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Table of Contents

Queen And Pawn Death Philip Peterson.....	Front Cover
From The Editor's Desk Jeffrey Roland.....	3
CJA Awards (NWC wins best print magazine, and honorable mention for best online magazine)	4
Still More Games From The Emerald City Open Various Players	6
National Tournament Of State Senior Champions Mary Kuhner	14
Washington Game/60 (Half-Page Ad) online via Chess.com Oct 3	16
Susan Kantor (1955-2020) Jeffrey Roland.....	17
Humor In Chess (Sequel) Karen Schmidt.....	18
Readers' Showcase Various Players	20
Seattle Seafair Open Derek Zhang	22
Washington Blitz Chess Championship (Half-Page Ad) online via Chess.com Oct 4	24
Vancouver Open Rekha Sagar.....	34
USPS Statement Of Ownership.....	41
15th SPF National Open for Boys & Girls (Full-Page Ad) online via Chess.com Oct 10-11	42
Seattle Classic Scholastic Jacob Mayer	43
Washington Challenger's Cup (Half-Page Ad) online via Chess.com Oct 24-25.....	44
Washington Class Championships (Full-Page Ad) online via Chess.com Nov 27-29.....	45
Northwest Chess Grand Prix Murlin Varner	46
Lenderman's Penultimate Philip Peterson.....	Back Cover

From The Editor's Desk

This is my 95th consecutive monthly issue as editor.

I usually wear multiple hats in each issue, being editor, writer, and even photographer. But this time I wore just the editor's hat, because I had so much material submitted from incredible sources. (Note for accuracy the exception to what I just said, I did submit a photo I took in 2011 of Susan Kantor on page 17.) For the last couple months, I've wanted to put out a 48-page issue, but it's not as easy as that. Finally, this month there was no way I could do only 32 pages and still put in all that I wanted to put in—in fact, Ralph Dubisch seriously joked with me yesterday (after this issue was 98% finished) that I could do a 64-page issue, and while he was kidding, he was also not kidding!

I didn't write any Idaho articles in this issue. I could have. After all, Idaho just started holding online tournaments too (WCF has been doing them for some time now), and at the time of this issue, Idaho has run four online tournaments. Likelihood is that I will catch up (or at least start) these unwritten Idaho articles next issue. And while the pandemic had for a time stopped over-the-board activity in the Northwest, we still got contributions from a couple Oregon players, all three games appearing in "Readers' Showcase" on page 20-21.

I should probably point out and recognize the incredible contributions from GM Aleksandr Lenderman who submitted and annotated so many games they are hard to count, and after he did that, he even annotated some additional games played by his students in the events. Also, the incredible photography of former *Northwest Chess* editor Philip Peterson, whose photos are so stunning that the idea of putting a caption on them proves challenging! And to the best of my knowledge, I have caught up all contributions by all players who submitted annotated games through the events covered. This issue is jam-packed with good stuff!

Northwest Chess won the Chess Journalist of America award for Best Magazine/Newsletter (Print) for the seventh year in a row, and this year we also entered in the Best Magazine/Newsletter (Online) for the first time ever, and were recognized with an honorable mention. That doesn't mean we were second-place, that means a significant number of voters considered us BEST, so we're already recognized as a great online magazine, but there's room for improvement. We also won another honorable mention award for "The Magic Year of 1971," John Donaldson for Best Historic Article which was in the [June 2020 issue](#) (that was out the end of May, so it qualified.)

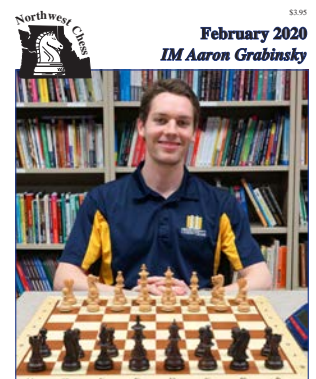
It has long been my opinion that we can be the best print magazine and the best online magazine too at the same time without either one being negatively impacted—the best of both worlds! So we are going to be improving our online presence. We plan to try to figure out a better way to present the games online, but for now, [look at page two \(upper left there is a link\)](#) for a link to the online games file (note this was also a link to that; see we're learning!)

Anyway, I hope you enjoy this issue. It has been truly a joy to produce. Keep contributing material, never stop, it is by players submitting material that we have things to put into these issues. Keep subscribing too! Thanks too for the loyal support we have had from readers, something we never take for granted, and something we have cherished since 1947.

Jeffrey Roland, Editor



2020 CJA Awards!
State Magazine/
Newsletter (Print)
(Winner)
plus
State Magazine/
Newsletter (Online)
(Honorable Mention)



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Joshua M. Anderson

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Chairman - CJA Awards Committee

Still More Games From The Emerald City Open

This is the third and probably final monthly installment of games from this event (see also August 2020 and September 2020 issues).

We begin with all five games from GM Aleksandr Lenderman, who annotates his own games and gives us a view of his journey through the tournament; we conclude the article with the last games that were submitted to us as annotated by players.—Editor.

**Michael Moore (1950) –
Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) [B07]**
Emerald City Open
Chess.com (R1), June 20, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

This is my round one game against Michael Moore. Interestingly enough I've also played him in the Memorial Day Washington Open in round two of that tournament, as well as in the blitz event. So this is the third time I'm playing him, which is quite unusual, but that means that I am getting more familiar with his style. This is the first time I have Black against him.

1.d4 d6 2.e4

First small surprise. I thought he's mostly playing with Nf3 and g3 setups here based on his recent games. I expected 2.Nf3.

2...Nf6 3.Nc3 e6



Position after 3...e6

Counter surprise. This is a very unusual move but in my opinion, better than it looks. I've played this move twice before in classical games, winning against a 2450 FIDE player and a 2300 FIDE player. It is a surprise weapon, trying to get the person out of theory right away. Since I know that Michael is reasonably knowledgeable in theory, I figured this would be a better choice than a more traditional continuation. 3...e5, 3...Nbd7, 3...g6, and 3...c6 are also possible moves.

4.Be3

4.Nf3 and 4.f4 are more common here.

4...Nc6

4...Be7 was maybe more flexible.

5.Bd3

Here 5.f3 might be the best setup for White, more consistent with Be3. Also, now ...e5 can be met with d5, and ...Ng4 is shut down. 5...e5 6.d5 (6.Nge2); 5.h3 Be7 6.f4 was also possible.

5...e5 6.dxe5

6.d5 was more ambitious and led to a complex fight. 6...Ne7 7.Nce2 (7.h3).

6...dxe5 7.h3 Bb4 8.Nf3

I thought 8.Nge2 was safer.

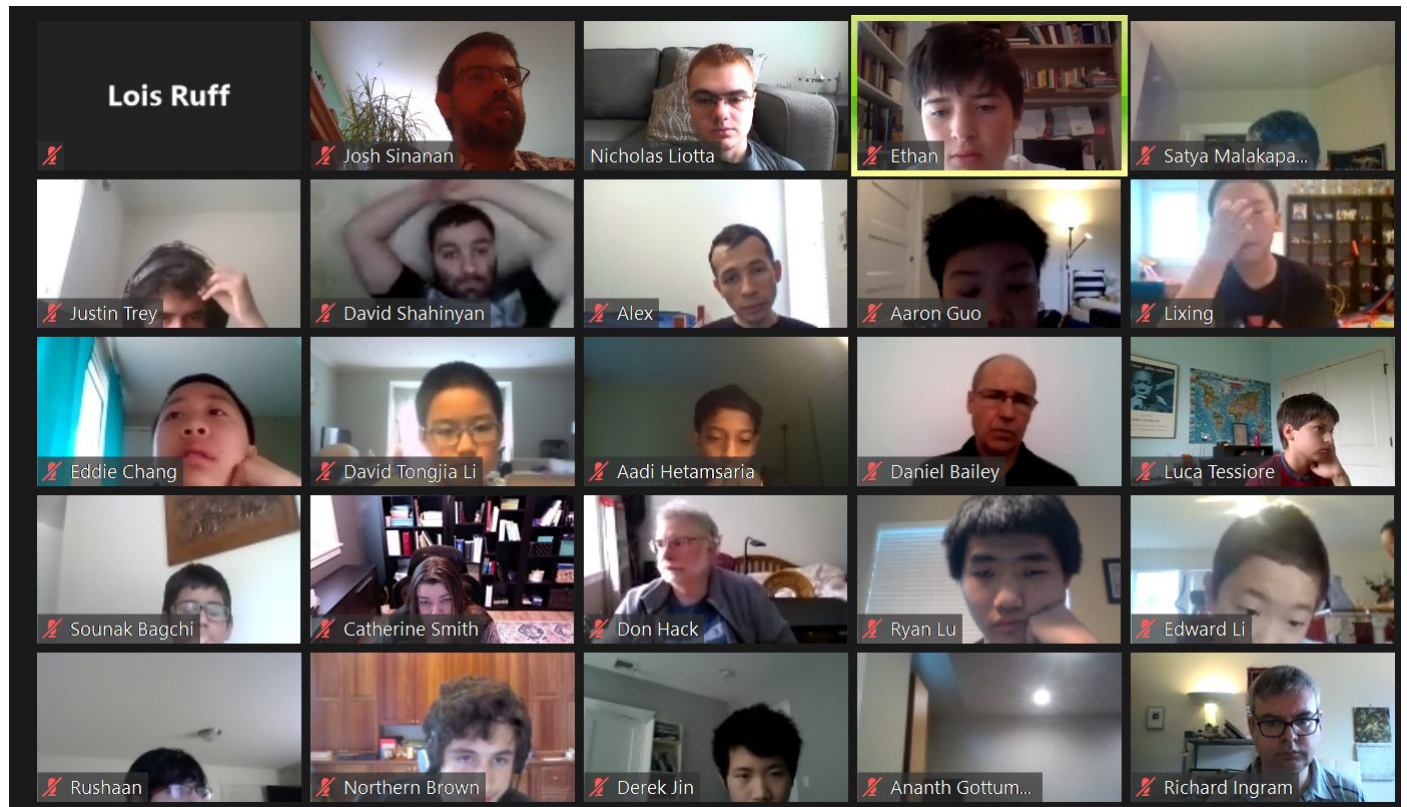
8...0-0 9.0-0 Bxc3 10.bxc3 Qe7



Position after 10...Qe7

Here I was quite happy with this unbalanced structure.

11.Qe2 Rd8 12.Rfb1?!



This move seemed strange to me. He wanted to stop ...Be6 perhaps, but I was planning to play ...b6 anyway. 12.Bg5! was probably better.

12...b6 13.Bg5 h6 14.Bh4 g5 15.Nxg5!?



Position after 15.Nxg5

I have to say, I underestimated this move. I didn't think it worked, but somehow it created some problems for me. If 15.Bg3 Nh5, I liked my position. I thought I go ...Nf4, and also none of the tactics really work for him. 16.Bxe5 (16.Nxe5 Nxg3 17.Nxc6 Nxe2+ I take the queen with check, that's the key point; 16.Bb5 Nxg3 17.fxg3 Na5+) 16...Nxe5 17.Nxe5 Nf4.

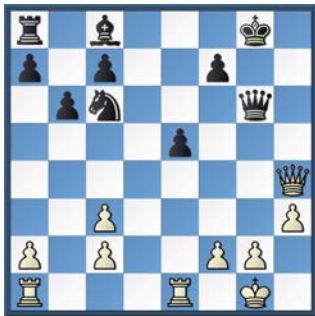
15...hxg5 16.Bxg5 Rd6 17.Qf3

Here I thought for a while, and I was happy to find a good idea to give the material back but get rid of his most dangerous pieces.

17...Qe6 18.Bc4 Qxc4 19.Bxf6 Rxf6?!

But it turned out this wasn't necessary. 19...Qe6 20.Qg3+ Kf8. I somehow didn't consider allowing the bishop to stay on f6, but in fact there is no mate. I have everything covered, and I'll end up simply with an extra piece. 21.Qg7+ Ke8 22.Qg8+ Kd7. Here the knight on c6 covers the d8-square.

20.Qxf6 Qxe4 21.Re1 Qg6 22.Qh4



Position after 22.Qh4

Here he definitely has some play; I probably did not handle the complications in the best way.

22...Bf5

22...f5 was better, a prophylaxis against Re3. (23.Re3 f4.)

23.Re3 Qd6

23...Qe6 24.f4 concerned me.

24.Rg3+

24.Qg5+! Bg6 (I was planning 24...Qg6, and after 25.Qh4 to play 25...Qe6) 25.h4 was stronger for White. Objectively White is not worse here.

24...Bg6



Position after 24...Bg6

25.Re1?!

This turned out to be too slow. 25.Qg5! Again, this was important to try to play a quick h4.

25...Kg7 26.Ree3 Rh8 27.Qc4 Ne7

Now I'm consolidating and getting my pieces into good squares.

28.Ref3

Creating a not-so-subtle threat of taking on f7.

28...Nd5 29.Qg4 Nf4 30.Kh2 Rh5 31.Qc8



31.Rxf4 exf4 32.Qxh5 fxg3+ was obviously winning for me.

31...e4

31...Ne2 was tempting but less clear because of the intermediate move 32.Rd3!

32.Re3 Rh8 33.Qg4 Nh5 34.Rxe4 Nf6 35.Qf3 Nxe4 36.Qxe4 Qxg3+ 37.fxg3 Bxe4

An interesting round one struggle. It was an exciting warmup.

0-1

Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) – Eshan Guha (2129) [E18]
Emerald City Open
Chess.com (R2), June 20, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

In this game I am playing against one of my higher-rated students, Eshan Guha, who is 2100+ US Chess, and a very hard-working student. He's a tough competitor and very resilient. I expected a tough game, and indeed, got one.

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.d4 Be7 5.g3 0-0 6.Bg2 b6

Probably this is favorable for White. If Black wants to play a Closed Catalan, he should usually play ...c6 first.

7.cxd5 exd5 8.0-0 Bb7 9.Bf4 Na6 10. Ne5



Position after 10.Ne5

I think this is one move too soon. I couldn't recall my earlier game precisely: 10.Rc1 is better first, and then after ...c5, see how he takes back. Meanwhile, White is flexible. 10...c5 11.dxc5 bxc5 (11...Nxc5 12.Nb5) 12.Qb3 Qb6 13.Qxb6 (13.Nd2) 13...axb6 14.Nd2.

10...c5 11.dxc5 Nxc5

Now this should be fine for Black.

12.Rc1 Nfe4

12...Rc8 13.Bh3 Ne6 was possibly more logical. (13...d4!?)

13.Nxe4 dxe4 14.Qc2 Rc8 15.Qb1

15.Rfd1 Nd3.

15...Bg5

15...g5 16.Rfd1 Bd5 17.b4!±.

16.Rfd1 Qf6

I expected 16...Qe7, although here I'm also better. 17.b4 Bxf4 18.gxf4 f6 (18...Ne6 19.Rd7) 19.bxc5 fxe5 20.cxb6 axb6 21.Qb3+ Kh8 22.fxe5 Qxe5 23.Qxb6± with an extra pawn.

17.Rxc5 bxc5 18.Nd7 Qf5 19.Bxg5 Qxg5

19...Rfe8 20.Be3+–.

20.Nxf8 Rxf8 21.Bxe4 Bxe4 22.Qxe4 g6

Now this should be a relatively easy technical win, but I was really misplaying it, possibly getting too relaxed in a winning position.

23.b3?



Position after 23.b3

I'm very upset at myself for this lazy move. There was absolutely no reason to let him trade rooks and contest the file. 23.Kg2 Rd8 24.Qe3; 23.Qc4 was a nice prophylactic move: 23...Rd8 24.Rxd8+ Qxd8 25.Qxc5 Qd1+ 26.Kg2 Qxe2 27.Qxa7 Qe4+ 28.f3+–.

23...Rd8 24.Rxd8+ Qxd8 25.Kg2 Qa5 26.a4 Qb6 27.Qd5 Qc7 28.e4 Qe7?!

28...h6; 28...h5 was more stodgy.

29.a5 Qc7 30.a6 Qb6 31.Qb7 Qe6 32.h3 Kg7 33.Qxa7?

I thought this was just winning easily, but in fact the battle only starts here. I'm very ashamed at myself for having this letdown in an easily winning position. 33.Kg1 h5 34.Qxa7 Qxe4 35.Qb7+– was just so simple.

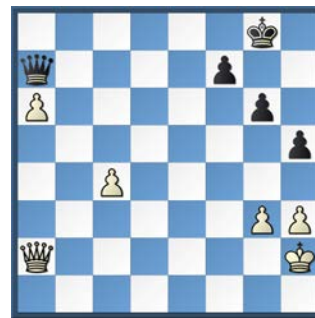
33...Qxe4+ 34.Kh2 Qe2 35.Qb7 c4!

A very nice resource, which I just missed.

36.bxc4?!

Again not the most precise. 36.Kg2 c3 (I was afraid of ...c3, but White should be winning here.) 37.a7 c2 38.Qc6 Qd2 39.a8Q c1Q 40.Qce8. I thought that with both sides queening it's a draw, but I didn't see that I can create mating threats while Black cannot!

36...Qxf2+ 37.Qg2 Qa7 38.Qb2+ Kg8 39.Qa2 h5!



Position after 39...h5

Again, strong resistance by Eshan. Somehow I thought c4-c5-c6 will just win easily, but no, here I have to actually do some unpleasant calculation and win the game all over again. There is a good lesson here. It's better to work harder earlier, spend an extra three to five minutes and win cleanly, than get here and still need to do the unpleasant work.

40.h4 g5!

Of course! The only chance.

41.hxg5 h4 42.gxh4?!

Looks like a mistake. Here I feel like I was tilting, being very upset to have gotten to this point in the first place. 42.Qd2 hxg3+ 43.Kxg3 Qxa6 44.Qd5 was maybe objectively better with decent winning chances.

42...Qc7+?!

Tempting but wrong. 42...Qd4!! When in doubt, centralize your queen! I noticed it works 9/10 times. 43.a7 Qxh4+ 44.Kg2 Qg4+ and I cannot escape perpetual.

43.Kg2 Qc6+ 44.Kg1 Qb6+ 45.Kf1 Qc6 46.Kf2 Qc5+ 47.Kg2 Qc6+ 48.Kg1 Qb6+ 49.Qf2 Qxa6 50.Qd4

As unpleasant as it was to have to give up that beautiful a6-pawn, I knew that I should be able to win this step-by-step with a centralized queen, a passed pawn and two pawns up. It will just take time, and I'll have to win the game over again.

