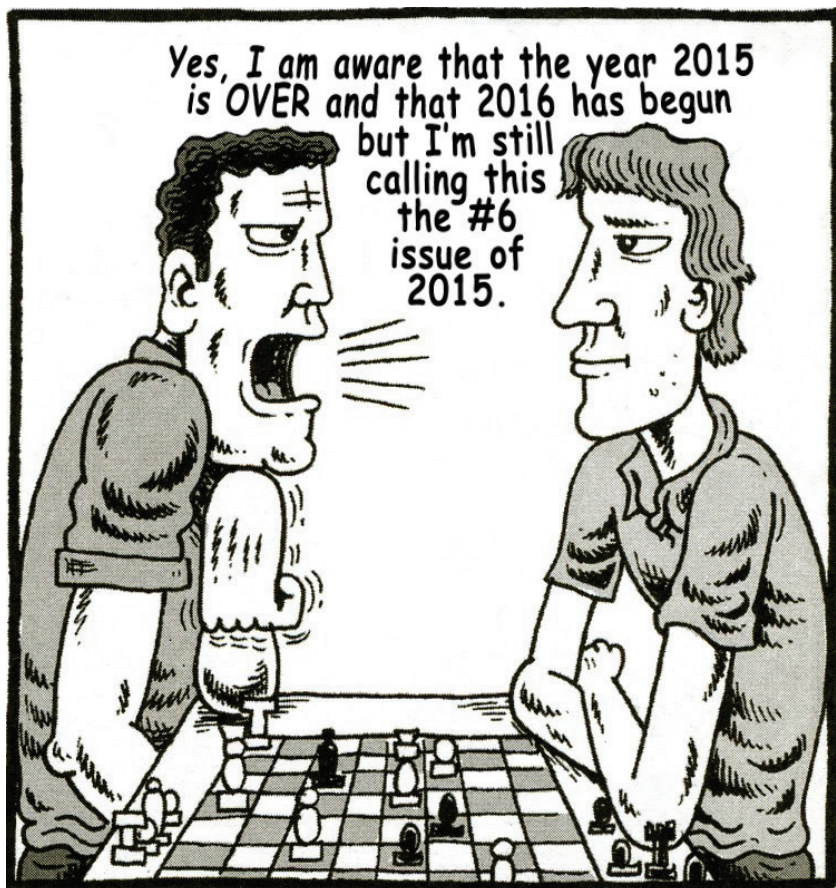


VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

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2015 - #6



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Virginia Scholastic Chess Association Richmond Fall Classic

by Michael Callaham

RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS dominated the Richmond Fall Classic, held Saturday, Nov 7 at the Main Branch of the Richmond Public Library. What makes their achievement especially noteworthy is that every Richmond Public School student was competing in their very first official USCF tournament! Fifteen players earned the the title of “rated tournament chess player,” which they can now put on their school applications and resumes. (Of the millions of chess players in the United States, less than 60,000 hold the title of “rated tournament chess player.”)

Henderson Middle School took clear 1st place in the k-8 section. Shaniya Natt lead the team with a score in 3-1. Albert Hill Middle School took 2nd place on the strength of performances by Aidan Davis and Brooks Newman who took individual 1st & 2nd place respectively. Ethan Coman, Carter Guishard & Diarra Trim, representing Binford, tied for third but got knocked out of the trophy on tie breaks. Devin Valentine represented Lucille Brown MS and earned himself a medal! In the K-12 group, Breon Lucas from Franklin Military Academy tied for 1st with Jack Weisel & Luming Zhao of Fort Union Military Academy, each undefeated 3½ out of 4.



(l-r) Gavin Dixon, Quamell Davis, Shaniya Natt, RCI's King Philidor (Mike Callaham), Jaila Blue, & Jaliyah Dixon. Janaya Williams & Jason Dunigan were also part of the Henderson team but not pictured.

A warm thanks goes to National and FIDE Master Landis Atkinson who graciously volunteered his time Saturday to provide free game analysis and advice to all the players at the tournament! The Richmond Chess Initiative (RCI) co-organized the event, provided snacks, fruit, gear sales and a free pizza lunch for the players. RCI



is a part paid - part volunteer Tournament Chess, Professional Development, and Entrepreneurial Training Company that provides weekly chess instruction for the Richmond Middle School Chess League. The Virginia Scholastic Chess Association directed/refereed the tournament and paid the USCF memberships and EFs of all 15 RPS participants. The Richmond Public Library allowed us to use the space in cooperation with the Richmond Metropolitan Grand Prix training and tournament circuit. We are all in this together to help Rated Tournament Chess Players of all ages earn scholarships, employment, and entrepreneurial opportunities! Have questions about how to get chess at your school, church, or place people meet? Call 804-398-2310 and ask for Mike Callahan. Want to help us or make a donation? Find out more about RCI at www.richmondchessinitiative.wordpress.com.





World Open Musings

by Macon Shibut

THE WORLD OPEN, America's largest annual open chess tournament, began in 1973 riding the Fischer boom. While the event got its start in New York City and has seen a couple of forays out to the provinces over the years (New Paltz, NY in 1981; Valley Forge, Pa in 1984, 2007 & 2010), the huge majority of World Opens have been staged around 4th of July weekend in Philadelphia.

