



DR. RALPH HALL  
MEMORIAL AWARD

2011	Willie Leonard	2019	Carl Rosenthal
2012	Michael Williams	2020	David Wood
2013	Michael Williams	2021	Michael Williams
2014	Adrian Pugh	2022	Michael Williams
2015	Carl Rosenthal	2023	Michael Williams
2016	Carl Rosenthal	2024	Michael Williams
2017	Carl Rosenthal		
2018	Michael Williams		

Oregon State  
Chess Championship

2011	Carl Rosenthal
2012	Michael Williams
2013	Michael Williams
2014	Adrian Pugh
2015	Carl Rosenthal
2016	Carl Rosenthal
2017	Carl Rosenthal
2018	Michael Williams
2019	Carl Rosenthal
2020	David Wood
2021	Michael Williams
2022	Michael Williams
2023	Michael Williams
2024	Michael Williams

Arthur Dake  
International Chess  
Tournament

2011	Michael Williams
2012	Michael Williams
2013	Michael Williams
2014	Michael Williams
2015	Michael Williams
2016	Michael Williams
2017	Michael Williams
2018	Michael Williams
2019	Michael Williams
2020	Michael Williams
2021	Michael Williams
2022	Michael Williams
2023	Michael Williams
2024	Michael Williams



February 2024

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# Northwest Chess

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## Advertising & Copy Deadline

Ads and submissions must be received by the fifth of the month for the items to appear in the next issue:

**February 5 for the March issue; March 5 for April.**

**Submit all ads, donations, payments, changes of address and subscriptions to:**

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## Front Cover

Zoey Tang, Oregon Junior Closed Champion.  
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

## Back Cover

(L) Emel Bayrambeyli and (R) Pace Lykins,  
co-champions Oregon Junior Closed Challengers section.  
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

## Submissions

Submissions of games (PGN format is preferable for games), stories, photos, art, and other **original** chess-related content are encouraged! Multiple submissions are acceptable; please indicate if material is non-exclusive. All submissions are subject to editing or revision. Send via U.S. Mail to:

**Jeffrey Roland, NWC Editor**  
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## Reader Appreciation

Hi Jeff,

Please find enclosed a photo of Stephen Willy with the January 2024 issue! This was taken January 9, 2024 at the Plateau Youth Chess Club in Sammamish by Su Lim.

Please feel free to post on the *NWC* website, social media pages, etc. as desired.

Cheers,

Josh

Hi Josh,

I love it! In my “editor’s cave,” I don’t always know how things are received out there. It’s great that he seems to love it too, and I take this picture and the look on Stephen’s face as a big “thank you,” and it pleases me to see this.

I just have to share it!

—Jeffrey Roland, Editor

# 2023 Oregon Junior Closed

Wilson Gibbins

The Oregon Junior Closed is always a combination of familiar faces with some new ones. Austin Tang, Calvin Chang, Pace Lykins, and Anisha Sripada have played in the last three over-the-board events, while first timers Saahil Gupta, Hayul Lim, Emel Bayrambeyli, Neil Natarajan, and Varun Iyengar look like they just might become regulars.

Reigning Oregon Closed Champion and Women International Master Zoey Tang won the Championship Section with a 5.0/5 record. Her brother Austin had a chance to tie her by beating her in the last round but could not quite pull off the upset with the black pieces. Austin also had Black against Zoey in the last round of the 2023 Oregon Closed, with a similar result. Sorry Austin—it isn't a conspiracy, just the random fluctuations of SwissSys.

The Challengers section was much more interesting, as Pace Lykins started fast with two wins. Emel Bayrambeyli beat him with the white pieces in round three. This created a three-way tie for first place with Calvin Chang joining Emel and Pace with two points and Neil Natarajan only a half point behind the leaders.

Pace used the white pieces in the last two rounds to collect two more wins. Emel had Black in her last two games, but managed to win them both, including the last game of the tournament to finish against Varun Iyengar.

Thanks to Dave Murray for organizing this tournament—managing invitations to a closed tournament is a tricky job. Thanks to the Portland Chess Club for allowing us to use their facility—by now the backgrounds for the pictures are starting to look familiar to *Northwest Chess* readers. Thanks to the players for having a combative attitude on the board and a respectful attitude off the board. And finally, thanks to the parents for sacrificing their weekends to make this event possible.

**William Nobles (1786) – Zoey Tang (2331) [B23]**  
Oregon Junior Closed  
(R2), December 9, 2023  
*[Wilson Gibbins]*

Zoey's published games often end with a lightning attack that seemingly comes out of nowhere. In reality, she often wins by grinding out better endgames, as the chances for attacks are few and far between when playing in high-prestige tournaments like the U.S. Girls' Junior Championship. But if given the opportunity, she can still generate attacking chances quite quickly.

**1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Nc6 5.Qd2**

The Carlsen variation of the Sicilian defense. It seems counter-intuitive to accelerate Black's development by taking with the queen on move four followed

by blocking the dark-squared bishop on move five, but Magnus and Stockfish approve. It is a reputable system, not a trick line.

**5...Nf6 6.b3 g6 7.Bb2 Bg7 8.0-0-0**

White scores nearly 65% from this position.

**8...Qa5 9.h3**

9.Kb1 is the only move I could find in my database or in the Master Games section on chess.com. Stockfish says William's move is fine. But White's lagging development means that he must be careful.

**9...0-0 10.Kb1 a6 11.f4**

11.g4±

11...b5



*Position after 11...b5*

**12.Nf3?**

Trying to complete White's development, but Zoey's attack comes too quickly. 12.Nd5 Nxe4 13.Nxe7+ Kh8 14.Qxa5 Nxa5 15.Rh2!:= says Stockfish, but the rook on h2 looks a little problematic.

**12...b4 13.e5**

The best try to save the game by unleashing chaos, but Zoey finds her way through the complications.

**13...dxe5 14.fxe5 Nxe5 15.Nxe5 Qxe5 16.Na4 Qa5 17.a3 Ne4 18.Qe1 Nc3+ 19.Bxc3**

## 2023 Oregon Junior Closed - Championship

Place	Name	Rating	State	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total
1	Zoey Tang	2331	OR	W4	W6	W3	W5	W2	5
2	Austin Tang	2054	OR	D3	D4	W5	W6	L1	3
3	Kai Sebastian Lewis	1838	OR	D2	D5	L1	D4	W6	2.5
4	Saahil Gupta	1817	OR	L1	D2	W6	D3	D5	2.5
5	Hayul Lim	1771	OR	W6	D3	L2	L1	D4	2
6	William Nobles	1786	OR	L5	L1	L4	L2	L3	0



L-R: Zoey Tang, Saahil Gupta, Austin Tang, Hayul Lim, Kai Sebastian Lewis, William Nobles.  
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

Hastening the end, but Black has a large advantage in any case. 19.Nxc3 bxc3 20.Bc4 Bb7 21.Rd3 Bxg2 22.Rg1 Rac8! 23.Rxg2 (23.Bxc3 Bxc3 24.Rxc3 Bd5?) 23...Rxc4! 24.bxc4 Rb8+

19...bxc3 20.Qxe7



Position after 20.Qxe7

20...Rb8!

Other moves give White equality or better. A sample computer line with lots of forced moves, ending in equality. 20...Bf5 21.g4 Rab8 (21...Rfe8 22.Qc5) 22.gxf5 Qxa4 23.Ka2 Rxb3 24.cxb3 c2! 25.Bc4! cxd1Q 26.Rxd1 Qc6=

21.Ka2 Be6 22.Rd6 Qe5

Despite appearances 22...Qxa4 doesn't win a piece as White can remove the bishop that is pinning the b-pawn with 23.Rxe6 but Black's attack crashes through with 23...Qf4 24.Re1 Rxb3 25.Kxb3 (25.cxb3 Qd2+) 25...Rb8+

23.Qc7

23.Rxe6 prolongs the game but does not change the outcome.

23...Rfc8

0-1

**Emel Bayrambeyli (1657) – Pace Lykins (1743) [B22]**

Oregon Junior Closed (R3), December 9, 2023

[Wilson Gibbins]

Round three matches the eventual co-champions. Pace is leading the tournament with two wins. Emel is a point behind.

1.e4 c5 2.c3 Nf6 3.e5 Nd5 4.Nf3 e6 5.d4 Qc7 6.Bd3 cxd4 7.cxd4 d6 8.a3 Nd7 9.exd6 Bxd6 10.0-0 b6 11.Bd2 Bb7 12.Nc3 0-0

Black has completed his development and equalized, but the isolated queen pawn position gives White some attacking chances. If Black stays alert, he can neutralize White's threats and enjoy playing against the isolated pawn on d4 in the endgame. But it is hard to be eternally vigilant against White's initiative.



L-R: Anisha Sripada, Varun Venkat Iyengar, Emel Bayrambeyli, Neil Natarajan, Calvin Chang, Pace Lykins.  
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

13.Nb5 Qb8 14.Nxd6 Qxd6 15.Re1 N7f6 16.Ne5 Rfc8 17.Qe2 Ne7 18.Bc3 Nfd5 19.Bd2 Ng6 20.Qg4



Position after 20.Qg4

20...Nde7?

20...Nf6=

21.Bb4! Qc7 22.Nxf7! Bd5

22...Kxf7 23.Qxe6+ Kf8 24.Bxg6 hxg6 25.Bxe7+

23.Ng5 Nf5 24.Nxe6 Bxe6 25.Rxe6 Nfe7 26.Rae1 Nd5 27.Bxg6 hxg6 28.Rxg6 Re8 29.Rge6 Red8 30.Bd2

1-0

Hayul Lim (1771) –  
Zoey Tang (2331) [A03]  
Oregon Junior Closed  
(R4), December 10, 2023  
[Wilson Gibbins]

Zoey is no longer exclusively a king hunter. Here is an example of patient play that eventually results in her winning the endgame.

1.Nf3 d5 2.e3 c5 3.b3 Nf6 4.Bb2 Nc6 5.Bb5 e6 6.0-0 Bd7

An important position, at least historically. Aaron Nimzowitsch got a couple nice wins from this position in the 1920s. Bobby Fischer used this line to beat

Henrique Mecking in the 1970 Interzonal, part of his qualification path to his 1972 World Championship, though he reached it by starting with 1.b3.

7.Bxc6 Bxc6 8.Ne5 Be7 9.d3



Position after 9.d3

9...0-0

9...Rc8 10.Nd2 0-0 11.f4 Nd7 12.Qg4 Nxe5 13.Bxe5 Bf6 14.Rf3 Qe7 15.Raf1

a5 16.Rg3 Bxe5 17.fxe5 f5 18.exf6 Rxf6 19.Qxg7+! Qxg7 20.Rxf6 Qxg3 21.hxg3 and White ground out a win in this ending. 1–0 (42) Fischer,R-Mecking,H Palma de Mallorca 1970

**10.f4 Nd7 11.Nxc6 bxc6**

Nimzowitsch's and Fischer's opponents did not allow White to inflict doubled c-pawns on them. Zoey demonstrates that they are not so bad.

**12.Nd2 a5 13.a4 Qb6 14.Qg4 Bf6 15.Bxf6 Nxf6 16.Qg3 Rfe8 17.Nf3**

Allows Black to undouble the c-pawns. It isn't fatal, but it is a small concession. 17.Rae1=

**17...c4 18.Ne5 cxd3 19.cxd3 c5 20.Rfc1 Rac8 21.Qe1 Rc7 22.Qc3 Rec8 23.Rc2 Ne8 24.Rac1 f6 25.Nf3 Nd6**

Black is improving her position. White is slowly getting outplayed.

