 10 exf6 Nxf6 11 0-0 Bd6 12 a3 Bd7 13 Nc3?

(Relying on a standard device to protect his d-pawn but overlooking a twist that lies at its end in this particular position.)



13...Nxd4! (Black opportunistically “falls for it.”) 14 Nxd4 Qxd4 15 Bg6+ hxg6 16 Qxd4 Bxh2+ 0-1

Thomas Rehle took class A honors with a final round win over the class D winner Aryan Khojandi. This loss notwithstanding, eleven-year-old Khojandi had the performance of the weekend. His final performance rating was 650 points above his posted rating, which ought to translate to a gain over 150 points-not bad for a single tournament! Watch out for this little budding star.

VIRGINIA CHESS Newsletter

2003 - Issue #3

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Sanda Costescu was top B; it was nice seeing her win some money after a long drought. Class C was split between Victor L Smith and Alec Hollingsworth. Daniel Clancy, with 2, took the top under 1200 laurels. Little Jeffrey Montes, rated 323, won the Upset prize with his draw versus Keadu Belachew, rated 1995.

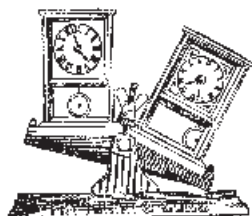
While Saturday was rainy and fairly miserable, Sunday was a gorgeous spring day. Thanks to all for playing. Hopefully, if we can find future sponsors we'll be able to have tournaments here at GMU/Arlington in the future. As it stands right now, this might be the last due to a huge increase in charges for organizations without University sponsors. It is not a good time for chess in Virginia as nice playing sites are drying up in the bad economy.

Timothy Rogalski - Jon Evans
Elephant Gambit

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 d5 (one of the silliest openings)
3 exd5 e4 4 Qe2 Nf6 5 Nc3 Bf5 6 Nh4 Bg4
7 f3 Bh5 8 Nxe4 Kd7 9 g3 Nxe4 10 Bh3 +
Kd6 11 Nf5 + Kc5 12 a4 c6 13 Qe3 + 1-0

Mark Young - Daniel Pomerleano
Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5
Nc3 g6 6 Bc4 Bg7 7 Be3 Qa5 8 0-0 0-0 9 Bb3
d6 10 h3 Qh5 11 Qd2 Bd7 12 Nde2 Rac8 13
Ng3 Qa5 14 Bh6 Rfe8 15 Bxg7 Kxg7 16 f4
Qc5 + 17 Kh2 b5 18 Rad1 a5 19 a4 bxa4 20
Nxa4 Qb5 21 Nc3 Qc5 22 Na4 Qb5 23 Nc3
Qb6 24 e5 dxe5 25 fxe5 Nxe5 26 Qg5 Rc5
27 Nd5 Nxd5 28 Rxd5 Rxd5 29 Bxd5 Qd6
30 c4 f6 31 Qf4 Rb8 32 Ne4 Qa6 33 Nc5 Qd6
34 Ne4 Qa6 35 Nc5 Qa7 36 Ne4 Qd4 37 Nxf6
Qxf4 + 0-1



67th Annual...

Virginia Closed
State Championship
August 29-31, 2003

Virginia Commonwealth University
Student Commons Activity Bldg
Commonwealth A/B rooms on 2nd floor
907 Floyd Avenue (Corner of Floyd & Cherry)
Richmond, Virginia 23284

Attention! The dates given above are correct! Due to venue constraints, this year's tournament will run Friday thru Sunday, not the customary Saturday thru Monday! Open to Virginia residents, military stationed in Virginia and students at Virginia Colleges and Universities with valid student ID for Fall 2003 Semester. 5SS, 30/90, SD/1, (2-day option rds 1-2 G/75). \$2500 b/100 (r/e count 50%). In two sections: **Open**: \$600-300-200-150, Top Expert, A \$100 Trophy to 1st, Top Exp and A. Title of Virginia State Champion to overall winner. **Amateur** (open to Under 1800): \$425-225-150 Top C,D,U1200, Unr \$100 each Top Upset \$50. Trophy to 1st, Top D,C,U1200. Title of Virginia Amateur Champion to overall winner. **Both**: 3-day: Reg Fri 5:30pm-6:45pm, rds 7, 12:00-5:30, 12:15-5:45. 2-day: Reg ends Sat 10:45am, rds 11:00-2:45-5:30, 12:15-5:45. One 1/2 pt bye available, MUST commit to bye with entry, no byes after Rd 1 starts. Trophies to Top Senior, Top Woman, Top Junior (under 18) - Open section adds 1 pt to score. EF: 3-day \$45 by 8/21, \$55 at site; 2-day \$46 by 8/21, all \$55 site. Re-entry \$30, only available 3-day into 2-day after rd 1. Tiebreaks: Cumulative, MM, S. New Pairing Rules used. W, NS, FIDE. Free parking at VCU deck, diagonally across from building on weekends, but only to first 50-75 cars. No smoking, food or drink is permitted in VCU auditorium or classrooms. Hotel (several blocks away): Radisson Hotel, 301 West Franklin St, Richmond, VA 23220 (804-644-9871, toll-free reservations# 800-333-3333). \$70 + 12.5% tax, 2 dbl or 1 king, reserve by 7/29 to be assured of room and mention "chess tournament at VCU." <http://www.radisson.com/richmondva>.

Enter: Michael Atkins, PO Box 6139, Alexandria VA 22306. Make checks to "Virginia Chess" email matkins2@cox.net or browse <http://www.vachess.org/2003closed.htm> for latest info.

