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## *IM Aaron Grabinsky*



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IM Aaron Grabinsky achieves his first GM Norm.  
Photo credit: Webster University.

**On the back cover:**

(L) Lincoln Whitney plays Andrew Kitterman at Western  
Idaho Open. Photo credit: Jeffrey Roland.

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## Table of Contents

IM Aaron Grabinsky Webster University.....	Front Cover
Letter To The Editor Owen McCoy.....	3
Oregon Chess News (includes the following): Portland Chess Center; Neil Dale Memorial (by Mike Morris); Congratulations to IM Aaron Grabinsky (with games and analysis by Aaron Grabinsky); Exhibition In Salem Celebrates The Art And History Of The Game Of Chess; Frank Niro .....	4-13
Open Letter To The WCF Cleveland Johnson.....	14
Kings vs. Princes VII Match Josh Sinanan .....	15
Junior Closed And Invitational Jacob Mayer.....	16
Extravaganza Carol and Fred Kleist .....	19
Washington President's Cup (Half-Page Ad) Seattle, WA Feb 15-16.....	19
Northwest Chess Open (Half-Page Ad) Seattle, WA Mar 7-8.....	20
Harmon Memorial (Half-Page Ad) Seattle, WA Apr 4-5 .....	21
Western Idaho Open Jeffrey Roland.....	22
Northwest Chess Grand Prix Murlin Varner .....	26
Chesstoon Brian Berger .....	28
Pacific Northwest Chess Center (Full-Page Ad).....	29
Seattle Chess Club (Full-Page Ad).....	30
Upcoming Events .....	31
Lincoln Whitney at Western Idaho Open Jeffrey Roland.....	Back Cover

## Letter To The Editor

By Owen McCoy  
December 30, 2019

Hey Jeff,

Hope you're doing well.

I don't know if you heard, but my family and I have had to relocate to Virginia. The move happened over winter break, and after being on the road for two weeks, we arrived at our new house last night.

Attached below is a picture of one of the first boxes I unpacked: a box of *Northwest Chess* magazines, every issue from June 2014 to date, that I've saved over the years.

I'm really going to miss the Northwest, but I hope to be back before too long. I really liked the chess community there, and the magazine was a big part of that. Thank you for your work helping the magazine to continue and grow, and for helping and encouraging me with my writing.

Happy New Years,

Owen



## Editor's Response:

Owen, thanks and keep in touch! Remember, you have fans out there who will look forward to future articles from you, as do I.

It pleases me too that you value our magazine and the friendships made in the Northwest.

— Jeffrey Roland, Editor

# Oregon Chess News

By Frank Niro

## Portland Chess Center

The Portland Winter Open, held December 14-15, 2019, was the last regular weekend chess tournament held at the old PCC location in southwest Portland. The four-round event was won by Nick Raptis with 3.5/4, followed by Wilson Gibbins, Lennart Bjorksten and Michael Moore at 3.0/4. Moore was awarded the under 2000 prize for his efforts. In the Reserve Section, Jack McClain and Eric Erard shared first place at 3.5/4 after a last round draw on the top board in the section. Class prizes were won by Kyriakos Kypriotakis, Jerrold Richards, Dustin Herker, Robert Range and Frank Morse, all at 3.0/4. Thirty-seven players participated. Frank Niro and Lennart Bjorksten handled the TD duties.

**Michael Moore (1948) –  
Wilson Gibbins (2213) [B41]**  
Portland Winter Open  
(R2), December 14, 2019

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6  
5.c4 Nf6 6.Nc3 Qc7 7.Be2 Bb4 8.Qd3  
Nc6 9.0-0 0-0 10.Nxc6 dxc6 11.f4 e5  
12.f5 Nd7 13.f6 Nxf6 14.Rxf6 gxf6  
15.Bh6 Kh8 16.Qf3 Be7 17.Bxf8 Bxf8  
18.Qxf6+ Bg7 19.Qf2 Be6 20.c5 Rd8  
21.b4 Rd4 22.Rb1 Qd8 23.a4 Qg5  
24.b5 axb5 25.axb5 Bf8 26.bxc6 bxc6  
27.Rb8 Kg7 28.h4 Qc1+ 29.Nd1 Rxd1+  
30.Bxd1 Bxc5 31.Qxc5 Qxc5+ 0-1

**Michael Moore (1948) –  
Zoey Tang (2072) [B41]**  
Portland Winter Open  
(R4), December 15, 2019

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 d6 5.d4  
cxd4 6.Nxd4 Nf6 7.Be2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0  
9.Be3 Qc7 10.f3 b6 11.Qd2 Bb7 12.Rac1  
Nbd7 13.Rfd1 Rac8 14.b3 Qb8 15.Nc2  
Rfd8 16.Qe1 Ba8 17.a4 Ne5 18.h3 Ned7  
19.c5 dxc5 20.Bxa6 Bb7 21.Bxb7 Qxb7  
22.Na3 Ne5 23.Qe2 Nc6 24.Nc4 Nd4  
25.Bxd4 cxd4 26.Nb5 Bc5 27.Qd3 Nh5  
28.Kh1 e5 29.Nxe5 Qb8 30.Ng4 Ng3+  
31.Kg1 Ne2+ 32.Kf1 Nxc1 33.Rxc1  
Qf4 34.Rc4 h5 35.Nf2 Qe3 36.b4 Bxb4  
37.Qxe3 dxe3 38.Rxb4 Rd2 39.Nd3  
Rxd3 40.Ke2 Rcd8 41.e5 Rd2+ 42.Kxe3  
Rxc2 43.Nd6 Ra2 44.Nc4 Rd5 45.Ke4



*Grandmaster James Tarjan (foreground facing camera) sets up the pieces for a blitz game during January 3 Friday Night Open House/Casual Night at the spacious new Portland Chess center while other players engage in both rated and unrated games. Photo credit: Frank Niro.*

**Rd1 46.Nxb6 Re2+ 47.Kf5 Rf1 48.f4  
g6+ 49.Kf6 Rc2 50.Nd5 Rc6+ 51.Kg5  
Rg1+ 52.Kh6 g5+ 53.Nf6+ Kf8 54.Rb8+  
1-0**

The first tournament at the new club site, rebranded as Portland Chess Center, was the monthly G/60 on December 28 that attracted 32 players. Lennart Bjorksten took clear first with 3.5/4 followed closely by Isaac Vega and Nareg Kedjejian, each with 3.0/4. William Nobles won the U1650 section (3.5/4). Mike Hasiuke directed the event in his usual professional manner despite players and spectators scrambling to familiarize themselves with the beautiful new playing quarters.

A new tradition, beginning January 3, 2020, is a Friday Open House/Casual Night focused on attracting new members to PCC and new players to US Chess. In addition to rated and unrated G/25 quads and mini-Swisses, there were casual games as well as Q&A discussions of US Chess rules and membership requirements. GM James Tarjan took on

all comers in blitz during each of the first two Friday meetings of the year. Doors open every Friday at 5 PM. Rated play begins at 7 PM. PCC is located at 2025 Lloyd Center in Portland. For those who may wish to visit in the future, the most convenient parking is via the Halsey Street Garage, entrance at 10th and Halsey. Parking is free.

Following are the winners during the first two PCC Friday Night Casual Nights of 2020:

January 3 –

**Quad #1:** Mike Janniro & Gunther Jacobi

**Quad #2:** Radu Stancescu

**Quad #3:** Andrei Stancescu

**Quad #4:** Ethan Chung

**Mini-Swiss #5:** Eadric Li

January 10 –

**Quad #6:** Gunther Jacobi

**Quad #7:** Santosh Balasubramanyam



*View of the playing hall for the 2020 Neil Dale Memorial held at the new Portland Chess Center (formerly Portland Chess Club) at #2025 Lloyd Center Mall.  
Photo credit: Mike Morris.*

## Neil Dale Memorial

Thirty-nine players attended the first weekend tournament in the new Portland Chess Center in Lloyd Center mall. Brent Baxter defeated Zoey Tang in the last round, making his extra pawn count in a rook and knight vs. rook and knight ending, to take undisputed first place. Young Zoey played well in the tournament, sharing the U2100 prize with Ethan Wu. Here her calm defense repulses Lennart Bjorksten's aggressive intentions.

**Zoey Tang (2063) –**

**Lennart Bjorksten (2142) [D00]**

Neil Dale Memorial, January 5, 2020

*[Light notes by Mike Morris]*

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 d5 3.e3 Nbd7 4.c4 c6 5.Nc3 dxc4 6.Bxc4 b5 7.Bd3 a6 8.Nf3 c5 9.0-0 c4 10.Bc2 Bb7 11.Re1 b4 12.Nb1 Ne4 13.Bxe4 Bxe4 14.Nbd2 Bd3 15.Rc1 f6 16.Bf4 Nb6 17.e4 Rc8 18.d5 Qd7 19.Nf1 Na4 20.Qd2 g5 21.Bxg5 fxe5 22.Ne5 Qb7 23.Qxg5 Nxb2 24.Qh5+ Kd8 25.Nf7+ Kd7 26.Nxh8 Bxf1 27.Rxf1 Nd3 28.Rcd1 Kc7 29.Nf7 Bg7 30.Qg5 Bf6 31.Qg3+ Kb6 32.e5 Qxd5 33.Qe3+ Ka5 34.exf6 Qxf7 35.fxg7 Re8 36.a3

Or 36.Rxd3 cxd3 37.Qc5+ Ka4 38.Qc6+ Ka5 39.a3

36...bxa3 37.Rxd3 cxd3 38.Qc5+ Ka4 39.Rb1 Qb3 40.Qd4+ 1-0

Other winners include Alan Rhodes (U1900 with 4 points), Eric Erard, Andrei Li, and Ethan Zhang (U1700 with 3 points each), Bob Liu (U1500 with 3 points) and Anisha Sripada (U1300 with 2 points). David Roshu won the upset prize with his first round win over national master Andrew Lebovitz. Mike Janniro and Mike Morris shared directing duties. Report courtesy of Mike Morris.

## Congratulations to IM Aaron Grabinsky

After much anticipation and hard work, 21-year-old Aaron Grabinsky has completed his quest for the title of FIDE International Master. He gained an astounding 82 FIDE rating points in a two week period and, in the process, earned his first GM norm. His fine finish to 2019 was in the Pan-Am Intercollegiate Championships, where he earned the top board four prize for Webster University. He followed up with an amazing start to the new year at the Charlotte Open, helping him reach his coveted goal. Both events were held in Charlotte, North Carolina. Grabinsky is from Coquille, Oregon, a small town of less than 4,000

in Coos County near the southwestern Oregon coast. Aaron was kind enough to share two of his games from each event with *NWC* readers as well as some candid insights into his thoughts along the way. And now I turn the report over to Aaron.

Much credit for my accomplishment is due to Dr. Nancy Keller, as without her, I never would have made it this far. Pretty much every single tournament I played in throughout my high-school years, she drove me to (my parents had to work, and had no time to drive me to tournaments), and she also footed the majority of the tournament costs. She taught me some about the game when I was just getting started, but her greatest contribution definitely comes in the form of giving me opportunities to play strong events all around the United States. She even drove me from Coquille to Las Vegas in June every year for the National Open! Because of her, I was given the opportunity to play all up and down the Pacific coast (from Seattle to San Diego!), as well as tournaments in Florida, Washington D.C., and many other states. She even flew me to Greece for the World Youth in 2015!

**Benjamin Bok (2673) –**

**Aaron Grabinsky (2454) [E16]**

Pan-American Collegiate Championship  
(3), December 28, 2019  
[Aaron Grabinsky]

As I was on the plane flying to Charlotte, North Carolina, I didn't have any great expectations. Of course I wanted to play well, but I'd just played in a small, four-round tournament at the St. Louis Chess Club and had lost to my good friend FM Joshua Colas in a ridiculous manner. After winning a pawn for absolutely nothing in the opening, I proceeded to painfully give all of my advantage away, and then some. So I was hoping to at least redeem myself somewhat in Charlotte. My goal was still to become an International Master before graduation (May 2020), but I was running out of time, and had been stuck in the mid-2300's FIDE for almost four years.

Coming into Charlotte, I was 2363, sort of towards the high-end of a three-and-a-half-year rating yo-yo. The Pan-American Intercollegiate Championships began December 27 and were held at the beautiful Hilton Charlotte University Place about 15 minutes from the airport. The location was absolutely gorgeous with a large lake and fountain visible from the playing hall. This tournament is an annual team event and I was playing board four for Webster University's C squad. Our average rating was north of 2500 US Chess, so we were hoping

to finish near the top, but of course it would be quite tough, as many teams are composed entirely of Grandmasters.

In the first round, I was paired against an unrated player and won without issues. This was a good start, but I was slightly disappointed that she was unrated, as that means I gain no rating points from beating her, and I was keen on making up for losing rating in the previous St. Louis tournament. Before round two, I thought I was playing my second unrated player, and was becoming quite annoyed, but I learned after the game that he was the team's alternate so I played someone completely different who actually had a rating.

Good news! The game was quite tough, much more difficult than round one. I don't think I started outplaying him until around move 40. Round three, my team faced the number two ranked team in the whole event, St. Louis University Team A. We were definitely the underdogs, even with 2500+ average, and lost as expected. But we gave them a good fight, only losing one game on board two, and making three draws, thus losing by the slimmest of margins. My game was quite tough, as I was facing GM Benjamin Bok whom I've played at least four times prior to this. I'd never lost to him even though I'm quite a bit lower-rated, so I was hoping to continue the streak. I managed to draw after suffering in a worse position basically the entire game.