50...Qa2 51.c5 Qb1+ 52.Kf2 Qf5+ 53.Kg3 Qe6 54.Qd8+ Kh7 55.Qd3+ Kg8 56.Qc3 Qc6 57.Qe5

Again centralizing the queen. From here my technique was probably not perfect, but it was good enough.

57...Qb5 58.Qd4 Qb3+ 59.Kf4 Qb8+ 60.Qd6!?

A pawn sac, giving up material to make my queen and my c-pawn stronger. This is a common motif in material-up endgames: give up some of your material to strengthen your position.

60...Qb4+ 61.Ke5 Qxh4 62.Qd8+ Kg7
63.Qf6+ Kg8 64.Kd6 Qg3+ 65.Qe5
Qd3+ 66.Kc7 Qa6 67.c6 Qa7+ 68.Kd8
Qa8+ 69.Kd7 Qa4 70.Qf6 Qg4+ 71.Kd8
Qd1+ 72.Kc7 Qa4 73.Qf5 Qa7+ 74.Kd8
Qd4+ 75.Kc8 Qa7 76.c7 Qa8+ 77.Kd7
Qb7 78.g6 fxe6 79.Qxg6+ Kh8 80.Qf6+
Kh7 81.Qf7+ Kh8 82.Qf8+ Kh7 83.
Qc5!



Position after 83.Qc5

This is cleanest, since I saw that c5 is one of the key squares which controls b6 (pinning square when my king goes to d8) and d5, the checking square. Now Black is lost.

83...Kg8 84.Kd8

I was happy with the result, and happy with my student's resistance, but disappointed with me relaxing too early in a winning game.

1-0

**Nick Raptis (2393) –
Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) [D37]**
Emerald City Open
Chess.com (R3), June 20, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

This game is against Nick Raptis, a very formidable master, with whom I've played many blitz games going way back. He is a tough creative player with a very versatile opening repertoire, so I knew it will be a tough game.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 a6

This is kind of designed against the Catalan.

4.Nc3

4.g3 b5 is the point. I think Black is doing well here.

4...d5 5.a4!?

Now, this surprised me. Much more common are 5.cxd5, 5.Bg5, 5.e3, 5.c5.

5...Bb4

This was a critical moment for me since I never saw the move 5.a4. I was trying to figure out under which circumstances would the ...a6/a4 inclusion be the most

ideal for me. Eventually I decided on 5...Bb4.

5...c6 6.Bg5. Alternately 5...c5 6.cxd5: a) 6...cxd4. This or ...exd5 maybe deserved attention where a4 is really misplaced. b) 6...exd5 7.Bg5 (7.g3). c) 6...Nxd5 7.e4 Nxc3 8.bxc3. In this structure I thought that ...a6 isn't so well-placed for me due to the weakness of the b6-square.

The engine likes 5...Nc6 and 5...h6, which I didn't consider all that much. I did consider 5...Be7.

Finally 5...dxc4 would transpose into the Vienna where a4 is reasonably placed. After 6.e3, it will look like a main line QGA.

6.Bd2?!

Now this also surprised me, and probably this isn't so good. I expected something more along the lines of Bg5.

6...0-0 7.e3 b6?!



Position after 7...b6

Possibly this is an inaccuracy in return. Here 7...c5 might make sense, since White's most logical move would be a4-a3, except that's illegal :). Also 7...Qe7 might be good to prepare ...c5.

8.cxd5 exd5 9.Bd3

Now we get sort of a theoretical position with a4 and ...a6 included. I decided to take advantage of ...a6 and wanted to wait before playing ...Bb7. Probably I overcomplicated it.

9...Bd6

I wanted to discourage Ne5. Of course, it still might be playable here. Also, taking advantage of the fact that Nb5 is not available for White. 9...c5 10.0-0 (10.Ne5) 10...Bb7 11.Ne5.

10.0-0 Re8 11.Qc2 c5?!

I regretted this move after my opponent's move. I saw my opponent can play e4 in reply to ...c5 but really underestimated it; perhaps subconsciously I wasn't thinking he would play it, at least not right away. 11...Bb7 is probably more solid and sensible, keeping the tension and hoping to outplay him later. Though I doubt I'm

better here after 12.a5.

12.e4!

Very strong move, otherwise White might be worse. 12.dxc5 bxc5 13.e4 c4 14.Be2 dxe4 is clearly good for Black. 12.Bf5 Nc6 is also very comfortable for Black. I guess I expected to get such a position.

12...c4

12...cxd4 13.Nxd5; 12...dxe4 13.Nxe4.

13.e5 cxd3 14.Qxd3 Nc6

14...Be7 15.exf6 Bxf6 16.Rfe1 is solid for White.

15.exd6 Qxd6

In retrospect I probably should've included 15...Nb4.

16.Rfe1 Bg4 17.Ne5!



Position after 17.Ne5

Another nice move that I underestimated. I thought it just loses a pawn but then realized he gets a lot of compensation. In general my opponent was playing very principled and creative chess and was asking me a lot of questions, which was very irritating.

17...Nb4

17...Nxe5 18.dxe5 Rxe5 19.Rxe5 Qxe5 20.Re1 Qd6 21.Bg5. Here he just gets full compensation, and it seems like I cannot create any winning chances anymore.

18.Qg3 Bf5 19.Bf4 Nh5

Now, this was a fascinating position, which took a lot of energy from me. I had a lot to calculate. 19...Qd8 20.Bg5 would feel like a concession. Somehow I didn't see 19...Nc2 20.Nxf7 Nxa1 21.Rxe8+ Rxe8 22.Nh6+ Kh8 23.Nf7+, although it leads to a forced draw, which I wasn't as happy with.

20.Qg5!

The principled move.

20...Nxf4

Before I played 19...Nh5 I was really trying to make ...g6 work. However, 21.g4! f6 22.Nxg6!!

On one hand I was very happy to have

spotted this resource for my opponent and therefore, I avoided playing this tempting line. On the other hand it was very frustrating for me that this resource had to exist for him.

I'm not even sure if he saw this when he played 20.Qg5, but unfortunately White is just better in all the lines, and the computer approves of my calculation in this case. 22...fxg5 23.Bxd6 Bxg6 24.Bxb4 and my knight happens to hang to rub salt into my wounds.

Objectively best would be 21...Nxf4 but this is a concession. 22.Qxf4 Be6 23.Rac1 (23.Re2 and here the f6-square is a bit weak. But not 23.Nxg6 Qxf4 24.Nxf4 Nc2 25.Nxd5 Bxd5 when Black just wins.)

21.Qxf5 f6!



Position after 21...f6

I was very happy to have spotted this actually before I played 19...Nh5.

22.Qd7?

22.Qxf4 Nc2 is the point. He is losing material here. Objectively best was 22.Ng4, which I expected, and here I thought it was about equal.

22...Qxd7

I played this fairly quickly since I was happy that I was winning the exchange and thought I should have good winning chances. I didn't see that I had something much better and more subtle which apparently just wins. 22...Qe6!! Sadly I didn't consider this move. 23.Qxe6+ Nxe6 24.Nd7 Rad8 25.Nxb6 Nc2 is just game over.

23.Nxd7 Red8 24.Nxb6 Rab8 25.a5 Nc2 26.g3 Nxa1?!

Another inaccuracy, selling my advantage cheaply. 26...Nd3 27.Reb1 (27.Red1 Nxb2 28.Rdb1 Nxa1 29.Rxb2. I think if I remember correctly, I stopped my variation here, thinking my knight is in a box, but Black is winning here with a very important 29...Rdc8! 30.Nxd5 Rc1+ 31.Kg2 Nc2+.) 27...Nxa1. Or 26...Nxe1 27.Rxe1 Nd3 28.Rb1 Nb4 would also give me excellent winning chances.

27.Rxa1 Ne6 28.Rd1 Nc7 29.b4 Rd6

30.Nea4 Rc6 31.Nc5 Kf7 32.Kf1 Rd8 33.Kg1 Na8 34.Nba4

Here I had a very hard time coming up with a good plan.

34...Rb8 35.Rb1 g5 36.Kf1 h5 37.Ke2 Nc7 38.Nb6 Rh8 39.Kd3 Rb8 40.Ncd7 Re8 41.Nc5 Nb5 42.Rd1 Kg6 43.Rd2?!

Giving me a chance, which at first I capitalize on.

43...Re1 44.Re2 Rxe2?!

But now I go badly wrong. 44...Ra1 45.Nxd5 (45.Rd2 Nc7 46.Kc3 Rh1 and most likely Black should win with perfect play.) 45...Rd6 was just winning.

45.Kxe2 Nxd4+ 46.Kd3 Nb5 47.Nxd5 Rd6 48.Kc4 Na3+ 49.Kb3 Rxd5?!

This is already playing with fire. At this point I should make a draw. This whole endgame I am ashamed of the way I've played.

50.Kxa3



Position after 50.Kxa3

50...Rd6?

And this is the decisive mistake. 50...Kf5 51.Nxa6 Ke5 52.Nc5 Kd6 would still be enough for a draw for Black.

51.Ka4 Rd2

51...Kf5 52.Nxa6. This is the idea I missed from far away. 52...Rxa6 53.b5 and the pawns are unstoppable.

52.Nxa6 Rxf2 53.b5 Ra2+

53...Rb2 54.Nb4 is losing right away.

54.Kb4 f5

54...Rxb2 55.b6 h4 56.gxh4 gxh4 57.Kc3! (57.Kb5 h3 58.b7 Rb2+ 59.Nb4 h2 60.b8Q h1Q would actually be a draw.) 57...Ra2 58.b7 Rxa5 59.b8Q Rxa6. We could've reached interesting endgame almost by force. It looks like White should eventually win though. 60.Qg8++.

55.Nc5 f4 56.gxf4 gxf4 57.b6 f3 58.b7 Rb2+ 59.Nb3 f2 60.b8Q Rxb3+ 61.Kxb3 f1Q 62.Qb6+

I was not very optimistic about this being holdable, but my only hope was that he

was low on time. My accuracy probably suffered here, since I was mostly playing on his time now. However the increment really helped him here going forward. I could've probably defended more tenaciously, but I guess I was always lost from this point.

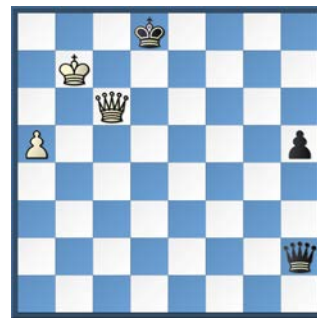
62...Kf5 63.Qc5+ Kg6 64.Qc2+ Kf6 65.Qc6+ Kg7 66.Qc7+ Kg6 67.Qd6+ Kg7 68.Kb4 Qb1+ 69.Kc5 Qc2+ 70.Kb6 Qf2+ 71.Qc5 Qb2+ 72.Qb5

72.Kc6 Qg2+ 73.Kd6 was more accurate since ...Qxh2+ is met with Qe5+.

72...Qxh2 73.Qg5+ Kf7 74.Qf5+ Ke7

I should probably keep the king closer to the edge with 74...Kg7 to avoid potential queen exchange tactics.

75.Qe4+ Kd8 76.Qd5+ Kc8 77.Qg8+ Kd7 78.Qf7+ Kd8 79.Qf6+ Kd7 80.Qc6+ Kd8 81.Kb7!



Position after 81.Kb7

This was a nice move which I missed. Now it is very difficult to defend.

81...Qe2!

Looks like the only chance. 81...Qb2+ 82.Qb6+ Qxb6+ 83.axb6 (83.Kxb6 h4 84.a6 h3 85.a7 h2 86.a8Q+) 83...h4 84.Ka7 h3 85.b7 h2 86.b8Q+. He queens with check.

82.Qb6+ Kd7 83.Qc7+ Ke8 84.a6 Qb2+ 85.Kc8 Qa3 86.Qd7+ Kf8 87.a7

Here even the engine is confused about whether this is winning for White or a draw. Either way, I could've defended better from here probably.

87...Qa6+

87...Qc5+ 88.Qc7 Qf5+ 89.Kb7 Qb5+ 90.Qb6 Qd7+ 91.Ka8 Qd5+ 92.Kb8 Qe5+ 93.Kb7 looks like might eventually win. Probably a tablebase would help here.

88.Kb8 Qb6+ 89.Qb7 Qd6+ 90.Qc7 Qb4+ 91.Kc8 Qe4

Maybe 91...Qg4+ was a better try.

92.Qc5+ Kg7 93.Kb8 Qe8+ 94.Kb7 Qe4+ 95.Qc6 Qb4+ 96.Kc7 Qa5+ 97.Qb6 Qe5+ 98.Kb7 Qe4+ 99.Qc6 Qb4+ 100.Kc8 Qf8+ 101.Kc7 Qf4+ 102.

Qd6 Qc4+ 103.Kd8 Qg8+ 104.Kd7 Qa8 105.Qe5+ Kh6 106.Qf6+ Kh7 107.Qe7+ Kh6 108.Qe3+ Kg6?!

108...Kh7 would prolong the fight but probably not change the result. 109.Kc7 h4 110.Qa3+-.

109.Qe8+

Tough loss.

1-0

Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) – Sounack Bagchi (1995) [A70]
Emerald City Open
Chess.com (R4), June 21, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

After a tough loss against Raptis, I ended up being paired against another one of my students, Sounak Bagchi, whom I think is under-rated at 2000. I wanted to play something interesting, so I decided to play into his Benoni, which he plays quite well.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.h3 Bg7 8.Nf3 0-0 9.Bd3 Re8

9...b5 is the main line here, leading to sharp complications.

10.0-0 Na6 11.Re1 Nc7 12.a4 b6 13.Bf4 Ba6 14.Bb5

Not best. 14.Bxa6 Nxa6 15.Nd2 is a stable advantage for White. Or 14.e5 dxe5.

Apparently best is the mysterious computer move 14.Bg3. It is very hard for Black to actually play a move, and it seems like e5 might come soon. 14...Nh5 (14...Qd7 15.e5) 15.Bh2.

14...Bxb5 15.axb5 Nh5!?

I didn't even see this move somehow but it turned out that White has lots of compensation here for the pawn. 15...a6 16.bxa6 Rxa6 17.Rxa6 Nxa6 18.Nd2 Bf8 might be more sturdy for Black.

16.Bh2 Bxc3 17.bxc3 Nxb5 18.c4 Nc7 19.e5 dxe5 20.Nxe5

White is actually winning here. I have very powerful pieces, a potential attack on the king, and Black's knights are very clumsy.

20...Ng7 21.Qf3 Nf5 22.g4 Nd6 23.Qf4

Maybe not the most precise since this allows ...Rxe5, where Black holds for some time. I was trying to make Nc6 first work but I couldn't quite calculate it to the end. 23.Nc6 Qd7 24.Qf4 Rxe1+ 25.Rxe1 Re8 (25...Nce8 26.Re7 Qc8 27.Ne5+-) 26.Ra1+-.

23...Rxe5 24.Rxe5 a5 25.Rae1!?

Committal but good. I abandon the a-pawn but my attack on the king will be stronger.

25...a4 26.Re7 Nce8 27.Qe5 a3 28.Bf4 a2 29.Qa1



Position after 29.Qa1

I calculated until here and thought that I should have winning threats on his king, and for now Black cannot utilize his passer.

29...Qc8 30.Bh6 f6 31.Kh2

Just getting out of the way of some checks.

31...Ra3 32.R1e6 Qa8 33.Rxd6

33.Qe1 was a quicker mate. 33...a1Q 34.Rxe8+.

33...Nxd6 34.Rg7+

Somehow I was blind and I didn't see Qe1 on move 33 or 34. However, I was always still winning.

34...Kh8 35.Rf7

35.Qxf6?? a1Q would be a tough way to lose, since now the queen from a1 controls the g7 square.

35...Ne4 36.Rxf6

36.Rf8+ would be less precise since Black can still struggle on here down a queen. 36...Qxf8 37.Bxf8 Kg8.

36...Nc3 37.Rf8+ Qxf8 38.Bxf8

Now his king is terminally weak.

38...Kg8

38...Rb3 39.Bh6.

39.Bh6 Rb3 40.Qe1

Unstoppable mate. My student fought very strongly, but unfortunately for him, the position I got out of the opening was too powerful.

1-0

Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) – Rushaan Mahajan (2208) [E38]
Emerald City Open
Chess.com (R5), June 21, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

This is my last round game against young master Rushaan Mahajan, who is also organizing good online events, in which I have played twice. I was very happy to be given White in the last round.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2

I played this line because I saw that he consistently plays the line he played against me, where I really believe in White's chances. My opponent told me he was surprised by it. I have played it here and there between 2015-2019 but lately most games I've played with 1.Nf3, so I knew that this could come as a surprise for Rushaan as well.

4...c5

4...0-0 5.Nf3 c5 6.dxc5 Na6. This line with ...Na6 is more common for Black when White has already committed to Nf3.

5.dxc5 Na6

5...0-0; 5...Bxc5.

6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.Qxc3 Nxc5 8.f3

This is Jan Gustafsson's recommendation from his chess24 video series on the Qc2 Nimzo-Indian. 8.b4 Nce4 9.Qd4 d5 10.c5 b6 11.f3 bxc5 12.bxc5 Qa5+ 13.Qb4 Qc7 14.fxe4 Rb8 is the complicated mess that Black is perhaps hoping for.

8...a5?!

Too slow. Black needs to develop here. 8...d6 9.e4 e5. (9...0-0 10.Be3 Bd7 11.Nh3±. White is slightly better here but Black is not without counterplay.)

9.e4 d6

9...a4 10.Bf4 Qa5 11.Qxa5 Rxa5 12.Rd1±.

10.Be3 Qb6?!

Probably not the best idea to step into a pin. 10...Qc7.

11.Rd1 0-0 12.b4?!



Position after 12.b4

This wins a pawn but it's too risky since my kingside is undeveloped. I fell into a materialistic trap. 12.Qd2 Rd8 (12...Nfd7 13.Ne2± would simply lead to a huge advantage for White.) 13.e5+-.

12...axb4 13.axb4 Na4 14.Qd2 Qc7 15. Qxd6 Qxd6 16.Rxd6



Position after 16.Rxd6

16...Nc3?!

This looks logical and it's a move I expected, but Black misses an incredible opportunity here, which I also did not see coming. 16...Nb2!! disturbs my harmony and doesn't let me develop my pieces very easily. It's quite complicated still, but possibly Black has full counterplay. 17.Bd4 Ra1+ 18.Kf2 Rb1 is one sample line where it is actually not easy for me to complete my development.