Annual VCF Business Meeting
Saturday 8/30 10:15-11:45 (bldg opens 10am)



Justin Burgess — Andrew Briscoe
2003 Millennium Chess Festival
Modern

Notes by Justin Burgess



1 e4 g6 2 d4 Bg7 3 Nf3 d6 4 Nc3 Nc6 (This move seems very strange for this opening.) 5 h3 e5 6 Be3 (I thought about playing 6 d5, but I wanted to play Bc4 eventually, especially since I won't need to play Be2 to block a Bg4 pin) 6...f5 (This seems a little too aggressive, and now Bc4 looks even better) 7 g3 (I doubt this was a very good move. I thought about playing something like 7 Bc4, but 7...f4 followed by 8...exd4 was scaring me) 7...Nf6 8 dxe5 Nxe5? (This was a crucial point in the game. I had played 8 dxe5 almost immediately, thinking that I could trade queens and keep black from castling. However, 8...Nxe4 seems much better than the text. In many lines Black can win a pawn, for example 9 Nxe4 fxe4 10 Nd2 Bxe5 11 Nxe4 Bxb2, although after 12 Rb1 and 13 Bc4 White seems to have more than enough for it.) 9 Nxe5 dxe5 10 Qxd8 + Kxd8 11 0-0-0 + Bd7 12 Bc4 (Trying to play Be6 at the right time; if now 12...fxe4, then 13 Bg5 Ke7 14 Nd5 + wins) 12...c6 (12...Kc8 is better) 13 Rd6 Kc7 14 Rhd1 Rhd8? (Black can still do fine with 14...Rh8) 14 Bg5 Nxe4? (I was expecting 14...Be8 15 Bxf6 Rxd6 16 Bxg7 Rxd1 + 17 Kxd1, with two pieces for the rook. I preferred White's position because all my pieces are active, whereas Black's rook and bishop are on the back rank. The other move black can try is 14...b5. After the text move I go up the double exchange.) 15 Bxd8 + Rxd8 16 Nxe4 fxe4 17 Be6! Bh6 + 18 Kb1 Bxe6 19 Rxd8 Bxh3 20 Re8 (20 Rh8 is slightly better) 20...Bg4 21 Rh1 Bd7 22 Rxe5 Bg7? 23 Re7 (And this wins another piece. Obviously if Black's dark-square bishop moves away I'll play 24 Rhxh7 and win the light-squared one instead.) 23 Bf6 24 Rf7 h5 25 Rxf6 Bf5 26 Rxf5 1-0

MCF "Grandmaster Dinner-Exhibition Match," March 29, 2003

One of the special treats at the Millennium Chess Festival (see full coverage in Virginia Chess #2003/2) is the Grandmaster Dinner-Exhibition Match. This event was videotaped and then a transcript was prepared from the videotape, which was provided to Virginia Chess by Tom Braunlich. The complete transcript contains a lot of commentary for each and every move, running some thirteen pages. We can't publish the whole thing, but what follows are excerpts from the grandmasters' most interesting comments. -ed

The MCF Grandmaster Dinner-Exhibition Match provides insight into the mind of a grandmaster. It is instructive to see the approaches to the game of the two players. This is the second such exhibition. We tried it last year in a game between GMs Alex Stripunsky and Michael Rohde. The players are in separate rooms. They each have two wallboards: one with the current position, one for analysis by the GM. A moderator maintains the current position boards, runs the clocks, and transmits moves by radio to the other room. There were about 170 spectators, who enjoyed a catered dinner from the Ramada Plaza, along with a cash bar for drinks! They were allowed to ask questions, and after the finish the two GMs came together for a lively "post-mortem."



Alex Shabalov - John Fedorowicz Sicilian

FED: If he plays 1 e4 I'm going to play some kind of Sicilian. Actually at the US Championship I prepared for a Sicilian and he went 1 d4, and I felt like an idiot already and I hadn't even played my first move. He's been playing d4 a lot lately.

1 e4

SHAB: We want this to be an exciting game, which just about forces me to play 1 e4!

1...c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Nc6 6 Bg5 e6 7 Qd2

FED: The point of Qd2 and 0-0-0 is that if Black isn't careful the d6 pawn can go. I remember when I first started playing chess, I thought, "Why do people play moves like a6?" and the next thing you know, this (d4) knight showed up here on d6 (moving through b5) and took all my pieces. So moves like a6 especially in the Sicilian are kind of important, they keep the knights out of your face and protect all the pawns....

7...a6 8 0-0-0 Bd7

SHAB: This move prepares ...b5, obviously, and then to push the knight away with ...b4. Bronstein used to say in the Sicilian there is a dynamic equilibrium where White keeps his knight on c3 and Black his knight on f6. As soon as the balance is broken somehow ... the side which can keep his knight in position is normally doing better. So the idea is to drive the c3 knight away somewhere. In a couple more moves I will have to do something about it! What I'm going to do right now is to defend my pawn on e4...

9 f3 Be7

SHAB: Now there is a threat to g5. For example, if Black gets a pawn to b4, after Ne2, Black has ...Nxe4. So White has to prepare for this one too. There are two ways to do this... actually

not two ways ... there is one! (laughs). If he attacks me (with ...h6), I don't have to think about it any more. I just play Be3 and then this pawn on h6 helps me in my attack with h4, g4, g5, etc. If he doesn't do this, as a prophylactic against ...Nxe4 I should defend the bishop, with 10 h4. I think that his idea is to play ...h5, this way he slows me down on the kingside, though on the other hand it makes it difficult for him to castle short. It's a strategy, you give

Scholastic's Founding Father Back On Track

Mike Cornell, one of the 'founding fathers' of Virginia's scholastic chess activity, the long-time VCU Scholastic Chairman, and organizer of the Dominion Scholastic Chess League, had brain surgery at MCV for a benign tumor on April 7. We are pleased to report that surgery went extremely well and Mike was talking, walking and remembering chess events better than his visitor! He was discharged April 10.