**26.Nd2 Nf5 27.Nf1 Kf7 28.g4 d4 29.Qd2 dxe3 30.Nxe3 Nd4 31.Nc4 Qc6**

Black wins the exchange.

**32.Qg2 Nxc2 33.Qxc6 Rxc6 34.Rxc2 Ra6 35.d4 Ke7 36.Nb2 Rac6 37.dxc5 Rxc5 38.Nc4 Rd8 39.Kf2 Rd3 40.Rb2 h5 41.gxh5 Rxh5 42.Ke2 Rdh3 43.Kd1 Rxh2 44.Rxh2 Rxh2 45.Nxa5 Rf2 46.Nc4 Rxf4 47.a5 Kd7 48.Kd2 Kc7 49.Kc3 g5 50.b4 Kc6 51.Na3 Rf3+ 52.Kb2 Rxa3!**

The king and pawn ending is easily winning for Black.

**53.Kxa3 Kb5 54.Kb3 g4 55.Kc3 g3 56.Kd4 g2**

0–1

**Pace Lykins (1743) –  
Neil Natarajan (1628) [C65]**  
Oregon Junior Closed  
(R5), December 10, 2023  
[Wilson Gibbins]

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3**

A practical move, not allowing Black to clarify the position into well-known patterns. A lot of trees have been killed and electrons inconvenienced in pursuit of truth in the main line. 4.0-0 Nxe4 5.d4 Nd6 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.dxe5 Nf5 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8 As far as I know, nobody has reached a definitive conclusion.

**4...d6 5.c3 Be7 6.0-0 0-0 7.h3 Bd7 8.Re1 Re8 9.d4 Bf8 10.Bd3 h6 11.Nbd2**

White calmly places his pieces on

standard Ruy Lopez squares. When I first started playing the Ruy as White, I was horrified to discover that I had to leave my queenside pieces on their original squares for quite a while—isn't Black ahead in development? But Pace correctly trusts that his piece configuration will lead to continuing opportunities to pose problems for his opponent.

**11...exd4?!**

Probably better to keep the strongpoint pawn on e5—this gives White a mobile pawn center.

**12.cxd4 Ne7 13.Nf1 c6 14.Ng3 Be6 15.Bd2 c5 16.Bb5 Bd7 17.Bxd7 Qxd7 18.d5 Ng6 19.Bc3**



Position after 19.Bc3

White has reached a good Benoni position where his bishop is much more active than Black's.

**19...Nh7 20.a4 Be7 21.Qb3 Bf6 22.Nh5 Bxc3 23.bxc3**

This adds another pawn to the protection of White's center and opens the b-file. Threatening mate-in-one gives White a bigger edge. 23.Qxc3 f6 24.Nd2± and White gets a known Benoni advantage, with his knight on c4 attacking the pawn on d6 combined with advancing his pawn to f4, to support the e4–e5 push.

**23...b6**

Frees the queen from the defense of the b-pawn, but it gives White a pawn to attack on the queenside with the a4–

a5 pawn push. See White's move 32. Stockfish says 23...Ng5 24.Nxg5 hxg5 is a reasonable position for Black.

**24.c4 f5 25.Ng3 fxe4 26.Nxe4 Ne5 27.Nxe5 Rxe5 28.Ng3 Rae8**

28...Rxe1+ 29.Rxe1 Re8 is about equal.

**29.Rxe5 Rxe5 30.Qb5 Qe7 31.Kh2 Nf6 32.a5**



Position after 32.a5

**32...Ne4?**

Right idea, but a move too soon. 32...bxa5 deflects White's heavy pieces off the optimal files that they have in the game continuation, buying just enough time for Black's counterplay. 33.Qxa5 Ne4 34.Qxa7 (34.Nxe4 Rxe4 35.Qxa7 Qxa7 36.Rxa7 Rxc4 37.Ra6 Kf7 38.Rxd6 is a drawn rook endgame despite White's extra pawn. 38...Rd4 39.Kg3 c4 40.Kf3 c3 41.Rc6 Rxd5 42.Rxc3 h5) 34...Qxa7 35.Rxa7 Nxf2 Pace finishes the game off with a series of accurate moves.

**33.axb6!+- axb6**

33...Nxg3 34.b7

**34.Ra8+ Kh7 35.Qb1!**

Threatens 36.f3 and winning pinned piece on e4, so Black has to block the b1–h7 diagonal. But that leads to other problems.

**35...g6 36.Qxb6 Qh4 37.Qb8**

Checkmate cannot be stopped.

1–0

**2023 Oregon Junior Closed - Challengers**

Place	Name	Rating	State	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total
1	Pace Lykins	1743	OR	W6	W3	L2	W5	W4	4
2	Emel Bayrambeyli	1657	OR	L4	W6	W1	W3	W5	4
3	Calvin Chang	1692	OR	W5	L1	W4	L2	W6	3
4	Neil Natarajan	1628	OR	W2	D5	L3	W6	L1	2.5
5	Varun Venkat Iyengar	1692	OR	L3	D4	W6	L1	L2	1.5
6	Anisha Sripada	1471	OR	L1	L2	L5	L4	L3	0

# **PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLASTIC**

## CHESS TOURNAMENT



President's Day Monday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Chinook Middle School

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

### DUAL RATED

### SECTIONS

**K-2 Open, 3-12 U1200,**

**3-6 Open, 7-12 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.** All equipment is provided.

### NORTHWEST-ONLY

### SECTIONS

**Kindergarten, 1-2 U700,**

**3-4 U700, 5-12 U900**

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 with 5-sec increment will be placed into the game after 35 minutes of play.

### SCHEDULE

Rounds: 9:15am, 10:45am, Lunch Time, 12:30pm, 1:45pm, 3:00pm. Awards presentation ~ 4:30pm or asap.

### ELIGIBILITY

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

### ENTRY FEE

\$45 by Feb. 12<sup>th</sup>, \$55 after. Room for 250 players.

### AWARDS

**Section Prizes:** Amazon e-gift cards awarded in each section:

1<sup>st</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>: \$65-\$60-\$55-\$50-\$45-\$40-\$35-\$30-\$25-\$20.

**Team Prizes:** Plaques 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 win.

### RATING

Higher of US Chess February regular or current NWSRS rating used to determine section and pairings.

### THE DETAILS

**100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Sun. Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> @ 5:00pm.** Unpaid players by the deadline will be withdrawn from the tournament.

### WA State Elementary Qualifier!

This event is a **qualifier for the WA State Elementary Championship** on May 4, 2024, in Kennewick. Players scoring 3.0+ points will qualify for State.

### Online Registration:

[NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/](http://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 Vice President: [rekha4chess@gmail.com](mailto:rekha4chess@gmail.com) or

Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206.769.3757, [washingtonchessfederation@gmail.com](mailto:washingtonchessfederation@gmail.com)



# 18th Annual Susan Polgar Foundation National Open For Girls And Boys

## SPFNO Organizers

The 18th Annual Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls and Boys was held at the Hyatt Regency Bellevue on Thanksgiving weekend, November 24-25, 2023. Scholastic chess players in grades K-12 participated from throughout North America, from states including Washington, Idaho, British Columbia, Montana, Texas, and Missouri! The two-day chess festival was co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and the Washington Chess Federation. Webster University head coach Grandmaster Liem Le and Penny Chess Club

Founder Women's International Master Penny Pham were the guests of honor, travelling all the way from St. Louis and British Columbia, respectively, especially for this event! 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 two-day chess festival. An all-star team of dedicated volunteers, judges, and tournament directors included Lane Van Weerdhuizen, Adam Porth, Liang Shi,

IM Long Le, David Hirschowitz, Walter Guity, Max Schmidt-Warnecke, Angela Chen, Melina Li, Chouchan Airapetian, Ojas Kandhare, Face Painter Gabby Carrillo, Magician Rich Waters, and many others. Amazing photographs and video footage were taken throughout the event by Meiling Cheng. A total of 408 players competed across 11 sections separated by grade level and rating: K-1 U800, 2-3 U800, K-3 Open, 4-6 U900, 4-6 Open, 7-12 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 side events enhanced the immersive weekend chess experience. Friday's busy slate of events included a Parents and Coaches Seminar, Face Painting, a Magic Show, the Susan Polgar Book Sale, SPFNO Girls Workshop, SPFNO Puzzle Solving Competition, and SPFNO Blitz Championship. Sunday offered several engaging events featuring GM Liem Le, including the GM Liem Le Lecture + Q&A, GM Liem Le Simul, and All-Comers Blitz with GM Liem Le, WIM Penny Pham, and IM Long Le.

The organizers were blown away for the second year in a row by the amazing 408-player turnout, up from 401 in 2022! The organizers hope to continue the trend and attract even more players next year, with a prospective venue in the Bellevue area already in the works! The two-day Championship sections, which feature both Open and Girls divisions, typically attract the strongest local players given the prestige of the event. With the co-located Washington Class Championships happening on the same weekend and offering FIDE-rated sections for Class B and above, many of the top players had to make the difficult choice of which tournament to play in, typically opting to play in both events when they are held at different times. Despite some attrition due to the Washington Class, several



*The Grand Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency Bellevue accommodated the 400+ player SPFNO.  
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*



*Top boards of the 50-player 7-12 Open section at the SPFNO.  
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

strong players still turned out for the SPFNO two-day Championship sections, including Edward Li, Ted Shi, William Summerfield, Odbayar Yondon, Albert Eksarevskiy, Kai Pisan, Michael Lin, Shashank Seela, Arjun Yadav, Evan Cen, Stanley Deng, Sarang Sankrithi, Imai Maharaja, Zoe Xu, and Guru H.R. Avula. Top seeds in the Girls sections included Lily Deng, Iris Zhang, Emma Li, Selina Cheng, and Miranda Meng. 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 2023 SPFNO winners:*

K-1 U800: First Place - **Vivaan Sankrithi** (5.0/5!!)

2-3 U800: First Place - **Jayden Wu** (5.0/5!!)

K-3 Open: First Place - **Jonathan Lan** (5.0/5!!)

4-6 U900: =First/Second Place - **Damien**

**Davies + Rishab Mitra** (5.0/5!! - Co-Champions)

4-6 Open: = First/Second Place - **Avery Kwan-Uchiyama + Kanav Shah** (4.5/5! - Co-Champions)

7-12 Open: = First/Second Place - **Vivaan Gupta + Deepak Rao** (4.5/5! - Co-Champions)

K-5 Girls: First Place - **Miranda Meng** (5.0/5!!)

K-5 Open: = First/Second Place - **Zoe Xu + Larry Yang** (4.5/5! - Co-Champions)

K-8 Open: = First/Second Place - **Shashank Seela + Arjun Yadav** (4.5/5! - Co-Champions)

K-12 Girls: First Place - **Selina Cheng** (5.0/5!!), Top-finishing High School player- **Iris Zhang** (3.0/5!): **Webster University Scholarship Winner!**

K-12 Open: = First/Second Place - **Ted Shi + William Summerfield** (4.5/5!), Top-finishing High School player- **Aiden Leong** (4.0/5!): **Webster University Scholarship Winner!**



*Ziliang Ma, from Detective Cookie's Chess Club in Seattle, ponders his next move.  
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

## Parents and Coaches Seminar:

The Parents and Coaches Seminar kicked off the weekend's action-packed side event schedule. Like most of the other side events, it took place in the aptly named Kasparov Room on Friday, November 24, from 10:30-11:30 PM. The one-hour seminar was led by WIM Penny Pham, founder and head coach of the Vancouver, B.C. based Penny Chess Club and Seattle-based chess coach and WCF President NM Josh Sinanan. Parents and coaches relished the opportunity to pick Penny and Josh's brains to learn how to effectively guide children on their chess journey. Participants were actively engaged and asked well-thought-out questions of the two experienced chess professionals.