17.Bd3

Looks natural but surprisingly this might also be an inaccuracy. 17.Ne2! would be quite good to offer a knight trade, trading off his best piece and also preparing to block ...Ra1+ with Nc1. 17...Ra1+ 18.Nc1 e5 19.Bd2 Na2 20.Kd1 Bd7 21.Kc2 Nxc1 22.Bxc1 Rfa8 23.Bd3±. Here White consolidates his extra pawn and two-bishop advantage.

17...Ra1+?!

The most direct move, but this line I calculated and probably White is just winning now. 17...e5! Development is key here; Black needed to get his bishop out to a good square. Now was the last good time to do it. 18.Kd2 Na2! 19.Bc5 Nd7! and even though White has an advantage, Black is still alive and kicking.

18.Kd2 Na4 19.Bd4 Ra2+ 20.Bc2

20.Ke3 Rxc2 21.Ne2 was stronger, since ...Rxc2 doesn't work as the knight on a4 gets stranded.

20...b6?!

This loses without a fight. 20...Nd7 21.Ne2 e5 22.Ra1 Nab6! 23.Rxa2 Nxc4+ 24.Ke1 Nxd6 25.Bf2±. White is much better here but Black can still fight on.

21.Ne2 Bb7 22.Ra1!

Simple and strong, trading off his most active piece and avoiding any ...Bxe4 and ...Nxe4 tricks.

22...Nb2 23.Bxb2 Rxb2 24.Kc3 Ne8 25.Rxb6

Not a perfect game by me, but I was happy to finish the tournament on a good note and even somehow got into second place mix after a very tough round three loss.

1-0

**Ze (Tony) Wang (2135) –
Advaith Vijayakumar (2026) [B21]**
Emerald City Open
Chess.com (R5), June 21, 2020
[Ze Wang]

This is the fifth round of the Emerald City Open. I am White and use my good knight to clinch the victory.

1.e4 c5 2.f4 Nc6 3.Nf3 g6 4.Bb5 Bg7 5.0-0

There are two good options on this move, 5.Bxc6 and 5.0-0.

5...Nd4 6.Nxd4 cxd4 7.d3 a6 8.Bc4 d6 9.Nd2

At this point, I thought for ten minutes. I was wondering if I should push 9.f5. I thought it premature, but it turns out it is a good move that creates some problems in the kingside and also frees my bishop at c1.

9...Nf6 10.Nf3 0-0 11.Qe1 b5

Black might consider ...d5 instead, because it can break my center. But 11...b5 is definitely okay.

12.Bb3 Nd7 13.Qh4

At this moment, I take large amounts of time to think. Maybe 13.f5 is a better choice. After 13...Nc5, I still have the option to play Bd5. I have a clear space advantage and am ready to attack.

13...e6 14.Qg3

A clearly bad move. I just waste a tempo and let Black play an important move. ...Nc5 is already a big threat to me. My light-squared bishop is in danger. The best choice should be simply to trade queens and look for a small edge in the endgame.

14...Nc5 15.f5

The only attacking move now. Both e6 and g6 protect the f5-square, but it frees my c1-bishop to join the kingside attack.

15...Nxb3 16.axb3 exf5 17.exf5 Bxf5 18.Bf4 d5

18...d5 is a really bad move, since it gives me chances to get the d4-pawn. The d4-pawn is much more important than the pawn on d6. Therefore ...Re8 to develop all the pieces is a much better try.

19.Be5 Qd7

Another dubious move and positional mistake. Since Black's pawns are all on light squares, his dark-squared bishop can be extremely valuable for defense. I think ...f6 to avoid the exchange is the best choice.

20.Bxg7 Kxg7 21.Nxd4

Good knight vs. bad bishop. I am very close to winning this position. It only needs patience.

21...Be6 22.b4

A good positional move; it locks Black's pawn structure and creates a permanent weakness on a6.

22...Rfc8 23.Qe5+ Kg8 24.c3 Re8 25.Qf4 f5 26.Ra5 Bf7 27.Rfa1 Qb7 28.h3

In this position, Black's pieces are all locked down. White is the only one who can attack, and it is good to play some quiet moves to avoid later checks.

28...Red8 29.Qg5 Qb6 30.Kh1 Kh8 31. Qf4 Re8



Position after 31...Re8

32.Nxb5

Final attack starts. White is winning.

32...Qe3 33.Qxe3 Rxe3 34.Rxa6 Rxa6 35.Rxa6 Rxd3

Best is 35...d4, attempt to free the bishop. I underestimated the power of this bishop. After 35...d4 36.Nxd4 Bd5, the g2-pawn is a little vulnerable.

36.Nd4 Rd2 37.b3 Kg7 38.b5 Rd1+ 39.Kh2 Re1 40.b6 Re8 41.b7 Rb8 42.Rxb6 Be8 43.Ne6+ Kf7 44.Nc5 d4 45.Cxb6

1-0

**Derin Goktepe (1930) –
Rushaan Mahajan (2208) [A40]**
Emerald City Open
Chess.com (R3), June 20, 2020
[Rushaan Mahajan]

Brief background: In this game I was playing against the rising Washington talent Derin Goktepe. I have played Derin several times and he has been a strong

opponent who has been getting better at a rapid pace. Coming in to the game I had 2.0/2, this was a crucial game for me to stay atop the standings.

1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 3.Nc3 Bb7 4.Nf3 Bb4 5.e3 Bxc3+

In this position I rushed to take the knight on c3 because I felt like ruining his pawn structure was more important than having the bishop-pair.

6.bxc3 d6 7.Bd3 Nd7 8.0-0 Ngf6 9.Bb2 0-0 10.Qc2 Re8 11.e4 e5

This type of position is very common and usually seen as about equal, but I like playing it as White has some positional problems.

12.Rfe1 Nf8 13.Bc1 Ng6 14.h3 Qe7 15.Nh2 Bc8

Here is where the attack starts. I line up all my pieces to land a vicious attack on White's kingside.

16.Nf1 Nh5

This is an important idea to bring the knight to the critical f4-square.

17.Ne3 Ngf4 18.Nd5 Qg5



Position after 18...Qg5

19.Nxf4

This was a critical moment here, and after some thought I took with the pawn as I thought practically the attack would be extremely hard to stop.

19...exf4 20.Kh2

Sometimes the computer gives you 0.00 "triple zeros" in really complicated and interesting positions like this one.

20...Re6 21.e5 Rh6 22.exd6 Bxh3 23.gxh3 Nf6

In this position I was super-confident, as I had calculated for about 15 minutes and everything I saw looked winning. Believe it or not this position is losing!

24.Bxf4?

Better was to play 24.Bf5!! when the bishop does a great job of defending the kingside. 24.Rg1 Rxh3+ 25.Kxh3 Qxg1 with a deadly mating threat of ...Qh1#.

24...Qxf4+ 25.Kg1 Rxh3 26.Be4 Nxe4 27.Qxe4 Qxe4 28.Rxe4

After having big hopes of a crushing position, it fizzled out into a difficult rook endgame.

28...cxd6 29.Rae1 g6 30.c5 bxc5 31.dxc5 dxc5 32.Rc4

This is a great resource by my opponent as now it is very unclear, and White has a chance to hold and make a draw.

32...Rh5 33.Re7 Rf5 34.Rc7 Rb8 35.R7xc5 Rxc5 36.Rxc5 Rb6 37.Ra5 a6 38.Kg2 Rc6 39.Kf1 Kg7 40.Ke2 Kf6 41.Kd3 Ke6 42.c4 h5 43.Kd4 f6 44.Ra3

This position is unclear, but Black's plan for victory is to sacrifice the rook for the c-pawn and use the majority on the kingside along with the king to promote one of the pawns.

44...g5 45.Re3+ Kf5 46.Kd5 Rc8 47.Rf3+ Kg6 48.c5 g4 49.Rg3 Kg5 50.Kd6 h4 51.Rg1 f5 52.c6 f4 53.Kd7 Ra8 54.e7 h3 55.c8Q Rxc8 56.Kxc8 h2 57.Rc1



Position after 57.Rc1

White has an extra rook, but the white king is far away and the connected pawns are very strong.

57...g3 58.fgx3 fxxg3 59.Rc5+ Kf4 60.Rc4+ Ke5 61.Rc5+ Kd4

0-1

Luca Tessiore (1135) – David Li (1344) [D32]
Emerald City Open (Reserve)
Chess.com (R3), June 20, 2020
[Luca Tessiore]

1.d4 d5 2.c4

A Queen's Gambit is on the board.

2...e6 3.Nf3 c5

The Tarrasch Defense.

4.Nc3 Nc6

Better was 4...cxd4.

5.cxd5 exd5 6.dxc5 d4 7.Na4

If 7.Ne4, then 7...Nf6 would force a trade

and the position would be in Black's favor. Na4 protects the pawn and seeks to win the bishop-pair.

7...Bxc5 8.Nxc5

Now White has the bishop-pair and a comfortable position.

8...Qa5+ 9.Bd2 Qxc5 10.Rc1 Qb6 11.b3

This move is an inaccuracy, but it had the idea to fianchetto the bishop later.

11...Nf6 12.e3 dxe3

Better was 12...0-0.

13.Bxe3 Qb4+ 14.Bd2 Qe7+ 15.Be2 0-0 16.0-0 Bd7 17.Re1

Preparing a discovery.

17...Rfe8

Better was 17...Bf5.

18.Ba6 Be6 19.Bb5

Pins the knight.

19...Rac8 20.Bc3 Nd5

Better was 20...a6.

21.Bb2

Keeps the bishop-pair.

21...Qd6

This is a serious mistake because the knight on d5 is pinned and cannot defend h7 from the threat of Ng5.

22.Ng5



Position after 22.Ng5

22...a6

This comes too late, as now Qh5 threatens mate.

23.Qh5 h6 24.Rxe6

A brilliant move that wins a piece: capturing is simply fatal.

24...Rxe6

Better was 24...Qf8, but Black is down a piece and losing anyway.

25.Qxf7+ Kh8 26.Bxg7#

The final blow delivered with the dark-square bishop.

1-0

National Tournament Of State Senior Champions

By **Mary K. Kuhner**

By winning the newly online Washington State Senior Championship in March, I earned an invitation and travel-money for the National Tournament of State Senior Champions, which was to be held in conjunction with the US Open in St. Louis. However, a few weeks later the US Open and all its satellite tournaments were canceled. I was frankly relieved, as the idea of bringing high-risk people from all over the US to play at close quarters seemed unwise. In July, however, US Chess let us know that this event (as well as the similar events for juniors) would be held online. So rather than traveling to Missouri, I locked myself in the basement for two successive weekends. I was the only woman in the 42-player event, which featured some interesting “states” such as Southern California and... Canada?!

To discourage cheating, we were required to have a second camera watching us from the side. This was challenging as webcams are nearly unobtainable right now; I ended up borrowing my housemate’s cell phone. On the morning of the event, I got up and was just having a leisurely breakfast when it dawned on me that the posted noon start time was for the Eastern time zone! I rushed to the basement and was just in time...to sit for an hour and win on forfeit. Perhaps my opponent had made the same mistake.

In the second round I played NM David Carter of Vermont in a hair-raising French Winawer and managed to beat him. That earned me a round three date with IM Ronald Burnett of Tennessee. This game almost didn’t happen; Ron was quite late and then forgot to log onto chess.com, and with speakers turned off (per the rules) we couldn’t get his attention. Finally the TD changed Ron’s screen name to FORFEIT IMMEDIATE SEE TD and we got to see him do a double-take and log in! Despite the time deficit he outplayed me in a Modern Defense. I lost my d-pawn to a combination, and although I managed to fight my way to an endgame with bishops of opposite colors, the IM’s technique was equal to the challenge.

Just before round four was to start the TD informed me that my opponent had been in a minor car accident. Fortunately he was uninjured, but he would miss the round. So after four rounds I had three points and had to play GM Enrico

Sevillano of Southern California. I had played him in a simul in Reno and managed a draw, but having his full attention was quite intimidating. Even more intimidating was the pace of play; he used just one minute (plus the ten second increment) for his first 15 moves, about 15 minutes total for the next three, and then less than a minute for the entire remainder of the game. I like to think on my opponent’s time, and this strategy made the G/90 time control feel more like G/45. I rushed, blundered material, and was efficiently dispatched. The usual advice against opponents who blitz you is to play calmly and hope they will make a mistake, but alas, the GM’s mistakes, if any, were well over my head.

This loss did not save me from facing NM Sergei Berchenko of Ohio in the last round. These were easily the most difficult pairings I have ever had: two NMs, an IM and a GM. There were players of my own strength and lower in this event, but I never had a glimpse of them!

Up until this point the tournament had run well in a technical sense, except for a crisis in round one when IM Elliot Winslow tried to castle and instead executed, as an apparent premove sequence, Ke8-f8-g8-f8. We still don’t know how he did this, but he managed to do it again in round six! None the less he drew. His opponent, asked about this, said “It was a strong novelty” to general amusement.

But this problem was overshadowed when, about an hour into round six, all of the games froze, began to blink, and shortly vanished one-by-one, never to reappear. The TDs consulted with chess.com and diagnosed a server crash. Luckily senior players are creatures of habit, and over half of us were keeping score on paper even though it wasn’t required; between that, memory, and snapshots of the computer screens we were able to recover the position in the majority of games. A few games were summarily drawn while we waited for the server to recover. I offered a draw in the guilty knowledge that I was worse. “I need to study the position,” said my opponent diplomatically.

We got restarted, with approximate times on the clocks, and then had another crisis when players who had not yet castled found themselves unable to do so. Those games were re-restarted, and we had half an hour or so before the next server crash. This time we took screenshots or photos quickly when the telltale flashing began, so reconstruction was easier.



*Mary Kuhner at 2019 Washington Open.
Photo credit: Sten Petrov.*

I was ground down in the endgame, finishing with 3.0/6, or more accurately 1.0/4. The event was won by GM Alex Fishbein of New Jersey, who had pairings that made mine look easy—he played GMs Rohde, Zapata, and Kudrin as well as three NMs, and gave up only half a point to Kudrin. This impressive performance helped cement New Jersey’s win in the team competition, which summed points across this event and the four junior events.

Given the extensive anti-cheating efforts, I think US Chess should rate events of this kind normally; my 1.0/4 result would have been +20. Between this event and the Washington Senior, I also think that chess.com needs to step up its game in order to be a suitable venue for serious events. At the very least, games should be saved during play so that they aren’t irrevocably lost when the server goes down. Until that time, I advise players to keep score on paper.

I’d like to thank the TDs, Christine Schweiss and Joe Yun, for perseverance and good humor in a difficult situation. They should definitely get hazard pay for round six, as well as for successfully wrangling our sometimes technically-challenged player-group. Overall, the National Senior was a fun experience. I’m sorry not to have met the other players in person, but I’m glad that I got to “attend” after all.

**David Carter (2269) –
Mary Kuhner (1878) [C18]**
National Tournament of
State Senior Champions
Chess.com (R2), July 26, 2020
[Mary Kuhner]

**1.d4 e6 2.e4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3
Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Qg4 Qc7 8.Bd3**

This twist on the usual Poisoned Pawn Winawer is popular in Oregon, apparently due to a book by Negi that I have not read. Compared to the regular Poisoned Pawn, White's bishop is more active on d3 than f1, but the g-pawn tends to hang and a rook on g2 can be dangerous for White (or for Black, who can easily lose it). Some years ago I managed to win a dramatic sacrificial game in this line, so I was happy to see it again.

**8...cxd4 9.Ne2 dxc3 10.Qxg7 Rg8
11.Qxh7 Nbc6 12.f4**

I felt that 12.Bf4 was stronger, not opening the diagonal g1–a7 against White's king.

12...Rgx2



Position after 12...Rgx2

Stockfish thinks I ought to play ...Bd7 and castle as quickly as possible, only then thinking about the attack.

13.Be3

Here and on many subsequent moves, Rg1 to exchange the aggressive rook can be recommended. I think that White may have felt entitled to trap the rook, even though it can't be done at the moment, and therefore didn't want to trade it off; this will end up being an expensive preoccupation. The immediate 13.Ng3 does not trap the rook due to 13...Qb6.

13...Nf5?!

Having my king stuck in the center is only normal for this opening, but after the subsequent exchanges I will have a very tough time developing my queenside pieces. I was worried about the dark squares if I tried ...Bd7 and ...0-0-0, but this is no cure.

14.Bxf5 exf5 15.Qh8+ Kd7 16.Rd1

I did not think this was a sufficiently

forcing move; I have only one response, but it elegantly covers several weak squares and also opens lines for my queen. It's an interesting detail of this opening that White can basically never castle long because the a-pawn can't be held after ...Qa5, but Stockfish thinks that there are several queen moves with more real threat value than this.

16...Ne7 17.Qf6



Position after 17.Qf6

17...Ke8?!

17...b6 is the engine recommendation, with hair-raising complications.

18.Qd6

It's evident that neither player can really figure out this position, which is very typical of the opening. I was delighted to see this move, as I don't have to trade queens and felt the initiative was falling into my hands. Stockfish thinks this is dead equal.

18...Qc4 19.Rd3

Moving the knight away allows the destabilizing ...Rxc2.

19...b6



Position after 19...b6

At this point each player had used about 45 of the available 90 minutes (with ten-second increment). However, my opponent used 32 minutes on his next move, a decision that was to cost him dearly later on. The engine favors 19...Qa2 but I never even considered this piece of pawn-grubbing. I should have, though; I knew the c2-pawn was more important than it looks.

20.Bf2?

Despite the long think, this is a losing move. With 32 minutes to think myself, I had not even conceived of it, however, and in my startlement made a poor reply. Last call for 20.Rg1, says the engine.

20...Qe4?

The right idea, but what could easily have been a fatally-wrong order of moves. I did consider the winning 20...Ba6 but could not calculate either line in enough detail to decide between them.

21.Re3 Qxc2 22.Rxc3



Position after 22.Rxc3

White has the serious threat of playing Rc7 and, when the knight moves, Qc6+ winning the rook in the corner. I calculated that I could avoid this by protecting the c6-square, but this defense fails.

22...Qb1+ 23.Rc1 Qb5 24.Qb4?

White, who has just seven minutes on his clock, has had enough of these threats and counter-threats. But it will turn out that getting rid of the queens does not solve his problems. White should be bold: 24.Rc7 Ng6 25.Nc3 with too many threats.

24...Qxb4+

I liked the structure after the direct capture a little better than after ...Ba6.

