

VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the
Virginia Chess Federation

2022 - #2

Aleksey in Belgrade!

Virginia Chess gets exclusive inside look
at the FIDE Grand Prix



Photo by Mana Sadeghi

Also in this issue...

1st Coastal Virginia Open and
The Strange Case of Carlton Gunn

VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

2022 - Issue #2

Editor:

Macon Shibut
8234 Citadel Place
Vienna VA 22180
vcfeditor@cox.net

Circulation:

Georgina Chin
2851 Cherry Branch Lane
Herndon VA 20171
membership@vachess.org



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,

VA 20151 adommalapati@yahoo.com Vice President: Michael Callaham, 607 Wickham Street #2, Richmond, VA 23222 waterman2010kir@aol.com Membership Secretary: Georgina Chin, 2851 Cherry Branch Lane, Herndon VA 20171, membership@vachess.org Treasurer Mike Hoffpauir, 405 Hounds Chase, Yorktown VA 23693, mhoffpauir@aol.com

VCF Inc Directors: Anand Dommalapati, Michael Callaham, Mike Hoffpauir, Robby Jackson, Aniket Sinkar





Coastal Virginia Open

by Christina Schweiss

The inaugural Coastal Virginia Open (CVO), a VCF Cup event hosted by the Hampton Roads Chess Association, was held in Virginia Beach February 4-6, 2022. The event began with a Friday night Blitz tournament that drew 35 players. Grandmaster Timur Gareyev finished 1st with a perfect score of 10 points, with Daniel Miller & Tyson Brady tying for 2nd/3rd with 8 points apiece.

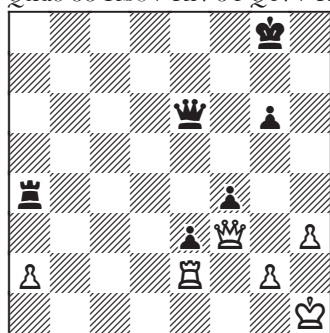
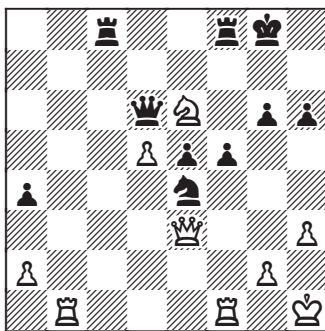
In the Open section, with 48 players, local master Nemanja Milanovic upset Gareyev in the final round to win clear 1st with a perfect score.

Nemanja Milanovic - Timur Gareyev Italian

Notes by Macon Shibut

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 d3 d6 5 c3 Qf6 6 b4 Bb6 7 h3 Nge7 8 Bb3 Be6 9 Be3 Bxe3 10 fxe3 Qh6 11 Qe2 a5 12 Bxe6 Qxe6 13 b5 Nb8 14 c4 Nd7 15 O-O O-O 16 Nc3 a4 17 Nh4 g6 18 Kh2 c6 19 bxc6 bxc6 20 Rab1 d5 21 exd5 cxd5 22 e4 dxc4 23 dxc4 Rac8 24 Nd5 Nxd5 25 cxd5 Qd6 26 Nf3 f5 27 Ng5 Nf6 28 Kh1 h6 29 Ne6 Nxe4 30 Qe3 (diagram)

30...Rf6? [Black would have full compensation for the exchange after 30...Qxd5 31 Nxf8 Rxf8 with two pawns and a great knight made better by the hole at g3. One possible conclusion then would be 32 Qxh6 (32 Rfc1 f4) Ng3+ 33 Kg1 Qd4+ 34 Rf2 Ne2+ 35 Kh2 Qxf2 36 Qxg6+ with a draw.] 31 Qxh6? [This obvious capture misses a great opportunity. The reason Black's previous move was a mistake is that 31 Rfc1! presages a dangerous penetration, eg 31...Rxc1+ 32 Qxc1 Qxd5 33 Rb8+ Kf7 34 Qc7+ Kxe6 35 Re8mate] 31...Ng3+ 32 Kg1 Qe7 33 Rfe1



e4 34 Qf4 Nh5 35 Qe5 Ng7 36 Rb8 Qa7+ 37 Kh1 Rxb8 38 Qxf6 Qf7 39 Qe5 Re8 40 Qd4 Nxe6 41 dxe6 Qxe6 42 Qxa4 e3 43 Qc2 f4 44 Qe2 Ra8 45 Qf3 Ra4 46 Re2 (diagram)

Black has the better chances in this endgame because it's not really an endgame yet. The outside passed pawn isn't going anywhere but Black's pawns are far advanced and the eventual blockade-breaking ...g5-g4 has a chance to succeed because it will also expose the White king. (The king will be



vulnerable to attack along both the back rank and the h-file.) But this requires patient preparation. After a move like 46...Rd4 (to have ...Rd1+ or ...Rd2 at the ready) or 46...Kg7 (Δ ...Kh6 keeping everything compact for the eventual ...g5) White could only wait and hope.

46...g5?

But opportunity strikes twice in this game. After Gareyev's reply, his g5 pawn is right away hard to defend.

47 Qh5 Re4 [if 47...Qe5 48 Rc2 Δ Rc6/7/8] **48 Qxg5+ Kf7 49 Rb2 e2 50 Rb7+ Ke8 51 Qh5+ Kf8 52 Qh8+ Qg8 53 Qf6+ 1-0** Black's flag fell but in any case it will be mate, eg 53...Ke8 54 Qc6+ Kf8 55 Qc5+ Ke8 56 Qc8mate

Daniel Miller & Larry Larkins joined GM Gareyev in a three-way tie for 2nd/3rd with 4 points each. There was a 10-way tie(!) for Top U1800. M Kerem Gokus earned the rd 1 Upset prize with a 449 point upset. Joshua Havens drew against a master to take the rd 2 Upset prize.

The U1600 section drew 40 players. Joaquin Litzenberger-Brunetti finished in clear 1st place with a perfect score. Steven Harrington was 2nd scoring 4½-½ and Alexander Reavey-Cantwell finished 3rd at 4-1. Ted Ambrose's 3½ points clinched the top U1200 prize. Joe Mercurio & Benjamin Evans Soyka tied for Top Unrated with 3.

