

VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the
Virginia Chess Federation

2020 - #1



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2020 - Issue #1

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Virginia Chess is published six times per year by the Virginia Chess Federation. Membership benefits include a subscription to *Virginia Chess*. Send material for publication to the editor. Send dues, address changes, etc to Circulation.

The Virginia Chess Federation (VCF)



is a non-profit organization for the use of its members. Dues for regular adult membership are \$15/yr. Junior memberships (under age 18 at expiration) are \$8/yr. President: Anand Dommalapati, PO Box 223582, Chantilly,

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Eastern Open

Former state champion Macon Shibut scored 5½-1½ to capture clear 1st place at the 46th annual Eastern Open, held between Christmas and New Year's at the Westin hotel in Tyson's Corner.

Sean Senft steamrolled the Under 2200 section, scoring 7-0 to finish two full points ahead of the field. Tyson Brady & Aron Cheng each scored 5½ to share top honors in the Under 1900. In the Under 1600 group Leonardo DiPerna also recorded a 7-0 sweep (and gained nearly 300 rating points!). Chandresh Duraisamy's 6-1 was good for clear 1st in the Under 1300.

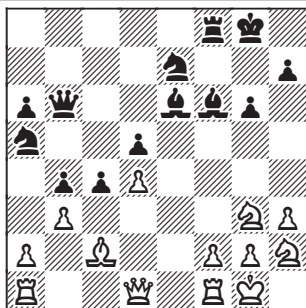
A total of 194 players competed across six sections. Tom Beckman organized the event for the eleventh year running, with TD staff Greg Vaserstein, Andy Rea, Karl Peterson & Josh Hiban.

Macon Shibut - Justin Paul

Ruy Lopez

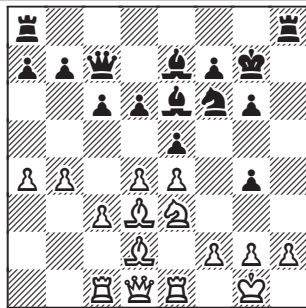
Notes by Macon Shibut

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 b5 5 Bb3 g6 [I noticed Justin play earlier in the tournament but I had not examined it because somehow I expected to be assigned the Black pieces in this game and I prepared accordingly.] **6 c3** [Considering 6 d4 exd4 7 Nxd4 I found 7...Na5 (correct according to Justin in the post mortem) and thought White had nothing special. Justin continued the variation 8 Qf3 Qf6! which he called Black's "only move". I was just thankful I hadn't ventured into complications he has evidently explored already.] **6...Bg7 7 d4 exd4** [7...d6 heads back towards something like a normal 'Modern' Steinitz Defense.] **8 cxd4 Nge7 9 O-O d6 10 h3 O-O 11 Nc3 Na5 12 Bc2 Bb7 13 b3 c5 14 Bb2?! [I should have played 14 Be3, and I knew it at the board. Somehow the undefended Nc3 spooked me.] 14...b4 15 Ne2 d5** [I expected 15...c4 16 bxc4 Nxc4 17 Bc1] **16 e5 c4 17 Bc1 Bc8** [Afterwards someone asked me about 17...c3, obviously impressed by the protected passed pawn. Aside from the fact that at this particular moment White might undermine the pawn by 18 a3, my more general explanation was that closing the queenside would mean the fun is essentially over on that flank for a while, whereas White gets time to methodically build up a major siege of the kingside. At least that was my hope during the game.] **18 Ng3 Be6 19 Nh2** [I considered 19 a3 cxb3 20 Bxb3 Nxb3 21 Qxb3 but decided to cast my lot entirely on the kingside.] **19...f6 20 exf6 Bxf6 21 Bh6 Qb6** [A surprise, but not an unpleasant one since I was not convinced of my whole kingside pretension. For instance, 21...Rf7 22 Ng4 Bxg4 23 Qxg4 Qc8 and now what? But my opponent doesn't want to defend, he will *seize the initiative*, to use a favorite phrase from books in vogue back when I was Justin's age. So he sacrifices an exchange in order to conquer the center, specifically my doomed d4 pawn.] **22 Bxf8 Rxf8**



23 Qe2! Bxd4 24 Rae1 [I was very happy when I found this Qe2-Rae1 plan. Black succeeded in capturing d4 but the initiative returns to me due to Black's insecure pieces on the e-file.] **24...Nf5** [24...Rf6 25 Ng4 Bxg4 26 hxc4 might have been better than how he played. Black has some compensation for the exchange.] **25 Nxf5 Bxf5 26 Bxf5 Rxf5 27 Ng4** [the right place at the right time] **27...Bg7** [27...Rf8 28 Qe7 is no better] **28 bxc4 Nxc4** [28...dxc4 caused me trouble in the post mortem but only because I didn't find the nice reply 29 Qd2! making way for the rook to lead the invasion. Black is defenseless, eg, 29...c3 30 Re8+ Bf8 (30...Rf8 31 Qd5+) 31 Nh6+ Kh8 32 Nxf5!] **29 Qe8+ Rf8 30 Qd7** [Δ Re7/Qxd5] **30...Qb5 31 Qe6+** [White certainly does not want to trade queens as Black's king is far the more vulnerable.] **31...Kh8 32 Rd1 d4 33 Rc1!** [From here everything works out in more or less forced manner.] **Ne5 34 Rc8 Nxc4 35 hxc4 d3 36 Rd1 a5 37 Rxf8+ Bxf8 38 Qf7 Bg7 39 Rxd3! Qxd3 40 Qe8+ Bf8 41 Qxf8** *mate 1-0*

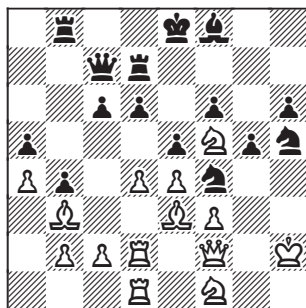
Maryland expert Kimani Stancil had an adventuresome tournament including two games that turned on what Hans Kmoch (PAWN POWER IN CHESS) would have termed a *center duo cross lever*.



Kevin Su – Kimani Stancil

Position after 17...Be6

White should stabilize the center by 18 dxe5. Underestimating the danger to his kingside, he poured gasoline on the fire by **18 f3?** and there followed **18...d5! 19 exd5 exd4! 20 Nf1** [if 20 dxe6 dxe3 21 Bxe3 Qxh2+ 22 Kf1 Qh1+ 23 Bg1 Rad8 24 exf7 Rh2 and the threat ...N-h5-g3+ is irresistible, eg 25 Rc2 Nh5 26 Rxe7 Ng3+ 27 Ke1 Qxg1+ 28 Kd2 Rxd3+] **20...Nxd5 21 cxd4 Bf6 22 fxg4 Bxd4+ 23 Kh1 Bf2** [Good enough to win (especially after White's reply!) but 23...Rxxh2+ 24 Nxh2 Rh8 was even stronger:] **24 Re4** [24 Qf3] **Rxxh2+! 25 Nxh2 Qxxh2+! 26 Kxxh2 Rh8+ 0-1**