The tournament's eternal spiritual home is of course the Adam's Mark Hotel, on City Line Ave north of central Philadelphia. Many of my fondest chess memories reside there. It was not the finest of hotels. In fact, there were times when it seemed rather a dump—such as the year when the water didn't work (although in fairness that may have been a more widespread problem not particular to the Adam's Mark). The elevators moved glacially in the best of circumstances; a rush of 1000 chess players would bring about complete gridlock fifteen minutes prior to each and every round. Ceilings leaked, the hotel restaurant seemed perpetually mismanaged, and Jerry Kearns got his car stolen from the parking lot one year. Chess players wandered back and forth across that parking lot like so many migratory animals, ranging between the playing area, the next door Holiday Inn (which provided overflow accommodations), the TGI Friday's, and what must be among the planet's worst Denny's restaurant.

Oh, but memories. Over the years I saw there young Joel Benjamin and old Samuel Reshevsky. I witnessed Roman Dzindichashvili gambling at blitz, backgammon and poker all night long, then produce magic in his tournament game while fueled by nothing more than cigarettes. I saw Tony Miles hitting on girls in the sports bar upstairs from the chess area. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* played out before my very eyes as the 1980s drew to a close and the crosstables filled up with exotic names like Babakouly Annakov, Artashes Minasian and Eduardas Rozentalis.

And I once saw Dr J himself—former 76er great (and earlier in his career, Virginia Squire) Julius Erving—stride across the Adam's Mark lobby.

Alas, the Adam's Mark was demolished in 2006. A Target superstar stands there now, and from my perspective at least the World Open has seemed a bit nomadic ever since. For the last three years (2013-2015) it found itself in Virginia. The Crystal City Hyatt Regency, in Arlington near Reagan National airport, met or exceeded the Adam's Mark standard in most respects—ample space, good lighting, plenty of varied food options nearby—although nearby the Starbucks closes at 5pm on weekends, which is ridiculous. But you can't have everything.



The sponsoring organization, Bill Goichberg's Continental Chess Association (CCA) runs other tournaments at the same venue (the Atlantic Open in August, the Washington Chess Congress in October), so perhaps there still could be future World Opens there, but at least for now the event's Virginia experiment has ended. The 2016 World Open is slated for a return to Philadelphia.

IF COURSE the World Open was never *of* Virginia even when it was held *in* Virginia. My own sense just from walking around the playing rooms is that familiar faces from our local chess scene were no more prevalent in Arlington than at World Opens I've attended in Philadelphia. Neither of our state champions during the period, Danny Miller and James Schuyler, played in any of Virginia's three World Opens. Maryland's Enkhbat Tesgeshuren has won the four (!) most recent Virginia Opens, and has played in at least some Philadelphia World Opens past (I know this because I was paired against him there once), but he only played in one the World Open at Arlington (2013). Even peripatetic Larry Larkins, who won the first two editions of the VCF Cup and who, I see from the USCF database, averaged ten tournaments a year since 2013, did not play in any of our World Opens.

I don't know exact figures or what the CCA wanted or projected for attendance at the Virginia venue, but by my own eyes it appeared that these three World Opens were normal for the event. This tournament draws regionally, nationally, even internationally, so maybe locally is not so important. Perhaps those who played, or didn't play, in the World Open in Virginia would have done the exact same things whether it was here or anywhere else on the I-95 corridor. The CCA certainly didn't do anything that I am aware of to encourage extra local participation. Back in January 2013, having learned that the World Open was coming, I emailed Bill Goichberg to inquire about publicizing it in VIRGINIA CHESS. His reply came four months later and essentially blew me off.

Grandmaster Sergey Erenburg Simultaneous Exhibition

Saturday, January 23, 2016

Arlington Forest United Methodist Church

4701 Arlington Blvd (intersection with N Henderson Rd)

Enter using basement door off rear parking lot ramp

GM Sergey Erenburg will give a 1-hour chess lecture with Q&A before taking on all challengers in a Simultaneous Exhibition match at the Arlington Chess Club. Erenburg was born in Russia and immigrated to Israel when he was 15 where he first won the Israeli national championship in 2004 at the age of 21. He also placed 2nd in the World Team Championship (2005) before attending the University of Maryland Baltimore County where he helped the UMBC team earn two US Collegiate Championships (2008, 2009). Register 1-1:30pm. No preregistration. Lecture 1:30pm. Simul 2:30pm. EF \$35, ACC members \$30, lecture only \$20. Pay on-site by cash or check, NO credit.

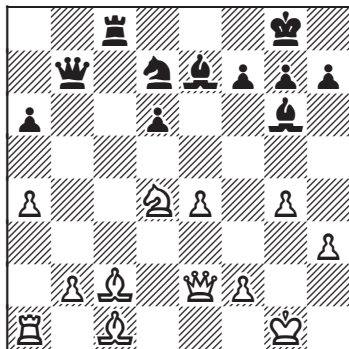


Macon Shibut – Steven Gaffagin
2015 World Open
Ruy Lopez

I arrived about 15 minutes early for the game. Pairing were already posted; I was to play White against Peter Korning—a name unfamiliar to me. I went to the appointed board and set up my equipment. Other players were also filing in. Soon enough Mr Korning arrived too. About my age, he was from Sweden. His wife was sightseeing around Washington while he played chess. They were going to stay on for a couple days more after the tournament. He seemed very friendly and we chatted until the director made his pre-round announcements, and then the direction to start all clocks. Our game began: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 d6. At this point... *confusion*. Another player arrived and said that I was sitting at his board! It turned out the pairing had been revised in the last minutes before the round yet, no announcement was made in the tournament hall! I had to *j'adoube* a couple chairs over to another table and start again against this different opponent. 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 [finally an 'innovation'] 5 Qe2 b5 6 Bb3 Be7 7 d4 d6 8 c3 O-O 9 O-O Bg4 10 Rd1 Qc8 11 h3 Bh5 12 Be3 Rb8 13 Nbd2 Na5 14 Bc2 Nd7 15 a4 exd4 16 cxd4 Nc4 [Surrendering a pawn, but a reasonable practical choice since taking it disorganizes my game.] 17 Nxc4 bxc4 18 Bc1 c5 19 g4 cxd4 20 Rxd4 Bg6 21 Rxc4 Qb7 22 Nd4?! [It was very difficult to find a plan. I chose the text move more with my fingers than my head. 22 Ra3 may have been better, eg 22...Ne5 (22...Nc5 23 b4) 23 Rb3 Qa8 24 Rxb8 Rxb8 25 Nxe5 dxe5 26 Qd3 White has a lot of work ahead to exploit the extra pawn.] 22...Rfc8 23 Rxc8+ Rxc8

24...Bf6?