25.axb4 Ba6

Taking stock: Black is up a pawn, but her pawn structure leaves something to be desired. Her bishop and the g2-rook have some definite prospects. White has the usual passed h-pawn seen in almost all lines of this opening, but Black's passed d-pawn, it turns out, cannot be disregarded either. I felt happy with my position but not convinced I had an exploitable advantage—other than my opponent's clock.

26.Kf1?!

With only four minutes left White makes a move that seems to add to his problems rather than resolving them.

26...Rg4

Very natural looking, but I soon regretted

not putting it on g6 where it could swing to the queenside.

27.Bg3



Position after 27.Bg3

The bishop is little more than a pawn here, though this move is consistent with his apparent desire to be rid of the intrusive rook for good.

27...d4

I felt I could exploit the awkward positions of White's pieces with this move, though the engine does not agree.

28.Kf2 Rd8

I was quite pleased with my d-pawn, and the ominous white h-pawn was going strictly nowhere.

29.Rhd1 d3 30.Ng1?!

It was at this point that I began to believe I was winning. Black's pieces and d-pawn are gaining more and more energy, whereas White's appear confused. 30.Nc3 is much better; the engine insists that the only way to advantage is 30...Bc4, which I am not at all sure I would have found.

30...Nd5 31.h3

I though this move was a blunder, though Stockfish disagrees. I will argue with the engine here; destabilizing the bishop and the knight behind it must be wrong!

31...Rg6

I had ten minutes left myself, and my heart was pounding.

32.Ra1?

The engine pegs this as the actual losing move; White just can't afford to give up the c-file.

32...Nc3

Disaster! Not only is the rook threatened, but ...Ne4+ will win the miserable bishop. White's position simply collapses.

33.Rxa6 Nxd1+ 34.Kf3 Nc3

The d-pawn has not yet spoken and will claim still more material.

35.Be1

White had 25 seconds on his clock, and he may have continued play simply because you don't resign in blitz.

35...d2

I had eight minutes myself and was just hoping to avoid a mistake!

36.Bxd2 Rxd2

To add insult to injury, I don't think White's knight can be saved.

37.Ke3 Rd1 38.Nf3 Rg3 39.Kf2 Ne4+ 40.Ke2 Rb1 41.Rxa7 Rb2+ 42.Ke3 Rb3+ 43.Kd4 Rgx3 44.Ra8+ Ke7 45.Kd5

Evidently the goal is to cheapo me off with a back-rank mate or perhaps an advance of the e-pawn. My opponent is evidently a good blitz player, and he had actually earned back half-a-minute by this point, whereas I was down to about six. However, unusually for me, I had managed to make a successful transition to blitz-like thinking myself, avoiding my usual time-trouble panic.

45...Rxb4 46.Ra7+ Kf8 47.e6 Rd3+ 48.Ke5

The mate is delayed only slightly by 48.Kc6 Rc3+ 49.Kb7 Nd6+ 50.Kb8 Rc8#.

48...Rb5# 0-1

A NORTHWEST CHESS GRAND PRIX EVENT

WASHINGTON GAME/60 CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

OCTOBER 3RD, 2020

Site: Online via Chess.com

Format: A 4-Round Swiss in two Sections: Open and Reserve (U1600).

Time Control: G/60;+5.

Entry Fee: \$40 by 9/30, \$50 after. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs, or US Chess 2400+. \$40 play-up fee if rated under 1600 playing in Open section.

Rounds: Sat. 10 AM, 1 PM, 4 PM, 7 PM.

Prize Fund: \$1,000 (based on 40 paid entries).

Open: 1st \$200, 2nd \$125, 3rd \$100 1st U2000: \$75, 1st U1800: \$75. Best Upset: \$50

Reserve: 1st \$150, 2nd \$100, 3rd \$75. Best Upset: \$50.

Byes: One half-point bye available, 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. A Chess.com and Zoom account are required.

Rating: US Chess Online Dual Quick & Regular Rated. NWSRS Rated. US Chess October 2020 rating supplement will be used to determine pairings and prizes. Higher of US Chess or foreign ratings used at TD discretion.

Procedure: Pairings will be released prior to the start of each round. Games will be started automatically by the TD in the [Live Chess](#) area. Players must report their result to the TD upon completion of the game.

Fair Play Policy: All players and parents (if U18) are required to sign the [WCF Fair Play Agreement](#) prior to the start of the tournament. All players will be monitored by Zoom during the games. WCF's Fair Play Committee will review any suspicious games on a case-by-case basis. Cheating of any kind is strictly prohibited.

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

Mail To: Washington Chess Federation
c/o Orlov Chess Academy
4174 148th Ave. NE
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Redmond, WA 98052
Contact: Josh Sinanan, WCF President
Phone: 206-769-3757
Email:
WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

Registration: Online at [nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration](#).
Registration **deadline Fri. 10/2 @ 5pm.**
\$15 Late Fee for payments accepted after the deadline. Unpaid players will receive a zero-point bye for round 1.



Susan Houston (later Susan Kantor) taken September 29, 2011. Photo credit: Jeffrey Roland.

Susan Kantor **April 20, 1955 — August 5, 2020**

By Jeffrey Roland

In September-October, 2011, I went on a cross-country road trip with Frank Niro. We had planned on playing in two tournaments on the road (we actually ended up only playing in one) and to visit the US Chess Federation in Crossville, Tennessee.

One very personal bucket-list I had was to meet Susan Houston. She had such a bubbly personality. I have such fond memories of her. As ICA President when I would call her with some of the strangest requests and issues, I would always start by saying, "This is Jeff Roland from Idaho," and she would reply, "Hello Jeff Roland from Idaho, what can I do for you?" It was the way she said it that was so amazing; I can't put it into words, but it was always such a pleasant experience. She spoke with a light and a chuckle in her voice as if she was so genuinely glad to hear from Idaho.

Once, when discussing how to rate tournaments in their new system, she even gave me her personal cell phone number and told me I could call her any time and she would help me with anything. What employee has such dedication in any field of business? I can't fathom how US Chess can ever replace her. She was irreplaceable and such a special person!

In fact, she gave me the impression (or delusion!) that there were three states that had the *most* influence in the US Chess Federation: New York, California... and Idaho! Yes, this is probably only something I manufactured in my own mind. Perhaps this is because Susan always made me feel so special when I called, that I knew no matter how off-the-wall and/or odd what we were doing might have seemed, it was very important to her and to US Chess!

Anyway, I found myself absolutely shocked to learn at last month's ICA Zoom Board Meeting that Susan Kantor (she later married Alan Kantor) had so recently passed away. I just want to say here, that Susan was one of the most warm, friendly, and best-remembered people I have known and dealt with in my entire life. It was truly special to me to actually meet her in 2011, and I took the above photo. She appeared was on the front cover of the [August 2012 issue](#), the first issue done by Frank Niro and myself when he was training me to become editor. My sincere condolences to her husband, Alan Kantor, her co-workers at US Chess, her family and friends, and everyone, like me, who really appreciated her.

Humor In Chess (Sequel)

By Karen Schmidt

Last month I shared a few real-life humorous stories involving my experiences with chess. I realized I left out a few! So this month's story will be a "sequel" covering more humor in chess.

When I discussed this topic with my son, he asked, "Why don't you write about your first date with Dad?" I had forgotten all about that evening — and I also forgot that I had shared the story with my son, who is an avid chess player himself. On my first date with my ex, who was also my new debonair hairdresser at the time, we were going to a performance at Jazz Alley — decades ago when it was located on the Ave in the U District. We

got our tickets early, and I suggested we go to The Last Exit On Brooklyn, near the UW campus, for coffee while we waited. This was a popular spot back in the day — coffee shop, chess, and go gaming hangout, and also popular with the bohemian, academic, student crowd.

When we got our coffee I suggested that we play a game of chess while we waited. Jim said, "Sure, but I'm really rusty. You might have to help me out." That was fine with me and I set up the board. We played a much-interrupted game, because I kept having to remind him about illegal moves and how the pieces moved. Nevertheless we played on... I can't remember whether we played a partial game or a whole game. I had not played much chess since my youth in Yakima, and I didn't play much after that evening until several years later when

I was teaching my son to play. Many decades later I came to find out that my ex had never played a game of chess in his life. He just pretended to be "rusty" on our first date... so as not to lose face? (Had I known this right away, it might have been a big red flag about his character!)

I have been a member of the Seattle Chess Club (SCC) for many years. Several years ago, I attended a fundraiser at the club. It was an auction of several of GM Yasser Seirawan's personal chess paraphernalia, including several of the books he had written, a chess clock, Staunton chess sets, and a large wooden chess set he had personally owned and played on for many years. The large set was a wooden box which held the pieces, and folded out to become the board. Seirawan attended the event in person, and gave a very interesting talk. Bobby Ferguson, our current Washington State Attorney General, was the Master of Ceremonies that afternoon. I had no idea that Bobby Ferguson had been the Washington State Chess Champion twice! I don't think it was mentioned that day — or else it went right over my head. All funds raised went to benefit the SCC, a wonderful non-profit club which exists on the basis of memberships and donations. A couple of things stand out in my memory about that event.

As the live auction proceeded, smaller items were auctioned off first, and the chess set was saved for last. It was announced that a minimum bid for the chess set would be \$200. I remember thinking to myself "Oh no... what if nobody bids \$200? That would be so embarrassing for the club." It seemed like a lot of money for a used chess set. I entertained the idea of bidding \$200, just to save the club that embarrassment. When the bidding started, the opening bid of \$200 was made, and then bidding rose in the next few minutes in increments of several hundred dollars per bid. Within moments, the chess set had been auctioned off for \$1800. Whew — no embarrassment!

When I had arrived at the club that afternoon, I saw that Bobby Ferguson had brought a toddler (his daughter) who looked to be about two-years old. I remember thinking to myself, "Is he crazy? Bringing a toddler to this kind of an event? She is going to ruin it with whining or a tantrum or worse." Of course, I was basing this assumption on my experience raising a very active boy. If I had taken my son to a chess auction at age two, we would have seen absolute chaos. Much to my amazement, during



The \$1800.00 chess set which belonged to Yasser Seirawan. Auction fund raiser at SCC. October 2018. Photo credit: Karen Schmidt.



Interior of the same set. Photo credit: Karen Schmidt.



Typical Westlake Park scene. Tony (left), McClay (center), unknown oppoent (right).
Photo credit: Karen Schmidt.

the live auction, this darling toddler just cruised quietly around the chess library — occasionally looking at a book, and then *replacing it on the shelf*. She made not a peep.

After the auction ended, we all sat around at the tables, had refreshments, and visited. Chess boards and pieces adorned the tables as usual. I was seated at a table with Bobby and his daughter. I think I complimented him on her behavior, and learned that she was about two years old, but couldn't really talk much yet. I was rather skeptical when Bobby mentioned that she knew how all the chess pieces moved. I probably smiled and raised my eyebrows. Bobby asked her to demonstrate how the rook moved. She picked up the rook and neatly slid it all the way back and forth horizontally, and then vertically on the chessboard. Then we moved on to the bishop — which she slid diagonally in both directions. And so on, through the knight, king, queen, and pawn! I could not have been more amazed. Here was a tiny girl who couldn't *talk yet* — but would have put my ex-husband to shame. I will never forget that experience. In years to follow, I was to learn painfully that nine-, ten-, 11-, and 12-year-olds could have GM coaches and US Chess ratings far above my own.

I have suffered many defeats at the hands of nine- and ten-year-olds over the years. I usually felt better about these losses when I asked who my opponent's coach was after the game. This was usually while we were reviewing the game in the skittles room, and they were showing me my questionable moves and blunders. He or she would reply

something like “GM Gregory Serper” or “former Hungarian National Champion Emil Anka.” I remember going home after one tournament and telling my (now ex!) husband that I had lost to a nine-year-old. He remarked in a scornful tone, “You lost to a *nine-year-old*?” I believe I replied “Dude! You would get beaten by a five-year-old! You don't even know *how* to play chess!”

For many years, I sat in on the weekly UW Chess Club “meetings.” The meeting part lasted about five minutes, and the remainder of the two hours was a bunch of college guys and me sitting around playing casual chess or speed chess. I was the only female and the unofficial mom figure — and the guys were always very friendly and helpful. I was working for UW, so they generously welcomed me into the club. Sometimes there would be as many as 25 guys in attendance. Some enjoyed playing blitz games on the clock, and others preferred to play short, medium, or longer games of casual chess. One year, the club put on a blitz tourney at the beginning of fall quarter in Savery Hall. I had helped advertise the tourney that afternoon by passing out flyers in Red Square. At 4:30 PM, 55 players showed up to play blitz. I sat at a table in the back and didn't join the tournament, because I was just learning to play five-minute games — and I didn't want to be crushed. I did set up a board and pieces in case anyone else wanted to play a casual, non-blitz game. A tall, good-looking young man asked me if I wanted to play, and when I said yes, he sat down. I jokingly asked, “You're not some secret grandmaster, are you?” I had learned from experience that many of the UW Chess Club members were high-

level players. As he answered “No,” the then-club-president (Odin Atkinson) was passing by and I heard him mutter “Yes.” Hmm. We started a game, and much to my shock I lost in 22 moves. I can't remember my opponent's name, but when I mentioned this crushing defeat to Odin a little later that afternoon, he remarked, “Well, he's a master — so lasting for 22 moves is actually pretty good.”

This last memory is more amazing than humorous. One Wednesday evening at the UW Chess Club, I played a casual game with a grad student from Germany. The young man was quite a high-level player and won the game... but I didn't lose immediately. I made him work for it a bit. We were not playing on a clock or recording the game. Afterwards, he asked politely if I would like to review the game. I said “OK” but was a bit confused about how we would do that, since neither of us had recorded the game. My opponent proceeded to set up the pieces, and play through our entire game from memory. He made all the moves for Black and White — since I had no clue what the “next move” had been for either of us! I was quite astonished and thanked him profusely for his time and the pointers he had given me — about alternate moves, better moves, missed opportunities, etc.

I am pretty sure that if I give it some serious thought, I have a lot more humorous chess experiences I could write about. So you may see a sequel to this sequel down the road! In the meantime, stay safe and busy, keep a sense of humor, and keep playing chess.



Starbucks in Pioneer Square.
Read the sweatshirt. LOL.
Photo credit: Karen Schmidt.

Readers' Showcase

(Miscellaneous Games Submitted For Publication)

**Derin Goktepe (WA) (1930) –
Konner Feldman (OR) (2054) [E73]**

Washington vs Oregon Match
Chess.com (R2), August 8, 2020
[Konner Feldman]

This game from the Washington vs Oregon match was a King's Indian Defense (KID) where White locked the center and gave up the KID bishop's counterpart. The deciding factor was Black's total control over pawn breaks, when I was able to improve even my king before opening up the board. The bind was especially mentally-taxing to White, who seemed like he could not sit still and do nothing (which was the appropriate course of action).

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6
5.Be2**

Sigh. I know this could still be main line, but the only reason people play these move orders is to play some weird sideline.

**5...0-0 6.Be3 e5 7.d5 a5 8.g4 Na6 9.h4
Nc5 10.f3 h5 11.g5 Ne8 12.Nh3 Qe7
13.Qd2 Bd7 14.b3?**



Position after 14.b3

An error. Advancing on the queenside only gives Black targets.

14...Na6

Threatening ...a4 to disrupt White's pawn structure and create play.

15.a3 Nc5 16.Bxc5??

Never give away the KID bishop's counterpart.

16...dxc5 17.a4

And here I realized the battle revolved around whether Black could activate his Bg7 or White his Be2. This means that White's only break, f4, is positional suicide. Thus, Black has all the time in the

world to prepare his own break: ...f6. But first, some obvious moves.

17...Nd6 18.0-0-0

18.Nb5 Nxb5 19.cxb5 (19.axb5 b6) 19...c4.

18...Kh7

To support an eventual ...Bh6 if I ever need it.

19.Rdg1

Here White begins flailing around with phantom threats (f4). White must accept that he can only draw if Black does not blunder horrendously. He should enable Be2-f1-h3 and trade it off, then create a defensive setup and shuffle his king.

19...b6 20.Bd1

I want to prepare ...f6, but I don't want to endanger my king in any way. The solution: get my king to b7. After all, it is already established that opening up the center with f4 is losing positionally.

**20...Rh8!! 21.Qg2 Kg8 22.Kb1 Kf8
23.Rf1 Ke8 24.Rf2 Kd8 25.Rhf1 Kc8
26.Ng1 Kb7 27.Nge2 Rae8 28.Ng3 f6
29.Nge2 fxe5 30.hxe5**

30.Qxe5 Bf6 31.Qxe6 Reg8.

30...Rhf8



Position after 30...Rhf8

I knew that this pawn structure was extremely favorable for Black and I still could take as much time as I needed. The computer does recommend 30...h4, but this move was committal, I had decided to explore every other opportunity first, as I could always re-manuever my pieces if all else failed. This is one of the advantages of having such a dominating position, and it was every bit a mental advantage as it was an on-the-board one.

31.Rh1 Rf7 32.Rh4 Ref8

32...Bh6. A missed opportunity, but there are many ways to win from here on.

33.Qg3 Bg4 34.Ng1 Qxe5 35.Rhh2 Qe3

35...Nf5 36.Qg2 Nd4.

36.Kc2 Bh6 37.Qg2 Qd4

37...Qc1+ 38.Kd3 Nxe4.

**38.Nh3 Be3 39.Rf1 Rf6 40.Ng1 Bxg1
41.Qxg1 Bxf3 42.Bxf3 Rxf3 43.Qxd4
cxd4 44.Rxf3 Rxf3 45.Nd1 Nxe4 0-1**

Embracing The Madness

**Emory Tate (2433) –
Benjamin Lin (2097) [B02]**

104th US Open
Los Angeles, CA (R9), August 12, 2003
[Benjamin Lin]

1.e4 Nf6

After discovering the pairings about an hour before this game began, I asked Oleg Zaikov if he had access to a chess database. We eventually borrowed a laptop from his friend Hana Itkis. It quickly became apparent that the late Emory Tate played aggressively. With no more time left to prepare, Alekhine's Defense seemed like the most reasonable choice for embracing the madness that was sure to ensue. Incidentally, Oleg's South Eugene teammate Morgan Griffiths drew Emory the round before. Morgan had been crowned 2003 National High School Champion a few months earlier.

2.Nc3 d5 3.e5 Ne4 4.d4

The mainline is 4.Nce2, because White hopes to take advantage of the misplaced knight on e4.

4...Nxc3 5.bxc3 c5 6.Be3 Nc6

6...e6!? voluntarily hems in the bad French bishop, but Black gets a MacCutcheon formation without having given up the valuable dark-squared bishop.

7.Qd2 Bf5!?

