

# VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the  
Virginia Chess Federation

2004 - #1

- ♔ Virginia Kids Win at Junior Orange Bowl
- ♔ Zofchak Memorial
- ♔ Kasparov's *My Great Predecessors* -  
Part II reviewed
- ♔ Readers' Games & Analysis



MILLENNIUM  
**CHESS**  
FESTIVAL

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA

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# VIRGINIA CHESS

## Newsletter

**2004 - Issue #1**

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## 14th **DAVID ZOFCHAK MEMORIAL**

*by Ernie Schlich*

**O**N A BEAUTIFUL FALL WEEKEND just before Thanksgiving, 30 players attended this annual tournament at the Virginia Beach campus of Tidewater Community College. Surprisingly, no experts or masters entered this year, which allowed the A and B players a good shot at top place prizes in the major fall tournament in our area..

Going into the final round, Otto Eason and Ed Lupienski led the field with  $3\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2}$ . They played to a fighting draw and thus ended up in a 4-way tie for the 1<sup>st</sup>. Winning their last games to join them at 4-1 were Errol Singh (undefeated but with  $\frac{1}{2}$ -pt byes in the first two rounds!) and Andrew Briscoe, one of our rapidly improving youngsters. Other prize winners were: Tobin Logan (top class B); Ted Rust (C); Ryan Rust (D); Mike and Michael E Krain (tied for top U1200); and Daniel Burks (unrated). Congratulations to those two father-&-son teams who won the C, D, and E prizes! It's great to see families playing chess.

Some of our visitors during the weekend could have made things more difficult for the winners had they entered. State champion Daniel Miller, former champions Errol Liebowitz & Rodney Flores, and expert Cornelius Vick all stopped by to watch the action and play some casual chess.

The Zofchak Memorial was established in 1989 to remember David Zofchak, a director and organizer in Hampton Roads in the early and mid 1980s.

# MILLENNIUM CHESS FESTIVAL

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## VIRGINIA BEACH, VA

APRIL	2	0	0	4
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*“One of the finest tournaments in America.”*

— GM Alex Stripunsky

Come help make the the 5th Millennium Chess Festival the best ever! Last year we had 276 players, and we’re hoping for over 300 this time. Our great schedule slot on the the weekend prior to the mammoth Foxwoods Open makes it likely that MCF5 will continue the tradition of attracting a strong field of titled players. (Last year we had 10 GMs among the many masters in the Open section.) The later date might even allow some swimming on the beach!

MCF5 will usher in three significant changes over previous years: (1) the **prizes have been increased** by over \$2500, to a total prize fund of \$18,000; (2) the **Open section prize distribution has been “widened”** to benefit players who tie for less than first place; (3) in response to numerous requests, we have added a separate **Under-1800 section**. Thus there will be four class sections instead of three — and we’ve lowered the “based on” number for full prize allocation in each.

We are still working out some details, such as which grandmasters will participate in the popular GM Exhibition Dinner Game the Exhibition GMs this year. Keep an eye on our web sitefor the latest news:

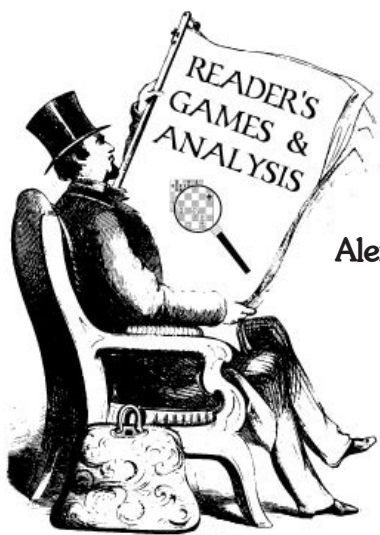
[www.geocities.com/millenniumchessfestival](http://www.geocities.com/millenniumchessfestival)

April 2-4, 2004  
Ramada Plaza Resort Oceanfront  
5700 Atlantic Avenue  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

**\$\$18,000 Prize Fund** – Open section prizes guaranteed, class sections each based on 55 players with 50% guaranteed.

5-SS, G/2. Five Sections: **OPEN:** \$2500-1200-800-600-400-300-200, U2400/Unr \$500-200, U2200 \$500-200, Upset Prize \$150. **UNDER 2000:** \$1200-500-400-300-200-150. **UNDER 1800:** \$1200-500-400-300-200-150. **UNDER 1600:** \$1200-500-400-300-200-150. **UNDER 1300:** \$1000-500-400-300-200-150. PLUS: Raffle Prizes, open to all! EF: \$69 if by 3/11, \$89 at site, \$30 discount for Juniors under age 18. GMs and WGMs free EF and comp hotel rooms if all rounds completed (contact below for details), IMs free EF if all rounds completed. Checks & Visa/MC accepted at site. Adult unrateds must play Open or U2000, Junior unrateds play U1600 or higher. USCF and FIDE rated. Reg Friday 4/2, 4:30-6:30pm. Rds Fri 7, 9:30–2:30, 9:30–2:30. Two ½-pt byes available—must commit to rd 4 or 5 byes before rd 2. Hotel \$73 (poolview) or \$83 (oceanfront), mention event for these rates, 1-800-365-3032 ([www.ramadaplazavabeach.com](http://www.ramadaplazavabeach.com)). NS, NC, W, FIDE rated. **SPECIAL EVENTS:** Unique GM Exhibition Dinner Match! (two GMs play a game from separate rooms while commenting on their thoughts for the audiences; combined with a catered buffet-style dinner.) Blitz Tournament! **ENTER:** Ernie Schlich, 1370 S Braden Crescent, Norfolk, Virginia 23502. Questions? email [eschlich@aol.com](mailto:eschlich@aol.com) phone, 757-853-5296 or check the web site, [www.geocities.com/millenniumchessfestival](http://www.geocities.com/millenniumchessfestival)

