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## Northwest Chess

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### On the front cover:

“Issue 900!” Photo credit: Philip Peterson, chess set  
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black and white photo of Viktors Pupols courtesy of *The  
Idaho Statesman*, and the image of the original working  
cover for January 2023 by Jeffrey Roland. The position on  
the board is from a game annotated in this issue.

### On the back cover:

“900-themed” artwork. Photo credit: Eric Holcomb.  
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### Submissions

Submissions of games (PGN format is preferable for  
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submissions are subject to editing or revision. Send via  
U.S. Mail to:

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## Northwest Chess Hall of Fame

This month, January 2023, we begin to feature the inaugural class in the *Northwest Chess* Hall of Fame. We plan to reveal the first six inductees approximately one every two months during the year, depending on magazine space availability and our ability to produce introductory biographies on schedule.

Our first inductee is the legendary Life Master Viktors Pupols (see bio by IM John Donaldson, page 4). While the other five names of the inaugural class will appear one by one in future issues, we can tell you now that Viktors is the only one still with us. His history in the region is heavily weighted to playing chess practically everywhere over the past seven or eight decades, though he also has contributed to *Northwest Chess* magazine (even when it wasn’t yet *Northwest Chess* by name), given lectures at local clubs, and run tournaments, notably events on the ferries of Puget Sound. “Unkel Vik” was a fixture at Seattle’s Last Exit on Brooklyn in its heyday, blitzing with future GM Yasser Seirawan and countless others long into the University District nights.

Pupols is well-known to be one of the few players on the planet able to claim a plus score against World Champion Robert James Fischer. Of course his victory came a bit before Fischer was the World Champion, or even a Grandmaster, but it still counts. The game was an exciting Latvian Gambit, one of Viktors’ specialties, in a U. S. Junior event. Vik and Bobby were playing blitz the night before, with Bobby expressing doubt that Viktors would play such a bizarre opening in a real game against him. Next day he did exactly that, and the rest is the stuff of legend.

One little-known fact about Viktors is his claim in the 1980s to be writing the definitive book on the best gas station and rest stop toilets in at least three states, having visited practically all of them driving obscure routes to tournament venues across the region. We aren’t sure if he ever found a publisher.

Congratulations on being the first inductee into the new *Northwest Chess* Hall of Fame, Unkel Vik.

— Ralph Dubisch for the *Northwest Chess* Board of Directors

# NORTHWEST CHESS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

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## VIKTORS PUPOLS

IM JOHN DONALDSON

The Pacific Northwest (British Columbia, Idaho, Oregon and Washington) has a rich chess tradition dating back roughly 150 years. During this time, it has produced a number of outstanding players including two-time World Championship Candidate Yasser Seirawan, Canadian Champions Peter Biyiasas and Duncan Suttles as well as three-time gold-medal winning U.S. Olympiad team member Arthur Dake. All, however, pale in terms of longevity when compared to the iron-man of chess in this region, if not the entire United States, Viktors Pupols.

Born in Latvia and raised in Germany, Viktors arrived in Tacoma in 1953 at the age of 19 and soon established himself as one of the best in the area, playing in his first state championship the following year. He has made a habit of participating in this annual invitational round robin event and through 2022 has competed in 50 of them. Records are supposedly made to be broken, but it's hard to imagine that happening to this one.

When Viktors played in his first Washington State Championship he was second to J.L. Sheets. This is the same Sheets who won a record nine Washington State Championship titles and was the victor in the inaugural competition in 1932. Viktors is indeed living history.

The Washington State Championship isn't the only tournament Viktors has played in. The US Chess online rating site, which goes back to September 1991, reports Pupols has played in 651 events the past three decades. Add in his activity the preceding four decades and it's likely Viktors has competed in over 1000

tournaments and played over 6000 games in his career.

Along the way Pupols has collected a number of scalps, but perhaps none as impressive as those of International Masters Bryce Tiglon and Dmitry Zilberstein in 2019 when he was in his early 80s. This is an accomplishment only a handful of octogenarian players have accomplished. On the other end of the age spectrum, Viktors defeated 12-year-

old Bobby Fischer in the 1955 US Junior. All those who have played Viktors can be thankful they do not need six degrees of separation to connect to Bobby.

The subject of a full-length biography by Larry Parr (*Viktors Pupols: American Master*) which covers his career up to 1983, Viktors is the standard by which multiple generations of rising young stars have measured their progress. Long may this continue!



*Viktors Pupols at the 2022 Washington Class Championship. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.*

# 2023 PanAmerican Team Chess Championship

&

## Seattle New Years Open

January 5 - 8, 2023



**Hotel Info & Rates:** Westin Seattle (1900 5th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101). \$149 one King or two Queen - Beds. Call (206) 728-1000 (request PanAm rate) or visit the tournament website for online booking.

**Format:** Two section (Open/U1800) 4 player team event  
6 round Swiss; G/90+30  
USCF + FIDE rated

One Section 3 player team event  
5 round Swiss; G/60+10  
unrated

Two sections individual event  
(Open / U1700)  
5 round Swiss; G/90+30  
USCF + Open section FIDE rated

**Schedule:** 1/5: 10-1pm Onsite Registration  
Rounds Thu 5 PM, Fri 10 AM & 5 PM,  
Sat 10 AM & 5 PM, Sun 9 AM

1/7: 7-9 am Onsite Registration  
Rounds Sat 10 AM & 2 PM & 5 PM,  
Sun 9 AM & 12 PM

1/6: 1-4 pm Onsite Registration  
Rounds Fri 5 PM, Sat 10 AM & 5 PM,  
Sun 10 AM & 3:30PM

**Entry Fee:** \$200 until 11/30/22, \$250 after  
\*U1800: \$200 EF covered by Red Bull  
\* \$100 discount for U2100 teams  
participating in CCL

\$200 until 12/14/2022, \$250 after  
\* EF waived if participating in CEA  
mentorship program

Open: \$80 until 12/31/22, \$100 after  
\* \$40 play-up fee if rated under 1700 in Open  
\* free entry for GM, IM, WGM, WIM  
U1700: \$60 until 12/31/22, \$80 after

**Prizes & Awards:** Top 4 teams qualify for Final Four  
College Chess Championship  
Trophies and Plaques for best teams  
and individuals (see website)

Trophies and Plaques for best teams  
and individuals (see website)

**\$2350/b50**  
Open: \$500/\$350/ \$200  
1st U2100/U1900: \$150  
Reserve: \$300/\$200/ \$150  
1st U1500/U1300/U1100&Unr.: \$100  
Biggest Upset (per section): \$25

### Side events (Open to All)

**Seattle New Years Blitz**  
Friday, 1/6/2023 at 9:00 PM  
Entry Fee: \$30 until 1/5/23, \$40 after.  
Free for collegiate and corporate  
participants.  
Prize Fund: \$700

**Seattle New Years Puzzle  
Championship**  
Friday, 1/6/2023 at 3:30 - 4:30pm  
Registration: \$10 on site  
and more ...

**Career Development  
Workshops**  
Fri 8:30am Resume Workshop (Twitch)  
Sat 3:00pm Chess Streamer Workshop  
(chess.com)  
Sat 8:00pm Networking Mixer



More information and additional side events at <https://cea.gg/panam> or email organizer Florian Helff at [chess@cea.gg](mailto:chess@cea.gg)

# Siva Sankrithi

Week three (Tuesday November 15, 2022) saw the Washington U2200 team faceoff against California North, a formidable challenge. We debuted NM Eric Zhang on board one, with NM Daniel Shubin, and experts Michael Omori and Advaith Vijayakumar returning on two, three, and four, respectively. Like California-S last week, California-N put a 2400+ player on board one, namely FM Rayan Taghizadeh, along with experts Nathan Fong, Theo Biyasas, and Bryce Yeh. California-N got off to a huge 3.5-0.5 lead in the first quarter, with only Eric holding a draw. In quarter two, California-N extended their lead to 6-2, with Advaith winning and Eric drawing again. Needing only 2.5 to secure the win in the second half, the odds were heavily stacked against us. I don't know if there was some epic halftime speech from Jacob or what, but we dominated the third quarter, going 3.5-0.5 with wins by Daniel, Eric, and Michael, and a draw by Advaith. Notably Daniel, with the black pieces, upset 2400 Rayan. Trailing 5.5-6.5 headed into the fourth quarter, the odds were still stacked against us, but chances were there. Ultimately Rayan and Nathan

proved too strong for our top boards and while Michael won and Advait drew, we fell 7-9, bringing our team score to two wins and a loss on the season, still in a good position to make the playoffs. After a brief hiatus, we resume versus our Northwest Chess friends, Oregon, on Tuesday 12-6. Get excited too for the free for all event thereafter where boards one will faceoff against other board ones only, board twos will faceoff against other board twos only, etc.

Week three (Wednesday November 16, 2022) saw the Washington U1800 team faceoff against our strong northwest siblings from the South, team Oregon. Oregon was led by superstar siblings NM Zoey Tang and Austin Tang, along with Jonathan Disenhof and Neev Kodarapu. We went with a more balanced lineup of Vidip Kona, Paul Lazarte, Vihaan Jammalamadaka, and Wade Suess. The first quarter was even, 2-2, with Wade scoring an upset over NM Zoey and Vidip besting Neev. The second quarter was even too, with the Tang siblings winning for Oregon and Vidip and Paul winning for us. 4-4 at the half. The third quarter was even as well, with Vidip and Vihaan

winning. 6-6 with a quarter to play! There is no separating these northwest friends and rivals! In the final round, the Tang siblings proved too strong again, and while Vihaan won, Neev scored the win on four to give Oregon the 9-7 win. Kudos on a great match! The team now has two wins and a loss overall and is in a good position to make the playoffs. We resume after a break versus Hawaii on Wednesday December 7. Another free-for-all event will follow here with board ones vs ones, twos vs twos, etc.

Remember you can watch all Washington States Chess Cup matches, in both U2200 and U1800, on twitch. tv/slothyChess, streamed by our own legendary Candidate Master Tim Moroney. Stay tuned! Cheers!

**Rayan Taghizadeh (CA-N) (2400) –  
Daniel Shubin (WA) (2196) [C06]**

2022-2023 SCC U2200

Week 3 CA-N vs WA

Chess.com (R3.1), November 15, 2022

[Ralph Dubisch]

It's important to remember, when playing through this see-saw battle, that it is rapid

U2200 Week 3: November 15, 2022

California-North		Washington	
Rayan Taghizadeh	B 1 0 W	Advaith Vijayakumar	
Nathan Fong	B 1 0 W	Michael Omori	
Theo Biyasas	W 1 0 B	Daniel Shubin	
Bryce Yeh	W 0.5 0.5 B	Eric Zhang	
Rayan Taghizadeh	W 1 0 B	Michael Omori	
Nathan Fong	W 0 1 B	Advaith Vijayakumar	
Theo Biyasas	B 0.5 0.5 W	Eric Zhang	
Bryce Yeh	B 1 0 W	Daniel Shubin	
Rayan Taghizadeh	W 0 1 B	Daniel Shubin	
Nathan Fong	W 0 1 B	Eric Zhang	
Theo Biyasas	B 0.5 0.5 W	Advaith Vijayakumar	
Bryce Yeh	B 0 1 W	Michael Omori	
Rayan Taghizadeh	B 1 0 W	Eric Zhang	
Nathan Fong	B 1 0 W	Daniel Shubin	
Theo Biyasas	W 0 1 B	Michael Omori	
Bryce Yeh	W 0.5 0.5 B	Advaith Vijayakumar	
	9 7		

Idaho: Bye  
Oregon: Bye

U1800 Week 3: November 16, 2022

Oregon	Washington				
Zoezy Tang	B	0	1	W	Wade Suess
Austin Tang	B	1	0	W	Vihaan Jammalamadaka
Jonathan Disenhof	W	1	0	B	Paul Lazarte
Neev Kodarapu	W	0	1	B	Vidip Kona
Zoezy Tang	W	1	0	B	Vihaan Jammalamadaka
Austin Tang	W	1	0	B	Wade Suess
Jonathan Disenhof	B	0	1	W	Vidip Kona
Neev Kodarapu	B	0	1	W	Paul Lazarte
Zoezy Tang	W	1	0	B	Paul Lazarte
Austin Tang	W	0	1	B	Vidip Kona
Jonathan Disenhof	B	1	0	W	Wade Suess
Neev Kodarapu	B	0	1	W	Vihaan Jammalamadaka
Zoezy Tang	B	1	0	W	Vidip Kona
Austin Tang	B	1	0	W	Paul Lazarte
Jonathan Disenhof	W	0	1	B	Vihaan Jammalamadaka
Neev Kodarapu	W	1	0	B	Wade Suess
		9	7		

U1800 Week 3: November 16, 2022

Cross Week of November 2022			
Nevada			Idaho
Ryan Phillips	B	1 0 W	Brian Lange
Eric Wilson	B	1 0 W	Jamie Lang
Kevin Reyes	W	1 0 B	Adam Porth
Akash Anumalasetty	W	0 1 B	Jeff Roland
Ryan Phillips	W	1 0 B	Jamie Lang
Eric Wilson	W	1 0 B	Brian Lange
Kevin Reyes	B	0 1 W	Jeff Roland
Akash Anumalasetty	B	1 0 W	Adam Porth
Ryan Phillips	W	1 0 B	Adam Porth
Eric Wilson	W	1 0 B	Jeff Roland
Kevin Reyes	B	1 0 W	Brian Lange
Akash Anumalasetty	B	1 0 W	Jamie Lang
Ryan Phillips	B	1 0 W	Jeff Roland
Eric Wilson	B	1 0 W	Adam Porth
Kevin Reyes	W	1 0 B	Jamie Lang
Akash Anumalasetty	W	1 0 B	Brian Lange
		14 2	



chess. There is simply no time to work out definitive tactics when faced with such dizzying complexity.

### 1.e4 e6 2.Qf3?!

Isn't there some opening rule against this sort of thing?

### 2...d5 3.d3 Nc6 4.c3 Nf6 5.Nd2 e5! 6.h3 Bc5 7.g4?!

White insists on being provocative but falls behind in development.



