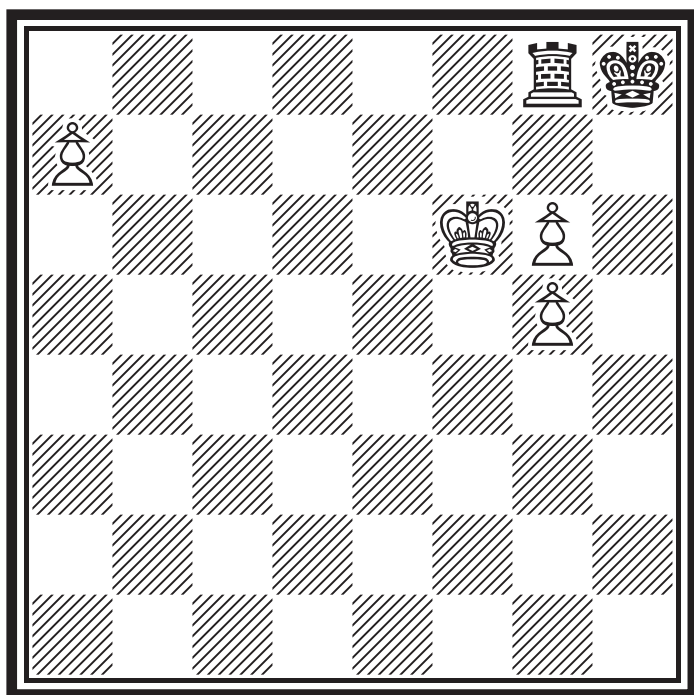


VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the
Virginia Chess Federation

2006 - #2



All Positions are Defensible!

White to play — Draw (*see page 11*)

VIRGINIA CHESS

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2006 - Issue #2

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Kingstowne Chess Club News

by Don Millican

KINGSTOWNE CHESS FESTIVAL



Kingstowne Chess Club held its 4th annual Chess Festival over the weekend of February 11-12 in Alexandria. Not to be outdone, Mother Nature crashed the party with a classic mid-Atlantic snowstorm, dumping up to twenty-one inches of the white stuff. Fortunately, the largest accumulations were to the north and west of the playing site, but the storm nonetheless cut attendance from previous years; in total 54 players braved the elements and battled for more than \$1,900 in cash prizes, twenty Grand Prix points, and merchandise from area businesses.

Sixteen competed in the Open section, including two Grandmasters, two Masters, and two Experts at the top of the wall chart. GMs Aleks Wojtkiewicz of Baltimore and Jaan Ehlvest from New York tied for 1st-2nd with $3\frac{1}{2}$ out of 4. Shinsaku Uesugi of Potomac,



Victorious grandmasters Wojtkiewicz (left) and Ehlvest



Matthew Grinberg of Kingstowne, Craig Saperstein of Great Falls, V., & Bora Yagiz of McLean finished tied for 3rd with $2\frac{1}{2}$. Saperstein & Yagiz also tied for Top Under 2000. Leonard Sistek rounded out the Open section's prize winners by taking Top Under 1800.

Fourteen players made up the Amateur (under 1800 or unrated) section. Byron Hood of Vienna with $4\frac{1}{2}$ out of 5 won clear 1st. Sanda



Costescu of Arlington & Nelson Garces of Alexandria scored 4 to tie for 2nd-3rd. Jeffrey Matthews of Lorton scored 3 and Nick Kousen from Vienna had $2\frac{1}{2}$ to take

Under 1600 and Under 1400 respectively.

Mike Donovan of Fairfax scored $4\frac{1}{2}$ of 5 to win 1st in the fifteen-player Booster (under 1600 or unrated) section. Sei Masuoka took clear 2nd with $3\frac{1}{2}$. Glenn Shelton of McLean & Darren



Hahnfeld of Kingstowne scored 3 to tie for 3rd-4th with Hahnfeld also winning Top Unrated. With $2\frac{1}{2}$, Adam Hood & Philip Hood (sons of Amateur winner Byron Hood) took Top Under 1400 and Top Under 1200 respectively.