The risk justified itself. Of course the critical line was 24...Rxc2, which I saw at the board. Had he played it, and thought I was ready to fight my way through, with two possibilities in mind in fact, although I was already pretty sure which one I would choose.





i) 25 Qxc2 It's unlikely that I would have played this. Even though I couldn't fully work out the refutation, I did not trust it, and my intuition was correct. 25...Bxe4 26 Qe2 is the supposed point—Be7 is hanging. 26...Bxb1 27 Qxe7 Qc8 28 Bf4 would be fine for White. Unsurprisingly, Black has something much better: 26...Bf6! instead of taking the rook. Then 27 Nc2 shields the rook but in reply 27...Ne5 gives Black a decisive attack. I finished this analysis while waiting for my opponent to make his 24th turn, so I had pretty much determined to answer 24...Rxc2 with...

ii) 25 Nxc2 The reason I figured he might not even play 24...Rxc2 is that here the obvious 25...Bxe4 doesn't give Black enough compensation for the exchange after 26 Ra1 (26 Bf4!) Bh1 27 Ne1 etc. After the game my opponent confirmed that indeed he gave up on 24...Rxc2 after seeing just this. However, I was also aware of what he missed, namely that the less obvious 25...Qxe4! was stronger. I thought White could manage the situation in any case, but after looking at it at home I concede that Black should probably be winning. 26 Qxe4 Bxe4 27 Na3—thus far forced. Now I saw 27...Bxb1 28 Nxb1 Nc5 29 Nc3 with equal material and “hopes exploit the outside passed pawn”. We need extend the variation just one move, 29...Nd3!, and it becomes clear the ending will not be equal material at all. Also, for what it's worth Black has something even stronger than taking the rook on the 27th turn, 27...Nc5! The rook will not go anywhere so Black again wins material directly: 28 Be3 (if 28 Ra1 Nb3) 28...Bxb1 29 Nxb1 Nxa4 30 b3 Nc5 31 Bxc5 dxc5 32 Kg2 ♣



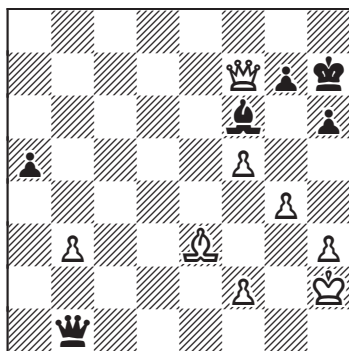
25 Nf5 Bxf5 26 exf5 [The correct way, retaining the possibility g5 for a kingside attack. 26 gxf5 is no advantage for White notwithstanding the extra pawn after 26...Qc6 27 Bd3 Nc5] **26...Qc6 27 Bd3 Nc5** [If 27...Ne5 28 Be4 (28 Qe4 Nxd3 29 Qxd3 Qxa4) 28...Qxa4 29 b3] **28 Be3** [White does not have a whole lot in any event, but I liked my position and sometimes that is more important.] **28...Nxd3 29 Qxd3 Qxa4 30 b3** [30 Qxd6 h5 =] **30...Qb5** [30...Qc6? loses to 31 Rc1, which I had seen and I guess you could say relied upon. I had not noticed 30...Qa2! which would have definitively equalized.] **31 Qxd6 h6** [The extra pawn is doubled and there is no prospect of creating a passed pawn but I still hoped I could make progress on the kingside.] **32 Qd1** [I liked this move, regrouping to activate the rook and guard against any accidents befalling my own king.] **32...Rc3 33 Qf1 Qc6?!** [Eliminating the queenside pawns by 33...Rxb3 34 Rxb3 Qxb3 35 Qxa6 must be correct.] **34 Rc1** [34 b4 Rc4 35 Bc5 was also worth considering.] **34...a5?** [A positional blunder. Putting this pawn on a dark square means any bishop ending is likely lost as White will work with threats on both flanks. So now Black must keep the queens on the board, when the pawn will still be a weakness and White may yet make a real attack out of g5 someday. 34...Rxc1



was correct, with the likely continuation 35 Qxc1 Qf3 36 Qf1] **35 Rxc3 Qxc3 36 Qb5 Kh7 37 Qb7** [For some reason I preferred this to the centralizing 37 Qd5 which is funny because had he now defended the f-pawn by 37...Kg8 my plan was to centralize “with tempo” by 38 Qa8+ Kh7 39 Qd5 Kg8 and then 40 Kg2 Δ Bd2] **37...Qd3** [Hustling to make the time control, Black despaired of holding all the pawns and just gave up f7 to get a chance at harassing my king.] **38 Qxf7 Qb1+ 39 Kh2** [39 Kg2? Qe4+ =]

39...Be5+

Had he played 39...Qe4 there's an excellent chance that on the last move of this time control I would have fallen for 40 Qe6? when Black draws by 40...Be5+ 41 Kg1 Qb1+ = The only way for White to demonstrate an advantage is to take a stroll: 40 Bd2! Be5+ 41 Kg1 Qb1+ 42 Kg2 Qe4+ 43 Kf1 Qd3+ 44 Ke1 Qe4+ 45 Be3 Qb1+ 46 Kd2 Qb2+ 47 Kd3 Qc3+ 48 Ke4 etc.