Position after 7.g4

### 7...dxe4

Perhaps it is even better to continue to develop and only exchange in the center when forced: 7...Be6 8.g5!? (8.Ne2 looks a bit like the game, but with more central tension.) 8...dxe4 9.dxe4 (9.Nxe4?! Nxe4 10.dxe4 (10.Qxe4?? Bd5+) 10...Qe7 Development and structure.) 9...Nd7

### 8.Nxe4 Nxe4 9.dxe4 Be6 10.Ne2 Qd6

10...Qd7 11.Bg5 (11.Bg2 0-0-0 12.0-0 Qd3?; 11.Ng3 Nb4! is practically winning.) 11...f6 12.Rd1 Qf7 13.Be3 Bxe3 14.Qxe3 Bxa2

### 11.Ng3 g6?!



Position after 11...g6

The threat of Nf5 doesn't feel like enough to justify weakening the kingside dark squares. Black has a noticeable edge in development and pawn structure, and anytime a knight does choose to drop into f5, ...g6 will come sooner or later to give it a nudge. 11...0-0-0!? 12.Be2

a) 12.Bg5? f6 13.Be3 Nb4! 14.Qe2 Bc4+;

b) 12.Nf5 Qf8 (12...Bxf5 13.Qxf5+ Kb8 14.Be2 Ne7) 13.Bb5 h5 14.Bxc6 hxc6 15.Bxb7+ Kxb7 16.hxc6 Rxc6 17.Qxh1 g6 18.Ne3 Qd6;

12...a5 13.Be3 (13.Nf5 Qf8) 13...Bxe3 14.Qxe3 Kb8 15.Rd1 Qe7 16.Nf5 Qf8 17.Rxd8+ Nxd8 and White's minor initiative peters out, leaving ...g6 and ...Bxa2 on the possibilities list.; 11...Nb4!? 12.Bb5+ c6 13.cxb4 Bxb4+ 14.Kf1 cxb5 probably favors Black, but not by as much as in the last note, with the black queen on d7 preventing the Bb5+ defense.

### 12.Bg5 f6!

A clever idea, only necessary due to the weakening caused by ...g6, though.

### 13.Bxf6?!

White should grab the tempo: 13.Rd1 Qe7.

### 13...0-0 14.g5 Nb4?!

14...Rad8 15.Be2 Qd2+ 16.Kf1 Be7



Position after 14...Nb4

### 15.Be2??

15.Qe2 is forced. Then 15...Rad8 16.Rh2 (16.Rd1 Qxd1+ 17.Qxd1 Rxd1+ 18.Kxd1 Bxf2 19.cxb4 Bxg3; 16.Bxd8? Bxf2+ 17.Qxf2 Rxf2 18.Kxf2 Qd2+ 19.Ne2 Nc2 20.Rc1 Qe3+ 21.Kg2 Qxe4+ 22.Kh2 Ne3 and despite a numeric superiority, White is helpless to save the exposed king and hanging pieces. 23.Ng3 Qh4!, for example.) 16...Bxa2!? (16...Nd3+ 17.Qxd3 Qxd3 18.Bxd3 Rxd3 19.Bxe5 and White may be hanging together.) 17.Bxd8 Bb3! 18.Rd1 (18.Bf6 Rxf6! (18...Nc2+ 19.Qxc2 Bxc2 20.Bc4+ Rf7 21.b4 Bb6) 19.Rc1 with considerable complications. 19...Rf8 20.Qd2 Qxd2+ 21.Kxd2 Bxf2 22.Nh1 Rd8+ 23.Ke2 Bg1 24.Rg2 Nd3 25.Rxg1 Nxc1+ 26.Ke3 for example, is computer-directed mayhem.

15...Nc2+ 16.Kf1 Nxa1 17.h4 Rxf6 18.gxf6



Position after 18.gxf6

### 18...h5??

Stockfish shows the cold-blooded 18...Rf8! 19.Nf5 (19.h5 Rxf6) 19...Bxf5 20.exf5 Kh8 21.b4 Bb6, and the computer has no worries on defense.; 18...Qd2 in order to meet 19.h5 with 19...g5 also leaves White with no real compensation.

### 19.Nxh5! gxh5??

19...Nc2

### 20.Qxh5 Kf8 21.Qh8+ Bg8



Position after 21...Bg8

### 22.Bh5??

The win is fairly straightforward with 22.Qg7+ Ke8 23.Qxg8+ Qf8 (23...Kd7 24.Qxa8 Qxf6 25.Rh2) 24.Qe6+ Kd8 25.Rg1+.

### 22...Qd3+

The tide turns yet again, but this is the final time.

### 23.Kg2

Possibly what White missed was 23.Kg1 Qg3+ 24.Kf1 Qxf2#

### 23...Qxe4+ 24.f3 Qc2+ 25.Kg3 Bf2+ 26.Kg2

26.Kh3 Qh7

### 26...Be3+ 27.Kg3 Bf4+ 28.Kh3 Qh7 29.Qxh7 Bxh7 30.Rxa1 Rd8 31.Rg1 Rd2 32.Kg4 Rxb2 33.Rd1

33.a4 Rb6

33...Rg2+ 34.Kh3 Rg3+ 35.Kh2 Rxf3+  
35...Rg5+  
36.Kg2 Rg3+ 37.Kf2 Rd3 38.Rf1 Rxc3  
39.Kg2 Rg3+ 40.Kf2 Rh3 41.Rd1 Rd3  
42.Rf1 Be4 43.Ke2 Rd2+ 44.Ke1 Rxa2  
45.Rg1 Ra1+ 46.Kf2 Be3+ 47.Kxe3  
Rxf1 48.Kxe4 Rh1  
0-1

Wade Suess (WA) (1527) –  
Zoey Tang (OR) (2233) [B56]

2022–2023 SCC U1800

Week 3 OR vs WA

Chess.com (1.1), November 16, 2022

[Ralph Dubisch]

A see-saw battle, and a major upset.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6  
5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Be3 Ng4 7.Bg5 h6 8.Bh4 g5  
9.Bg3 Bg7 10.Bb5

10.Nb3 is still known territory.

10...Bd7

10...Qb6!?

11.Nf5



Position after 11.Nf5

11...Bxf5

11...Bxc3+ 12.bxc3 Qa5 13.0-0 (13.  
Qxg4? Qxc3+ 14.Ke2 Qxc2+ 15.Kf1 Qb2  
forking a1 and b5.) 13...Qxb5 14.Qxg4  
Qc4

12.exf5 Nf6 13.0-0 0-0 14.Re1 a6 15.Bd3  
b5?!

15...Nb4; 15...Rc8

16.Ne4

16.h4

16...Qd7 17.c3 Rfe8 18.Qf3 Rac8  
19.Rad1 Qa7?!

19...d5 20.Nxf6+ exf6 (20...Bxf6 21.h4+)  
21.Rxe8+ Rxe8 22.Bc2

20.Bb1

20.h4

20...b4 21.h3

21.h4

21...bxc3 22.Nxc3 Qc5 23.Rc1

23.Rd2

23...Nd4 24.Qd3 Qa7?

24...Qb4

25.Qe3

25.Rcd1 Nc6 26.h4!?

25...e5

25...Nb5 26.Qxa7 Nxa7 27.Bd3



Position after 25...e5

26.Ne4?!

26.fxe6! Rxe6 (26...fxe6? 27.Bxd6+-)

27.Qd2

26...Nxe4 27.Qxe4?!

27.Bxe4

27...Qa8?

27...Rxc1 28.Rxc1 d5!?

28.Qd3?

28.Qxa8 Rxa8 29.f3, and White will be  
doing fine if the bishops can activate.

28...Bf6?

28...Rxc1 29.Rxc1 e4! and...Nxf5.



Position after 28...Bf6

29.Kh1?

Better 29.Rxc8 Rxc8 30.Qa3 Qc6  
31.Qa5 Bd8., but Black has active well-  
coordinated pieces.

29...Rxc1 30.Rxc1 e4 31.Qa3 Nxf5?

31...d5! and Black can pick off the f5-  
pawn for nothing.

32.Bxd6 Qd5 33.Qc5?! Qxc5?!

33...Qd2! threatens...Bd4 while hitting  
the bishop on d6.

34.Bxc5 Bxb2 35.Re1 Rc8 36.Bb4 Nd4  
37.Bxe4 Rb8 38.Bc5 Rc8 39.Bb6 Nb5  
40.Bd3 Bc3 41.Rc1 Rb8 42.Be3 Bf6  
43.Rb1?!

43.a4; or 43.Rc6.

43...Rd8 44.Bxb5 axb5 45.Rxb5 Rd1+?

45...Ra8 simply regains the pawn with  
complete equality.

46.Kh2 Ra1 47.Ra5 Bc3 48.Ra6 Kg7  
49.g3 f5?!

49...f6 supports g5 and maintains better  
king cover.

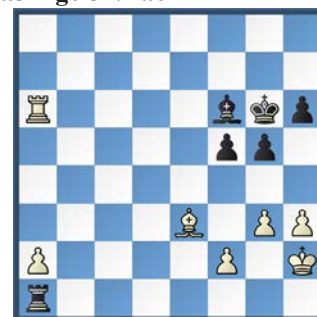
50.Ra3

50.h4 Re1 (50...f4 51.gxf4 gxh4 52.f5  
h5 53.Bg5) 51.a4 gxh4 52.Bxh6+ Kh7  
53.gxh4 should be a technical win.

50...Bf6

50...Be5

51.Ra5 Kg6 52.Ra6



Position after 52.Ra6

52...Re1?

Losing immediately. 52...Rd1 offers  
slightly better chances for survival on  
the board, if not on the clock. 53.a4 Kf7  
54.Kg2 Rd3 55.a5 Be5, with the hope of  
reducing the pawn count after 56.Rxh6 f4  
57.Bb6 fxe3, but 58.a6 gxf2 59.a7 Ra3  
60.Rc6 planning Rc8 and a8=Q should  
win.; 52...Kf7? 53.Rxf6+ Kxf6 54.Bd4+

53.Bd4

Time forfeit, though now Black is quite  
lost in any case.

1-0



**Jonathan Disenhof (OR) (1514) –  
Paul Lazarte (WA) (1873) [E09]**

2022–2023 SCC U1800

Week 3 OR vs WA

Chess.com (R1.3), November 16, 2022

[Ralph Dubisch]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.g3



Position after 4.g3

4...h6?!

Black needs to challenge the Catalan where it lives. Ignore the fianchetto development at your peril. 4...dxc4 5.Bg2 a6 6.0-0 Nc6 7.e3 Bd7 8.Qe2 b5 9.Rd1 Be7; 4...Be7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qc2 a6 8.a4 Bd7 9.Qxc4 Bc6 is still in book, with only a slight edge for White.

5.Bg2 c6 6.0-0 Nbd7 7.Qc2 Be7 8.Nbd2 0-0 9.e4 dxe4 10.Nxe4 Nxe4 11.Qxe4 Nf6 12.Qe2



Position after 12.Qe2

12...Bb4?!

The bishop moves again to strike at nothing. Black should begin some kind of counterplay in the center. 12...c5±

13.Rd1 Qe7 14.a3 Ba5 15.Bf4 Rd8 16.b4 Bc7 17.Bxc7 Qxc7 18.Rac1 b6 19.Ne5 Bb7



Position after 19...Bb7

20.c5

An interesting positional idea, trying to entomb the black bishop. Instead, White has good chances to pick up the c-pawn with 20.Qf3!± Rac8 21.b5, or thematically open up central lines and create a passed d-pawn: 20.d5 c5 21.d6!?, when 21...Rxd6 22.Rxd6 Bxg2 23.Rd2 Be4 24.Nd7 Qb7 25.Nxf6+ gxf6 26.Qg4+± Kh7?? (26...Bg6±; 26...Kf8? 27.Rcd1 Bh1?! 28.f3! Bxf3 29.Rd8+ Rxd8 30.Rxd8+ Ke7 31.Qg8 f5 32.Qe8+ Kf6 33.Rd7+-) 27.Rd7!+-

20...b5 21.Rd3 Re8

21...a5±

22.h4 Re7 23.Re1 Rae8 24.Qd2 Nd5 25.Bh3 a5 26.g4 axb4 27.axb4 f6 28.Ng6 Bc8

28...Rf7 29.g5 Bc8 30.gxh6 gxh6 31.Rg3±

29.Nxe7+ Rxe7 30.Rf3 e5 31.g5?

31.dxe5 fxe5 (31...Rxe5 32.Ra3± 32.Ra3±

31...Bxh3

31...e4!± 32.gxf6 (32.Rg3 Bxh3 33.gxf6 Nxf6 34.Rxh3∞) 32...Nxf6 33.Rxf6 gxf6 34.Bg2±

32.Rxh3 Nf4

32...e4 33.gxh6 g6 34.Rg3 Kh7 (34...e3? 35.Rxg6+ Kh7 36.Qd3+-) 35.h5±

33.Rg3 Nh5?

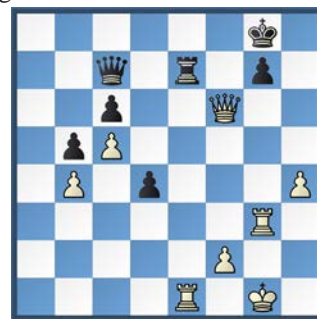
33...fxg5 34.hxg5 hxg5 35.Qe3±

34.gxf6

34.Qa2+! Kf8 (34...Rf7 35.g6+-) 35.gxh6 Nxg3 36.h7+-

34...Nxf6 35.Qxh6 exd4 36.Qxf6??

White's most serious error in the game, and it goes unpunished. 36.Rxe7 Qxe7 37.Qg6+-



Position after 36.Qxf6

36...Qxg3+??

Black's only opportunity to turn the tables. Move order matters: 36...Rxe1+! 37.Kg2 Qxg3+ 38.fxg3 gxf6+-

37.fxg3 Rxe1+ 38.Kf2 gxf6 39.Kxe1+-

The rest goes smoothly.

39...Kf7 40.Kd2 Kg6 41.g4 f5 42.gxf5+ Kxf5 43.Kd3 Kg4 44.Kxd4 Kxh4 45.Ke5 Kg5 46.Kd6 Kf5 47.Kxc6 Ke6 48.Kb7

1-0

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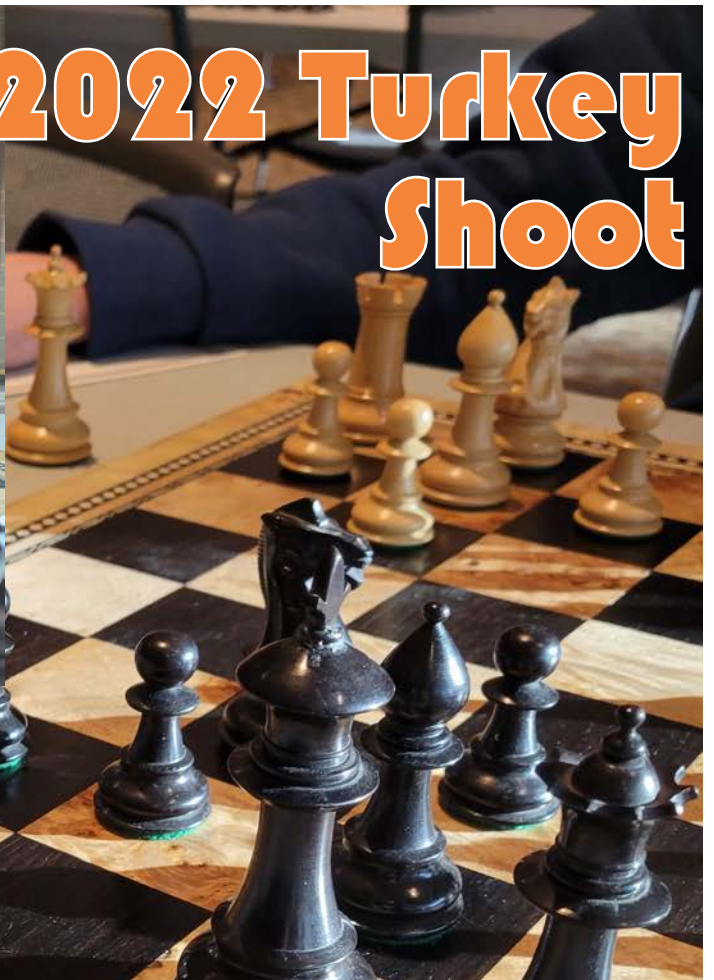
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# 2022 Turkey Shoot



Adam Porth





**L**inus Wannamaker bagged a turkey! Literally. The Turkey Shoot was an annual event that I have run in the past and why not bring it back? There is a renewed interest in chess events and each tournament has new tournament players. This tournament, played in Coeur d'Alene on November 20, 2022, had two more newbies among the 12 players of familiar faces.