Satvik Reddy – Kimani Stancil

Position after 29 Red1

Two rounds later, Stancil probably had his earlier game in mind when he played



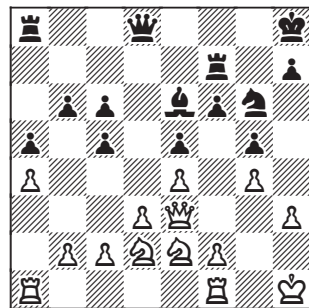
29...d5! In fact White is winning this time (count the pieces!) but Black kept playing and miracles happened. **30 dxe5 Qxe5 31 Kh1 Rbd8 32 Bb6 Rb8 33 Bd4 Qe6 34 Re1 Kd8 35 Bb6+** [35 exd5 would have been a knockout because 35...Qxf5 36 Bb6+ Kc8 37 dxc6 now ...Qh3+ is nothing (Kg1) whereas Black's king will be butchered.] **35...Kc8 36 Bxa5** [36 exd5 Qxf5 37 dxc6 was still winning] **36...Qf7 37 exd5 Nxd5 38 Rde2 Nhf4 39 Re8+ Kb7 40 Rxb8+ Kxb8 41 N1g3 h5 42 Ne3?** ["Not losing but a huge mistake." —Stancil] **42...Bc5 43 Qh2 Qe8 44 Ng2 Re7 45 Rxe7 Qxe7 46 Bxd5** ["46 Ne4 seemed to be best! I am still losing but [there] ends up being a favorable end (for me) to this game's story!" —Stancil] **46...cxd5 47 Nxh5** ["a very poisoned pawn!!!" —Stancil] **47...Qe2!** [Indeed, White is suddenly defenseless] **48 Qg3 Qf1+ 49 Kh2 Qg1** *mate 0-1*

Neil Samant - Tom Beckman Sicilian

Notes by Tom Beckman

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 g6 4 Bxc6 dxc6 [In the future I will likely play 4... bxc6 with more play and complexity but I hadn't quite prepared that yet.] **5 d3 Bg7 6 h3 Nf6 7 Nc3 O-O 8 O-O Nd7 9 Be3 e5 10 Qd2 f6?!** [Unnecessary. Although Black is happy to trade off his now bad king bishop, there are some weakened squares over there... Black should steer his knight towards d4 with 10...Re8 11 Bh6 Nf8 12 Rae1 f6 13 Nh2 (13 Ne2 =) 13...Ne6 14 Ng4 Bxh6! 15 Qxh6 Ng5!—okay, now this looks better than d4—16 f3 Be6 17 Kh2 b5!] **11 Bh6?!** [11 a4 b6 12 Bh6 Bxh6 13 Qxh6 a5 14 Nd2 Rf7 15 Ne2 Ba6 16 Qe3 Nf8 17

f4 exf4 18 Nxf4 Qc7 19 b3—White gets in f4 with some effect.] **11...Rf7 12 Bxg7 Kxg7 13 Qe3** [or 13 Nh2 b6 14 b3 g5 15 Ng4 Nf8 16 Ne2 h5! (16...Ne6 17 Ng3 a5 18 a4 Nd4 19 Rfb1 Be6 is weaker) 17 Ne3 h4 18 a4 a5 =] **13...b6 14 Nd2 Nf8 15 a4** [15 f4 is likewise equal after 15...exf4 16 Rxf4 Qd4 17 Nd1] **15...a5** [I was overly concerned with 16 a5 and so needlessly froze my queenside pawns. 15...Ne6 16 Ne2 Nd4 17 Nxd4 cxd4 18 Qg3 g5 19 f4 exf4 20 Rxf4 Qc7 was objectively better but the position would be rather dead.] **16 Ne2 Ne6 17 Kh1** [White should open the position with 17 f4 exf4 18 Nxf4 Qd4 although after 19 Qxd4 cxd4 20 Ne2 c5 21 Kh2 it isn't much.] **17...g5!?** [17...Nd4 was indicated but I wanted to stop f4 and possibly create some kingside play despite the weakened squares.] **18 Nb3?!** [The knight does nothing here as long as I don't play ...Nd4! The correct way was 18 Ng3 Nd4 19 Rfc1 Rc7 20 b3 Kg8 =] **18...Kh8 19 Ng3 Nf4 20 Ne2?!** [20 Nd2 Be6 21 b3] **20...Be6 21 Nd2 Ng6?!** [I missed the cute 21...Rd7! first with a threatened ...c4. This forces either 22 Ra3 Qf8 23 Re1 Rad8; or 22 Nxf4 gxf4 23 Qe2 Qg8 24 g4 h5] **22 g4?**



Thanks you very much for providing a point to open up lines for my attack!



The Virginia Chess
Federation proudly
presents ...

2019-20 VIRGINIA SCHOLASTIC & COLLEGE CHESS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Friday Night, Saturday and Sunday, March 6th – 8th, 2020

Where ?	Thomas Jefferson High School ("TJ"), 6560 Braddock Rd, Alexandria, VA 22312
Tournament Format and Player Eligibility	<p>THERE ARE THREE TOURNAMENTS!!</p> <p>#1. Friday Night Blitz: March 6th. Four (4) double-rounds in 3 Sections (K-5, K-12, and College). Time control is Game-in-5, no time delay, with 2 games per round. See schedule and awards below. On-site Registration for Blitz opens at 5 PM and closes at 6 PM. Round 1 is at 6:30 PM. Open to any Scholastic or College Player, you do not need to be a Virginia resident to play Blitz. Players must bring a digital chess clock – no analog chess clocks allowed.</p> <p>#2. The Main Event—2020 VA State Scholastic & College Chess Championships: Saturday and Sunday, March 7th and 8th.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One College Section: All 4 rounds played on Saturday. Time Control is Game-60, delay 10 for all rounds. Players must be enrolled full-time in a VA college or university, or be a Virginia Resident attending college out-of-state. Titled FM, GM or IM college players cannot be more than 25 years old as of September 1, 2019. • Eight (8) Scholastic Sections: K-12 Championship and K-12 Under 1400; K-8 Championship and K-8 Under 1200; K-5 Championship and K-5 Under 1000; and, K-3 Championship and K-3 Under 600. Players can "play up" into a higher section. Time Control: Rds 1-2 (G/60; delay 10), Rds 3-5 (G/90; d10). Scholastic players must be attending a public, private or home school in VA, or be a VA Resident attending school out-of-state. Unrated players may play in any section according to their school grade. • #3. Parents and Friends (P&F) Tournament: For adults only (e.g. parents, coaches, family friends and other adult players), no scholastic or college players. 4 rounds of USCF-rated chess, with Rounds 1-2 on Sat. and Rounds 3 and 4 on Sun. G/45 delay 10 for Rd 1; G/60 d10 for Rds 2-4. See below for Registration instructions and Round Times. <p>Details at www.vachess.org.</p>
Registration & Entry Fees	<p>Registration opens Sunday, December 1st at www.vachess.org. If you prefer to mail your entry, please do so by Saturday, February 29th. Onsite Registration at TJ from 5-9 pm on Friday March 6th. Blitz Registration closes at 6 PM. Entries for P&F will be accepted at the Tournament Directors' Office 9:30-11am on Saturday. No entries by phone or email.</p> <p>Early Entry Fees are \$20 for Blitz, \$50 for the Main Event and \$25 for P&F through midnight on Saturday, Feb 29th. Beginning Sunday, March 1st, entry fees increase to \$30 for Blitz, \$65 for the Main Event and \$35 for P&F through midnight on Thursday March 5th. Starting Friday March 6th and on-site fees are \$35 Blitz, \$75 Main, \$35 P&F. Online payments may be made by credit card or PayPal. Mail payments may be made by check or money order. On-site payment by check, cash or credit card.</p> <p>To qualify for the Early Entry Fee your payment must be submitted online or post-marked by midnight Saturday February 29th.</p> <p>No Main Event registrations or payments will be accepted on-site after 9 PM Friday evening without the express approval of the Chief TD. Main Event Players not paid in full by 9:00 PM on Friday March 6th RISK NOT BEING PAIRED for Round 1.</p> <p>Blitz Players not paid in full by 6 PM March 6th RISK NOT BEING PAIRED for Round 1 of Blitz.</p> <p>Team Rooms are available: Details at www.vachess.org.</p>
Schedule of Events	<p>Check-in and Late Registration: 5-9PM Friday, March 6th. DO NOT ARRIVE BEFORE 4:30 PM!! Check-in is required for players who need to pay fees, sign for their Team Rooms, or who want to enter Blitz (Blitz Registration closes at 6 PM). Arrive at the Registration Desk by 9 PM Friday to pay for the Main Event using cash, check or credit card.</p> <p>Blitz Rd 1 @ 6:30 PM Fri. March 6th. Blitz is Game-in-5, no time delay. Bring your digital Chess Clock.</p> <p>Main Event, Rds 1-3 on Sat. March 7th @ 9 AM, 12-noon, and 4:30 PM. Rds 4 and 5 on Sun. March 8th @ 8:30 AM and 12:30 PM. Bring your digital Chess Clock.</p> <p>P&F Tournament, Rd 1 Sat. at 12:15PM, Rd 2 at 4:45PM; Rd 3 on Sunday at 8:45 AM, Rd 4 at 12:45 PM. Bring your chess set and digital clock!!</p> <p>Awards: Blitz Awards—Saturday 10 min before Round 2 (for K-5) and Round 3 (for K-12). P&F Awards handed out immediately after P&F ends. Main Event Awards handed-out by section on Sunday afternoon about 30 minutes after each section's final round. <i>Over \$4,000 in trophies!!</i></p> <p>Chess Sets and Boards: Will be provided. IF YOU OWN A DIGITAL CHESS CLOCK, BRING IT.</p>
Awards	<p>In the Main Event, Players and Teams who finish in 1st Place in the Championship Sections earn the title of "2020 Virginia State Champion". For a list of all prizes, see the tournament web site at www.vachess.org.</p> <p>If there is a tie for 1st place in either the K-5, K-8 or K-12 Championship sections with a perfect 5.0 score, there will be an "Armageddon" Blitz Playoff between those tied players based on tie-breaks. The winners of the K5, K-8 and K-12 Championship Sections are eligible to represent Virginia at prestigious National Chess events in late July 2019 as part of the U.S. Open in St. Louis, MO. The top girl in the K-12 Championship Section is eligible to represent VA at the National Girl's Tournament of Champions in late July during the U.S. Open in St. Louis, MO.</p>
Hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See www.vachess.org for information about Hotels and Team Rooms.