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Bb4+ 4.Nbd2 0-0 5.g3**

In our previous game, my opponent had chosen 5.a3 here, so I was a little surprised.

**5...b6 6.Bg2 Bb7 7.0-0 d5**

To be honest, I didn't really know any theory here, but my moves look decent enough.

**8.b3 Nbd7 9.Bb2 Qe7 10.Rc1 Bd6 11.Ne5 c6**

This felt like the most solid approach. 11...c5?! 12.Nxd7! Qxd7 (12...Nxd7 13.dxc5 bxc5 14.cxd5 exd5± and Black's central pawns may well become a liability) 13.dxc5!? and my kingside is about to be compromised.

**12.e4 dxe4 13.Nxe4 Nxe4 14.Bxe4 Nxe5 15.dxe5 Bc5 16.Qf3±**

So I've emerged from the opening with a slightly inferior position. Not great, but what to do. Even though I've succeeded in exchanging two pairs of minors, my c6 pawn is lousy.

**16...Rad8 17.Rcd1**

17.Bxc6? Bxc6 18.Qxc6 Rd2 19.Rb1 Rfd8 would have been a dream for Black. 20.Qf3 Rxf2! with Rd2 to follow, for example.

**17...Qc7 18.Kg2 h6 19.h4 Be7 20.Rfe1 Ba8!?**

Planning c5 obviously. I had to get rid of this weakness.

**21.Bc1 c5 22.Rxd8 Qxd8 23.Bxa8 Qxa8 24.Qxa8 Rxa8 25.Rd1 Rd8 26.Rxd8+ Bxd8 27.h5!**



Position after 27.h5

After some pretty forcing exchanges, we've ended up here, and initially I was pretty satisfied. After all, shouldn't be too difficult to make a draw here, right? Well, I learned that it's far more unpleasant than it first looks.

**27...Kf8 28.Kf3 Ke8 29.Ke4**

The problem is, Black can never do anything and White will just keep gaining more and more space.

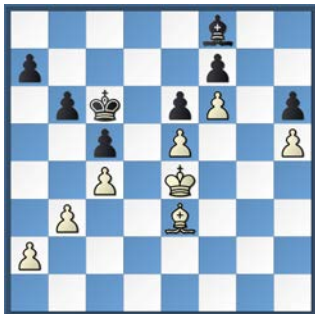
**29...Be7 30.g4 Bf8 31.f4 g6**

I felt this was necessary here. 31...Kd7? 32.f5! Ke8 33.g5 Kd7 34.f6+ vividly illustrates the dangers of a waiting policy.

**32.f5 gxh5 33.gxh5 Kd7**

Simply hoping that I will have an impenetrable barricade.

**34.Be3 Kc6 35.f6**

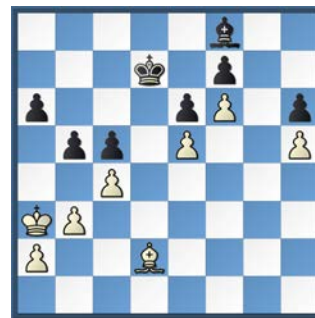


Position after 35.f6

The problem is, it's not unbreakable. My bishop will never move, and I foolishly forgot that *Zugzwang* was going to be a really big issue.

**35...a6 36.Kd3 Kb7 37.Kc2 Kc6 38.Kc3**

**Kb7 39.Kb2 Kc6 40.Bd2 Kd7 41.Ka3+- b5!?**



Position after 41...b5

Not what I wanted to do, but allowing Ka4 is also very bad. 41...Kc6 42.Ka4 Kb7 43.a3 Kc6 44.b4 Kb7 45.b5! Ka7 (45...axb5+ 46.Kxb5+-; 45...a5 46.Bxa5 bxa5 47.Kxa5+- is really sad.) 46.bxa6 Kxa6 47.Bc3 Ka7 48.Kb5 Kb7 49.a4 Kc7 50.Ka6 Kc6 51.a5 bxa5 52.Bxa5+- and I should resign now.

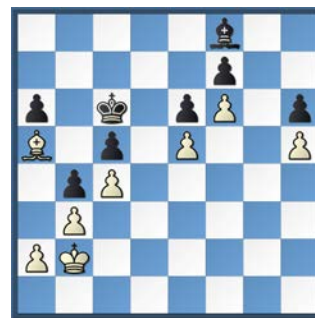
**42.Ba5?**

42.cxb5! axb5 43.Kb2 is simply winning, as a4 comes next, with an outside passer. 43...b4 44.Kc2 Kc6 45.Kd3 Kd5 46.Bf4 Kc6 47.Kc4 Kb6 48.Bc1 Kc6 49.a3 bxa3 50.Bxa3 Kb6 51.Bc1 Kc6 52.Be3+- Kb6 is met with b4 at long last. My bishop hates me, lol.

**42...Kc6 43.Kb2??**

43.cxb5+! axb5 44.Kb2+- still had to be played.

**43...b4!=**



Position after 43...b4

Amazingly, Black is suddenly completely fine!

**44.a3 Kb7**

The issue is that White's bishop is also caged in now.

**45.Kc2 Kc6 46.Kd3 Kb7 47.Kc2 Kc6 48.Kc1 Kb7 49.Kb1 Kc6 50.Kb2 Kb7 51.Kb1 Kc6 52.Kc1 Kb7 53.Kd2 Kc6 54.Kd3 Kb7**

After not finding any path forward for a few moves, my opponent tries one last chance.



Webster's Pan-Am winning C-team, with coach GM Susan Polgar. The hero, Aaron Grabinsky is second from the right.  
Photo credit: Mike Klein and Chess.com.

55.Bd8!? Kc8!



Position after 55...Kc8

56.Bb6

56.Be7?? bxa3! 57.Kc2 Bxe7 58.fxg7 Kd7 59.Kb1 Kxe7 60.Ka2 f5-+

56...Kb7 57.Ba5 Kc6 58.Kd2 Kb7 59.Kd1 Kc6 60.Kc2 Kb7 61.Kc1 Kc6 62.Kb1 Kb7 63.Ka1 Kc6 64.Kb2 Kb7 65.Kc1 Kc6 66.Kd1 1/2-1/2

Finding no way to overcome the barricade, my opponent finally takes the draw. 66.axb4 cxb4 67.Bd8 Bc5 68.Be7 Kb6=. Black simply shuttles the king between c6 and b6 forever. White's bishop has no way out, as exchanging

on c5 is always at least a drawn pawn endgame for Black.

A huge escape, as I suffered pretty much the whole game, and was completely losing in the bishop endgame. GM Bok had one chance to win at the very end, but he missed it somehow and suddenly I was totally fine! I think it's a mental thing for him. Like he's obviously the stronger player, but for some reason, he just can't seem to beat me!

Okay, so far so good! Our team had lost round three, so we had 2/3 team points, but individually, I had 2.5/3 and was feeling pretty good. Round four, we played a significantly weaker team and I easily defeated a girl rated around 1800. In round five, we again played down as a team, and since I'm board four, I again got a weaker opponent, someone around 2000. I won quite easily with some pretty tactics.

**Aaron Grabinsky (2454) – Gulrukhbegim Tokhirjonova (2515) [A01]**

Pan-American Collegiate Championship (6), December 30, 2019  
[Aaron Grabinsky]

The last round was crucial, as for Webster University, the goal is not only to win the Pan-American Championships (which we've done many times), but also, perhaps even more importantly, to qualify for the Final Four of College Chess, a round robin event held in March in New York City every year. The top four finishing teams of the Pan-American Championships qualify for that event, and Webster has qualified for the past several years. Our A and B teams were of course in the running, but in the last round, anything can happen with so much pressure, and since our C team could potentially reach the qualifying score of five points, we had our work cut out for us. We faced the University of Missouri's A team, which was about 100 rating points stronger than us by average. After several tense hours, our top three boards drew, and it was up to me to defeat WGM Gulrukhbegim Tokhirjonova, an international student from Uzbekistan, in order to win the match.

**1.b3 d5!**

I was preparing for 1...e5, so this was already a slight annoyance.

2.Bb2 Nf6 3.e3 Bf5 4.Nf3 h6 5.d4 e6  
6.Be2 Nbd7 7.0-0 Be7 8.c4 0-0



Position after 8...0-0

9.c5!?

I'm not sure if this plan is best, but I didn't see any obvious drawbacks to it. 9.Nc3 is of course totally fine.

9...c6 10.Nc3 b6 11.b4 Qc7!

Black wants e5.

12.Bd3 Bxd3 13.Qxd3 a5

13...e5!? 14.dxe5 Nxe5 15.Nxe5 Qxe5 16.Na4 Qc7 17.Bd4! was my intention. White is very stable now.

14.a3 Rfb8



Position after 14...Rfb8

Probably Black is doing very well here. I don't think White is really worse, but perhaps 9.c5 wasn't the greatest decision.

15.Qc2 Rb7 16.Rfb1 Rab8 17.h3 Nh7!

A very strong idea by my opponent.

18.Ne2 Ng5

The point of Nh7. Black wants to exchange the good knight on f3 in order to play e5. If I play Nd2, then e5 and the knight goes to e6 where it would be extremely well-placed.

19.Nxg5 hxg5 20.Bc3

20.cxb6?! Nxb6 21.bxa5 Nc4 is pretty good for Black.

20...Qc8 21.Rc1 Ra7 22.Be1

Eyeing the c6-pawn.

22...Qa6!

Attacking e2 and threatening ...axb4 and

...Qxa1.

23.Qd1 Rab7 24.Nc3 bxc5 25.bxc5 Bf6

It looks like she wants to play ...e5, so I let her have it!

26.g3

This doesn't do anything (or hurt anything). I basically just wanted her to play ...e5.

26...Rb3

26...e5? 27.Nxd5! cxd5 28.c6↑ was my not-so-cunning trap.

27.Qe2 Qa7

27...Qxe2! 28.Nxe2 and I thought that just maybe the black a-pawn would turn out to be a liability, but it's probably just very good for Black with ...e5 coming for real now.

28.Na4 e5 29.Bc3

I at least felt safe now. Not better by any means, but in control of the situation.

29...Rxc3!?

Brave, very brave. But I was actually hoping for this as it gives me just as much to play for as it does her!

30.Nxc3 exd4 31.exd4 Bxd4



Position after 31...Bxd4

My center is destroyed, but an exchange is an exchange.

32.Rab1 Rxb1 33.Nxb1 Nxc5 34.Nd2

The question is: Will Black's center pawns be strengths or weaknesses?

34...Qc7 35.Kg2

Caution is a good thing! 35.Nf3 Qxg3+ would be a bit unfortunate.

35...Ne6 36.Qa6 Nc5

36...c5? 37.Qa8+ Qd8 38.Qxd8+ Nxd8 39.Nb3+—

37.Qe2 Ne6 38.Nf3 Bf6 39.Qa6!

Now Nc5 is no longer an option and Black's center pawns are not happy.

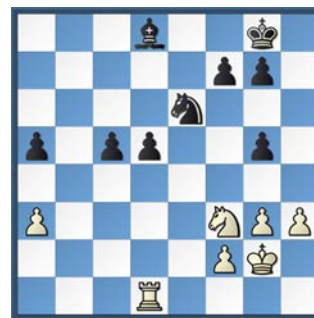
39...c5?!

39...Nd8!/? was perhaps more tenacious.

40.Qa8+ Qd8 41.Qxd8+ Bxd8

41...Nxd8 42.Rxc5+—

42.Rd1!



Position after 42.Rd1

42...d4

42...Nc7!/? 43.Ne5↑ heading to c6 looks pretty annoying for Black, but this should definitely have been preferred to the game continuation.

43.Ne5+—

Black's pawns are stuck forever and I knew that I was completely winning now.

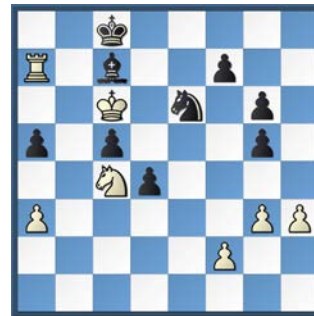
43...Kf8 44.Kf3 Ke7 45.Ke4 Bc7 46.Nc4 Kd7 47.Kd5

That's a very nice king!

47...g6 48.Rb1

White's play is super easy and Black is basically paralyzed by the activity of all White's pieces.

48...Bd8 49.Rb7+ Bc7 50.Ra7 Kc8 51.Kc6



Position after 51.Kc6

51...Nd8+

51...Bb8 52.Ra8+— with Nd6+ coming, or 51...Kb8 52.Ra6 and Black will soon lose material anyway.

52.Kxc5

And the pawns finally fall.

52...Kb8 53.Ra6 Ne6+ 54.Kd5 d3 55.Rc6 Kb7 56.Nd6+ Ka7

56...Bxd6 57.Rxd6 d2 58.Ke5+— just in time! and d2 drops.

57.Nb5+ Kb7 58.Rc3 Bb6



58...d2 59.Rd3

**59.Rxd3 Ka6**

59...Bxf2? 60.Rf3 Bb6 61.Rxf7+ Nc7+ 62.Kd6 loses what pieces Black had left.