Each player was provided a small pie of their choice and the games began with a gobble! Ken Erickson stayed on board one for four rounds and was the expected winner, however, Linus won in round four as both players used almost all their time (G/30). Even the best of us struggles with time trouble as the round three game demonstrated with Ken, down three pawns in a game against Braedon Marver. Ken was in time trouble again against Braedon with nearly three minutes left on his clock and Ken having less than 30 seconds. Ken was able to successfully collect all Braedon's pawns with his king and queen his remaining pawn with only two seconds left! Braedon resigned while the chess hall watched in awe of Ken's speed and focus.

First place – Linus Wannamaker (Turkey)

Second place – Kenneth Erickson (Pumpkin Pie)

Third place – Desmond Porth (yam)

**Linus Wannamaker (1466) –  
Emmy Pimentel (498) [C55]**  
2022 Turkey Shoot  
Coeur d'Alene, ID  
(R1), November 20, 2022  
[Ralph Dubisch]

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4**

The Italian Game.

**3...Nf6 4.d3**

This quiet way to handle the Two Knights Defense is now by far the most popular method in Grandmaster play. Long ago 4.Ng5 was standard, but it is now recognized as time wasting, and Black is thought to get plenty of counterplay with 4...d5 (4...Bc5!? for the swashbucklers.) 5.exd5 Na5 (5...Nxd5? leads to the infamous Fried Liver attack. White can choose the immediate sacrifice on f7 followed by Qf3, or open the center with 6.d4.; Other moves have also been played and analyzed, mostly before there was

computer assistance in the process. 5...Nd4 6.c3 b5 7.Bf1 Nxd5; 5...b5 6.Bf1 h6 7.Nxf7 Kxf7 8.dxc6) 6.Bb5+ c6 7.dxc6 bxc6 8.Be2 h6 9.Nf3 e4∞.; 4.d4 can lead to the Max Lange Attack. 4...exd4 5.e5 (5.0-0 Nxe4 (5...Bc5 6.e5 d5 7.exf6 dxc4) 6.Re1 d5 7.Bxd5 (7.Nc3!?) 7...Qxd5 8.Nc3∞)



Position after 4.d3

**4...Be7**

4...Bc5 5.c3 a6 6.Bb3 Ba7 7.0-0 d6 8.Nbd2 0-0 9.h3 Many of the subtleties of this opening now depend on whether one side or the other advances their a-pawn one or two spaces, starts maneuvering the knight from the queenside to the kingside, breaks in the center, pins on g4/g5... Even the top GMs are capable of messing this up on a regular basis.

**5.0-0 0-0 6.c3**

6.Re1 d6 7.a4 (7.c3 Na5 8.Bb5 a6 9.Ba4 b5 10.Bc2 c5 and we seem to have reached a position from the Spanish Game (Ruy Lopez). The modern way of playing the Italian lends itself to these transpositions.) 7...Na5 8.Ba2 c5 9.c3 Nc6 10.Nbd2 Be6 11.Nc4

**6...d5**

6...d6 7.Bb3 Na5 8.Bc2 c5 9.Nbd2 Nc6 10.Re1

**7.exd5 Nxd5 8.Re1**

8.h3

**8...Bf6**

8...Bg4 9.h3 Bh5 10.Nbd2 Nb6 11.Bb5 is roughly equal.

**9.Nbd2 Be6**

9...Nb6

**10.Ne4± Re8 11.Nfg5 Qe7?!**

11...Bxg5 12.Nxg5 h6 13.Nxe6 Rxe6/ White has the bishop pair, but Black has no serious weaknesses.

**12.Nxe6 fxe6**

Forced. 12...Qxe6? 13.Nc5 Qd6 (13...Qe7



Linus Wannamaker.  
Photo credit: Adam Porth.

14.Nxb7 Nb6 15.Bb5 has similar issues.) 14.Nxb7 loses a black pawn and doesn't solve the problem of the loose knights.

**13.Qf3 Rad8 14.b4 b5**

Black has something of a bad bishop and those weak e-pawns to defend in the long term, so looks for short-term tactics to provide compensation. 14...Nxc3 at first looks interesting: 15.Nxc3 e4, but 16.Nxe4!! (The idea was 16.dxe4 Qxb4! regaining the piece with interest.) 16...Bxa1 17.Bg5 Bf6 (17...Qxb4 18.Rxa1 and White has both material and activity.) 18.Nxf6+ gxf6 19.Bxf6+-



Position after 14...b5

**15.Bb3**

15.Bxb5 seems quite possible. The only risk lies in complex tactics such as 15...Nd4 16.cxd4 Qxb4, but something like 17.Bg5 Qxb5 18.Bxf6 Nxf6 19.Nxf6+ gxf6 20.Qxf6 leaves White with a strong initiative: 20...exd4 (20...Rxd4 21.Rxe5 Rd5 22.Re4 Rg5 23.Rae1; 20...Qxd3 21.Re3) 21.Re5 (21.Rxe6?! Rf8 22.Qh4 Qxd3 is not as clear for White.) 21...Rd5 22.Re4 Rg5 23.Qxd4, when White has excellent winning chances.

**15...Qf7 16.Bd2 Nce7 17.a4 a6 18.g3**



Nf5 19.axb5 axb5 20.Ra6



Position after 20.Ra6

### 20...Ra8??

I like how White has opened and started operations on the a-file, and here Black cracks tactically. 20...Be7 maintains the original disadvantage.

### 21.Rea1

Very good and quite thematic, but White can win more quickly with tactical motifs involving the loose rook on a8, overloaded pawn e6, loose knights, and a fork on d5: 21.Rxa8 Rxa8 22.Nxf6+ Qxf6 (22...gxf6 23.Bxd5 exd5 24.Qxf5) 23.Bxd5, when a recapture loses the rook to a fork, 23...exd5 24.Qxd5+.

### 21...Rxa6 22.Rxa6 h6



Position after 22...h6

### 23.Nxf6+

Or 23.Bxd5 exd5 24.Nxf6+ scoring the f5-knight.

23...Nxf6 24.Rxe6! Rxe6 25.Qxf5 Nd5 26.Qxf7+ Kxf7 27.Bxd5 Kf6 28.Bxe6 Kxe6 29.Kg2 g5 30.Kf3 Kf5 31.g4+ Kf6 32.Ke4 Ke6 33.f3 c6 34.h3 Kf6 35.f4

35.c4 Ke6 36.Bc3

35...exf4 36.Bxf4 gxf4 37.Kxf4 Ke6 38.c4 Kf6

38...c5 39.bxc5 b4 40.Ke3 catches the pawn.

39.h4 Kg6

1-0

## 2022 Turkey Shoot Final Standings

#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total	T-Solkoff	T-Cumul.
1	1	Linus Wannamaker	1466	W11	W2	D3	W7	3.5	8.5	9
2	2	Kenneth Erickson	1862	W5	L1	W7	W3	3.0	10.5	7
3	3-5	Desmond Addison Porth	1503	W6	W4	D1	L2	2.5	11	8
4		Scotty Brian Hohman	1017	W8	L3	W6	D5	2.5	9	6.5
5		Andersen Dank	974P	L2	W11	W10	D4	2.5	7.5	5.5
6	6-8	Ryder Pimentel	956	L3	W8	L4	W9	2.0	8.5	4
7		Braeden Marver	1200P	W12	W10	L2	L1	2.0	8	7
8		Mike O'Brien	Unr.	L4	L6	W12	W10	2.0	6	3
9	9	Gregory Deane Callen	828	L10	D12	W11	L6	1.5	4.5	3.5
10	10-11	Adam Porth	1472	W9	L7	L5	L8	1.0	8	4
11		Emmy Pimentel	498	L1	L5	L9	W12	1.0	8	1
12	12	Hudson Redder	Unr.	L7	D9	L8	L11	0.5	6.5	1.5



Linus Wannamaker (L) and Kenneth Erickson. Photo credit: Adam Porth.

# WA Junior Open & Reserve CHESS TOURNAMENT

Martin Luther King Day Monday, Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Interlake High School

16245 NE 24<sup>th</sup> St. Bellevue, WA 98008



## CLASSICAL SECTIONS:

### Open, U1500

A 4-round G/50; +5 Swiss in two sections. Longer time control for Intermediate to Advanced players. Dual NWSRS and US Chess Rated; US Chess membership required. Rounds: 9:15am, 11:15am, lunch, 1:30pm, 3:30pm. Awards ceremony ~ 5:45pm. Armageddon playoff if needed to break tie for 1<sup>st</sup> Place in Open section immediately following the last round: G/10 white, G/8 black with draw odds.

## RAPID SECTIONS:

### K-1 U800, 2-3 U800, 4-8 U900 K-3 U1200, 4-12 U1300

A 5-round G/25; d5 Swiss in five sections. Shorter time control for players of all levels. Rounds: 9:15am, 10:45am, lunch, 12:45pm, 2:15pm, 3:45pm. Awards ceremony ~ 5:15pm.

## ALL SECTIONS:

NWSRS Rated. Open, U1500, U1300, and U1200 sections are also US Chess rated, which requires clocks, notation, and US Chess membership. **Please bring a digital clock if you have one**, a limited number will be available to borrow. The U800 and U900 sections don't require clocks or notation, but a clock set for 10 minutes will be placed in the game after 40 minutes of play.

## ELIGIBILITY:

Open to all juniors under age 21 years of age as of the tournament date. Out-of-state players welcome!

## ENTRY FEE:

\$45 by Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>, \$55 after.  
Room for 320 players.

## AWARDS:

**Section Prizes:** Amazon Gift Cards awarded in each section:  
1<sup>st</sup> \$80, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$70, 3<sup>rd</sup> \$60, 4<sup>th</sup> \$50, 5<sup>th</sup> \$40

**Team Prizes:** Amazon Gift Cards awarded to the top 4 players from the top 5 finishing teams (top 4 scores from same school comprise team score) across all sections:  
1<sup>st</sup> \$30, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$25, 3<sup>rd</sup> \$20, 4<sup>th</sup> \$15, 5<sup>th</sup> \$10.

**Special Prizes (per section):** Medals for first-time players, best female player (by TPR), and biggest upset.

## RATING:

Highest of January supplement US Chess Regular/US Chess Online, or current NWSRS rating used to determine section and pairings.

**WA State Elementary Qualifier!**

## THE DETAILS

**Health/Safety Protocols:** All players and spectators are required to sign the WCF Health/Safety Protocols & Waiver of Liability form prior to the start of the tournament.

### Online Registration:

[NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/](http://NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/)  
Pay by Credit/Debit/PayPal.

**100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Sun. Jan 15<sup>th</sup> @ 5:00pm.** No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline. Unpaid players by the deadline will be withdrawn from the tournament.

*Highest finishing WA resident in the Open section seeds into the Premier section of the 2023 WA State Championship, and the 2024 WA Junior Closed.*

This event is a qualifier for the WA State Elementary Tournament in April in Tacoma. Players scoring 2.5+ points in the 4-round sections or 3.0+ points in the 5-round sections will qualify for State.

Pizza lunch and other concessions will be available for purchase on site.

**Questions?** Contact Rekha Sagar, WCF Scholastic Director at 425.496.9160 or [rekha4chess@gmail.com](mailto:rekha4chess@gmail.com)

# 17th Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls & Boys

## SPFNO Organizers

The 17th Annual Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls and Boys was held at the Bellevue Marriott October 22-23, 2022. Scholastic chess players in grades K-12 participated from throughout North America, from states including Washington, Oregon, California, British Columbia, Texas, Missouri, and New Jersey! The two-day chess festival was co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and the Washington Chess Federation.

SPF Founder Grandmaster Susan Polgar and SPF co-Founder Paul Truong were the guests of honor, traveling all the way to Bellevue from Europe, along



*Susan Polgar during her simul on Sunday, October 23. Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

with their camera crew, especially for this event!

A total of 402 players competed across ten sections separated by grade level and rating: K-1 U800, K-3 U800, K-3 Open, 4-8 U900, 4-12 Open, K-5 Girls, K-5 Open, K-8 Open, K-12 Girls, and K-12 Open.

Along with the one-day Scholastic and two-day Championship sections, several fun side events enhanced the immersive weekend chess experience. Saturday's events included a Parents and Coaches Seminar, Game Review + Analysis with two-time Washington State Champion Megan Lee, All Comers Blitz with Megan Lee, SPFNO Puzzle Solving Competition, SPFNO Blitz Championship, and a Magic Show! Then on Sunday were the Susan Polgar Book Signing, SPFNO Girls Workshop, and Susan Polgar Simul.

The organizing team of WCF President Josh Sinanan (Chief Organizer), Jacob Mayer (Chief Tournament Director), Ben Radin (Registration and Pairings Director), and Eddie Chang (Events Manager) oversaw the proceedings and orchestrated the chess extravaganza. Amazing photographs were taken throughout the event by photographer extraordinaire Meiling Cheng. An all-star team of dedicated volunteers, judges, and tournament directors included Rekha Sagar, Ani Barua, Detective Cookie, Larry Greenawalt, Karen Schmidt, Vijay Sankaran, Lane Van Weerdhuizen, Dhanashree Kale, Duane Polich, Meiling Cheng, Megan Lee, Chouchan Airapetian, Angela Agaian, Araz Agaian, Liang Shi, Valentin Razmov, Gabriel Razmov, Sanjana Medikurthi, Sridhar Seshadri, Aryan Deshpande, Olin Martin, Siva Sankrithi, Wayne Xiong, Michael Xiong, Melina Li, Ojas Kandhare, Jerry Fan, Xuan Lin, Elliott Zackrone, Magician Rich Waters, and many others. Throughout the weekend, a film crew was on site filming footage as part of a chess

documentary that will be released over the next few years!

The organizers were blown away with the 400+ player turnout and are already looking for a bigger and better site to host the event in future years! The two-day Championship sections, which featured both Open and Girls divisions, attracted several strong local players, including NM Daniel Shubin, Austin Liu, CM Nikash Vemparala, Yiding Lu, Stephen Willy, Ted Wang, and CM Owen Xuan. Top seeds in the Girls sections included Varnika Jammalamadaka, Sophie Szeto, Angela Chen, Kate Wong, Miranda Meng, Selina Cheng, and Zoe Xu. On the line in both the Open K-12 and Girls K-12 Championship sections were scholarships to Webster University, each valued at over \$50,000!