Nine competed in the Novice (under 1400 or unrated) section. Victor Nguyen scored $5\frac{1}{2}$ out of 6 to win 1st. David Becker of Kingstowne



finished 2nd with 4, and Sophie Gorman of Bowie took 3rd with $3\frac{1}{2}$. Top Under 1200 went to Teresa Gorman of Bowie (sister of 3rd place winner Sophie Gorman)

while Top Under 1000 was won by Brandon Zhang of Great Falls, Va with 3 and $2\frac{1}{2}$ respectively. Angela McKay of Silver Spring went home with Top Unrated by scoring $1\frac{1}{2}$.

For the fourth year, area merchants contributed extra prizes for players whose games had special features or via a raffle. Contributing prizes this year were Bella Donna Spa, Chipotle, Bella Donna Spa, Manhattan Bagel, Mama Mia Pizza, Papa John's, Uno Chicago Grill & Pizzeria, and TGI Friday's. Brad Walker and Kingstowne Resident Owners Corporation provided the playing facilities, also for the fourth consecutive year.



WILFREDO ACEVEDO - LEONARD SISTEK

ENGLISH

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 Nc3 Nc6 4 e4 d6 5 d4 cxd4 6 Nxd4 Bd7 7 b3 g6 8 Be2 Bg7 9 Be3 Qa5 10 Qd2 Nxe4 11 Nxc6 Qxc3 12 Qxc3 Bxc3+ 0-1

BYRON HOOD - JEFFREY

MATTHEWS

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Be7 5 Nf3 c5 6 dxc5 Qa5 7 Qa4+ Qxa4 8 Nxa4 Nc6 9 cxd5 Nxd5 10 Bxe7 Kxe7 11 a3 a5 12 e3 Bd7 13 Rc1 Rab8 14 Bc4 Nf6 15 Ke2 Rhd8 16 Rhd1 Ne5 17 Nxe5 Bxa4 18 b3 Be8 19 f3 Nd7 20 c6 Nxe5 21 c7 Nxc4 22 cxd8 Q+ Rxd8 23 Rxd8 Kxd8 24 bxc4 b6 25 Kd3 Bc6 26 Kd4 f6 27 e4 e5+ 28 Kc3 Kc7 29 Rd1 h6 30 h3 g6

31 c5 b5 32 Rd6 f5 33 exf5 gxf5 34 Rxh6 e4 35 fxe4 fxe4 36 g4 b4+ 37 axb4 axb4+ 38 Kxb4 e3 39 Kc3 e2 40 Kd2 Bb5 41 Re6 Bc4 42 Rxe2 Kc6 43 Re3 Kxc5 44 Rc3 Kd4 45 Rxc4+ Kxc4 46 Ke3 Kd5 47 Kf4 Ke6 48 g5 Kf7 49 Kf5 Kg7 50 h4 Kf7 51 h5 Kg7 52 h6+ Kh8 53 Kf6 Kg8 54 h7+ Kxh7 55 Kf7 1-0

NELSON GARCES - BYRON HOOD

SLAV

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 e3 Nf6 4 Nc3 e6 5 Nf3 Bd6 6 Bd3 dxc4 7 Bxc4 b5 8 Bd3 Bb7 9 a3 a6 10 b4 Nbd7 11 Bb2 e5 12 Qc2 exd4 13 Nxd4 O-O 14 O-O Qc7 15 Nf3 c5 16 Ne4 Nxe4 17 Bxe4 Bxe4 18 Qxe4 Rfe8 19 Qd5 Ne5 20 Nxe5 Bxe5 21 Bxe5 Qxe5 22 Qxc5 Qxc5 23 bxc5 ½-½

KINGSTOWNE QUAD #27

The club's first Quad tournament of 2006 was on March 4 in Alexandria. Due to an oversight by the Senior (or is that Senile?) Tournament Director, no advertisement appeared in *Chess Life*. Alternative methods of publicity still drew ten players, which was better than expected.