**60.Nd6 Nc5**

60...Bxf2 61.Rf3

**61.Rc3 Na4 62.Rc6**

The rest is quite trivial and requires no comments.

**62...Ka7 63.f3 Bf2 64.g4 Nb6+ 65.Ke4 f6 66.Nb5+ Ka6 67.Nc3 Kb7 68.Rxf6 Nc4 69.Rxg6 Nxa3 70.Kd3 Bh4 71.Re6 Bg3 72.Re2 Kc6 73.Ne4 Bf4 74.Ra2 Bc1 75.Nc3 Nb5 76.Rxa5 Nxc3 77.Kxc3 Kd6 78.Kd4 Ke6 79.Ra6+ Kf7 80.Ke5 Kg7 81.Kf5 Kh7 82.Rg6 1-0**

After a lot of work, I somehow managed to win, and Webster team C had pulled off the upset! I didn't know until after I'd won, but both our A and B teams suffered defeat in the final round, so my game was critical to Webster's qualifying for the Final Four event this March.

Our C team qualified with 5/6 team points (thanks to me!) and amazingly, neither our A nor B squads finished with enough points to make it in. But in the end, it was all fine, since no matter which team qualifies, the university makes it regardless, so everybody was happy.

Good thing I didn't know how much was at stake during my game, or I probably would have choked from the pressure! My individual performance (5.5/6) was good enough for a top board four performance medal, and I was very happy to have gained 23 FIDE rating points from the event! This put me at 2386, only 14 points shy of my long-sought after goal, but of course, I wasn't too excited, as I'd been here many times before.

Throughout the past few years, I've come tantalizingly close to 2400 FIDE (even in the high 2390's!) at least three times, but every time, I collapsed under the mental pressure and lost the last critical game, never failing to plummet back down into the ditch.

And usually quite depressed, proceed to re-evaluate my life decisions! But this time was a little different for some reason. I felt more motivated, especially knowing that I'd just played the crucial role in qualifying the prestigious Webster University team into the Final Four! In two days, I would be starting the 2020 Charlotte Open, a very strong nine-round open with several GM's and IM's held

in the same venue directly following the Pan-American Championships. Just in case some crazy people haven't had enough chess!

**Aaron Grabinsky (2363) – Andrew Tang (2521) [D00]**  
Charlotte Open (2), January 2, 2020  
[Aaron Grabinsky]

After a day or so of rest, I started to play again. Round one was pretty smooth, as I defeated a 2000 player from Vietnam with Black relatively easily. Then the challenge once again reared its ugly head. In round two, I had White against GM Andrew Tang.

**1.d4 d5 2.Bf4**

The London system served me quite well in this event.

**2...c5 3.e3 Nc6 4.c3 Nf6 5.Nd2**



Position after 5.Nd2

I've found against this black set-up since it is best to develop the white queenside first.

**5...e6 6.Ngf3 cxd4 7.exd4 Nh5!?**

An interesting variation.

**8.Be3**

8.Bg5?! f6 just helps Black.

**8...Bd6 9.Ne5 g6 10.f4 f6**

Even though Black's set-up looks strange, it's quite solid and leads to rich piece play.

**11.Nd3**

11.Nxc6?! bxc6 is good for Black.

**11...Qc7 12.g3 0-0**

12...e5? is premature. 13.dxe5 fxe5 14.fxe5 Nxe5 15.Nxe5 Bxe5 16.Nf3±

**13.Bg2 b6**

13...e5? 14.Bxd5+

**14.0-0 Ba6 15.Nf3**

White's control over e5 is very important in these structures. Re1 will come soon, as well.

**15...Rae8**

15...e5? again just doesn't work. 16.dxe5 fxe5 17.fxe5+-

**16.Re1**



Position after 16.Re1

**16...Ng7!?**

A typical re-maneuvering to f5.

**17.Rc1 Nf5 18.Bf2 Qd7 19.Bf1!?**

Toying with some Nde5/c5 ideas.

**19...Qf7 20.Qa4 Bb7**

20...Na5? 21.b4 Bxd3 22.Bxd3 Nc4 23.Bxc4 dxc4 24.Nd2±. c4 is a problem for Black.

**21.Bg2 Bc7 22.Re2**

Intending to double.

**22...Nd6 23.Nd2**

Restricting the d6-knight.

**23...a5 24.c4!**



Position after 24.c4

Perfectly timed! The loose knight on c6 makes this break very strong. 24.Rce1? Ba6! 25.Qxc6 Bxd3 26.Re3 Bb5+- would be embarrassing.

**24...Na7**

24...Nxc4? 25.Nxc4 dxc4 26.Qxc4+-; 24...dxc4? 25.Nxc4 (25.Bxc6? cxd3) 25...Nxc4 (25...b5 26.Nxd6 bxa4 27.Nxf7+-) 26.Qxc4+-

**25.c5! bxc5 26.Nxc5 Bc6 27.Qd1**

This felt like the safest square. 27.Qc2 Bb5 28.Reel Nc6 and Nb4 might hit the white queen.

**27...Re7**

27...Bb5 28.Re1 Nc6 29.a4! and there's

no ...Nb4 with tempo. 29...Bc4 30.b3+-

**28.Bh3**

My whole strategy revolves around the eternal weakness on e6.

**28...Rfe8 29.Qc2**



Position after 29.Qc2

**29...Nf5**

29...Bb5? Now this doesn't work for concrete reasons. 30.Rxe6! Rxe6 31.Bxe6 Rxe6 32.Nxe6 Qxe6 33.Qxc7+-

**30.a4!**

Keeping everything off of b5.

**30...Ba8 31.Rce1!**

Patience is a virtue! 31.Rxe6? (*I really wanted to play this, but sadly, it just doesn't work*) 31...Rxe6 32.Nxe6 Qxe6! (32...Rxe6? 33.Qxc7 is good for White) 33.Re1 (33.Qxc7 Rc8!+-) 33...Qxe1+! 34.Bxe1 Rxe1+. Black has way too much material for the queen.

**31...Nc6 32.Nf3 Bd6 33.g4!**

Time for some action!



Position after 33.g4

**33...Ng7 34.Qd2 h6!?**

Intending ...g5, shutting out my bishop on h3 and gaining the f4 square.

**35.Bg3 g5 36.Nd3 Bb7**

I have to be quick, as ...Ba6 is coming.

**37.fxg5! Bxg3 38.g6!**

A very strong intermediate move. 38.hxg3?! hxg5. I didn't like this for me. My bishop on h3 is dead and I can't use f4 or h4. Black is quite solid, and ...Ba6 is still coming next move.

**38...Qxg6 39.hxg3±**



Position after 39.hxg3

This position, however, is quite different as h6 is a weakness, I have f4 and h4 for my knights, and everything is just much more open and accessible.

**39...Ba6 40.Nf4 Qf7 41.Rf2 Nb4 42.Nh4 Rc7 43.Nfg6 Kh7**

Black has reacted to all the threats, but his position remains alarming.

**44.Bf1!**

Trading my horrible bishop on h3 for, arguably, Black's best minor piece, and intending to double on the f-file.

**44...Rc2 45.Qe3 Rxf2 46.Qxf2 Bxf1 47.Rxf1**

f6 is a problem.

**47...Qc7 48.Qe3**

48.Qxf6 Qxg3+

**48...f5**

There was no other way to stop Rxf6. 48...Qf7? Black can't hold onto f6 with the queen. 49.Ne5 Qe7 (49...Qf8? 50.Nhg6+- and Rxf6 next) 50.Nhg6 Qd8 51.Nf7!+-

**49.Ne5 Qc2?**

Played with only a few seconds on the clock, but Black's position is impossible to save with no time anyway.

**50.Nf7 1-0**

My opponent flagged trying to play Kg8, but White is completely winning here anyway as h6 falls heavily on the next move.

This was it! For at least the fourth time, I was entering a game which had the potential to make me an International Master. I knew the situation, but I did my best not to think about it and focused on the game. Praise God that I was able to do this, as in previous situations, I was sadly unable to not think about the enormous pressure of achieving IM. I'm sure it would have been the exact same this time around, unless God had intervened

and helped me to focus. Because I didn't really do anything different! To my surprise, I played very well, gained an advantage on the board and on the clock, and while trying to move his king in an already losing position, my opponent flagged. After signing the score sheets, I could still hardly believe what had just happened. I was an International Master at long last!

Needless to say, I was overjoyed and quite relieved, but with 2/2, there was still a long event ahead, and I had to focus, as subsequent results were of course also important! This was definitely a huge moment for me though, and I hadn't been so happy in a long time. It turned out though, I wasn't quite done winning yet! In round three, I had Black against a strong GM around 2550 from Turkey. I drew with almost no effort! Round four, I played an IM around 2440 and also drew in a relatively uneventful game. Round five was very, very good, as I had Black against a strong young kid around 2450, who also happened to be an IM. After me basically waiting the whole game, he finally blundered and I won! With 3/4 against strong opposition, it just might be possible to score a GM norm. Crazy, right?

In round five, I played another GM around 2520 and drew, again, pretty easily. Round six was quite painful though, and dealing with it mentally was a real test. I had Black against another up-and-coming player, IM Brandon Jacobson rated 2470. After playing pretty well in the opening, I was given the opportunity to reach a tactically winning position and missed it. And then I proceeded to lose my first game of the tournament. This really hurt, not so much because I lost, but because I missed an opportunity to win! It also seriously injured my GM norm aspirations. Going to sleep that night wasn't fun.

The next morning I had White against IM Edward Song rated 2411 and just decided to play freely, figuring that the GM norm wasn't too realistic anymore. I played a pretty dubious pawn sacrifice in the opening and quickly found myself in a depressing situation - down a pawn with no compensation against a strong IM. Amazingly, I managed to find some tricks (which he conveniently fell for) and fought back to equal, then to slightly better, and then it completely flipped around, and I won, up a bishop in the endgame! Well, that sure was a miracle. As I was eating lunch with my friend and roommate, IM Brian Escalante, we learned that I was playing GM Valentin Iotov from Bulgaria in the final round

with White! This was great news, as I got double-white in rounds eight and nine, and I also was paired with a GM!

**Aaron Grabinsky (2363) –  
Valentin Iotov (2516) [D00]**

Charlotte Open (9), January 5, 2020  
[Aaron Grabinsky]

At this point, I still had only slim hopes for the norm, but I was very determined to win, nonetheless; not only for rating, but also to clinch the \$1,000 U2400 FIDE top prize. A win would most certainly help with both of those goals. What happened in the next two hours surpassed even my wildest dreams. I completely crushed him in 27 moves.

**1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 e6 4.Nd2 Bd6  
5.Bg3 0–0 6.Bd3 c5 7.c3 Nc6 8.Ngf3 b6  
9.Qe2 h6!?**

9...Bb7 10.Rd1 h6 is the normal order in this line.

**10.Rd1**

I just played this anyway hoping for Bb7 Ne5 and a transposition.



Position after 10.Rd1

**10...Bxg3?!**

I didn't understand this move at all.

**11.hxg3 Bb7?!**

My next move should not be allowed. 11...Qd6! trying to play e5, is better, or 11...Qc7! with the same intention.

**12.Ne5!**

Thematic and strong.

**12...Nxe5?**

I was really confused by my opponent's decisions this game. As a GM, he should really know better than to change the structure like this. From my experience, this exchange almost always favors White, especially with an open h-file!

**13.dxe5**

I think I'm already basically winning.

**13...Nd7 14.f4**

The problem is, White's plan is so simple.

IT 1

**Certificate of Title Result**

GM     
  IM     
  WGM     
  WIM

---

Name: **GRABINSKY**      First name: **AARON**      Sex: **M**  
 ID-number: **2087090**      Federation: **USA**  
 Date of Birth: **1998-06-20**      Place of Birth: **San Francisco, California, USA**

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Event: **2020 Charlotte Open**      Start: **2020-01-01**      Close: **2020-01-05**  
 Chief Arbiter (name, ID): **IA, IO Grant Oen #2059487**      number of games: **9**  
 rate of play: **Game/100 mins + 30 sec. increment**      number of federations: **3**  
 number players not from title applicant's federation: **3**      number rated opponents: **9**  
 number players from host federation: **6**      total number titled opponents: **8**  
 numbers of:    GM **4**    IM **4**    WGM \_\_\_\_\_    WIM \_\_\_\_\_    FM \_\_\_\_\_    WFM \_\_\_\_\_

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Where applying 1.43e:  
 number of federations: **22**      number of rated players not from host federation: **22**  
 number of players not from host federation holding GM, IM, WGM, WIM titles: **14**

Special remarks: **1.43e applies.**

Rd	Opponents	ID	Fed	Rating	Rat. 1.46c	Title	Score
1	Nguyen Khoi Nguyen Le	12402699	VIE	1999	2200		1
2	Andrew Tang	2059630	USA	2521		GM	1
3	Cemil Can Ali Marandi	6300529	TUR	2546		GM	0.5
4	Craig Hilby	2062674	USA	2434		IM	0.5
5	Christopher Woojin Yoo	30909694	USA	2449		IM	1
6	Akshat Chandra	25007611	USA	2524		GM	0.5
7	Brandon Jacobson	30901561	USA	2470		IM	0
8	Edward Song	2051192	USA	2411		IM	1
9	Valentin Iotov	2906074	BUL	2516		GM	1
10							
11							

Rating average (1.46b): **2452**      Score required: **6.5**      Score achieved: **6.5**  
 Exceeding norm by **0** points

Chief Arbiter's signature

Federation confirming the result: **USA**

Pictured above is Aaron Grabinsky's certificate for his first Grandmaster norm, one of the most coveted documents in the chess world.  
Photo credit: Aaron Grabinsky.