However, just a few short weeks after going home, he started having abdominal pains and was diagnosed with needing to have his gallbladder and a bile duct stone removed. Mike was readmitted to MCV and had this surgery done as a laparoscopic procedure. He went home, again, on May 7 and he is now recuperating nicely under the care of his two children, Nolan (age 5) & Gavin (3) and his wife, Helen. Mike's stamina and spirits are improving. Assuming the doctor gives him the go-ahead, it is hoped that he will be back at his school position during the week of May 19. VCF members who wish to contact Mike and/or send their regards will be able to reach him at his work email at

mcornell@hs.spotsylvania.k12.va.us

or write directly to:

Mike Cornell, 12010 Grantwood Dr,
Fredericksburg VA 22407-6259.



some and you gain some. That's how it works. Whose strategy is going to be better in the end?

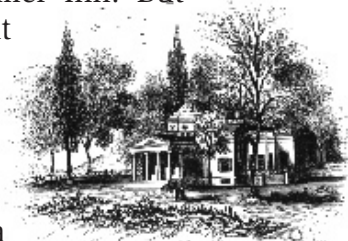
FED: And now I think he'll play 10 h4. The other move here is 10 g4, both with the idea to start storming on the kingside, to try and push the knight away. [Question from the audience: "Do you plan to castle over there?"] It depends. Usually what happens is Black gets stuff rolling fast (on the queenside), and in this line probably I wouldn't castle anytime soon, maybe around move 20 if I need to get my rook out or if my king gets in trouble in the center. But usually in this kind of thing the king hangs out in the center, which makes the Najdorf people insult the Rauzer people less, since in the Najdorf Black never castles... Also, I'm not going to play ...b5 soon either. I'm going to play ...Qc7 so that if he ever captures on c6 I can take back with the b—pawn. Then I have a strong center and possible business going on the b—file. Instead, I'm going to go ...Ne5 and only then ...b5. This is typical. It isn't as sharp as a Najdorf, but it is a pretty complicated opening. White wants to knock Black off the board but Black doesn't mind that because when you play the Sicilian you're trying to win also...

10 h4 h6 11 Be3 h5 12 Kb1 Qc7

SHAB: ...Here is the moment where I need a plan. Now is a good moment for me to slow down and think about it. 13 Nb3 is interesting, with idea to prevent 0-0-0, but let's say Nb3 he plays ...b5, what am I doing next? I need a good plan. [Question from the audience about 13 Rg1] To prepare g4. But it's not a threat right away because he can just take and take on h4 (with the rook).... But the problem with g4 anyway is that he takes (...hxg4, hxg4) and he gets this great square on e5, and if g4—g5 he can just go ...Nh5 and ...g6 and his king is very safe in the center. So I must be careful here. This is one of those moments where White should really know what he is doing!

Charlottesville Open To Change Site!

Sad news for VCF members—the Best Western in Charlottesville, which has hosted the Charlottesville Open and the Virginia Closed for several years, is gone. Fortunately, Mark Johnson found a nice replacement, the Best Western Cavalier Inn. But the net result is that site costs have increased, and entry fees must rise to cover them.



This has been a difficult year. The VCF has experienced organizational problems with several events. Federation officers are working hard to find new venues at reasonable costs, but it will be difficult to find arrangements as good as we've enjoyed in the past. We will do everything possible to keep costs down, and hope you will continue to support and enjoy our events.

13th Annual...

Charlottesville Open
July 12-13, 2003
Best Western Cavalier Inn
105 North Emmet Street
Charlottesville, VA, 22905

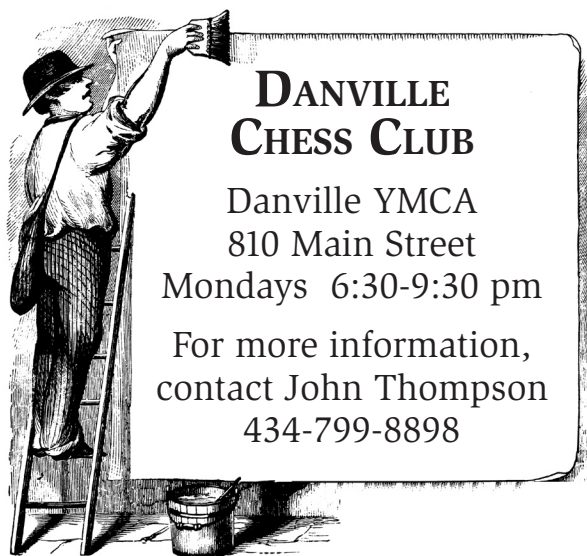
5—SS, G/90. \$\$1500 (top 3 G, class prizes b/50): \$400-250-150 X, A, B, C each \$125, D \$100, U1200 & Unr each \$50. EF \$40 if r'cvd by 7/7, else \$50. One °pt bye available. Reg 11-11:45, rds 12-3:15-7:30, 9:45—1:30, W, NS, NC. Hotel \$79 (1-4 in room), 434-296-8111. Enter: Ernest Schlich, 1370 South Braden Crescent, Norfolk, VA 23502. Make checks payable to VCF. For more info browse www.vachess.org or call 757-853-5296.

15 Grand Prix Points



I should switch to plan with f3—f4 probably. I don't have g4, so the only plan that comes to mind is to play f4, and (since playing f4 would weaken e4) probably Bd3 to cover e4 in case he plays ...b7—b5—b4. ... I don't really know where to put this bishop. I'd be happy to get rid of it, so ...Ne5 to trade the bishop is no problem. I want to continue my development and see what he is going to do. I see no direct moves here. I don't see a clear plan for White... I don't .. it's a nice setup for Black. But I know general principles. I must develop my pieces. So that's what I'm going to do. I'll play Bd3, then Re1, and then all of the sudden I'm ready to push f4 and maybe e5 or f5. (The square) g4 is weakened then, but if ...Ng4 I can play Bg1.

FED: So, one thing I like about this position for Black is that his pawn storm stuff (with g2—g4) is stopped, as I can just take it. And, (even if he got it in somehow), I could still take it and when he retakes I have a strong e5 square for the knight. Everything is under control so far, but with this guy it could get weird fast! This position is one I've written about, and I think that Black is in decent shape. No e5 breaks. White finds it difficult for f4—f5. If f4 is played, g4 can be used for the knight. ...