In the top Quad, Micah Herzig took home a gold medal with a 3-0 score. Stephen Jablon & Lisa Kong tied for 2nd with Jablon winning the bronze medal on tiebreak. The bottom "quad" (actually a six-player Swiss), saw Adam Chrisney win gold with 3. Carlston Boucher & Jeffrey Matthews tied for 2nd-3rd. Boucher won the silver on tiebreak, leaving Matthews with the 3rd place bronze medal.



Roanoke Valley Chess Club News

by Bob Collins

It is with great pleasure that the Board of Directors and the Officers of RVCC announce that we have signed a three-year contract with America's Best Value Inn to host the annual Southwest Virginia Open. This year's tournament will be on August 19-20, 2006. The hotel, formerly a Holiday Inn, is at Exit 137 on I-81 in Salem, and has been the site of previous RVCC events. The format and details will follow in the weeks to come, but please mark your calendars now!

We will be seeking private and corporate sponsors for this tournament in hope of making it a permanent fixture on the chess calendar. For more details, please contact me.

2nd Annual

Richard K Delaune, Jr Memorial June 16-18, 2006

Holiday Inn Express

6401 Brandon Ave, Springfield, VA 22150

Conveniently located at the junction of I-95, I-495 & I-395

5-SS, rd1 game/2, rds 2-5 30/90, SD/1. \$\$\$3300 (top 4 Open G, rest b/120). Three Sections- *Open Section*: \$600-400-200-100 (top 4 G), U2300 \$175. *Under 2200 Section*: \$400-200 A, B each \$150, Unr \$125; *Under 1600 Section*: \$325-175, D, U1200 each \$150. *All*: Top 3 in each section receive beautiful etched acrylic trophies. EF \$55 if rec'd by 6/10, \$65 afterwards and at site. One irrevocable ½pt bye allowed, must commit before rd 1. Reg Friday 5-7:30pm, rds: 8, 10-5, 10-3:30. Special announcements: Opening ceremony Friday 7:45pm and Memorial Reception Saturday 3:30pm. Richard's friends, 2-time US Champ GM Joel Benjamin & GM John Fedorowicz will be playing! Hotel 703-644-5555, ask for Sales Department and request special chess rate of \$85 - reserve before June 1. NS, NC, W, FIDE.

Enter: Mail checks payable to "Virginia Chess" to Michael Atkins, PO Box 6139, Alexandria VA 22306. Info at www.vachess.org/rkdmemorial.htm or email matkins2@cox.net. No phone or internet entries, just inquiries.

20 Grand Prix points





Virginia State Scholastic Championships

by Mike Hoffpauir

This year's tournament was pulled off in Roanoke in fine form by Mickey Owens and his army of volunteers from the Roanoke City Public Schools. Everything went really smoothly. Mickey even got the weather gods to cooperate!! The results are online and the tournament has already been rated by USCF, another tribute to Mickey crackin' the whip over the TD crew. (My back still has marks! Ouch.) See <http://spotsychessclub.freesevers.com/results/states2006.html>

The overall winners, and this year's state representatives to the Denker and Polgar nationwide invitational events are, respectively, Edward J Lu (high school winner on tiebreak over 3 other players) and Abby Marshall (8th grader, one of the four tied for 1st K-12).

Early Notice:

2006 VIRGINIA CLOSED STATE CHAMPIONSHIP - September 2-4, 2006 Hilton Garden Inn Richmond Innsbrook, 4050 Cox Rd, Glen Allen