Trying to play a French structure without a bad bishop might be asking too much of this position, because the queenside immediately becomes a target.

8.Rb1 Qc7?

The critical continuation is 8...c4! 9.Rxb7 e6 10.Be2 Qc8 11.Rb2 Ba3 with lots of activity for a measly doubled pawn.

9.Nf3 e6 10.dxc5 0-0-0??

10...Be7 would be the sane way to play.

11.Be2 Bg4 12.Nd4 Bxe2

Trading off the bad French bishop, but clearly things have gone terribly wrong for Black.

13.Qxe2 Nxd4??

13...Bxc5! 14.Nb5 Qe7 15.O-O Kb8 16.Bxc5 Qxc5 17.Nd6 Rd7 18.Qa6 Nd8 proved to be too difficult to calculate over the board.

14.cxd4 f6 15.f4 g5

Without a concrete plan, Black is simply lashing out.

16.0-0 gxf4 17.Bxf4 f5 18.Rf3!

A beautiful rook-lift to join the queenside attack.

18...Rd7 19.Ra3 a6??



Position after 19...a6

20.Rxa6!!!

Triple Exclam!!! is the title of Emory's biography written by Daaim Shabazz. I should have anticipated this powerful sacrifice, especially after my pre-game preparation. Emory was known for his uncompromising style of play.

20...bxa6 21.Qxa6+ Kd8 22.c6??

22.Qxe6! was crushing, and Black is totally helpless. Instead, the text allows Black to survive.

22...Qa7! 23.Bg5+ Be7

Almost everything is hanging, and strangely nothing can be taken.

24.c7+ Rxc7 25.Qd6+ Ke8 26.Bxe7??

26.Qxe6 was White's last chance to save the game.

26...Kf7

Black has finally consolidated with a winning advantage.

27.Bd8 Rd7 28.Bb6 Rxd6 29.Bxa7 Ra6 30.Rb7+ Kg6 31.Bc5 Rxa2 32.Re7

Northwest Chess

Rxc2 33.Rxe6+ Kg5 34.Ra6 Rb8 35.h4+ Kg4 36.Ra3 Rbb2 37.e6 Rxc2+ 38.Kf1 Rbf2+ 39.Ke1 Re2+ 40.Kf1 Ref2+ 41.Ke1 Rb2 42.Kf1 Rgf2+

White resigned, because after 43.Kg1 Rfe2 threatens both mate and the passed pawn on e6.

0-1

\$1400 Game

Antonio Angel (1900) – Benjamin Lin (2027)

2001 Continental Open (U2000)
Las Vegas, Nevada (R6), July 29, 2001
[Benjamin Lin]

1.Nf3 g6

Although this game was played in 2001, the story begins a year earlier. Shortly after winning the National Junior High Team Championship, scholastic superstars Oleg Zaikov and Ryan Thurlow both defeated me for 400+ point upsets. Ryan did it twice in the same month!! Those three games cost me almost 100 ratings points. Soon afterwards, I was no longer an expert. This was the perfect time to enter one of those CCA tournaments run by Bill Goichberg. My friends Stacey Mitchell, Steve Schwartz, and Nick Raptis also played in this tournament. After a disappointing loss in round two, my chances for winning a big prize seemed dismal. Thoughts filled with self-doubt lingered. Was I just another patzer or could I play like an expert once again? Playing numerous blitz games with Stacey between rounds was fun and uplifting. After achieving four wins in five rounds, a four-figure payday was back on the agenda. All I had to do was win this game!

2.e4 Bg7 3.d4 c6!?

Aiming for the Gurgendize variation, which I had never played before as Black. However, I had lots of experience from the white side since this was my brother's pet line. I also remembered that IM Georgi Orlov had published a game in *Northwest Chess* featuring this system.

4.Bc4?

This loses a tempo. The main line is 4.Nc3 d5 5.h3.

4...d5 5.exd5 cxd5 6.Bb5+ Bd7 7.Bxd7+ Nxd7

The white bishop has helped Black to develop!

8.Be3

More strange bishop moves from White.

8...Ngf6 9.Qc1 Rc8 10.c3 Qb6 11.b3?

Castling was definitely indicated.

11...Ng4 12.Bd2 Qe6+ 13.Kf1 Qa6+ 14.Ke1 0-0 15.h3 Ngf6 16.Bh6 Rfe8 17.Bxg7 Kxg7

White has successfully traded another pair of bishops and is now lost due to lack of development.

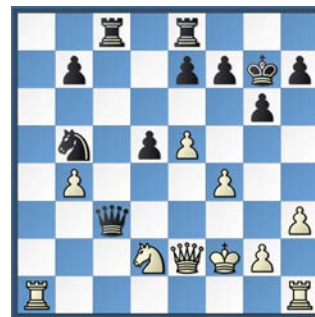
18.Ne5 Nxe5 19.dxe5 Ne4 20.Qe3 Qa5 21.b4 Qc7 22.f4 Nxc3 23.Nd2 a5

23...d4! 24.Qxd4 Red8 with tremendous activity and pressure.

24.a3 axb4 25.axb4 Nb5 26.Kf2 Qc3?

I missed 26...d4 27.Qe2 Qb6 28.Nc4 Qe6 29.Nd2 Rc2!

27.Qe2??



Position after 27.Qe2

Trading queens would have offered significantly more resistance. Around here, Nick wandered over from the Open section to observe my big-money game. I resolved to play actively like Nick would.

27...Nd4 28.Qd1 Nc2 29.Rb1 Qe3+ 30.Kf1 Qxf4+ 31.Kg1 Qd4+ 32.Kh2 Qxe5+ 33.g3 Rc3 34.Nf3 Qe3 35.Rf1 d4 36.Rb2 d3 37.Nd2 Qe2+ 38.Qxe2 dxe2 39.Rc1 e1Q 40.Rxc2 Qxg3+ 0-1



Photo credit: Philip Peterson.

Seattle Seafair Open

By Derek Zhang

A diverse group of 98 players from eight states and six countries participated in the 2020 Seattle Seafair Open, held July 18-19 online on Chess.com. The five-round G/90;+10 tournament, co-hosted by the Washington Chess Federation and the Seattle Chess Club, was played in one big Open section. Derek Zhang and Austin Cluff directed, assisted by Rekha Sagar, Ani Barua, Brandon Peng, and Jacob Mayer.

The Open section started with a bang in round one when Michael Shapiro sprung a surprise upset over top seed GM Aleksandr Lenderman when Lenderman blundered a piece in a slightly better endgame. The upset bug continued to spread throughout the top of the tournament, with second seed GM Aleksej Aleksandrov falling in a tense round four battle to IM Tigran Petrosyan and third seed GM Vitaliy Bernadskiy miscalculating a pawn ending in Round three against local expert Nicholas Whale.

In the end, many-time Oregon State Champion FM Nick Raptis emerged from the chaos to claim the first prize of \$450 with a perfect 5.0/5 score, impressively defeating GM Maxim Lugovskoy and Lenderman in the final two rounds. GM Jose Martinez Alcantara, IM David Shahinyan, IM Tigran Petrosyan, and local NM Joseph Levine all finished a half-point back to finish in a four-way tie for second-fifth, each earning \$272.

Brandon Jiang, Pranav Sairam, Daniel Qian, and Austin Tang, each scoring 4.0/5, split the U2200 and U2000 prizes to the tune of \$75 each. Edward Li, coming in to the tournament rated just 1595, scored successive 450+ point upsets on the final day to claim the U1800 prize of \$150 with a 4.0/5 score.

Meanwhile, Carson Roesch and Vidip Kona each ended the weekend \$150 richer with 3.5/5 scores, taking home the U1600 and U1400 prizes, respectively. Drew Bunch and Skylor Chan, both immensely under-rated, split the U1200 prize while each scoring a 900-point upset along the way. Last but not least, Aditya Kompella and Gaurang Pendharkar tied for the Unrated prize of \$100 with scores of 2.0/5.

Overall the tournament ran as smoothly as we could have hoped, in no small part due to the great sportsmanship on display throughout the event. A shout-out goes out to Aditya Ramkumar, who

graciously agreed to continue the game when his third-round opponent miscalculated a draw offer in a much better position. Thank you to everyone who helped make this tournament a huge success!

Also, as you may know, the Seattle Chess Club has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, unable to host in-person chess events since March, but still paying rent on their unused space each month. The Seattle Chess Club invites you to consider membership in the club or donations to support its mission. For membership information, go to:

seattlechess.club/membership/

The SCC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization; donations are tax deductible. Donations to support the club can be mailed to: 2150 N. 107th St., Ste. B-85, Seattle, WA 98133. Please help the Seattle Chess Club as you are able!

**Michael Shapiro (1502) –
Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) [A10]**
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R1), July 18, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

In the first round I was playing a player around 1600, so I expected a relatively easy game, but I got anything but.

1.c4 b6

1...e6.

2.Nf3 Bb7 3.Nc3 e6 4.a3

A slightly unusual move, but I couldn't really find a way to punish this. 4.g3; 4.d4.

4...Nf6

I thought this is normal. 4...d5 5.cxd5 exd5 6.d4.

5.g3

5.d4 could've transposed into the Nimzo.

5...c5 6.Bg2 Nc6



Position after 6...Nc6

Somehow the engine really dislikes this. 6...d5 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Nxd5 (8.0-0 Nc6

9.Qa4 Qd7 10.Nxd5 exd5 11.d4) 8...Qxd5 9.0-0. I considered this, but I thought that he plays d4 too easily, and the game can fizzle.

7.0-0

7.e4.

7...Be7 8.b3

8.d4 Nxd4 9.Nxd4 Bxg2 10.Kxg2 cxd4 11.Qxd4 0-0. I was willing to play this position, but I wasn't really that happy with this. I wasn't really worried about 8.e4, but apparently I might be slightly worse here, although at least here I keep all my pieces on the board. 8...e5.

8...0-0 9.d4 Nxd4

9...d5.

10.Nxd4 Bxg2 11.Kxg2 cxd4 12.Qxd4 Qc7

12...d5 13.cxd5 Nxd5 14.Nxd5 exd5 15.Bb2 Bf6 16.Qd2. This position is equal but with almost no winning chances for White.

13.Kg1

13.e4.

13...Rfd8 14.Bb2 Qc6 15.Qd3 d5

I think this move is objectively best, and I thought I'll have some winning chances in the endgame due to my position being slightly more active. However, maybe it was a practical mistake. 15...d6 16.Rfd1 Nd7.

16.cxd5 Nxd5 17.Nxd5

17.Qf3.

17...Rxd5 18.Qc3 Qxc3 19.Bxc3 h5

19...Rc8 20.Bb4. Here I was worried about this, and I thought that this rook endgame might not yield enough winning chances. I also considered 19...a5 20.a4, but I thought that this structure would potentially be problematic for me.

20.b4 Rc8 21.Rac1 a5



Position after 21...a5

22.e3!!

I didn't see this move coming, but it is a really strong move preparing Bd4 and

maintaining very strong drawing chances.

22...Rd3 23.Bd4 Rb8

23...Rxc1 24.Rxc1 axb4 (24...Rxa3 25.Rc8+ Kh7 26.bxa5 bxa5 27.Rc7. Here I thought I had no winning chances.) 25.axb4 b5 26.Rc8+.

24.Rc7 Bf8

24...Bd8 25.Rc3.

25.Rc3?!

I was happy to see this move, and I thought I'll have real winning chances. Somehow he defended really well even after this. 25.Ra1=.

25...Rxc3 26.Bxc3 Rc8 27.Bd4 axb4 28.axb4 b5 29.Ra1 Bxb4 30.Rb1 Rc4 31.Kg2 f6 32.f4!

Another strong prophylactic move.

32...Kf7

32...f5 33.Be5.

33.Kf3 Ke7??



Position after 33...Ke7

What can I say? Loss of concentration, it happens to all of us. Truth be told, even if I don't blunder, this is objectively not easy to win. I am not sure what exactly went wrong for me this game.

I thought I played a reasonably good game up to this point, but somehow, perhaps, my opponent played the game of his life. 33...Ke8 34.Ke2 Kd7 35.Kd3 Kc6 36.Ra1. Because of the poor coordination of my pieces, he gets too much counterplay, which is enough for equality.

34.Rxb4

Of course! Unfortunately it's such a blunder from which there is simply no recovery.

34...Rxb4 35.Bc5+ Kd7 36.Bxb4 Kc6 37.Ke4 Kd7 38.h4 g6 39.Kf3 Kc6 40.Ke4 Kd7 41.Kd4 Kc6 42.e4 Kb6 43.f5 gx f5 44.ex f5 45.Kd5 Kc7 46.Ke6 Kc6 47.Kxf5 Kd5 48.Kxf6 Ke4 49.Kg5 Kf3 50.Kxh5 Kxg3 51.Kg5

1-0

**Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) –
Nugen Tran (1047) [A17]**
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R2), July 18, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

In round two after a tough loss to a 1500 player, I re-entered with a half-point bye and ended up playing an 1100 player who upset a higher-rated player in round one. So, I was the highest 0.5/1 and my opponent was the lowest 1.0/1. I figured my opponent was under-rated. I don't think I played people that level in a tournament since I became a GM, except in a simul. However, these days we cannot look at the ratings, since no one has been able to play rated tournaments for the last few months, and it is quite possible that many players, especially younger players, might already be a few hundred points higher in level than their official rating that might be lagging behind. For a while my opponent played quite well, until the unexpected rook blunder.

1.Nf3 d5

My pet line.

2.e3 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.b3 c5

5...0-0 is more common here.

6.Bb2 Nc6

6...d4 doesn't quite work here. 7.exd4 cxd4 8.Nb5 d3 9.Qb1+.

7.exd5 exd5 8.d4 Be6

8...0-0 again was probably more accurate.

9.dxc5 Bxc5 10.Bb5 0-0 11.0-0 a6?!

I would play something like 11...Qe7 since I wanted to take on c6 anyway.

12.Bxc6 bxc6 13.Rc1 Ba7

13...Bd6.

14.Na4 Rc8 15.Qd3



Position after 15.Qd3

This is a strong multi-purposeful move, getting the queen into an active position where I attack a few of my opponent's targets: the a6-pawn on the queenside and the h7-pawn on the kingside.

15...a5 16.Ng5 g6 17.Qa6

17.Nc5 might actually be the most precise.

17...Bb8 18.Nxe6 fxe6



Position after 18...fxe6

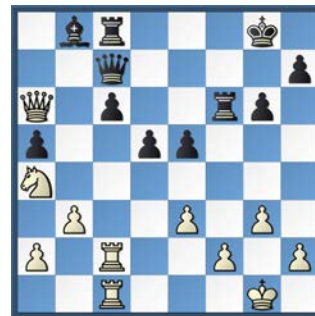
19.Bxf6

Originally I thought I can play 19.Rxc6, but then I saw ...Bxh2+ with some murky complications which I didn't want to allow. 19...Bxh2+! 20.Kxh2 Ng4+ 21.Kh3 Qg5 was already enough for me to see in order to avoid going into this. 22.f4 Qh5+ 23.Kg3 Rce8! (23...Qh2+? 24.Kf3 Qh5 25.Rxc8. Here White wins.) 24.Rxe6 Nxe3 25.Rxe3 Rxe3+ 26.Kf2 Re2+ 27.Qxe2 Rxf4+ 28.Ke1 Re4 with a very unclear position.

19...Qc7!

A very nice intermediate move that I didn't see. It's a very impressive move for a player slightly below 1100! Just goes to show how much the quality of chess in general has improved since I was a starting-out player.

20.g3 Rxf6 21.Rc2 e5 22.Rfc1



Position after 22.Rfc1

22...Qa7??

Thankfully for me, a blunder came. 22...Kg7±. White is clearly better due to Black's weak queenside pawns and White's active pieces, but Black is still in the game.

23.Qxc8+ Kf7 24.Rxc6 Rf3 25.Rc7+ Bxc7 26.Rxc7+ Qxc7 27.Qxc7+ Kf6 28.Qd6+ Kf5 29.Qxd5 Kg4 30.h3+ Kxh3 31.Qxf3 e4 32.Qxe4 g5 33.Qf5+ g4 34.Qh5#

1-0

Ananth Gottumukkala (1785) – Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) [B15]
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R3), July 18, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

After a quick round-two win, I was paired against a young Indian player who is around 1800, but I knew he's quite dangerous since he has beaten Nick Raptis before.

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 g6

Last time in a similar tournament I played 3...Nf6 against IM Georgi Orlov without lots of success. This time I wanted to switch it up in order to avoid preparation by my opponent and to keep my opponent guessing.

4.d4 Bg7 5.h3 dxe4 6.Nxe4 Nf6 7.Nxf6+

This might be slightly worse for Black but is supposed to be fairly solid and reliable. However, I quickly got an unpleasant position in this game.

7...exf6 8.Bd3 0-0 9.0-0 a5 10.Re1 Na6 11.c4 Be6?!

Showing lack of understanding of this position. Taking squares away from the knight on a6 was uncalled for. 11...Nc7 would be normal with ideas like ...Ne6 and ...f5, putting pressure on White's d4-

pawn. Another idea can be ...b5. Black should challenge White's center or else Black will be worse. 11...Nc7 12.b3 Re8 (12...f5).

12.a3

12.Bf4. Normal development was also possible.



Position after 12.a3

12...Re8

I don't think I considered 12...b5! Apparently this concept of sacrificing the pawn for some initiative, gaining control of some open files and key squares, was beyond my understanding of the position. 13.cxb5 cxb5 14.Bxb5 Nc7 15.Bf1 Bd5=.

13.Bf4 Bf8 14.Rc1 Bd6 15.Qd2 a4 16.d5!?

Simplifying the game and getting to a

risk-free position. 16.Bxd6 Qxd6 17.Re4± might've been more ambitious to try to go after my king.

16...cxd5

Apparently 16...Nc5 was possible, which I also don't think that I saw. 17.dxe6 Bxf4 18.exf7+ Kxf7 19.Bxg6+ hxg6 20.Qxf4 Nd3 21.Rxe8 Nxf4 22.Rxd8 Rxd8 23.Rc2=. However, here White has to play some precise moves, and even here, Black still can continue fighting.

17.cxd5 Bxf4 18.Qxf4 Bxd5 19.Rxe8+ Qxe8 20.Qxf6



Position after 20.Qxf6

20...Qd8?!

Continuing my bad form from earlier in the day. 20...Rc8=.

21.Qxd8+ Rxd8 22.Bxa6

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Email: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

Registration: Online at nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration.
Registration **deadline Sat. 10/3 @ 5pm**.
\$15 Late Fee for payments accepted after the deadline. Unpaid players will receive a zero-point bye for round 1.