13 Bd3 Ne5 14.Rhe1

FED: Okay. Now I have to see if he can go f3—f4 or not. One thing about this guy is that he likes sacrificing stuff. So I have to keep an eye on f4 and e5 and if he can blast open the center.

SHAB: The main problem for Black in this line is he doesn't really know where his king belongs. He's ready for all my pushes, but if he plays ...Nc4 now, 15 Bxc4 Qxc4 — he could do that, but then I play f4, or maybe Bg5 first. So now it's time for him to think about what to do. He could play ...b5. He could actually ...0—0, since my rook moved away a little bit. [Question about ...Nxd3] The point of Ne5 was not to take the bishop. That just strengthens my center, and also gives me Rc1. Actually I expect ...b5 now. It's logical. He still could castle long maybe. (His ideal plan) would be to push my knight away and then be ready for ...d5.

14...b5

FED: Now if 15 f4 Ng4 16 e5 I have to be worried about pins being set up if I take on e5 and he follows with a Bf4. I might instead be able to play Nxe3 first and then put the other N on g4. The main thing here is to keep the e5 break under control.

SHAB: The plans are getting clearer now. There are three ways to proceed here I see. First is direct f4. Second is Bg5 first, then f4. Third way is like Petrosian for example would do, to prepare in advance to protect the b2 pawn (Qf2, allowing Bc1, and also perhaps harrasing him with Qg3). Since if he plays ...Nc4 and ...bxc4 I need my bishop on c1, that pretty much eliminates Bg5 as the move.

15 f4

FED: Let's see ...b4 16 Nce2. Now I see b4 is a very good idea. I like this! A nice thing about this is that even if e4—e5 were to happen I



would now have this Nd5 thing in the center. I just want to make sure. If 15...b4 16 fxe5 I take 16...bxc3 hitting his queen. That's good for Black. So, I'm going to go ...b4 and we'll pray!

15...b4 16 Nce2 Nc4

FED: 17 Qxb4 loses a piece to ...Nxe3. 17 Qc1 just doesn't feel right. If 17 Bxc4 Qxc4 he might have to think about Qd3 since I'm getting pressure on his e—pawn. Now I was wondering here if 17 Bxc4 Nxe4...!? But it's too... you know, its good to look as fantasy stuff but usually you should just talk yourself out of it, because its going to backfire and then you're going to feel like an idiot.

SHAB: So if I take 17 Bc4 Qc4 the pawn is hanging. I can play 18 e5!? Right? 18...Ne4 19 Qd3 Qd3 20 cxd3 Nc5 hmmm... Nah. Okay, if I take this e4 square away from him with 18 Ng3, actually this is interesting. He can play 18...e5 himself? No, he cannot— Nf5. So e4-e5 is a threat now. Then if (skipping a move for Black) 19 e5 de 20 fe5 Nd5... maybe something like this, 21 Ndf5, might be coming. Interesting.

17 Bxc4 Qxc4 18 Ng3

SHAB: So if 18...Ng4 I can just play 19 Nf3 and defend h4, and again he has the two bishops but my compensation is my lead in development and his king isn't safe. And I think around here I will be really threatening e4—e5. Maybe not right away, [but] t's actually not so simple for him to proceed. Now is a critical moment. One possible plan for me is Nb3 and Bd4 to strengthen the push e5!? And if then ...a5...a4 my knight can come back to c1.



FED: I'm thinking maybe Ng4 here. It's a nice square, threatens to take the bishop pair, gets out of the way of things, and maybe I could snatch his pawn on h4. But then 18 Nf3 might re—threaten e5. The knight then looks good on g4, but it isn't doing much and may only look nice. So you know what, I think what I'm going to do here is play 17...Rb8 so that when he goes 18 e5 and my knight comes to d5 it threatens ...Nc3 stuff. That will at least distract him a bit. And the Rb8 is a better way to protect this one (pawn on b4). So I'm going for ...Rb8!— See, that's how you talk yourself into a move!

18...Rb8 19 Ka1

FED: So we persuaded him to move his king again. I think you'd have to say Rb8 for Ka1 is a good deal!

19...0-0

SHAB: Oooh! Wow. Actually White can play e5 and then take on h5. Am I going to do this? Hmmm... It's a tough call. In blitz I wouldn't think a second, I'd play e5. I'm also thinking about Nf3, then Bd4, but the problem then is ...Rc8; that's when I would need my king on b1. I guess that actually leaves me without a choice. e5!

20 e5 Nd5 21 exd6 Bxd6 22 Ndf5

FED: Okay, let's see how to deal with this. One thing is on ...exf5 23 Qxd5 I can't defend all my bishops. I'm leaning towards ...Bc7. He might be looking to do some Nxe7 followed by Nxe5 + thing. 22...Bc5 might be a possibility too, but that might help him with a Ne4 move later. If 22...Bc7 I'm threatening to take on f5, followed by ...Be6. But one



thing that bothers me about it is I'm getting further away from the kingside.

22...Bc7 23 Nxh5 exf5 24 Qxd5 Qxd5 25 Rxd5 Be6 26 Rc5

SHAB: He's a pawn down. 26...Bb6 right away is nothing, I can just go 27 Re5. Maybe he needs to attack this pawn on h4 with 26...Bd8, since then if 27 g3 g6 I'm losing my knight. If 27 Bd4 he can go back with ...Bb6, which is trouble. Same thing if 27 Bf2 (to defend the h—pawn) 27...Bb6. I have to be careful. I've gotta come up with something pretty good. ... Maybe 27 Rh1?