## Gabby Smiley Face Painting:

To enhance the festive atmosphere of the event and provide entertainment for parents and kids alike during the marathon day of intense chess competition, several fun side activities were scheduled simultaneously throughout the day. Face painter extraordinaire Gabby Carrillo was on-site from 11:00 AM-3:00 PM performing her fantastically colorful and brilliant face painting designs much to the satisfaction and enjoyment of kids and adults alike! Gabby's dedication and fine craftsmanship for hours on end was particularly impressive, as she painted faces, arms, and legs for all interested parties for just over four hours without any break! The limit of one face paint per person was blatantly ignored by one

young man who requested the Spiderman theme on his face, arms, and neck! As is typical when Gabby is around, the line for complimentary face paints never seems to shrink over the course of the afternoon.

## Magician Rich Waters:

On Friday during the lunch hour from 11:30 AM-1:30 PM, kids and adults gathered on the Hyatt Regency Foyer to witness a tricky and exciting exhibition! Local Magician Rich Waters performed close-up magic tricks and balloon twisting, much to the enjoyment of the mesmerized audience. Just like a fine wine, Rich's tricks seem to get better with age, and he's thought up several new and Avant-garde ruses to confuse even the keenest observers, youthful skeptics, and aspiring myth busters!

## Susan Polgar Book Sale:

The Susan Polgar Book Sale took place on the busy Black Friday shopping day, November 24, from 1:00-2:00 PM in the Kasparov Room. On sale were several books written by GM Susan Polgar, who has authored several high-quality books throughout both her playing and teaching careers. 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*. The book sale was a huge success, with over eight boxes of books disappearing off the shelves when all was said and done!

## SPFNO Girls Workshop:

The SPFNO Girls Workshop was held on Friday from 2:00-3:00 PM in the Kasparov Room immediately following the book sale. Special guests WIM Penny Pham and WFM Chouchan Airapetian hosted the special one-hour workshop that focused on empowering girls through chess. Those attending the workshop enjoyed the interactive presentation and learned how Penny overcame obstacles to obtain success at the chess board, founded the Penny Chess Club, and become the highest rated woman in Canada!

## SPFNO Puzzle Solving Competition:

A total of 31 brave contestants were given a maximum of 30 minutes to solve 20 checkmate puzzles. There were two mates in one, six mates in two, five mates



*A young participant shows off her colorful and stylish paint, courtesy of Gabby Smiley Face Painting. It's so on fleek!  
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

in three, four mates in four, and three mates in five. Solutions were written on paper and evaluation was based on accuracy, completeness, and speed. A star-studded cast of titled players graded the puzzles and compiled the final results: GM Liem Le, IM Long Le, WIM Penny Pham, and NM Josh Sinanan. Congratulations to the winners!

Last Name	First Name	Rating	Score	Time (min.sec)	Prize
Merriman	Dann	1674	20	15.35	1st 1000+
Cheng	Edward	1841	20	15.45	2nd 1000+
Reddy Saddi	Neevan	1724	20	19.2	3rd 1000+
Keane	Brendan	1184	20	29.3	4th 1000+
Yondon	Odbayar	1762	19	15.3	5th 1000+

Last Name	First Name	Rating	Score	Time (min.sec)	Prize
Confer	Bradén	941	13	Max	1st U1000
Kakarlapudi	Sreeram M.	898	11	26.56	2nd U1000
Roorbach	Narin	621	10	Max	3rd U1000
Kakarlapudi	Jairam I.	648	8	Max	4th U1000
Latuskiewicz	Matthew	733	7	Max	5th U1000

## SPNFO Blitz Championship:

The 2023 SPNFO Blitz Championship attracted 27 players and took place on Friday, November 24 at 6:30 PM in the Botez Room. The eight-round Single Swiss in two sections, K-5 and 6-12, was directed by Chief TD Jacob Mayer, ICA President Adam Porth, and Ben Radin. The games were US Chess Blitz Rated with a time control of game in five minutes with no delay. In the K-5 section, Aarit Shah, a fifth grader from Mark Twain Elementary School in Kirkland, emerged victorious with an impressive 6.8/8 score! Other top finishers included Odbayar Yondon & Dann Merriman (6.0, =Second/Third Place), Rafael Palathingal & Moses Li (5.5, =Fourth/Fifth). In

the 6-12 section, Lakeside sophomore sensation Owen Xuan swept the field with a perfect eight points from eight games! Second place was awarded to Lakeside freshman stud Albert Eksarevskiy with seven points. Blackwell Elementary sixth grader Arjun Yadav finished in Third Place with six points. Fellow sixth grade phenom Selina Cheng from Detective Cookie's Chess Club in Seattle captured fourth-place honors with five points. Odle Middle School sixth grader Sanjay Urali rounded out the trophy winners with 4.5 points, good enough for clear fifth place. Congratulations to the winners!

## GM Liem Le Lecture + Q&A:

On Saturday morning from 10:30-11:30 AM, players, spectators, and parents were treated to a special presentation by our honored guest and current world number 18 GM Liem Le! Liem went in depth on his teaching philosophy and recommended training tips for up-and-coming players. Fresh off his strong performance at the St. Louis Rapid and Blitz, Liem showed a few of his own games that were key to his development as a player, including a clutch win against Shakhriyar Mamedyarov to secure his final grandmaster norm! You can watch an excerpt from his lecture here on the WCF YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/2QYJjSarNsQ>.

## GM Liem Le Simul:

The Grandmaster Liem Le Simul took place on Saturday afternoon from 1:00-4:00 PM in the Kasparov Room, which was the site for most of the SPNFO side events. A total of 17 courageous chess players of all ages and ratings from unrated to Class A took their seats with the black pieces against special guest and world number 18, Super GM Liem Le. For most of the contestants, it was their first time ever playing against a Grandmaster! After two and a half hours of play, all games were finished, with only one player managing to draw against the grandmaster!

Special congratulations to Andra Marinescu (1477), on scoring a draw against GM Liem Le after spectacularly sacrificing her queen in an offbeat line of the French Tarrasch! Andra was even winning at one point in the game but allowed her illustrious opponent to escape with a draw by perpetual check following



*(L) WCF President Josh Sinanan presents Dann Merriman with one of his many trophies that he earned at the SPNFO. Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

a double knight sacrifice! Congratulations to the fearless chess warriors who took part!

**GM Le Quang Liem (2803) – Andra Marinescu (1427) [C05]**  
 Le Quang Liem Simul Bellevue, WA  
 November 25, 2023

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Be7 4.Ngf3 Nf6  
 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bd3 c5 7.c3 b6 8.0-0 Ba6  
 9.Bxa6 Nxa6 10.Re1 cxd4 11.cxd4 Rc8  
 12.a3 b5 13.Nf1 Nb6 14.Ng3 Nc4 15.b3  
 Na5 16.Bd2 b4 17.axb4 Bxb4 18.Nh5  
 0-0 19.Re3 Qb6 20.Rd3 Rc6 21.Ng5  
 Bxd2 22.Rxd2 Nxb3 23.Rb1 Nxd2 24.  
 Rxb6 Rxb6



Position after 24...Rxb6

25.Nxh7 Kxh7 26.Nf6+ gxf6 27.Qh5+ Kg8 28.Qg4+ Kh7 29.Qh5+ Kg8

1/2-1/2

## All-comers Blitz with GM Liem Le, WIM Penny Pham, and IM Long Le:

On Saturday evening from 5:00-7:00 PM, players and spectators had a chance to challenge GM Liem Le, WIM Penny Pham, and IM Long Le (Penny’s husband and Liem’s older brother) to thrilling games of five-minute Blitz Chess! Though there were several strong contenders and speed chess wizards lined up to play the titled trio, our illustrious guests remained undefeated throughout the evening.

One young man managed to draw his game with IM Le by reaching a drawn king and pawn endgame, albeit with the help of one or two friendly “takebacks” earlier in the game. While Penny and Long alternated colors, GM Liem Le, a former World Blitz Champion, preferred to play White in all his games, usually employing the London System or Torre

Attack to deadly effect. Unlike the simul, which is a one-versus-many format, the all-comers blitz battles offered a unique opportunity to play against these titled players one on one and experience just how strong they truly are!

Congratulations to all players and chess families who contributed to this year’s SPFNO. We look forward to continuing to grow this evening in the coming years!

## About SPFNO

The prestigious annual Susan Polgar National Open Championship for Girls and Boys (SPFNO) was created in 2006 and is sponsored by the Susan Polgar Foundation (SPF) to give more opportunities to young chess players.

The event rotates throughout the United States and will be co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and Washington Chess Federation from 2020-2024. For more information, please visit:

<https://www.spfno.com/>



*(L) Andra Marinescu plays the French Defense against GM Liem Le during his 17-board simul. Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

# The Inland Classic

## February 24 – 25, 2024

Presented by the Spokane Chess Club

**Location:** Lakeland Junior High

15601 N. Highway 41, Rathdrum, ID

I-90 to Exit 7 Post Falls, ID. Head north on Highway 41 (10 minutes) to Rathdrum

**Registration:** via telephone or email only; **CLOSES** 10 pm February 22, 2024.

**Rounds:** 10-2:30-7; 9-1:30 or ASAP. **Time control:** G/115, d5. **Entry fee:** \$30 adults, \$25 under 19. Telephone and email entries accepted (can pay at door – cash or check only). All registrants must check in by 9:40 unless a first-round bye was granted.

**\$1750 GUARANTEED prize fund.** Class prizes based on at least 5 per class; classes may be reconfigured if less than five class entries. Only one prize per player (excluding biggest upset). NS, NC, W. One ½-point bye available if requested by end of round 3. Director reserves the right to use class pairings in final round.

### PRIZES

FIRST -- \$400

SECOND -- \$270

THIRD -- \$150

Class Prizes: Top Expert \$100

\$100 first, \$70 second: A; B; C; D & under/unrated.

Biggest Upset prizes: \$100 & \$50 (non-provisional ratings).

**Entries:** Spokane CC, c/o Kevin Korsmo N. 9923 Moore, Spokane, WA 99208-9339.

For information or to enter please call (509) 270-1772 or write [kmkorsmo@comcast.net](mailto:kmkorsmo@comcast.net)

Check website for updates: [www.spokanechessclub.org](http://www.spokanechessclub.org)



# St. Anne Celtic Challenge Fall 2023

Josh Sinanan

The Fall 2023 edition of the St. Anne Celtic Challenge scholastic tournament took place on Sunday, November 19, at St. Anne School in the swanky Queen Anne neighborhood of Seattle. A robust showing of 155 scholastic chess players in grades K-9 participated across five sections parsed by grade level and chess rating: K-1 U800, 2-3 U800, K-3 Open, 4-8 U900, and 4-12 Open.