WASHINGTON BLITZ CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

SUNDAY OCTOBER 4TH, 2020

Site: Online via Chess.com

Format: A 9-Round Double Swiss in one section.

Time Control: G/3;+2.

Entry Fee: \$35 by 9/30, \$45 after. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs, or US Chess 2400+.

Schedule: Starts at 12 noon. Rounds approximately every 10 minutes. 30 min break after round 5.

Prize Fund: \$850 (based on 30 paid entries).

Open: 1st \$300, 2nd \$200, 3rd \$100 1st U1800: \$50, 1st U1600: \$50. 1st U1400: \$50. Best Upsets: 1st \$60, 2nd \$40, 3rd 1-yr NWC subscription extension.

Byes: Up to 3 half-point byes available, 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. A Chess.com and Zoom account are required.

Rating: US Chess Online Blitz Rated. US Chess October 2020 rating supplement will be used to determine pairings and prizes. Higher of US Chess regular/blitz or foreign ratings used at TD discretion.

Procedure: Pairings will be released prior to the start of each round. Games will be started automatically by the TD in the [Live Chess](#) area. Players must report their result to the TD upon completion of the game.

Fair Play Policy: All players and parents (if U18) are required to sign the [WCF Fair Play Agreement](#) prior to the start of the tournament. All players will be monitored by Zoom during the games. WCF's Fair Play Committee will review any suspicious games on a case-by-case basis. Cheating of any kind is strictly prohibited.

Somehow I totally missed it; I only saw this possibility about five minutes into his thinking.

22...Bxf3

A sad necessity. 22...bxa6 23.Rd1± would be a very unpleasant pin for me.



Position after 22...Bxf3

23.Bb5?!

Phew. Of course, if he played 23.gxf3, I should be able to hold a draw, but White reaches a position where he cannot lose. I would have to then accept a draw against an 1800 after already losing to a 1500 earlier in the day. This just goes to show that everyone can play good chess these days, and even an out-of-form GM can easily be scalped for a draw or win. 23...bxa6 24.Rc4 Rd2 25.Rxa4 Rxb2 26.Rxa6 g5, where Black should easily hold a draw thanks to his rook activity, but of course White can never lose unless he goes crazy trying to win at all costs.

23...Bd1

I suspect my opponent might've missed this move. At least now, the game doesn't immediately fizzle into a draw, so I started to be slightly optimistic.

24.Kf1

24.Rc4 Bb3 25.Rb4 Rd1+ 26.Kh2 Rd2 27.Kg3 would probably just be a dead draw.

24...Rd2 25.Rc8+?!

25.Bc4 Bb3 26.Bxb3 axb3 27.Rc7 is still a draw.

25...Kg7 26.Ra8 Rxb2 27.Bxa4 Be2+ 28.Ke1

28.Kg1 b5.

28...b5

Here at least White has to answer some questions.

[Diagram top of next column]

29.Rb8?!

29.Re8 should still probably draw, but already here White has to work for a draw in most lines. 29...bxa4 (I was probably going to play 29...Bh5 30.Bxb5! Rxb5



Position after 28...b5

31.g4 Ra5 32.Re3 Bxg4 33.hxg4 Ra4 34.f3, and with accurate play White should draw, but at least here there are some imbalances, so I can hope for a miracle.) 30.Rxe2 Rb1+ 31.Kd2 Ra1 32.Re3 Ra2+ 33.Ke1 h5. This is objectively a draw, but here my rook is more active than his since my rook ties his rook down to his pawn, but I can still play many moves to try to trick him.

29...Bd3

I was spending some time here trying to compare ...Bc4 and ...Bd3, and it looks like I chose the wrong one. 29...Bc4 30.Bd1 Rb1 31.Kd2 Ra1 32.Ra8 Bd5 33.Ra7 b4 34.Ra5 Ra2+ 35.Ke1 Bxg2 36.axb4 Rb2 with decent winning chances for Black.

30.Bd1 Ra2 31.Ra8 Be4 32.Ra5?!

I also expected this, but now Black might be close to winning. 32.Ra7 Bxg2 33.Bb3 Ra1+ 34.Kd2 Bxh3 35.Bxf7 would give White good counterplay and excellent drawing chances. 35...Kf6 36.Be8!±.

32...Bxg2 33.Rxb5 Rxa3?!

33...Bxh3 was probably better.

34.h4 h6 35.h5?!



Position after 35.h5

An instructive mistake, fixing his pawn on the weak h5-square where I can attack it with a bishop and a rook. Now White is lost. 35.Rb4. Objectively here, White still has very good chances to hold.

35...g5 36.Rb6 Bf3 37.Bb3

37.Bxf3 Rxf3 38.Ke2 Rh3+.

37...Bxh5 38.Rb7 Ra1+ 39.Kd2 Rf1

40.Ke3 Re1+ 41.Kd3 Bg6+ 42.Kd2 Re4 43.Rd7 h5 44.f3 Rb4 45.Kc3 Rf4 46.Bd5 h4 47.Ra7 Bh5 48.Kd2 Rd4+

I was happy to get the win and keep myself in contention in the tournament. However, I was not very happy with this game.

0-1

Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) –
Nicholas Whale (2065) [E62]
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R4), July 19, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

In round four I played against a strong local expert, Nicholas Whale. He has proven to be very dangerous, beating the strong GM Vitaly Bernadskiy last round. Actually I didn't even expect to play him, so I was on my own in the opening.

1.d4

1.Nf3.

1...Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 5.Nc3 d6 6.Nf3 c6 7.0-0

A sideline of sidelines. I was on my own here, since I couldn't quite recall what I should do here.

7...Qa5 8.e4 Qh5

The idea of ...Qa5.

9.Ng5

9.e5 dxe5 10.Nxe5± would also be slightly better for White. 9.Qb3 would be interesting, trying not to allow ...Bh3. 9...e5 10.d5.

9...Qxd1 10.Rxd1 h6

10...Nfd7!? 11.Nf3 Nb6 12.b3 c5.

11.Nf3 Rd8 12.h3

Probably unnecessary. 12.Be3 Ng4 13.Bd2 Nf6 14.Rac1±.

12...Na6

12...d5!? might've been possible. 12...Be6 also might've made sense to play earlier.

13.Be3 Be6 14.d5

Probably not the most accurate move. 14.b3 was preferred since I am keeping the tension. I was worried about him playing ...d5, but quite clearly it is not that great for him. 14...d5 15.cxd5 cxd5 16.e5 Ne4 17.Nxe4 dxe4 18.Nd2.

14...Bd7 15.e5?

This is just a careless move. I don't know why I assumed he has to take. 15.dxc6 Bxc6 (15...bxc6 16.e5 here would be good.) 16.Nd4± is a solid but stable advantage.

15...Ne8!



Position after 15...Ne8

Of course! Now I realized that I cannot hold my space, and I am losing all of my advantage, and in fact I have to be lucky not to be worse.

16.dxc6 Bxc6 17.exd6?

Another mistake, helping his knight get into the game, but at this point I was struggling to find a move. 17.Nd5 Bxd5 18.Rxd5 Nec7. I couldn't see what to do here, but in fact I just have good compensation for the pawn. 19.Rdd1 dxe5?! (19...d5 20.Rac1) 20.Ne1!

17...Nxd6 18.Nd2 Bxg2 19.Kxg2 Bxc3

I am just much worse after 19...b6. My pieces are just not harmoniously placed. Very poor opening play.

20.bxc3 Nf5 21.Nf1 Nxe3+ 22.Nxe3 e6?!

Now I can breathe a little bit easier. 22...Rxd1 23.Rxd1 Nc5; with everything else being equal, my pawn structure is a wreck.

23.Rd4 Kf8?!

23...Kg7 24.Rad1 Rdc8.

24.Rad1 Ke7 25.Ng4

Now I am creating counterplay, and at least the worst is over for me.

25...h5 26.Ne5 Rxd4 27.cxd4

27.Rxd4 is tempting, but would be a mistake, since after ...Nc5 all the penetration squares are covered. My pawns are still very weak.

27...b6 28.Rd3

28.f4 was more accurate to keep the knight on e5 since I stop ...g5.

28...g5 29.Rf3 f6 30.Nc6+ Kd6 31.d5 Rf8!

This is precise. 31...f5 32.Nd4.

32.Ra3

32.Nxa7 exd5 33.cxd5 Nc7=.

32...exd5 33.cxd5 Kxd5 34.Ne7+ Ke6 35.Rxa6

35.Ng6 Rg8.

35...Kxe7 36.Rxa7+ Kd6



Position after 36...Kd6

37.Rb7

Still a draw after this, but it creates the most practical problems for Black. 37.Rh7 Ra8 38.Rxh5 Rxa2 is an easy draw for Black.

37...Kc6 38.Rh7 Ra8 39.Rh6

39.Rxh5 Kd6.

39...Rxa2 40.Rxf6+ Kc5 41.Rf5+ Kc4 42.Rxg5 b5 43.Rxh5 b4 44.Rh4+ Kc3 45.Rh8

This is still a draw, but Black has to do some calculation.

45...b3 46.Rc8+

46.Rb8 b2 47.h4 Ra4.

46...Kd2 47.Rb8 Kc2 48.h4 b2 49.h5 b1Q?

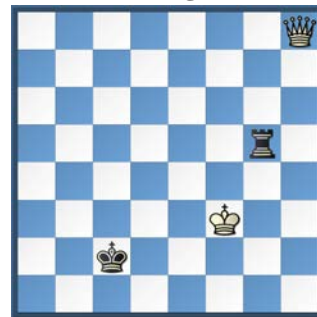
After many accurate moves by Black in the endgame, finally he errs. 49...Ra8!

would gain a very important tempo for Black. 50.Rb7 b1Q 51.Rxb1 Kxb1 52.g4 Rg8 53.f3 (53.Kf3 Kc2 54.Kf4 Kd3 55.h6 Rf8+ would be complicated but leads to a draw.) 53...Kc2; 49...Ra3 would also be sufficient since 50.h6 (50.Rxb2+ Kxb2 51.g4 Kc3 52.Kf3 Kd4+ 53.Kf4 Kd5 54.Kf5 Rh3=) 50...Ra6! = (50...Rb3? 51.Rxb3 Kxb3 52.h7 b1Q 53.h8Q+-).

50.Rxb1 Kxb1 51.g4

51.h6?? Ra6.

51...Ra6 52.g5 Ra5 53.f4 Kc2 54.h6 Ra4 55.h7 Rxf4 56.h8Q Rg4+ 57.Kf3 Rxg5



Position after 57...Rxg5

58.Qc8+

I calculated that I can win the rook by force since it's unprotected, meaning I don't even have to prove my queen versus rook technique.

58...Kb3 59.Qb8+ Kc3 60.Qc7+ Kb3 61.Qf7+ Kc2 62.Qc4+ Kb2 63.Qe2+ Kb1 64.Qd1+

It was nice to grind out this win. I was happy with how I played the endgame, but very unhappy with how poorly I played in the opening. With this win, I got myself into contention going into the last round.

1-0

Nick Raptis (2393) –
Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) [A07]
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R5), July 19, 2020
[Ralph Dubisch]

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1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 Bg7 4.0-0 e5
5.d3 Ne7 6.e4 0-0 7.exd5 Nxd5 8.Nc3

8.Re1 Nc6 9.Nc3 Nde7 10.Bd2 seems to be the normal and slightly more forcing move order, though it isn't clear that Black can take advantage of the transposition.

8...Ne7

8...Nxc3 9.bxc3 e4 gives White interesting options and perhaps a slight edge.

9.Re1 Nbc6 10.Bd2 h6 11.b4!



Position after 11.b4

I don't know all that much about these reverse modern positions, but I like the enterprising mindset behind this queenside spike, offering to exchange wing for center pawn and threatening to drive off the c6-knight. Note the unassuming 10.Bd2 that made it possible.

11...a6

11...Nxb4 12.Nxe5±.

12.a4 Nf5 13.Rb1 Re8 14.Ne4 Kh7 15.Nc5 Rb8 16.h4 b6 17.Ne4 f6?



Position after 17...f6

This move seems quite anti-positional, reducing the influence of the dark-square bishop and seriously weakening the kingside light squares.

I suppose it's possible the GM suffered a hallucination here and worried about some kind of Ng5+ tactic. Indeed, if Black doesn't guard the c6-knight, then takes the first knight to check on g5, things are grim. However, 17...Bb7 18.h5 Ncd4 seems to make sense, with perhaps a small advantage to White.; But even if Black plays "pass" here, 17...— 18.Neg5+ Kg8 is fine. (18...hgx5? 19.Nxg5+ Kg8 20.Bxc6 is, of course, bad.)

18.h5 gxh5?

I think Black needs to try 18...g5, though White still establishes solid control of the light squares: 19.g4 Nd6 (19...Nfd4 20.Nxd4 Nxd4 21.c3 Ne6 22.Ng3 is also in White's favor.) 20.Nxd6 Qxd6 21.Nh2, heading to e3 or g3 via f1.

19.Nh2 h4 20.Qh5 hxg3?



Position after 20...hxg3

Black is playing with fire. Opening the f-file can only be good for White. 20...Rf8± White still has attacking chances, but it's far from decisive.

21.fxg3 Rf8 22.Rf1 Nce7 23.g4 Qd4+ 24.Kh1 Ne3 25.Bxe3 Qxe3 26.Rbe1 Qd4 27.g5!

Nice.

27...f5 28.Nf6+

28.gxh6 Bxh6 (28...Bf6 29.Ng4) 29.Ng4! Ng8 30.Ng5+ Kg7 31.Nxe5 Rf6

32.Rg1+.

28...Rxf6

28...Kh8 29.Nf3 Qd6 30.Nxe5 might last a minute longer.

29.gxf6 Bxf6 30.Qf7+

1-0

**Tigran Petrosyan (2452) –
Aleksej Aleksandrov (2708) [C54]**
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R4), July 19, 2020
[Tigran Petrosyan]

1.e4

Before the game it was a bit difficult to choose an opening, because my opponent plays almost the same with Black. So I chose Italian with c3 and d4 which is less common.

1...e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Be4 Be5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.e5 d5 7.Be2 Ne4 8.cxd4 Bb6 9.0-0 0-0 10.Nc3 Bf5

10...Bg4 is played more, the positions after the opening are usually equal.

11.Na4

I watched a game played by Jobava, and I liked his idea.

11...f6



Position after 11...f6

12.exf6

From here I actually forgot my preparations and started to play on my own. 12.Be3 was played in Jobava's game. 12...Qe7

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13.exf6 Rxf6 14.Rc1 Raf8 15.Nxb6 axb6 16.Ne5 h6 17.f4 Nd6 18.Bf2 Be4 19.Bh4 g5 20.fxg5 Rxf1+ 21.Bxf1 Nxe5 22.dxe5 Nf5 23.Bf2 hxg5 24.Qd2 c5 25.b4 c4 26.Bxb6 Qxe5 27.Qxg5+ Kf7 28.Be2 Ke6 29.Bc5 Qf6 30.Qg4 Qb2 31.Rf1 Rf7 32.Bxc4 Qxg2+ 33.Qxg2 Bxg2 34.Re1+ Kf6 35.Bd3 Bh3 36.Kf2 Rh7 37.Bd4+ Kg5 38.Rg1+ Kf4 39.Bb2 Rf7 40.Re1 Kg4 41.Rg1+ Kf4 42.a4 Nd6 43.Rg7 Ne4+ 44.Ke2 Rf8 45.Bd4 Bg4+ 46.Ke1 Nd6 47.Bc5 Re8+ 48.Kd2 Ne4+ 49.Bxe4 dxe4 50.Rf7+ Ke5 51.Rxb7 Rd8+ 52.Ke1 Bf3 53.Be3 Rd3 54.Rb5+ Ke6 55.Bf4 Ra3 56.a5 Kf6 57.Kd2 Rd3+ 58.Kc2 Bd1+ 59.Kc1 Be2 60.Re5 Rd1+ 61.Kc2 Rd7 62.Rc5 Bd1+ 63.Kb2 Rd3 64.Rc3 Rd4 65.a6 Rxb4+ 66.Kc1 Bf3 67.Rc6+ Kf7 68.Be3 Bg4 69.a7 Ra4 70.Rd6 Ke7 71.Rd4 Ra6 72.Rxe4+ Be6 73.h4 Kf7 74.Re5 Rc6+ 75.Kb2 Rc8 76.h5 Ke7 77.h6 Kd6 78.Bf4 Kd7 79.Rxe6 1-0 (79) Jobava,B (2722)-Anton Guijarro,D (2607) Doha 2014.

12...Qxf6 13.Nxb6 axb6 14.Bf4 Rac8 15.Rc1

Maybe a little bit slow. 15.Ne5∞. Of course this is the first move chess players should consider first, but I didn't like it for a simple reason: 15...g5. Now for White it is not clear what to do (15...Nxe5± 16.Bxe5) 16.Nxc6 (16.Bc1∞. This is interesting 16...Nxe5 17.dxe5 Qxe5 18.f3 Nd6 19.Bxg5. Here the position is not very clear again. Black king is very weak, but instead Black has a powerful centre and can push ...c5 and ...d4. 16.Be3∞ doesn't work: 16...Nxe5 17.dxe5 Qxe5 18.f3 Nc3.) 16...gxf4 17.Ne5∞. Here the position is very unclear, Black has more space on the kingside, and the g-file is open for the rooks and the queen. I didn't like this during the calculation. 15.Be5 was also possible, but for me it was a strange move. I think 15.a3! is better, to start b4-b5 immediately.

15...Be6 16.Be3 h6 17.a3



Position after 17.a3

There is an interesting story I remembered before making this move. It was 2015 or 2016, I was playing in Al-Ain, UAE. That day we had two games, the first game

I played six hours and could hold my bad position, and the second game had to start in one hour. My opponent was GM Kravtsov Martyn. So I went to eat, quickly prepared for the game and came to the game. We played this opening. My opponent got a very strong knight on e5, and I couldn't do anything against it, and I lost. In my game, when I was making my plan, I remembered that game and with a3 started the plan to bring the knight to e5.

17...Nd6

Here we have the critical position. Black wants to play ...Nc4 or ...Nf5, White must play actively too, so I decided to follow my plan.

18.b4 Nc4

I was a bit scared of 18...Nf5, and wanted to continue 19.b5 Nxe3 20.fxe3 Na5 21.Ne5. Here I didn't know how to analyze this position. White's knight on e5 is really nice, but Black can prepare ...c5. I thought it a playable position.