FED: Okay, his knight has started to look weird out on h5, so maybe I can bother him before the knight gets back into play. Even when the knight gets back to g3 it's not really fully back in the action. I could try Bd8 to try to soften him up on this pawn (h4). Main ideas here: First, maybe to try to get play on the c—file. But if I play Rfc8, then can he play Bd4? I wouldn't be able to go ...g6 because Nf6+ is too annoying. I think I have to prevent that, possibly with ...Bb6. But I'd rather keep these bishops on a little longer so that I could get some more counterplay. If 26...Bb6 27 Rc6 is what I'm trying to figure out. 27...Bxe3 28 Rxe3 Rfd8 maybe he has to go 29 b3 and am I getting enough counterplay?

On 26...Rfc8 he has 27 Bd4 and do I want to get involved in that stuff? ... maybe then 27...Bd8? It starts to bother c2, but what's the story down here (on g7) ? Both kings are in a messy situation there. But I think I might go for that one, because I don't see the counterplay in the other line where after b2—b3 his king is too safe.

26...Rfc8

SHAB: Oooh. Good. We got a little break here. I was worried about ...Bd8. Now he's inviting 27 Bd4. I don't see any reason not to! He must have something in mind, but I don't see it.

27 Bd4 Bd8 28.Rxc8 Rxc8 29 Nxg7 Rxc2 30 Kb1 Rd2 31 Nxe6 fxe6 32 Be5

FED: Okay. I have time to take pawns. Can I just take this one (Bxh4), or would he get dangerous business back here (on the h—file)? Or if 32...Rxc2 33 h5!? — I might be able to round that pawn up; (but) I'm not sure if I want this pawn to live that long. I'm leaning toward 32...Bxh4, since on 33 Rh1 I don't think he's doing anything big to my king. My king is secure and I'm still bothering the g2 pawn.

32...Bxh4 33 Rh1 Bg3 34 Rh8 + Kf7 35 Rh7 + Ke8 36 Ra7

FED: It seems to me that ...Rxc2 is reasonable. There's no funny pin stuff (with 37 Rg7) because of ...Rg1+ and ...Bf2 — we have to make sure of that.

SHAB: (Reconsidering) Actually that wasn't smart, if I want to make a draw I could play Rh6: 36 Rh6 Kd7 37 Rh7+ Kc6 38 Re7

36...Rxc2 37 Rxa6

FED: Now, I have to watch it here. He's taking on e6 check, I can't allow that. He may come over here to b6 and hit b4, but I always have ...Be1 if I have to. It feels a little bit passive, but I think I have to go for Kd7.

SHAB: Actually I like my position again! Now I see that I can play Rb6, get this pawn (b4) and also defend f4. So when I play 38 Rb6 his only move is ...Be1 but that is passive.

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**37...Kd7**

FED: Now I'm expecting 38 Rd6 + Ke7 39 Rb6 and he's starting to get some threats.

SHAB: Okay (playing quickly) Rb6.

38.Rb6?

SHAB: (5 seconds later) Ahhh. That's a mistake again! (Why?) I have to play this one first – 38 Rd6 + Ke7 — now 39 Rb6 and on 39...Be1 I have 40 Bd6 + and take on b4. Bing!

38...Be1 39 Kc1

SHAB: I want to play Kd1 and knock the bishop away. If he plays 39...Bd2 40 Kd1 he has to defend against Rd6 + If he plays 39...Rg1 he allows my king over (Kc2) and that would be a real problem for him.

FED: He wants to bother the bishop. Okay, 39...Re2 with the idea of ...Re4 keeping an eye on everybody may be reasonable. I go for that!

39...Re2

FED: I thought I was okay, then I wasn't so sure, now— I don't know. After a while he just became better. It's hard to say how much better, but if my rook gets to e4 it seems like everybody's protected and I can start thinking about ...Bg3 ideas, so he has to be careful.

SHAB: I see what he's up to. He wants to play 40...Re4 and then ...Bg3. Okay, I'll have to give him a check and exchange rooks.

40 Kd1 Re4 41 Rd6 +

FED: Okay, what's his trick? After ...Ke7 42 Rd4 doesn't seem to do anything; I can just take and then my king comes to the queenside, because if he attacks b4 I can always attack f4. So that seems to keep the balance.

41...Ke7 42 Rd4

and a draw offer.

½-½



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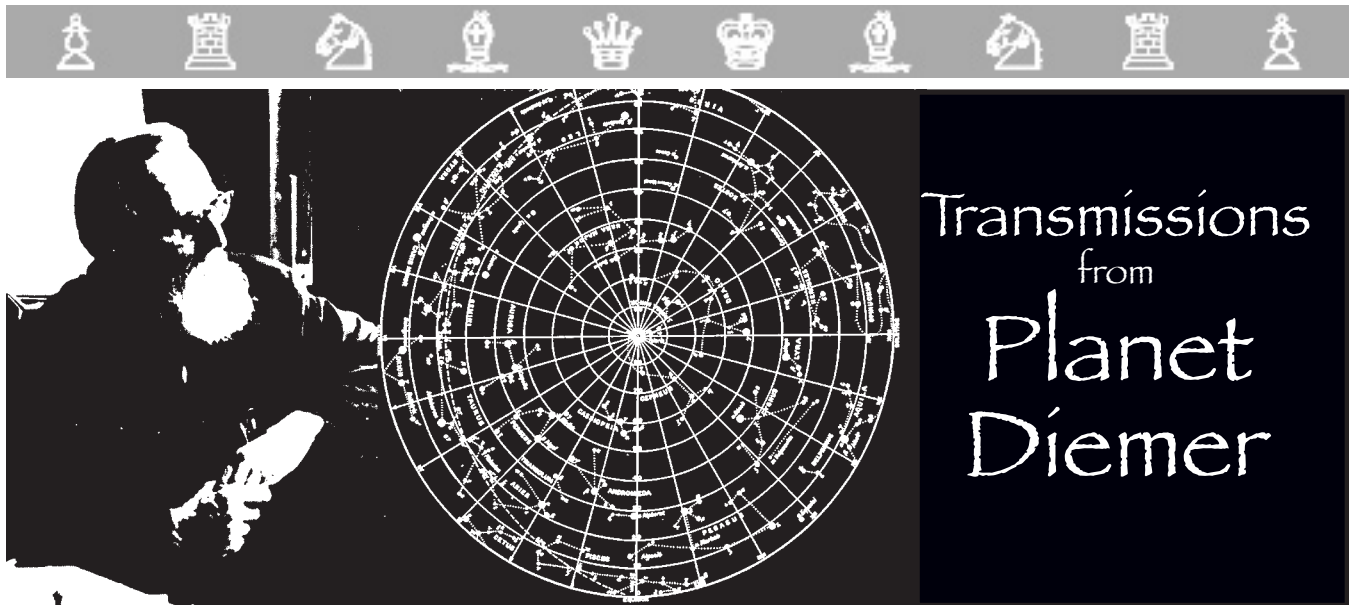
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Time flies! Can it really have been four years already since I first wrote about this opening? ("What's the Deal With the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit?," *Virginia Chess* #1999/3) Around that time I subjected the BDG to extensive field testing and my evaluation has not changed appreciably from what I summarized in that first article: "a useful situational weapon - perhaps too speculative as the centerpiece of one's repertoire, but White does get an active, attacking game and definite practical compensation."