120 Grand Prix points!



Alexander Betaneli - Andrew Johnson  
2003 Eastern Open  
French Defense

*Notes by Andrew Johnson*

(This is a game I played against Alexander Betaneli (USCF 2234) at the 2003 Eastern Open. Though it was drawn, it is quite an exciting struggle where the advantage passes rapidly from side to side.) **1 c4 e6 2 e4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 cxd5** (I remembered looking at this opening and I knew that I didn't have to take the d5 pawn back right away. I continued to develop my pieces.) **4...Nf6 5 Nc3** (But my 'book' knowledge is done now... By the way, players that spend all their time studying openings need to read Macon Shibut's *Chess Tips* article at <http://www.vachess.org>. It is excellent. I see so many players that do nothing but study openings. The problem with this approach is that you also have to play the middle game and sometimes even the ending. I think that if you want to be an expert, the best way to study chess is to play 'guess the move' with the games of strong players. Just guess your favorite player's moves and you'll get better.) **5...Be7 6 Bc4 Nbd7 7 Nf3 0-0 8 0-0 Nb6 9 Bb3** (9 Qb3 a5 10 a4; 9 d3 Nfxd5 10 Nxd5 Nxd5) **9...Nbx d5 10 d4 Re8** (10...c6 is also interesting and good enough.) **11 Ne5 c6 = 12 f4** (I didn't even consider this attacking plan as it seems to loosen up White's position quite a bit.) **12...Be6** (I thought 12...Be6 was forced because I could not allow White to play f5 without paying some price. I also felt I needed to shore up f7 somehow,

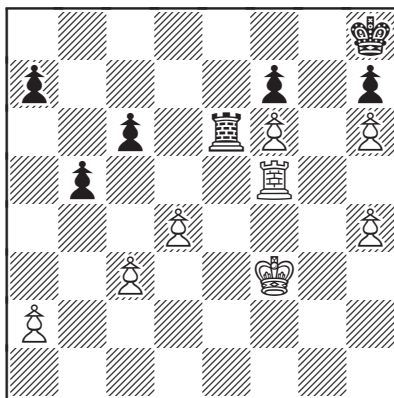


and of course to develop the light square bishop *somewhere*), but according to Fritz 12...Bd6 would have been slightly better. It's amazing to me how many resources a chess position can have. Working with Fritz can really open your eyes. On the other hand, it can close them as well. I have begun analyzing my games without computer aid before I turn on the almighty Fritz. I've discovered that Fritz, using its default settings, plays pawn endings badly. Also, it loves material and will sometimes evaluate positions incorrectly because it thinks that a pawn is worth more than it really is. I'm trying to learn how to use Fritz as a tool but not as a crutch. Occasionally I disagree with the program's evaluation of a position and I always learn something when I try to resolve which one of us is correct. *I believe it is very bad for your chess if you just let Fritz do your work for you.* In order to improve, you must try to work out the variations for yourself.) **13 f5 ∞ Nxc3 14 bxc3 Bd5 15 g4** (Is my bishop really good or really bad in the event of 15 c4 Be4? I have a feeling it's a little bit of both. I thought that this position was playable for me and evidently my opponent did too. If 15 Bg5 Qc7) **15...b5** (15...Bd6 16 Bf4) **16 Bc2?** (16 g5! Nd7 17 f6 gxf6 18 gxf6 Nxf6 19 Bh6 with more than enough compensation for the pawn.) **16...Bd6 ≡ 17 g5 Ne4 18 Bxe4 Bxe4 19 Ng4** (I didn't anticipate this move either, though it is quite strong.) **19...Qd7!?** (19...Bf8!? is also good—20 f6 g6 21 h4—but I saw some really interesting tactics associated with the text move. Fritz recommends 19...Qc7, which I didn't even consider.) **20 f6 ≡ Bc2?** (Why did I have to play such a cute move? Objectively it's not so bad, but I didn't calculate the correct follow-up. Meanwhile, I could have gone 20...Bf5! 21 Ne3 Bh3) **21 Qf3** (21 fxg7 Bxd1 22 Nf6+) **21...Be4** (21...Re4 Amazingly, my previous move was sound even though I based it on a bad idea. But now I needed to find the justification 21...Re4! and Fritz suggests the possible continuation 22 Nf2 Rh4 23 fxg7 Bxh2+ 24 Kg2 Bg6) **22 Qh3 ±** (Uh oh... I *thought* that I could play ...Bf5 here, but unfortunately Rxf5 wins for White in that case. So I had to find something else... I've learned not to





get discouraged when I discover my intended move is a blunder. Fritz has taught me that most positions have multiple resources, as long as you're willing to look for them!) **22...Re6! 23 Bf4** (If 23 fxf7 Kxg7 24 Nf6 Qe7 25 Qh6+ Kh8 I'd have needed all my defensive skills to survive.) **23...Bf5** ± (That dangerous knight on g4 simply had to go!) **24 Nh6+ gxh6 25 Qxf5 Kh8** (25...Rae8 26 gxh6 Kh8 27 Kh1) **26 h4** (26 Rae1 Bxf4 27 Rxe6 fxe6 28 Qxf4 hxf5) **26...Rae8 27 gxh6 Bxf4 28 Rxf4 Re1+** (Fritz says that Black is still in the game with 28...Rg8+ 29 Kh2 Qd6 but I was in serious time pressure already and chose a different path that I suspected would get me into a long, forced variation and a somewhat inferior rook endgame. I hoped to make it to time control with a non-losing position — are not “all rook endings drawn”? Well, at least it's true that the winning side often blunders in rook endings and allows the defender to escape with a draw, or sometimes even a win. So was seeking my salvation there!) **29 Rxe1 ± Rxe1+ 30 Kf2 Qxf5 31 Rxf5 Re6 32 Kf3**



Fritz evaluates this position as terrible for Black but over the board I felt that I had good chances to hold it. This may be an example of the computer overvaluing material. My rook is active, my king has a way of becoming active on the queenside by humbly shuffling across the 8th rank, and I don't see an easy way for White to further improve his position. Practically





speaking, White's game is already almost as good as it can get, whereas Black can improve things by playing simple moves.