40 f4 [This, on the other hand, was easily calculated with my remaining time.] **40... Qc2+ 41 Kg3 Bc3** [If 41...Bf6 42 g5 wins. The text move introducing the resource ...Be1+ is the best try. Now it was time for a walk around the playing hall to clear my head after the time scramble before settling down to a long look at the position.]

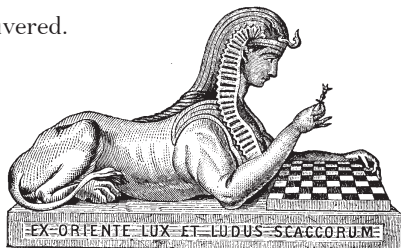
42 Qg6+

As I recall, the first move I looked at was 42 Qd5 and I didn't care for the “complications” arising after 42...Be1+ (42...Qe2) 43 Kf3 Qh2. In fact White is good here: 44 Qd3! threatening f5+ and if 44...Qxh3+ 45 Ke2 threatening the bishop as well. The quality of analysis suffers in the fourth or fifth hour of play.

Next I considered whether I force matters with 42 g5 but 42...Be1+ 43 Kf3 Qd1+ 44 Ke4 Qc2+ did not look like anything I wanted to get involved with. Here too the truth is rosier than I thought as 45 Ke5 Bc3+ 46 Bd4 seems to work out, eg 46...Qe2+ 47 Kd6 Bb4+ (or Qa6+ 48 Kc7!) 48 Kd7 mating.

Unable to calculate a clean finish, I maneuvered.

42...Kh8 43 Qe6





I saw that it would be all over if I could reach this position with it my turn (for instance, had he played 42...Kg8 instead of Kh8, allowing 43 Qe6+ Kh8) after 44 g5 Be1+ 45 Kf3 Qd1+ 46 Kg2 Qe2+ 47 Kg1. However, after 42...Kh8 the similar variation 43 Qe8+ Kh7 44 g5? Doesn't work because White's queen is on an undefended square: 44...Be1+ 45 Kf3 Qd1+ 46 Kg2 Qe2+ = because 47 Kg1? runs into the cold shower 47...Bf2+!

43...Qd3?

The only move I examined was 43...Be1+ I intended to reply 44 Kf3 Qd1+ 45 Ke4 Qc2+ 46 Ke5 and it felt like victory was near (eg 46...Bc3+ 47 Kd6 etc) but 46...Qd3!? would still have forced me to work some more. I don't know what my opponent saw that discouraged him from playing the obvious bishop check but the move he chose is essentially a gift tempo, after which the win is easy.

44 g5 Be1+ 45 Kf3 hxg5 [My king easily escapes checks here or on the next move, eg 45...Qf1+ 46 Ke4 Qh1+ 47 Kd3; or 45...Qd1+ 46 Kg2 Qe2+ 47 Kg1] **46 fxg5 g6 47 Qe8+ Kh7 48 Qxg6+ Kh8 49 Qe8+ 1-0** The finish could be 49...Kg7 50 f6+ Kh7 51 Qf7+ Kh8 52 Qg7mate; or 49...Kh7 50 Qf7+ Kh8 51 Qf8+ Kh7 52 g6mate.





Reflections

Reflections



Looking Back on an Amateur Chess “Career”

by Mark Warriner

INTERESTING DRAWS – PART I

I love to collect chess books, too much really; 1,000+ and counting. Magazines, sets, instructional DVDs and engines too. I shudder to think of what I could have done with the \$\$\$ spent on chess instead of saving or investing. Ridiculous. Ah well, we all have our vices. Mine just happens to collect dust and to interest no one except other chess players. Who never see them anyway. “Hey, wanna come look at my chess book collection some time?” Sure, let me put it on my calendar.

Anyway, W Heidenfeld wrote a book titled *Draw* (ISBN 0-04-794014-X, George Allen & Unwin 1982) extolling the interests of the more ho-hum of the possible results in chess, the ol’ ½–½. I have to agree with Heidenfeld, though I was initially skeptical and just thought it was another cool, obscure book. Here are a few of my own games that persuaded, well, me.

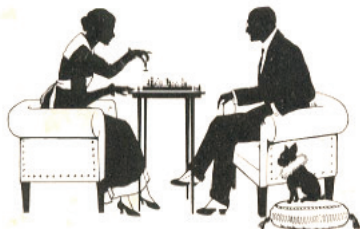
David Eisen was a very good player. International Correspondence Master, Two-time Absolute Postal Chess Champion 1980-81, Expert (Master?) over-the-board player, etc. He didn’t say much and seemed a little nervous during this game. I have no idea why; I was certainly no threat to him. But I got more than a little lucky and drew what was at least an optically interesting game. (I love that term. I first heard GM Hikaru Nakamura use it to describe games/positions and decided to add it to my chess lexicon.)