### *Special congratulations to the following 2022 SPFNO winners:*

K-1 U800: first – Daniel Zhu (5.0/5)

K-3 U800: =first/second – Aaron Zhang & Agnivesh Chaudhuri (5.0/5, Co-Champions!)

K-3 Open: =first/second – Kevin Zhu & Neevan Reddy Saddi (4.5/5, Co-Champions!)

4-8 U900: first – Mac Chen (5.0/5)

4-12 Open: first – Odbayar Yondon (5.0/5)

K-5 Girls: first – Selina Cheng (5.5/6)

K-5 Open: first – Arjun Yadav (5.5/6)

K-8 Open: first – Skylor Chan (5.5/6)

K-12 Girls: first – Iris Zhang (5.5/6), Top-finishing High School player – Krisha Khandelwal (4/6): Webster University Scholarship Winner!

K-12 Open: first – NM Daniel Shubin (5.5/6): Webster University Scholarship Winner!



## Parents and Coaches Seminar

The first side event to kick off the weekend's action-packed schedule was the Parents and Coaches Seminar, which took place in the Redmond Ballroom on Saturday, October 22 from 10:30-11:30am. The one-hour seminar, which was led by Susan Polgar, provided an opportunity for parents and coaches to learn how to effectively guide children on their chess journey. Participants were able to ask questions and hear tips from Grandmaster Susan Polgar, who is herself a chess parent and former coach of the successful Webster University Chess Team.

## Megan Lee Game Review + Analysis & All Comers Blitz

On Saturday afternoon from 12:30-4:30pm, we were treated to a special appearance by two-time Washington State Chess Champion Megan Lee, who conducted game review and analysis from 12:30-2pm followed by All Comers Blitz from 3:00-4:30pm in the Redmond Ballroom! Several kids eager to pick up some tips and strategies from the State Champ had their games reviewed and analyzed by WIM Megan Lee, who just recently returned from playing in the US Women's Championship in St. Louis. After a short break, players and parents had a chance to challenge Megan Lee to a thrilling game of five-minute Blitz Chess! Megan had several tough games, but she remained undefeated.

## Chess-inspired Artwork on display

Local artist and Seattle Chess Club member Gabriela Osias was on-site on Saturday from 12-4pm to display some of her chess-inspired artwork! Players and parents had a chance to check out some samples on her Instagram ([https://www.instagram.com/gosi\\_creates/](https://www.instagram.com/gosi_creates/)). Gabriela's work is notable for its novelty and fine craftsmanship and makes the perfect gift for any chess enthusiast!

## SPFNO Blitz Championship

The 2022 SPFNO Blitz Championship attracted 40 players and took place on

Northwest Chess

Saturday, October 22 at 6:30pm in the Seattle Ballroom. The seven-round single Swiss in two sections, K-5 and 6-12, was directed by Jacob Mayer. Games were US Chess Blitz Rated with a time control of game in five minutes with no delay.

In the K-5 section, Vidip Kona, a fourth grader from Redmond, emerged victorious with a perfect 7.0/7 score! Other top finishers included Michael Xiong (6.0 – second place), Odbayar Yondon (4.5 – tied third place), and Zachary Chua (4.5 – tied third place). In the 6-12 section, Sammamish seventh grader Stephen Willy reigned supreme with seven points from seven games. Four players shared second-fifth place honors with five points apiece: Vihaan Jammalamadaka, Nikash Vemparala, Owen Xuan, and Edward Cheng. Congratulations to the winners!

## Special Appearance by Magician Rich Waters

On Saturday evening from 7-9pm, kids and adults gathered nearby the blitz playing hall on the Bellevue Marriott Foyer to witness a tricky and exciting exhibition! Local magician Rich Waters performed some close-up magic tricks and balloon twisting, much to the enjoyment of a mesmerized audience! This was a big hit, and we will be sure to bring back the magician in future events. Many thanks to Karen Schmidt for connecting us with Rich, whom she met at the recently opened Detective Cookie Chess Park in Seattle!

## Susan Polgar Book Signing

The Susan Polgar Book Signing occurred on Sunday, October 23 from 10-11am in the Redmond Ballroom. GM Susan Polgar, who has authored several books throughout her playing and teaching careers, was on site to autograph books and take pictures. A variety of books written by Susan Polgar and well-suited for all levels of players were available for purchase: *Learn Chess the Right Way*, Vols. 1-5 and *A World Champion's Guide to Chess*.

## SPFNO Girls Workshop

The SPFNO Girls Workshop was held on Sunday from 11:30am-12:30pm in the Redmond Ballroom. Susan Polgar and other local female chess leaders including WCF Women's and Girl's Director Chouchan Airapetian, Detective

Denise "Cookie" Bouldin, Karen Schmidt, and WCF Scholastic Director Rekha Sagar hosted the special one-hour workshop that focused on empowering girls through chess. The girls attending enjoyed the presentation and learned how Susan Polgar broke through gender barriers on her way to becoming the first woman to earn the Grandmaster title!

## Susan Polgar Simul

The Susan Polgar Simul took place on Sunday afternoon from 1-4 PM in the Redmond Room, which was the site for most of the side events. 18 brave scholastic chess players took their seats with the black pieces against GM Susan Polgar. For most of the contestants, it was their first time even playing against a Grandmaster!

After only 2.5 hours play, all games had finished in favor of Susan Polgar, a clean sweep! Although, no wins or draws were achieved this time, the last man standing was Vihaan Pai (1172), who lasted 60+ moves! Congratulations to the fearless young players who took part!

## Puzzle Solving Competition

Forty-three brave contestants were given a maximum of 30 minutes to solve 20 checkmates puzzles. Scoring was based on speed, accuracy, and completeness. Congratulations to the winners:

### Rated Over 1000:

Nikash Vemparala – first  
Varnika Jammalamadaka – second  
Vihaan Jammalamadaka – third  
Noah Condit – fourth  
Vidip Kona – fifth

### Rated Under 1000:

Kayne Winter – first  
Krisha Khandelwal – second  
Elliot McCallum – third  
Beowulf Laughli-Koch – fourth  
Mac Chen – fifth

Congratulations to all players and chess families who contributed to this year's SPFNO.

We look forward to continuing to grow this event in the coming years!

**Iris Zhang (1593) –  
Varnika Jammalamadaka (1726) [B36]**  
SPFNO K–12 Girls  
(R3), October 22, 2022  
[Iris Zhang]

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6  
5.c4 Nf6**

Accelerated Dragon, Varnika's favorite weapon as Black.

**6.Nc3 Nxd4 7.Qxd4 d6**

At this point in the game, I was out of book.

**8.f3 Bg7**

I decided to prepare a kingside attack with Be3 and then Qd2.

**9.Be3 0-0 10.Qd2 Be6 11.Nd5 Nxd5  
12.exd5 Bf5 13.g4 Bd7 14.0-0-0 Qc7**

Though my c-line was still exposed, I decided to continue my kingside attack with pawn pushes.

**15.Bh6 Qc5 16.h4**

Better was Bxg7.

**16...f5**

Without ...f5, after h5 push it would've been deadly for Black.

**17.h5 Rf7 18.hxg6 hxg6 19.Qg5 Qb4  
20.Rd2 Bxb2+**

This move caught me by surprise, and from here on it became a very close game.



*Iris Zhang, SPFNO K-12 Girls Champion!  
Photo Courtesy of Iris Zhang.*

**21.Rxb2 Qe1+ 22.Kc2 Ba4+**

My opponent was under time pressure but played well.

**23.Kd3 Qd1+**

I considered 24.Rd2 but 24...Qxf3.

**24.Ke3 f4+**



*Position after 24...f4+*

**25.Ke4**

Though my kingside attack was near successful, 25...Rf6 followed up by 26.Qh4 Qc1 would be completely winning for Varnika.

**25...Bc2+ 26.Rxc2**

Secured the win.

**26...Qxc2+ 27.Bd3 Qc3 28.Qxg6+ Rg7  
29.Bxg7 Qxg7 30.Qxg7+ Kxg7 31.Kxf4  
Rf8+ 32.Kg3 Kf6 33.f4 e5 34.fxg5+  
Kxe5 35.Rf1 Rg8 36.Rf4 a6 37.Re4+  
Kf6 38.Re6+ Kf7 39.Rxd6 Ke7 40.Rb6  
Rb8 41.d6+ Kd7 42.Bf5+ Kd8 43.g5  
Ke8 44.d7+ Ke7 45.g6 a5 46.Rb2 a4  
47.Re2+ Kf6 48.Re8**

Of the six games I played, this one was the most risky one but also the most fun.

**1-0**

**Krishna Khandelwal (1100) –  
Sophie Szeto (1725) [D35]**

SPFNO K–12 Girls  
Bellevue, WA (R6), October 23, 2022  
[Krishna Khandelwal]

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6 4.Nf3 Nf6  
5.Bg5 Be7**

At this point, I was a bit confused whether to go with the fianchetto setup with g3, Bg2 or just play e3.

**6.e3 Nbd7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.Bd3 b5 9.Rc1  
Bb7 10.0-0 0-0**

I think I should have played Ne2 here so that I can play Ng3 Nf5 later.

**11.Bb1 b4 12.Na4 Ne4**

I made a mistake on the next move. I should have just captured the black bishop on e7 and then I would have won a pawn on e4 after Be4 de4 Nd2 and then Qc2.

**13.Bf4 Rc8 14.Ne5**

Black should have taken on e5.

**14...c5 15.Nxd7**



*Position after 15.Nxd7*

**15...Qxd7**

I missed taking a free pawn out here; I should have captured on e4 and then taken the pawn on c5.

**16.dxc5 Nxc5 17.Nxc5 Bxc5 18.Qd3  
g6??**

18...g6 was a blunder after which the position is lost for Black.

**19.Bh6 Rfe8 20.Rxc5 Ba6 21.Qxa6  
Rxc5 22.Qf6 Qc7 23.Qg7#**

**1-0**

**Austin Liu (2078) –  
Daniel Shubin (2245) [C19]**

SPFNO K–12 Open  
Bellevue, WA (R6), October 23, 2022  
[Daniel Shubin]

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5**

Going into the game, I was a half-point ahead of the rest of the field and was planning to keep the game as simple as possible.

**3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3  
Qc7 7.Nf3 Ne7 8.a4 Bd7**

Better would have been: 8...h6 9.Bb5+ Bd7 10.Bd3 Nbc6 11.0-0 Qa5 12.Bd2 c4 13.Be2 0-0-0.

**9.Bd3 Bc6**

**9...h6**

**10.Ng5**

At this point, I realized I had misplayed the opening and it was no longer easy... I would have to defend for a while.

10...h6 11.Qh5 g6

11...0-0? 12.Nh7 Re8 13.Nf6+ gxf6  
14.exf6

12.Qh3 Nd7

Threatening Nxe5, but a simple 0-0 would avoid the threat and better prepare the pawn advance.

13.f4

13.Rb1 Nxe5 14.dxe5 Qxe5+ 15.Be3 hxc5; 13.0-0 Nb6 14.a5 Nc4 15.Re1

13...Nb6 14.a5 Nc4

14...Na4!

15.g4



Position after 15.g4

Clearly I had to ...0-0-0 and connect the rooks... but for that I had to protect the f7-pawn... unfortunately, I chose the wrong continuation and my opponent could have punished me. 15.0-0 Nf5 16.g4 0-0-0 17.gxf5 hxc5

15...Ng8?

15...Bb5! 16.0-0 Nc6

16.Bxg6?!

Trying to force the issue when slow, steady play would have sufficed. 16.0-0 0-0-0 17.a6 cxd4 18.axb7+ Bxb7 19.cxd4+-

16...fxg6 17.Nxe6 Qe7 18.Nxc5 Nf6 19.Qd3 0-0-0 20.Qe2 Rde8

20...Nd7 21.Nd3 Qh4+ 22.Kf1 h5

21.0-0 b6

In the game I assumed that, despite opening the a-file, the white rook alone would not be able to produce any significant counterplay.

22.axb6 axb6 23.Nb3 Bd7

23...Ne4!

24.h3

24.Nd2!? Nd2 with the idea that if knight takes, Qa6 with an attack... Austin and I both missed this it seems...

24...h5 25.g5

25.Nd2

25...Ne4 26.Rf3 Kb7 27.Nd2 Nxd2 28.Bxd2 Bf5 29.Be1+

At this point, I was in full control... The bishop and knight are overpowered, controlling the whole board, and I was ahead on both clock and position...

29...Ra8 30.Rb1 Ra2 31.Rc1 Be4 32.Rf1 Qe6 33.Kh2 Qf5 34.Rf2 Rha8

Zugzwang: despite having four pieces, everything White does loses.

35.Qd1 Ne3 36.Qe2 Nxc2 37.Bd2 Na3 38.Qd1 Nc4

White resigned as Black follows up with: 39.Qe1 Nxd2 40.Rxd2 Qxf4+

0-1

Romi Milner (1359) –  
Arjun Yadav (1441) [A48]  
SPFNO K-5 Open  
Bellevue, WA (R6), October 23, 2022  
[Arjun Yadav]

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4

Here I knew the opponent was going to play London system.

2...g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.e3

I decided to play my Kings Indian Defense.

4...0-0 5.Be2 d6 6.h3 Nbd7 7.0-0 c5

We were still in theory.

8.c3 a6

Here I thought of gaining more space on the queenside with ...b5.

9.Nbd2 b5 10.Re1 Bb7

I gave my bishop an active diagonal.

11.Bf1 Nh5

I wanted to get a tempo to play ...f5 by attacking the bishop. But...

12.Bh2 f5 13.Ng5

I ended up creating a weakness on e6.

13...Bd5

The best defense in this position.

14.c4

Here, I should have

counter-attacked the knight on g5 with ...h6.

14...bxc4 15.Bxc4 Bxc4 16.Nxc4

This allows White to have a straight diagonal to my king (a2–g8).

16...Rf6 17.Qf3 Kh8 18.Qd5

This allows me to trade queens with...

18...Qg8 19.Qxg8+ Kxg8 20.g4?

White didn't realize that I can counter with ...h6!

20...h6

If White plays Nf3, I can play ...fxg4 attacking the knight.

21.gxh5 hxc5 22.hxc6 Rxc6 23.Rad1 d5 24.dxc5 Nxc5 25.Rxd5 Ne4



Position after 25...Ne4

Activating the knight to an outpost. The knight could only be dislodged with f3, which I thought to be creating more weakness around White's king.

26.Red1 f4 27.Rd8+ Rxd8 28.Rxd8+ Kf7 29.Kf1 f3

Allowed me to push the pawn to f3 and minimize the white king's movement.

30.Be5 Rc6

The knight is pinned as there is a mate with Rc1.

31.b3 Bf6



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I thought of playing ...Rh6, however decided to keep it near the action but since I only needed a draw to win the tournament, I played it safe.

**32.Bxf6 exf6 33.Rd3 Ke6**

Centralizing my king.

**34.a4**

Weakening the b3-pawn and gave target for my knight.