The question is, how "situational" do you want to be? The hard core Blackmar-Diemer Gemeinde has ways of transposing practically any opening into a BDG hybrid. Personally, I was ready to move on perhaps a year ago. Yet in April when I traveled to the Foxwoods Casino & Resort (which is itself an strange and unfamiliar world-but more on that another time) for their big annual chess tournament, two of my three White games found me in orbit here around Planet Diemer. For now, at least, it seems I'm playing the BDG more than... well, than when I was playing it.

Then as now, you win some and you lose some. Let's see how:

**Macon Shibut-Max Enkin,
2003 Foxwoods Open**

Notes by Macon Shibut

1 e4 Nf6 2 Nc3

At the Millennium Festival a couple weeks earlier I'd played 2 d3 in this position and my opponent replied 2...h6?! I then went 3 Nc3 with the thought that if 3...d5 I could play 4 d4!—a BDG with a tempo less, but the tempo is ...h6, which could readily become a target for the stock sacrifice Bxh6

2...d5 3 d4 dxe4 4 f3 e3

This is the Langeheinecke Defense, a popular choice by defenders who find themselves in the BDG via transposition from a Caro Kann (1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 f3 or 4 Bc4 Nf6 5 f3), Center Counter (1 e4 d5 2 d4 dxe4 3 Nc3) or, as here, Alekhine's Defense. My sense is that players who encounter the gambit straight-on via the traditional 1 d4 d5 2 e4 dxe4 3 Nc3 move order are more inclined to take the gambit pawn rather than give it back. With Black's next three moves - Bf5, c6 & e6 -



we reach in fact a position that is structurally a Caro Kann with the one difference that White's pawn is at f3 instead of f2. In the subsequent play Black will try to demonstrate that this is a silly move, weakening the dark squares and depriving White's king knight of its most natural square. White, on the other hand, will argue that f3 can be a useful foundation for a kingside pawn assault with g4, h4 etc.

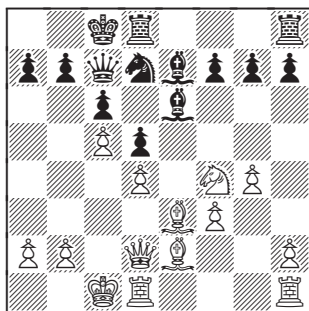
5 Bxe3 Bf5 6 Bc4 c6 7 Nge2 e6 8 Nf4 Bd6

The correct development. Against other plausible moves, 8...Nbd7 for instance, White might go 9 g4 Bg6 10 h4 threatening h5, which is trouble for Black because if 10...h6 11 Nxg6 etc. After the text Black can always eliminate Nf4 if necessary.

For some reason, more than one of my opponents have tried 8...Nd5 in this or similar position, a move that I cannot understand at all. Attentive *Virginia Chess* readers may be already tired of the game Shibut-Polyakin, 2000 Atlantic Open; it seems I find some excuse to drag out back out every time I write about this opening. But I feel so smug and clever about White's 16th move: 9 Ncxd5 exd5 10 Be2 Bd6 11 Qd2 Nd7 12 g4 Be6 (12...Bg6 13 h4) 13 0-0-0 Qc7 14 c4 0-0-0 (14...dxc4 15 Nxe6 fxe6 16 Bxc4) 15 c5 Be7

(diagram)

16 Ng6!! hxg6
17 Bf4 Ne5 18 Bxe5
Qd7 19 Qa5 with a
decisive attack.



9 Qd2 h6

He hopes to avoid ...Bxf4 altogether. Since he does not succeed in this, however, the text comes to look like a waste of time and a kingside weakening.

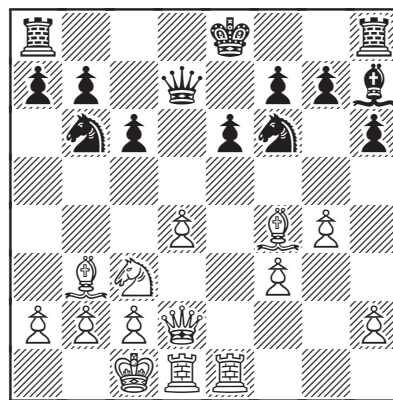
10 0-0-0 Nbd7 11 g4 Nb6

If 11...Bh7 Black has to reckon with various dangerous possibilities: 12 h4 ♖g5-g6; 12 Rhe1 eyeing a sacrifice on e6; or even the immediate 12 Bxe6!? fxe6 13 Nxe6 Qe7 14 Rhe1

12 Bb3 Bh7 13 Rhe1 Bxf4

"The threat is stronger than the execution." Black can't stand the pressure - mostly psychological - of the potential sacrifices, eg 13...Qc7 14 Bxe6!? so he surrenders the bishop pair for nothing more than some temporary simplification.