19.Bxc4 dxc4 20.b5 Na5 21.Ne5

The job is done, white knight is on e5. But during the game I wasn't very confident about my position. My only plan is to push f-pawn, because I have pawn majority on the kingside, and Black has to create the counterplay on the queenside.

21...Rfd8 22.f4 c5

Again, a very important point. During the game I was looking at two moves. I chose f5, but I will show what happens after bxc6.

23.f5

But after f5 I wasn't expecting too much. Let me show you few variations I calculated. 23.bxc6 Nxc6 (23...bxc6?! is not a very good move; White can push f5 for free: 24.f5) 24.Nxc4 (24.f5?± Nxe5 25.fxe6 Qxe6) 24...Nxd4 25.Ne5 Rxc1 26.Bxc1. Here I thought Black is better. The white queen's position is very bad.

23...cxd4?!



Position after 23...cxd4

This move I considered first, of course, and to find the answer was very easy. 23...

Bf7= was the best move to play: 24.Ng4 Qh4 25.Bf2 Qg5 (25...Qe7?! 26.f6) 26.Be3 Qh4=. I wanted to finish the game with repetition. Playing any further seemed very dangerous to me, especially if Black takes on d4. Maybe there is a way to play g3, or f6, but I would not risk that much; 23...Bxf5± 24.Qh5 g6 25.Qxh6 Qg7 26.Qh4 cxd4 27.Bg5. I calculated this, and I thought this is just a good position to play for White. Against the sacrificed pawn White has a huge counterplay. 23...Bd5± 24.Ng4 Qh4 25.Rf4 cxd4 26.Rxd4, something like this. Of course I checked the variations after the game and found many mistakes.

24.Ng4 Qe7

I didn't look at this move, because I thought I can simply take on h6 and destroy the king. 24...Qh4 is just winning the bishop: 25.Bf2 Qg5 26.fxe6.

25.Bxh6 Bd5

Here again is another important moment. My opponent had less time, and I was feeling that my position is much better, and I thought I found a way to win.

26.f6

I wanted to play more quietly with 26.Re1 Qf8 27.Bg5 d3, but I thought Black gets some counterplay. Later I checked 28.f6 and now see that this is also very good for White.

26...Qe4 27.Rf2 gxh6 28.Nxh6+ Kf8 29.Qh5

I thought I was winning after this move, because my calculation finished after Qh5. My plan was to play Nf5 and checkmate the king, but to my very big disappointment my opponent played...

29...Qh7



Position after 29...Qh7

It was like a cold shower; I didn't know what to do. Maybe my opponent saw this, because he offered me a draw. But I believed in my position, because the black king is really very very weak, so I started to think. And please look at the knight on a5, it is completely out of the game and can't take part in defense.

30.Re2!+-

After 15 minutes of thinking I rediscovered this move (I found it earlier, but there was one nuance I couldn't see).

30...Be4

This is losing too. 30...Rc7+- this is losing after 31.Re7 Rxe7 32.fxe7+ Kxe7 (32...Qxe7 33.Rf1+ Kg7 34.Nf5+) 33.Nf5+; 30...Re8+- losing for the same reason, 31.Re7; 30...Bf7+- was the move I couldn't do anything with. But suddenly I found a very interesting idea: 31.Re7 Bxh5 32.Rxh7 and Black just can't protect the king from the checkmate. 32...Ke8 33.Re1+ Kf8 34.Rh8#; 30...Bf3+- 31.Re7 Bxh5 32.Rxh7.

31.Rxe4 Rc5 32.Re7 Rxh5 33.Rxh7

Now again, the checkmate threat. Black has to sacrifice the rook.

33...Rxh6 34.Rxh6

And White is winning only because of very bad black king, because Black could have a good counterplay with pawns c4+d4.

34...Kf7 35.Re1 Rg8 36.Re7+ Kf8 37.Rhh7 Rg6 38.Rc7 Kg8 39.f7+ Kxh7 40.f8Q+ 1-0

**Chad Boey (1496) –
Minda Chen (1966) [B22]**

Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R5), July 19, 2020
[Chad Boey]

1.e4

I was having a bad tournament so far, with only two wins and two losses.

1...c5

The last time I faced the Sicilian Defense was a day prior. A grandmaster hatched his evil plan against me wherein he sat back and did nearly nothing and waited for me to make a mistake. When the mistake was finally made, punishment was swift and lethal. Is this how chess is played? If so, I quit. But I still have hope there is room for art on the board.

2.d4

This time my opponent is not a grandmaster but carries a title of "CM" which I can only guess stands for "criminal mastermind." Will she be willing to accept my gambit.

2...cxd4 3.c3 Nf6

I was wrong. This is the most annoying way to decline the gambit, though not as cowardly as playing pawn to d3. Only one master I've faced has ever accepted the

gambit.

4.e5 Nd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.cxd4?

6.Bc4 is preferable. This was a hasty and unnecessary capture by me, which I regretted, but not for long. 6.Bc4 Nb6 7.Bb3.

6...d6 7.Bc4 Nb6 8.Bb3 h6?



Position after 8...h6

Mistake, 8...dxe5 is much better. I understood why she made this move, because I think she wanted to play 8...Bg4 9.Bxf7+ Kxf7 10.Ng5+ Ke8 11.Qxg4.

9.e6!!

The move I'm most proud of here. This is a pawn sacrifice I've employed frequently against Alekhine's Defense. I calculated the continuation after ...fxe6 and my opponent, wisely I think, opted to sacrifice a piece for two pawns. Not a coward after all!

9...Bxe6?!

Taking with ...fxe6 would leave Black's kingside development in a jam to untangle and create holes in the fortress. 9...fxe6 10.Qd3 Kd7 11.Qg6.

10.d5 Nxd5 11.Bxd5 Qa5+ 12.Nc3 Bxd5

A bold choice, but I understand the reasons behind it. Black is seeking clarity and simplicity in the position. Whether she knows it or not, she is communicating to me that she would like to move on to the endgame stage. Message received, and I will do my best not to cooperate with her plans.

13.Qxd5 Qxd5 14.Nxd5 Kd7!



Position after 14...Kd7

Now Black's plan becomes clear to me. The black king stands strong behind army of pawns that will march forward. I wish I had eaten lunch, this is going to take some work.

15.0-0

Premature castling by me, much better would have been 15.Be3.

15...e6 16.Nc3 Be7 17.Bf4?

This bishop would be better on e3.

17...g5 18.Bg3?

Again, I obsess over this diagonal and pay the price. The bishop should have gone to e3. Caught between the enemy soldiers and the castle walls, the bishop is going to jail for now. 18.Be3 f5 19.Rfd1.

18...f5 19.h3 h5 20.Rfd1 f4 21.Bh2 Raf8 22.Ne4!



Position after 22.Ne4

I dare you to play ...g4!

22...g4 23.Nc5+ Kc8 24.Nxe6 Rfg8

Black chooses to keep the rook-pair and allow me to move my knight. But then I realize that Black's g-pawn will simply push forward, twice-defended and I will lose a piece either way.

25.Bxf4?!

I have accepted that Black will equalize, and I decide to keep the bishop. Perhaps it would have been better to move the knight and allow the g-pawn to come forward, keeping the castle walls intact. 25.Ne1 g3 26.Rac1 gxh2+ 27.Kxh2.

25...gxf3 26.g3 h4

Now I see that Black's h- and f-pawns are willing to work for me. Maybe they just want to be on the winning side? They arrive and I welcome them as reinforcements to my castle walls. With their help, the pigs will never break through.

27.g4 Rg6 28.Nd4 Rf8 29.Be3 Ne5 30.Kh1 a6 31.Nf5 Kd7 32.Rac1 Re8 33.Bf4 Bd8 34.Rc3 Nf7 35.Rxf3 Re2 36.Rd2 Re1+?!

A blitz move?

37.Kg2 Re4 38.Bh2 Bg5?

Another blitz move! If only I had used my time to calculate how to punish it.

39.Rc2?

More accurate was Nxb4 and then Black would have to make some choices. 39.Nxb4 Bxd2 (39...Bxb4 40.Rxf7+) 40.Nxg6 Ng5 41.Rd3.

39...Ne5 40.Rfc3 Bd8 41.f3 Re1 42.Bf4 Ba5 43.Rb3 b5 44.Rc3?!

Inaccuracy. Nxb4 was best. 44.Nxb4 Re6 45.Nf5 Bb6 46.Bxe5 R6xe5 47.h4 Rd1 48.h5 Re6 49.Rbc3 a5 50.h6 Re8.

44...Rxe3 45.Bxe3 Nc4 46.Bf2 Bd8 47.b3†

Perhaps better is to take the h-pawn immediately with Bxb4, but I saw no reason to simplify the game with the resulting trade of pieces when I had the advantage in both material and time. 47.Bxb4 Bxb4 48.Nxb4 Ne3+ 49.Kg3 Nxc2 (49...Rxe3+ 50.fxe3 Nxc2 51.Nf5 Ke6 52.h4) 50.Nxg6.

47...Ne5 48.Bxb4 Bxb4 49.Nxb4 Re6 50.Nf5 Nd3 51.Kg3 a5 52.h4 a4 53.bxa4 bxa4 54.h5 Nc5 55.h6 Re8 56.Rd2 Nb7 57.Rd4 a3 58.Ra4 Re1 59.Rxa3 Rh1 60.Ra8?

A nonsense move. Simply 60. Kg2 is winning. 60.Kg2 Rxh6 61.Nxh6.

60...Ke6



Position after 60...Ke6

61.h7??

The worst move I made all game. Fatigue set in. It is at this stage of the game that my opponent's skills start to shine.

61...Rxb7 62.Ra7 d5 63.Nd4+ Kd6 64.a4 Kc5 65.Ne6+ Kb6 66.Ra8 Re7 67.Nd4 Re1 68.g5 Kc5 69.Nb5?!

Inaccuracy. Nf5 was best. 69.Nf5 Rg1+ 70.Kf4.

69...d4 70.Rc8+ Kd5 71.Rc7??

Another blunder I made. Kf2 was best. The endgame is her comfort zone and she is making it known. The tables have turned. My weakness and her strength are

on full display now. Do I have time to pop something in the microwave? Gosh I'm hungry. 71.Kf2 Rh1 72.f4 Rh4 73.Kg3.

71...Nc5 72.Rc8 d3 73.Kf4 Kc4 74.Nd6+?!

A better move would have been Na3+: 74.Na3+ Kb4 75.Nb1.

74...Kb4 75.Ne4 Rxe4+ 76.fxe4 d2 77.Rd8=

It is now that I have accepted this will be a draw. Black's devious plan to draw the game has come to fruition. Criminal masterminds frequently do this against me.

77...Ne6+ 78.Ke3 Nxd8 79.Kxd2 Kxa4 80.Ke3 Kb5 81.Kf4 Kc6 82.Kf5 Kd7

Black offers the draw. I know it's a draw, but I say: prove it!

83.g6

I've been robbed again, and I'm not happy. You have achieved a draw, but that doesn't mean I'm going to lay down and take it.

83...Ke8 84.e5 Ke7 85.Kg5 Ne6+ 86.Kh6 Kf8 87.Kh7 Ng7 88.Kh6 Ne6 89.Kh5 Kg7 90.Kg4 Kxg6 91.Kf3 Kf5 92.Ke3

This type of draw is more painful for me than a loss. It won't be a draw the next time we meet, one way or another.

92...Kxe5 1/2-1/2

Angela Chen (1421) –
Michael Zhang (977) [C50]
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R5), July 19, 2020
[Michael Zhang]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d3 Nf6 5.Bg5

This is not good move because Black has not castled.

5...h6

5...d6

6.Bh4 g5

Black could have waited to play this move because this move may scare White from castling kingside.

7.Bg3 d6

This move opens the light-square bishop and defends the e5-pawn.

8.0-0 Bg4

8...h5 sets up a trap but requires sacrificing the queen. 9.Nxg5 (9.h4 is White's best defense because the position will be locked. 9...g4 10.Ng5) 9...h4 10.Nxf7 hxg3 11.Nxd8 Bg4 12.Qd2 Nd4 13.Re1

(13.Nc3 Nf3+ 14.gxf3 Bxf3. Checkmate is unstoppable.) 13...Nf3+ 14.gxf3 Bxf3 15.Rf1 (15.Kf1 Rxh2 16.fxe3 Rh1#) 15...gxh2#.

9.h3 Bh5 10.c3 g4 11.hxg4 Bxg4

Black keeps the pin on the f3-knight.

12.Nbd2



Position after 12.Nbd2

This move stopped Black's kingside attack.

12...h5

A better move for Black is Nh5 or Qd7 to avoid the pin by Bh4.

13.Qc2 d5

This is a losing move for Black because it opens the center when Black's king has not castled yet.

14.exd5 Nxd5 15.Nxe5 h4 16.Nxc6 bxc6 17.Rfe1+ Kf8 18.Be5 Rh6 19.d4 h3



Position after 19...h3

Black is focusing on opening the white king. But this is a bad move because Black would lose a piece.

20.dxc5 hxg2 21.Kxg2

Now white king is open.

21...Bh3+ 22.Kg1 Qg5+ 23.Bg3 Nf4

Black brings more pieces into the attack on White's king.

24.Qe4

White brings more defenders to the king. It is not looking good for Black.

24...Rg6

24...Nh5 is a better move because it puts

pressure on the pinned piece.

25.Nf3 Qf6 26.Ne5 Rg7

Black retreats rook to g7 to defend the f7 pawn.

27.Nd7+

White blundered a piece with this move.

27...Bxd7 28.Re3

I think White is trying to do Alekhine's Gun. But Black did not allow this to happen.

28...Nh3+ 29.Kg2 Nf4+

29...Qxf2+. This move looks tempting but Black will run of good checks. 30.Kh1.

30.Kg1 Nh3+ 31.Kf1



Position after 31.Kf1

White made this move probably because White does not want a draw by repetition. But this move put the white king under a pin. Black played decisively from this point on.

31...Rxb2 32.Ke2

White could avoid forced mate with Qe7+. After this move, checkmate is unstoppable.

32...Qxf2+ 33.Kd3 Bf5 34.Kd4 Bxe4 35.Kxe4 Rxe3+ 36.Kd4 Qd2+

36...Qf4# Black missed a checkmate in one here.

37.Bd3 Qxd3# 0-1

**Alec Beck (1942) –
Vidip Kona (1261) [E65]
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R2), July 18, 2020
[Vidip Kona]**

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.g3

I played King's Indian Defense.

4...0-0 5.Bg2 d6 6.Nf3

I thought here White would play the move d5 and gain some space in the center. But my opponent castled kingside.

6...c5 7.0-0 Nbd7

I wanted to play b6. Since bishop on g2 is

targeting my a8-rook, I played ...Rb8 first to avoid future threats.

8.e3 Rb8 9.b3 b6 10.Bb2 Bb7

I think my position is okay and my pieces are developed.

11.Qc2 a6 12.a4 Qc7 13.Rac1 Rbc8

My rook on b8 is doing nothing, so I improved my piece by lining the rook to attack the queen on c2.

14.Qb1 Qb8 15.Rfd1 Rfd8 16.Ne1 Bxg2

I am happy to exchange the light-square bishop in this position.

17.Nxg2 Qb7 18.d5 Ne5 19.Nf4 Qd7

My plan is to play ...Qg4 and try to create some pressure on White's kingside.

20.Ne4 Nxe4 21.Qxe4 Nf3+ 22.Qxf3 Bxb2



Position after 22...Bxb2

Here I felt Black has a slight advantage because bishop is more active and controlling the center.

23.Rc2 Bg7 24.Nd3 Re8 25.e4 Rb8 26.Re1 Qc7 27.Rce2 e6 28.e5

I didn't expect e5 in this position; I think this is a good move. I expected 28.dxe6 Rxe6, and I have some counterplay.

28...dxe5 29.Nxe5 exd5 30.Qxd5 Rbd8 31.Qc6 Qxc6 32.Nxc6 Rxe2 33.Rxe2 Rd3 34.Re3 Rd6 35.Ne7+ Kf8 36.Nd5 Bd4

In this position I played Bd4 to give some room for my king to come into the game.

37.Re2 b5 38.axb5 axb5 39.Nc7 bxc4 40.bxc4 Rb6 41.Nb5 Ra6

Here I thought my opponent would capture my bishop and take the game to a rook ending. But he didn't exchange.

42.Rd2 Bf6 43.Nc7 Rc6 44.Nd5 Bd4 45.Kg2 Re6 46.Kf3 f5 47.Re2 Kf7 48.Ra2 g5 49.Ra7+ Kg6 50.h4 h6 51.Ne7+ Kf6 52.Nd5+

My opponent is in time trouble but I don't have any good moves in this position to win the game. We repeated the moves and agreed to draw.

52...Kg6 53.Ne7+ Kf6 54.Nd5+ Kg6 1/2-1/2

**Vidip Kona (1261) –
Valentin Razmov (1986) [C84]
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R1), July 18, 2020
[Vidip Kona]**

1.e4

My opponent is a very strong player, but I don't want to give up. I decided to give a tough fight to my opponent.

1...e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

Standard Ruy Lopez opening.

3...a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.d3 b5 7.Bb3 d6

Black main idea is play ...Na5 and take the bishop on b3. So I decided to play a3 to give some space to my bishop.

8.a3 0-0 9.Nc3 Bg4 10.Be3 Qd7 11.Nd5 h6 12.c3 Rfe8 13.Nxf6+ Bxf6 14.Bd5 Be6 15.c4 Rab8 16.b4 Ne7 17.Bxe6 Qxe6 18.Rc1 Rec8 19.c5 d5 20.Qc2 d4 21.Bd2 c6 22.Ne1

After this my plan is to play g3, Ng2, f4 to grab some space.

22...g5 23.Qb2 Ng6 24.g3 Kh7 25.Nc2 Rg8 26.Na1 Qh3 27.f3 Nf4 28.Bxf4

I am not comfortable in this position after ...Qh3. Black has advantage. So I decided to exchange some pieces to avoid astrong attack from Black. 28.gxf4 gxf4+ 29.Kf2 Rg2+ 30.Ke1 Qxh2.

28...gxf4 29.Qg2 Qxg2+ 30.Kxg2



Position after 30.Kxg2

After queens exchanged from the board, my position is better.

30...fxg3 31.hxg3 Bh4 32.g4 Bg5 33.Rc2 Be3 34.Nb3 Rbf8 35.Kh3

I want to stop ...h5 so, I played Kh3.