The only winning plan that I can see for White would be to find a way to offer a favorable rook exchange on the e-file. The problem is that most such scenarios are not "favorable" enough—the pawn ending is drawn. But if he cannot offer a rook exchange on the e-file, then the White king can never get to the queenside where he could, I admit, wreak some havoc!

White can also try moving his king to g5 to protect the f-pawn, thus freeing his rook for active operations against the queenside. But I didn't fear this plan greatly as I also have a rook that can become fiendishly active.

**32...Kg8 33 Kf4 Kf8 34 Kg4** (Since it's difficult to find a good plan, White makes a waiting move and hopes I implode.) **34...Ke8 35 a4** (Fritz prefers 35 bxa4 and I'd have to agree with that assessment. I was in severe time pressure at this point.) **35...a6**

## 2004 Arlington Chess Club Championship

**May 15-16, 2004**

George Mason University Professional Center  
(the Old Law School)

3401 N Fairfax Dr, Arlington

(across From Virginia Square Metro Stop)

5-SS, game/120. One Section, FIDE rated. \$\$2000 b/66, top 3 guaranteed: \$500-300-200, top X,A,B,C,D each \$110, top U1200 \$100, top unr \$100, top ACC Member U1800 \$250. In addition, top scoring ACC member gets plaque and 2004 club champion title; top scoring U1800 ACC member gets plaque and club amateur champion title. EF \$45 if rec'd by 5/5, \$55 at site. Reg 9-9:45, rds 10-2:30-7, 10-2:30. One irrevokable ½-pt bye avail, must declare before rd 1 begins. NS, NC *Enter*: Michael Atkins, PO Box 6139, Alexandria, VA 22306, checks payable to Michael Atkins. For additional info, email [matkins2@cox.net](mailto:matkins2@cox.net) or check the web site <http://members.cox.net/arlingtonchessclub/94champ.htm>



**36 d5** (36 axb5 cxb5 37 Rf3 Rd6) **36...cxd5** (36...Re4+!? looks like a viable alternative: 37 Kg5 Kd7 38 dxc6+ Kxc6 39 axb5+ axb5 (Fritz)) **37 axb5** ± **axb5** **38 Rxd5 Rc6** **39 Re5+** (if 39 Kf5 Rxc3 40 Rxb5 Kd7 and I'm holding on.) **39...Kd8** (39...Kd7 40 Re7+ Kd6 41 Rxf7) **40 Re7** (40 Kf5!?) **40...Rc7** (I made time control!!!! Hurrah... now it's time to assess the damage. Hmmm.... Not too bad; I seem to have survived. How did that happen? These were my thoughts at this point in the game. The moral of this story is to stay calm in time pressure. Don't panic, you don't have to lose lose, especially if your chess clock gives you a 5-second delay on each turn! You may even have time to write down all of your moves, which I did even though I only had about 15 seconds left at this point.) **41 Kf5** (Now I went into a long, deep thirty minute think to figure out the ramifications of the ensuing pawn ending. I calculated out every move played for the rest of the game, and I am quite proud of this accomplishment. Over the board I was able to play all the following moves with complete confidence, having literally seen everything! This is probably due to the fact that I have been slowly working my way through *Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual* —I've made it to page 24. Since pawn endings are the first 60 pages, I had been practicing calculating them for a couple weeks leading up to this game! It will probably take me a year and a half to work my way through the entire book, but it is extremely well written and incredibly instructive) **41...Rxe7** = **42 fxe7+ Kxe7** **43 Ke5** (In spite of the seemingly strong (and extra) f-pawn, Black has to play accurately to hold the draw.) **43...f6+** **44 Kd5 Kd7** **45 h5 Ke7** **46 Kc6 f5** **47 Kxb5** (Using your king to deflect the opponent's king is a typical pawn endgame ploy. Here it allows me to get closer to his passed c-pawn and keeps him further from my f-pawn. My plan is to trade my f-pawn for the c-pawn, after which my pawn on a7 will be doomed but my king will save the day by trapping White's king in the corner.) **47...Kd6** **48 Kc4 Ke5** **49 Kd3 f4** **50 c4 f3** **51 Ke3 f2** **52 Kxf2 Kd4** **53 Kf3 Kxc4** **54 Ke4 Kc5** **55 Ke5 Kc6**



**56 Kf6 Kd6 57 Kf7 Kd7 58 Kg7 Ke7 59 Kxh7 Kf7** (And the king is imprisoned, a very important motif in pawn endgames.)  
**60 Kh8 Kf8 61 h7 Kf7 62 h6 Kf8 ½-½** Stalemate. My opponent had rejected my draw offer at move 53. After the game he said, "It is better this way." I agree!

**Mike Bates - Tim Rogalski**  
**USCF 98UM7**  
**RUY LOPEZ**

*Notes by Tim Rogalski*

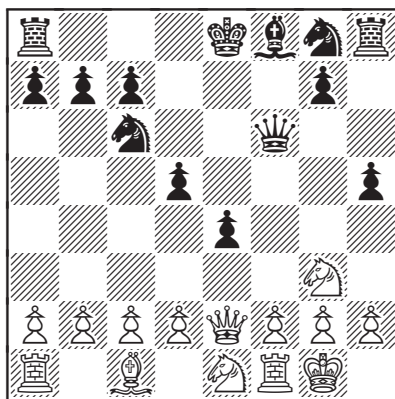
Correspondence Chess (CC) is unfortunately going the way of the dinosaurs. The percentage of over-the-board (OTB) players who play CC is low and getting lower. Email, computers, impatience, and lack of scruples will eventually make traditional CC obsolete. I will mourn its' passing. In CC, one can nurse a small advantage to a win with farsighted accuracy. In CC, one can play offbeat openings rarely seen at the highest levels of OTB chess and have every assurance of a dynamically rich game. In CC, one is appreciatively compelled to learn the nuances of a new opening. In CC, one can steer a game into intense complications without fear of falling into a precipice. In CC, one can explore esoteric endgames that only make footnotes in OTB games. In CC, one can find an outlet for individual creativity. It is little-known statistic that the highest-ever rated USCF player, John Penquite with a phenomenal 2939 correspondence rating,





once won 58 games straight without a loss or draw! Fortunately, the Age of Chess Computers has only partially arrived. When a computer can defeat a CC World Champion in a ‘10-move-in-30-days’ match, *then* computers will have become sentient, and humans will be ready to join the dinosaurs!