In the U1000 section, 34 players vied for trophies and Judah Hines scored 5-0 to take the big one. Gordon Fairborn finished 2nd on tiebreaks over Richard Ha, both with 4-1 scores. Harish Sivakumar finished 4th on tiebreaks over Sander Kallman. The top two finishers were returning to chess after not having played since they were young children, continuing a trend where ratings at this level do not tell the true tale of playing strength—especially after two years of the pandemic.

Like the Zofchak Memorial, the CVO attracted a number of first-time tournament players with some impressive skills. The main event was a five-round Swiss at G/75+10 for rd 1 and G/90+10 for the remaining rounds. U1000 took place on Saturday only with 5 rounds at G/40; d5. This inaugural tournament drew 122 players from ten states in Open, U1600, and U1000 sections. Almost \$4,500 in prize money was awarded! HRCA looks forward to hosting the Coastal Virginia Open again in 2023!

9th Cherry Blossom Classic - MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND !!!

May 26th - 30th, May 27th/28th - 30th 2022

Washington Dulles Airport Marriott
45020 Aviation Dr, Dulles, VA 20166, VA 20166



The Strange Case of Carlton Gunn

by Macon Shibut

AN UNEXPECTED THING HAPPENED at the 1976 Virginia High School Scholastic Championship. Helen Hinshaw's report in the April 1976 edition of the VCF newsletter tells the story:

"Carlton 'Duke' Gunn, a provisional 1681 and unknown player, swept the VCF High School Championship with a perfect 5-0 record to become Virginia's new High School champion. Duke, as he prefers to be called, was one of four team members playing on the Dan River High School team. Duke is an 11th grader certainly proved (sic) that he has the potential to be one of Virginia's top players."

His talent was indeed obvious, but Gunn did not go on to become one of Virginia's top players. In fact, it's possible he never played another rated game. The rating supplement in the December 1976 issue of CHESS LIFE lists Carlton D Gunn now up to 1737 with a USCF expiration date of 12/76. His name does not appear on any subsequent rating list in CHESS LIFE.

Few of the other players at the Scholastic Championship had ever seen Gunn before. But they knew him by the time it was over and they remembered him long thereafter. It's remarkable that nearly half a century after the fact, people still occasionally come up to me asking about my game versus Carlton Gunn—could I have held the endgame? whatever happened to him?

The years have dulled the details but my general recollection is of an energetic and colorful presence. Gunn embellished his score sheet, filling in his name as "The Duke" with bold ornamental lettering. Around his neck he wore a big gold chain with a cross. During play he'd fiddle with the cross, and at the prizegiving after the tournament he exultantly removed the chain and draped it around the champion's trophy.

All this plus an aggressive, tactical playing style that impressed us as Tal-like and basically overwhelmed most of his opponents. I was a senior in high school in 1976 and I flatter myself that our 3rd round encounter was his toughest game. Recently I looked it over again after many years. I was rated 1839 at the time and that feels about right. We both made plenty of class player type mistakes. But I actually like the game, result notwithstanding. It's a true fighting game. Playing through the moves, a lot of memories return and I can sense the intensity we brought to the board that night.

The game appeared in the June 1976 VCF newsletter with full annotations credited to "Gunn and Shibut". In fact, at least 90% of the notes were by me. What I think happened is that I submitted the game annotated in full; Gunn submitted a scoresheet



with a few variations; and the editor at the time, Woody Harris, sort of grafted everything together for publication. He didn't attribute any particular note to either one of us, but he gave Gunn top billing overall because he'd won the game.

If Woody thought he was thereby honoring the champion, well—'no good deed goes unpunished'. Gunn wrote in to a subsequent issue of the newsletter, rather miffed. He convincingly refuted several points in my analysis and he did not hide his annoyance at seeing his game and notes mingled with my dross. I must admit he had a point. I'll try to do better this time.

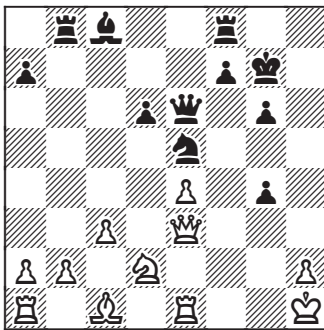
Macon Shibut - Carlton 'Duke' Gunn 1976 Virginia Scholastic Champ King's Indian Attack

1 e4 Nf6 [Counterattack from move one. My reply may seem wimpy, but in fact the King's Indian Reversed was my main White opening in those days. Sometimes I began 1 Nf3 or 1 g3, but even 1 e4 was usually with the intent of playing the King's Indian Reversed, departing from that plan only in the event of 1...e5] **2 d3 c5 3 g3 Nc6 4 Bg2 d6 5 Nf3 g6 6 O-O Bg7 7 Nbd2 Rb8 8 Nh4 e5 9 Nhf3** [This of course required an explanation and I gave one, writing that my intended 9 f4 would be a mistake now owing to 9...exf4 10 gxf4 Nxe4. Thus on 'our' very first note, Duke already had to correct a dumb mistake by me. That variation must be continued 11 Nxe4 Qxh4 12 Nxd6+ etc. But 9 f4 was indeed bad, only for the actual reason 10...Ng4! instead of Nxe4] **9...O-O 10 c3 Qc7 11 Nh4** [Black's queen move deactivated my perceived issue with f4, so... back again.] **11...b5 12 f4 Qb6 13 Kh1 Ng4 14 Qe2 c4 15 dxc4** [I did not consider 15 f5! when 15...Ne3 can be answered 16 Nxc4! bxc4 17 Bxe3 Qxb2 18 Qxb2 Rxb2 19 dxc4 ∞] **15...exf4** [Gunn tried to create disorienting, back-and-forth, full board tactics in every game.] **16 gxf4** [My 1976 notes