David Eisen - Mark Warriner 1990 Virginia Open Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 e5 [I became interested in the Sveshnikov Sicilian after buying (I won’t say “reading” as, like most, I tend to *browse* chess books) *The Sicilian Pelikan* by Evgenny Sveshnikov (ISBN 0-02-029821-8, Collier Books 1989). The opening has gone through many phases of popularity during the past quarter-century.] **6 Ndb5 d6 7 Bg5 a6 8 Bxf6** [A move I love to hate, but if you want to play the Sveshnikov you better learn to like it.] **8...gxf6 9 Na3 b5 10 Nd5** [If you check the databases, you’ll find that the main move is 10....f5. I was already beyond my knowledge and chose an alternative that might be slightly less favorable.] **10...Bg7 11 c3** [Good, though 11 Bd3 has been trending



as of late.] **11...Ne7** [11...f5 typically yields more favorable results for Black. Again, my ignorance.] **12 Nc2 Nxd5** [also 12...O-O or 12...f5] **13 Qxd5 Be6 14 Qc6+ Ke7 15 Ne3 Qd7** [We're finally in 'rare air', only a handful of games having gone this route. White can go either 16 Nd5+ or 16 Qd7+. Hard to say which is better.] **16 Qxd7+ Kxd7 17 Be2** [17 Bd3 might have been just a tad better, and 17 g3 is playable also, but I can't find fault with the text.] **17...Bh6** [17...Rhc8 was also worth considering] **18 Ng4 Bg7** [You don't need to be a pro to figure out that 18...Bxg4 19 Bxg4+ gives Black a bad situation on the light squares.] **19 O-O f5** [Finally one of the thematic breaks for Black in the Sveshnikov; again 19...Rhc8 could also be played.] **20 exf5 Bxf5 21 Ne3** [Engines like 21 f4 but I wonder whether most players would figure that out.] **21...Be6 22 a4** [Probably 22 Bf3 or 22 Rfd1 was better.] **22...bxa4 23 Rxa4 Rhb8 24 Bxa6 Ke7** [or 24...d5 right away] **25 b4 Bh6** [Again, 25...d5 was better. The text gives White too much activity.] **26 Rfa1 d5 27 Bd3?** [27 Ra5 was much stronger. Now Black can equalize.] **27...Rxa4 28 Rxa4 e4 29 Be2 Kd6** [But this is too bold. 29...Rc8 applied pressure.] **30 Kf1?** [Again letting Black off of the hook. 30 Ra6+] **30...Bg7 31 Nd1 Be5** [Here I was formulating an idea of advancing my f- and h-pawns. I felt sure I was losing (though I wasn't), and was seeking active counterplay.] **32 h3 Rc8 33 Ra3 Rc7 34 Ke1 Rc8 35 Kd2 Bf4+** [Didn't have my exact setup visualized yet and was just trying to make time control. No doubt 35...f5 was an improvement.] **36 Ne3 h6?** [This gives White a sizeable advantage. 37 g3 Be5 38 Bg4; or 37 Ra6+] **37 Bg4 f5 38 Be2 Rc7?** [Off-key; 38...Be5 instead] **39 g3 Bg5? 40 h4 Bf6** [I actually wanted this position at the time, but 39...Be5 was again better. Funny how certain moves remain the best even for more than one move in a row sometimes.] **41 Nc2 Ke7?** [a big ol' thoughtless howler now] **42 Nd4** [42 b5 was stronger] **42...Be5 43 Ra6 Bd7 44 Rxh6** [Okay, so now I was in full desperation mode. But I did uncork the only realistic try.] **44...f4 45 Rg6 Ra7?** [Not the best at all, but if White goes astray Black is totally fine. Guess what? White went astray!] **46 Ra6?? Rxa6 47 Bxa6 fxf3 48 fxf3 Bxf3** [and now Black can draw due to the activity of his bishop pair] **49 h5 Bf4+ 50 Kc2 Kf6** [a slight inaccuracy that does not spoil the draw; 50...Kd6] **51 Be2 Kg5 52 b5 Bc7 53 Kb3 Bb6 54 Kb4 Be8 55 Ne6+ Kh6 56 Nf4 Bf7 57 c4 dxc4 58 Bxc4 Bxh5 59 Nxh5 Kxh5** a close but dynamic shave. ½-½



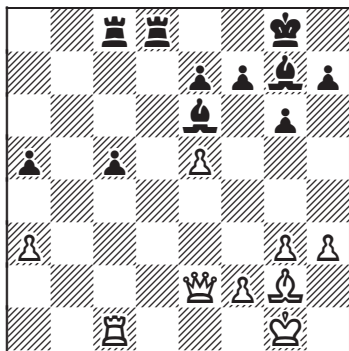


Saninder “Sunny” Singh is just about the nicest Chess player you will ever meet— infallibly polite, always thoughtful, and cheerful. A strong Expert, he regularly trounced me back in my early days in the ‘80s learning at the VCU Chess Club. But I did manage one very interesting draw. It’s not often you get to a queen versus two bishops and a pawn ending, but here you go.