14 Bxf4 Qd7



White's pieces are ideally placed but there is no advantageous breakthrough at hand. In particular, the immediate d5 doesn't do anything besides further simplify the game: 15 d5 cxd5 16 Nxd5 Nfxd5 17 Bxd5 Nxd5 18 Qxd5 Qxd5 19 Rxd5 Rc8 etc.

15 Bg3!

But this maintains a positional bind. If Black castles kingside, of course there a readymade attack with h4 and g5. Now queenside castling is ruled out as well since there would follow Qf4, exploiting to the utmost the absence of Black's dark square bishop.

15...Nbd5 16 Ne4

This natural move was actually not an easy decision. Black has more knights than good squares to put them on, so all in all I would



prefer not to trade a pair. Also, it's not certain whether my center is strengthened by the transfer of the pawn from f3 to e4 or if it merely becomes a target for Bh7.

The alternative was 16 Na4 b6 17 c4. In the end I distrusted this because knight stands poorly, plus opening the b1-h7 diagonal this way made me nervous. If my king were on a1 instead of c1 it would be a different story.

16...Nxe4 17 fxe4 Nf6 18 Qf4 0-0

The safest course at this point, since White's d5 pawn break was about to happen.

19 h4 a5 20 a3 a4 21 Ba2 b5 22 Qf3

"Dominating" the knight in preparation for g5

22...b4 23 g5 Ne8 24 gxh6 g6

A very sad move to make! However, stuff like 24...b3 is too unconvincing as yet. Black tries to keep the kingside as closed for a little longer, hoping he can somehow use the time to stir up real play against White's king.

25 axb4 Qe7

It's very convenient for White that his bishop controls b8, inhibiting Black's rooks from joining the attack.

26 d5!

White's rooks, on the other hand, a primed for action in the center.

26...exd5

Necessary, lest dxe6 etc extend the range of Ba2 all the way to Black's jugular.

27 exd5 Qxb4 28 dxc6 a3

Clearing both the file of my rook and the diagonal of my bishop, and played with the concluding variation fully worked out:

29 bxa3 Rxa3 30 Bxf7 +! Rxf7 31 Rxe8 + 1-0

**Macon Shibut-Igor Foygel,
2003 Foxwoods Open**

Notes by Macon Shibut

1 e4 g6 2 d4 Bg7 3 Nc3 c6 4 Be3 Qb6

This cannot be a good move. The queen is misplaced under the gaze of White's bishop, with the effect that Black's potential in the center is restricted. Already both ...e5 and ...d5 are impossible.

5 a3

Indirectly protecting b2 (5...Qxb2? 6 Na4) and leaving Black with his compromised position. 5 Rb1 was a straightforward alternative but I didn't want to rule out queenside castling.

5...d6 6 Bc4 Nf6 7 f3 d5!?

Black decides to mix things up since normal play with 0-0 gives White the standard attack with Qd2, 0-0-0, h4 etc while Black's counterplay on the queenside would be inhibited by his poor Qb6.

Now I found myself at a decision point. Of course the first order of business was to calculate the forcing line, 8 exd5 cxd5 9 Bxd5 (not 9 Nxd5? Nxd5 10 Bxd5 Qa5+) 9...Qxb2 10 Nge2. Here Black can't take the bishop: 10...Nxd5? 11 Nxd5 Na6 12 Nec3 and the queen is in terrible danger. So probably he ought to simply retreat her while he has the chance, 10...Qb6, and then 11 Bb3. In the resulting position White has a pronounced lead in development. Black has no organic weaknesses, however, and it's possible he'll manage to complete his mobilization and eventually exploit White's slightly ragged structure ("hanging" pawns; three pawn islands; the odd move f3). Overall I think White is slightly better but I don't regret taking the alternate path, which brings the game into BDG alignment...



**8 Bb3!? dxe4 9 Qd2**

Having said “A” White must of course go ahead with “B”, the pawn sacrifice. 9 fxe4 Ng4 would favor Black.

9...exf3 10 Nxf3

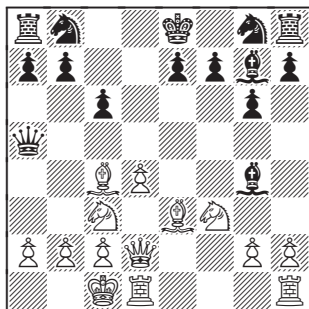
So here we are. My decision at move 8 was partly psychological. Obviously Black must have calculated the tactical consequences of 8 exd5 in advance, whereas pulling the game in this other direction might force him to reorient. Moreover, I have some prior experience with this structure-most of it happy. I’ll provide a diagram later to help the reader return to this point; for now, bear with me through a couple more digressions...

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Bc4 Nf6 5 f3 e3 (see the comments from the previous game, Shibut-Enkin) 6 Bxe3 g6 7 Qd2 Bg7 8 0-0-0 0-0 9 Bh6 b5 10 Bb3 a5 11 a4 b4 12 Ne4 Nd5 13 h4 Qc7 14 Ne2 Ba6 15 Bxg7 Kxg7 16 h5! Bxe2 17 Bxd5! cxd5 18 hxg6 fxg6 19 Qh6+ Kf7 20 Ng5+ Ke8 21 Qxf8+! Kxf8 22 Ne6+ Kg8 23 Nxc7 Ra7 24 Rd2 and White won in Shibut-Nichols, 1998 Virginia Closed.