included some nonsense about 16 Rxf4 but of course the text is correct.] **16...bxc4 17 Nxc4 Qd8!** [I'd expected him to pin me on the diagonal, 17...Qb5 (which could have been well met by 18 Bf3), but The Duke abruptly switched flanks.] **18 Nf3 Ba6 19 Nfd2 Qh4 20 Bf3** [20 h3 was better] **20...Nh6 21 Qf2?** [Why just give away f4? Back then I wrote: "*Correctly trying to exchange queens in a difficult and unclear position for both sides. Trying to hold the extra pawn would be dangerous in view of Black's active position.*" 21 Qe3 may indeed be difficult, but no more dangerous for White than Black after, say, 21...Rfc8 22 Nxd6 Bxf1 23 Nxc8 Bh3. The move I played was simply wrong.] **21...Qxf4 22 Bg2 Qg4** [Exchanging queens in such a position was probably against Duke's nature even if it was good.] **23 Re1 Qe6 24 Bf1** [Trying to maintain my knight on c4 so it can capture whatever Black puts on e5] **24...Ng4 25 Qg1** [For once a note from 1976 merits repeating verbatim: "*threat: Nxd6*"] **25...Bc8 26 Bh3** [I called this a "*positional trap*" in light of the possible 26...Nf2+ 27 Qxf2 Qxh3 28 Qg3 and "*Black must trade queens and White looks good.*" There were several things wrong



with this analysis. First, why should Black even consider 26...Nf2?; second, why doesn't White take the d-pawn instead of 28 Qg3?; and finally, even if we grant the entire variation, White really does not look so good after we continue 28...Qxg3 29 hxg3 Be6. Here and throughout my 1976 notes I'm struck by how affirmatively I presented my chances. Yes, I slip off the hook later thanks to mistakes by Gunn, but the overall arc of the game is that I was comprehensively outplayed.] **26... h5 27 Bxg4 hxg4 28 Qg3 Be5** [My notes gave this !?, but ?! or even ? would be more like it. 28...Ne5, 28...Ba6 or 28...d5 are all better moves. Gunn was attracted to the idea of clearing g7 for his king so as to switch his rooks to the h-file. Having latched onto that, there would be no diverting him.] **29 Nxe5 Nxe5 30 Qe3** [30 Nb3 Δ Nd4] **30...Kg7**

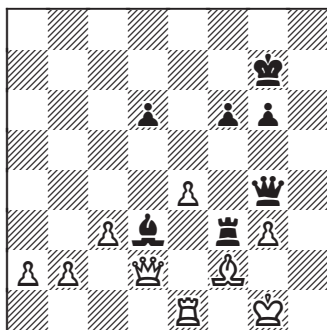


31 Qxa7!? [Actually a decent practical decision. White is going to suffer in any event, so grab the pawn and have something to look forward to if the defense holds. The alternative was trying to finish developing the queenside: 31 Nb3 and the plausible continuation 31...Rh8 32 Nd4 Qe7 33 Re2 Ba6 34 Rg2 leads to an amusing trap: 34...Rh3? (34...Rh5) 35

Nf5+! gxf5 36 Qxh3 although even then Black is still better after 36...Rh8 37 Qe3 Bb7] **31...Bb7 32 Qe3** [My optimism showed itself again in calling this "a blunder, losing a vital tempo" compared to the better move I thought I had in 32 Qd4 "White could possibly have weathered Black's attack quite nicely". It's true I do indeed lose a tempo inasmuch as I play Qd4 next turn. But had I played there now, I would merely have been busted a move sooner after 32...g3!—White would not weather for long.] **32...Rh8 33 Qd4?** [As wrong now as it was on the previous turn, and for the same reason. The only (slim) chance was 33 Rg1 directed against ...g3] **33...Rh3** [Gunn sticks to his design (see the note at move 28) and passes on the winning 33...g3 34 Re2 Qg4 35 Qe3 Rxh2+ 36 Rxh2 gxh2] **34 Re3 Rbh8** [Again, and even more so, 34...g3!] **35 Rxh3 Rxh3 36 Kg1** [Last call for 36...g3! -+...] **36...Qf6 37 Qf2** [Now Black is forced to win prosaically in an endgame after 37...Qxf2+ 38 Kxf2 Rxh2+ Not caring for this, he gave back the greater part of his advantage.] **37...Nf3+?! 38 Nxf3 Rxf3 39 Qe1!** [Not falling for 39 Qd4? Rf1+ 40 Kg2 Bxe4+! 41 Kg3 (41 Qxe4 Qf2mate) Rg1+! 42 Qxg1 Qf3+] **39...Ba6?** [Another error. Now White really is back in the game!] **40 Be3 Qe6 41 Bd4+ f6 42 Qd2?** [Needlessly fearing ...Rf1+, I suppose. But passed pawns must be pushed— 42 a4! ∞] **42...g3!** [My slip allowed this back into the picture and it should simply win.] **43 hxg3 Qh3?** [Too stylish for his own good! There was a forced mate after 43...Rxg3+ 44 Kf2 Qh3 and if 45 Bxf6+ just 45...Kh7] **44 Bf2! Bd3** [Aiming for ...Bxe4 and then some Rxg3/Qh1+ thing, while simultaneously

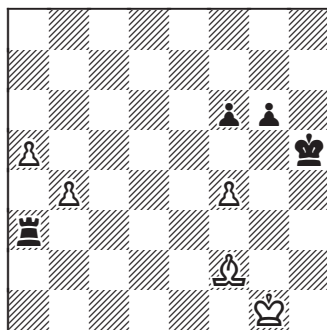


shielding his d6 pawn from my queen] **45 Re1** [This conforms to Lasker's Rule—use an unoccupied piece to defend direct threats—but in this instance **45 Qe1!** was actually more reliable, bolstering the f2-g3 construction. The rook on a1 may prove not at all “unoccupied” once the a- and b-pawns start rolling.] **45...Qg4**



46 b4 [I wanted to sacrifice the exchange when his bishop takes e4 and then rely on my passed pawns. I'd probably come to appreciate how well the Bf2-Pg3 defends against major pieces alone. However, first of all, **46 a4** may have been a better way to do the same thing. I remember debating between those two moves and reaching no conclusion. And second, there was also **46 Re3**. Having been under pressure practically the entire game, I was *that close* to enjoying my material advantage! **46...Rxe3** (**46...Bxe4** runs into **47 Qe2!**) **47 Qxe3 Bxe4** **48 b4** etc...] **46...Bxe4?** [Objectively, it was time to force a draw **46...Rxc3+!** **47 Bxc3 Qxc3+** **48 Kh1 Qh3+** and if **49 Qh2 Bxe4+!** **50 Rxe4** (or **50 Kg1 Qg4+** etc) **Qf1+**. The Duke either didn't see it or—more likely—wasn't interested.] **47 Rxe4?** [According to plan. But **47 Qxd6!** and White would have been unjustly

better! I probably didn't notice how from d6 my queen looks back along the diagonal to defend against...**Rxc3**. Had I seen that, I might have played **47 Qxd6** and gotten lucky that yet another move I didn't notice, **47...Rxf2**, also doesn't work due to **48 Rxe4!**] **47...Qxe4** **48 Qxd6 Rd3** **49 Qc7+ Kh6** **50 Qf4+ Qxf4** **51 gxf4 Rxc3** [This would not be available if White had pushed the a-pawn instead of the b-pawn on move **46**] **52 a4** [I remember being uncertain, but hopeful, about this position during the game. But by the time I composed my annotations I had become deranged and wrote “*Indeed, it is White who has fair winning chances.*” Gunn smacked this down with a few well-chosen variations.] **52...Ra3** **53 a5 Kh5**