Qh5, Nf3, g4-g5, checkmate! Black doesn't really have a good plan.

**14...f5**

Inviting the next break, but his position was already quite bad. 14...f6?! 15.Qg4! (attacks h6 and e6, winning a pawn) 15...Kh8 16.Qxe6 fxe5?? 17.Rxh6+! gxh6 18.Qxh6+ Kg8 19.Qh7# is just one example of Black's miseries.

**15.g4! c4**

15...fxg4 16.Qxg4+-

**16.Bb1**

Maybe 16.Bc2 was more accurate, but whatever.

**16...Qe7 17.Nf3 Nc5**

17...fxg4 18.Nd4+- and Qxg4 next.

**18.gxf5 exf5 19.Nd4 Bc8**

19...Ne4 20.Bxe4 fxe4 21.g4+- is also bad.

## 20.Rh5!

Not letting up the pressure.



Position after 20.Rh5

## 20...Be6

20...g6 21.Rxh6

21.Nxf5 and the black position just collapses.

## 21...Rxf5!?

21...Bxf5 22.Bxf5 Rxf5 is the same.

## 22.Bxf5 Bxf5 23.Rxf5 Qh4+ 24.Qf2!

24.Kd2 Ne4+ 25.Kc1 g6∞ is unnecessary to allow.

## 24...Nd3+ 25.Rxd3 Qh1+

25...Qxf2+ 26.Kxf2 cxd3 27.Ke1+— White will soon be up two pawns for nothing in this rook endgame.

## 26.Qf1 Qh4+

26...Qxf1+ 27.Kxf1 cxd3 28.Ke1+—

## 27.Kd2 1–0

If cxd3 Qxd3, it's only a matter of time for Black, down two pawns with a weakness on d5, not to mention his compromised king. So he resigned.

As I left the tournament hall, still wondering at what had just taken place, the chief arbiter informed me that I had indeed made the Grandmaster norm with the minimum score required, 6.5/9!! I was literally in shock, as not only had I become an IM, but now, had made a GM norm, something I never expected to do! All in the same tournament too! I'd also won the top U2400 FIDE prize outright, as it was mathematically impossible for any of the other contenders to catch me. If that wasn't enough, my FIDE rating sky-rocketed from 2363 (before the Pan-American Championships) to 2445 after everything was said and done. That's 82 points in two weeks, not too bad!

My US Chess rating also reached a new all-time high at 2506! Yes, I cracked 2500 for the first time in my life! Can't really think of a better way to have started the year! The long, painful struggle to

become an International Master has finally ended in Charlotte, North Carolina, almost six years after becoming a National Master in San Diego, California (April, 2014). Perhaps I can even entertain new ambitions of achieving the next, and last, prestigious title offered to chess players: Grandmaster! The journey continues.

## Exhibition In Salem Celebrates The Art And History Of The Game Of Chess

The Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, has announced that it will present “*Checkmate! Chess Sets from the Maryhill Museum of Art.*” This exhibition traces the fascinating history of chess across continents and through time, from its origins in India to its current popularity throughout the world. Organized by curator Jonathan Bucci and drawn from the extensive collection of the Maryhill Museum of Art in Goldendale, Washington, one of the finest collections of its kind in the United States, the exhibition opens January 7 and continues through April 26, 2020, in the Study Gallery.

The exhibition features approximately two dozen chess sets from Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas that date from the 18th through 20th centuries. While working within the predetermined structure of 32 game pieces, chess makers have historically brought their own creativity and interpretation to each set, resulting in a wide variety of materials and themes. Created in wood, glass, bone, and ivory, the sets include traditional designs as well as abstract, non-figurative sets and narrative sets depicting mythological characters and historical figures. Discover Ferdinand the Bull and his friends. Look eye to eye with the Red Queen from *Alice in Wonderland*. Face the Inuits of the north with pawns who are seals, and be sure to not get trampled by the caravan of elephants on their way to battle.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Colleen Schafroth, executive director of the Maryhill Museum of Art, will deliver an illustrated lecture on the history and art of chess on Thursday, February 13 beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Paulus Lecture Hall in the Willamette University College of Law. Schafroth is the author of several books on the history of chess including *The Art of Chess*.

A “Leap Day Chess Tournament” will take place Saturday, February 29 from 12 noon to 4 p.m. in the Maribeth Collins Lobby of the Hallie Ford Museum of Art. For further information, and how to register, visit [willamette.edu/go/hfma-tournament](http://willamette.edu/go/hfma-tournament) or call 503-370-6855. This exhibition is supported by general operating support grants from the City of Salem's Transient Occupancy Tax funds and the Oregon Arts Commission. The Hallie Ford Museum of Art The museum is located at 700 State St. in Salem. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. The galleries are closed on Monday. General admission is \$6, \$4 for seniors and \$3 for students 18 and older. Students 17 and under and children are admitted free. Admission is free for everyone on Tuesdays. For more information call 503-370-6855 or visit [willamette.edu/go/hfma](http://willamette.edu/go/hfma).



## Checkmate! Chess Sets from the Maryhill Museum of Art

Jan. 7 – April 26, 2020  
Study Gallery and Print Study Center

Hallie Ford Museum of Art  
© WILLAMETTE UNIVERSITY

[willamette.edu/go/hfma](http://willamette.edu/go/hfma) | 503-370-6855  
700 State Street | Salem, Oregon 97301



These two photos taken at the chess exhibit at the Maryhill Museum of Art on April 12, 2013. Photo credit: Jeffrey Roland.



# Open letter to the Washington Chess Federation

Recently, the Washington Class Championships (November 29 — December 1, 2019), administered by the Washington Chess Federation, offered and paid out a guaranteed prize fund of \$10,000.

Of the 170 entries, 68 were competitors “playing-up” a section above where they would normally be qualified to compete. Each of these 68 players (presumably) paid a play-up fee of \$85 — a 65% mark-up on the “standard” early entry fee (or, a 106% markup for “medal only” entries — the “medal only, no cash prize” entry fee was only \$80, but still required an \$85 play-up fee — a markup of 106% for players with no stake in the prize money.) If all of those 68 competitors paid this \$85 premium, then play-up fees accounted for \$5780 of revenue. Thus, play-up fee revenue alone amounted to nearly 58 percent of the total guaranteed prize fund.

“Standard” entry fees in the tournament comprised the remainder of the revenue. Although an exact number is harder to pin down (due to “medal-only entries” vs. “prize fund entries,” early entries vs. last minute entries, etc.), a conservative estimate of \$17,000-\$20,000 in standard entry fee revenue for this tournament is not unreasonable. When adding the play-up fees to the standard entry fee revenue, the total revenue for the tournament can be conservatively estimated to range between \$22,780 to north of \$26,000. In other words, “play-up fee” revenue increased overall tournament revenue by approximately 20 percent.

Tournament organizers budget for expenses around projected standard entry fees alone. We know from experience (like the annual Washington Open, a tournament that —as yet— doesn’t require play-up fees) that the prize fund plus venue and other ancillary expenses are covered by standard entry fees alone. Therefore, we know that play up fees are not required to meet expenses.

Rather, play-up fees are to moderate the number of players choosing to play-up, insulating higher rated players from the potential rating penalties that attend competing with lower rated players in that section. In other words, play-up fees are used as a resource to manage the players. Therefore, it is the players who have a vested interest in the play-up fees paid within any given section.

Prize funding for any given tournament is based upon projected entry fee revenue for that tournament. In many tournaments (non-guaranteed) prize funds are routinely reduced when entry fee revenue is insufficient. However, I am hard pressed to recall an instance of prize funding being increased when entry fee revenue exceeded projections.

Considering all of the above, my questions to the WCF are: Wouldn’t it make sense that a surcharge required of players choosing to play up should be correspondingly added to that section’s prize fund?

Given that play-up fees are a surcharge added to regular entry fees (which are already projected to cover all expenses), then it seems sensible that play-up fees be returned to the prize fund and allocated to the players in that section — the people directly vested in and impacted by those fees.

Why aren’t they?

Respectfully yours,

Cleveland Johnson

# Kings vs Princes Match VII

By Josh Sinanan

The seventh edition of the Seattle Kings vs Princes Match took place December 14-15, 2019 at the Seattle Chess Club and attracted 11 players in one section. The match started off with upsets abound: Two underrated Kings, Henry Benaid (1584) and Pasha Kuznetsov (1459) won against Princesses Stephanie Velea (1732) and Sophie Velea (1846), respectively, in the first round. As the match progressed, the Princes fought

back with several key upsets of their own: Princes Lixing Shen (1131) and Atharva Joshi (1322) each downed an out-of-form King Frank Fagundes (1707), while Prince Henry Graves (206) managed to beat the over-ambitious King Pasha Kuznetsov (1459)!

In the end, the Kings were just too tough, led by strong performances from Kings Henry Benaid (1584 – 1616), LM Viktors Pupols (2200 – 2200), and Pasha Kuznetsov (1459 – 1467). The best dressed prize was awarded to Princess Stephanie Velea both days for her classy royal outfits! The prizes for the largest upset in each round went to Princes

Lixing Shen (round 1, 576 points), Henry Graves (round 4, 1258 points!), and Atharva Joshi (round 6, 385 points).

The match was directed by Senior TD Fred Kleist, hosted by the Seattle Chess Club, and organized by the Washington Chess Federation. Hail to the Kings, who have reclaimed the throne once again with a convincing 17.5-14.5 victory!

Here are the results by team:

## Kings

**Henry Benaid 1584 5.0 \$150**  
 LM Viktors Pupols 2200 4.0 \$67.50  
 Pasha Kuznetsov 1459 4.0 \$67.50  
 John Graves unrated 2.5  
 Frank Fagundes 1707 2.0  
 Avg. rating: 1738

## Princes

**Daniel Shubin 2078 4.0 \$150**  
 WCM Sophie Velea 1846 2.5 \$45  
 WCM Stephanie Velea 1732 2.5 \$45  
 Henry Graves 201 2.5 \$45  
 Atharva Joshi 1322 2.0  
 Lixing Shen 1131 1.0  
 Avg. rating: 1385  
**Final Score: Kings 17.5 - Princes 14.5**

**Sophie Velea (1846) –  
 Viktors Pupols (2200) [A04]**  
 Seattle Kings vs Princes Match 7  
 (R4), December 15, 2019  
*[Ralph Dubisch]*

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 f5 3.d3 d6 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.Be2  
 Nc6 6.0-0 Be7 7.Nd2 f4 8.Nb3 Be6  
 9.Bd2 Qd7 10.Be1 h5 11.f3 g5 12.Bf2  
 g4 13.d4 g3 14.hxg3 fxg3 15.Bxg3 h4  
 16.Bh2

16.Be1



Position after 16.Bh2

16...h3



(L) Sophie Velea alongside John Graves during round three.  
 Photo Credit: Josh Sinanan.

16...Bxb3 17.dxe5 (17.axb3 Nxd4; 17.d5 Bxd5 18.Nxd5 Nxd5 19.exd5 Nd4) 17... Bxc2 (17...h3!? 18.g4 (18.g3 Be6 19.exf6 Bxf6) 18...Nxc4 19.fxc4 Be6) 18.Qxc2 dxe5

17.g3 Bxb3 18.axb3 Nxd4 19.Nd5 Nxd5 20.exd5 Nf5 21.Qd2 Rg8 22.g4 a6 23.Kh1 Nd4 24.Qd1 Nxe2 25.Qxe2 c5 26.dxc6 Qxc6



Position after 26...Qxc6

27.Qc4

27.Ra4 b5 28.Re4

27...Qxc4 28.bxc4 0-0-0

28...Rc8 29.b3 Kd7

29.Rad1 Rg6

29...Bh4 30.Bg1 Bg3=

30.c5 dxc5 31.Bxe5 Re8 32.Bg3 Bf8 33.Rfe1 Rxe1+ 34.Rxe1 Kd7 35.Kh2 c4 36.Kxh3 Rb6 37.Be5 Rh6+ 38.Kg2 Bc5 39.f4 Kc6 40.f5 Kd5 41.Bg7 Rh7 42.f6 Bd6



Position after 42...Bd6

43.Rh1??

43.Rd1+ Ke6 44.Rxd6+ Kxd6 45.f7+-

43...Rxb1 44.Kxb1 Ke6 45.Kg2 Be5 46.c3 b5 47.Kf3 a5 48.Ke3 b4 49.Kd2 a4 50.Kc2 a3 51.bxa3 bxa3 52.g5 a2 53.Kb2 Bxc3+ 54.Kxa2 Kf7 55.Kb1 1/2-1/2

## Junior Closed and Invitational

By Jacob Mayer

On January 10-12 the Junior Closed and Invitational took place at the Seattle Chess Club. Six of the top Juniors played in the round robin event to compete for a spot in the upcoming Championship Section of the 2020 Washington State Championship. In addition, an open,

invitational section was held alongside open to all Juniors from Washington.