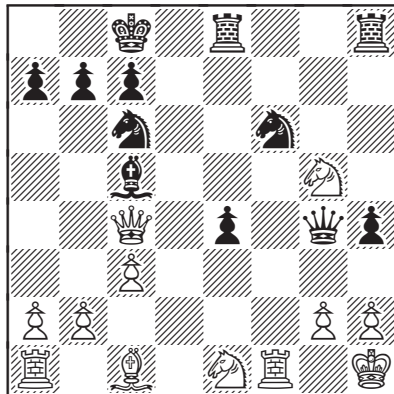
**1 e4** (This was the second game that I played against Correspondence Master Mike Bates. In our first, I was down a pawn in a losing rook ending and got lucky when I skewered his rook for free. So I had a psychological advantage before the first move.) **1...e5** (The 10th CC World Champion Vytas (Victor) Palciauskas stated that 1...e5 is best in CC while 1...c5 is best in OTB.) **2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 f5** The Schliemann Ruy Lopez is especially deadly in CC. **4 Nc3 fxe4 5 Nxe4** (Looking ahead, this hapless knight gets kicked in the head four times by Black pawns before it dies on move 26) **5...d5 6 Ng3 Bg4 7 0-0?! (7 h3 is best. Since one can consult opening books and databases in CC, the mere act of deviating from “book” may become double-edged.) 7...Qf6 8 Be2?! (Too defensive; it is better to acknowledge the inaccuracy of premature castling and accept doubled f-pawns. Either 8 Bxc6+; 8 d3; or 8 Re1 were better alternatives.) 8...e4 9 Ne1 Bxe2 10 Qxe2 h5! ♞**



(Black’s last move is not in any book or database, but that should change with this game.) **11 d3** (11 Nxh5?? Qh4 wins)



**11...h4 12 Nh5** (12 dxe4? hxg3 13 exd5+ Qe5! winning) **12...Qf5 13 Nf4 0-0-0 14 c3** (14 dxe4 dxe4 15 Qc4 is only a marginal improvement after 15...Re8± (rather than the unnecessarily complicated 15...Bd6?! eg 16 Qe6+ Qxe6 17 Nxe6 h3?! 18 Nxd8 hxg2 19 Kxg2 Rxh2+ 20 Kg1 Nd4 21 f4 exf3 22 Rxf3 Ne2+ (22...Kxd8? 23 Rf8+! Ke7 24 Bf4!±) 23 Kf1 Ng3+ 24 Kg1 Ne2+ leading to a perpetual.)) **14...g5± 15 Nh3 g4 16 Ng5 Re8 17 dxe4** (17 f3 gxf3 18 Nexf3 Qg6!± removing the queen from the f1 rook's line of fire while protecting the e8 rook.) **17...dxe4 18 f3 Bc5+** (This development with gain of tempo is the primary reason I played 13...0-0-0 instead 13...Bd6) **19 Kh1 Nf6** (Completing development and connecting the rooks is imperative.) **20 fxxg4** (There was a fantasy variation involving a queen sacrifice culminating in checkmate: 20 fxe4 Nxe4! 21 Rxf5?? Ng3+! 22 hxg3 hxg3+ 23 Nh3 Rxe2± 24 Nd3? Rxh3+! 25 gxh3 Rh2#) **20...Qxg4 21 Qc4** (After receiving the postcard with this move, I informed both my opponent and the TD that I would need more than 10 days reflection time for my reply.)





I used 14 days to decide on **21...Nd7!?**

Every line seems fascinating! Black win the White queen by 21...Nh5?! 22 Qxc5 Ng3+ 23 hxc3 hxc3+ 24 Kg1 Rh1+ 25 Kxh1 Qh5+ 26 Nh3 Qxc5 but in my opinion this prematurely exhausts his resources; I prefer White's three pieces after 27 Nc2.

21...e3! is another possibility, just as complicated: 22 Qxc5 Re5! 23 Qxe3 (23 Qa3?! Qe2!±) Rxe3 24 Bxe3 Ne4± and here 25 Nxe4? Qxe4 26 Bg1 h3 would be winning for Black.

However, in defense of sacrificing the e-pawn with the move I chose, I had foreseen as far as White's 29th move and judged that his exposed king, along with my hyperactive pieces and control of open lines, amounted to a winning position.

**22 h3 Qd1 23 b4 Nce5! 24 Qxe4 Rhf8! 25 Rxf8 Rxf8 26 Ngf3** (not 26 bxc5?? Rf1+ 27 Kh2 Rxe1) **26...Nxf3 27 gxf3 Bf2 28 Bb2?! (White could have poured rain on the fireworks display by 28 Be3! Qxa1 29 Bxf2 Qxa2 30 Bxh4 but Black is still winning after 30...Qf7) 28...Qd2-+ 29 Rb1 Rg8!?** (29...Bg3! 30.Ng2 Ne5! is also unanswerable.)