Open to VA residents, military stationed in VA and students at VA Colleges and Universities with valid student ID for Fall 2006. 6-SS, 30/90, SD/1. \$\$2,700 b/100 paid entries. *Open:* \$600-300-200-150, X, A each \$100 ea. Title of 2006 Virginia State Champion to 1st overall. Trophies to 1st overall, top X & top A. *Amateur (under 1800):* \$425-225-150, top C, D, U1200, Unr each \$100, top Upset \$50. Title of 2006 Virginia Amateur Champion to 1st overall. Trophies to 1st overall, top C, top D, top U1200. *Both:* Trophies to top Senior (60+), Junior (U18) and Woman from overall tournament (both sections) with 1pt added to Open scores for the purposes of awarding these prizes. EF \$55 if rec'd by August 27, \$65 thereafter. Reg Saturday 9/2 9am-12:30, rds 1-7, 11-5, 10-3:30. Two irrevocable ½pt byes available—must be declared before rd 2. Re-entry with ½ pt bye allowed for rd 2 only for \$30. W, NS, FIDE. Hotel \$85+taxes if reserved before 8/18. 804-521-2900, mention the tournament and ask for chess rate. Enter: Make checks to "Virginia Chess" and send to Ernest Schlich 1370 S Braden Crescent, Norfolk, Va 23502. Info by email eschlich@verizon.net or on the web www.vachess.org/2006closed.htm. **Annual VCF Business Meeting, Saturday Sept 2, 10am -12 noon**



Staunton Open

by Rob Getty

THE INAUGURAL STAUNTON OPEN was held on March 25th at the Hampton Inn in - of course - Staunton, Va. Having only received fourteen advance entries and waking up to light snow falling, I feared the worst. However, the arrival of fully twenty-three on-site entries led to the opposite problem: a field of 37 players in a site set up for a max of 32!

After some quick adjustments, we were up and running. 1st place was shared by Pennsylvanian master Thomas Magar, local expert Robert Cale & Jason Rosenhouse, each with 3½ out of 4. Rosenhouse (1910) achieved a draw playing white against Magar in the last round after Cale had drawn his 3rd round game versus Mike Atkins.

JASON ROSENHOUSE - THOMAS MAGAR

SICILIAN

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 Nc3 a6 4 d4 cxd4 5 Nxd4 Qc7 6 Bd3 Nf6 7 0-0 Nc6 8 Nb3 b5 9 Be3 d6 10 f4 Bb7 11 Kh1 Be7 12 Qe2 0-0 13 Rf3 Nb4 14 Rg3 g6 15 a3 Nxd3 16 cxd3 Rfe8 17 Rc1 Qd7 18 Na5 Rac8 19 Nxb7 Qxb7 20 b4 Bf8 21 Qf2 Bg7 22 Bd4 Nh5 23 Rf3 e5 24 fxe5 dxe5 25 Bc5 Rcd8 26 Rf1 Nf4 27 Nd5 Nxd5 28 exd5 Rxd5 29 Rxf7 Rd7 30 Rf3 Qd5 31 h3 Qe6 32 Qe2 e4 33 dxe4 Qxe4 34 Re3 Qxe3 35 Bxe3 Rde7 36 Qf3 Rxe3 37 Qf7+ Kh8 38 Qd7 R3e7 ½-½

Local scholastic player Philip Chodrow entered the last round 3-0 and so had a chance for clear first. However, he was unable to upset Cale — his chess coach! — who earned his share of 1st with a win.



No, a different Staunton

So while the Hampton Inn has a great skittles area and good location, the playing room is too small for any growth in upcoming years! Another Staunton Open is planned for next year and we are currently investigating larger sites.



Chess Clubs

Please send additions / corrections to the Editor.