Congratulations to Daniel Shubin, who swept the field with a perfect 5.0/5 score! In the process Daniel upset two masters and truly earned his spot in the upcoming state championship. Following a first round loss to Daniel, NM Derek Zhang won his following four games to finish in clear second place with 4.0/5. Joshua Lewis-Sandy of Bainbridge Island finished in third place with 2.0/5.

In the Invitational Section Brandon Peng came in to the event as the favorite and proved his status with a convincing 4.5/5 points to finish in clear first place. Leonardo Zhou finished in second with 4.0/5, and Harrison Keyser, Angela Chen, Saket Singh, and Austin Liu tied for third place with 3.0/5 points.



2020 WA Junior Closed participants (L-R): Minda Chen, Rushaan Mahajan, Daniel Shubin, Derek Zhang, Joshua Lewis-Sandy, Harrison Toppen-Ryan. Photo Credit: Jacob Mayer.

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Congratulations to all our Juniors and we look forward to seeing their continued progress!

**Daniel Shubin (2085) –  
Rushaan Mahajan (2202) [B41]**  
Junior Closed and Invitational  
(R4), January 12, 2020  
*[Ralph Dubisch]*

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6  
5.c4 Nf6 6.Nc3 Bb4 7.Qd3 d5 8.exd5  
exd5 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 dxc4

10...Nc6

11.Qxc4 Bd6 12.Bg5 b5 13.Qd3 Bb7  
14.Bf3 Ra7 15.Rad1± Qc7?

Now everything goes White's way.

16.Bxf6+- gxf6



*Position after 16...gxf6*

17.Ndxb5

Taking over d5 and f5 with 17.Bxb7  
Rxb7 18.Nf5 Bxh2+ (18...Be5 19.Nd5  
Qd8 20.f4) 19.Kh1 Kh8 (19...Qf4 20.Nd5  
Qg5 21.f4) 20.Nd5 Qd8 21.Kxh2 is  
immediately decisive.

17...Bxh2+ 18.Kh1 axb5 19.Bxb7 Rxb7  
20.Nd5 Qd6 21.f4 Kh8 22.Kxh2 Rd7  
23.Qxb5 Rg8 24.Qb6 Re8 25.Qd4 Re2  
26.Qc3 Qc6 27.Qb4 Kg7 28.Rf3 Qd6  
29.Rg3+ Kf8 30.Qc4 Rxb2 31.Ne3

Or 31.Qc8+ Rd8 32.Qg4 Ke8 (32...Qxd5  
33.Qg8+ Ke7 34.Re3+) 33.Nxf6+ Qxf6  
34.Qg8+ Ke7 35.Re3+ Qe6 36.Qxd8#

31...Qc7 32.Rxd7 Qxd7 33.Qc5+ Qe7  
34.Qc8+ Qe8 35.Rg8+ 1-0



*WA Junior Closed Champion Daniel Shubin poses with his cash prize winnings.  
Photo Credit: Jacob Mayer.*

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**Joshua Lewis-Sandy (2034) – Daniel Shubin (2085) [C03]**  
 Junior Closed and Invitational (R3), January 11, 2020  
*[Ralph Dubisch]*

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Be7 4.c3

4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bd3 c5 7.c3 Nc6 8.0–0 is quite well-traveled.

4...c5 5.e5

5.dxc5 Bxc5 6.Bd3 looks like reliable theory.

5...Nc6 6.Ndf3 Qb6 7.Bd3 cxd4 8.cxd4 Bb4+ 9.Kf1 Bd7 10.Be3

10.Ne2

10...Be7 11.Ne2 Rc8 12.Rc1

12.g3 Nb4 (12...Qxb2 13.Rb1 is at least a small improvement on the game for White.) 13.Bb1

12...Qxb2 13.Rb1 Qa3

Black avoids 13...Qxa2 14.Bd2, when the black queen is contained and White has play for the pawns.

14.Rxb7

Perhaps 14.Bc1, since 14...Qxa2 15.Bd2 is the last note.

14...Nb4!



Position after 14...Nb4

Black is in charge for the rest of the game.

15.Ne1

15.Bb5 Bxb5 16.Rxb5 Qxa2

15...Qxa2 16.Bd2 Nxd3 17.Nxd3 Qa6

18.Qb1 Ba4 19.Rb2 Qc4 20.Rb8 Nh6 21.Nc5 0–0 22.Rb4 Qc2 23.Nxa4

23.Qxc2 Bxc2 24.f3 Nf5

23...Qxd2 24.Rb2 Qa5 25.Ra2 Rb8 26.Qa1 Qb5 27.Nac3 Qd3 28.Rxa7



Position after 28.Rxa7

28...Bb4

28...Rfc8 29.Rxe7 Nf5! (29...Rxc3 30.Re8+ Rxe8 31.Qxc3, White's base on d4 is still very vulnerable.) 30.Ra7 Rxc3+

29.Qd1 Qc4 30.Nb1

30.Na2 Be7 (30...f6) 31.Nac1

30...Ra8! 31.Rxa8 Rxa8 32.f3 Nf5 33.Kf2 Ra2 34.Qc1 Qxe2+ 0–1

**Derek Zhang (2263) – Daniel Shubin (2085) [A11]**  
 Junior Closed and Invitational (R1), January 10, 2020  
*[Ralph Dubisch]*

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.e3 Nf6 4.Nc3 c6 5.b3 Be7 6.Bb2 Nbd7 7.Qc2 b6 8.Be2 Bb7 9.Rg1!?

Very committal. There's no question about what White intends now, and the problem with that is Black can adapt. 9.0–0 is, of course, normal and fine for White.

9...Qc7 10.g4 h6 11.h4 dxc4 12.bxc4 Ne5 13.Nxe5 Qxe5 14.0–0–0 0–0–0 15.Qa4 Qb8

White's opening experiment has been largely successful, in that White controls more space and has the initiative.



Position after 15...Qb8

16.g5 hxg5 17.hxg5 Ne8 18.f4

18.d4!?

18...c5 19.Nb5?

This just throws away a rather important tempo. 19.d4 cxd4 20.Nb5 a6 21.Nxd4 makes more sense, if White's goal is to reposition the c3-knight.

19...a6 20.Nc3 Nd6 21.Qb3 Bc6



Position after 21...Bc6

22.Na4

22.g6 f6 23.d4

22...Rh2! 23.Bf1!?

23.Rge1 b5!?

23...Bf3! 24.Re1?! Ne4 25.d3 b5 26.dxe4 bxa4

26...Qd6!-+

27.Qxb8+ Kxb8 28.Bc3 Rxa2+ 29.e5 Rd7 30.Rg3 Be4 31.Re2 Ra3 32.Bb2 Rad3 33.Re1 Rd2 34.Bd4 Rc2+ 35.Kd1 Rb7 36.Bd3 Bxd3 0–1

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# EXTRA! EXTRA! EXTRAVAGANZA! AT SEATTLE CHESS CLUB

By Carol and Fred Kleist

Seattle, WA — November 8-10, 2019

Thirty-three players braved the seven rounds over three (or optional two-day with two faster rounds) to compete this year in Seattle Chess Club's Extravaganza. This compares to 43 players last year, so we are back up to two-thirds instead of one-half of our normal attendance, which has been the case since the new center opened in Kirkland.

Top board soon belonged to teenage Sophie Tien, although she was not the highest-rated in the section. She played her seven rounds with no losses, giving up only two draws, earning six points to win first place. In the quiet chess hall, with all other games finished, the two teenagers, Sophie and highest-rated Minda Chen, battled to a draw in the final round.

One other player, Surya Gorantla, had actually earned five points after six rounds. Unfortunately, he had not asked



Sophie Tien. Photo Credit: Patrick Tien.

## Washington President's Cup February 15-16, 2020

Highest finishing Washington resident in the Open Section seeded into the 2021 Washington Invitational

**Site:** Seattle Chess Club, 2150 North 107th Street, Seattle, WA 98133.

**Format:** 5 Round Swiss. Two Sections. Open and Reserve (U1600).

**Time Control:** Round 1 G/60, d10, Rounds 2-5 40/120, SD/30, d10.

US Chess February 2020 rating supplement will be used to determine pairings and prizes. Foreign ratings used for players with no US Chess rating. Higher of US Chess or foreign ratings used at TD discretion.

**Prize Fund:** \$2,200 (based on 60 paid entries).

**Open:** 1st \$400, 2nd \$300, 3rd \$200, 1st U2000 \$150, 1st U1800 \$150.

**Reserve:** 1st \$300, 2nd \$225, 3rd 175, 1st U1400 \$150, 1st U1200/Unrated \$150.

**Entry Fee:** \$60 if postmarked or online by 02/09, \$70 after 02/09 or at site. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs, US Chess National Masters. \$40 play up fee if U1600 playing in Open section.

**Registration:** Saturday 9:00 - 9:45 AM.

**Rounds:** Saturday 10:00 AM, 12:30 PM, 6:00 PM; Sunday 11:00 AM, 4:30 PM.

**Byes:** Two half-point byes available, request before end of round 2. US Chess and WCF membership/Northwest Chess subscription required, other states accepted. US Chess Grand Prix Points: 6. US Chess Junior Grand Prix event. Northwest Chess Grand Prix event. NS. NC. W.

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

**Mail To:** Jacob Mayer, 9502 44th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115-2610. **Phone:** (206) 697-5625.

**Email:** [jacob.mayerchess@gmail.com](mailto:jacob.mayerchess@gmail.com).

**Online Registration:** [www.nwchess.com/onlineregistration](http://www.nwchess.com/onlineregistration).

for a half-point bye for round seven before the cutoff time. Something apparently came up, and he felt he had to leave. So he left cheerfully, being a very good sport. He will receive his earned rating points of course, but we cannot pay out prizes for unfinished tournaments, even though he would have qualified for clear second. Sometimes the rules seem harsh, but US Chess has good reasons for them.

Other excitement in the Open Section resulted in the very young Yiding Lu sharing equal second-third place with Minda at 4½ points and a third preteen, Pranav Balaji, had four points, qualifying for the Under 2000 prize. Thus the Open Section definitely belonged to the youth players.

Not so the Reserve: Stephen Buck, a Senior well known for many years for his participation in events in the Northwest, his helping hand in the Tacoma Chess Club and general good fellowship, earned his six points for clear first, just as Sophie had, that is, no losses, allowing only two draws.

Ashwin Kaliyaperumal, whose name seems to occur on all prize lists of tournaments in which he plays, scored 4½, as did Garrett Atkinson, as well as surprise winner, relatively new to the

game, Chad Boey, keeping up with 4½ also, and thus forming a trio to divide the second place prize money which was combined with U1400 and U1600 prizes.

Last but not least in exciting comebacks was another senior winner, Lois Ruff. Lois scored four points to win the U1200 prize and earn massive rating points. Our Top Senior, Stephen Buck, with his six out of a possible seven, went up only a single rating point! Such is life in the ups and downs of US Chess.

**Chad Boey (1270) –  
Henry Louie (1303) [C41]**  
Extravaganza Seattle  
(R2), November 9, 2019  
[Ralph Dubisch]

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6  
5.Nc3 Be7 6.Bc4**

Other paths: 6.Be2!? 0-0 7.0-0 Re8 8.f4 Bf8 9.Bf3 c5 10.Nde2!? Nc6 11.b3!?!; 6.g3!?! d5 (6...0-0 7.Bg2 Re8 8.0-0) 7.e5 Ng4 8.e6!?! (8.Bg2 Nxe5 9.Qe2 Nbc6 10.Nxc6 Nxc6 11.Nxd5±) 8...Nf6 9.exf7+ Kxf7 10.Bg2±

**6...0-0 7.0-0 Bd7**

[Diagram top of next column]

7...c6 is a common move here: 8.Re1



Position after 7...Bd7

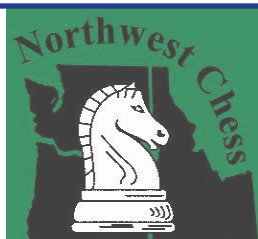
(8.a4!?) 8...b5 9.Bf1 b4 10.Nb1 c5; 7... Nc6 8.Re1 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 Nd7 is a different idea.; 7...Nxe4 8.Nxe4 d5 9.Bd3 dxe4 10.Bxe4 is a classic fork trick attempting to equalize by clearing the center pawns, though White's still has influence.

**8.Nf5 Nc6 9.Nxe7+ Nxe7 10.Qe2 Ng6  
11.f4 h6 12.Bd2 a6 13.a4 Re8 14.Rfe1  
Bc6 15.Qd3**

**15...Rf8 16.Bb3 Qc8 17.Re2**

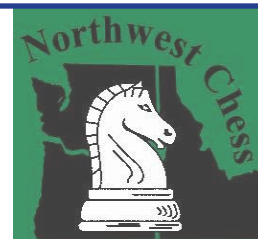
17.e5 is premature, because 17...Qg4 guards the g6-knight with tempo on g2.