For forty intrepid youngsters, it was their very first rated chess tournament! The St. Anne Celtic Challenge has become a regular tournament on the “circuit” for many, as it offers a fast-paced schedule on a Sunday afternoon, instead of the traditional day-long affair hosted on a Saturday, which is the norm for most scholastic tournaments in the greater Seattle area. The tournament attracted players from throughout the West Coast, including parts of Redmond, Kirkland, Sammamish, Bellevue, Seattle, Issaquah, Yarrow Point, Everett, Woodinville, Cupertino (CA), Lake Stevens, Monroe, Bellingham, Clyde Hill, Auburn, Bothell, University Place, Marysville, Snohomish, Olympia, Milton, Shoreline, and Mercer Island.

The atmosphere was calm and welcoming, with many displays of good sportsmanship and genuine friendship throughout the afternoon! The chess spoke for itself, with many entertaining encounters created by the wild cast of characters taking part in the proceedings!

The event was hosted by St. Anne School, organized by St. Anne Chess Coordinators Carlee Thorrington & Arlene Kelly, and

directed by WCF President and St. Anne Chess Coach Josh Sinanan with assistance from judges Ani Barua, Gabriel Razmov, Rishi Ramaswamy, and Sebastian Clemente. The tournament was held in memory of Coach Chris Hurley (1965-2020), who founded the St. Anne Chess Club and built up the chess programs at

St. Anne and Seattle Preparatory School, which his kids Jane and George attended.

Many thanks to the amazing chess families and volunteers who contributed to this fantastic event!

Congratulations to the trophy winners:

Individual Trophies					
Place	K-1 U800	2-3 U800	K-3 Open	4-8 U900	4-12 Open
1st	Skylar Qin	Ren Wadhvani	Alisa Rachiba	Vihaan Gupta	Joshua Van Gorkom
2nd	Vincent Gu	Andrew Yang	Vayu Kakkad	Spencer Han	Ziliang Ma
3rd	Eric Yu	Aadya Karanam	Daniel D Yun	Russell Jaeger	Gavin Shi
4th	Felicity Mei	Alice Li	Edgar Li	Oliver King	Isaac Friedenson
5th	Leonard Bach Hoang	Siana Razmov	Bowen Zhang	Owen Nelson	Rian Raja
6th	Elina Khudiyev	Abigail Lew	William Zhao	Riddhima Chauhan	Snehil Ghosh
7th	Kaiyi Han	Emma Li	Aditi Sembium	Benjamin Don	Abhay Lizon
8th	Suryen Charuvil Vinu	Lucas Kim	Skandha Raj	Niko Elmieh	Yang Xu
9th	Edda Wang	William Wang	Natalie Xu	Lakshmanan Nachiappan	Atharv Rao
10th	Kristina Velichko	Shrihan Bayya	Sambuddha Sekhar Das	Aryash Singhal	Mike Tie

Team Trophies			
Place	School	Players	Score
1st	Open Window School	Skylar Qin (689) 4.5, Alice Li (742) 4.0, Vincent Gu (369) 4.0, Abigail Lew (726) 3.5, Arnav Kannapiran (844) 3.0, Theodore Lew (201) 2.0	16
2nd	Somerset Elementary	Eric Yu (538) 4.0, Kaiyi Han (440) 3.5, Atharv Rao (1249) 3.0, Zhibo Zhang (1024) 3.0, Austin Liu (532) 2.5, Aadvik Rao (385) 2.0	13.5
3rd	Bellevue Children's Academy	Felicity Mei (379) 4.0, Aditi Sembium (1063) 3.0, Sai Karthik (963) 2.0, Aarika Singh (345) 2.0	11
4th	St. Anne School	Russell Jaeger (709) 4.0, James Thorrington (742) 3.0, Liam Kelly (486) 2.0, Thomas Doyle (unr.) 2.0, Joseph Santiago (unr.) 2.0, Mason Whittaker (490) 1.0, Sophia Mahapatra (unr.) 1.0, Cyrus Cooney (100) 0.5	11
5th	Ben Rush Elementary	Guru Harshith Reddy Avula (1320) 3.0, Dhvani Deepesh (203) 3.0, Devashreetha Reddy Mallu (unr.) 2.5, Rushank Reddy Mallu (377) 2.0, Devyan Thakur (unr.) 1.0, Rutvi Navya Jeevan (142) 0.0	10.5

# Al Forthan Memorial Scholarship Chess Tournament Fundraiser!

Please join us and enjoy a competitive chess tournament while raising funds for Oregon High School seniors impacted by addiction and poverty. Meet our participating Alumni, clients, affiliates, supporters, and help support our **community in the journey toward recovery.**



**One-day tournament: Saturday, March 23, 2024**  
at Matt Dishman Center, 77 NE Knott St, Portland 97212

### Schedule:

Day of Registration: 9:00 – 9:50am

Rounds: 10:00am – 7:00pm

Prizes and Awards: 7:30pm



### Entry Fee: \$50

\*\*At least half of all proceeds will fund the Al Forthan Scholarship for students impacted by poverty and addiction.\*\*

**Registration:** Pre-register by emailing [dbreckenridge@voaor.org](mailto:dbreckenridge@voaor.org) or register day of from 9am-9:50am. Additional Information emailed after registration. For additional assistance with registration call: **(503) 802-0313**

**Rounds times:** 6 rounds, **(25 min + 5 sec increment)** ~Net 30 minutes per side, from 10:00am – 7:00pm

**3 Sections:** Scholastic (Under 1600/Unrated), Reserve (Under 1800/Unrated), Open (1800+ Rated)

**Food & Recreation:** Matt Dishman Center has recreations, including a pool & hot tub for family and supporting members to enjoy while waiting for rounds. We will also have food and drink available for additional support to the scholarship. \*A voucher will be provided for players bringing their own tournament chess set & clock.

**Prizes:** Adjusted proportionally if there are a different number of players, with increasing gift cards and movie tickets for lower attendee scaling. \*Must have USCF rating to compete for Open section prizes.

*~60 Sponsored. We will email updates for when pre-registration entries meet the projected 120 participants.*

Sections	Prizes for placement	Additional Prizes
<b>Open</b> <b>(1800+ Rated)</b>	<b>1st: \$1000   2nd: \$500   3rd: \$250</b> <b>4th &amp; 5th: \$100 Nike Gift cards   6th-10th: 2 Regal tickets</b>	Raffle opportunity for additional prizes
<b>Reserve</b> <b>(Under 1800/Unrated)</b>	<b>1st: \$500   2nd: \$250   3rd: \$100</b> <b>4th &amp; 5th: \$50 Nike Gift cards   6th-10th: 2 Regal tickets</b>	Raffle opportunity for additional prizes
<b>Scholastic</b> <b>(K-9: Under 1600/Unrated)</b>	<b>1st: \$225   2nd: \$125   3rd: \$50</b> <b>4th &amp; 5th: \$50 Nike Gift cards   6th-10th: 2 Regal tickets – 10th+: \$5 Burgerville Gift card</b>	Raffle, Trophies, Medals, & chocolate chess pieces!



# 11th Annual Reno Larry Evans Memorial Open

May 3-5 or May 4-5, 2024, 3 Day or 2 Day Schedule

US Chess  
150 GPP (Enhanced)

**\$27,500!!** (b/275)

**\$17,000!!** (Guaranteed)

F.I.D.E. Rated  
OPEN Section

## NEW LOCATION: CIRCUS CIRCUS RENO

500 N. Sierra Street, Reno, NV 89503 (Downtown Reno)

6 Rd Swiss ♦ 6 Sections ♦ 40/2, Game/1 - d5 ♦ (Open Section) 40/2, Game/55 - d5 ♦ 2 Day (Rds 1-3) G/1 - d5

**Open Section (2200 & above)** EF: \$194, (2000-2199) \$250, (1999/below) \$300; GMs and IMs free but must enter by 4/5 or pay late fee at door. Guaranteed Prizes; (1-7 in Open Section plus 1/2 of all other prizes).

**Open Section** \$2,000 - 1,000 - 900 - 800 - 700 - 600 - 500, (2399/below) \$1,000 - \$500, (2299/below) \$1,000 - \$500 (If there is a tie for 1st then a playoff for \$100 out of prize fund plus trophy).

**Section Expert** (2000-2199) EF: \$194 (2-day EF: \$190) \$2,000-1,000-500-300-200

**Section "A"** (1800-1999) EF: \$193 (2-day EF: \$190) \$1,800-900-500-300-200

**Section "B"** (1600-1799) EF: \$192 (2-day EF: \$190) \$1,700-800-400-300-200

**Section "C"** (1400-1599) EF: \$191 (2-day EF: \$190) \$1,500-700-400-300-200

**Section "D/Under"** (1399-below) EF: \$180 (2-day EF: \$190) \$1,000-500-300-200, (1199/below) \$400-200-100

**Top Senior (65+)** - \$200; **Club Championship** - \$600 - 300.

**Wed. 5/1: 7:00 pm** - GM Sergey Kudrin Clock Simul w/ complete analysis of YOUR Game (Only \$30!-bring clock)

**Thursday 5/2: 6 - 7:15 pm** - Lecture by IM John Donaldson (FREE)

**7:30 pm** - GM Melikset Khachiyani Simul (\$20); Blitz (G/5 d0) Tourney \$25 - 80% of entries = Prize Fund

**Saturday 5/4: 3 - 4:30 pm** - FREE Game/Position Analysis - IM John Donaldson



**Registration:** Thursday (5/2) 5 - 8 pm. - Friday (5/3) 9 - 10 am. - Saturday (5/4) 9 - 10 am.

**Round Times:** (3-day Schedule) Friday - 12 Noon - 7 pm; Saturday - 10 am - 6 pm; Sunday - 9 am - 4 pm  
(2-day Schedule) Sat.- Rd 1 - 10:30 am, Rd 2 - 12:45 pm, Rd 3 - 3 pm, Rd 4 merge with regular schedule - 6 pm

**For more information:** Call, Write or E-mail Organizer and Chief TD, N.T.D. Jerome (Jerry) Weikel,  
(H) 775-747-1405 OR (Cell) 775-354-8728 • 6578 Valley Wood Dr., Reno, NV 89523 • wackykl@aol.com

**Room Reservation:** Call Circus Circus Reno, 1-800-648-5010, Group Reservation Code: SRLEM4

**Hotel Rates** \$87.00 Sun-Thu / \$166.45 Fri-Sat, single or double occupancy, tax included.

**Reserve by 4/16 • Best way to reserve is Hotel Link:** <https://book.passkey.com/go/SRLEM4>

**For TLA and to confirm receipt of entry see player list at:** [www.renochess.org](http://www.renochess.org)

**ENTRY FORM - 11th Annual Larry Evans Memorial Open - Reno, Nevada - May 3-5 OR May 4-5, 2024**

Mail to: WEIKEL CHESS, 6578 Valley Wood Drive, Reno NV 89523

PRINT Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_ USCF Rating \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
USCF ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ All pre-registered players check in at TD desk on arrival.