Saninder Singh - Mark Warriner
1987 Fredericksburg Open
English

1 c4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 g3 g6 4 Bg2 Bg7 5 Nf3 d6 [Very topical these days, not so much then. But then moves are constantly being recycled these days thanks to engine analysis.] **6 O-O Nf6** [6...Nh6 has been scoring well for Black.] **7 e4** [Slightly unusual move order. Instead 7 d4 or 7 d3] **7...O-O 8 h3 a6** [doesn’t score nearly as well as 8...Ne8] **9 d4 cxd4 10 Nxd4 Bd7** [10...Nxd4 11 Qxd4 Be6 would have been better] **11 Be3 Rc8 12 Nxc6 Bxc6 13 Qe2 Bd7?** [13...Nd7] **14 Rac1 Be6 15 Nd5 Nd7** [Perhaps counter-intuitively, 15...Nxd5 was better, eg 16 exd5 Bf5 17 b4 a5 18 a3 b6] **16 b4** [16 Nf4 capturing the bishop and messing up Black’s pawn structure.] **16...b6** [Cliff diving, instead of 16...Bxd5 17 cxd5 Rb8 trying to hold on] **17 Rfd1** [not terrible, but again 17 Nf4 was better] **17...a5** [probably not best, but it was a shot] **18 a3 Re8?** [Black is running out of moves, but this is a waste. Either 18...Bxd5 or 18...Be5] **19 c5?** [totally letting Black off the hook; either 19 Nf4, 19 Rc2 or 19 h4 keep control] **19...bxc5 20 bxc5 Nxc5 21 Bxc5** [Engines find 21 e5, but would an amateur in an over-the-board game? Not likely!] **21...dxc5 22 Nf6+** [It might seem a little off for Black to have gone down this road of giving up the queen, but I’d calculated (okay guessed) it was all right, and so it seems. But Black’s next move is not quite best.] **22...Bxf6** [Engines indicate 22...exf6 23 Rxd8 Rxd8 as better. I’m guessing they don’t like allowing e5 by White.] **23 Rxd8 Rxd8 24 e5 Bg7**

(diagram)

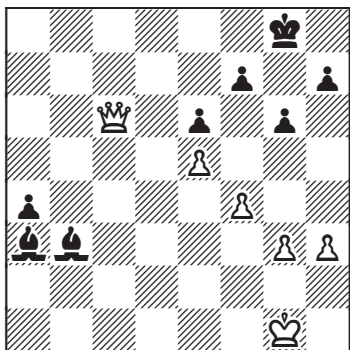


The dust has almost settled, and though the Black bishop lacks scope, as I surmised the position is basically equal. White has a Q *vs* B+B+P. Black’s pawn is a passer and if he can eliminate the e-pawn he will have a nice dark-square diagonal. *If...* (biggest word in the universe)

25 f4 a4 [25...c4 or 25...Bb3 first are also okay] **26 Qb5** [or 26 Qa6 Bb3 27 Bb7 Rb8 28 Rxc5 Bf8 29 Rc3 e6 30 Bc6] **26...Bb3 27 Rxc5 e6** [I’d figured on activating the dark-square bishop this way, but apparently it’s not a good



idea. 27...Rc5, 27...Rb8 and 27...Rd1+ all preferred by engines.] **28 Rxc8 Rxc8** **29 Bc6** [going after the a-pawn, but I had an interesting—though not good—idea...] **29...Bf8 30 Qa6 Rxc6?!** [I permit myself the “exclam” for the creativity of the idea, but engines say “nah, it doesn’t work.”] **31 Qxc6 Bxa3**



Okay, so my thinking here was that at worst I had a fortress. I’ll play Bf8 and dance around with the light-square bishop, and maybe even better if I can somehow walk the pawn down to a1.

32 g4

32 Kf2 Bf8 33 Qb5 Bc2 34 Ke3 a3 35 Kd4 h5 36 Qf1 a2 37 Kc3 Bb1 38 Kb2 Bc5 39 Qc4 Bg1 40 Qc3 Kg7 41 Qd2 Bc5 42 Ka1 Kh7 43 Qd6 is sheer fantasy, but it gives an idea of how difficult this position is to assess and the

weird things that can happen. With the text I was guessing White was trying either to prevent a fortress by not allowing Black to play h5, or to crack open the kingside with a pawn roller.

32...Bb2 [And here I just gulped and played bravely. Engines don’t really like this moved but I don’t see a way for White to win.] **33 h4?** [Better for White 33 Qd6 Kg7 34 Qb4 seems to be better for White, eg 34...h5 (34...h6) 35 gxh5 gxh5 36 h4 Kg6 37 Kf2 Kf5 38 Qb7] **33...a3** [now Black secures a draw] **34 h5** [tricky, but can be side-stepped two ways] **34...Kg7 35 Qa8 h6** [35...gxh5 36 gxh5 h6 apparently also works though I don’t like the looseness of Black’s king.] **36 g5** [best, testing Black’s nerves] **36...a2 37 gxh6+ Kh7** [Carelessly taking the pawn would be mate in one!] **38 hxg6+ fxg6 39 Qb7+ Kxh6 40 Qh1+ Kg7 41 Qb7+ Kf8 42 Qa8+ Ke7 43 Qb7+ Ke8** Black can dance all day but can’t evade perpetual checks, whereas White can’t afford to do anything else lest the a-pawn promote with check. ½–½



IONCE FELL ASLEEP for 45 minutes during a game. It’s true; just ask Norman Canter. I didn’t get enough sleep the previous night and was exhausted. I remember thinking it probably didn’t matter if I fell asleep anyway, my position was so bad. And someone would probably wake me up... Nobody did. You can imagine my consternation, and probably his, when I awoke only to find that he hadn’t moved almost the entire time I was out! I kept checking the clock because I couldn’t believe it. During the game, I dropped the exchange, then was down a pawn, then allowed two passed, connected pawns (d & e no less)—and yet I survived. Don’t ask me how I pulled this one out of my posterior region, I was just fortunate. It’s been said more than once—it’s better to be lucky than good. Call me “Lucky.”