**17...b6 18.e5! Nh4 19.exf6 Bxg2  
20.Rxg2 Nxg2 21.Kxg2 gxf6 22.Qg6+  
Kh8 23.Qxf6+ Kh7 24.Bd5 Qg4+  
25.Kf2 Rae8 26.Rg1 1-0**



# Northwest Chess Open

March 7-8, 2020



**Site:** Seattle Chess Club: 2150 North 107th Street, Seattle, WA 98133.

**Format:** 6-Round Swiss in one section. This is a fundraising tournament for Northwest Chess magazine.

**Organizer:** Northwest Chess Foundation.

**Time Control:** G/90, d10.

**Registration:** 9:00-9:45 AM on March 7 or preregistered.

**Rounds:** Saturday: 10 AM, 2 PM, 6 PM, Sunday 10 AM, 2 PM, 6 PM.

**Entry Fee:** \$35 by March 4, \$40 after or at site. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs, & WIMs.

**Byes:** Two half-point byes available in advance or by the end of Round 2. Northwest Chess Grand Prix event.

**Prizes:** Northwest Chess subscription extensions (includes WCF membership for WA residents)

1<sup>st</sup>: 3-yr ext., 2<sup>nd</sup>: 2-yr ext., 3<sup>rd</sup> 1-yr ext.  
1<sup>st</sup> U1800/U1600/U1400/U1200/UNR: 1-yr ext.

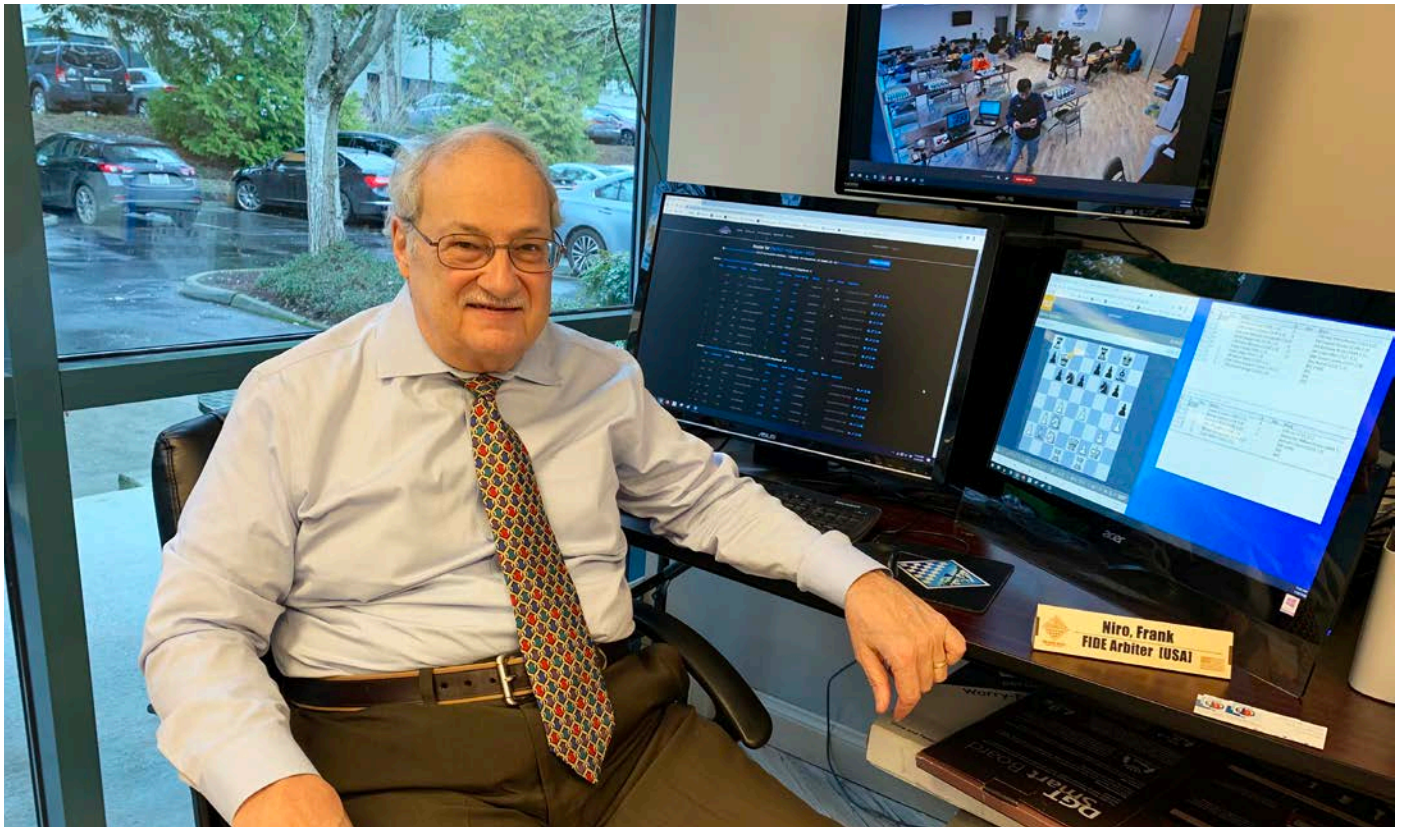
**Rating:** US Chess Rated, US Chess March 2020 rating supplement will be used to determine pairings and prizes. Current US Chess membership and Northwest Chess subscription required.

**Entries:** Make checks payable to Northwest Chess.

**Mail To:** Josh Sinanan, 3610 218<sup>th</sup> St. SW Brier, WA 98036.

**Phone:** (206) 769-3757, **Email:** joshsinanan@gmail.com.

**Registration:** <https://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration/>



Frank Niro checking out the PNWCC. Photo credit: Xuhao He.

# Harmon Memorial

## April 4-5, 2020

**Site:** Seattle Chess Club, 2150 North 107th Street, Seattle, WA 98133.

**Two Sections:** Open (FIDE Rated) and Reserve (U1800).

**Open:** 4-Round Swiss. **Time Control:** 40/120, SD/30, d10.

**Reserve:** 5-Round Swiss. **Time Control:** Saturday 30/90, SD/30, d10; Sunday 40/120, SD/30, d10.

**Registration:** Saturday 9:00 - 9:45 AM or preregistered.

**Rounds:** Open: Saturday 10:00 AM, 4:00 PM; Sunday 11:00 AM, 5:00 PM. Reserve: Saturday 10:00 AM, 2:30 PM, 7:00 PM; Sunday 11:00 AM, 5:00 PM.

**Entry Fee:** \$60 if postmarked or online by 3/28, \$70 after or at site. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs. \$40 play-up fee if rated under 1800 playing in Open section.

**Rating:** US Chess April 2020 rating supplement will be used to determine pairings and prizes. Foreign ratings used for players with no US Chess rating. Higher of US Chess or foreign ratings used at TD discretion.

**Prize Fund:** \$2,000 (based on 60 paid entries).

**Open:** 1st \$450, 2nd \$350, 1st U2100 \$150, 1st U1900 \$150.

**Reserve:** 1st \$320, 2nd \$220, 1st U1600 \$120, 1st U1400 \$120, 1st U1200/Unrated \$120.

**Byes:** One half-point bye available (Open section), two half-point byes available (Reserve section). Request before end of round 2. US Chess and WCF membership/Northwest Chess subscription required. US Chess Grand Prix Points: 6. US Chess Junior Grand Prix event. Northwest Chess Grand Prix event. NS. NC. W.

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

**Mail To:** Jacob Mayer, 9502 44th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115-2610. **Phone:** (206) 697-5625.

**Email:** [Jacob.Mayerchess@gmail.com](mailto:Jacob.Mayerchess@gmail.com).

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

# Western Idaho Open

By Jeffrey Roland

The Western Idaho Open was held at the Engineering Consultants, Inc. (ECI) in Boise, Idaho on December 14, 2019. Forty players attended.

Seth Machakos (1577-1662—4.0/4) was first place with the tournament's only perfect score. Alex Machin (1871-1967—3.5/4) and Kaustubh Kodihalli (1594-1622—3.5/4) tied for second-third places. Caleb Kircher (1790-1784—3.0/4) and Michael Presutti (1600-1605—3.0/4) tied for first place in Class B. Finn Belew (1370-1388—2.5/4) was first place in Class D. There was a three-way tie for first place in Class F between Darren Su (955-956—2.0/4), Leonardo Wang (923-995—2.0/4), and Hanford Chong (807-894—2.0/4). Three players tied for first place Unrated between Cole Kicmol (Unr.-551P—1.0/4), Yufei Qu (468P-430P—1.0/4), and Jason Wright (Unr.-679P—1.0/4).

Jeffrey Roland was the chief tournament director, assisted by Alise Pemsler and Jef Leifeste.

**Finn Belew (1370) –  
Alex James Machin (1871) [A36]**  
Western Idaho Open Boise, ID  
(R1), December 14, 2019  
[Ralph Dubisch]

**1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 g6 3.e4 d6 4.d3 Bg7 5.g3  
0-0 6.Bg2 c5 7.Nge2 Nc6 8.0-0 Ne8 9.f4**

Much more common: 9.Be3, often followed by something like 9...Nd4 10.Rb1 (Or 10.Qd2 Nc7 11.Bh6) 10...Nc7 (10...a5!?) 11.b4

**9...f5!? 10.Nd5?! e6 11.Ne3 Nc7  
12.Nc2?!**

Now we've definitely found independent territory. White has chosen to use his knights for passive defense of the d4-square.

**12...e5 13.Rb1 fxe4 14.dxe4 Nd4  
15.Ncxd4?!**



Position after 15.Ncxd4



(L-R) Finn Belew, Alex Machin. Photo credit: Jeffrey Roland.

I much prefer using the other knight for this capture. After 15.Ncxd4, the c2-knight can more easily reposition to the blockading square d3 via e1, and there are no worries about a pin with ...Bg4.

**15...exd4**

15...cxd4!? offers Black the possibility of using c5 for the knight.

**16.Qd3 Qf6?!**

Wild and crazy time: 16...b5!? 17.cxb5 d5 18.exd5? (18.b3∞) 18...Bf5 19.Be4? (19.Qc4 is far less clear, and though Stockfish likes Black in most lines, it would be necessary to prove excess compensation for two pawns in some of them.) 19...c4+;

Normal development: 16...Qe7; 16...Rb8.

**17.Bd2 Bd7 18.Rf2**

18.b4 b6 (18...Na6 19.b5 Nc7 20.a4±) 19.e5 Qe7 20.Bxa8 Rxa8 21.Rbe1±

**18...Bc6 19.Re1 Rae8 20.Nc1**

20.f5!?

**20...Qe7 21.Rfe2 Qd7 22.Rf1?!**

With 22.Qc2 b5 23.b3, and soon Nd3, White can finally bring the knight to the blockade point.

**22...b5 23.b3 bxc4**

More pressure on c4: 23...Na8!?, here or on the next move, heading to b6.

**24.bxc4 Na6 25.a3?! Qb7**

25...Nb8!? assumes there will soon be a bishop exchange, leaving the c6-square

available.

**26.Qb3**

26.Nb3; 26.g4! Rb8? (26...Nb8 27.g5 and it's evident that the discussion has shifted to White's kingside play, rather than Black's b-file ideas.) 27.f5 Qb1 28.Qg3± giving the white queen access to the kingside really changes the calculus.

**26...Rb8**



Position after 26...Rb8

For as long as any living player can remember, chess authors have been emphasizing the importance of having a plan, though far fewer have helped much in figuring out what the right plan might be. Here, Black has latched onto the idea of controlling the b-file, and he does a superb job of infiltrating; White has been mostly passively reacting to threats and ideas, and though he's managed to maintain a roughly balanced position so far, it's hard to see that being a recipe for long-term success. 26...Qxb3 27.Nxb3 Rb8 28.Na5 Ba8± is a different way to approach the b-file.

27.Qd3 Qb1 28.Qf3

28.Qxb1 Rxb1

28...Qc2 29.Qg4?

This should lose, but otherwise White has just been losing time shifting the queen around.

29...Qxc4

Faster: 29...d3! 30.Ref2 (30.Qe6+ Rf7 31.Ref2 Bd4 32.Qxd6 Rf6) 30...Bd4

30.f5 d3 31.Ref2 Bd4 32.fxg6



Position after 32.fxg6

32...Rb7

32...Rxf2! 33.Rxf2 (33.gxh7+ Kh8 34.Rxf2 Bxf2+) 33...Bxf2+! (33...Rf8?? 34.Nxd3! Qxd3 35.Qe6+ Kh8 36.g7+! Bxg7 37.Rxf8+ Bxf8 38.Qf6+ Kg8 39.Qe6+ Kh8 40.Qf6+) 34.Kxf2 Rf8+ 35.Ke1 (35.Kg1 Qd4+ 36.Kh1 Rf1+ 37.Bxf1 Bxe4+; 35.Bf3 Bxe4 36.gxh7+ Kh8) 35...Qd4 36.Qe6+ (36.Nxd3 Qg1+ 37.Ke2 Qxg2+) 36...Kh8 37.g7+ Kxg7 38.Qe7+ (38.Bh6+ Kh8 39.Bxf8 d2+ 40.Kd1 dxc1Q+ 41.Kxc1 Qg1+ 42.Kd2 Qxg2+-+; 38.Qh6+ Kg8 39.Qg5+ Kh8) 38...Kg8 39.Qg5+ Kh8-+

33.gxh7+ Kxh7??

33...Kh8+

34.Qh5+ Kg8 35.Bh6??