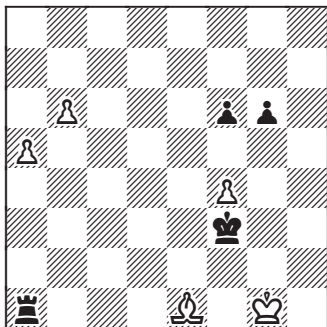


54 Be1?

I wrote: “*Even this is sufficient, but 54 Bb6-c7 is a draw at least.*” I regret the “at least” presumption but in fact **B-b6-c7** does look like White's best defense. **54...Kg4** **55 Be7!** (but not **55 b5 Rb3** **56 a6 Rxb5** **57 a7 Rb1+** **58 Kf2 Ra1**) **Rc3** **56 Bb8!** Black is of course the one who is pushing but I'm not exactly sure about the right way forward. At any rate, the move I did play is definitely not “sufficient”.



54...Kg4 55 b5 Kf3! [cluelessly
punctuated !? in 1976] 56 b6 Ra1!



57 Kf1

I awarded this ?? and wrote “57 b7 forces
Black to accept a draw by 57...Rxe1+ 58
Kh2 Re2+ 59 Kh3 Re1! 60 Kh2 etc”.

Uh, no. It's a forced mate. Just continue
the variation 60...Rb1 61 a6 Kf2 62 Kh3
(if 62 a7 Rxb7 63 a8Q Rh7mate) Rh1+
63 Kg4 Rg1+ 64 Kh3 (or 64 Kh4 Kf3
65 b8Q Rh1mate) and now 64...f5! 65
Kh4 Rg4+ 66 Kh3 Rg3+ 67 Kh4 (or
67 Kh2 Rb3! etc) Kg2 68 b8Q Rg4mate.

57...Rb1 0-1



*Roving reporter Aleksey Bashtavenko's wanderings have taken him to Belgrade, where
he dropped in on the second leg of the FIDE Grand Prix!*

The Mecca of Chess

30 years later

by Aleksey Bashtavenko

“Comrades, the fatherland is in danger! Our tanks are on foreign soil!

*The roosters crow that there are no guilty ones;
but for lies and for the sins, you will have to answer!”*

—Alexander Galich

AFTER A TURBULENT six-month sojourn in Brazil, I longed for a return to Europe. I learned the true value of deprivation, and it was an indelible life lesson for me. While Mexico's security situation was troubling, Brazil was on a different level. Westerners seldom think about the standards of living they take for granted, but the peace of mind one experiences walking the streets without fear of armed robbery is priceless. In a similar vein, we take our freedom of expression for granted. Fortunately, most of us will never endure the tribulations of life that will compel us to keep our complacency in check. As chess players, we hear a great deal about the struggles of the world's top players: countless hours of intense study; difficulties relating to 'normal' people; or just plainly going off the deep end, as did the two greatest minds in the annals of American chess. However, we cannot even begin to imagine what it would be like to represent our country at a time of unprecedented uncertainty, when the future of humanity had never been in greater peril. I have had the enormous privilege of meeting a man who experienced exactly that, and embodied Hemingway's maxim regarding “grace under pressure”.



Exhausted from a nine-round open tournament that took place near Belgrade, I arrived on the evening of March 6 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel—venue for the second leg of the FIDE Grand Prix, a series that would decide the final two participants in the upcoming candidates tournament for the world championship.

There I met Milan Dinic, the press officer. Our conversation went approximately thus:

M: Please email me the stories that you have written for VIRGINIA CHESS and I will get you accredited as a member of the press.

A: That means that I will be able to interview the players, correct?

M: (*Rolls eyes and laughs scoffingly*) Oh yeah, you may interview the players, but I can't guarantee anything about the mood that these guys will be in.

A: Trust me, I know! I am a chess player myself.

M: Then you must know that this is our first world-class event in 30 years!

A: The first since the rematch between Fischer and Spassky!

M: I was there, I was only a kid then, but I witnessed it. My father wrote a book on it, this was a truly unforgettable event.

A: Fischer lost his US citizenship over this!

M: Because of the sanctions against Yugoslavia, but I am grateful for what he did.

A: Then he completely went off the deep end.

M: (*Laughs and shakes his head*) Well, that's a logical progression for a lot of these guys.

A Serbian acquaintance introduced me to one of the grandmasters competing in this tournament. Seemingly confirming the press officer's observation, Richard Rapport avoided eye contact and spoke in tones vacillating from apathy to disdain. His demeanor suggested a misplaced rock star, with dark circles under his eyes and body language conveying extreme exhaustion. His flamboyant hairstyle and self-absorbed swagger screamed "*diva!*" but he lacked the panache to repute himself as the man of the hour.

Our conversation declined from awkward to downright unpleasant. Rapport rolled his eyes and stared at the floor when I asked about his expectations for this tournament. As if about to bare his teeth and growl, he grumbled: "I won just about every game, and I am looking to win them all!"

Just a momentary distraction—Milan Dinic confirmed to me that he received the email with my VIRGINIA CHESS portfolio—and when I turned back, Rapport had vanished. I found his cold arrogance absolutely galling. However,



Press Pass for Virginia Chess!



3rd Colonial Open

April 13-17, 2022

Washington Dulles Airport Marriott, 45020 Aviation Dr, Sterling, VA 20166

Open Section – 5-day - 9 Rounds – Norms Possible

\$\$ 14,000 TOTAL GTD PRIZE FUND – 150 GPP Enhanced !