**ENTRY FEE ENCLOSED: (CIRCLE SECTION AND FEE BELOW) BYE(S) REQUESTED FOR ROUND(S): (circle) 1 2 3 4 5 6**

----- OPEN SECTION -----

EXPERT "A" "B" "C" "D/Under" UNRATED

GM/IM • Masters • 2000-2199 • 1999-Below

2000-2199 1800-1999 1600-1799 1400-1599 1399-Below Free With

<b>3-Day EF</b>	Free	• \$194	• \$250	• \$300	\$194	\$193	\$192	\$191	\$180	USCF Dues
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<b>2-Day EF</b>	\$190	\$190	\$190	\$190	\$190	USCF Dues
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**FEES ALSO ENCLOSED FOR:**

- \$30 Wed. Clock Simul GM Kudrin
- \$20 Thu. Simul GM Khachiyani
- \$25 Thursday Blitz (G/5 d0)
- \$20 Discount - Sr 65+ Age \_\_\_\_\_

**POSTMARK BY April 5, 2024.**

Add \$11 after 4/5. Add \$22 on site.  
Do not mail after 4/26 or email after 4/30. Make check / m.o. payable to WEIKEL CHESS or provide credit card info and signature. \$5 service charge on credit card entries.  Visa  Master Card  Am.Ex  
Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card# \_\_\_\_\_ CVV Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

- Check Enclosed
- Charge My Card

**TOTAL FEES:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# The Unique Connection Between Music And Chess

(A Conversation With FM Slava Mikhailuk)

Ken Lee

I have met dozens of young people in the Pacific Northwest who participate in both these amazing lifelong hobbies.

I recently sat down with FM Slava Mikhailuk (pronounced Me-high-luke) to discuss his unique perspectives on the subjects of music and chess.

**Ken:** Slava you teach both chess and piano to kids. How do you think these two hobbies are related?

**Slava:** That is an interesting question. I never planned to mix piano and chess but those are my personal interests. It kind of happened by accident. My mother taught piano to me as a small child. I did not start playing chess until I was 11 or 12 in Russia.

From my perspective I can tell you that both piano and chess are excellent for development.

Children have to get familiar with pattern recognition, and it takes a long time and a great deal of daily practice to get better.

In my opinion, there is a direct relationship between chess and math. They both require lots of calculation and similar mental exercise.

On the other hand, I believe that chess and music are more complementary disciplines. To be specific, I think it is almost impossible for a chess player to play well when they are upset.

That said, I find that piano students often play their best music when

they are upset. A musician uses their instrument to express something that is more of a feeling rather than a rational thought.

**Ken:** Can you compare the development process of piano players and chess players?

**Slava:** For beginning piano players, they first start out with the fundamentals such as notes, white and black keys, and proper hand position.

For beginning chess players, they start with piece identification. Interestingly, there are white and black pieces in chess just like there are white and black keys in piano.

A beginning chess player also learns about individual piece movement and fundamental rules. A typical US Chess ELO rating for beginners is between 100 and 900.

While it varies for every learner, I like starting students in music and chess at about five and half years of age. At that age, they just want to have fun and are enthusiastic about everything.

In my case, however, I didn't start playing chess until I was 11 or 12. I was very fortunate. I received excellent coaching in Russia, so most of my progress in chess occurred between the 11 and 21 years of age. This was years before I moved to the United States in 1996.

For intermediate piano players, they can progress to this level as early as the fourth grade but sometimes it happens in Middle School. Age is not important. It is more important for piano players to enjoy the process of practice and playing.



*Slava Mikhailuk (L) playing chess with his son Michael.  
Photo courtesy of Slava Mikhailuk.*

To me, intermediate chess players (US Chess rating ELO is about 901 to 1300) should concentrate on their middle game, where most games are won or lost. Also, we work on endgames and game analysis.

At the intermediate chess level, I also encourage my students to play aggressively. That does not mean that they have to take pieces all the time. It means that they need to be constantly aware of opportunities to counterattack.

My advanced piano students are at the level of my son, Michael, who is 18. Michael has the technical foundation and skills to learn just about any piece.

My advanced chess students have a US Chess ELO rating above 1300. At this level, my students must study openings. My advanced students understand that they have to continue to study and work hard to compete.

So, in both chess and music, it is a lifelong journey. I also tell my chess and music students that they have to practice every single day.

**Ken:** What do you think is the difference between music and chess?

**Slava:** Chess is a competitive sport. There is always a winner and a loser.

In piano, there are recitals but, for me, recitals are not about competition but about sharing with others. There certainly are high level piano competitions, but my students do not participate.

I think music competitions are so subjective. If the students are not playing the exact same piece, then the competition boils down to the opinion of an individual judge on the day of the competition.

Music is a mode of expression and students should be encouraged to express, not compete.

**Ken:** As a teacher in both chess and piano, what gives you the most satisfaction in working with students?

**Slava:** In piano, I often hear from parents that my students continue to play and practice piano at university. Even if they are not music majors, they still enjoy the process of playing and learning.

In chess, it makes me happy that I can introduce such a wonderful game to students that has such a long-lasting influence on their life.

When I was growing up in Russia, we did not have the benefit of playing chess with computers. We played long classical games and then took quite a bit of time to study between tournaments. We also used to practice playing chess without the board at all, often calling out moves while playing entire games in our head. It was excellent training.

With the advancement in chess engines, students today can play all the time with endless amounts of practice. Even so, my advice to chess students is to try and work on specific problems over a period of time.

For example, a chess student can study multiple ways to defend against the Sicilian over and over until they feel that they have multiple ways of addressing that situation.

Here is my final thought about chess.

My Russian chess coach told me years ago “You can never unlearn chess.” He was telling me that the fundamental principles of decision making, seeing options and opportunities, and always striving to get better through self-analysis is a very good thing.

Slava Mikhailuk is a five-time Washington State Chess Champion. You can connect with him about chess and piano on his website

<https://ellenartschool.com>.



*Slava Mikhailuk (R).  
Photo courtesy of Slava Mikhailuk.*

# WASHINGTON PRESIDENT'S CUP



SAT-SUN, FEBRUARY 24-25<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

LAKESIDE UPPER SCHOOL

14050 1<sup>ST</sup> AVE NE, SEATTLE, WA 98125

*Highest finishing Washington resident in the Open section seeded into the 2025 Washington State Championship – Invitational section.*

**Format:** A 5-round Swiss in two sections:

**Washington (1600+):** NWSRS, US Chess & FIDE Tri-Rated.

**Lincoln U1600:** NWSRS & US Chess Dual-Rated.

**Schedule:** Saturday 9:30 AM, 12:30 PM, 5:30 PM; Sunday 10 AM, 3:30 PM. Closing Ceremony: Sunday ~ 7pm or asap. Players whose games run long may request a late start for the next round.

**Time Control:** Rd. 1: G/60; +15. Rds. 2-5: 40/100, SD/30, +15. Late default: 60 min.

**Prize Fund:** \$3,500 (based on 100 paid entries)

**Washington:** 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>: \$450-375-300-225-150-125.  
1<sup>st</sup> U2000/U1800: \$100

**Lincoln:** 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>: \$325-250-175-125.  
1<sup>st</sup> U1400/U1200/U1000: \$100; 1<sup>st</sup> Unrated: \$70

**Special Prizes** (per section): **Biggest Upset Win:** \$10/round, **Best Female Player** (by TPR): \$25, **Best Dressed:** \$20/day, **Best Senior Player** (65+, by TPR): \$25, **Biggest USCF Rating Gain:** \$25, **Best Annotated game:** \$25. Minimum of 3 qualifying players per section for best female/senior player to be awarded.

**Entry Fee:** \$70 by 2/17, \$80 after. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs & WIMs. Players rated 1400+ (in both NWSRS + USCF) may pay an extra \$40 play-up fee to play in Washington section. Maximum of 150 players – please register early to guarantee your spot.

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

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

**Rating:** US Chess and NWSRS Rated. Open section is also FIDE Rated. Higher of February US Chess Regular or current NWSRS rating used to determine section, pairings, and prizes. If ratings differ by >200 pts., the avg. of current NWSRS and Feb. US Chess regular rating will be used.

**Registration:** Online at [nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration](http://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration)  
Registration and payment **deadline: Fri. 2/23 @ 5pm.**  
Payment via Zelle/PayPal (ID: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com) or Venmo (ID: @WACHess) available.

*In case of a tie for 1<sup>st</sup> place, a future follow-up playoff match will determine the seed for the Invitational section of the 2025 Washington State Championship.*

**Info/Entries:** Make checks payable to Washington Chess Federation.

**Mail To:** Washington Chess Federation  
c/o Orlov Chess Academy, 4174 148<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE,  
Building I, Ste. M, Redmond, WA 98052

**Contact:** Josh Sinanan, WCF President

**Phone:** 206-769-3757

**Email:** WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

# Blast From The Past!

By Viktors Pupols

Kingston, WA—December 27, 2023

As I write this, there are late-year tournaments running, some arranged so that hometown favorites can gain a couple of rating points and qualify for the CANDIDATES.

This reminded me of a 2002 tournament which was a qualifier for the U.S. Championships.

My last round opponent was Ms. Anna Levina; I am enclosing the game. As a result of it, I finished with 4.0/6 and did not qualify.

Georgi Orlov finished with 4.5/6; he did not qualify either.

Ms. Levina scored 3.0/6; she did qualify.

—Happy New Year, Unkel Vik

Viktors Pupols (2248) –  
Anna Levina (2080) [D46]

2002 National Open  
Las Vegas, NV (R6), March 10, 2002  
[Viktors Pupols]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6 4.e3 Nd7 5.Nf3  
Ngf6 6.Qc2 Bd6 7.h3 0-0 8.Be2 dxc4  
9.Bxc4 e5

This generally equalizes in the Meran.

10.0-0 exd4

GM Walter Browne (and others) did not mind an isolated d-pawn.

11.exd4 Nb6 12.Bb3 h6

A natural move, but it should be preceded by ...Nbd5. Now I'm following Browne.

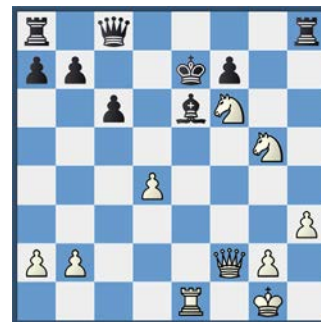
13.Bxh6 gxh6 14.Qg6+ Kh8 15.Qxh6+  
Kg8

Better is 15...Nh7. The most natural attack is 16.Ne4 Be7 17.Nf6 Bf5! preventing Bc2; and the bishop should stay on the b1–h7 diagonal even if ...Bd3 and ...Bxf1 won material.

16.Bc2 Be6 17.Ng5 Re8 18.Bh7+ Nxh7  
19.Qxh7+ Kf8 20.Nce4 Nd5 21.f4 Bxf4  
22.Rxf4 Nxf4 23.Qh8+ Ke7 24.Qf6+  
Kd7?

24...Kf8 is stronger; White can perpetual check immediately or continue with space advantage.

25.Qxf4 Ke7 26.Nf6 Qb8 27.Qf2 Rh8  
28.Re1 Qc8



Position after 28...Qc8

29.d5?

Not bad, but 29.Nd5+ is more immediate.

29...cxd5 30.Nxd5+ Kd7 31.Rd1 Ke8  
32.Qf6 Qc5+ 33.Kh1 Rh5 34.Nxe6 fxe6  
35.Qxe6+ Kf8 36.Qf6+ Ke8 37.Qg6+  
Kd8 38.Qxh5

1–0

## Presidential Blitz Championship



Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Lakeside Upper School

14050 1st Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98125

**Contact:** Josh Sinanan,  
WCF President, 206-769-3757  
WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

**Registration:** Online at  
[nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration](http://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration).  
Online registration and  
payment **deadline @ 5 PM on**  
**Saturday, February 24**, or else  
register at site.