Black, with seven seconds on his clock, accepts one of his opponent's numerous draw offers. Of course Black is now winning on the board, with 35...Rxf2 36.Qg6+ Rg7, among others. But all-in-all, an entertaining upset.

Instead, White could have earned the half-point with 35.Qg6+ Rg7 36.Qxd6 Rxf2 37.Rxf2 Bxf2+ 38.Kxf2, and here a very messy draw is a reasonable result.

1/2-1/2

**Seth Machakos (1577) – Brian Lange (1413) [B34]**  
Western Idaho Open Boise, ID (R2), December 14, 2019  
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Bg7



Seth Machakos during his second round game. Photo credit: Jeffrey Roland.

5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Be3 Nf6 7.f3

7.Bc4 0-0 8.Bb3 d6 (8...a5 9.0-0 a4 10.Nxa4 Nxe4 11.Nb5 has tended to favor White in practice, though there could be opportunities for some home cooking in the complications.) 9.f3 Bd7 10.Qd2 reaches a relatively normal sort of Sicilian Modern Dragon.

7...Qb6?

7...0-0 8.Bc4 (8.Qd2 d5 and Black achieves one of the Sicilian goals, ...d5 in one move.) 8...Qb6 9.Bb3 Nxe4 10.Nd5 Qa5+ 11.c3 Nc5 12.Nxc6 dxc6 13.Nxe7+ Kh8 14.Nxc8

8.Nf5 Qxb2 9.Na4 Qa3 10.Nxg7+ Kf8



Position after 10...Kf8

11.Bh6

11.c3! saves the a4-knight as well, because 11...Kxg7? 12.Bc5 traps the queen.

11...Qxa4 12.Nh5+ Kg8

12...Ke8 13.Nxf6+ exf6 has a better chance of survival.

13.Nxf6+ exf6 14.Qd6 Qb4+ 15.Qxb4

Nxb4 16.Kd2 d5 17.a3 Nc6 18.exd5 Ne5 19.Re1 Bd7 20.h3 Re8



Position after 20...Re8

21.f4 Nf3+ 22.gxf3 f5 23.Rxe8+ Bxe8 24.Bc4 f6 25.Re1 Bf7 26.Re7 b5 27.d6 bxc4 28.d7

Pretty.

1-0

**Caleb Kircher (1790) – Seth Machakos (1577) [C47]**  
Western Idaho Open Boise, ID (R4), December 14, 2019  
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nc3 Nc6 4.g3 Bc5 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.h3 h6 8.d3 Be6 9.Na4 Bb6 10.Kh2 Re8 11.Nxb6 axb6 12.a3 Qd7

12...d5

13.Qe2

13.c4!?

13...b5 14.Ng1?!?

Undeveloping and simultaneously leaving d4 without protection. White must have intended the withdrawal to allow f4, but plans must take into account the opponent as well as one's own potential. 14.Bd2

**14...Nd4**

Or 14...d5! White's bishop-pair isn't the primary feature of this position; Black's space and development advantages outweigh any possible future benefits of the bishops, assuming they can both stay on the board long enough to be useful. 15.exd5 Bxd5 16.Bxd5 Nxd5

**15.Qd1 b4**

15...Qc6 16.c3 Nb3

**16.Be3 bxa3 17.Bxd4 exd4 18.bxa3 Ra4**

18...c5

**19.f4 Qb5 20.f5?!**

20.Rb1 succeeds in exchanging a3 for b7, a net gain for White and the last real chance to equalize. 20...Qa6?! (20...Qc5 21.Rxb7 Rxa3) 21.e5 dxe5 22.Bxb7 leaves White threatening both the e5-pawn and a fork on c6, so Black will need to come up with compensation for the exchange.

Yes, there is some, but only enough to compete, not to claim an edge.

**20...Bd7 21.Ne2**

21.Rb1 Qa6 22.e5?! dxe5 23.Bxb7 Qa5+ is vastly different from the previous line: White has given up the e5-pawn, will lose a3, and has no fork.; 21.Nf3 looks the most natural try now, in order to meet 21...d5? with 22.e5±

**21...d5!**



Position after 21...d5

The positional wrangling of the opening has gone well for Black, and now middlegame tactics are decisive.

**22.exd5 Nxd5 23.Qd2**

23.c4 Qb2 (The alternative 23...dxc3!? 24.Bxd5 Rxe2+ 25.Qxe2 Qxd5 offers quite a bit of compensation for the exchange.; 23...Ne3 24.cxb5 Nxd1 25.Nxd4 Nb2 26.Nc2 Re2 27.Ne1 Bxb5 looks fun, too.) 24.Bxd5 (24.Qc1 Rxe2 25.Qxb2 Rxb2 26.cxd5 c5) 24...Qxe2+ 25.Qxe2 (25.Kg1 Qxd1 26.Raxd1 Rxa3 27.Be4 Bc6 28.Bxc6 bxc6) 25...Rxe2+ 26.Kg1 Re3. There are many targets on the third rank.

**23...Ne3 24.f6 Nxe2! 25.Kxe2 Bxh3+ 26.Kg1**

26.Kxh3 Qh5+ 27.Kg2 Rxe2++

**26...Bxf1 27.Rxf1 Qg5 28.Rf4 Rxa3 29.Kf2 Ra6 30.Nxd4 Rxf6 31.Nf3 Rxf4 32.gxf4 Qc5+ 33.d4 Qf5 34.Ne5 g5**

34...f6

**35.Qd1 Qxf4+ 36.Kg2 f6 37.Qh5 Rxe5**

37...Qe4+ 38.Kf1 Re7

**38.Qg6+ Kf8 39.Qxh6+ Ke7 40.Qg7+ Ke6 41.dxe5 Qxe5 42.Qg8+ Kd6 43.Qd8+ Kc6 44.c4 g4 45.Kf2 f5 46.Kf1 f4 47.Qd1 f3 48.Qa4+ b5 49.Qa6+ Kd7 50.Kf2 Qe2+ 51.Kg3 Qxc4 52.Kf2 Qc5+ 53.Ke1 g3 54.Qb7 Qc1# 0-1**



(L-R) Seth Machakos, Caleb Kircher. Photo credit: Jeffrey Roland.





*Seth Machakos, 2019 Western Idaho Open Champion. Photo credit: Jeffrey Roland.*

# The 2019 Glen Buckendorf / Buz Eddy Memorial Northwest Grand Prix

Murlin Varner, Administrator (mevjr54@outlook.com)

2019 is over, the standings are final, the checks may even be in the mail. Our winners are Michael Cambareri for Idaho, and Ralph Anthony for Washington. Cambareri is a first time winner, while Anthony won Washington once before, in 2013. Of course, there are many other class winners, some new, some previous winners. See the final standings below.

December offered only three events, but they still had significance. In Washington, we had the monthly Tornado and Quads at the Seattle Chess Club. There was one result of significance from these two events. John (Jack) Christy attended the quads, didn't win any games, but collected two points for completing his schedule. Those two points moved him into a tie for second place in Class C. Paid for his entry fee, with a little to spare. Barring any difficulties in fee collection, the prizes in Washington are \$100.64 for first and \$50.32 for second.

In Idaho, there was one very significant event to end the year. The Western Idaho Open in Boise had 40 players, and this caused many changes in the standings. Nine players improved their positions on the leaderboard, and three moved themselves into cash spots. In Class B, Dwayne Derryberry moved into possession of second place as a result of his efforts in Boise. In Class C, two players, Bryce Leifeste and Joshua Price, ended in a tie for second after the dust settled. Some other players held on to their cash spots due to their performances in Boise. The prizes for Idaho are tentatively set at \$14.31 for first and \$7.15 for second.

In Washington the most active player was Lois Ruff, winner of the Class D prize by a margin of 26.5 points, with 28 events. Following Ruff were Ralph Anthony (23), Viktors Pupols (22), Stephen Buck (19), and Peter O'Gorman (18). Four Idaho players were able to attend five events each: Griffin Herr, Adam Porth, Darren Su, and Finn Belew. All won their respective class contests.

Now for 2020. The new honoree will be announced in the next issue. Points are already accruing as I write this. And Oregon is back! Their first event in the new year (Neil Dale Memorial) was the very first weekend of January. Also in January were the Seattle Chess Club Quads and Tornado, and the Seattle City Championship. The Neil Dale Memorial and the Seattle City Championship were both offering double Grand Prix points. In February, we have six events, in three locations. In Seattle there are the SCC Tornado, the WCF President's Cup and two SCC Quads. In Boise there is the annual Idaho Closed, limited to Idaho residents only. In Spokane we will have the annual Dave Collyer memorial to cap off the month. Both the President's Cup and the Dave Collyer Memorial are offering triple Grand Prix points. (Additional Oregon events may be announced after the writing of this report. Check the inside back cover for more details.)

Data below current as of the end of 2019. On to 2020!

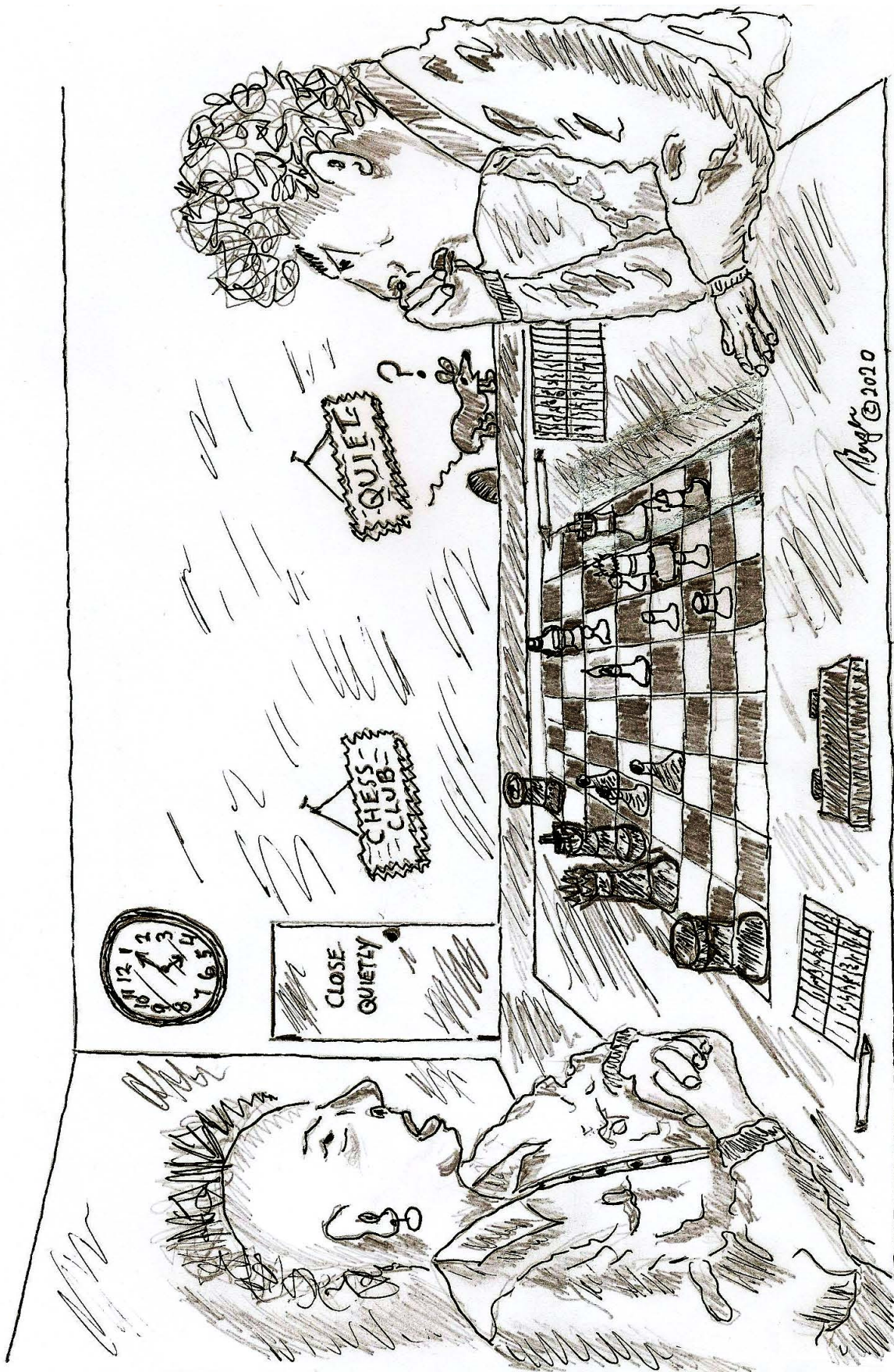
## 2019 Memorial Northwest Grand Prix Standings

Idaho			Washington			Other Places						
last	first	pts.	last	first	pts.	last	first	state	pts.			
			<b>Masters</b>									
			1	Pupols	Viktors	181.0	1	Truelson	Joseph	MN	78.0	
			2	Perez	Ignacio	138.0	2	Raptis	Nick	OR	19.5	
			3	Sinanan	Joshua C	91.5	3	Donaldson	W John	CA	18.0	
			4	Lee	Megan	58.5	4	Cigan	Jason D	OR	16.5	
			5	Schill	William J	53.5						
<b>M/X/Class A</b>			<b>Experts</b>									
1	Cambareri	Michael E	47.5	1	Casey	Garrett W	123.5	1	Nair	Roshen S	OR	69.0
2	Geyman	Jonathan P	34.5	2	Whale	Nicholas M	123.0	2	Moore	Michael	CAN	54.0
3	Kircher	Caleb P	21.5	3	Frantz	Joseph K	115.0	3	Huang	Patrick W	HI	42.0
4	Machin	Alex J	18.5	4	Mahajan	Rushaan	114.0	3	Four tied at			36.0
5	Wei	James	16.0	5	Anand	Vignesh	110.0					