**34...Nc5 35.Rc3 Ne4 36.Rc2 Nc5 37.Rc3**

Here I missed that after ...Nxb3, Rxb3, ...Rxc4, Rb6+, ...Ke5, White couldn't take on a6 because of the threat of Rc1#. After a few moves, the game was drawn by agreement.

½-½

**Vijay Nallappa (1544) –  
Skylor Chan (1600) [A43]**

SPFNO K-8 Open

Bellevue, WA (R3), October 23, 2022  
[Skylor Chan]

**1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 c5**

Normally I play the King's Indian Defense, but I decided to go for a Benoni structure in this game.

**3.d5 g6 4.Nc3**

My opponent takes advantage of the 2.Nf3 move order and avoids playing c4.

**4...d6 5.e4 Bg4**

Common motive in Benoni structures, I wanted to play ...Nbd7 and take control of the e5-square.

**6.h3 Bxf3 7.Qxf3**

7.h3 helps Black, as the bishop is going to take on f3 anyways.

**7...Nbd7 8.Bd2 a6 9.a4 Bg7 10.Bc4**

Giving up the bishop pair.

**10...Ne5 11.Qe2 Nxc4 12.Qxc4 Nd7**

Ne5 idea.

**13.0-0 0-0 14.Rfb1**

Odd move by opponent, f4 would make more sense.

**14...Rc8 15.Nd1 Qb6**

Idea to play c4 without f4 coming.

**16.Bc3 Ne5 17.Qe2 c4 18.Kh1**

Idea of f4

**18...Bh6**

Avoiding f4, White is slightly better.

**19.Bd2**

Now I was considering whether to exchange the dark-squared bishops, but didn't want Qh6 and Ne3 to come.

**19...Bg7**



Position after 19...Bg7

If Bc3 came, I would play ...Qc5 and accept the exchange of the dark squared bishops (21.f4 Nd7 Bxg7 Kxg7) as the queen is on a light square and my king is on g7.

**20.Be3**

20.Ne3

**20...Qd8 21.Bd4 b5**

I break with b5, trying to create imbalances and to rip open lines.

**22.f4 Nd7 23.Bxg7 Kxg7**

White has an edge.

**24.Ne3 Nc5 25.axb5**

Forced in order to keep material balance.

**25...axb5 26.Qf3 Ra8**

We are fighting for the a-file.

**27.c3?!**

At first glance seems logical to take control of the dark squares, but allows the file to be taken by Black.

**27...Nb3 28.Rxa8 Qxa8 29.Nc2**

Both sides were low on time, and opponent blunders the exchange.

**29...Nd2± 30.Qd1 Nxb1 31.Qxb1 Qa4 32.Qd1 Ra8 33.Qd4+ Kg8 34.Na3 Qa7 35.Qd2 Qc5 36.Kh2 Ra4**

Rxa3 is accurate.

**37.Qc2 Rxa3 38.bxa3 Qxa3 39.Qd2 b4 40.cxb4 c3**

This is completely winning for Black.

**0-1**

**Skylor Chan (1600) –  
Darsh Verma (1632) [C54]**

SPFNO K-8 Open

Bellevue, WA (R4), October 23, 2022  
[Skylor Chan]

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Bb4+ 7.Bd2**

Black has two choices; to take on e4 or to exchange the bishops.

**7...Bxd2+ 8.Nbxd2 d5 9.exd5 Nxd5**

There are some interesting lines here, such as Qc2.

**10.0-0 0-0 11.Rc1 Bg4**

Odd move. I was expecting Nb6.

**12.h3 Bh5 13.Bxd5 Qxd5 14.Qa4**

Idea of Rc5.

**14...Bxf3 15.Nxf3 Rfe8 16.Rc5**

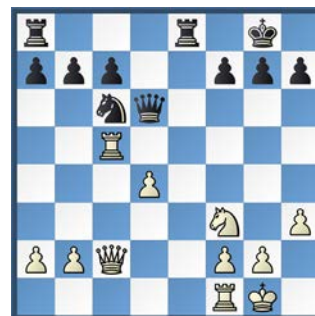
Very natural move.

**16...Qd6**

Very interesting moment in this game. My first idea was Rfc1, but I didn't want to allow any Re2 ideas. However, if Qc4, then Re4 ideas lurk.

**17.Qc2**

17.Qc4 Re4



Position after 17.Qc2

**17...Nb4**

Critical moment. 17...Qc4 is the best move, as if 18.Nc6 then 19.d5! winning the c7-pawn. Otherwise, if 18.Na6 19.Rd5 comes and after something like 19.Qf6, White can go for this Qb3 Rb5 idea to win the b7 pawn. Instead, I played the worst move.

**18.Qf5 f6! 19.a3**

Idea to play Rd5.

**19...Na6 20.Rd5 Qe6**

Here, I missed that I could exchange on e6 and play b4, where White has a slight advantage and can play for a win. However, I wanted to create imbalances

and played:

**21.Nh4**

Not the best of moves, While's still equal.

**21...g6**

Critical position. The best was to exchange queens here and to play b4 like mentioned earlier, but I kept the queens on the board.

**22.Qf3 c6 23.Ra5**

Though the rook looks almost trapped, Black only has an edge here, and if something like ...Nc7, then Rc5 could come and White's rook would come back into play. Though the play is easier for Black, we agreed on a draw as he had seven minutes while I had 12. Overall, I missed a few chances which could have given me an advantage.

½-½

**Noah Condit (1558) –  
Skylor Chan (1600) [B52]**

SPFNO K-8 Open

Bellevue, WA (R5), October 23, 2022

[Skylor Chan]

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+ Bd7**

I play ...Nd7 mainly, but I wanted to try something new.

**4.Bxd7+ Qxd7 5.c3 Nf6 6.Qc2**

Here I missed Qg4; this would pick up the e4-pawn after O-O.

**6...Nc6 7.d4 cxd4 8.Nxd4**

Here I was considering exchanging on d4 or to play ...Rc8. I figured that ...Rc8 would be better as if White doesn't exchange the knights, they are left with this annoying c3-pawn which hinders their development.

**8...Rc8 9.Be3 Ng4! 10.Qe2**

I would gladly take the bishop pair.

**10...Nxe3 11.Qxe3 d5**

A questionable move, I should've waited a bit before playing this.

**12.0-0 dxe4 13.Nd2**

13.Nxc6

**13...Nxd4**

13...g6 14.Nxe4 Bg7

**14.cxd4 g6 15.Nxe4 Bg7 16.Rfd1**

16.d5 Rc2

**16...0-0 17.d5!? Rc2**

Going after the pawns.

**18.d6 b6**

Important move, preventing Nb6.

**19.Rd2 Rfc8 20.Qb3 Rxd2 21.Nxd2 Qxd6**

Now I am much better.

**22.Rd1 Qc6**

Rd8 is better, but it is already completely winning.

**23.h3 Qc2 24.Qf3 Bxb2 25.Nb3 a5 26.Rd2 Qb1+ 27.Kh2 Be5+ 28.g3 Rc2 29.Qd3 Rb2 30.Rxb2**

Opponent blunders his queen.

**30...Qxd3**

0-1



## WASHINGTON PRESIDENT'S CUP



### Info / Entries:

**Contact:** Josh Sinanan, WCF President

**Phone:** 206-769-3757

**Email:**  
washingtonchessfederation@gmail.com

**Registration:** Online at  
[nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration](http://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration)

**Registration and payment  
deadline: Wed, Feb 1 @ 5pm.**

Unpaid players will be removed from the roster after the deadline, and players from a Waitlist will be offered a spot.

### FEBRUARY 4-5, 2023

#### Sites:

**Open section:** Orlov Chess Academy – Seattle,  
7212 Woodlawn Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98115

**Reserve section:** Orlov Chess Academy – Redmond,  
4174 148th Ave NE, Building I, Ste. M, Redmond, WA 98052

**Format:** A 5-Round Swiss event in two sections: Open and Reserve (U1600). Max 30 players in Open section, max 25 players in Reserve (U1600) – please register early!

**Entry Fee:** Must be paid by Feb 1: no late or on-site registrations or payments. \$65 by Jan 28, \$75 after. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs, or US Chess 2400+. \$40 play-up fee if rated under 1600 and playing in Open section.

**Time Control:** Rd. 1: G/60;+10; Rd. 2-5: 40/120, SD/30; +10

**Rounds:** Sat @ 9:30 AM, 12 PM, 6 PM; Sun @ 10 AM, 4 PM

**Prize Fund:** \$1,500 (based on 45 paid entries)

**Open:** 1<sup>st</sup> \$250, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$150, 3<sup>rd</sup> \$125  
1<sup>st</sup> U2000/U1800: \$100, Biggest Upset: \$25

**Reserve:** 1<sup>st</sup> \$200, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$125, 3<sup>rd</sup> \$100  
1<sup>st</sup> U1400/U1200/U1000/Unrated: \$75, Biggest Upset: \$25

*Highest finishing WA resident in  
the Open Section seeded into the  
2024 WA State Championship –  
Invitational section.*

**Byes:** Two half-point byes available. If interested, request before the end of round 2.

**Memberships:** Current US Chess and WCF membership / Northwest Chess subscription required. Memberships must be paid at time of registration.

**Rating:** Dual rated - US Chess and NWSRS. Rounds 2-5 of Open section also FIDE rated. Highest of US Chess Regular (Feb 2023 rating supplement), US Chess Online, and NWSRS used to determine pairings and prizes. Higher of US Chess and foreign ratings used at TD discretion.

**Health/Safety Protocols:** All players and parents (if U18) are required to sign the [WCF Health / Safety Protocols & Waiver of Liability](#) form prior to the start of the tournament.

# SPF National Open (Year Two In Seattle)

**Karen Schmidt**

It's hard to believe that a whole year has elapsed since the first of at least three annual Susan Polgar Foundation National Open scholastic tournaments to be held in Seattle. Last year I volunteered the whole weekend with many other local chess players and tournament organizers, and had the opportunity to meet not only Susan Polgar, but also Seattle's own Detective Cookie (local police officer who has run a free chess program for inner-city kids for the past 16 years).

This year there were over 400 kids participating in the K-12 scholastic tournament—in either a one-day five-round, or two-day six-round, tournament. In addition to the two main events, there were also several side events: a chess-puzzle-solving contest, an evening blitz tournament on Saturday, a Sunday book signing, a Girls Only workshop, and a Simul on Sunday afternoon with Susan playing 20 kids.

Another popular and highly entertaining side event was a magic show on Saturday evening in a main common area, while the blitz tournament was in progress. Since I “found” the magician, “Magic Rich” Waters, myself—meeting him while playing chess at the brand-new Detective Cookie Chess Park! I was committed to seeing his performance. And what a performance it was! A lot of younger children and parents gathered around, and his tricks *amazed* us. We experienced disappearing scarves, mind-boggling rope tricks, invisible card tricks, a bit of hypnosis with some juggling thrown in, and then a second hour when he twisted balloon critters for all the kids. (Balloon swords were also very popular.) I have no idea how any of those magic tricks actually work, but we were all spellbound. No doubt Magic Rich, who performs at birthday parties, conferences, and other

events around the state, will be back for future scholastic tournaments. It was a lovely break from the intensive chess games for both players and parents.

This year the parents were much better behaved and seemed to accept the fact that they were not

allowed in the tournament halls while the games were in progress. That made the “parent control duty” much easier than at several other tournaments I have attended as a volunteer.

The Simul was Sunday afternoon from 1:00 PM until 4:00 PM, with Susan Polgar playing 20 kids. Parents and volunteers were allowed to remain seated in the room to watch. Several of the games lasted almost the entire three hours, with six or eight very young children among the last few games to finish. I had a brief chat with the McCallum family afterwards; they had travelled from Vancouver, British Columbia, to participate in the tournament. Both Elliott (age six) and Siobhan (age nine) also played in the Simul. Elliott, whose feet did not reach the floor from his chair, explained to me that his sister had received a chess set for her sixth birthday. Shortly after this (he would have been three), he began to play chess on that set, playing against himself... a la Bobby Fischer. Both children now take small group lessons at the Vancouver Chess Club and belong to the chess club (which meets weekly during lunch recess) at their school. Both children will undoubtedly be high-level players in a few short years.

The “last man standing” at the Simul was Yihaan Pai, age eight. Susan Polgar was very generous about signing every child's scoresheet. She also kindly posed for a photograph with every child who won a trophy at both days' award ceremonies.

The Susan Polgar Foundation also awarded two \$50,000 college scholarships to top girl and boy finishers in the K-12 Open event. Webster College in Saint Louis—where Susan is headquartered—has a strong chess program, which Polgar previously coached.

I was fortunate to stay after the tournament and enjoy take-out Thai food with Susan Polgar, Washington Chess Federation President Josh Sinanan, Detective Cookie and several other members of the organizing committee. They discussed this year's event over dinner — what went well and what might be slightly revised for next year. Susan was headed for France next, almost immediately.

There is a huge amount of time, energy and planning required for a scholastic tournament of this size. Interestingly, there was a film crew with Polgar in Seattle at this tournament. They are making a documentary about her life, and this was one of their first filmings, according to the crew director. Stay tuned down the road — it hasn't been determined yet which network will air the documentary. I am already committed to volunteering at next year's third annual Susan Polgar Foundation National Open!



(L) Siobhan and Elliot McCallum from Vancouver, B.C. at the SPFNO. Photo Credit: Susie McCallum.



In a recent article in this magazine ("Took The Train To Spokane," December 2022 *Northwest Chess*, page 27), Karen Schmidt laments the alarmingly high standard of play among unrated players at recent tournaments in the Pacific Northwest. She complains that "...there seemingly are no more novices... I realized that the UNR (unrated) players now average about a 1600 skill level."

She attributes the high level of play of these tournament newbies to the fact that they most probably have spent countless hours playing on [chess.com](https://www.chess.com) and [lichess](https://www.lichess.org), and have most probably watched countless videos by the likes of Youtubers like Agadmator and Gothamchess, all before taking their first step through the doors of a brick-and-mortar tournament hall. I would add that the pandemic definitely helped too; personally, I probably spent more time playing online chess and taking chess lessons during the last two years than I did in all the years prior to that, combined. So to be fair, it wasn't just unrated players who benefitted from the COVID lockdowns; rank-and-file class players like me also benefitted.

But having said that, I do share Schmidt's lamentations, to a degree. It's definitely true that the standard of unrated play has gone up exponentially. Gone are the days where one can reliably expect unrated players to be noobs who barely know how the pieces move, who drop pieces right and left, so that all one has to do is simply sit back and wait for them to self-destruct and claim an easy win. Heck, these days, unrated players even win tournaments! In what is surely an unprecedented feat in the history of Idaho chess (Idaho chess historians out there, please correct me if I'm wrong), Jeremy Thomas won his debut tournament, the Eastern Idaho Open, back in September. (For the gory details, please see Jay Simonson's report on this tournament in the December 2022 issue of *Northwest Chess*, page 29.)