1 e4 g6 2 d4 Bg7 3 Nc3 c6 4 Be3 d5 5 Qd2 Qa5!? 6 0-0-0 dxe4 7 Bc4 Bg4 8 f3 exf3 9 Nxf3

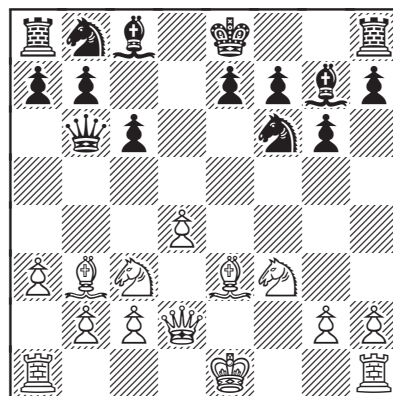
(diagram)

9...Bxf3?! 10 gxf3 Nf6 11 Rde1 0-0 12 Bh6 Nbd7 13 Rhg1 Qb4 14 Bb3 Rad8 15 a3 Bxh6 16 Qxh6 Qxd4 17 Ne2! (The knight goes to f4 and a decisive sacrifice on



g6 can hardly be averted.) 17...Qc5 (others are no better, eg 17...Qd6 18 Nf4 Ne5 19 Rxe5! Qxe5 20 Nxg6! wins; or 17...Qb6 18 Nf4 Ne5 19 Rg5 Nxf3 20 Nxg6 Nxg5 21 Nxe7+ Kh8 22 Qxf6 mate) 18 Nf4 Ne5 19 Rg5 Nxf3 (if 19...Nfd7 20 Nh5!) 20 Rxc5 Nxe1 21 Nxg6! and 1-0 shortly, Shibut-Flores, 1998 Virginia Open.

But now back to the present...



Black to Play

10...0-0 11 0-0-0 Bg4 12 Rhf1 Nbd7 13 Bh6?

A positional blunder from which I never recover. The correct plan was 13 h3 Bxf3 14 Rxf3 Δ Rdf1 and g4-g5 with very good play, or at least it seems so to me. It’s not so much that White’s attack is irresistible-for it isn’t-but it can be pursued at a comfortable pace since Black has no active counterplay. In this connection, we see again how bad his queen is on b6, whereas after the hackneyed text move Black is able to rectify precisely this defect in his game.

13...c5! 14 Bxg7 Kxg7 15 d5

Otherwise the pawns disappear from the center, Black’s rooks quickly occupy the c- and d-files, and White would have no compensation whatsoever for the sacrificed pawn. By keeping the center somewhat closed I create at least a chance to mass force on the kingside.

15...a6 16 Rde1 Bxf3 17 Rxf3 Qd6 18 Rh3 h5 19 Qg5 b5!

Having measured my attack precisely, Foygel knows when he must defend and when he can afford to press his own initiative.

20 g4 c4 21 Ba2

Forlorn, but the piece sacrifice would be a dry well: 21 gxh5 cxb3 22 hxg6 (also no good is 22 Re6 fxe6 23 Qxg6+ Kh8, or 23 Rg3 Ne5) 22...Rh8 White has no follow-up.



21...Rh8 22 gxh5 Rxh5 23 Rxh5 Nxb5
24 Qxe7

So I recover the pawn, but at a terrible positional price (Ba2).

24...Qf4 + 25 Kb1 Nhf6

One of the threads I'd been clinging to was the possibility 25...Ndf6-threatening Re8-26 d6! when 26...Re8? runs into 27 Qxe8! Nxe8 28 d7. The text likewise threatens Re8 but with a knight securely blockading the d-pawn.

26 Qb4 Nb6 27 Rd1

In a bad position there are only bad choices. The text hangs a pawn, but 27 d6 Rd8 28 Rd1 Nbd5 was hopeless as well.

27...Nbxh5! 28 Nxd5 Nxd5 29 Qe1 Nf6
30 Qh1 Ne4 31 Ka1

White is reduced to the plan c3 and Bb1

31...Re8 32 Rf1

Not yet 32 c3 since with the removal of my pin on the long diagonal ...Nf2 was threatened.

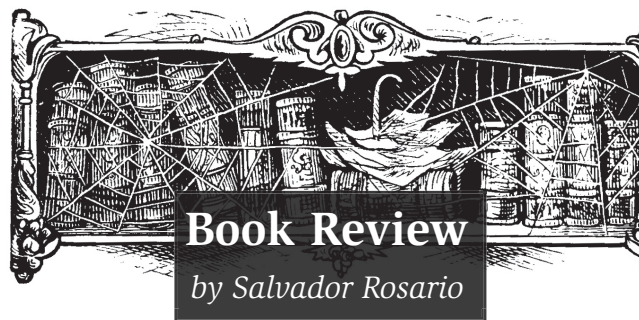
32...Qe5 33 Qf3

Now 33 c3 Nxc3! 34 bxc3 Qxc3 + 35 Kb1 Re2, which I should have played to end the misery.

33...Re7 34 Re1 Qd4 35 c3 Nxc3! 36 Rf1

36 Rxe7 Qg1 + mates

36...Na4 37 Qg2 c3 38 Bxf7 cxb2 + 39 Ka2
Rxf7 40 Rxf7 + Kxf7 0-1



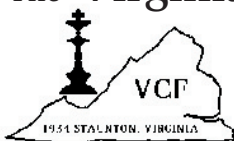
Kasparov against the World: The Story of the Greatest Online Challenge

Published by Kasparov Chess Online. 202 pages, list \$24.95

As I read the latest Kasparov offering, I was reminded of the movie classic *Animal House*. There's a particular favorite scene where a fraternity pledge, played by Kevin Bacon, must "assume the position" by squatting over. When he does, he is repeatedly paddled by Nedermeyer and must answer each stroke with "Thank you, Sir! May I have another!"

This book is painful to go through. I am sorry, but \$24.95 is an outrageous price for 202 pages about a single game. In addition — who cares what distractions Kasparov faced while playing this game? With little in the way of variations (but plenty of boring voting statistics) *Kasparov Against the World* contributes little to any chess library. Overpriced schlock.

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