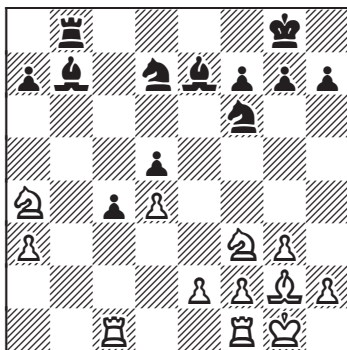


Norman Canter - Mark Warriner

1987 VA State Open

Queen's Indian

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 g3 b6 3 Bg2 Bb7 4 O-O e6 5 c4 Be7 6 Nc3 O-O 7 d4 d5 [I used the Queen's Indian Defense a lot in the 80's. It seemed much more popular then. I enjoyed Karpov's games from the Black side, but then Kasparov came along and blew it all up. I enjoyed that too.] **8 cxd5** [8 Ne5 is more typical, though both moves have been successful.] **8...exd5 9 Bg5** [also 9 Bf4 or 9 Ne5] **9...Nbd7** [Still a lot of possible replies, but this is most frequent and solid.] **10 Rc1 Re8** [not common, with 10...c6 or 10...h6 preferred] **11 a3 c6 12 b4 c5** [The first "original" move, but I won't deign to call it a "TN." Either 12...Rc8, 12...h6, or 12...a5 were almost certainly better.] **13 bxc5 bxc5 14 Qb3** [14 Rb1 or 14 dxc5 were tougher to meet.] **14...Rb8?** [Oops! Just 14...Qb6 instead.] **15 Bf4** [So what does an Amateur do when they make a one-move howler? Well, they panic and play another bad move, of course.] **15...Qa5** [15...c4 had to be tried. I got lucky and sort of transposed.] **16 Bxb8 Rxb8 17 Qa4** [White had better: 17 Ne5 cxd4 18 Nxd7 Nxd7 19 Nxd5 Bxd5 20 Qxd5 Qxd5 21 Bxd5] **17...Qxa4 18 Nxa4 c4**

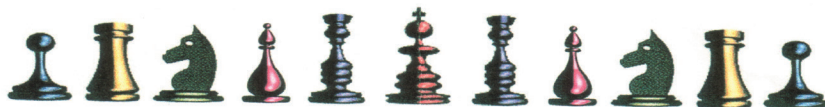


Okay, pretty bad, but I do have the passed c4 pawn, so I decided to continue even though things were bleak to say the least. I'm surprised I didn't notate it on my scoresheet (we could in those days), but somewhere around here is where I fell asleep. I know this because I did record the times at move 20, and by then my opponent had used 1:24! (I had used only 0:27) Why he thought so long while I was sleeping, I'll probably never know.

19 Ne5 [19 Rb1 was even better] **19...Bxa3 20 Nxd7** [20 Rb1 was a much sterner test. White starts letting Black slip a bit.] **20...Nxd7 21 Rb1 Bc6 22 Rxb8+ Nxb8 23 Nc3** [Again letting Black off easy; instead 23 Ra1 Bb4 24 Rb1 a5 25 Nc3 g5 26 Nxd5 Bxd5 27 Bxd5 c3 and Black can flail away but make no progress.] **23...Nd7 24 Nxd5 Bxd5 25 Bxd5 c3 26 Bb3 Bb2** [So Black's on life-support but still kicking. Down the exchange, but it's difficult for White to mobilize the



rook due to Black's bishop on b2 guarded by the passer on c3.] **27 e4** [Engines aren't a fan of this, wanting 27 Rd1 or even 27 d5 instead. Perhaps it's just that the text is slower. It also allows a tactical trick if White isn't alert.] **27...Nb6 28 d5** [White has allowed Black to almost crawl back to equality. Black, thinking he'd found a clever trick, throws it all away.] **28...Nc4?** [Now either 29 d6! or 29 e5! wreak havoc (we'll let you work out why).] **29 Bxc4? c2 30 d6 c1Q 31 Rxc1 Bxc1 32 d7?** [White needs more finesse to escort his pawn to queen. The move played just diagrams for Black what must be done. 32 e5 and 32 Kg2 are both more difficult.] **32...Bg5 33 f4 Bd8 34 Kf2 Kf8 35 Kf3 a5** [It's important to advance this runner to make him as unpleasant for White as possible.] **36 e5 a4 37 Ke4 a3 38 f5 Ke7 39 e6 f6** [39...fxe6 40 fxe6 Ba5 41 g4 Be1 42 Kd4 g6 43 h3 may be a cleaner draw] **40 Kd5 h6** [So Black achieves a fortress; his king and bishop just jockey about d8, e7, f8 and White can't break through.] **41 Ba2 Bc7 42 Kc6 Ba5 43 Kb5 Bc7 44 Kb4 Bd6+ 45 Kc4 Bc7 46 Kd5 Bb6 47 Ke4 Bd8 48 Kf3 Kf8 49 Kg4 Be7 50 Kh5 Bd8 51 Kg6 Be7 52 h3 Bd8 53 g4 Be7 54 h4 Bd8 ½-½**



2015 Annual Membership Meeting

The 2015 Annual Membership Meeting of the Virginia Chess Federation (VCF) had been delayed from the standard Labor Day date. Notice was provided on the VCF website homepage over two weeks before the meeting was held on November 8, 2015.

A quorum call rounded up an initial 11 members so that the meeting could be called to order. The final list of attendees included current VCF board members Mike Hoffpauir, Andy Rea, Adam Chrisney, Mike Callahan as well as VCF editor Macon Shibut, Anand Dommalapati (both on by conference call), Luan Nguyen, Ian Barruel, Todd Hammer, Joe Faries, Mark Scott, and Raj Kovvali (who joined VCF at the tournament). Current board member Ernie Schlich was excused from attending but available by phone upon request.



First order of business was approval of the previous minutes which was deferred until a copy could be shared by email. Next item was the election of VCF board officers. The current board of directors (5) was re-nominated with no new additions. Motion made by A Chrisney, seconded by M Hoffpauir and then unanimously passed.