2020 Virginia Scholastic & College Chess Championships

--- Mail-in Entry Form ---

(Use this form if you cannot access the Internet, or if you do not want to register on-line)

Note: See the Player Eligibility rules under Note #2 below. Please send **one form per player.**

Player's Last Name: _____, **First Name:** _____ **MI:** _____

USCF ID Number: _____, write "New" if player is a new member. (See Note 5 below.)

Name of School or College currently attending: _____

Current Grade in School or College: _____ **Gender:** ☐ Male ☐ Female

Location of School or College (county or city): _____

1. **BLITZ:** Section you will enter (select one only): ☐ Not Playing ☐ K-5 ☐ K-12 ☐ College

2. **MAIN EVENT:** Section you will enter (select one only): ☐ K3 Championship ☐ K3 Under 600

☐ K5 CH ☐ K5 U1000 ☐ K8 CH ☐ K8 U1200 ☐ K12 CH ☐ K12 U1400 ☐ College

Optional 1/2-point bye (only 4 Rds in College): ☐ No Bye ☐ Rd 1 ☐ Rd 2 ☐ Rd 3 ☐ Rd 4 ☐ Rd 5

3. Parents & Friends (P&F) ENTRY: Enter on-line or on-site only. No mail-in entries for P&F, sorry.

4. Mailing Address for the person entering the tournament:

Street:

Street: _____

City: _____, Virginia Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

[illegible]

NOTES:

1. Please complete **all information**. **ONE ENTRY FORM PER PLAYER**, you can send multiple entries in the same envelope.

2. Player Eligibility:

3. a. **Blitz:** Open to all scholastic and college students, REGARDLESS OF STATE OF RESIDENCY.
- b. **Main Event:** Scholastic players must be attending a public, private or home school in VA; or, they can be Virginia Residents who are attending school out-of-state. College Section players must be enrolled full-time in a VA college or university, or be a Virginia Resident attending college elsewhere.
- c. **Parents & Friends:** No scholastic or college players; Adults only.
4. **NOTE about the Sections:** The Championship Sections are for players with any US Chess Rating. The "Under" Sections are for players whose US Chess Rating is BELOW the threshold for that section. Unrated players are allowed to play in the Championship or Under sections.
5. **Early Entry Fees:** Blitz (\$20 per player), Parents & Friends (\$25), Main Event (\$50). If you wait to pay or register on site the entry fees are \$10 to \$25 higher. Mail payments by CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY, payable to "VCF" or "Virginia Chess". **To qualify for the Early Entry Fee Discount,** your payment must be submitted online or post-marked by midnight Saturday February 29th.
6. **All players** must be current members of the U.S. Chess Federation (USCF) to play in the Blitz, Main Tournament, or Parents & Friends events. You can join USCF or update your membership at the tournament during On-Site Registration, but it is EASIER and PREFERABLE for you to join or update your membership online at www.uschess.org at least 1 week before the tournament. If you join online, please bring a copy of your new USCF Membership Card or Temporary Registration with you.
7. **To enter BLITZ,** we must have your payment **by 6PM Friday March 6th**.
8. Payment on-site for all events can be made by Cash, Check or Credit Card. Parents & Friends Entry closes at 11 AM on Saturday morning.
9. If you mail your entry, complete and mail this form and your payment to the address shown below. If you entered on-line, you do not need to send this form. ***Mail-in entries must be post-marked by Saturday February 29th.***

Mike Hoffpauir
ATTN: VA State Chess Ch
405 Hounds Chase
Yorktown, VA 23693-3356

9. After we receive your entry, we will send you a confirmation email.
10. Registrations will be posted on the Tournament Web Site (www.vachess.org) as soon as possible after we receive them. A registration is not "complete" without your payment in full, including USCF membership.
11. **Main Event Players not paid in full when the Registration Desk closes at 9 PM on Friday March 6th risk not being paired for Round 1 of the Main Tournament.** For questions, contact Mike Hoffpauir at mhoffpauir@aol.com or 757-846-4805.



22...Raa7?! [I looked at the winning 22...h5 but somehow couldn't see the piece pseudo-sac 23 gxh5 Rh7! It would be over after 24 Ng3 (24 hxg6 Rxh3+) Nf4 25 f3 Raa7 26 Rf2 Nxh5 27 Nxh5 Rxh5 28 Rh2 Bxh3] 23 b3 [White can slightly better defend after 23 f3 or 23 Kh2] 23...h6?! [Wimp. 23...h5 is still close to winning.] 24 Ng3 Nf4 25 Ne2? [25 Nh5! blocks the h-file with chances to hold] 25...h5 [Finally!] 26 Nxf4 gxf4 27 Qe2 hxg4 28 hxg4 Rh7+ 29 Kg2 Bxg4?! [Too fancy. White could resign after 29...Rag7! 30 f3 Bxg4! 31 fxg4 Qd7 32 Kf2 Rh2+] 30 Qxg4 Rag7 31 Qxg7+ Rxg7+ 32 Kf3 Qd7?! [Sloppy. 32...Rh7 33 Rh1 Qd4 34 Rxh7+ Kxh7 35 Ra2 was a simpler win] 33 Rh1+ Kg8 34 Rag1 b5!? [34...Qd4] 35 Rxg7+ Kxg7 36 Rg1+ Kf7 37 Ke2 Qd4 38 c4 [38 Rc1 lasts longer] 38...bxa4 39 bxa4 Qb2 40 Rd1 Qa2 41 f3 Qxa4 42 Rb1 Qc2 43 Rb7+ Ke6 44 Rb6 Kd6 45 Ra6 a4 46 Ra7 Qa2 47 Kd1 a3 48 Kc1 Qb2+ 49 Kd1 a2 50 Rf7 a1Q+ 51 Ke2 Qac1 52 Rxf6+ Ke7 53 Rxc6 Qbxd2mate 0-1