♔ Alexandria: Kingstowne Chess Club, Kingstowne South Center, 6080 Kingstowne Village Parkway, Tuesdays 7-10pm, info Rob McKinney, robcmckinney@aol.com, (703) 924-5883 ♚ Arlington: Arlington Chess Club, Lyon Village Community House, 1920 N Highland St (at Lee Hwy), Fridays 7:30pm. Registration for rated Ladder and Action events ends 8pm. Blitz/Quick tourney first Friday of each month. Info www.wizard.net/~matkins or John Campbell (703) 534-6232 ♚ Arlington Seniors Chess Club, Madison Community Center, 3829 N Stafford St, info (703) 228-5285 ♚ Blacksburg: Chess Club of Virginia Tech, GB Johnson Student Center, Rm 102, Virginia Tech, Wednesdays 7-9pm ♚ Charlottesville: Charlottesville Chess Club, St Mark Lutheran Church, Rt 250 & Alderman Rd, Monday evenings ♚ Chesapeake: Zero's Sub Shop, 3116 Western Branch Blvd (Rt 17), (Poplar Hill Plaza near Taylor Rd intersection), Mondays 6pm to closing ♚ Great Bridge United Methodist Church, corner of Battlefield Blvd & Stadium Dr, Tuesdays, 6:30-10pm, info 686-0822 ♚ Culpeper: Culpeper Chess Club, Culpeper County Public Library, Rt 29 Business (near Safeway). Adults meet Tuesdays 6:30-8:45pm, juniors Thursdays 6:30-8:45pm. Info John Clark 540-829-6606 ♚ Fort Eustis: contact Sorel Utsey 878-4448 ♚ Danville: Danville Chess Club, Danville YMCA, 810 Main Street. Mondays 6:30-9:30 pm. Info John Thompson 434-799-8898 ♚ Fredricksburg: Spotsylvania Chess, Lutheran Church Rte West 4.7 miles from Exit 130 on I-95. Every Tuesday 6-9pm, info Mike Cornell 785-8614 ♚ Glenss: Rappahannock Community College - Glenss Campus Chess Club, Glenss Campus Library, Tuesdays 8-10pm in the student lounge, info Zack Loesch 758-5324(x208) ♚ Harrisonburg: Shenandoah Valley Chess Club, Trinity Presbyterian Church, corner of S High (rt 42) & Maryland Ave (Port Republic Rd), Fridays 7:30pm, <http://cep.jmu.edu/huffnacj/svcc/svchome.html> ♚ McLean: Booz Allen Hamilton CC, Hamilton Bldg, Rm 2032, 8283 Greensboro Dr. Thursdays, info Charles Thrasher 703-917-2235 ♚ Mechanicsville: Stonewall Library, Stonewall Pkwy, Mondays 6:30-9pm 730-8944 ♚ Norfolk: Tidewater Chess Club, Beth Messiah Synagogue, 7130 Granby St, Norfolk. Tuesdays, 7-10pm, Ernie Schlich (757) 853-5296, ESchlich@aol.com ♚ Larchmont Public Library, 6525 Hampton Blvd, Wednesday 6-9pm ♚ ODU Chess Club, Webb Univ Ctr, Old Dominion University, info www.odu.edu/~chess ♚ Purcellville: Blue Ridge Cafe, Thursdays 5-7pm and Saturdays 1-4pm (& bi-wkly 4-7pm), info Douglas A Gripp, 540-668-7160 ♚ Richmond: The Kaissa Chess Club, Willow Lawn Shopping Center, in the food court, Thursdays 5-9pm. info Alfredo Franco 367-1154 ♚ The Side Pocket, Cross Roads Shopping Center, Staples Mill Rd. A billiards parlor with chess tables set up any hour, every day ♚ Huguenot Chess Knights, Bon Air Library Community Room, 1st & 3rd Friday of each month, 7-11pm, info Walter Chester 276-5662 ♚ Jewish Ctr CC, 5403 Monument Ave. 4-6pm every other Sunday beginning 1/8/95. (804) 288-0045 ♚ VCU CC, 907 Floyd Ave, Capital Ballroom C, Saturdays 3-7pm, info Michael Neal, grandmaster_2b@yahoo.com ♚ Roanoke: Roanoke Valley Chess Club, Grandin Ct Rec Ctr, Corner of Lofton & Barham Rd SW, Fridays 7:00-11:00pm, Info Brian Roark (540) 378-1316 or brian.roark@acterna.com ♚ Virginia Beach: Tidewater Community Chess Club, Bldg D ("Kempsville") Cafeteria, Tidewater Community College Va Beach Campus, 1700 College Crescent Rd. Mondays 7-10pm ♚ Williamsburg: Williamsburg CC, The Williamsburg Landing, 5700 Williamsburg Landing Drive. 2nd floor Game Room. Tuesdays 7-10pm. Don Woolfolk 757-229-8774 or Tom Landvogt 757-565-5792 ♚ Winchester: Winchester Chess Club, Westminster-Canterbury Home for the Elderly, Tuesdays 7pm ♚ Woodbridge: Prince William Chess Club, Tuesdays 7-9pm at the Game Parlor, Prince William Square, 14400 Smoketown Road. Contact Dick Stableford, 703-670-5887 or o6usmc@comcast.net ♚ Yorktown: Olde Port Chess Club, Thursdays 6:30-10:30pm in the clubhouse at Olde Port Cove, for adult players (age 18 and above—exceptions are made for serious young players rated above 1800 USCF) Contact Funda Hutchins, 868-4375 or zugzwang@cox.net