**** \$7,000 INCREASE FROM LAST YEAR **** 2nd

Consecutive Year with Prize Increase ****

US Chess Junior Grand Prix ... A VCF Cup Event

Open (FIDE) (5-day) \$2400-1200-800-400-200, U2300/Unr \$500-300-200
 U2200 (FIDE) (3-/2-day) \$1200-600-300-200, U2000 \$400-200 (Unrated limit \$200)
 U1900 (3-/2-day) \$1000-500-200-100, U1700 \$300-200 (Unrated limit \$150)
 U1600 (3-/2-day) \$800-400-200-100, U1400 \$200-100 (Unrated limit \$150)
 U1300/Unr (2-day) \$500-300-100, U1100/Unr \$100

More tournament information/Online registration: www.ColonialOpenChess.com, Email co2022@capitalareachess.com

Hotel: Washington Dulles Airport Marriott (frequent shuttle service from IAD to Hotel). \$109/night if reserved by Mar 30th. Reservations call 1-703-471-9500, <http://www.colonialopenchess.com>

Min Prize Guarantees/Appearance fees for titled players who register by 3/15 and play all 9 games with no byes. Contact organizer for details or check the official website. Min Rating in Open Section: FIDE(2000) / USCF(2100) except Foreign FIDE Rated Players. FIDE 1900/USCF 2000 USA players pay \$250 additional to play in Open. Entry Fees: Open: Early bird \$195 by 3/1, \$215 by 3/13, \$235 by 3/31, \$250 by 4/12, \$275 after 4/12 and Onsite (GMs/Foreign IMs/Foreign WGMs \$50 EF; US IMs/US WGMs and Foreign FIDE Players \$100 EF). U2200/U1900/U1600 Sections: Early bird \$105 by 3/1, \$125 by 3/13, \$145 by 3/31, \$165 by 4/12, \$185 after 4/12 and Onsite. U1300: Early bird \$80 by 3/1, \$95 by 3/13, \$115 by 3/31, \$135 by 4/12, \$155 after 4/12 and Onsite.; \$5 service fee for refunds.

Schedule & Time control: Open All games G/90;+30, Wed 4/13 7pm, Thu 4/14 & Fri 4/15 1pm-7pm, Sat 4/16 11am-5pm, Sun 4/17 10am-3:30pm. U2200/U1900/U1600 3-day; Reg. ends Fri 4/15 6pm. All games G/90;+30, Rds. Fri 4/15 7pm, Sat 4/16 11am-5pm, Sun 4/17 10am-3:30pm. U2200/U1900/U1600 2-day Reg. ends Sat 4/16 10am. Rds. 1-2: G/45;+15, Sat 4/16 11am-2pm; Rds. 3-5: G/90;+30, Sat 4/16 5pm; Sun 4/17 10am-3:30pm. U1300 2-day ONLY. 6 Rounds G/45;+15 (Sat 4/16 & Sun 4/17 10am-1pm-4pm) Byes: All rounds allowed, must commit 1hr before rd. 2 (Open Section byes must be requested before Rd 3. Only 1 bye allowed in last 2 rounds in Open and U2200); limit 2 byes in all sections except Open max 3 byes. Email co2022@capitalareachess.com. Enter: colonialopenchess.com or Capital Area Chess Inc, 5116 Bebe Ct., Centreville, VA 20120.



heeding Dinic's counsel, I accepted that such unsavory exchanges might be normal in this setting.

Yet in contrast with the impression left by Rapport, grandmaster Dmitry Andreikin proved to be delightfully accommodating. In part this was because we both spoke Russian. This is one of the very few times in my life where knowing Russian has benefited me.

Andreikin let me interview him several times over the coming days, establishing a certain level of familiarity. In time I was able to probe him about matters beyond just chess. For instance, we discussed the doping scandal that has led to Russian athletes being unable perform under their national flag. I tend to agree with Andreikin's view that chess players had nothing to do with this and so it seems inappropriate to extend that sanction to them.

THE FOLLOWING DAY was the 6th and final round of the so-called Group Stage. By the time I arrived, Grischuk and Shankland had already agreed to a draw. Rapport and Shirov also declared peace early, as did Mamedyarov and Vachier-Lagrave minutes later. Nikita Vitugov and Anish Giri fought to a more protracted draw. Pentala Harikrishna and Amin Tabatabaei played an intriguing game where Black prevailed in a superior endgame. Vladimir Fedoseev and Vidit Gujrathi shared the spoils in an endgame that seemed destined for a draw much earlier. However, the match between Yu Yangyi and Alexander Predke proved far more eventful. The Russian grandmaster won a complex queen *vs* rook+bishop endgame with only seconds remaining on his clock.



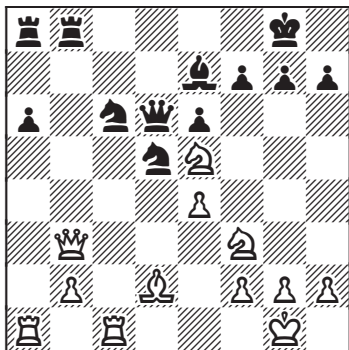
Aleksey (right) speaking with GM Dmitry Andreikin. Photo by Dr Mark Livshitz from the official FIDE Flickr archive (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/fide/>)



For all that, the most memorable game of the day was between Dmitry Andreikin and Etienne Bacrot.

Dmitry Andreikin - Etienne Bacrot Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 dxc4 4 e3 Nf6 5 Bxc4 c5 6 O-O a6 7 Nbd2 cxd4 8 Nxd4 Bc5 [After the game, Andreikin explained to me that at this point he felt comfortable playing for a draw, as he was hoping that Grischuk was going to prevail over Shankland. He could not be sure of that result of course, but in any case it was desirable that he to maintain maximal flexibility.] 9 N4b3 Be7 10 Be2 b5 11 a4 bxa4 12 Rxa4 O-O 13 Nc4 Bd7 14 Ra1 Nc6 15 Nbd2 [At this juncture Andreikin learned that Grischuk-Shankland had ended a draw. Now he would play for a win, which would qualify him for the Knock Out Stage without having to withstand a tiebreak playoff.] 15...Nd5 16 Nf3 Ncb4 17 Bd2 Qb8 18 Nce5 Bb5 19 Bxb5 Qxb5 20 Nd4 Qb7 21 Qb3 Qc7 22 Ndf3 Rfb8 23 Rfc1 Qd6 24 e4 Nc6 (diagram)



I expected 25 Rxc6 but Andreikin went for a thunderous queen sacrifice, seeking the initiative to the fullest...