**Eligibility:** Open to all junior +  
adult players.

**Format:** A 9-Round single Swiss in one  
section.

**Time Control:** G/3; +3 sec. increment.

**Schedule:** At-site registration: Sun.  
6:45-7:30 PM.  
Rds.: 7:45 PM, 8, 8:15, 8:30, 8:45, 9, 9:15,  
9:30, 9:45 PM. Awards ~ 10 PM.

**Prize Fund:** \$600 (based on 50 paid  
entries).

1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>: \$130-100-70. 1<sup>st</sup> Unrated: \$50.  
1<sup>st</sup> U2000/U1800/U1600/U1400/U1200:  
\$50

**Entry Fee:** \$20 if postmarked or online by  
2/18, \$25 by 2/24, \$30 at-site. Free entry  
for GMs, IMs, WGMs, WIMs.

**Byes:** Three half-point byes available; if  
interested, request before end of round 2.

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

**Rating:** US Chess Blitz Rated. Higher of  
February US Chess or current NWSRS  
rating will be used to determine pairings  
and prizes.

# Harmon Memorial Chess Tournament



MARCH 2-3, 2024

LAKESIDE UPPER SCHOOL

14050 1<sup>ST</sup> AVE NE, SEATTLE, WA 98125

*Highest performing WA players (by TPR) in the Open and Reserve sections seeded into the 2025 Washington State Premier + Challengers sections, respectively.*

**Format:** A 5-round Swiss in two sections:

**Open:** NWSRS, US Chess & FIDE Tri-Rated (except for rd. 1, which is not FIDE rated)

**Reserve U1700:** NWSRS & US Chess Dual-Rated.

In case of a tie for 1<sup>st</sup> place, follow-up playoff games will determine the seed for the Premier or Challengers section of the 2025 Washington State Championship.

**Schedule:** Saturday 9 AM, 12:30 PM, 6 PM; Sunday 10 AM, 3:30 PM. Closing Ceremony: Sunday ~ 8 PM or asap. Players whose games run long may request a late start for the next round.

**Time Control:** Rd. 1: G/60; +15.

Rds. 2-5: 30/90, SD/30; +30. Late default: 60 min.

**Prize Fund:** \$3,600 (based on 90 paid entries)

**Open:** 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>: \$450-375-300-225-150-125.

1<sup>st</sup> U2100/U1900: \$100

**Reserve:** 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>: \$325-250-175-125.

1<sup>st</sup> U1500/U1300/U1100: \$100; 1<sup>st</sup> Unrated: \$70

**Special Prizes** (per section): **Biggest Upset Win:** \$10/round, **Best Female Player** (by TPR): \$50, **Best Dressed:** \$20/day, **Best Senior Players** (50+ & 65+, by TPR): \$50, **Biggest USCF Rating Gain:** \$25, **Best Annotated game:** \$25. Minimum of 3 qualifying players required per section in contention for each best female/senior prize to be awarded.

**Entry Fee:** \$80 by 2/24, \$95 after. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs & WIMs. Players rated 1500+ (in both NWSRS + USCF) may pay an extra \$40 play-up fee to play in Open section. Maximum of 100 players – please register early to reserve your spot.

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

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

**Rating:** US Chess and NWSRS Rated. Open section is also FIDE Rated (except for rd. 1). Highest of March FIDE, March US Chess Regular, or current NWSRS rating used to determine section, pairings, and prizes. If ratings differ by >200 pts., the avg. of current NWSRS and March. US Chess regular rating will be used.

**Registration:** Online at [nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration](http://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration)  
Pay by Credit/Debit/PayPal/SettleKing.

**Registration and payment deadline: Fri. 3/1 @ 5pm.** No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline. Payment also available via Zelle (ID: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com) or Venmo (ID: @WAChess).

## Questions?

Josh Sinanan, WCF President,  
206-769-3757,  
[WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com](mailto:WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com)

# Sridhar At North American Open

## Sridhar Seshadri

**S**ridhar Seshadri came back from a great vacation in Switzerland at the Top Of Europe.

He came on back from Switzerland on December 25, and on December 26, with lot of jet lag, went the very next day to play in the US North American Open in Las Vegas.

He started his first round with the white pieces and started with 1.d4 and confused the CM Nikhil Pavarthaneni with the second move e3, followed by Be2, and developing the same bishop to f3, followed by h4.

This is an aggressive attack Sridhar planned to demolish his opponent's kingside early, which ended in both sides castling on queenside. After queens got exchanged, Sridhar took over control of the e-file.

The move 7...e5 was too early. This gave White the opportunity to push the h-pawn further with a deadly Nc4 that attacked the black bishop on d6. Black

cannot take the knight because bishop on b7 is hanging.

Sridhar set a small trap with the temporary sacrifice of the a2-pawn, only to remove opponent's bishop from the active play where Sridhar had an idea to bring the rook to a file attacking his bishop when it comes back to b1 to eye the f5 pawn.

Here the opponent offered a draw, and since Sridhar was tired from his Switzerland trip, he was not sure if there was really a win for him as he thought the opponent will only play his bishop since opponent king and rook has no play.

Sridhar felt that this was a game that needs to be analyzed by readers.

**Sridhar Seshadri (1458) –  
Nikhil Pavarthaneni (2012) [A45]**  
North American Open 2023  
Las Vegas (R1), December 26, 2023  
*[Ralph Dubisch]*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.e3 e6 3.Be2 b6 4.Bf3!?**

This is a bit time consuming, and it takes away the natural square for the knight, but it has the benefit of leading to unusual, one might even say unique, positions.

**4...d5 5.Nd2?!**

A little too quirky. White has already used up the grace tempo supplied by having the first move, so should now avoid weird passive moves that interfere with other development. 5.c4 uses the pressure of the pin created by the bishop on f3.

**5...Bb7**

5...c5

**6.c3 Nbd7**

6...c5

**7.h4?! e5! 8.h5**

The ubiquitous plan inspired by AlphaZero: when in doubt, push the h-pawn. It doesn't make a great deal of sense here, however.

**8...exd4?**

Releasing the central tension, and at the same time opening a line for the c1-bishop to escape from the cage White built for it. Almost any normal developing move is better, such as 8...Rc8 or 8...Be7. Even a waiting move like 8...h6 doesn't give anything away.

Stockfish suggests active play with 8...c5 or 8...e4 as well.

**9.exd4 h6 10.Qc2?!**

It isn't yet clear where the queen wants to develop, so in general it's more appropriate to develop something else first. 10.Ne2 seems natural, or White could begin the trek of the other knight to the kingside with 10.Nf1. Even 10.Nh3 and 10.Nc4 are candidates that should be considered before the game move, since normal play by Black, such as ...Rc8 and ...c5, could cause a queen on c2 considerable discomfort.

**10...Bd6?! 11.Nc4!**

Demonstrating the drawback of Black's



bishop development.

11...Ne4

11...Be7

12.Nxd6+ Nxd6 13.Bf4 Qf6 14.Bxd6

Not terrible, but I would prefer to keep the bishop-pair unless there is a compelling reason to part with it. 14.Nh3±

14...Qxd6 15.0-0-0 0-0-0

15...0-0∞

16.Ne2 Nf6 17.Ng3 Qf4+

17...Ne4!?



Position after 17...Qf4+

18.Qd2!

Good judgment. The ending favors White, who has more space and the better bishop.

18...Qxd2+ 19.Kxd2± g6 20.hxg6

20.Rde1

20...fxg6 21.Rhe1

21.Rde1

21...Kd7

21...h5!?! 22.Re5 h4 23.Ne2∞

22.Re5 Rde8 23.Rde1 g5?! 24.Nh5 Nxb5

24...Ne4+!?

25.Bxb5 Rxe5 26.Rxe5 Rf8 27.Ke3 Kd6

28.g3 Bc8 29.f4 gxf4+ 30.gxf4 Bf5 31.b4

31.Kf3 c5 (31...Be4+ 32.Kg3 Rg8+ 33.Bg4± intending Kg3-h4 and f4-f5.) 32.Bg4±

31...c6 32.Bf3 b5

32...Be6±

33.Kf2 Bb1?! 34.Kg3 Bxa2?

The opening of the a-file for White's rook is far more dangerous than Black's "extra" a-pawn.

35.f5± Rf6 36.Kf4 Kd7 37.Bg4 Bb1?

An unfortunately timed idea for Black, allowing the rook to vacate e5 with tempo. 37...Kd6

38.Re1! Be4 39.Ra1

White does have a significant advantage here at the end, but even stronger would have been 39.Ke5! Rf8 (39...Ke7 40.Ra1 Rf7 41.f6+) 40.f6+ Kd8 41.Be6+-, intending Rg1-g7 if the king stays on the back rank, and possibly f7 and Rg8 if it tries to run far away.

½-½

Steven Loring (1920) –  
Sridhar Seshadri (1458) [D00]  
North American Open 2023  
Las Vegas (R6), December 28, 2023  
[Ralph Dubisch]

This game features a nice concluding sacrifice by Black.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 d5 3.Bxf6 exf6 4.e3 Bf5

After 4...Bd6, practice suggests Black should be very pleased to have the bishop-pair and no weaknesses.

5.Bd3 Bg6 6.Ne2 Bd6 7.Bxg6?! 7.h4!?

7.h4!?

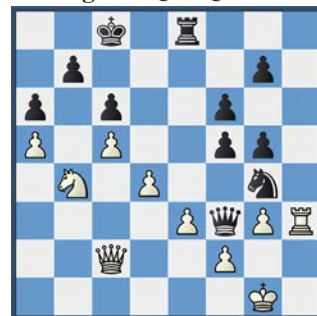
7...hxg6 8.Qd3 Na6!?

8...c6 9.Nd2 Nd7

9.Nd2 c6 10.c3 f5 11.g3 Qe7 12.b4 Nc7 13.a4 a6 14.Nb3 Ne6 15.Nc5

White should probably at least challenge the coming occupation of f3. One line (completely not forced) would be 15.Kf1 Ng5 16.Kg2 Qe4+ 17.Qxe4+ fxe4 18.h4 Nf3 19.Ng1, when Black would have to exchange on g1 with rough equality.

15...Ng5 16.a5 Nf3+ 17.Kf1 Rxb2 18.Rxb2 Nxb2+ 19.Kg2 Ng4 20.Rh1 Nh6 21.Nf4 0-0-0 22.Qc2 Re8 23.c4?! Bxc5 24.bxc5 dxc4 25.Qxc4 Qe4+ 26.Kg1 Qb1+ 27.Kg2 Qe4+ 28.Kg1 g5 29.Nd3 f6 30.Nb4 Ng4 31.Qc2 Qf3 32.Rh3



Position after 32.Rh3

32...Nxe3!!

The other sacrifice on e3 is similarly extremely strong: 32...Rxe3!! 33.fxe3 Nxe3 34.Qf2 (34.Qd2 Qf1+ 35.Kh2 Ng4#) 34...Qd1+ 35.Kh2 Ng4+ 36.Kg2 Nxf2 37.Kxf2 Qd2+ 38.Kg1 Qxb4+-

33.fxe3 Rxe3 34.—

The threats of ...Re1 and ...Re2 win the queen: 34.Qf2 Qd1+ 35.Kg2 Re2, and the loose knight on b4 will also fall in short order.

0-1

Supporting and promoting chess related activities throughout Washington State since 1946.