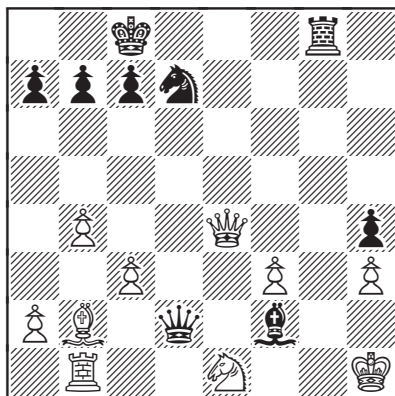


## RUSSELL POTTER

- National Chess Master
- Over 30 Years of Chess Teaching Experience
- Three-time Virginia State Champion

**CHESS LESSONS BY PHONE OR IN PERSON**

Tel: (540) 344-4446  email: [chessmastr@earthlink.net](mailto:chessmastr@earthlink.net)



**30 Ng2 Nf6! 31 Qf5+** (After 31 Qf4 I intended 31...Qd7 although 31...Rg3! 32.Qxd2 Rxh3# would have been prettier.) **31...Kb8**  
**32 Qxf6 Bd4! 0-1** Alex Dunne published this game in his *Chess Life* column, "The Check is in the Mail" (Jan/Feb 2001).

The merits of correspondence chess will be fully appreciated one day, but only after its bones have been dug up out of the sand.

## VIRGINIA OPEN NEWS — PLAN AHEAD!



We anticipate returning the VCF's biggest annual event to its traditional January date in 2005, but the **2004 Virginia Open** will be played in June — **June 18-20** to be exact, at the **Holiday Inn in Springfield**. Full details will be forthcoming in the next issue of *Virginia Chess*. For now we can tell you that **6-time US Champion Walter Browne will be competing** in the Virginia Open! Moreover, GM Browne will be conducting a **simultaneous exhibition** on **Thursday, June 17th at the Arlington Chess Club**. First preference for simul seating will be given to former members of Browne's defunct World Blitz Chess Association (WBCA) who are owed membership credits. Up to \$10 from prepaid WBCA dues can be applied to the simul's \$20 board fee.





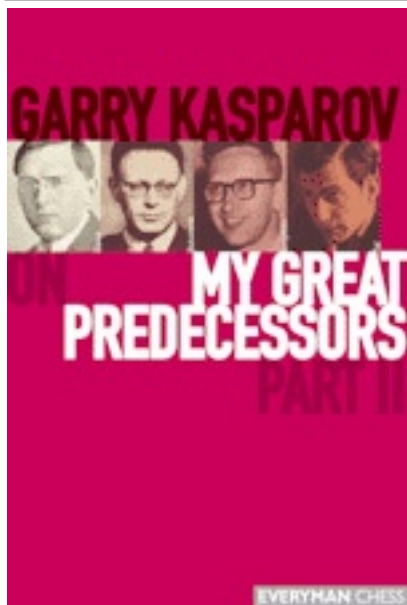
## My Great Predecessors, Part II by Garry Kasparov

Everyman Chess, 2004. Hardcover, 468 pages. \$35 list.

*reviewed by Macon Shibut*

**F**OLLOWING THE RELEASE last July of the first volume of his monumental *My Great Predecessors*, Garry Kasparov indicated that at least three more installments were on the way and that, indeed, the second book was already close to finished. Sure enough, it has arrived in bookstores a mere six months behind the initial offering. With it come certain practical difficulties. Even dedicated readers may not have completed Kasparov's exhaustive—and exhausting—tour through classic games by Steinitz, Lasker, Capablanca, Alekhine, *et al.* Now this second helping promises to divert us for months to come from family, work, sleep and all the other mundane realities that forever eat into our chess time.

It quickly becomes apparent that *My Great Predecessors, Part II*, and the remaining volumes ahead, will pose a challenge to reviewers as well. To put it mildly, *Part II* flows seamlessly from *Part I*. The physical impression of the two books is identical—the same binding, the same style sheet, the same red dust jacket. (I'd kind of hoped for different colors so we could forever refer to “Kasparov Blue” or “the Yellow *Predecessors*,” etc. Alas...) They employ the same games-connected-by-narrative format. On first impression at least, the annotations are of roughly the same depth and quality. (The new book is but twenty pages longer than *Part I* and it contains one more numbered game, 149 versus 148.) Since any such work, by arguably the strongest player who ever lived, cannot help but be a major event in chess publishing, do we roll out the full parade for each volume? Even if we wind up repeating ourselves? Or do we defer serious assessment of *any*



of them until the entire series is finished, reasoning that in fact they comprise a single book that is as yet a work in progress?

The balance of this review will highlight things that do in fact set this *Predecessor* apart from — well, its predecessor. But let's be clear at the outset: whatever you liked or disliked about *My Great Predecessors, Part I*, you're probably going to feel the same about *Part II*. I personally thought that *Part I*, while not perfect, was a great achievement that belongs in every serious chess library. *Part*

*II* has all the strengths of the previous volume, plus it addresses a time frame that many students of the game will find more interesting or relevant to their own chess.

The champions on display in the present volume are Euwe, Bovinnik, Smyslov and Tal. Soviet grandmasters Keres, Bronstein and Geller are also called out for special attention (much as Chigorin, Rubinstein and Tarrasch were last time). The comparative discounting of other mid-20<sup>th</sup> century stars like Reshevsky and Flohr is notable — the latter has no games here and he made but one appearance in *Part I*, and that as the victim of an Alekhine combination — but we can't really complain. The *Predecessors* series is explicitly about *world champions*; digressions from that purpose are to be received as a bonus, not a requirement. Whatever their merits or contributions to chess, Reshevsky, Flohr, Gligoric, et al, neither held nor played a match for the world championship.



On the other hand, it is interesting that Kasparov singled out Geller for special tribute. To be sure, the late Ukrainian grandmaster was a wonderful player. However, the fact is that while he played in world championship qualifying events for a quarter of a century, Geller never even got as far as a Candidates' final. Popular estimation has never accorded him as high a spot as *Predecessors'* other stars. Nonetheless, there are certain players — Nezhmetdinov appears to be another example — for whom even champions reserve a special regard, a respect that speaks to something beyond the competitive record. For an average student, it ought to be instructive to examine the games of these special players, trying to divine what magic in them earns the champions' admiration. And so here Kasparov devotes fully thirty-four pages, beginning on page 295: "Now is the time to break off and remember Efim Petrovich Geller (1925-1998), another chess legend, known for his academic opening erudition and bold attacking style of play..."