25 Qxb8+ Nxb8 26 Rc8+ Bf8 27 exd5 exd5 28 Rac1 f6 29 Nc6 a5 30 Rd8 Qc7 31 Nfd4 Qb7 32 Nxa5 Qxb2 33 Ndb3 Kf7 34 Bf4 Bb4 35 Rc7+ Kg6 36 Rg8 Bxa5 37 Nxa5 Rxa5 [The complications had seemingly resolved in favor of the French grandmaster, who sauntered back and forth between the board and his private room next to the stage. He

insouciantly reclined in his chair, observing that he had ten minutes left on his clock while Andreikin was down to under a minute. But in choosing his last move, Bacrot underestimated the strength of White's attack. The prophylactic 37...Kf5! was called for.] 38 g4! Andreikin created an escape route for his king and cut off Black's flight squares simultaneously. Bacrot could have offered a sanctuary to his king with f5, but he was now also down to under three minutes on his clock, and he mistakenly sacrificed his knight.] 38...Nd7 [The point was to deflect White's rook from being able to block a check from c1...] 39 Rxd7 [...but Andreikin just snapped off the knight anyway, seeing more clearly than his opponent that the check is not really dangerous.] Qb1+ 40 Kg2 Qe4+ 41 Kg3 Ra3+ 42 Kh4 1-0

The first round of the Knockout semi-finals featured an intriguing kingside attack by Giri with counter-attacking chances from Andreikin, concluding in a weird dynamic balance.



Anish Giri - Dmitry Andreikin Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 b3 b6 4 Bb2 Bb7 5 Nc3 Nf6 6 e5 Ne4 7 Nxe4 Bxe4 8 Qe2 Bb7 9 h4 Nc6 10 h5 Nb4 11 d3 b5 12 a3 Nc6 13 Qd2 Rc8 14 Rh3 Qc7 15 O-O-O Na5 16 Ng5 Be7 17 Rg3 c4 18 dxc4 bxc4 19 b4 h6 20 Nxf7 [After the match Andreikin confirmed that this was incorrect but 20 Nh3 would have been very strong for White.] 20...Kxf7 21 bxa5 Bd5 22 Qf4+ Kg8 23 Rxd5 Bg5 24 Rxg5 hxg5 25 Qd4 exd5 26 Qxd5+ Kf8 27 Bd4 Qc6 28 Qxc6 Rxc6 29 Be2 a6 30 Kd2 Ke7 31 Kc3 Rb8 32 a4 Rb1 33 Bf3 ½-½ Despite the activity of Giri's centralized Bishops, I was surprised that Andreikin agreed to a draw. However, in a post-game interview he firmly assured me that neither side has significant winning prospects in the final position.

Meanwhile, in the other semifinal, Rapport scored a nice win as White against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave.

Richard Rapport – Maxim Vachier LaGrave Gruenfeld

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 d5 4 cxd5 Nxd5 5 e4 Nxc3 6 bxc3 Bg7 7 Bc4 c5 8 Ne2 O-O 9 Be3 Nc6 10 Rc1 cxd4 11 cxd4 Qa5+ 12 Rc3 [Rapport thought over this unusual looking rook placement for a good 5-7 minutes prior to committing to it.] 12...e5 13 d5 Nd4 [To my eye Black's position seemed promising; his king was castled, his pieces were actively placed, and White rook is awkwardly pinned.] 14 Bd2 Bd7 15 Nxd4 exd4 16 Rc1 Qa3 17 Qb3 Qxb3 [After the queens had been exchanged, White's position suddenly seemed stronger. Nonetheless, Vachier-Lagrave proceeded to put pressure on what appeared the weakest point in White's pawn chain: e4.] 18 Bxb3 Rae8 19 f3 f5 20 Rc7 Bb5 [Watching the game as it was played, I could not understand why Black didn't sacrifice the bishop with 20...fxe4, not seeing the defense 21 d6+ Kh8 22 Rxd7 exf3+ 23 Re7. Around this point, a spectator was coughing and Rapport seemed visibly irritated by the commotion. In fairness, the game has reached a critical juncture.] 21 a4 Bd3 22 d6+ Kh8 23 d7 Rb8 24 Bb4 Be5 25 Bxf8 Bxc7 26 Be7 Kg7 27 e5 b5 28 Bf6+ Kf8 29 e6 Bd8 30 Be5 Rb6 31 Bxd4 Rc6 32 axb5 Bxb5 33 Kf2 Ke7 34 Be3 Bb6 35 Rd1 Bxe3+ 36 Kxe3 Rc3+ 37 Kf4 [The bishops have been exchanged, and White's rook has been activated, and the connected passed pawns are unstoppable.] 1-0

Rapport offered an interview to Milan Dinic and his associates, but dismissed requests for a conversation with other independent reporters. He briefly discussed the game before fleeing the scene. Perhaps he doesn't care for the apparent gap between his self-assessment and that of others who do not think of him as the best player in the world. As far as Rapport is concerned, it must be a matter of time. Who could question his optimism in light of such a dazzling victory over one of the most dynamic super-grandmasters of our time?