Kimani Stancil - Thomas Rehle Sicilian

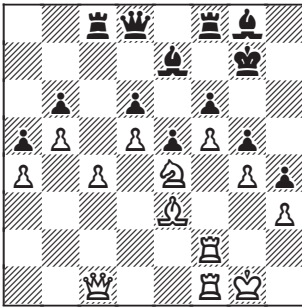
Notes by Kimani Stancil

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 g6 5 Nc3 Bg7 6 Nde2 Nf6 7 g3 d6 8 Bg2 O-O 9 h3 Be6 10 O-O Rc8 11 Nd5 [Using center occupation to address queenside pressure by Black's pieces. Also, the shortest route for this piece to join in any kingside attacks.] 11...Bd7 12 Kh2 [Limits the potential tempo gaining ...Qb6+ that would enable Black to better organize the rooks.] 12...Ne8 13 g4 [...f5 must be restrained; the resulting exchanges would now enable

White's pieces to eventually attack the Black king along the opened lines.] 13...e6 14 Ne3 Qc7 15 f4 h6 16 c3 [Black's problem pieces, the knight on e8 and the light squared bishop, have potential to exert pressure on both the queenside and center, so this move stabilizes those sectors.] 16...a6 17 Kh1 Ne7 18 f5 [Gaining space along with a useful tactic on f6 to limit the knight on e8 from moving to the queenside or center.] 18...Bc6 19 Nf4 e5 [Giving up the central square d5 and walling in the dark squared bishop near-permanently appears to be a serious mistake.] 20 Nfd5 Nxd5 21 exd5 [The beginning of a positional plan to use the light square dominance to fix Black's dark squares as later targets for attack. The center and queenside must be addressed first.] 21...Bb5 22 Rg1 Nf6 23 Qc2 g5 [A missed opportunity to play 23...e4!, sacrificing a pawn to gain potential for his pieces in using the square e5 and the open line for his dark squared bishop.] 24 Be4 [Not giving a second chance.] 24...Nxe4 25 Qxe4 f6 [With the center light square secured, the focus shifts to the queenside.] 26 Bd2 Be8 27 b3 Bf7 28 a4 b6 29 c4 a5 30 Rgb1 Rfd8 31 b4 Be8 32 Kh2 Bf8 33 b5 Rd7 34 Kg3 Qd8 35 Ra2 Rh7 36 Rh1 h5 37 Raa1 h4+ 38 Kh2 Rhc7 39 Rhc1 Rb7 40 Rc2 Qc7 41 Nd1 [This is the beginning of a long knight maneuver ultimately to e4 while using the queen to limit Black's pressure on c4 and prevent entrance to White's camp via the dark squares c5, d4, or b4.] 41...Kg7 [A poor move cutting Black's 7th rank. It is imperative that Black maintain flexibility to defend on either the queen's or king's



side.] **42 Be3 Be7 43 Nb2 Qb8 44 Rf1 Bd8 45 Nd3 Rf7 46 Ne1 Rf8 47 Nf3 Qc7 48 Rfc1 Qe7 49 Nd2 Bf7 50 Kg2 Qb7 51 Qd3** [Tactics had to be considered. 51...Rxc4 52 Nxc4 Bxd5+ 53 Kh2 Be4 fails because of 54 Nxd6 Bxd3 55 Nxb7 Bxc2 56 Nxd8 Bb3 57 Ne6+ Bxe6 58 fxe6 winning for White] **51...Qd7 52 Ne4** [Now the squares g5 and f6 become the focal point of White's attack.] **52...Bg8 53 Kh2 Rb8 54 Rf1 Rb7 55 Qa3 Be7 56 Qc1 Qd8 57 Kg1 Rb8 58 Rcf2 Rc8**



59 Bxg5 fxg5 [If 59...Bxd5 60 Bh6+ Kf7 61 Bxf8 Bxf8 62 cxd5 Rxc1 63 Rxc1 Bh6 64 Rc3 Bf8 65 Rfc2 the black queen will be trapped.] **60 f6+ Bxf6 61 Rxf6 Rxf6 62 Rxf6 Qxf6 63 Nxf6 Kxf6 64 Qc2 Kg7 65 Qf5 Rxc4 66 Qxg5+ Kf7 67 Qd8 Rxa4 68 Qxd6 Ra1+ 69 Kf2 Rb1 70 Qd7+ 1-0** Black resigned in view of White's next move, 71 Qf5+

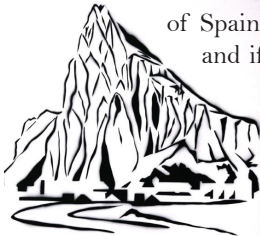
Sam Schank - Aravind Ponukumati Dutch

1 d4 f5 2 Bf4 Nf6 3 e3 e6 4 Nf3 d6 5 h3 g6 6 Nc3 Bg7 7 Bc4 O-O 8 Rg1 [Evidently envisioning g4 but it never happens.] **8...d5 9 Bd3 Ne4 10 Ne5 c5 11 Bxe4 fxe4** [Now the Rg1 looks kind of silly] **12 dxc5 Qa5 13 Qd2 Qxc5 14 O-O-O Nc6 15 Ng4** [Black's reply embarrasses the poor knight, so 15 Nxc6 was necessary although Black is much better anyhow.] **15...h5 16 Nh2 Na5 17 Na4 Qb5 18 Nc3 Qb4 19 a3 Qc5 20 Na4?** [blunder in a hopeless position] **20...Nb3+ 0-1**

Gibraltar Chess Festival

by Robert Fischer

I recently participated in the Gibraltar Chess Festival and I wanted to write a report to give readers of VIRGINIA CHESS information they can use if they decide to take a European chess vacation. I can tell you that this event is one you will remember for your whole life.

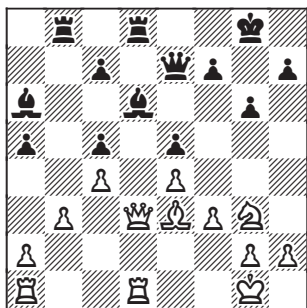


Gibraltar is a territory on the United Kingdom on the southern border of Spain. Historically it has been extremely important militarily, and if you play in the tournament you will want to visit the "rock" and see the caves and explore some of the military history. The island is only 4.5 kilometers long, so there aren't a lot of other non-chess activities right there. However, you can take a day cruise to Morocco, or go dolphin watching, or travel into Spain.



This year, prior to the tournament, the festival offered a chess course held at the University of Gibraltar. The instructors were IM Elisabeth Paehtz and GM Veselin Topalov. To be frank, I don't know how the organizer, Brian Callaghan pulls this off. For only 1400 British pounds (about \$2000) I got most of my meals, four nights in a hotel, and three days of instruction with a former FIDE world champion and a cracker jack chess trainer who recently finished an assignment training the Turkish women's team. There were ten of us in the class including an international master from England. Most of people in the university were rated between 2000 and 2200.

We spent a lot of time looking at classic games. In Elisabeth's opinion, these can be fertile grounds for instruction since the mistakes players made in the past often make it easier to demonstrate ideas.