**I**N MY REVIEW of *Predecessors, Part I* (Virginia Chess 2003/4, p 6), I wrote: "It will be interesting to see if the prevailing tone changes in subsequent volumes as [Kasparov] turns his eye towards champions he knows personally or has played." Based on *Predecessors, Part II*, it now appears that the question is a bit more complicated than just familiar players and change of tone. The new book addresses what can accurately be called the Soviet Era in chess. In documenting it, Kasparov confronts not only players that he knew first hand but also the system that molded him personally. No matter how cosmopolitan, no matter how he may try to style himself a "child of change," Garry Kasparov is and will always be an intellectual product of the Soviet Union.

We recall how this showed through as early as the opening pages of *Predecessors, Part I*. The Introduction, titled "The Champions as Symbols of the Time," was a monument of dialectic hooey that drew guffaws from nearly every western reviewer. ("Remember the slogan that [Philidor] proclaimed in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century — 'The pawns are the soul of chess!' — Do we not hear in this echoes of the coming Great French Revolution? ... Fischer modernized practically all aspects of the ancient game and could well have implemented its conversion onto professional lines ... Fischer — an outstanding contemporary of the Beatles, hippies and mass disturbances by students, demanding greater individual freedom...") With *Predecessors, Part II* Kasparov and his Soviet upbringing plunge into post-WWII world championship controversies: the intrusion of Cold War geopolitics into chess, the silly power plays, the disputes, the cynicism, the boycotts, the persecution of "unreliable" persons. It is always fascinating to see a Soviet-bred and



educated author lecture westerners on how freedom and democracy ought to work. Kasparov makes an honest effort but can't hide his basic orientation or the associated tendency to stretch for historical implications, as when he discusses the "severe and unjust" rule limiting to five (out of eight) the number of players from a single country (read: USSR) in the old Candidates tournaments. The rule, Kasparov writes,

reflected the unnatural situation that existed in chess in the 1950s and 1960s, when many of the best grandmasters, occupying most of the places in the world's top thirty, had no opportunity to participate fully in the world championship qualifying cycle — for the only reason that they were Soviets! ... Some will retort: but with this limit, fighting spirit was strengthened, and only the very best made it to the top — that is, by the laws of Darwinism, the strongest survived! But just think how much nervous energy it cost these world class stars to battle among themselves for the right to squeeze through they eye of a needle. And how it must have been to recognize that you are the stronger and have occupied a higher pace, but it is another who will go through. Were not these unhealed spiritual wounds one of the causes of the untimely death of Leonid Stein?

Kasparov gives a warm account of the personal relationship with Mikhail Botvinnik, his mentor. For many readers, this will be one of the most anticipated portions of *Predecessors, Part II*. The narrative on pages 255-262 includes a number of nuanced insights and personal anecdotes, for instance:

I remember with a smile how Armenian television ... asked Botvinnik a question: "What do you think, will Akopian become world champion?" Volodya Akopian, a pupil at the school, was then 14, while I was 22. I had just won the title and was intending to play for a long time to come... As usual, after thinking for several seconds, Botvinnik slowly and forcibly stated: 'If he works well, he will become world champion!' I looked at Mikhail Moiseevich in astonishment: yes, Akopian would probably become a good grandmaster, but... world champion? But this was the directive of a wise teacher: you have to work! And on the other hand, he had a subtle and very distinctive sense of humor.

Some interesting details emerge. Regarding Botvinnik's famous training sessions for young Soviet talent, Kasparov wryly comments that, "many of the



present-day leading grandmasters passed through our school, although it is rare for any of them to remember this.” His ultimate falling out with Botvinnik, we are told, was over a disagreement about Gorbachov’s *perestroika*.

Increasingly we began disagreeing over fundamental questions. ... Botvinnik was a staunch communist, a child of the Stalin regime. He spoke out for ‘socialism with a human face’ and thought that the system itself must not be changed, but merely improved. At the end of his life his favorite theory was that capitalism is a spontaneous market, where there are no laws, and the advantages of socialism will be fully disclosed when we learn to plan skillfully, with the help of... powerful computers! He sincerely believed that computers would help to save the planned economy (for which, in particular, he tried to create his ‘thinking’ program). And he was terribly unhappy with the ‘supervisors of *perestroika*,’ and repeated that everything was proceeding ‘in the wrong direction’ and that everything should be done ‘differently’.

But all this is secondary. Like the preceding volume (and doubtless like those yet to come), *Predecessors, Part II* is ultimately a Games Collection. Chess annotations comprise at least 80% — probably more — of its content. Again I harken back to my review of *Part I* and the bottom line assessment that I gave there: “Now we can appreciate more of what was going on in those old games thanks to Garry Kasparov’s objective and penetrating work. ... My overriding impression was of how special it is just to have this caliber of player undertaking this kind of an enterprise.” There is a remarkable continuity between commentary of *Parts I* and *II*. Kasparov again draws heavily on the notes of other analysts and assesses these right along with the games themselves. While it’s always clear enough to me what is Kasparov’s and what came from someone else, his casual form sacrifices academic rigor for the sake of readability. Personally I like this approach — although it must be said that many reviewers disagreed. (The lack of a bibliography in *Part I* came under particular fire; Kasparov acknowledged the point in interviews and promised to address it in the future, so I suppose it’s noteworthy that there is still no bibliography in *Part II*.)

Regarding the actual chess content, objectivity is still the watchword. Again one does not see the sort of intimate, subjective commentary that Kasparov applied to his own games in *Test Of Time* and other first-person game collections. Instead we get what aims to be, simply, the Final Word on the



most significant chess games played through the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century — no more and no less. (Incidentally, Kasparov makes his own debut “at the board” in the very last game of the present book: a special treat, a previously unpublished fragment from a 1992 blitz game with Tal. Update your databases!)