Dmitry Andreikin - Anish Giri

King's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 g6 3 b3 Bg7 4 Bb2 c5 [I was hoping to see the main line King's Indian Defense, as I knew that Giri played this opening in his younger years. However, neither side was willing to accept the risks that came with it.] **5 dxc5 Qa5+ 6 Nbd2 Qxc5 7 e3 O-O 8 c4 b6 9 Be2 Bb7 10 O-O d6 11 Rc1 Nbd7 12 Nb1 Ne4 13 Bxg7 Kxg7 14 Nfd2 Nxd2 15 Qxd2 Qg5 16 f3 Nf6 17 e4 Qxd2 18 Nxd2** [I began to wonder if either of these players had the determination to fight for a win.] **18...Rac8 19 Nb1 Rc5 20 Nc3 Rfc8 21 Kf2 a6** [While Andreikin centralized his pieces with Nc3 and Kf2, Giri's position appeared to have been preferable. He was preparing the pawn break with b5, which would undermine Andreikin's pawn on c4. He also exerted considerable pressure on the c-file by placing both of his rooks there.] **22 Na4 R5c6 23 Nb2 b5 24 Ra1 bxc4 25 Nxc4 Rc5** [As against Bacrot, Andreikin played an intriguing knight maneuver. Later he told me that he enjoys playing in a provocative, counter-attacking style reminiscent of Viktor Korchnoi. This is part and parcel of a general mindset of maintaining flexibility, which is perfectly suited for occasions where a draw is an acceptable result but it may still be necessary to fight for a win. However, in this position, I had trouble identifying any winning resources for him. The only favorable imbalance I could see was the queenside pawn majority, but White is nowhere close to being able to leverage that.] **26 Rfd1 a5 27 Ne3 d5 28 exd5 Nxd5 29 Bc4 Nb6 30 Bf1 Nd5 31 Bc4 Nb6 32 Bf1 Nd5 ½-½**

I asked Andreikin to confirm my sense that he had been satisfied to play for a draw. Without mounting a high-horse, he nonchalantly acknowledged that he was exhausted from the previous round, and frankly felt sleepy for much of the game.

And so, on to the tiebreaks...

Dmitry Andreikin - Anish Giri

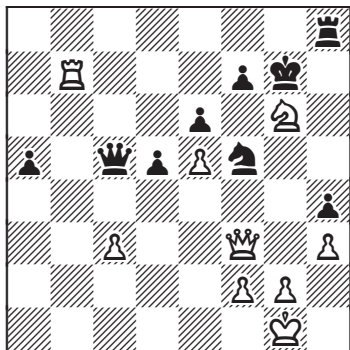
Vienna

1 e4 e5 2 Bc4 Nf6 3 d3 Nc6 4 Nc3 Bb4 5 Ne2 d5 6 exd5 Nxd5 7 O-O Be6 8 Bxd5 Bxd5 9 f4 f6 10 fxe5 Nxe5 11 Nxd5 Qxd5 [Once again, two sets of minor pieces were exchanged fairly early in the opening, which suggested to me that neither side was particularly opposed to a draw.] **12 Nf4 Qd7 13 c3 Bd6 14 d4 O-O-O 15 Qb3 Ng6 16 Ne6 Rde8 17 d5 Nf8 18 Nd4 Ng6 19 Ne6 Nf8 20 Nd4 Ng6** [Instead of repeating moves, Giri could have tried 20...Qg4, mounting pressure on White's lightly defended king. But he was low on time and could look forward to having the White pieces in the next game. In retrospect, it is almost a sure bet that he regretted not playing on.] **21 Ne6 ½-½**



Anish Giri - Dmitry Andreikin Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Nxc6 bxc6 7 Bd3 d5 8 O-O Nf6 9 Qf3 Bb7 10 Re1 Be7 11 Qg3 h5 12 h3 Kf8 13 Bf4 h4 14 Qf3 Kg8 15 Rad1 Nh5 16 Bh2 Bd6 17 Bxd6 Qxd6 18 e5 Qb4 19 Ne2 g6 20 c3 Qe7 21 b4 a5 22 a3 Ba6 23 Nd4 Bxd3 24 Qxd3 Qb7 25 Rb1 Qa6 26 b5 cxb5 27 Rxb5 Ng7 28 Reb1 Qc8 29 Rb6 Qc5 30 Qf3 Rf8 31 Rb8 Qxa3 [Again in the spirit of Viktor Korchnoi, Andreikin grabbed a pawn while his own king remained in danger.] 32 Rxf8+ Qxf8 33 Nc6 Qc5 34 Rb7 Nf5 35 Ne7+ Kg7 36 Nxg6 (diagram)



With both players now catastrophically low on time, Anish played a seemingly impulsive knight sacrifice. Had Andreikin accepted the piece straightaway, the game could have ended in perpetual check. However, showing guile and stoic composure, he inserted a sharp counterattacking move...

36...Qc6! 37 Rxf7+ Kxf7 38 Nxh8+ Kg7 39 Qh5 Qxc3 40 Nf7 Qe1+ 41 Kh2 Qxf2 42 Ng5 Qg3+ 43 Kg1 Qe1+ 44 Kh2 Qxe5+ 45 Kg1 Qe3+ 46 Kh2 Qg3+ 47 Kg1 Qe1+ 48 Kh2 Qh1+! 49 Kxh1 Ng3+ 50 Kg1 Nxh5 51 Nxe6+ Kf6 52 Nc5 Ke5 53 Kf2 d4 54 Ke2 Nf4+ 55 Kf3 Kd5 56 Na4 Ne6 57 g3 hxg3 58 h4 d3 59 Kxg3 Kc4 60 h5 Kb3 61 h6 Nf8 62 Nc5+ Kc2 63 Ne6 d2 0-1

Unfortunately, I was not able to discuss the game with Andreikin right after it ended, but I was among the first to congratulate him on advancing to face Rapport in the Finals, which commenced the following day.

Dmitry Andreikin - Richard Rapport Scotch

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nc3 Nc6 4 d4 exd4 5 Nxd4 Bb4 6 Nxc6 bxc6 7 Bd3 d5 8 Bd2 O-O 9 O-O Bxc3 10 Bxc3 dxe4 11 Bxf6 Qxf6 [Already, a draw seemed like the most likely result.] 12 Bxe4 Qxb2 13 Bxc6 Rb8 14 Rb1 Qxb1 15 Qxb1 Rxb1 16 Rxb1 Rd8 [The pawn structure is symmetrical and the queens have been exchanged. I was certain that the players were going to agree to a draw in no time, but the game dragged on for another two hours.] 17 Bf3 Bf5 18 Rb7 Bxc2 19 Rxc7 Be4 20 Be2 g5 21 h3 a5 22 Ra7 Ra8 23 Re7 Bd5 24 Bf3 Bxf3 25 gxf3 f6 [Andreikin was down to under ten minutes, but he had already shown he is no stranger to playing tough positions under serious time pressure, and this position didn't seem to be a stringent test of this ability.] 26 Kg2 Rc8 27 Ra7 Rc5 28 f4 gxf4 29 Kf3 Rc3+ 30 Kg4 Ra3 31 Kf5 Rxh3 32 a4 f3 33 Kxf6 Rh6+ 34 Kg5 Rh2 35 Kf6 Rh6+ 36 Kg5 Rh2 37 Kf6 ½-½



Belgrade Grand Prix Final: Richard Rapport (l) vs Dmitry Andreikin

Photo by Mana Sadeghi

To be honest, I was rather bored of this game. I watched most of it from the TV screen outside the playing hall, but I returned to the room just as Andreikin was about to play 37 Kf6. As I took my seat, he looked directly at me and confidently moved his king diagonally a square up.