**Full disclosure:** Jeremy is a long-time friend and regular chess partner of mine. So I knew going into the tournament (which I also played in) that he is a strong player and would acquit himself well... but not *this* well. Also, although he has played tons of games on [chess.com](https://www.chess.com) and has most likely watched at least a few chess videos before his tournament debut, Professor Thomas also has to juggle family responsibilities while serving as the Chair of the Department of Sociology,

# Where Have All The Novices Gone (long Time Passing...) Nobel Ang

Social Work, and Criminology at Idaho State. In other words, he's not exactly a chess bum or one of those annoying kids who have tons of time to devote to chess study... And yet he had the gall to win his first OTB chess tournament. What is the world coming to?!

Oh well. Life is not always fair, is it? But it's not all doom and gloom. I must also admit that playing stronger unrated players does have its upsides. I can't speak for anybody else, but my experience has been that when I play weaker players, my play tends to get a bit sloppy. I don't look as hard for tactics and other opportunities, and basically just cruise along, confident that all I have to do is wait for them to blunder and self-destruct. In contrast, facing stronger opposition forces me to look harder at the position in every move, and pushes me to play and perform at a higher level than I would have if my opponent had been a noob.

My recent game from round four of the Eastern Idaho Open illustrates this point perfectly. My opponent was a young unrated player. I had the white pieces, and after 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 dxc4 4.e4 Bg4 5.Bxc4 Bg7, the following position resulted:



What would you play as white in this position? If I were a little less vigilant, I would have played something like 6.Be3, following the general opening rule of thumb to develop all my pieces. But

because I was playing an unrated player whose real strength was unknown to me at the time, my spidey senses were on high alert, and I almost immediately spotted 6.Bxf7+!! After 6...Kxf7 7.Ng5+ Ke8 8.Qxg4, White is clearly winning; Black is a pawn down and has lost the right to castle. I then capitalized on Black's disarray and my much more active pieces to hunt down his king, eventually winning the game in 26 moves without castling or even developing my queenside rook and knight. I'm not going to show the entire game here, but if you're interested, shoot me an email at [siegfried23@hotmail.com](mailto:siegfried23@hotmail.com)

I learned later that my opponent's provisional rating was in the 1600s, and that he had actually beaten a 1600 and a 1700 in rounds two and three, before succumbing to a lowly 1500 (me) in the final round. In other words, he would have had a provisional rating in the 1800s or the 1900s if he hadn't lost to me! I am therefore performing a valuable public service in the Idaho chess community: Preventing unrated players from having inflated provisional ratings. You're welcome.

But jokes aside, let me get back to my original point, which is that I seem to play better against strong players, especially if they are unknown quantities. As a matter of fact, my bishop sacrifice in this game was my first-ever brilliant move (according to Stockfish 11) in an OTB tournament. And it's all because of my heightened Spidey senses in the presence of strong unrated opposition. If it weren't because of this unrated player, I might have lived my entire life without ever playing a brilliant move in an OTB tournament. Okay, I'm probably being melodramatic here, but you get the point.

So yeah, I welcome the prospect of playing more strong unrated players in tournaments to come. Jeremy Thomases of the world, bring it on!

# 2022 Oregon Class Championships

**Wilson Gibbins**

**S**eventy-six players descended on the familiar confines of the DoubleTree by Hilton in Portland's Lloyd District to battle for prizes across the seven sections of the Oregon Class Championship. A slight drop-off in attendance from Washington was more than offset by the increase in attendance from Oregon and California. Technically we had players from five states, one each from Minnesota and Arizona. But more about the mystery Arizonian later in this article.

At first glance, it was sad showing for the great state of Oregon, as the outnumbered Washingtonians still managed to win three out of seven sections, and the Arizonian took one, leaving only three sections for team Oregon. But if you look a little more closely, Master/Expert champion Lennart Bjorksten though no longer an Oregonian is still part of the Portland chess community, as is Class A Champion Brent Baxter and Class C Champion Aaron Xinghan Li. And the mystery Arizonian Jack Buchanan has been living in the Portland area for over a year, playing all of his rated games in Oregon. In summary, a coalition of Oregon players and Portland area players from Washington dominated the tournament. Your move, Seattleites.

Lennart Bjorksten made an incredible comeback to win the Masters/Expert section, dropping his round one game to the always-dangerous Austin Tang but winning his final four games to finish clear first. One of the nice aspects to class tournaments is that the small section sizes allow one to experience incidents and accidents and still finish with a good result. Michael Omori and Rishabh Chinni tied for second with 3.5 points, resulting in a Washington sweep of the top prizes.

Brent Baxter's undefeated 4-1 record in the Class A section was sufficient to

win by a full point, combining three wins with one draw and a bye. Jerry Sherrard, Danny Phipps, and Hussein Hashemi Senejani tied for second with three points.

Will Nobles and Kai Sebastian Lewis tied for first in the Class B section. Kai won the head-to-head matchup in round

two, but Will won his last three games to catch Kai, who took byes in the last two rounds.

Aaron Xinghan Li won the Class C section with four wins and one draw, giving him in a full point lead over second place Michael Rabadan.



*Lennart Bjorksten. Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.*





*Jack Buchanan.*

*Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.*

The mystery Arizonian, Jack Buchanan (pictured above), scored four wins and one draw to capture the Class D section by 1.5 points over second place Meet Raval. But he won't have the opportunity to win any more class D prizes, as his rating is rapidly rising to match his real strength as a player. What is his real strength? Come to Portland, play him, and find out!

Varun Venkat Iyengar won class E with the familiar winning formula of four wins and a draw with Zachary Charles Daugherty. Zachary tied for second with Andrew Alexander A Uan-Zo-Li, both finishing with 3.5 points.

Finally, Andrew Worth Carson scored 4.5 points to win Class F over second place Aiden Gray with four points.

Thanks to Dave Murray who organized the tournament and directed round one before handing it off to Chad Lykins. Thanks to Chad for carrying the tournament the last four yards rounds over the goal line. And finally, thanks to the ever-present Lilly Tang and the sometimes-present Wilson Gibbins for sitting behind the director desk and answering the thousands of questions that inexplicably come up in every tournament.

**Lennart Bjorksten (2101) –  
Austin Tang (1977) [D00]**  
Oregon Class Championship  
(R1), November 5, 2022  
*[Wilson Gibbins]*

I try to create a narrative for a tournament, especially when there is none. The easy narratives these days are "Youth will be served" vs. "Old age and treachery will

always beat youth and exuberance." Perhaps this game will be an indicator, as Austin is a regular in the Junior tournaments, and Lennart is a regular in the Senior tournaments.

**1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.e3 Nc6 5.c3 Bf5 6.Ngf3**

Sometimes London practitioners can steal a pawn in the opening with 6.dxc5 but this is not one of them 6...e5 7.Bg3 Bxc5.

**6...e6 7.Nh4 Bg4 8.Qb3 Qd7 9.h3 Bh5 10.g4 Bg6 11.Nxg6 hxg6**

The game starts well for Lennart. He has the two bishops in a quiet position, just kind of position that a more experienced player might be able to exploit against his youthful opponent.

**12.Bg2 cxd4 13.exd4 Na5 14.Qc2 Bd6 15.Be3 0-0 16.0-0-0?**



*Position after 16.0-0-0*

This is a position where looks are deceiving. It looks logical to castle long where there is more pawn cover for your king, and you can use the advanced g-pawn to attack Black's king. But the pawn structure resembles an exchange Queen's Gambit Declined Reversed where the standard plan is the minority attack, advancing the p-pawn and perhaps the a-pawn to weaken the b2-c3-d4 pawn structure. So White is castling queenside into Black's intended attacking zone. White it might look a risky to castle kingside with the g-pawn advanced, Black doesn't have any immediate pawn breaks on that side of the board. Black has one pawn break on the queenside. And he will use it effectively.

**16...b5!**

Marching to b4 to crack open White's king position.

**17.Kb1 Rab8 18.f4**

This move makes the engine evaluation worse. But it is as good a try as any. White probably can't successfully defend his

king in the long run, so counterattacking Black's king is the best approach.

**18...b4 19.c4**

Trying to keep the b-file closed.

**19...dxc4 20.Nxc4 Rfc8 21.b3**

White has a tricky attempt to maintain his queenside pawn structure that doesn't quite work. 21.Ne5 Bxe5 22.dxe5 Nd5 23.Qe4 Nc3+ 24.bxc3 Qa4 Stockfish predicts great suffering for White in the near future in lines like 25.Ka1 Rxc3 26.Rb1 Nc4 27.Bc1 Rc2.

**21...Nxc4 22.bxc4 b3 23.axb3 Qa4 24.Rd3 Rxc4 25.Qa2 Qxa2+ 26.Kxa2 Rc2+**

White made no tactical errors, yet Black's minority attack was sufficiently strong enough bring home the point. After round one we seem to be heading toward the "Youth will be served" narrative. But that isn't how the tournament turned out, as you will see in the next game.

**0-1**

**Lennart Bjorksten (2101) –  
Ryan Richardson (2043) [A45]**  
Oregon Class Championship  
(R5), November 6, 2022  
*[Lennart Bjorksten]*

This game decided the tournament. Entering the last round, Ryan and I were the only players at three points.

**1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 e6 3.e3 d5 4.Nf3 Bd6 5.Ne5**

Move order makes a difference! By delaying the typical c3 and Nbd2, White gets to counter Black's ...Bd6 with the knight jump, thereby avoiding trading off the London bishop.

**5...0-0 6.Bd3 c5 7.c3 b6 8.0-0 Ba6**

Black gets to trade off his bad bishop, but at the cost of several tempi since Black's knight will now be misplaced.

**9.Bxa6 Nxa6 10.Nd2 Nb8**

Correct, even if it looks strange. This retreat is the best way for Black's knight to get back into the game.

**11.Rc1 Bxe5 12.dxe5**

This restricts the bishop, but I like having a white pawn on e5.

**12...Nfd7 13.e4**

White's idea is to break open the center. This should benefit white's bishop and



rooks.

13...f6 14.exd5 fxe5 15.dxe6 exf4



Position after 15...exf4

16.Qf3

I also considered Qb3 and Re1, but couldn't calculate which option was best. Turns out the computer likes Qb3, but all of these moves create tactical problems for Black, who was starting to get low on time.

16...Qc7?

Black cracks. He obviously saw that 17.Qxa8? Nc6 would trap White's queen, but White has a nice intermezzo.

17.e7!

Now Black loses decisive material. On 17...Re8 18.Qxa8, Black can no longer play ...Nc6 because the rook would hang. And if 17...Rc8 18.Qxa8 Nc6 then White simply promotes with e8=Q.

17...Nc6 18.exf8Q+ Rxf8

The rest, as they say, is a matter of technique. White merely needs to play simple, straightforward moves to activate his pieces. The extra exchange will quickly be felt.

19.Qd5+ Kh8 20.Rfe1 Nf6 21.Qe6 h6 22.Nf3 Re8 23.Qf5 Rd8 24.Rcd1 Rf8 25.Nh4 Rd8 26.Ng6+ Kg8 27.Nxf4

1-0

**Brent Baxter (1800) – Kevin Kuczek (1971) [A04]**  
Oregon Class Championship  
(R1), November 5, 2022  
[Wilson Gibbins]

1.Nf3 f5 2.b3 e6 3.Bb2 Nf6 4.g3 Be7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.d3 e5 8.c4 Nc6 9.Nc3 Qe8

I tend to get slaughtered by Black's kingside attack in these Dutch Defense vs. English Opening positions. Brent keeps a cool head, makes a few moves to frustrate

the attack, and waits for his chance.

10.Qd2 Bd8 11.Ne1

Brent prepares to gain a little space for the kingside defense by pushing a pawn to f5.

11...Qh5 12.Nd5 Ng4 13.h3 Nf6 14.f4 Qg6 15.Kh2 Nh5 16.Qe3 Re8 17.Qf2



Position after 17.Qf2

Brent has worked to negate Black's kingside attack, which is enough to gain him a slight edge. Petrosian would be proud.

17...Be6

Seems logical to develop a piece, but Stockfish says it allows White to increase his advantage. The engines prefer 17...exf4 18.gxf4.

18.e4 Bxd5?

It is strategically correct to remove the well-placed knight, so this would be a good move if White had to recapture immediately, but...

19.exf5! Qxf5 20.Bxd5+ Kh8 21.Be4

The cold-blooded 21.Qg2 is even stronger, threatening 22.g4. If Black tries to avoid the pawn fork with 21...Qg6 (21...Qd7) then 22.fxe5 Nxe5 23.Bxe5 dxe5 24.Bf7 wins material.

21...Qe6 22.fxe5 dxe5 23.Qf8+ Qg8 24.Qxg8+ Kxg8 25.Bd5+

This check drives Black's king to h8 where it will be vulnerable to back rank mates. See move 27.

25...Kh8 26.Bxc6 bxc6 27.Bxe5 Bg5

27...Rxe5 28.Rf8#

28.Nf3 Bf6 29.Rae1 Kg8 30.g4 Bxe5+ 31.Nxe5 Nf6 32.Nxc6 h6 33.Kg3 Nd7 34.Re7 Rxe7 35.Nxe7+ Kh7 36.Nd5 c6 37.Nb4 c5 38.Nc6 a5 39.Rf7 Nf6 40.Ra7 Re8 41.Rxa5 Re3+ 42.Kg2 Rxd3 43.Rxc5 Rd2+ 44.Kf3 Rxa2 45.g5 hgx5 46.Rxg5 Ra3 47.Nd4 Nd7 48.Rd5 Nb6 49.Rc5 Nd7 50.Rc7 Ne5+ 51.Ke4 Ng6 52.Nf5 Rxb3 53.Rxg7+ Kh8 54.Rxg6

Rxh3 55.Rh6+ Rxh6 56.Nxh6 Kg7 57.c5 Kf6 58.Kd5 Ke7 59.Kc6 Kd8 60.Kb7

1-0

**Brent Baxter (1800) – Danny Phipps (1912) [A07]**  
Oregon Class Championship  
(4), November 6, 2022  
[Wilson Gibbins]

1.Nf3 d5 2.b3 c6 3.Bb2 Nf6 4.g3 Bg4 5.Bg2 Nbd7 6.0-0 e6 7.d3 Be7 8.Nbd2 Qc7 9.c4 Rd8 10.cxd5 cxd5 11.Rc1 Qb8 12.Qc2 0-0 13.e4 Rc8 14.Qb1 dxe4 15.dxe4

The pawn structure is symmetric, both players have developed all their pieces, so the game is about even.

15...e5? 16.Nc4!

Suddenly White's pieces start jumping all over the center by attacking the e5-pawn that just moved within attacking range and the d5-square which is no longer protected by the pawn on e6.

16...Bxf3

The best way to prevent White from taking the pawn on e5, but still a concession to give up the bishop pair and defender of the light squares d5 and f5.

17.Bxf3 b5 18.Ne3 Bc5 19.Qd3 Rfd8

If I were Black, I would be looking at the symmetrical pawn structure and White's blocked bishop on f3, and be plotting my route to equality, perhaps by exchanging the dark-squared bishops. In reality, White stands significantly better.