Kasparov’s case for a continuous, traceable line of evolution in chess technique remains contradictory and muddled. His repeated exclamations that particular move is “amazing for 1931” or that such-and-such a plan foreshadows “the chess of twenty years in the future” grow less convincing. None of that bothers me! On the contrary, they are part of the quirky personality of these vast books and I want more of them. Presumably Part III will take us through Petrosian, Spassky and Fischer. (Kasparov once told me in person that Fischer and Spassky were “the two geniuses” of 20<sup>th</sup> century chess.) Then, someday, we will get Part IV: Karpov, and perhaps a selection of Kasparov’s own games. Until that day, these great games from one of the most important and interesting phases of chess history will provide ambitious readers with months of pleasure.



## New and Noted

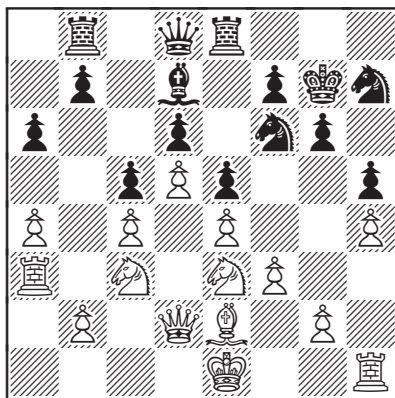
We have on hand a few other new books. I would like to review them properly but *My Great Predecessors, Part II* has been all-consuming since its arrival right around Christmas. Therefore, a few brief comments will have to suffice. First of all, there is John Watson’s *Chess Strategy In Action* (Gambit, 288 pps, \$24.95 list). This is a sequel to Watson’s 1999 book *Secrets of Modern Chess Strategy*, which was reviewed in the 1999/5 issue of *Virginia Chess* (p 11) and then was the object of a further essay in issue 2000/1 (p 18, “Modern Chess Anarchy?”) Since *Secrets* was superb, I am very much looking forward to reading the new book, perhaps some autumn when I’m not doing anything. Its first part appears to be cast from the same theoretical/philosophical mold as the original: Watson mulls over the tendency of modern master play with regards to various technical elements—surrender of the center, development,



doubled pawns, etc. The last third demonstrates how all this blends together in practical play through very rich annotation of 35 grandmaster games. I'm confident this is going to be really good.

I also have two new puzzle books from Everyman: *The Times Winning Moves*, by Raymond Keene & Byron Jacobs, and *It's Your Move: Tough Puzzles*, by Chris Ward. Both are soft cover and list for \$18.95. The *Times* book is a conventional problem anthology. The 500 positions are selected from those that have appeared daily in the London newspaper's chess column. They are drawn from actual games and each comes with a short text introduction. (Example: "White is a piece down but has a very aggressive posture on the kingside. How did he break through in brilliant style?") Of course the solutions are provided in the back pages. Good stuff for the tram!

*It's Your Move: Tough Puzzles* is something completely different. Here the tasks are divided into five "tests" of ten positions each. But these are not problems of the "White to move and win" variety. Instead, it works like this: At the beginning of the book we are introduced to five make-believe persons—Analytical Anatoly, Battling Boris, Creative Chris, Desperate Dan and Elegant Elizabeth—whose names roughly indicate their chess playing styles. For each test position, we are allowed to eavesdrop on their thoughts about what to do next. For example, in the diagram position we learn that Anatoly believes...



*Position after 18...Qd8*

White should concentrate his efforts on the queenside. He should kick off with 19 a5 to gain a firm grip on the b6 square. It should then be his aim to occupy that very square with a knight with a Nc3-a4-b6 maneuver, closely followed by a b2-b4 pawn break. To free up the h1 rook for queenside action, he believes that the White monarch should set up home on f2.

Dan, on the other hand, thinks that...





The most fruitful pawn break is going to be f3-f4 and he can't wait to get his major pieces employed along that file. He proposes 19 0-0 with 20 f4 up next. Ideally he would like to swing the a3-rook along to f3 but recognizes that the piece congestion along the third rank makes that a little difficult. Hence after probably making the recapture Rxf4 (assuming Black trades pawns, he will adopt the maneuver Ra3-a1-f1 for a spot of doubling up.

Of course Boris, Chris and Elizabeth also have their own ideas about the position. Your task is to weigh up all these various interpretations of the position and decide which one is most correct. Often the matter is not clear and varying degrees of partial credit will be awarded for different answer—thus the test format, wherein you're final score will be the sum of points you accumulated through all ten positions. The solution section explains the strong and weak sides of each argument and also provides the actual continuation to the game from which the position was taken.

I did one of the tests and I must say, it was fun, challenging and occasionally instructive. The book really underscores how rich a game chess is! Oftentimes several very different lines of reasoning all seem plausible. The whole concept is very nicely executed and you quickly come to know the personalities of your five "players" so well that you can almost predict how they're going to see things. I imagine a lot of people will love *It's Your Move: Tough Puzzles*. They may want to look into Ward's related titles, *It's Your Move* and *Improver's It's Your Move*.

## Junior Orange Bowl

by Peter Hopkins

Seven young chess players represented Virginia in the 6th Annual Junior Orange Bowl International Scholastic Chess Championships, a 3-day event held in Miami, Florida December 27-29. Sponsored by the Virginia Scholastic Chess Association, the team of four boys

and three girls won 1st place in the 7-round event after trailing the team from the Bahamas going into the final round.

After losing on time to Ecuador's Marlon Lopez in the 4th round, Robert Brady, the current Virginia High School Chess Champion



from McLean, placed 2nd in the individual standings with six wins. Rounding out the team were Christine Golden & Jessee Perry from Midlothian, Philip Chodrow from Staunton, Ryan Fitzgerald from Rocky Mount, and Sathya Vijayakumar & Ann Marie Brown from Richmond.

The Ford Motor Company provided the team with a bus for the trip to Miami and local chess players from the Kaissa Chess Club at The Shops at Willow Lawn provided financial support.