RAY KAUFMAN - GEOFF MCKENNA

DC LEAGUE 2006

BENONI

Notes by Geoff McKenna

From our March 3 match versus the Arlington Kings. 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 c5 4 d5 exd5 5 cxd5 d6 6 Nc3 g6 7 e4 Bg7 8 Nd2 0-0 9 Be2 (I think it's more popular nowadays for White to play Bd3 and then h3) 9...Re8 10 0-0 Na6 11 f4 c4 (A standard reaction, trading the c-pawn for better access to dark squares, e.g., if

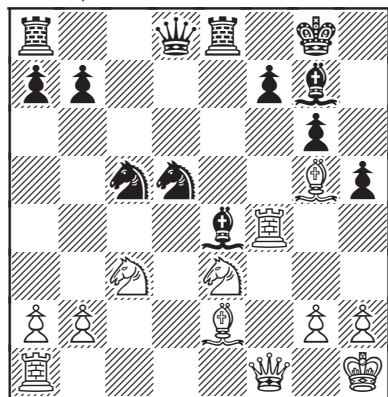
12 Bxc4 Qb6+ 13 Kh1 Ng4 with threats) 12 e5 dxe5 13 Nxc4 e4 14 Kh1 h5?! (A typical dream sequence after the text is 15 h3 Ng4 16 hxg4 Qh4+ Δ ... g3. However, 14...b5 is a critical line: 15 Nxb5 Qxd5 16 Ncd6 Rd8 17 Qxd5 Nxd5 18 Nxc8 when I was afraid of losing a pawn based on the looseness of my Knight on a6) 15 f5! Bxf5 (Here I felt that, for Black, the game is afoot, and the foot stinks. Maybe 15...Kh7 is safer.) 16 Bg5 e3 (In the post-mortem Ray spoke favorably of this move. I thought that White was objectively much better in all lines including the text, which I played in the spirit of "if you can't dazzle 'em with brilliance...") 17 Nxe3 Be4 18 Rf4!?

Nc5 (The Black pieces produce an unfavorable impression here, like furniture waiting to be taken away. This is a key position. I'm not sure what White should play; b4 is an option.) 19 Qf1! Nxd5

(diagram)

I based this on three main variations:

a) 20 Bd8 Ne3 21 Qf2 Bg2+ 22 Kg1 Rad8 Δ ...Bd4; b) 20 Ne4 Ne3 22 Bd8 Nf1 23 Nc5 Re2 24 Rf1 Rd8; c)



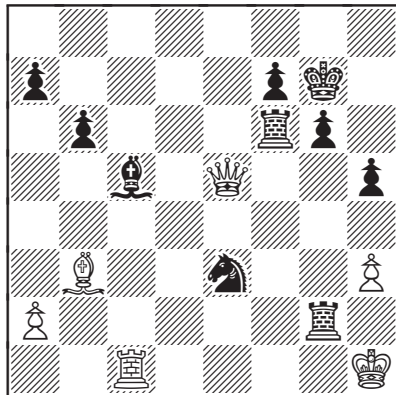
The game line. Having used up most of my time on moves 14 and 16, I was unable to confirm all the details here.