20.Nd5! Kh8 21.Kg2 a6 22.Rfd1 Nb6 23.Qe2



Position after 23.Qe2

23...Nfxd5

Who wants to live with a pesky knight on d5 forever? That said, capturing with the knight on b6 is safer, keeping the knight on f6 to help defend the kingside.

## 24.exd5 f6

Perhaps this was the reason to take with the knight on f6, as it freed the f-pawn to defend the one on e5. But it weakens the light squares around Black's king. White doesn't have any attackers in the zone yet, but Black's defenders are a long way from the kingside. The attackers are about to appear.

**25.Bg4 Rc7 26.Be6 Nc8 27.h4 Nd6 28.h5 Bb4 29.h6**

Can White really threaten Black's king with only a bishop and a pawn? Yes, yes, he can, if his queen can shift into the attacking zone at a moment's notice.

**29...Re7 30.hxg7+ Rxd7 31.Rc6 Qb7 32.Qh5**

White has a winning advantage, so Black's next move can hardly be classified as a mistake, but it allows an attractive finish.

**32...Rg5 33.Qxg5! fxe5 34.Bxe5+ Qg7**

1-0

**Kai Lewis (1620) –  
Will Nobles (1710) [D20]**  
Oregon Class Championship  
(R2), November 5, 2022  
[Wilson Gibbins]

This round two game between the eventual Class B winners is a back-and-forth affair that finally resolves in favor of Kai Lewis. Undaunted, Will Nobles goes on to win his next three games, allowing him to catch Kai who took half-point byes in rounds four and five.

## 1.e3

Not the most theoretically critical line, but White has lots of chances to transpose into other openings depending on Black's next moves.

## 1...e5 2.c4

For example, transposing to the English Opening.

## 2...c6

Transposing to a Reversed Alapin Sicilian.

**3.Nc3 Nf6 4.d4 exd4 5.exd4 d5 6.Nf3 Bd6 7.Bg5 dxc4 8.Bxc4**

Chessbase classified this game as ECO code D20—the Queen's Gambit Accepted. Why wasn't it classified A20, the ECO code for the English line 1.c4 e5 2.e3 or even A00, the classification code for the 1.e3 opening? Because this

position could have been reached through the move order 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 e5 4.Bxc4 exd4 5.exd4 6.Nc3 c6 7.Nf3 Bd6 8.Bg5, an unlikely Queen's Gambit Accepted line that has also been reached through the French Defense move order 1.e4 e6 2.d4d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.Nf3 Bd6 5.c4 c6 6.Nc3 Nf6 7.Bg5 dxc4 8.Bxc4. Chess is a maze of twisty passages, all alike.

## 8...0-0 9.0-0 Nbd7 10.d5?!

A little impatient, allowing Black equality. The isolated d-pawn will be hard for Black to attack, so White has no need to hurry to liquidate the supposed weakness.

10.Re1 Nb6 11.Bb3 Bf5 (I'd be tempted to play 11...Bg4 as 12.h3 Bh5 13.g4 Bg6 14.Ne5 appears to weaken White's kingside, but Stockfish loves White's position.) 12.Ne5 gives White a decent attacking formation.

## 10...Nb6! 11.Bb3 cxd5 12.h3 Re8

12...Be6 is also a fine move, defending the newly won pawn on d5. But Stockfish says it 0.00, a sign that it believes that best play for both sides will result in a three-fold repetition. A sample repetition line is 13.Qd3 Rc8 14.Rad1 Re8 15.Nd4 h6 16.Bh4 Be7 17.Nxe6 fxe6 18.Qe2 Bc5 19.Ne4 Be7 20.Nc3 Bc5 21.Ne4 Be7 which looks artificial to me, but Stockfish is always right and I am always wrong.

**13.Bxf6 Qxf6 14.Nxd5 Nxd5 15.Qxd5= Bf5 16.Rad1 Rad8 17.Qxb7 Be4 18.Qxa7?**

18.Bd5!= Bxf3 19.Bxf3 Rb8 (19...g6 20.Qxa7? Qf4 requires White to sacrifice the exchange with 21.Rxd6) 20.Qc6 Red8 21.b3 may be drawn despite White's extra pawn due to the opposite colored bishops.

## 18...Bxf3! 19.gxf3 Qf4 20.Rxd6

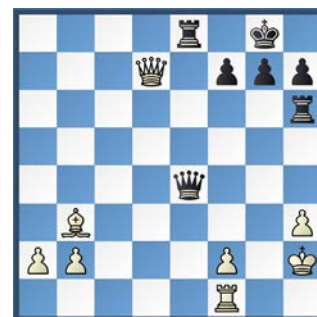
The other way to prevent Black from playing 20...Qh2 checkmate is 20.Qxf7+ Qxf7 21.Bxf7+ Kxf7 Stockfish likes Black's position to the tune of -4.5, but it looks like there is a lot of work for Black to do before claiming the point. Black has the wrong rook pawn for the dark-squared bishop, so either Stockfish has high hopes for the g-pawn or is hoping to tie White down by aiming all Black's pieces at the pawn on f2 and then picking off whatever loose pawns it can find.

## 20...Rxd6

Black's extra exchange and White's broken kingside pawns support Stockfish's assessment of an overwhelming Black

advantage. But there is no immediate mate, so White has reasons for hope. His attack on Black's f7-square ties Black down. And though White's connected passed pawns on the queenside are no immediate threat, if he can ever get them rolling...

**21.Qb7 Rg6+ 22.Kh1 Rh6 23.Qd7 Qxf3+ 24.Kh2 Qf4+ 25.Kh1 Qe4+ 26.Kh2**



Position after 26.Kh2

## 26...Qe5+

Black has plenty of moves that do not spoil his advantage, but not many moves that make progress, and most of them seem require aiming toward magical computer piece arrangements. If you don't believe in magical computer piece arrangements, you can save time by skipping the following analysis. One magical piece arrangement example is 26...Rf8. Normally you don't want rooks playing defense—they are great attackers and less than ideal defenders. But the f7 pawn needs all the help it can get. 27.Rd1 Qf3 28.Rd2 (Alternatively, defending the pawn with 28.Rf1 leads to the loss of the b-pawn after 28...Qe2 29.Qd1 Qxb2) 28...Rxb3+ 29.Qxb3 Qf4+ 30.Kg2 Qxd2 makes progress, as the only way White can defend his b-pawn is to break up the connected passed pawns. 31.Qc3 Qxc3 32.bxc3

**27.Kh1 Re7 28.Qd8+ Re8 29.Qd7 Rf6 30.f3 Qe2 31.Bc4 Qe7?**

We are taught to trade pieces when we are up material. But in this case, removing the queens means that White's broken kingside pawn shelter is no longer a defensive problem. This allows White's connected passed pawns on the queenside to come into their own. Black is still better, but White now has clear reasons for hope. For Ted Lasso fans, this is a time to Believe, not the time for "It's the hope that kills you."

**32.Qxe7 Rxe7 33.Rf2 g5**



I mentioned earlier my belief that Rooks are great attackers but less than ideal defenders. So I support Black's attempt to mount an attack. Stockfish prefers trying to slow down White's queenside pawns with 33...Ra7 34.b3 Ra3 This seems defensive to me, but perhaps I should view it as an attack on the a2 pawn, combining attack with defense.

**34.b3 Re3 35.Kg2 h5 36.a4 Kg7**

The last chance to slow down White's queenside pawns is 36...Rf5! 37.b4 (if White tries to pass with a move that maintains the status quo like 37.Kg3 Kg7 38.Kg2 h4 39.Rf1 Kf6 40.Rf2 Rc3 41.Rf1 Ke7 42.Re1+ Kd6 43.Rf1) 37...Rf4 and White gets to choose whether Black will win a pawn a pawn on b4 or f3 38.Rc2 (38.Bd5 Rxb4) 38...Rxf3.

**37.a5!= Rd6?!**

37...Rc3 38.a6 Rxc4 39.bxc4 Rxa6 40.c5 Rc6 41.Rc2= Yeah, in rook endings there are always plenty of mistakes for either side to make, so the game isn't quite over. But Stockfish says that both sides havemultiple moves to maintain equality—not one of those “narrow path to a draw” positions.

**38.a6!± Re7? 39.Ra2**

39.b4!±

**39...Ra7!= 40.Ra5 Kg6 41.Ra2 f6 42.Kg3 f5 43.Re2 f4+ 44.Kf2 Kf5 45. Re8 Rd2+ 46.Re2?**



Position after 46.Re2

**46...Rad7??**

A heartbreaking finish to a hard-fought game. 46...Rxe2+! 47.Bxe2 Ke5 48.b4 Kd5 49.b5 Kc5 Black's king blocks the pawns on light squares, so the light-squared bishop can't break the blockade.

**47.Be6+! Kf6 48.Bxd7 Rxd7 49.b4**

**1-0**

**Will Nobles (1710) –  
Alexander Uan-Zo-Li (1773) [C79]  
Oregon Class Championship  
(R4), November 6, 2022  
[Wilson Gibbins]**

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6  
5.0-0 d6 6.Re1 Bg4**

In the Ruy Lopez, White often plays h2–h3 to prevent this pin before advancing pawns in the center with c2–c3 and d2–d4. What happens if Black pins this knight before White prevents it? Will demonstrates that White how to get the central pawns rolling even when they are inhibited by a pin on the f3 knight.

**7.c3**

First, Will stops 7...Nc6–d4 which would intensify pressure on the pinned knight. And the pawn on c3 will eventually support the d2–d4 pawn push, it will just come a little later than it usually does in the Ruy Lopez. Some the Ruy requires a little patience.

**7...b5 8.Bc2 Be7 9.d3**

It appears that White will lose time by taking two moves to get his pawn to d4. But he will gain some time by attacking Black's light squared bishop, so it will turn out fine in the end.

**9...h6 10.Nbd2**

When I played the Ruy it took a lot of faith for me to believe these positions were good for White. Black appears to have more pieces developed than White, partly because White's bishop on c1 is going nowhere fast. But it usually is reasonably well placed on c1. And the rook on a1 isn't undeveloped, it is there to assist an a2–a4 pawn push. Development means getting your pieces to good squares—if they are already on good squares, you are under no obligation to move them.

**10...0-0 11.h3**

White now gets this standard Ruy move for free.

**11...Bh5 12.Nf1 Nh7 13.Ng3**

This typical Ruy maneuver gains additional time by attacking the bishop on h5.

**13...Bg6 14.d4**

White gets a normal Ruy position. Even though it took a little longer to get there, it all turned out well in the end. White has a solid though not yet winning advantage.

**14...Bf6 15.d5 Ne7 16.h4!?**

White has other good moves, but this one creates some kingside action. 16.a4 is also good, though not better than what White played.

**16...h5**

The best way of preventing 17.h4–h5 and winning Black's bishop on g6.

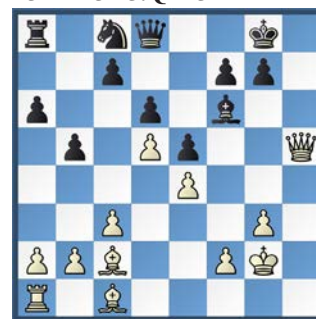
**17.Ng5 Nc8**

17...Bxg5 18.hxg5 f6± holds White's advantage to a minimum. 19.gxf6 (19. Nxf6 f5) is messy but about equal.) 19...Nxf6

**18.Nxh7 Kxh7 19.Nxh5 Bxh4 20.g3 Bf6?**

20...Bg5 21.f4 Bh6± isn't pleasant for Black, but is better than the game continuation.

**21.Kg2 Rh8 22.Rh1 Kg8 23.Qg4 Bxh5 24.Rxh5 Rxh5 25.Qxh5**



Position after 25.Qxh5

White will need to shift some pieces to the kingside for an ongoing attack, but his well-placed queen and the open h-file means that Black will have a difficult defense.

**25...Kf8 26.Be3 Ne7 27.f4 Ng6**

Stockfish says 27...exf4± is a better defensive try, but I would be reluctant to relinquish my e5 strong-point and open lines around my king. Black's e5-pawn is keeping White's bishop on c2 from contributing.

**28.f5 Ne7 29.g4 Ng8 30.g5 Be7 31.g6 Nf6 32.Qh8+ Ng8 33.Rf1 f6**

It is tempting to try to lock the position as much as possible, but Black needs the f6-square for his bishop to defend the pawn on g7.

**34.Rh1! Qd7 35.Rh7! Bd8 36.Bh6!**

You don't need to see the mate in seven that Stockfish announces to understand the carnage that is about to occur on g7.

**1-0**

# 2022 Washington Challenger's Cup

Josh Sinanan

The 2022 Washington Challenger's Cup was held November 4-6 at the Orlov Chess Academies in Seattle and Redmond. Though typically held in late October, the event was pushed out to early November to avoid a conflict with the SPFNO, which WCF co-hosted. The Open and Reserve sections were held at separate locations due to space limitations of the venues, with the Open section taking place in Seattle and the Reserve U1700 section in Redmond.

As is the tradition for this event, the highest-finishing Washington State resident in the Open section seeds directly into the Championship section of the 2023 Washington State Championship, which is set to take place in Redmond in February. The seed into the State Championship, along with the Open section being FIDE rated, typically attracts many strong players, seeking the coveted seed or just in search of a strong FIDE-rated tournament hosted locally.

Despite these attractive features, only two masters showed up for the Open section, FM Tian Sang and NM Viktors Pupols. Chess players from throughout Washington State were represented in the 50-player field, including the cities of Redmond, Kent, Seattle, Bothell, Bellevue, Olympia, Snoqualmie, Brier, Sammamish, Duvall, Woodinville, Kingston, Mercer Island, Fall City, and Medina! The tournament was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation and directed by the man, the myth, the legendary Senior Tournament Director Fred Kleist (Open section) and Scholastic Chess Coach/Director Extraordinaire Lane Van Weerdhuizen (Reserve section).

FIDE Master Tian Sang, a researcher based in Redmond and working at Apple, emerged victorious in the Open section with a perfect five points from five games! Sang, who was once a top-ranked

junior when he lived in China, registered on a whim at the last minute and broke his two-year hiatus from competitive play. His key matchup came in the third round, when he was paired against soon-to-be-master Brandon Jiang, rated 2175, of Bellevue. Sang finished strong with wins against Seattle chess wizard Akiva Notkin and recent British Columbia transplant David Zhou of Seattle. Four players shared second/third/U2100/U1900 honors a point and a half back with 3.5 points apiece: Ted Wang of Medina, Luca Tessiere of Seattle, Vihaan Jammalamadaka of Redmond, and Akiva Notkin of Seattle. Notkin also won the Best Upset prize for his last-round victory against the legendary Northwest Master "Unkel" Vik Pupols. Needless to say, Akiva is grossly underrated at only 1251 US Chess, and is a force to be reckoned with at the board!

In the Reserve U1700 section, two third graders from the Eastside, Aaron Ren and Yuchen Zhou, dominated the field, each scoring an undefeated four points from five games! Aaron Ren, an Enatai Elementary student based in Bellevue, won his first three games in a row before drawing with Darsh Verma and Co-Champion Zhou in the final two rounds. Yuchen Zhou, a Cherry Crest Elementary student based in Bellevue, also drew with Ren and Verma, and managed to score a clutch fourth round win against fellow third grade phenom Dann Merriman on his way to the Co-Championship title.