Josh Sinanan  
President  
joshsinanan@gmail.com

(206) 769-3757  
4174 148th Ave NE, Building I, Suite M, Redmond, WA 98052



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# WA State Barber/Rockefeller

## OPEN CHESS TOURNAMENT

Saturday, March 16, 2024

Chinook Middle School

2001 98th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA 98004



### CLASSICAL SECTIONS

**K-5 Rockefeller Open** (Qualifier for Rockefeller Closed Event)

**6-8 Barber Open** (Qualifier for Barber Closed Event)

A 4-round Swiss. Longer time control for Intermediate to Advanced players. Dual NWSRS and US Chess Rated; US Chess membership required. Time Control: G/60; +10, except for rd. 1 (G/25; +5). Rounds: 9am, 10:30am, 1:30pm, 4:15pm. Awards ~ 6:45pm.

### RAPID SECTIONS

**K-1 U700, 2-3 U800, K-3 Open, 4-12 U1000, 4-12 Open**

A 5-round G/25; +5 Swiss. Shorter time control for players of all levels. Rounds: 9am, 10:30am, 11:45am, Lunch Time, 1:15pm, 2:30pm. Awards ~ 4pm.

### ALL SECTIONS

NWSRS Rated. Open sections are also US Chess Rated, which requires clocks, notation, and US Chess membership. **All equipment is provided.** The U700, U800, and U1000 sections don't require clocks or notation, but a clock set for 10 mins +5 sec increment will be placed in unfinished games after 35 minutes of play.

### ENTRY FEE

\$45 by March 9<sup>th</sup>, \$55 after.  
Room for 250 players.

### AWARDS

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

1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>: \$90-80-70-60-50.

**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> – 5<sup>th</sup>: \$30-25-20-15-10.

**Special Prizes (per section):** Medals for first timers, best female player, and biggest upset win.

### FOLLOW-UP INVITATIONAL EVENT

**Top 12** finishing WA State residents in the K-5 Rockefeller Open and 6-8 Barber Open section (by tiebreaks) will qualify for the Rockefeller and Barber Closed Events on March 31 in Redmond. The winners of the 12-player closed (4-Round Swiss) events will earn a \$750 travel stipend (donated by the WCF) and will be the WA State representatives at the National Rockefeller (K-5) and Barber (6-8) Tournament of Champions, respectively, held concurrently with the US Open in early August.

### THE DETAILS

#### Online Registration:

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

100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. **Entry + payment deadline Fri., March 15th @ 5pm.** No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline. Unpaid players will be removed from the roster and waitlisted players will be offered a spot.

### ELIGIBILITY

Open to all students in grades K-12 as of the 2023-24 school year. Out-of-state players welcome!

### RATING

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

## WA State Elementary Qualifier!

#### Questions?

Contact Josh Sinanan, WCF President at 206.769.3757 or [WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com](mailto:WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com)

Issaquah Highlands Chess Club & Washington Chess Federation Present...



# Eastside Open

Sat. March 30, 2024



Blakely Hall – 2550 NE Park Dr. Issaquah, WA 98029

**Format:** A 5-round Swiss tournament in three sections: **Open**, **Reserve** U1600, and **Rising** (unrated).

**Entry fee:** \$45 by 3/23, \$55 after. \$25 play-up fee if rated under 1600 and playing in Open section. Free entry for players rated 2000+. Maximum of 100 players, please register early to reserve your spot!

**Schedule:** Registration & Check-in: 9-9:45am. Rounds (5): 10am, 11:30am, 1:30pm, 3:00pm, 4:30pm. Closing Ceremony + Blitz Tournament: ~ 6:00pm or asap.

**Time Control:** G/30; +5 sec. increment per move starting from move 1.

**Rating:** Open and Reserve U1600 section are Dual NWSRS + US Chess Rated. Higher of March US Chess or current NWSRS rating will be used to determine section, pairings, and prizes. Rising section is unrated, with no memberships required.

**Memberships:** US Chess and WCF/OCF/ICA memberships required for Open and Reserve sections, other states accepted. No memberships required for Rising section.

**Prize Fund:** \$2,500 based on 100 paid entries.

Open: 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>: \$250-200-150. 1<sup>st</sup> U2000/U1800: \$100

Reserve U1600: 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>: \$225-180-150, 1<sup>st</sup> U1400/U1200/U1000: \$100

Rising (unrated): 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>: \$200-150-125-100.

Special Prizes (per section):

Biggest Upset Win: \$35, Best Female Player (by TPR): \$35, Best Dressed: \$20.

**Byes:** Up to 2 half-point byes available if requested before the end of round 2.

**Registration:** Online at [nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration](http://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration). Pay by Credit/Debit/PayPal/SettleKing.

**Registration + payment deadline: Fri, Mar 29 @ 5pm.** Unpaid players will be removed from the roster after the deadline, and players from the Waitlist will be offered a spot. At-site registration: 9-9:45am.

On-site payment available by cash, check made out to "WCF", Zelle (ID: [washingtonchessfederation@gmail.com](mailto:washingtonchessfederation@gmail.com)), or Venmo (ID: @WACHess).

**Blitz Tournament:** Time: 7-9pm (after rd. 5 of main tournament). Entry Fee: \$20. Format: A 7-Round Single Swiss in one section, 2 half-point byes available. US Chess Blitz rated. TC: G/4; +3. On-site registration: 6:00-6:45pm. Rds. @ 7pm, 7:15, 7:30, 7:45, 8, 8:15, 8:30. Closing Ceremony ~ 8:45pm or asap. Current US Chess membership required. Higher of March 2024 US Chess Blitz or Regular rating used to determine pairings and prizes. Prize Fund: **\$500** (based on 50 pd. entries)

1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>: \$120-80-50, 1st U1900/U1700/U1500/U1300/U1100/Unrated: \$30. Biggest upset win: \$10/rd.



**Questions** – Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206-769-3757, [washingtonchessfederation@gmail.com](mailto:washingtonchessfederation@gmail.com)

# Happy New Year 2023

By Jeffrey Roland

The “Happy New Year 2023” tournament was played in Melba, Idaho December 30, 2023 at the Melba Valley Senior Center, 115 Baseline Road, and it was a fundraising event for the Idaho Chess Association. And let me say that Kira Schoenwald did a great job as TD!

Most of the information about this event can be found in the crosstable shown below, but there were a couple things of note that I could mention that aren’t shown in the crosstable.

For the first three rounds, players were playing under the condition that they had to record all their moves, even if they were under five minutes. It turns out that in order for that to be proper, the time control would have had to have a 30-second increment, instead of the ten-second increment that we were using. (4SS, G/30; +10).

So the game between former Idaho State Champion Michael Henderson and Andrew Beck from round three was originally scored as a win for Henderson because Andrew Beck was not able to physically record the game in severe time trouble and still win (he lost). But upon a review in the rulebook, prompted by a question, the TD modified her original condition for round four to be that when either player goes under five minutes, recording in the game can stop.

The game was ultimately scored as a draw, but what I want to note here is that Michael Henderson offered to have the score *actually reversed* and scored as a win for Andrew Beck (I witnessed him asking the TD to do this) because Michael knew he was losing for much of the game and should have lost! That is the kind of sportsmanship Michael Henderson is famous for, and I have known Michael for over 42 years—he’s always been a good sport.

But a draw is what the TD made it, and that is probably the right call, after all Michael did actually win initially; one cannot say for sure what the result would have been if only... because there’s so many variables to consider.

But I note that Michael was sincerely *willing* to go further. Good sportsmanship doesn’t score points on a scoreboard, but it does do other things worth more than points, such as encouraging others and doing the right thing. Anyway it’s nice to see good sportsmanship.

Second, and I’m not bragging but it’s a matter of fact, US Chess sent me an email on January 5 (in the even newer year of 2024) after rating this event stating:

Congratulations! Your recent tournament performances have earned you one or more new milestones or norms towards your next norms-based title: **100 Quick/Dual Rated Wins**

Well, that is pretty cool, I didn’t even know they were counting! It’s nothing at all like all the NM titles (and one GM) from Washington state we’ve been reading about so much lately!! But hey, there’s something at *all* levels for *all* players to play for in chess—it’s not only for the elite few—chess is for everyone!

**Zackary Semancik (1399) – Jeffrey T Roland (1700) [D78]**

Happy New Year 2023  
Melba, ID (R3), December 30, 2023  
[Ralph Dubisch]

**1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 5.0-0 c6 6.d4 d5 7.Qc2 Nbd7**

7...Bf5

**8.Nc3**

8.cxd5 cxd5 9.Bf4± makes sense here, as the black knight doesn’t immediately occupy c6. White gets c-file play.

**8...dxc4 9.a4 Re8 10.Bf4**

10.a5!?! e5 11.dxe5 Nxe5 12.Nxe5 Rxe5 13.a6∞

**10...Nd5 11.e4?! Nxf4 12.gxf4 Nf6**

12...a5∞

**13.Rad1 Bg4 14.Rfe1 Qc7 15.Ne2 b5 16.axb5 cxb5 17.d5 Rac8**

17...Rad8 puts pressure on d5 to delay White’s central advances.

**18.Nfd4?!**

18.h3 Bxf3 19.Bxf3 Nd7∞; 18.e5 Nd7 19.Nfd4 looks very hard to handle. Stockfish claims Black is better, but the line involves potentially giving away both b5 and c4 pawns and does not look like something a mere human would consider.

**18...a6**

Natural, solidifying the queenside pawn chain, but allowing White strong central play. Stockfish here wants 18...Nh5 instead, giving 19.e5 Nxf4! 20.Nxf4 Bxd1 21.Rxd1 Bxe5∞ eventually ending up with a rook and about a million pawns for the two minors.

**19.e5! Nh5 20.Ra1**

20.Qe4∞

**20...Qb6 21.h3**

21.Qe4 Bh6

**21...Bxe2 22.Nxe2 Bh6**

22...f6

**23.f5!?! Nf4**

23...a5∞

**24.Nxf4 Bxf4 25.Qe4**

25.Re4!?

**25...Bd2 26.Red1 c3 27.bxc3 Rc4 28.Qxc4!?**

An audacious attempt that meets with success. 28.Qe2 Bxc3.

**28...bxc4 29.Rxd2 gxf5**

Happy New Year: 2023 HNY													
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total	Solkoff	Cumul.	Op. Cumul.	Median	
1	1-2	Zackary Thomas Semancik	1399	W15	W3	D2	W6	3.5	10.5	9	23	9	
2		Jeffrey T Roland	1700	W4	W12	D1	W5	3.5	10	9	27	9	
3	3-4	Emory Andrew Christensen	Unr.	W11	L1	W8	W7	3	8.5	7	22	7.5	
4		Mark P Light	844	L2	W14	W10	W11	3	6	6	13.5	6	
5	5-6	Andrew Beck	1354	W13	W8	D7	L2	2.5	8.5	8	22.5	7.5	
6		Thomas Morris Hines	927	D7	W11	W12	L1	2.5	7.5	7	21	6.5	
7	7-9	Michael Henderson	1800	Unr.	D6	W9	D5	L3	2	10	6	25.5	5
8		Noah Tanner	Unr.	W10	L5	L3	W13	2	8	5	20	4	
9		Ryan Michael Nisson	Unr.	H--	L7	D13	W12	2	4	3.5	12.5	2	
10	10	Anthony Kenji Nakashima	949	L8	D13	L4	W14	1.5	6	2.5	13.5	3	
11	11-13	Trevor Thomsen	1103	L3	L6	W14	L4	1	8.5	2	20	5.5	
12		Alexandra Henninger	1046	W14	L2	L6	L9	1	8	4	19.5	4.5	
13		Marcella Whitecloud	Unr.	L5	D10	D9	L8	1	8	2.5	19	5.5	
14	14-15	Silas Robert Kukla	Unr.	L12	L4	L11	L10	0	6.5	0	14.5	3.5	
15		Kyra May Schoenwald	820	L12	L12	U--	U--	0	3.5	0	9	0	

29...Qb3!??