20 Bxd8 Nxe3 21 Rxe4 Nxe4 22 Qf3 Nxc3 23 bxc3 Raxd8 24 Bb5 Re7 25 Ba4 Bxc3 26 Rb1 b6 27 h3 Bd4 28 Re1 Bc5 (At this point I noticed that we were down 3-1 in the match, so I revised my plan of building a fortress.) **29 Bb3 Kg7 30 Re2 Rd6 31 Qa8 Rf6 32 Re1 Ng4 33 Rc1 Ne3** (Here I feared 35 g4 but Ray convinced me that Black lives with a timely Rook check after 35...hxc4 36 hxc4 Nh4 37 Rxc5 Re1+) **34 Qd8 Nf5 35 Rd1 Re2 36 Qb8 Ne3 37 Rg1 Nf5 38 Rc1 Ne3 39 Qe5 Rxc2?**

(diagram)

39...Nf5 was much better, when Black follows with h4 and Bd4 with a win in sight. After 39...Rxc2, however, I think 40 Rxc5 leads to a draw with White having the better of it. A sample line: 40...bxc5 41 Qxe3 Rff2 42 Bd5 Rh2+ 43 Kg1 Rxa2!? 44 Bxa2 Rxa2, when Black will draw if the Rook can make it back to e6 or f5. Unfortunately, none of this happened because... **1-0 time.** As it turns out, my remaining teammates rallied, so the match score wound up 4-3 in favor of the Kings.



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GEOFFREY McKENNA - GREG ACHOLONU

DC CHESS LEAGUE 2006

SLAV

Notes by Geoff McKenna

From our March 31 match versus Coral Reef. **1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nc3 a6 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 Bf4** (This exchange variation is a little dull but presumably playable.) **5...Nc6 6 e3 Nf6 7 Bd3?! Bg4 8 f3** (I was engrossed in the intricacies of **8...Bh5 9 Qb3 Na5 10 Qa4+ b5 11 Bxb5+ axb5 12 Nxb5** The text increases White's lead in time at a cost of significant dark square weakness.) **8...Bd7 9 Nge2 e6 10 e4** (Here I would like to castle but **10...Nh5** is annoying. Greg suggested **10 h3** to create a flight square for the bishop, but then **Nh5** and **Qh4+** have a certain Vincent Price quality. My guess is that **10 Bg3** is best, to flee to **f2** if necessary.) **10...dxe4 11 fxe4 e5! 12 dxe5 Ng4 13 Nd5** (The best chance in a difficult position. Black has a stunning variety of promising continuations, but apparently best is the simple **13...Ngxe5** with the better game. Two tricky alternatives are **13...Bc5 14 e6 Bxe6 15 Nc7+** and the Black King is stuck for a good square; or **13...Qa5+ 14 Nec3 Qc5 15 Qe2 13...Rc8?! 14 Rc1 Ngxe5 15 0 0 Be6?** (**Bd6** and **O-O** was necessary. Now the blockade



Upcoming... but unfortunately we don't have additional details at this time. The info here comes from the USCF's tournament clearinghouse web page. We'll try to learn more before our next issue (which will appear in June.)

July 15-16 — Charlottesville Open

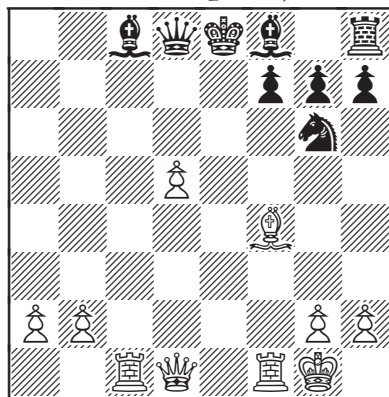
July 29-30 — Virginia Beach Swiss at Courtyard by Marriott



on e5 collapses. Having used up most of my time on moves 13 and 14, I only used about 5 minutes for the rest of the game.) **16 Nd4 Ng6 17 Nxc6 bxc6** (Avoiding 17... Rxc6 18 Nc7+) **18 Bxa6 cxd5 19 Bxc8 Bxc8 20 exd5**

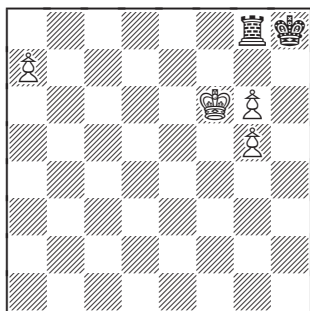
(diagram)