Idaho			Washington			Other Places						
last	first	pts.	last	first	pts.	last	first	state	pts.			
<b>Class B</b>			<b>Class A</b>									
1	Herr	Griffin G	39.0	1	Vijayakumar	Advaith	134.5	1	Vega	Isaac	OR	97.5
2	Derryberry	Dewayne R	19.0	2	Kaelin	Alex	107.0	2	Sripada	Havish	OR	75.0
3	Daigle	Adrian P	18.0	3	Chang	Eddie	101.5	3	Pitre	H G	CA	60.0
4	Kodihalli	Kaustubh	15.5	4	Kuhner	Mary K	100.0	4	Murray	David E	OR	45.0
5	Three tied at		15.0	5	Kurungod Anoop	Pranav	91.5	5	Hosford	Michael J	OR	39.0
<b>Class C</b>			<b>Class B</b>									
1	Porth	Adam	27.5	1	Anthony	Ralph J	202.0	1	Kodrapu	Ishaan K	OR	51.0
2	Leifeste	Bryce	19.5	2	Buck	Stephen J	186.0	2	Beauchet	Pierre-Hadrien	OR	46.5
2	Price	Joshua J	19.5	3	Lainson	Silas	149.5	3	Lykins	Pace	OR	36.0
4	Ang	Ching-E N	19.0	4	Gupta	Anand	145.0	4	Qu	Jayden	CAN	33.0
5	Machakos	Seth D	17.0	5	Li	Edward	117.0	5	Jiang	Kate Y	CAN	30.0
<b>Class D</b>			<b>Class C</b>									
1	Belew	Finn C	21.0	1	Varner	Murlin E	118.5	1	Yang	Arnold T	OR	81.0
2	Shepard	River C	15.5	2	Christy	John P	108.0	2	Morrissey	Patrick W	OR	39.0
3	Glass	Evan M	14.0	2	Johar	Mudit	108.0	3	Lykins	Chad	OR	30.0
4	Wang	William J	14.0	4	Chen	Angela Z	107.5	4	Mok	Gillian	CAN	24.0
5	Two tied at		10.5	5	Liu	Austin	102.5	5	Buckner	Moises H	OR	15.0
<b>Class E and Below</b>			<b>Class D And Below</b>									
1	Su	Darren	23.5	1	Ruff	Lois A	150.0	1	Sripada	Anisha	OR	79.5
2	Porth	Darwin A	14.5	2	Li	Emma	123.5	2	Yang	Arthur T	OR	60.0
3	Leifeste	Jef	14.0	3	Karukayil	Johan	121.0	3	Sripathi	Prajna	OR	39.0
4	Van Law	Quentin	14.0	4	Tatikonda	Ninanth	102.0	4	Conley	Fred	AK	36.0
4	Chong	Hanford	13.0	5	Zhang	Michelle	100.0	4	Jiang	William J	CAN	36.0

## Overall Leaders, by State

1	Cambareri	Michael E	47.5	1	Anthony	Ralph J	202.0	<p>There are no prizes for players residing outside of the Northwest Chess area.</p> <p>This information is presented here so our readers can see that we do draw from other states and those players are contributing to our Grand Prix prize fund.</p>		
2	Herr	Griffin G	39.0	2	Buck	Stephen J	186.0			
3	Geyman	Jonathan P	34.5	3	Pupols	Viktors	181.0			
4	Porth	Adam	27.5	4	Ruff	Lois A	150.0			
5	Su	Darren	23.5	5	Lainson	Silas	149.5			
6	Kircher	Caleb P	21.5	6	Gupta	Anand	145.0			
7	Belew	Finn C	21.0	7	Perez	Ignacio	138.0			
8	Leifeste	Bryce	19.5	8	Vijayakumar	Advaith	134.5			
8	Price	Joshua J	19.5	9	Casey	Garrett W	123.5			
10	Ang	Ching-E N	19.0	9	Li	Emma	123.5			
10	Derryberry	Dewayne R	19.0	11	Whale	Nicholas M	123.0			
12	Machin	Alex J	18.5	12	Karukayil	Johan	121.0			



**HAVING NEVER GOTTEN OVER HIS CHILDISH BEHAVIOR,  
HEROLD ALWAYS LIKED TO BRAG TO HIS OPPONENT  
THAT, "MY PIECES ARE BIGGER THAN YOURS!"**



# Pacific Northwest Chess Center (PNWCC)

12020 113th Ave NE #C-200, Kirkland, WA 98034

<https://www.uschesshub.com/Organizers/Details/A6051987>

PNWCC  
Website



## NEW

All PNWCC Events will be registered through USChess Hub – <https://www.uschesshub.com/>  
a Website created and maintained by Xuhao He and FM Anthon He



## Friday Night Events

Dates	Description	Rounds and Fees
Every Friday Except the week of FIDE Open	G/45;d5 Duel/G/25;d3 Rapids	2/3 (with accelerated pairing)

## Scholastic and Beginner Event

Dates	Description	Rounds
Feb 29	Transformers G45;d5	4

## One-Day Tournament

Dates	Description	Rounds
March 1st	G60 – Adults and USCF 2000+ play for free	4

## PNWCC Monthly USCF Open

Dates	Description	Rounds
Feb 1 -2	6-round G90;d10	6

## PNWCC FIDE Tournaments

Dates	Theme	Featured GM's	Rounds
March 12 – 15	Anniversary II	2+ GM	7
April 16 – 19	Skagit Tulips II	2=GM	7

**Tournament dates and details are subject to changes. Visit our website for most recent updates.**

# Seattle Chess Club Tournaments

Address  
2150 N 107 St, B85  
Seattle WA 98133

Infoline  
206-417-5405

seattlechess.club  
kleistcf@aol.com

Address for Entries  
SCC Tnmt Dir  
2420 S 137 St  
Seattle WA 98168



The SCC online registration system is now open at [www.seattlechess.club](http://www.seattlechess.club).

**Feb 1, 29; Mar 28** **Saturday Quads**  
Format: 3-RR, 4-plyr sec. by rtg. TC: G/120;d5. EF: \$9 (+\$7 fee for non-SCC). Prizes: Free entry for next quad. Reg: 9-9:45 a.m. Rds: 10:00-2:15-6:30. Misc: US Chess, WCF memb. req'd, OSA. NS.

**Feb 23, Mar 15** **Sunday Tornado**  
Format: 4-SS. TC: G/60; d5. 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 memb. req'd, OSA. NS.

**Mar 29** **SCC Novice**  
Format: 4-SS. Open to U1200 and UNR. TC: G/75; d5. EF: \$11 by 3/25, \$16 at site. (-\$2 SCC mem., -\$1 mem. other NW dues-req'd CCs). Prizes: SCC membership. 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.

## WCF @ the SCC

<b>Presidents' Cup</b>	<i>Feb. 15-16</i>
<b>WA Girls' Champ.</b>	<i>Feb. 21-23</i>
<b>NWC Open</b>	<i>Mar. 7-8</i>

## SCC Adult Swiss

February 29-March 1

A 4-round Swiss open to those born before 3/2/1999 with guaranteed prizes of \$190 (5 per prize group).

First	\$60
Second	\$30
U2000	\$25
U1800	\$25
U1600	\$25
U1400/Unr	\$25

**Time Control:** G/120; +30.

**Entry Fees:** Free for SCC members. Others — \$10.

**Registration:** Sat. 10-10:45 a.m.

**Rounds:** 11-4:30, 11-4:30.

**Byes:** 1 (Sunday rounds, commit at registration).

**Miscellaneous:** US Chess & WCF/ICA membership req'd (OSA). No smoking.

## Seattle Spring Open

March 20-22 or 21-22

A two-section Swiss (4 rounds — Open, 5 rounds — Reserve) with a time control of 40/90 and SD/30 with a 30-second increment (Reserve two-day schedule — Round 1, G/60; d5). The prize fund of \$1000 is based on 54 paid entries, 6 per prize group.

### a Northwest Grand Prix event

#### Open

<b>First</b>	<b>\$220</b>
<b>Second</b>	<b>\$160</b>
<b>U2100</b>	<b>\$100</b>

#### Reserve (U1950)

<b>First</b>	<b>\$120</b>
<b>Second</b>	<b>\$80</b>
<b>U1750</b>	<b>\$70</b>
<b>U1550</b>	<b>\$60</b>
<b>U1350</b>	<b>\$50</b>
<b>Unrated</b>	<b>\$20</b>

#### Plus Score Pool — \$120

**Entry Fees:** \$38 if rec'd by 3/18 (\$26 SCC memb., \$32 memb. of other dues-required CCs in the NW), \$48 at site (\$36 SCC memb., \$42 memb. of other dues-required CCs in the NW).

**Unrated**—Free with purchase of 1-yr US Chess & 1-yr WCF. **Add \$1 to any EF for 2-day schedule. Add \$12 for U1800 playing in Open Section.**

**Registration: Open**—Sat. 11- noon; **Reserve**—Fri. 7-7:45pm, Sat. 9-9:45am. **Rounds: Open**—Sat. 12:30-6:15, Sun. 11-4:30; **Reserve**—Fri. 8, Sat. (10 @ G/60)-12:30-6:15, Sun. 11-4:30. **Byes:** 1 in Open, 2 in Reserve (Sunday rounds, commit at registration).

**Miscellaneous:** US Chess & WCF membership req'd. No smoking.

# Upcoming Events

♣ denotes 2020 Northwest Grand Prix event.

Pacific Northwest Chess Center events see page 29. Seattle Chess Club events see page 30.

- ♣ **Feb 15-16** Washington President's Cup, Seattle, WA. Half-Page Ad page 19.
- ♣ **Feb 15-17** Idaho Closed State Chess Championship, **Boise, ID.** 6SS, Time Control: 30/120; d5, SD/60; d5. Section: Open. Site: The Riverside Hotel, 2900 W Chinden Blvd, Boise, ID 83714. Registration: Idaho residents only. ICA & US Chess memberships required. Entry Fee: \$30 per player. Discount for online advance registration (encouraged!) closes 9 pm MST on 2/14. Same day registration \$40 (online or at site). Over 80, IMs, FMs, GMs free. Check-in: 9-9:30 2/15. Rd Times: 2/15 10 am, 5 pm, 2/16 8 am, 5 pm, 2/17 8 am, 3 pm. Business meeting 3 pm 2/16. 1/2 pt bye Rds 1-5 only. Maximum 1-half point bye, Rounds 1-5, commit before round is paired. 0-point bye round 6. Prizes: Overall: 1, 2, 3. Classes: X, A, B, C, D, E (includes F & below), Unrated, plus Top Junior, Senior, and Woman. Details: idahochessassociation@gmail.com, Online registration at [www.idahochessassociation.com](http://www.idahochessassociation.com), (208) 631-5357.

**Feb 21** IM John Donaldson Simul and Lecture, Spokane, WA. Site: Kress Gallery, River Park Square, 808 West Main, Spokane. Lecture at 6 p.m., Donaldson Simul starts at 6:45 p.m. Fee: \$10 per board (bring your own equipment). Blitz Tournament: 2:30–3:00 registration at Kress Gallery (2nd level River Park Square). Blitz event will end by 6:00. Format depending upon entries.

♣ **Feb 22-23** The 28th Dave Collyer Memorial, **Millwood, WA.** Location: Millwood Presbyterian Church Community Center, 3223 N. Marguerite, Millwood, WA. I-90 Exit 287; north on Argonne Road to light at Euclid; turn left, two blocks. Format: A computer-paired, five-round Swiss System event. Registration: Sat. 9:30-10:30. Rounds: 11-2:30-7; 9-1:30 or ASAP. Time control: Round 1: G/90,d5; Rounds 2-5: G/115,d5. Entry fee: \$28 if received by 2/20, \$35 at the door; under 19 \$5 less. Telephone entries accepted (pay at door). All registrants must check in by 10:40 unless a first-round bye was granted. \$1,800 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 prior round; Sunday bye must be requested by end of round 3. Director reserves the right to use class pairings in final round. PRIZES: First \$350, Second \$225, Third \$125. Class Prizes: Top Expert \$100; \$100 first, \$70 second each in A, B, C, D, and E/unrated. Jim Waugh Biggest Upset prizes: \$100 and \$50 (non-provisional ratings). Entries: Spokane CC, c/o Kevin Korsmo, N. 9923 Moore, Spokane, WA 99208-9339. For information please call (509) 270-1772. Check website for updates: [www.spokanechessclub.org](http://www.spokanechessclub.org).

♣ **Mar 7-8** Northwest Chess Open, **Seattle, WA.** Half-Page Ad page 20.

♣ **Apr 4-5** Harmon Memorial, **Seattle, WA.** Half-Page Ad page 21.

**Northwest Chess**  
c/o Orlov Chess Academy  
4174 148th Ave NE, Building I, Suite M  
Redmond, WA 98052-5164

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