Liublinsky – Botvinnik
Moscow 1943
White to Play

This example is from training we received on what pieces to exchange. Botvinnik has been outplayed by a lesser player and stands badly due to his isolated queenside pawns. He plans to sacrifice an exchange on d4 to fix his pawn structure and get some play. **23 Ne2 c6 24 Nc3** [An inconspicuous

but significant error. **24 Qc2** first was called for in order to exchange a pair of rooks after **24...Bc7**] **24...Bc7 25 Qc2 Rd4!** [The sacrifice could not be delayed because Black must retain one rook for the subsequent attack. For his sacrifice Black's pawn chain is repaired, he obtains one pawn, and the closed nature of the position deprives the White rooks of activity. What tells is no longer material, but the positional advantage.] **26 Ne2** [White prefers to take the rook with his knight and retain his bishop. A questionable decision, since after **26 Bxd4 cxd4** the knight would have been well placed at d3.] **26...Bc8 27 Nxd4 cxd4 28 Bf2 c5** [In the end White is without counterplay and obliged to await events. Botvinnik eventually won. I won't give the rest of the game for space reasons, but you can find it in the databases.

THE ATTENDEES were invited to the Governor's castle for dinner where we listened to a short speech by Anatoly Karpov. When I met Anatoly, I greeted him with, "Hello Anatoly, I am Robert J Fischer." Everybody laughed.

The next night, Karpov gave a 30 board simul. The field was very strong and included several players with FIDE ratings over 2000. Anatoly played white on all boards and moved around the room shaking hands with each player, moving first 1 c4, then 1 d4 against the next opponent, then playing 1 e4, before repeating the pattern. When he



got to my board it was 1 e4, which is what I had hoped for since we'd studied some Berlin Defense games in the university and I thought this line would give me the best chance. The simul took 5 hours and the last game finished at 1 am. Karpov scored 26 wins and gave up just 4 draws. I am proud to say that I was one of the draws.

Anatoly Karpov - Robert Fischer

Gibraltar Simul 2020

Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Nf6 4 O-O Nxe4 5 d4 Nd6 6 Bxc6 dxc6 7 dxe5 Nf5 8 Qxd8+ Kxd8 9 Nc3 Bd7 10 Ne4 Kc8 11 h3 b6 12 g4 Ne7 13 Nfg5 [Around here I thought I might have made a mistake since White has managed to mobilize his kingside pawn majority. Perhaps I should have played h6 sooner.] 13...Be8 14 f4 Ng6 [trying to restrain f5] 15 c4 [Both 15 b3 Kb7 16 Bb2; and 15 Nf3 Δ f5 seemed very dangerous to me. I couldn't quite understand why he played 15 c4.] 15...h5 [I wanted to generate some counterplay and not just sit back and get squashed.] 16 Kg2 Kb7 17 c5?! hxg4 18 hxg4 f5 [I was concerned about giving him connected passed pawns but felt I would get enough play to hold the position. My king was safe and his was not.] 19 exf6 gxf6 20 Nxf6 Bxc5 [Karpov was pausing for a long time at my board, taking what seemed like almost a minute here. I started to dream of winning.] 21 Kg3 Bd4 22 Nfe4 c5 [By now I really liked my position. But Karpov's famous defensive resources don't let him down; he exchanges off my most dangerous piece.] 23 Ne6 Bc6 24 Nxd4 cxd4 25 Nf6 [I was still trying to figure what to play when Karpov reached my board. Sensing my indecision, he just moved to the next board, which was really nice of him. Often simul givers will insist that you must move immediately when they arrive at your board.] 25...Bb5 [Fritz gives a tiny edge to Black after 25...Raf8] 26 Re1 Raf8 27 g5 Nh4 28 Re5 Bd3 29 Bd2 Nf5+ 30 Kg2 Nh4+ 31 Kg3 Nf5+ 32 Kg2 ½-½ I later learned that a Russian Chess News website had reported the result of the game. Well, I always wanted to shake up the Russian chess scene.

THE TOURNAMENT STARTED after the simul. There were three sections: the masters section, the challengers section for players rated under 2250 Fide, and the amateurs section for players rated under 1900. The masters group was extremely strong, with approximately 250 players including top grandmasters Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Wang Hao, Vassily Ivanchuk, Veselin Topolov and David Navara to name just a few. The field was not just strong at the top but incredibly deep. Three-time Soviet champion and world champion candidate Alexander Beliavsky was all the way down on board 62 in round one. I have never seen so many 2600+ players at one time.





Robert Fischer - Lumir Hladik

Gilbralter Challengers 2020

King's Indian

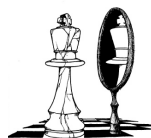
1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Bg2 O-O 5 Nf3 d6 6 O-O c5 7 d4 cxd4 8 Nxd4 a6 9 e3 [keeping the long diagonal open] **9...Qc7 10 Nd5 Nxd5 11 cxd5 Nd7** [I think White is a little better with more space in the center and some initiative on the queenside.] **12 Bd2 Nf6** [I expected 12...Nc5, but with no pawn on e4 it is hard for Black to create counterplay.] **13 Rc1 Qb8** [If 13...Qb6 I intended 14 Qb3 Qxb3 15 axb3 Bd7 16 Rc7 Rab8 17 Rfc1] **14 Qb3 Bd7 15 Qb6 Ne8 16 Rc3! Qa7 17 Rb3 Qxb6 18 Rxb6 Bc8 19 Rc1 e5** [I really could not believe this move. White is much better, but this just loses.] **20 dxe6 Bxd4 21 exf7+ Rxf7 22 exd4 Nc7 23 Rxd6 Be6 24 Rxc7 Rxc7 25 Rxe6 1-0**

Organizer Brian Callaghan insists on calling his event a festival instead of a tournament, and I understand why. There are so many side events. There were three master classes with Topolov, Mamedyarov and Beliavsky. There was a special event called Battle of the Sexes where the 6 top women played 6 top men on an oversize chess set (3-foot king) with the teams alternating players each move. Various social events gave me opportunities to meet chess players from all over the world, including players from Singapore, South Africa, Russian, Norway, Denmark and the United Kingdom.

I really can't say enough good things about the Gibraltar Chess Festival. In fact, I have already signed up for next years' University. The University will be taught by another top notch instructor like Elisabeth and Vladimir Kramnik. If you would like to attend, my advice is to reserve your place in the university now, emailing Stuart Conquest (sconquest@hotmail.com).

Reflections Reflections

by Mark Warriner



Looking Back on an Amateur Chess "Career"

LOSING IS LEARNING IN BLEAK DISGUISE

Labor Day weekend is historically *The Chess Event* in Virginia, the Virginia Closed State Championship. After a decent performance at the Charlottesville Open, I put a lot of pressure on myself to perform well in this year's championship. That attitude has the potential to either motivate a great performance, or it can create disastrous tension that knocks you flat. My coach warned about focusing on my overall play and not to worry about my rating goal. Still, with all the expectations I carried... well, it went as you might expect.



Unlike in Charlottesville where I had a relatively easy game in this first round, in Richmond I faced a four-time state champion. I determined to make the most of the opportunity and to go straight for the upset.