A funny tableau: material is about even but the White army is fully engaged, while Black's back rank looks like something out of a Sam Lloyd composition. **20...Nxf4 21 Qa4+ Bd7** (If instead 21...Qd7 to defend f7 then 22 Rxc8+ Ke7 23 Re1+) **22 Qxf4 f5** (22...f6 is probably a little better, but White's winning.) **23 Rfe1+ Kf7 24 Rc7 g6 25 d6 Kg8 26 Qc4+ Kg7 27**



From the Front Cover — **All Positions Are Defensible**

by Macon Shibut



I first saw this remarkable study several years ago in a British magazine. The solution's effect on me was almost like an optical illusion. Even once I knew the right moves, playing them through in my mind's eye was somehow difficult..

I showed the position to my friend Dave Sherman. A few weeks later I was at a tournament in New York when Dave came running up to me with an air of desperation. He had challenged a couple grandmasters with the position, they hadn't been able to solve it, but when they finally admitted defeat *Dave couldn't produce the solution even though he had seen it before* and was confident he'd set the position up correctly! I had to accompany him back to his slightly exasperated grandmasters to demonstrate the answer and to prove that Dave wasn't a total fool.



The study ought to be easy; there simply aren't that many candidate moves to consider! The difficulty arises from a practical player's tendency to prematurely abandon the key variation. It looks hopeless so we give up on it, and move on to try something else, when in fact we were only a move away from the simple but surprising finish.

The composer is Yochanan Afek, an Israeli IM with several interesting and pleasing studies to his credit. He also writes occasional articles for *New In Chess* magazine — see <http://www.newinchess.com/Archives/ArticlesList.aspx?AuthorID=551>

By now you're anxious to see the solution. I'll resist the temptation to suspend the reader until the next issue of *Virginia Chess*...

1 g7+ Kh7 2 g6+

No great surprise thus far, I suppose, although it is still not clear where this is all leading.

2...Kh6 3 a8Q!

Most people try 3 Kf7 first, staring at it for a long time. Then, mostly out of despair, they examine the text move. But only for a moment, as it seems pointless, so then back for another look at 3 Kf7...

3...Rxa8 4 Kf7 Ra7+

Isn't that all?

5 Kg8!

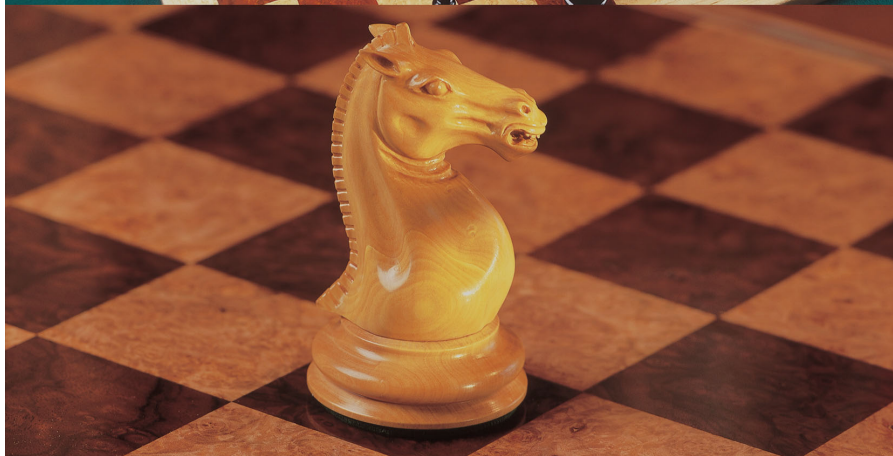
Ah!

5...Rxb7+ 6 Kh8 Ra7 7 g7

and Black has nothing better than stalemate by Rxb7. "But wait!," you ask, "What about 5...Kxb7 (instead of 5...Rxb7)?" Alas, it's no big difference: 6 Kh8! and again Black gets only a draw.



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