According to the Reserve U1700 TD Lane Van Weerdhuizen, the pace of play was crisp and expedient, with an entire round managing to finish in only ten minutes despite the time control of game in ninety minutes with a thirty-second increment! Four up-and-coming juniors tied for third place a half-point back with 3.5 points: Odbayar Yondon of Redmond, Darsh Verma of Bothell, Arnab

Gadde of Redmond, and Vijay Nallappa of Redmond. Amana Demberel, a tenth grader from Lincoln High School based in Seattle, claimed first U1500 honors by virtue of having the same score as the third place finishers. Snoqualmie Middle School chess stud William Cummins and third grade Ella Baker Elementary student Aakash Mishra rounded out the prize winners by sharing first U1300/U1100 honors with three points apiece. Mishra also won the Best Upset prize for his last round victory against a player rated more than five hundred points above him. Congratulations to the winners, and many thanks to all who contributed to this fantastic event!

**Yagiz Arat (1894) –  
Kai Pisan (1775) [A16]**  
Washington Challenger's Cup,  
(R4) November 6, 2022  
*[Kai Pisan]*

## 1.c4 Nf6

This was a fascinating game in the English Opening and both sides had many different chances. Although Black took the advantage pretty early on, there are lots of hidden tactical and strategic ideas. This was a marathon of a game, lasting around three hours, and a crucial win for me in the tournament.

## 2.Nc3 e6 3.g3 d5 4.cxd5?!

This already gave me a pretty easy game, as it allowed for a strong d5 and c6 pawn center. It also helped me play against the English bishop.

## 4...exd5 5.d4 c6 6.Bg2 Bf5 7.Nf3 Bd6 8.Nh4?!

This was a surprise from my opponent, as I had been thinking about 0-0 or possible Qb3 variations. I did not want to give up the light-squared bishop, even though preserving it would not allow me





Kai Pisan.

Photo Courtesy of Kai Pisan.

to maintain my grasp of the critical e4 square.

**8...Be6 9.0-0 Qc8?!**

The engine dislikes this move, but in the game, I thought it was an interesting plan because I could play both ...Nbd7 and prepare to trade off the light-squared bishops. I was also worried about possible f4 ideas and my bishop having to be evacuated from e6.

**10.Bg5 Nbd7 11.f4?!**

Over the board I did not think this move was good because I could simply play h6 and get the bishop for the knight; it also weakened White's king on the g1 to a7 diagonal.

**11...h6 12.Bxf6 Nxf6 13.f5 Bd7 14.e4!**

White took an aggressive strategy because Black's king was still in the center. It looked quite dangerous for me to short castle, so I decided to opt for moving my king queenside, after dealing with the center tension.

**14...dxe4 15.Nxe4 Nxe4 16.Bxe4 Qc7 17.b4?!**

Another aggressive ploy by White to keep Black's king exposed. On closer inspection however, it simply gave away a pawn. Although grabbing it immediately is not one of the engine's top choices, it still gave Black many practical chances if the king could be brought to safety.

**17...Bxb4 18.Kh1??**

An odd choice, especially since White needed to play actively as they were a pawn down. Better would have been Qb3 or Rb1.

**18...0-0-0 19.Rb1 Ba5 20.Rf2?!**

Black is now winning since White's pieces are in disarray and White is down material. This plan of Rf2, although a smart way to stack the rooks, is not fast enough for the position's needs.

**20...Rhe8 21.Qf3 Bb6 22.Rfb2**



Position after 22.Rfb2

**22...Bxd4**

A critical decision point here. If Black did not take on d4, then d5 and the light squares around Black's king being weakened would be constantly looming. On the other hand, even then I knew that taking on d4 would lead to a long, complicated, drawn-out ending of two rooks versus the queen. In hindsight,

...Qd6 or ...Kb8 might have been better, although I think simplifying the position down makes it easier to play.

**23.Rxb7 Qxb7 24.Rxb7 Kxb7 25.Ng2 Re7 26.Qd3 Bb6 27.a4??**

White finally gave way to the pressure and blundered a discovery. This led to an even more winning endgame for Black, with two rooks and a bishop versus a queen. It is also a nice tactical motif.

**27...Bxf5! 28.Bxc6+ Kxc6 29.Qb5+ Kb7 30.Qxf5 Rd1+ 31.Ne1 Rdx1+ 32.Kg2 R1e5 33.Qf3+**

Here I was perplexed by how to get my king safe, but saw that if I somehow got it to g8, my wall of pawns would be enough protection.

**33...Kc7 34.Qf4 Kd8 35.Qf3 f6 36.Qb3 R7e6 37.Kh3 Ke7 38.Kh4 Kf8 39.a5!**

I saw this move, although I deemed it not dangerous because my rooks were protecting my bishop and my king was no longer at risk. However, it is White's best option.

**39...Bxa5 40.Qb8+ Kf7 41.Qxa7+ Re7 42.Qa6 g6 43.Kh3 Kg7**

With the problem of my king out of the way, I could finally go on the offensive and maneuver my pieces to their optimal squares.

**44.Kh4 Bd2 45.Kg4 h5+ 46.Kh3 g5 47.Qd3 Re2!**

A beautiful zugzwang. I still had to calculate it carefully, however, as stalemate traps such as Qh7!! could have worked if White had not had a g-pawn. This also forces the winning of White's queen because of the encroaching ...g4+, ...Rh2 checkmate threat.

**48.g4 R7e3+**

**0-1**

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# 2022 Challenger's Cup Scholastic

By Josh Sinanan

The 2022 Challenger's Cup Scholastic chess tournament was held Saturday, November 12, at Chinook Middle School in Bellevue. The event marked the first in-person scholastic tournament hosted by WCF at a school since the pandemic! A total of 190 talented scholastic chess players in grades K-12 participated from throughout the Pacific Northwest, including the cities of Bothell, Seattle Redmond, Bellevue, Woodinville, Sammamish, Normandy Park, Kirkland, Snoqualmie, Mercer Island, Renton, Bainbridge Island, Issaquah, Salem (OR), Medina, Clyde Hill, Duvall, Yarrow Point, Olympia, and Snohomish! The event was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation and directed by WCF Scholastic Director Rekha Sagar with assistance from WCF Member-at-Large Ani Barua and WCF Women's and Girl's Chess Director Chouchan Airapetian. Floor judges and TDs included Tim Campbell and Jeff Weng. Amazing photographs were taken throughout the day by WCF Officers Rekha Sagar, Ani Barua, and Chouchan Airapetian. The five-round, game in twenty-five minutes with a five-second delay, Swiss tournament was split into five sections parsed by grade level and rating: K-1 U800, 2-3 U800, K-3 Open, 4-8 U900, and 4-12 Open.

Congratulations to the courageous chess warriors who participated, many for whom it was their first ever chess tournament! Our vibrant chess community continues to thrive as we return to playing chess across the board. Special recognition is due to our Amazon Gift Card prize winners:

Section Prizes - Amazon E-Gift cards (1st-5th) awarded in each section.					
1st \$90, 2nd \$80, 3rd \$70, 4th \$60, 5th \$50					
Section	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
K-1 U800	Chen Yuan & Jinhan Zou		Sahaan Vivek	Vivienne Luo & Samuel Zhang	
2-3 U800	William Zhao	Vidur Ganesan	Rafael Palathingal, Oliver Su, Snehil Ghosh & Yi-En Pi Hu		
K-3 Open	Aahan Sriram	Edgar Li, Elijah Edwin, Wen Liang & Vayu Kakkad			
4-8 U900	Eric Wang, Peter Michiels & Niranjan Prashant			Shreyas Kedarisetty, Krish Vijay & Cristina Juarez-Caballero	
4-12 Open	Erik Kato	Atharva Joshi	Gavin Shi, Evan Cen, Dann Merriman, Haituka Anandkumar, Smaran Malakapalli & Pranav Kokati		

Special Prizes - Medals for first-timers (awarded at-site), best female player, and biggest upset.		
Section	Best Female Player (by TPR)	Biggest Upsets
K-1 U800	Bella Li	Jinhan Zou
2-3 U800	Ananya Sabarish	Nithilan Venkatesan
K-3 Open	Aditi Sembium	Caden Chang
4-8 U900	Vaidehi Joshi	Charan Bikkula
4-12 Open	Lakshana Anand	Kenan Khatib



# Seattle Chess Club Tournaments

→ Address ↖  
 7212 Woodlawn Ave NE ↖  
 Seattle WA 98115  
 ↗ Info ↖  
 www.seattlechess.club  
Addresses for Entries ↖  
 SCC Tnmt Dir  
 2420 S 137 St  
 Seattle WA 98168  
 —or—  
[www.seattlechess.club](http://www.seattlechess.club)

## SCC Fridays

One US Chess-rated round per night (free to SCC members, \$5 per night for others) normally played at a rate of 40/90 followed by 30/60. Drop in for any round!

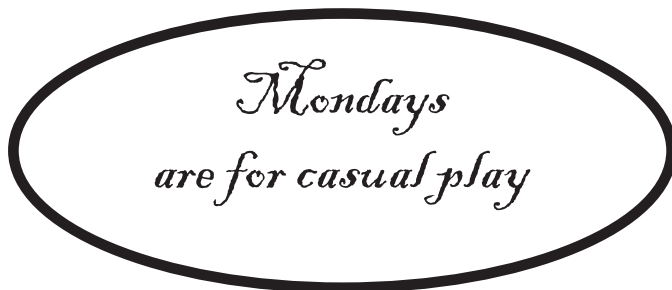
**January Thaw (Close Ratings):** 1/6, 13, 20, 27.  
**Cabin Fever:** 2/3, 10, 17, 24.  
**March Winds (Close Ratings):** 3/3, 10, 17, 24.  
**Fifth Friday G/15 (4 or 5 rds.):** 3/31.  
**April Showers:** 4/7, 14, 21, 28.

**January 14** **Saturday Quads**  
**Format:** 3-RR, 4-plyr sec. by rtg. **TC:** G/100;+10. **EF:** \$9(+\$7 fee for non-SCC). **Prizes:** Free quad entry. **Reg:** 9-9:45 a.m. **Rds:** 10:00-2:15-6:30. **Misc:** US Chess, WCF; OSA. NS, NC.

**January 15** **SCC Novice**  
**Format:** 4-SS. Open to U1200 and UNR. **TC:** G/60;+15. **EF:** \$20 (-\$2 SCC members). **Prizes:** SCC membership(s). **Reg:** 9-9:45a.m. **Rds:** 10-12:45-3:30-6. **Byes:** 1 (Rd 3/4—commit at reg.). **Misc:** US Chess memb. req'd. NS, NC.

**January 29** **Sunday Tornado**  
**Format:** 4-SS. **TC:** G/50;+10. **EF:** \$18 (+\$7 fee for non-SCC). **Prizes:** 1st 35%, 2nd 27%, Bottom Half 1st 22%, 2nd 16% (\$10 per EF to prize fund). **Reg:** 10:30-11:15 a.m. **Rds:** 11:30-1:50-4:10-6:30. **Byes:** 1 (Rd 3/4—commit at reg.). **Misc:** US Chess, WCF; OSA. NS, NC.

**February 4** **Saturday Quads**  
**Format:** 3-RR, 4-plyr sec. by rtg. **TC:** G/100;+10. **EF:** \$9(+\$7 fee for non-SCC). **Prizes:** Free quad entry. **Reg:** 9-9:45 a.m. **Rds:** 10:00-2:15-6:30. **Misc:** US Chess, WCF; OSA. NS, NC.



## Seattle City Championship

**January 21-22**

A five-round Swiss with a time control of G/100;+25. The prize fund of **\$585** is based on 24 paid entries, 3 per prize group.

First	\$150	Class C	\$50
Second	\$100	Class D	\$45
Expert	\$65	Class E & Under	\$40
Class A	\$60	Unrated	\$20
Class B	\$55		

**EF:** \$44 (\$33 for SCC members) if received by 1/16. Thereafter, \$56 (\$44 for SCC members).

**Reg.:** Sat. 9-9:45am. **Rds:** Sat. 10-2:45-7:30, Sun. 11-4.

**Byes:** 2 (Sun. rds, commit at reg.). **Misc.:** US Chess & ICA/OCF/WCF memb. req'd. NS. NC.

# ***PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLASTIC*** *CHESS TOURNAMENT*

President's Day Monday, February 20, 2023

Chinook Middle School

2001 98<sup>th</sup> Ave NE Bellevue, WA 98004



## *OPEN SECTIONS:*

### **K-5 Open, K-12 Open**

A 5-round G/25; +5 Swiss. For advanced beginner to advanced players.

Dual Northwest and US Chess Rated. US Chess membership required. **Clocks and notation required – Please bring a digital clock if you have one**, a limited number will be available to borrow.

## *RESERVE SECTIONS:*

### **Kindergarten, K-2 U800, K-5 U900, K-12 U1200:**

A 5-round G/30 Swiss. For novice to intermediate players. Northwest rated only. US Chess membership not required. No clocks used from the start, but a 10-minute clock will be placed into the game after 40 minutes.

## *SCHEDULE:*

Rounds: 9:15am, 10:45am, lunch, 12:30pm, 1:45pm, 3:00pm. Awards presentation ~ 4:30pm.

**WA State Elementary Qualifier!**

## *ELIGIBILITY:*

Open to all students registered in grades K-12. Out-of-state players welcome!

## *ENTRY FEE:*

\$45 by Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>, \$55 after. Room for 200 players.

## *AWARDS:*

**Section Prizes:** Amazon Gift Cards awarded in each section:

1<sup>st</sup> \$80, 2<sup>nd</sup> \$70, 3<sup>rd</sup> \$60, 4<sup>th</sup> \$50, 5<sup>th</sup> \$40

**Team Prizes:** Trophies awarded to the top 5 finishing teams (top 4 scores from same school comprise team score) across all sections.

**Special Prizes (per section):** Medals for first-time players, best female player (by TPR), and biggest upset.

## *RATING:*

Highest of February supplement US Chess Regular/US Chess Online, or current NWSRS rating used to determine section and pairings.

## *THE DETAILS*

Health/Safety Protocols: All players and spectators are required to sign the WCF Health/Safety Protocols & Waiver of Liability form prior to the start of the tournament.

**100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Sun. Feb. 19<sup>th</sup> @ 5:00pm.** Unpaid players by the deadline will be withdrawn from the tournament.

This event is a **qualifier for the WA State Elementary Championship** on April 29 in Tacoma. Players scoring 3.0+ points will qualify for State.

**Online Registration:**  
[NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/](https://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration/)  
Pay by Credit/Debit/PayPal.

Pizza lunch and other concessions will be available for purchase on site.

## **Questions?**

Contact Rekha Sagar, WCF Scholastic Director at 425.496.9160 or [rekha4chess@gmail.com](mailto:rekha4chess@gmail.com)



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