30.d6 exd6 31.exd6 Rd8 32.Rad1 Qb3  
33.d7 Qxc3 34.Re2 Rxd7?

34...Qb3 35.Re8+ Kg7 36.Rd5 Qb1+  
37.Bf1 (37.Kh2?? Qb8+! 38.Rde5 c3-+)  
37...Qb7! 38.Rxd8 Qxd5 39.Bxc4!∞ This  
should favor Black, but there is good  
fortress potential.

35.Rxd7 Qc1+ 36.Kh2 Qf4+ 37.Kg1  
c3??

Take the repetition: 37...Qc1+ 38.Bf1  
Qg5+ 39.Kh2 Qf4+ 40.Kh1 Qc1

38.Re8+??

38.Rd1 a5 39.Rc2 Qb4 40.Bf1 f4  
41.Rd3+; 38.Bd5 Qc1+ 39.Kg2 Qg5+  
40.Kf1 Qc1+ 41.Re1+-

38...Kg7 39.Rc8 Qc1+ 40.Kh2



Position after 40.Kh2

40...c2?

40...Qf4+ 41.Kg1 Qc1+ 42.Bf1 Qg5+  
43.Kh1 Qc1: It's useful to calculate what  
happens if the white king tries to run  
toward the center, Kg2-f3-e3.

41.Rdc7?

41.Rd3 f4 (41...Qf4+ 42.Rg3+) 42.Rdc3  
Qd1 43.f3 Qe1 44.Rxc2±

41...Qf4+ 42.Kg1 Qc1+ 43.Kh2

1/2-1/2

# NM Ryan Min

**C**ongratulations to Ryan Min of Bellevue, Washington, who recently became Washington State's newest National Master! Ryan achieved a US Chess rating of 2206 as a result of winning three games in a row at the recent North American Open, held in Las Vegas, Nevada December 26-30, 2023. Along the way, Ryan scored clutch wins against NM Nathan Yan (2277) and GM Dmitry Gurevich (2475), with the victory against the Grandmaster officially sealing the title. Jolly good show, Ryan!

Here is the game which made Ryan Min a National Master.

**Ryan Min (2178) –  
Dmitry Gurevich (2475) [D41]**  
North American Open  
Las Vegas (R4), December 27, 2023  
*[Ralph Dubisch]*

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5

3...Bb4 is the popular Nimzo-Indian  
Defense.

4.cxd5 Nxd5

Similar to the Gruenfeld Defense,  
but with...e6 instead of the center-  
pressuring...g6 and...Bg7. 4...exd5  
reaches standard Exchange Queen's  
Gambit Declined positions, where White  
still can opt for aggressive Botvinnik/  
Kasparov lines starting 5.Bg5 and keeping  
the option of developing the g1-knight to  
e2, instead of the natural f3.

5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 c5 7.Nf3

This is the normal way to play, and as  
we see in the game, Black is likely to  
exchange pawns, develop the f8-bishop  
with check, and exchange that on d2. All  
of that is in accord with the principle of  
exchanging when cramped (though it's  
possible that given a choice, Black would  
prefer to exchange the other bishop).

An interesting alternative is 7.a3!?,  
limiting the f8-bishop and keeping that

set of minor pieces on the board—at the  
cost of a developing move. My Stockfish  
engine says it's still just equal, but  
relatively limited data favoring White  
might indicate that it's easier to play with  
more space and good central control here.

7...cxd4 8.cxd4 Bb4+ 9.Bd2 Bxd2+

9...Qa5?! 10.Rb1 Bxd2+ 11.Qxd2 Qxd2+  
12.Kxd2± is good for White. White's  
king is active and very safe in the center,  
the rook has developed with pressure  
on the half-open b-file, and White has  
the advantage in space, center control,  
development, and piece quality.

10.Qxd2 0-0 11.Bc4 Nc6

Alternately, 11...Nd7 12.0-0 b6 13.Rad1  
Bb7 14.Rfe1 Rc8. On d7, the knight  
does not block the lines of the b7-bishop  
or the rook on the c-file. Depending on  
circumstances, it may redeploy to f6 or f8.

12.0-0 b6 13.Rad1 Bb7 14.Rfe1 h6

Logical, if worried about Ng5. Other  
natural development: 14...Rc8 15.d5  
Na5 16.Bd3 exd5 17.e5± Though down a  
pawn, White appears to have very good  
compensation, with d4 available for the  
knight and a brewing attack against the  
depopulated kingside.; 14...Na5 15.Bd3  
Rc8 16.d5 could simply transpose to the

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above, or White could choose a different retreating option with the bishop and try Ne5–g4, as in the game.

### 15.Qf4

15.d5± is a standard idea for White, usually after completing development (as here). 15...exd5 (15...Na5?! 16.dxe6! is a promising piece sacrifice: 16...Nxc4 (16...Qxd2 17.exf7+ Kh7 18.Nxd2±) 17.exf7+, and now—(Kh8 17.Qxd8 Rfxd8 18.Rxd8+ Rxd8 19.e5! Rc8 e6 Bd5 20.Nh4 Kh7 21.Nf5; Kh7 17.Qc2 Qc8 18.e5 g6 e6 Bxf3 gxf3 Nd6 19.Qb3; Kxf7 17.Qf4 Qf6 18.Qc7± Kg8 Qxc4+)) 16.Bxd5 Qe7 17.e5 is Stockfish best for both sides. White still has an annoying space advantage.

### 15...Na5 16.Bf1 Qb8 17.Qe3 Qd6 18.Ne5 Rac8 19.Ng4!? Rc7?

19...Rfd8 20.d5! (20.e5 Qf8∞) 20...exd5 21.e5 Qe6 22.Qg3 with compensation.

### 20.e5 Qe7 21.Nf6+! Kh8



Position after 21...Kh8

21...gxf6 22.Qxh6+- and White threatens both exf6 and Rd3–g3. 22...f5 23.Rd3 f4 24.Rh3 f5 25.Qh8+ Kf7 26.Rh7+ Kg6 27.Rxe7 Rxh8 28.Rxc7+-

### 22.Ne4?

Clearly unnecessary. If Black couldn't capture the knight with the king on g8, it is even worse with the king on h8. White must think d6 is an even better square for the knight than f6, but it's too early to give up on the mating attack. 22.Rd3! hints at Qf4 and Rh3xh6+, among other possibilities, and it is quite difficult to meet.

### 22...Bd5 23.Rd2?!

Stockfish helpfully suggests returning to f6! 23.Nf6 Rd8 24.Qf4 (24.Rd3 Bc4∞) 24...Rc3±

### 23...Nc4 24.Bxc4 Rxc4 25.Nd6 Rc6 26.f4 f5! 27.Rf2 Qc7 28.Nb5 Qb8 29.Nd6?!

29.Nc3 Qd8

### 29...a6

29...b5 is more active.

### 30.Rc1 Qc7 31.Rxc6 Qxc6 32.h3 Kh7 33.Qd3

### 33.Qa3!?



Position after 33.Qd3

### 33...Qa4

33...Qc1+!? 34.Rf1 Qb2 35.Rf2 Qa1+ 36.Kh2 Qc1

### 34.a3 Qa5 35.Kh2 Rg8 36.Rc2 b5?

Giving up the c5 square. 36...Qe1 37.Qg3

### 37.Rc5! g6?

37...Ba2±

### 38.Qc2! Qd8?

38...Rf8 39.Rc7+ Kg8 40.Rd7 Rd8 41.Nb7 Bxb7 42.Rxb7 Kh8 43.d5! (43.Qc6?? Qd2) 43...exd5 (43...Qa4 44.Qc7 Qxf4+ 45.Kg1 Qe3+ 46.Kh1 Qe1+ 47.Kh2+-) 44.Qc6+-

### 39.Rc8 Qh4

39...Be4 40.Qc1

### 40.Rc7+ Rg7

40...Kh8 41.Nf7+ Kg7 42.Ng5+ Kf8 43.Rf7+ Ke8 44.Qc8#

### 41.Ne8!

1–0



Ryan Min.  
Photo Credit: Feng Min.

# NM Yu-Cheng Liang

**C**ongratulations to Yu-Cheng Liang of Camas, Washington, who recently became one of Washington State's newest National Masters! Yu-Cheng achieved a US Chess rating of 2214 as a result of scoring 4.0/9 at the Independence Day IM Norm tournament, hosted by 1000GM in Sunnyvale, California June 30-July 4, 2023. Along the way, Yu-Cheng scored clutch victories against NM Alejandro Maass (2254) and WGM Martha Fierro (2353).

Well done, Yu-Cheng!



*Yu-Cheng Liang.  
Photo Courtesy of Yu-Cheng Liang.*

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**Mar 16 *New Date*** **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.

*Wednesdays are for casual play*

**Feb 3, Mar 9 *New Date*, Mar 30** **Saturday Quads**  
**Format:** 3-RR, 4-plyr sec. by rtg. **TC:** G/100;+15. **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 memb. req'd. NS, NC.

**Feb 4, Mar 17 *New Date*** **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 memb. req'd. NS, NC.

**Mar 10 *New Date*** **G/20 Hexes**  
**Format:** 5-RR in 6- or 5-player sections. **TC:** G/20;+8. **EF:** \$12 (+\$6 fee for non-SCC). **Prize Fund:** \$\$54 b/6. **Prizes:** \$36-18. **Reg:** 12-12:45 p.m. **Time Frame:** 1 to ~6:30 p.m. **Byes:** 0. **Misc:** US Chess memb. req'd. NS, NC.

Weekends, April 2024—June 2024	
<b>G/20 Hexes:</b>	May 5, Jun 30.
<b>Novice:</b>	Apr 28, Jun 29.
<b>Quads:</b>	Apr 27, Jun 1.
<b>Tornado:</b>	Apr 14, May 12, Jun 9.
<b>Adult Swiss</b>	20-21 April
<b>Adult Swiss</b>	1-2 June
<b>Emerald City Open</b>	22-23 June

## Seattle Spring Open

March 23-24, 2023

A five-round Swiss with a time control of G/100 with a 15-increment. The prize fund of \$500 is based on 24 paid entries, 3 per prize group.

<b>First</b>	<b>\$150</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>U1900</b>	<b>\$70</b>
<b>U1700</b>	<b>\$60</b>	<b>U1500</b>	<b>\$50</b>	<b>U1300</b>	<b>\$40</b>
		<b>Unrated</b>	<b>\$30</b>		

**Entry Fees:** \$40 if rec'd by 3/20 (\$28 SCC memb.), \$52 after the 20th (\$38 SCC memb.). **Unrated**—Free with purchase of 1-yr US Chess & 1-yr WCF.

**Registration:** Sat. 9-9:45am. **Rounds:** Sat. 10-2:30-7, Sun. 11-3:30.

**Byes:** 2 (Sunday rounds, commit at registration). **Miscellaneous:** US Chess & WCF membership req'd. No smoking.



**Oregon Junior Closed (Challengers)**

**Co-Champions!**