Geoff McKenna – Mark Warriner Queen's Indian

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 g3 b6 3 Bg2 Bb7 4 d4 e6 5 c4 Bb4+ 6 Nbd2 O-O 7 O-O Na6 [My coach and I looked over a few games with the minutes we had and I knew a Queen's Indian was possible versus Geoff. I've almost always had good games on the Black side, so I felt pretty decent about my chances even considering the huge difference in rating and achievements. 7... Na6 was not something we'd prepared specifically, though it had come up under different circumstances. I just had feeling it might throw Geoff a little.] **8 Qc2 d5 9 cxd5 exd5 10 a3 Be7 11 b4 c5 12 bxc5 bxc5 13 Rb1 Rb8 14 dxc5** [Perhaps 14 Bb2 would have posed Black a long term issue, controlling e5. 14...c4 is not such a threat as the pawn can easily be stopped.] **14...Nxc5 15 Nd4 Re8 16 N2b3 Ba8** [16...Nce4 was right.] **17 Bf4** [17 Nxc5 Rxb1 18 Qxb1 Bxc5 19 Qd3] **17...Nxb3 18 Rxb3 Rxb3 19 Qxb3 Qa5 20 Nf5 Qxa3** [I was totally baffled by Geoff's sacrifice and mistakenly thought I was well ahead. Not winning, but definitely superior. Actually, it's just even as White is going to have plenty of piece play and control of the center.] **21 Qb5 Qc5 22 Qb2 Qb6** [The extra pawn doesn't mean all that much. White will get the bishop pair and they coordinate quite well. Black doesn't have much better than returning the pawn by 22...d4 23 Nxe7+ Qxe7 24 Bxa8 Rxa8 25 Rd1 and hope to utilize the outside passer.] **23 Qxb6 axb6 24**

Nxe7+ Rxe7 25 Rb1 Rxe2 26 Be3 Rc2

[I offered a draw. I'd finally realized my position wasn't good enough for a win and Geoff was down to seconds for the last two moves before time control. He correctly and immediately ignored the offer and moved. First of all my last move was not best (26...h6) and secondly it was unlikely that I would know how to prosecute the ending.] **27 Rxb6 Rc8 28 Bd4 Ne8** [Too passive. 28...Ne4] **29 Bh3 Rc1+ 30 Kg2 Bc6 31 Bf5 g6 32 Bb1 Bd7** [Black needed to get his king active and make some space. 32...f6 or 32...Kf8] **33 Be3 Rc8 34 Kf3 h5 35 Kf4** [It began to dawn on me that the extra pawn wasn't going to make this easy. Geoff understood the need to get active and use the king as a fighting piece!] **35...Rc6 36 Ke5 Rxb6 37 Bxb6 Be6? 38 Bxg6** [This caused me to reel back in my chair and put my hands behind my head and stare at the ceiling. This was the last game to finish in the first round. There had been no upsets, and I kept thinking that it was up to me to be the one to pull it off. Now those hopes were dashed. It was such a simple oversight that I lost my composure and began berating myself, which in time pressure caused me to lose focus. As a result I missed what should have been a further, albeit difficult, drawing chance. I never recovered, either in the game or the entire tournament.] **38...Bg4** [As per master David Bennett, who participated in the post-mortem, maybe just maybe



there's a chance for Black to hold after 38... fxg6 39 Kxe6 Ng7+ 40 Kxd5 Kf7] **39 Bc2 Bf3** [39...f6+ 40 Kxd5 Kf7 41 h4 Be6+ 42 Kd4 Ng7 43 Bd1 Bd7 at least it's a fight] **40 Kf4 Be2 41 Bd4 Nc7 42 Be5 Ne6+ 43 Ke3 Bg4 44 Bb3 d4+** [I have no idea why I never activated my king. The bishop ending is lost.] **45 Bxd4 Nxd4 46 Kxd4 Kg7 47 h4 Kf6 48 Ke4 Bf5+ 49 Kf4 Bg6 50 Bd1 Kg7 51 Ke5 f6+ 52 Ke6 Bf7+ 53 Ke7 Bg6 54 f4 Bf7 55 f5 1-0**

Mark Warriner – Isaac Spence Caro Kann

Still reeling from the events of the afternoon, I had very little time to get dinner and prepare for the next round. I didn't feel like eating, but I knew I must. Upon returning to the playing hall, we learned that my next opponent was someone who had upset some strong players (including former state champ Qindong Yang) in the Friday night blitz championship. *Oh great, I remember thinking, a dangerous lower-rated player.* Negativity again. Woof. Coach Richardson dutifully prepared me, again correctly divining the opening my opponent would play. If it weren't for him I'd have had a much worse tournament than I did. My advice? Get a good coach if you want to improve!] **1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 Bf5 4 h4 h5 5 Bd3 Bxd3 6 Qxd3 e6 7 Bg5 Be7 8 Nf3** [Wow. James (coach) predicted the opening perfectly. That helped me regain my composure somewhat, though having just suffered an emotional loss to a silly error, I didn't trust myself and was working doubly hard to calculate everything. It wasn't a healthy attitude for achievement.] **8...Nd7 9 Nbd2 Qb6**

10 O-O Bxg5 11 hxg5 g6 12 c4 Ne7 13 g3 [Letting slip the initiative. 13 c5 would have been better.] **13...O-O-O** [But this is a big error, playing right into White's plans.] **14 c5 Qc7 15 b4 Nf5 16 a4 Nb8 17 b5 Rdg8** [Black's king should seek safety elsewhere (17...Kd7) as the queenside is about to be overrun.] **18 Rfb1 h4** [There's nothing threatening here, White's king is perfectly safe while Black needed to think about the safety of his own.] **19 g4 Ne7 20 b6 axb6 21 Rxb6 Nd7 22 Rb4 f6** [Sheer desperation. But I overthought the position and eschewed the crushing and simple 23 gxf6. I hallucinated some sort of nonexistent counterattack. Negative thinking, tsk-tsk.] **23 Rab1 fxe5 24 Nxe5 Nxe5 25 dxe5 Rh7 26 Qb3 Nf5 27 gxf5 gxf5 28 f4 Qe7 29 Qe3 Qe8 30 a5 Qh5 31 a6 Qg4+ 32 Kf1 Kb8 33 Qf3** [Still not trusting myself. 33 Qa3 ends things on the spot.] **33...Rgh8 34 Qb3** [correctly recognizing a forced mate] **34...h3 35 Rxb7+ Ka8 36 Rb8+ 1-0**

Sudarshan Sriniaiyer – Mark Warriner Sicilian

There is a lot to this short game. Sudarshan was my final round opponent from Charlottesville and I really wanted to make good on my flagging effort from last time. Colors were reversed and so Coach Richardson wanted to spend time preparing. I really wasn't in the mood. Somehow he's able to cram a lot right before a game. My needs are different. I need to be able to focus before a game. My prep needs to take place during training and at home. I'm too old to memorize a lot of stuff at the last minute, moreover



it's just not in my DNA. We had a tough discussion as he was quite upset with my rejecting his help in that moment. He's a fantastic coach, let me be clear, but it was a moment about learning how I worked, for myself as much as for him. Just tell me what line or two they are likely to play. Either I know what to do already or I don't, and I can decide how I want to deal with it.] **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Qxd4** [As it turned out, this was a rare time where James incorrectly guessed my opponent's opening choice. I believe Sudarshan saw my loss in Charlottesville to Nemanja Milanovic in this line. It was a surprise but one I was ready to meet, at least initially.] **4...Nc6 5 Bb5 Bd7 6 Bxc6 Bxc6 7 Nc3 Nf6 8 Bg5 e6 9 O-O-O Be7 10 Rhe1 O-O 11 Kb1 h6 12 Bc1 Qa5 13 Qd2 Rfd8 14 Nd4 Be8 15 f4 Rac8 16 f5 e5 17 Nb3 Qc7 18 g4 Nh7** [My opponent had three times during the game nervously adjusted my pieces, legally I should point out, on his time before making his move. This last time, before he played 18 g4. Being rather emotional already from my earlier disappointment, I let it bother me and I went to the TD to complain. I was informed that my opponent's actions were legal and that there was nothing I could really do. I was actually advised to adjust *one of his pieces* (I'm not joking) in return if I wanted him to stop. Frustrated, and distracted, I did just that. It stopped all the nervous adjusting, but my concentration was destroyed and my play collapsed. I hope in the future the USCF can do something about this rule. But not to use this as an excuse; I was not looking to counterattack as I should, so probably things wouldn't have gone well anyhow.]

19 Qf2 Qb8 [I went in the tank, clueless as to what Black should do and feeling very negative about my performance in this game and the tournament overall. Once those negative thoughts set in, it's over.] **20 Nd5 Bf8 21 f6 g6 22 Ne7+ Kh8 23 Nxc8 Rxc8 24 Be3 b6 25 Qd2 Nxf6 26 Bxh6 Bg7 27 Bxg7+ Kxg7 28 g5 Nh5 29 Qxd6 1-0.** Just a horrid collapse.