Afterwards, I reminded the battle-weary Andreikin that Karpov's nickname in school was “Гаденыш”, which translates to English as a “little serpent”, though most interpreters would ascribe a far more derogatory meaning to that term. Andreikin chuckled but demurred at with my suggestion that Karpov is a sly and a slippery person—though he did allow that the former world champion's involvement with the KGB has done him no honor.

Then I suggested that Rapport reminds me of Karpov. Even more amused by this, Andreikin nonetheless objected. He assured me that Richard Rapport is in fact a very nice guy. Returning to the game, I asked why he was playing for a draw again, even with White. Andreikin told me he hadn't slept much because he was picking up his family at the airport. They arrived in the middle of the night after the flight was delayed by over eight hours due to a bomb threat.

Richard Rapport - Dmitry Andreikin **Queen's Gambit Declined**

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 a6 [Offhand, 3...a6 seemed odd to me. I was surprised to learn that this is a book move with a name, the Janowski Variation.] **4 cxd5 exd5**



5 a3 h6 [If Andreikin's 3...a6 was idiosyncratic, these other rook's pawn moves seemed beyond explanation. This seems like how we tell beginners not to play.] **6 Bf4 Nf6 7 e3 c5 8 Be5 Be6 9 Nge2 Nc6 10 Nf4 cxd4 11 Bxd4 Nxd4 12 Qxd4 Bd6 13 g3 Rc8 14 Rd1 Qa5 15 Rc1 O-O 16 Nxe6 fxe6 17 Bh3 Kf7 18 O-O Rc4 19 Qd3 Be5 20 Ne2 Rfc8 21 Rxc4 Rxc4 22 b4 Qa4 23 Nf4 Bxf4 24 exf4** [Andreikin's position seemed promising to me. He had the c-file and a dynamic pawn center. Yet, Rapport targeted the pawn on e6 and found opportunities to exploit the vulnerability of Andreikin's king.] **24...Qc6 25 Qe3 Ne4 26 f3 Rc3 27 Qd4 Rc4 28 Qe3 Rc3 29 Qd4 Rc4 30 Qe5** [Declining to repeat moves!] **Nd2 31 f5 Nxf1 32 fxe6+ Ke8 33 Qxg7 Qb6+ 34 Kxf1 Rc1+ 35 Ke2 Re1+ 36 Kxe1 Qe3+ 37 Kd1 Qd3+ 38 Kc1 Qe3+ 39 Kb1 Qd3+ 40 Kc1 Qe3+ 41 Kb2 Qd2+ 42 Ka1 Qc1+ 43 Ka2 Qc4+ 44 Kb2 Qe2+ 45 Ka1 Qf1+** [Not a blunder, just falling on his sword in recognition that the checks will run out, eg 45...Qe1+ 46 Ka2 Qe2+ 47 Qb2 Qc4+ 48 Kb1 Qd3+ 49 Qc2] **46 Bxf1 1-0**

Rapport disappeared after the match and didn't even bother to attend the interview. By contrast, Andreikin showed up at the press conference. In a tone of dignified rationality, he explained that his peak form was a decade ago. While he was happy to have reached the final, he was of course disappointed to have lost. He shrugged his shoulders with a stoic resignation that seemed to say, "it is what it is".

A similar tone could be heard in Andreikin's discourse when I caught up with him later. Did he wish to send a message to the West? No, such a message helps no one. It would do nothing to reverse the trend of dehumanization of Russian chess.



THE 1998 OLYMPICS IN NAGANO have always held a special significance for me. As I see it, Nagano represented the end of an era. Not only an end of my own time in Russia, but also the end of Yeltsin's Westernization of my country. At the same time, Nagano was also the final performance of one of Russia's most phenomenal hockey generations. We had the Bure brothers, Fedorov, Kasparitis. And in goal, Mikhail Shtalenkov—they called him "The Iceberg" for his steely resolve and unflappable disposition.

Unfortunately, it wasn't enough. The Czech Republic won the final match, 1-0. They had Dominik Hasek, perhaps the finest goalkeeper of all time. By the irony of fate, the Czech player who scored the winning goal was Petr Svoboda, whose name means "freedom" in both Czech and Russian. Svoboda won the game for his country, but to my mind, it signified the end of Russia's bid for a liberal democracy and its most cynical denouement that ensued with the election of Vladimir Putin.

When I spoke with Dmitry Andreikin for the final time, he assured me that I could do him no harm by publicizing the poem by Jewish-Ukrainian dissident



Alexander Galich that Andreikin recited on YouTube just two days prior to the Belgrade Grand Prix. (<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/HNKjQDiv5eA>) Andreikin tacitly acknowledged that we were on the same page about the tragedy of the “dehumanization of Russia and Russian sport.” And he confirmed that he had no plans of returning to the Fatherland that is “in danger.”

I shook Andreikin’s hand and urged him to contact me if he ever needed help fleeing from our imbecilic government. He seconded my exclamation that our conversations had been a great pleasure.

As I watched him hurry get on the elevator, evading the dozens of autograph seekers, I couldn’t help but think of the final moments of that 1998 hockey final, when Mikhail Shtalenkov headed to the bench to make room for the sixth attacker. I wonder if this could be yet another end of an era? And will it also be in vain, just as the ending that I witnessed as a child?



Grandmaster Dmitry Andreikin

Photo by Pyotr Tantsov

Virginia Chess
2851 Cherry Branch Lane
Oak Hill, VA 20171-3843

Non-profit Org.
US Postage PAID
Orange VA
Permit No. 97

In This Issue:

Tournaments
Coastal Virginia Open 1

Features
The Strange Case of Carlton Gunn (Shibut) 8
The Mecca of Chess (Basttavenko) 11

Odds & Ends
Upcoming Events 2, 9
VCF Info *inside front cover*