LeRoi Thompson (Bahamas)

- Robert Brady (VSCA)

Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 d6 3 g3 Nc6 4 Bg2 g6 5 d3 Bg7 6 Be3 Nf6 7 h3 Bd7 8 f4 Qb6 9 Rb1 Qa5 10 Nf3 b5 11 e5 Nd5 12 Bd2 Nxc3 13 Bxc3 b4 14 e6 Bxc3+ 15 bxc3 Bxe6 16 Nd4 Nxd4 17 Bxa8 b3 18 cxb3 Qxc3+ 19 Kf2 Nf5 20 Qe2 Qd4+ 21 Kf3 d5 22 Rhc1 g5 23 Bc6+ Kf8 24 fxg5 Qg7 25 Kf4 h6 26 g6 Qxg6 27 g4 Qg5+ 28 Kf3 Nd4+ 29 Kf2 Qh4+ 30 Kf1 Nxe2 31 Kxe2 Qxh3 0-1

## SCHOLAR'S MATE

*by Emily Rhodes*

**S**cholastic chess tournaments are great for kids until their

rating reaches a certain point. Once a scholastic player's rating reaches 1200 to 1300, there are not enough higher rated opponents in these events for the player's skills to continue improving. Instead, every tournament they are simply putting their rating on the line.

Some players solve this problem by playing in higher grade sections, eg an elementary school player entering in the high school or middle school sections. Others take another course of action and begin to play in adult tournaments. But the question is: When are kids ready to begin competing in adult tournaments?





The chess coach of Springfield Park Elementary, Dave DeClark, considers that before your kids start playing in adult tournaments you need to consider “maturity level, sportsmanship, average number of ‘oops’ per game (less than three), and ability to write notation.” Most scholastic chess tournaments don’t require kids in the primary and elementary divisions to take notation, but adult tournaments usually do follow this rule as well as enforcing clock play.

In addition, Bill Barrow, vice president of the VSCA (Virginia Scholastic Chess Association) points out that the atmosphere surrounding an adult tournament is different from a scholastic tournament. Scholastic players need to become used to people going in and out of the tournament room. He also pointed out that adult tournaments are usually almost completely silent.

Russell Potter, a Life Master, who teaches chess to a number of Virginia students, adds a couple more considerations. Students should know all the rules of the game, need to be able to play games longer than 15-20 minutes, have a good solid opening repertoire, and be “past the ‘tears stage’.” Adults feel a twinge of admiration and support, as long as the child is well behaved and wins or loses gracefully. “If a kid is playing good chess, ... very few people gripe about losing to a whiz kid,” said Potter. However, “adults feel inappropriately guilty when a kid dissolves into tears.”

Potter also recommends preparing your child emotionally. He said that kids who are high performers in scholastic tournaments need to have reasonable expectations when they compete in adult events. While they may be used to winning most of their scholastic games, they should be prepared for a possible setback. Winning just one game is fine. They should be praised for hanging in for a number of moves with adults. He recommends that parents tell children, “Do your best, and we call it success.”



Parents must also consider the time commitment involved. Adult tournaments often consume an entire weekend, while scholastic tournaments usually only last one day. Adult tournaments are also apt to be more expensive, particularly if you have to stay in a hotel. But the most important consideration is, really, if your kid is up for the challenge. "It's a lot of chess," remarks Barrow. "so the kids really [have] to want to do it," said Bill Barrow.

## RESULTS FROM RECENT SCHOLASTIC EVENTS:

### Swift Creek Scholastic V - November 15, 2003

	<i>Individual Winners</i>	<i>Team Winners</i>
K-3	William C Hantzmon	Collegiate
K-5	Krishna Bindumadhavan	Springfield Park
K-8	Carson Wang	Manchester

### Lakeside Scholastic IV - December 6, 2003

	<i>Individual Winners</i>	<i>Team Winners</i>
K-3	William Perkins	Collegiate
K-5	Jerome M. Mueller	Swift Creek

### Hopewell Scholastic XX - December 13, 2003

	<i>Individual Winners</i>	<i>Team Winners</i>
K-3	Matthew W. Hammond	Collegiate
K-5	Eric A Rhodes	Swift Creek
K-8	Carson Wang	Manchester
K-12	Jonathan Hundley	Washington & Lee

### James River Scholastic I - January 17, 2004

	<i>Individual Winners</i>	<i>Team Winners</i>
K-3	Jesse Lee	Collegiate
K-5	Matthew W Hantzmon	Collegiate
K-8	Carson Wang	Manchester
K-12	Daniel H Lacker	MLW Governor's School



## Virginia Grade Level Championships-January 10, 2004

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Champion</i>
12th Grade	Nick Creasy
11th Grade	Thomas Carr
10th Grade	Jonathan Hundley
9th Grade	Alec Hollingsworth
8th Grade	James Shen
7th Grade	Carson Wang
6th Grade	Victoria Lee
5th Grade	Craig Saperstein
4th Grade	Darwin H Li
3rd Grade	Krishna Bindumadhavan
2nd Grade	John S Hantzmon
1st Grade	Jesse Lee (Md)/David Clower (Va)
Kindergarten	Jeevan Karamsetty

## UPCOMING SCHOLASTIC TOURNAMENTS:

Feb. 14	Dinwiddie Scholastic IX
Feb. 14	MVP Individual Scholastic (Fredericksburg)
Feb. 14	MVP 4-Board Championship (Fredericksburg)
Feb. 21	Roanoke City Championships
March 13-14	State Championships (Fredericksburg)
March 20	Moore Millennium V

### Coming up in the next issue:

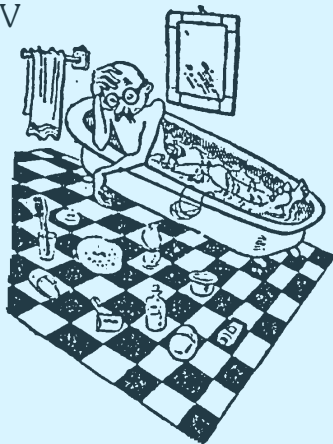
Superstitions and good luck  
charms in chess!

*Don't Forget....*

# Millennium Festival

April 2-4  
Virginia Beach

*(see page 2 for details)*



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