Mark Warriner – John Farrell No Opening(!)

The game that wasn't! I tried to pull myself together from the debacle in the third round, but I felt like a lamb being led to slaughter. I set up the board and clock and waited for about 20 minutes in a pessimistic mood. Then the TD approached me and explained that they'd accidentally paired me against an opponent who *wasn't in the tournament!* Huh?! Well, a little known fact is that you can hang around a tournament and pick up a free game now and then if there are an odd number of players. They'll pair a rated game for the "odd man out" against some available "house player". Turns out John Farrell was a house player who'd played a game in a prior round, and when pairing the 4th round they forgot to remove him from the pairings list. The upshot was I could either take a full point bye or I could play another house player. Given my mindset, I opted to take the full point bye. Perhaps Caissa was showing me some mercy.

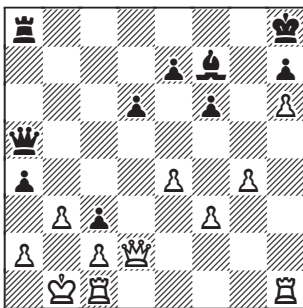
Mark Warriner – Nicholas Xie Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 Be3 Bg7 7 f3 O-O 8 Qd2 Nc6 9 Bc4 Bd7 10 O-O-O [Coach and I failed to connect prior to this round. I can't remember why, but as it turned



out it didn't matter. Our training prep worked well, and thanks to my recent sparring partner, Adrian Rhodes, things went swimmingly up until move 19.]

10...Rb8 11 Bb3 Na5 12 Bh6 Nxb3+ 13 Nxb3 b5 14 h4 Qc7 15 h5 Bxh6 16 Qxh6 g5 17 Qxg5+ Kh8 18 Nd5 Nxd5 [I didn't know all the theory, but Adrian and I had practiced Dragon variations and I was comfortable, if not entirely accurate.] **19 Qxd5** [Not losing, but letting slip a good deal of the advantage. As Nicholas pointed out after the game, just 19 exd5 and Black's choices are all unpleasant. I can't remember exactly why I didn't play this, but the larger point is I didn't consider it carefully.] **19...Be6 20 Qd4+ f6 21 Qd3 a5 22 Kb1 b4 23 Nd4 Bc4 24 Qd2** [It was frustrating making forced moves I could have played voluntarily earlier saving precious tempi. Still White's in the driver's seat, until...] **24...a4 25 b3 Bf7 26 Rc1** [Oops. Finding equality. 26 g4] **26...Rfc8 27 g4 Qa5** [Giving me another chance, which I miss.] **28 Ne2** [28 Nf5] **28...Ra8 29 h6** [I thought trapping Black's king gave me counterchances, but it's too late.] **29...Rc3** [29...Rc5 wins outright] **30 Nxc3 bxc3**



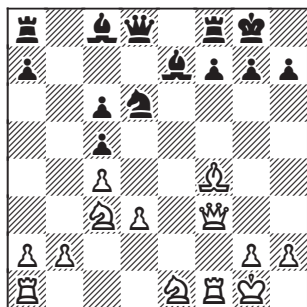
My queen attacked, facing the twin threats ...Q-b4-a3 and ...axb4 (followed by ...Bxb3 as needed), I resigned. Nicholas seemed shocked. Indeed, I did assess the position correctly (it starts off 31 Qe2 Qb4 32 Qd3 d5 and I'll let the reader work out the instructive process from there) but I definitely should have made him show it. David Bennett again participated in the post-mortem and was kind enough to examine the final position in detail on his youtube.com channel. Much thanks to David! Here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULKVUKA2Jow>. But the resignation was again thinking too negatively. Never give up! **0-1**

Al Harvey – Mark Warriner Sicilian

I was paired with very old and dear chess friend, Al Harvey. We've played twice before (see VIRGINIA CHESS #2015/1) so this would be a rubber match after 28 years! **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Nd7 4 c4** [Just like that, I'm out of book and nerves kicked in.] **4...Nf6 5 d3 e6 6 O-O Be7 7 Nc3 O-O 8 Ba4 e5** [Interestingly, an IM and GM had played the position just days earlier: 8...Ng4 9 Ne1 Nge5 10 f4 Ng6 11 Be3 Nb6 12 Bb3 Bd7 13 Qh5 f5 Black went on to win in Vetoshko-Bosiocic, Spilimbergo 2019] **9 Ne1 Nb8** [I was burning huge amounts of time, convinced I'd lost my ability to play. The temperature in the room felt like 100 degrees and my head hurt. Al played quickly and seemed to know the line, while I was pitching tempi left and right. Again, negative thinking.] **10 f4 exf4 11 Bxf4 Nc6 12 Bxc6** [This actually helps Black's cause.] **12...bxc6 13 e5? Ne8** [Black's clearly better after 13...



dxe5 14 Bxe5 Ng4 15 Qe2 Re8 16 Bg3 Bf6] 14 exd6 Nxd6 15 Qf3



Black to Move and Regroup

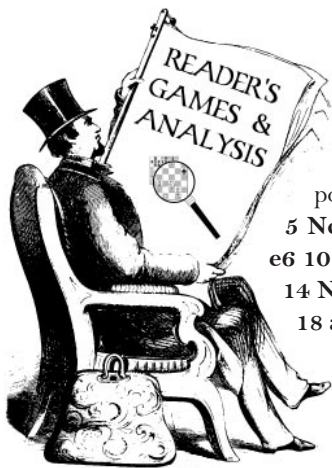
Here in the waning hours of the tournament I finally decided to pull my head out of my posterior region. Recalling a story my Coach told me about one of his experiences, I went out to the hallway, found a private spot, and actually sat on the floor facing a corner. I put myself in a time-out. I made myself sit for 10 minutes and decided, as my Coach related that he had once done himself, to own my position and my performance. I got myself into this mess and now I was going to get myself out. I could have used some of that

spirit earlier, but better late than never. I marched back to the board and steeled myself to the task at hand.

15...Nf5 16 Qxc6 Be6 17 Qf3 Qd4+ 18 Qf2 Qd7 [18...Bf6 was better but I wanted to keep the queens on the board to continue the fight] 19 Ne4 19...Rac8 20 Qd2 [20 Be5, here or next turn] 20...Rfd8 21 Rd1 Qd4+ [21...Bxc4 22 dxc4 Qe6] 22 Kh1 [White's still a little better after 22 Nf2] 22...Bxc4 [Finally some spirit!] 23 Qc3 [if 23 dxc4 Qxc4] 23...Bxa2 24 Nf3 Qxc3 25 bxc3 Bb3 26 Rb1 [Black is better now, but 26 Rd2 limits the damage] 26...Bc2 27 Rb7 Bxd3 28 Re1 Bxe4 29 Rxe4 Rd1+ 30 Ne1 Bf6 [I should have eliminated back rank dangers by 30...g5] 31 Rc7 [But now capturing the rook allows mate.] 31...Rdd8 32 Rxa7 Re8 [simply 32...Bxc3] 33 Rc7 [Again!] 33...Bxc3 [Here too 33...g5 34 Rxc8 Rxc8 35 Be5 Re8 36 Nf3, but White's still fighting.] 34 Be5? [A tragic oversight that costs Al the game after a hard fight. I think he simply confused the move order in his calculations, intending 34 Rxc5 Bxe1 35 Rxe8+ Rxe8 36 Rxf5] 34...Rxc7 0-1

This overall performance exposed a serious flaw in my mental and emotional approach. I managed to defeat my lower rated opponents but lost all the games against players rated higher. I expected too much of myself early, and when I failed to achieve my expectation I descended into mental self-flagellation. Negative thinking never, I emphasize *never*; helps your chess. A positive mental attitude is essential at all times.