Raj Kovvali, parent to VCF junior member Omkar Kovvali, joined the meeting during this discussion and asked if he could volunteer for the board and run for any vacant position. He was informed that board members need to first be VCF



members (\$10) and that the position of Membership Secretary was currently filled by E Schlich and who, though not in attendance, had previously indicated a desire to divest himself of his board commitments (Treasurer, Membership Secretary). The board deferred further consideration until E Schlich's desires were confirmed and a full description of the duties of Membership Secretary could be shared with R Kovvali. A Chrisney / M Hoffpauir to follow up on this item.

ANNUAL BUSINESS:

Acting-Treasurer's Report (E Schlich): In summary, the VCF is in good financial shape though a deficit has been run in recent years, particularly last year. VCF has over \$34,000 with net worth decreasing by over \$5,300 last year. Most of last year's decrease was due to noticeably lower attendance at VCF tournaments. A full two-page report from E Schlich with attachments covering VCF's 5-year net worth and a summary of income and expenses was shared at the meeting.

Membership Secretary's Report (E Schlich): Current memberships are 206 down from 263 last year (at or over 250 for the previous five years). A full 1-page memo was shared at the meeting.

Editor's Report (M. Shibut): VCF is on schedule to publish each issue (6 total) this year on time. There is no need of any software upgrades or other expenses at this time. M Shibut offered special thanks to Mark Warriner for his faithfulness on contributing his "Reflections" series. He also urged all members to consider contributing material to further issues. It was suggested that the President reach out to all VCF chess clubs to urge them to summarize club sponsored tournaments and activities and to contribute other material.

OLD BUSINESS:

Treasurer. Two-three years ago, long-time VCF Board Member and Treasurer, E Schlich, notified VCF of his desire to step down from these duties. The membership was told in detail of the arduous multi-year effort to find a replacement. While the search for a suitable replacement will continue, M Hoffpauir will assume these duties to give E Schlich much deserved relief. It was agreed (no motion) that in the future the board should have at least one additional member familiar with these duties (Treasurer + Board Member) so we are not faced with this burden again.

Webmaster. The membership was apprised that no one fills this position per se but M Hoffpauir handles these duties as do a number of other board members on an as needed basis. The prior webmaster was a hindrance to timely updating the website. Filling this voluntary position will be a priority for the coming year.

Certain VCF Members. The membership was made aware of a player who is on the sex offenders registry and has participated in a number of chess events this year,



including two VCF events. This past spring, some irresponsible players fanned player/parent hysteria over his presence. An exhaustive review with relevant law enforcement entities has determined that the player served his time and his probation and that law enforcement is not restricting his activities and his status has been reconfirmed each time he has participated. VCF is not placing any restrictions on his participation in VCF events but organizers monitor his actions at VCF venues.

New Clubs. The membership was apprised of various activities to foster new chess clubs as well as to develop new tournament directors and organizers. Board members were urged to continue these efforts.

NEW BUSINESS:

New Electronics Policy. The membership was apprised of a new VCF policy under development on the use and possession of cell phones and other electronic devices during VCF chess tournaments. The goal of the policy is to accommodate the use of new technology but also vigorously protect the integrity of VCF chess tournaments. The policy is almost finalized and will at a minimum be posted on the VCF website.

VCF Events. The board reviewed participation in VCF events in recent years. Numbers have dropped and the board discussed how to restructure future events to best rebuild participation. Options discussed included more comprehensive publicity, differing time controls for different sections, accelerated time schedules and side events, amongst other options. Development of new events was also briefly discussed. Current VCF events include: VA Closed, VA Open, VA State Scholastics, VA Senior Open, Northern VA Open, Charlottesville Open, Zofchak Memorial, and Emporia Open.

Quarterly Board Conference Calls. In follow up to the topic being briefly discussed last year, A Chrisney suggested a need for regular board conference calls for cohesion, sponsoring of VCF events and continued momentum of board issues throughout the year. Quarterly conference calls were suggested to roughly occur just after Thanksgiving, in late March (just after VA scholastic and VA Open tournaments) and in late June. The fourth quarterly call would be the annual Labor Day membership meeting. The President would be responsible for reminding the board of each call. A Chrisney made a motion for this to be implemented, M Hoffpauir seconded, and it passed unanimously.

Grant Funding / Public Service Announcements. M Callaham has been researching options for generating revenue outside of tournaments and other chess events. If secured, this funding can be used for a variety of VCF-specific purposes. M Callaham has apprised M Hoffpauir of his efforts and will submit a 1-page



summary of potential opportunities and next steps for the March conference call.

OPEN FORUM: This is a new VCF agenda item. The board has set aside this time for VCF members to present new business without having previously advised the board. Members are to have up to 2 minutes to address the board, unless otherwise approved. As needed, each new business item may be delegated for further consideration and approval. No members addressed the board this meeting though they have in previous years.

ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION: With all membership business covered, a motion was made by A. Chrisney to adjourn, seconded by A Rea and passed by unanimous consent. First item of the Executive Session was to elect a President. A Rea nominated A Chrisney as President, M Hoffpauir seconded. No other nominations were proposed. A. Chrisney was unanimously re-elected VCF president. A Chrisney appointed M Hoffpauir as Treasurer, Macon Shibut as Editor, M Callaham as Scholastic Coordinator and with M Hoffpauir to continue as Chairman and A Rea as Vice-Chairman. A number of other items above were discussed further but no additional action was taken.



Photo by David Long

Changing Address?

Please notify the membership secretary if your address is changing! You can email changes/correction to Ernie Schlich at ernest.schlich@gmail.com

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