I had hoped to show more in my return to chess this year, but alas it was not to be. On the plus side, I think I proved I didn't lose anything since I stopping tournament chess over a quarter century ago. That itself is an achievement for an older player. But I've set myself a higher standard, to achieve the Master title, and it's clear that I've a long way to go. Just breaking into Expert looks like a formidable barrier right now. Consistency is the desired mark. I have the heart, determination, and a good Coach. So, to work on my emotional character, my chess knowledge, and onwards and upwards!



Geoff McKenna - Nicholas Thomas

DC Chess League 2019

Slav

Notes by Geoff McKenna

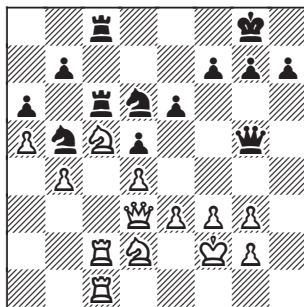
Mistakes occurred, but some interesting positions. 1 c4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 Nc3 Nc6 6 Bf4 a6 7 e3 Bf5 8 Bd3 Bxd3 9 Qxd3 e6 10 O-O Bd6 11 Bg3 O-O 12 Rfc1 Rc8 13 a3 Qe7 14 Na4 Ne4 15 b4 Bxg3 16 hxg3 Nd6 17 Nc5 Nb8 18 a4 Nc4 19 a5 Nc6 20 Rab1 Na7 21 Nd2 Nd6 22 Rc2 Rc6 23 Rbc1 Rfc8 24 f3 Nab5 25 Kf2 Qg5

26 Nxb7 [the engines approve]
26...Rxc2 27

Rxc2 Rxc2 28 Qxc2 Nxb7 29

Qc8+ Nd8 30 Qxa6 Nxd4 31 f4 Qe7 32 exd4 Qxb4 33 Nf3 Qb8 34 Ne5 Qb2+ 35 Kg1 Qxd4+ 36 Kh2 Qc5 37 Qa8 Qf8 38 a6 f6 39 Nc6 Nxc6 40 Qxc6 Qb8 41 Qxe6+ Kf8 42 Qxd5 Qa7 43 Qb7 Qc5 44 Qd7 Qh5+ 45 Qh3 Qc5 46 Qxh7

Kf7 47 Qd3 Qh5+ 48 Kg1 Qc5+ 49 Kf1 Qc1+ 50 Ke2 Qc6 51 Qb3+ Kg6 52 Kf2? [Hanging the a-pawn; White should defend it with Qd3+ followed by a king march to the queenside.] 52...Qc5+? 53 Qe3 Qc2+ 54 Kf3 Qd1+ 55 Qe2 Qb3+ 56 Kg4 Qd5 57 Kh4 Qc5 58 g4? [Zeitnot again, missing the simpler win 58 a7] 58...Kh6 59 Qe6 Qf2+ 60 Kh3 Qa7 61 Qf5 Qe3+ 62 Kh2 1-0



Geoff McKenna - Christian Vogler

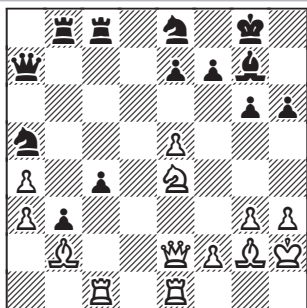
DC Chess League 2019

King's Indian

Notes by Geoff McKenna

1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 g6 3 g3 Bg7 4 Bg2 d6 5 d4 O-O 6 Nf3 Nc6 7 O-O a6 [The Panno variation. Black plans to exchange a wing pawn for White's c-pawn, gaining some central ascendancy. I used to play this as Black 40 years ago but I have forgotten the theory.] 8 h3 Rb8 9 b3 b5 10 cxb5 axb5 11 Bb2 b4 12 Na4 Na5 13 Rc1 c6 14 Nd2 Bd7 15 Kh2 Qc8 16 Re1 Qa6 17 e4 Rfc8 18 e5 Ne8 19 Ne4 Qa7 20 Ng5 h6 21 Ne4 [I couldn't see a way to make this work.] 21... c5 22 dxc5 Bxa4 23 bxa4 dxc5 24 a3 b3 25 Qe2 c4





White's pawns are a shambles and the Black Queenside pawns are about to hatch. Time for the kitchen sink. **26 e6 f5 27 Bxg7 Kxg7 28 Nc3 Nf6 29 Red1 Qc5 30 Rd7** [Somehow White obtains genuine counterplay. In this position Stockfish recommends the obvious 30...Kh7 with advantage.] **30...Rd8 31 Rcd1 Rxd7 32 exd7 Rd8 33 Qe6 Rxd7** [Black wants to weaken White's back rank so he can promote his pawns, but this is wrong. He could maintain an edge with 33...b2] **34 Rxd7 Nxd7 35 Qxd7 b2 36 Qb5?! Nb3 37 Qxc5 Nxc5 38 Bd5?** [White's turn to lose the thread. 38 Bc6 would have held onto the material.] **38...Nxa4 39 Nb1 Nb6 40 Bf3? Kf6 41 Bd1? Ke5 42 a4 Nd5 43 Kg2 Kd4 44 Kf1 Nc3?** [Black can still win with 44...Kd3] **45 Bc2 Nxb1?** [Black can still draw with 45...Nd5] **46 Bxb1 Kc3 47 Ke2 Kb4 48 Kd2 Kxa4 49 Kc3 Kb5 50 Kxb2 Kc5 51 Kc3 Kd5 52 f3 e6 53 Ba2 g5 54 Bxc4+ Ke5 55 Kd3 h5 56 Ke3 f4+ 57 gxf4+ gxf4+ 58 Kd3 h4 59 Ba2 1-0** It would have been simpler to play 59 Bxe6 and then reap the pawns, but they aren't going anywhere.

53rd Annual

Virginia Open

March 20-22, 2020

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5SS – Rd 1 Fri 3/20, 7:30pm (G/90 inc/30), rds 2-3 Sat 3/21 10am (G/90 Inc/30) & 3pm (40/90, SD/30 inc/30), rds 4 & 5 Sun 3/22 10am & 4:30pm (40/90, SD/30 inc/30). \$\$4600G in two sections: *Open* (FIDE rated) \$950-600-375-250, top X, A each \$225. FIDE Rules, 30-minute default for late arrivals. *Amateur* (under 1900 USCF) \$600-350-210, top B, C, D each \$175, top U1200 \$170, top Unr \$130. All Unrateds must play in Amateur Section and are limited to \$250 place award. Plaques to 1st in Open and Amateur, trophies to top U1000, U800, U600. EF \$85 if rec'd by Sat 3/14, \$100 starting Sunday 3/15 and on site. \$5 retained if you withdraw before the tournament. VCF membership req'd for Va Residents (\$15 adults, \$8 jr under 18). One ½pt bye allowed any round, must commit by Sat 9:30am. Re-entry \$40, start rd2 with ½ pt. Hotel www.marriott.com, 703-471-9500, rooms \$115+taxes chess rate, reserve by Fri 2/28. Enter: Mail checks payable to "VCF" to Anand Dommalapati, ATTN: VA Open, 5116 Bebe Ct., Centreville, VA 20120, online at www.vachess.org, or on Site Fri 3/20 4:30-6:45pm. Info www.vachess.org, or adommalapati@yahoo.com.

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In This Issue:

Tournaments

Eastern Open	1
Gibraltar Chess Festival.....	7

Features

Warner Relections	10
Readers' Games (McKenna)	16

Odds & Ends

Upcoming Events	4, 17
VCF Info	<i>inside front cover</i>