35...Rc8 36.Na5 Rc7 37.Rh2 Rg5 38.Kg2 Kg6 39.Rfh1 h5 40.Rxh5 Rxh5 41.gxh5+ Kh6 42.Kg3 Rc8 43.Kg4 Rg8+ 44.Kf5 Rg3 45.Kxe5 Rxf3 46.Nxc6

My king is in the center of the board and all my other pieces are active to capture the black pawns. I think Black doesn't

have any counterplay.

46...Bf2 47.Rd1 Kxh5 48.Nxd4 Rg3 49.Nf5 Rg6 50.Rh1+ Kg4 51.Rh2 Kf3

I decided to exchange the pieces so I can promote my pawns easily.

52.Nh4+ Bxh4 53.Rxh4 Ke3 54.Rh3+

Now Black's king is doing nothing. My opponent doesn't have any good moves to improve his position.

54...Kd2 55.d4 Re6+ 56.Kd5 Re8 57.c6 Rd8+ 58.Kc5 Kc2 59.d5

My pawns are very strong.

1-0

Vidip Kona (1261) – Sullivan McConnell (2224) [C02]
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R5), July 19, 2020
[Vidip Kona]

1.e4

My opponent is a National Master and he is very strong player. I am happy with my performance so far in this tournament. I beat a couple of strong players and drew with another strong player. I decided to give a tough fight in this game as well.

1...e6 2.d4 d5

My opponent played the French.

3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bd7 6.Be2 Qb6 7.0-0 Nh6 8.Na3

I played Na3 in this position. If Black plays ...Nf5, I will play Nc2 to defend the d4-pawn.

8...cxd4 9.cxd4 Nf5 10.Nc2 h5 11.b3 a5

My plan is to play Bb2 and improve the knight to a better square.

12.Bb2 a4 13.Rb1

I thought my opponent would capture axb3. I was prepared for this. I will win the pawn back with some counterplay. But he didn't take my pawn.

13...Be7

13...axb3 14.axb3 Qxb3 15.Ba3 Qc3 (15...Qa4 16.Bxf8 Rxf8 17.Ra1) 16.Bxf8 Rxf8 17.Rxb7.

14.Qd3 a3 15.Ba1 g5 16.Qb5 Qxb5

Exchanging the queens in this position is bad for me. I am losing my pawn on e5. I didn't calculate properly. Black is better now.

17.Bxb5 Nxe5 18.Bxd7+ Nxd7 19.Ne3 Nxe3 20.fxe3 f5 21.Rbc1 g4 22.Nd2 Bd6 23.Rc2

I played Rc2 to double the rooks on c-file.

23...Nb6 24.Rfc1 Kd7 25.Bc3 Rhc8 26.Nb1 Rc6

I think my opponent's plan is to exchange the rooks and take the game to endgame since he is pawn up. So I want to equalize the position before all major pieces exchange from the board.

27.Bd2 Rac8 28.Rxc6 Rxc6 29.Rxc6 Kxc6 30.Bc1

Now more pressure on a3-pawn and I am winning the pawn back.

30...Kb5

Here computer suggests ...Nxa3 with the check. But I want to keep my knight on the board so I captured with bishop.

31.Bxa3 Bxa3 32.Nxa3+ Kb4 33.Nb1

I think this position looks drawn. Black's king cannot enter into White territory. I decided to bring my king into the game and create some threats to Black.

33...Nc8 34.Kf2 h4 35.Ke2 Nd6 36.Kd3 Ne4 37.Kc2 h3 38.gxh3

I cannot block the pawn g4 with 38.g3. He will sacrifice his knight and promote the pawn. **38...Nxc3 39.hxc3 h2.**

38...gxh3 39.Kb2 Nf2

39...Ng3 40.Nd2.

40.a3+ Ka5 41.Nd2 Ng4 42.Nf1 Kb5 43.Kc3



Position after 43.Kc3

I think game is equal.

43...Kc6 44.Kd3 Kd6 45.Ke2 e5

I am trying to bring my king to capture the pawn on h3 and create passed pawn.

46.Kf3 Ke6 47.Kg3 Nxe3

47...Nxe3 is a mistake and loses game immediately.

48.Nxe3 f4+

49.Kf3

This is a blunder. I should play **49.Kxh3**, and I will create the passed-pawn and win my game easily.

49...fxe3 50.Kxe3

Computer suggesting, for Black **50...Kf5**

is draw. Luckily, my opponent didn't play that move.

50...e4 51.a4 Kf5 52.b4

This position is winning for White.

52...Ke6 53.a5 Kd6 54.b5 Ke6

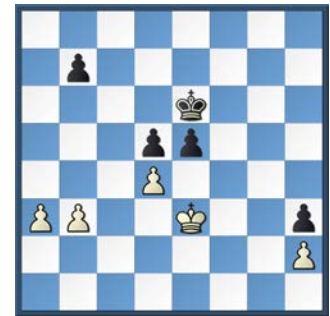
I am going to promote my pawn and opponent resigned.

1-0

Valentin Razmov (another player in the tournament) nominated the following position for endgame brilliancy prize and submitted the following analysis after White's move 50.Kxe3.

Note, this is the same game shown above. — Editor.

Vidip Kona (1261) – Sullivan McConnell (2224)
Seattle Seafair Open
Chess.com (R5), July 19, 2020
[Valentin Razmov]



Position after 50.Kxe3

50...e4?

was played in the game. The move seems logical and intuitive — establishing a protected passed pawn to keep the white king busy while Black would surely be able to stop White's queen-side pawns and earn at least a draw.

But there's a subtle mistake with this "generally correct" thinking — this position has a special aspect to it, which is not commonly shown in endgame books. **50...Kd6** draws, as White is not fast enough to win Black's d5-pawn, then win Black's h3-pawn and finally promote their own h-pawn, only by distracting the Black king with a future distant passed a-pawn **51.dxe5+ Kxe5 52.a4 d4+ 53.Kf3 (or 53.Kd3 Kf4! 54.Kxd4 Kf3 55.a5 Kg2 56.b4 Kxh2 57.b5 Kg1 58.a6 bxa6 59.b6 h2 60.b7 h1Q 61.b8Q** and the resulting Q+P vs Q endgame is a theoretical draw) **53...Kd5 54.a5!** the only non-losing move **54...Kc5 55.Ke4 Kb4 56.Kxd4 Kxa5 (56...Kxb3 57.Kc5 Ka4 58.Kb6**

Kb4 59.Kxb7 Kxa5=) 57.Kc5 b5 58.Kc6 Kb4 59.Kb6 Kxb3 60.Kxb5 Kc3 61.Kc5 Kd3 62.Kd5 Ke3 63.Ke5 Kf3 64.Kd4! again, the only non-losing move 64... Kg2 65.Ke3 Kxh2 66.Kf2=; 50...exd4+ also draws, though may seem potentially losing at first 51.Kxd4 Kd6 the simplest method (51...Kf5!? even this works for a draw with a few twists along the way that may lead to either side slipping and losing 52.Kxd5 Kf4 53.a4 Kf3 54.Kd4! the only non-losing move: the Black king is fast enough with the capture on h3 and promotion of his own h-pawn, but he can be cornered and thus not allowed to complete this feat! 54...Kg2 55.Ke3 Kxh2 56.Kf2 b6! the only drawing move for Black this time — Black needs to count the precise timing of White’s queening to make sure it leads to a stalemate situation (56...Kh1? loses after 57.a5! h2 (57...Kh2 58.b4 Kh1 59.b5 b6 (59...h2 60.Kf1! b6 61.Kf2! bxa5 62.b6 a4 63.b7 a3 64.b8Q a2 65.Qb7#) 60.Kf1 bxa5 (60...Kh2 61.axb6; 60...h2 61.Kf2!) 61.b6 a4 62.b7 a3 63.b8Q a2 64.Qb2) 58.a6! bxa6 (58... b5 59.a7 b4 60.a8Q#) 59.b4 a5 60.b5 a4 61.b6 a3 62.b7 a2 63.b8Q a1Q luckily for White, this promotion is not with a check 64.Qb7#) 57.b4 b5! ensures a stalemate or a promotion of Black’s h-pawn — in both cases reaching a draw (57...Kh1? 58.b5! h2 (58...Kh2 59.a5 Kh1 60.Kg3 (or 60.Kf1 Kh2 61.a6) 60...bxa5 61.b6 Kg1 62.Kxh3) 59.a5 as before... 59...bxa5

60.b6 a4 61.b7 a3 62.b8Q a2 63.Qb7#) 58.axb5 (or 58.a5 Kh1 59.a6 h2 60.a7=) 58...Kh1 59.b6 h2 60.Ke3! attempting to avoid the stalemate and continue playing for a win 60...Kg2 61.b7 h1Q 62.b8Q and although this is a theoretical Q+P vs Q draw, in practice it is not easy to achieve, nor is it easy for White to win it within the established limit of number of moves) 52.a4 Kc6 53.b4 Kd6 54.Kd3 (54.b5? b6 wins for Black as the white pawns are blockaded and Black’s king will reach and capture both white pawns, while the black d-pawn will serve as a “distant passed pawn” distracter.; 54.a5? Kc6 also loses for White, since Black is now able to reach and capture both white queen-side pawns in exchange for his own d-pawn) 54...Ke5 55.Ke3 (55.a5 Kd6 56.b5! Kc5 57.a6 bxa6 58.bxa6 Kb6 59.Kd4 Kxa6 60.Kxd5 Kb5=) 55...d4+ 56.Kd3 Kd5 57.a5 Ke5 58.b5 Kd5 59.a6 bxa6 60.bxa6 Kc6 61.Kxd4 Kb6 62.Ke4 Kxa6 63.Kf4 Kb6 and Black draws, because White’s h2-pawn is too far back: it cannot promote fast enough, nor can White’s king capture on h3 and then shoulder Black’s king to avoid typical rook-pawn draws.

51.a4 Kf5

Black can only wait...

52.b4 Ke6 53.a5 Kd6 54.b5

And around here Black resigned, though they may well have tried to check if White

sees the win.

54...Kc7 55.Kf4!

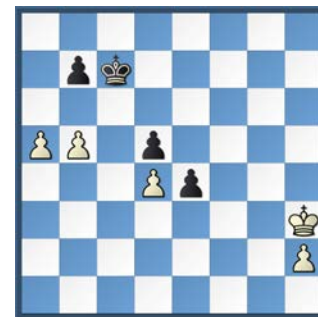
a move in the right direction, though the king is tied up to Black’s protected passed pawn, isn’t he?

55...Kd6 56.Kg3!

reveals the essence of White’s winning approach — the h3-pawn can be won, while the white king still stays within the square of Black’s protected passed e4-pawn.

56...Kc7 57.Kxh3

And White wins due to their two distant passed pawns a- and h-, which cannot simultaneously be stopped by Black.



Position after 57.Kxh3

1-0



Vancouver Open 2020

By Rekha Sagar

The 2020 Vancouver Open, traditionally one of the Northwest's largest open chess tournaments, was held on July 25-26. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was moved online via Chess.com, which attracted a much more diverse mix of players given the increased accessibility and non-existent travel costs. Chess players from throughout the globe, including parts of Washington, Oregon, British Columbia, California, Missouri, Wisconsin, Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, Florida, Peru, Armenia, and Ukraine were represented in the 74-player field! The event was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation. WCF Member-at-Large Rekha Sagar directed the tournament with assistance from Ani Barua and Brandon Peng. There were 41 players in the Open section and 33 in the Reserve U1700 section, with several ambitious souls choosing to play-up in search of the strongest competition.

Armenian IM David Shahinyan, a member of the world-renowned ChessMood Team, was certainly in the mood and tore through his competition to finish in clear first place with 4.5/5, conceding only a single draw to GM Bernadskiy in round four. Four players tied for second place with 4.0/5: GM Aleksandr Lenderman from New York, GM Vitaliy Bernadskiy from Ukraine, GM Jose Martinez Alcantara from Peru, and local legend GM James Tarjan from Portland.

Young rising star Vidip Kona from Redmond, rated only 1261 US Chess, swept the U1700 reserve section with a very impressive 5.0/5! Three players tied for second place a full-point back at 4.0/5: David Li from Chicago, Saarthak Malakar from Portland, and Hiruna Devadithya from Issaquah.

This was my first time running a WCF event, and I am delighted to report that the tournament ran extremely well with all players displaying a high level of integrity. I appreciate Catherine Smith for the honorable gesture and great display of sportsmanship on her fourth round with opponent Vidip Kona. Vidip had a mouse-slip in a critical position and lost his queen. Catherine graciously understood the situation and confirmed that it was an accident and gave him an opportunity to trade her queen for rook in the next consecutive moves. I am pleased to have



Photo credit: Philip Peterson.

such wonderful players in Washington Chess Federation. I am so thankful to President Josh Sinanan and Scholastic Director Jacob Mayer for providing an opportunity to host this beautiful event.

**Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) –
Ryan Lu (1948) [A13]**
Vancouver Open Chess.com
(R1), July 25, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

In the first round in the Vancouver Open

I am playing against Ryan Lu. I already played him in one tournament before with Black, so I had a rough idea of what to expect in this game.

1.Nf3 d5 2.e3

My pet line.

**2...Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.b3 0-0 6.Bb2
c5 7.cxd5 exd5**

7...Nxd5 is more common at the higher levels while ...exd5 is more common at the lower levels though ...exd5 is also a

decent option.

8.d4 Nc6 9.Be2



Position after 9.Be2

9...Be6

9...Ne4 with the idea of ...Bf6 with pressure on d4 is more principled.

10.0-0 Rc8 11.dxc5 Bxc5 12.Rc1 Qe7 13.Nb5

Trying to blockade the isolated pawn and also threatening Bxf6 along the way. 13.Bd3 was perhaps more harmonious trying to play Ne2 next move and stopping ...Ne4. It's important also that d4 doesn't work yet because 13...d4? 14.Na4.

13...Ne4 14.Nbd4 Nxd4?!

Possibly 14...Nb4!? was an improvement. In general, Black probably doesn't want to release the tension and exchange on d4, since my knights on d4 and f3 are somewhat redundant. 15.a3 (15.Ra1 Bg4 and here Black is probably ok.) 15...Na2!! is the point. 16.Rc2 (16.Ra1 Nac3=) 16...Bxa3 17.Bxa3 Qxa3 18.Qa1 Rxc2 19.Nxc2 Qc5 20.Qxa2 Nc3 and the tactics work out for Black.

15.Nxd4 a6 16.Bd3 Rfd8 17.Rc2 Nf6?!

Probably unnecessarily passive. 17...Bd6.



Position after 17...Nf6

18.Qb1

18.Nf5 Bxf5 19.Bxf5 Rc6 20.g3± was also possible.

18...Bd6 19.Rxc8 Bxc8

Kind of forced. 19...Rxc8 20.Nf5 Bxf5 21.Bxf5 Rc6 22.Bxf6 Qxf6 23.Bxh7+ was the point.

20.Qc2 h6

20...Bxh2+ here doesn't work since my knight can go back to f3 and defend h2. 21.Kxh2 Ng4+ 22.Kg1 Qh4 23.Nf3.

21.Rc1 Bg4

21...Ne4.

22.Bf5

Fighting for the f5-square.

22...Ba3 23.Bxg4 Bxb2 24.Qxb2 Nxc4 25.h3 Nf6 26.Qc3

Now seizing control of the open c-file.

26...Ne4 27.Qc7 Qd7 28.Qxd7 Rxd7 29.f3 Nf6 30.Rc8+ Kh7 31.g4 Kg6?!

This only helps White since the black king isn't safe there. 31...Ng8 followed by ...Ne7 was the best chance to try to defend, though White is much better due to the control of the c-file, better pieces, and better pawn structure.

32.h4 Nh7?

And now this just loses.

33.Rh8

Threatening h5 winning a piece, therefore forcing...

33...Nf6

33...h5 34.gxh5+ Kh6 35.Kf2 also didn't work for Black. (35.Nf5+?! Kxh5 36.Rxh7+ Kg6 37.Rxg7+ Kxf5 38.h5 Ke6).

34.Ne2

A nice finishing touch. Black either gets mated or has to give up a piece, so therefore he resigned. Nice start for me.

1-0

Harry Bell (2000) – Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) [D37]
Vancouver Open Chess.com
(R2), July 25, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

In round two I played a veteran player, Harry Bell, who is floored at 2000, and that means he was probably 2100+ or maybe even 2200+ at his peak.

1.Nf3 e6 2.c4!?

Move one I expected, but move two was actually a slight surprise. I expected 2.d4 and then I saw that my opponent in a recent blitz game fell for a cute little trap, so one of the reasons for me choosing 1...e6 was that maybe I would get a quick win. 2...c5 and here since he's typically played London, he played Bf4?! 3.Bf4?! (3.e4; 3.c4; 3.e3; 3.c3 are all reasonable alternatives.) 3...cxd4 4.Nxd4?? and here

his opponent played 4...Nc6?? missing 4...e5! 5.Bxe5 Qa5+-.

2...d5 3.d4 Nf6 4.Nc3

I didn't actually expect my opponent to go into mainstream stuff. Now I had a choice to make.

4...a6

I decided to choose the most solid option.

5.cxd5 exd5 6.Bf4

6.Bg5 is probably more common but Bf4 was not bad either.

6...c5



Position after 6...c5

This is probably the equalizing line but maybe I could've chosen a different line to get more winning chances.

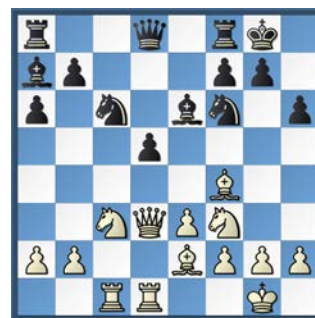
7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.e3 Nc6 9.Be2 0-0 10.0-0 h6

Here I knew that I should play 10...d4 and equalize, but I was afraid that the game would fizzle out too much and I am playing someone much lower rated, so I wanted to keep the tension even if I might be slightly worse. 10...Be6 11.Bg5. In this case this move felt annoying.

11.Rc1 Ba7 12.Qd3

12.Qb3!? was interesting, trying to stop me from playing ...Be6. White is probably slightly better here.

12...Be6 13.Rfd1



Position after 13.Rfd1

13...Qe7

13...Nh5!? was an interesting alternative which I didn't really see. 14.Nxd5 Bxd5 15.Qxd5 Nxf4 16.exf4 Qb6 17.Rf1

Qxb2=, however, here the game also kind of fizzles.

14.Ne5 Rfc8?!

At first I wanted to play 14...Rfd8, but then I didn't like 15.Nxc6 bxc6 16.Na4, but then I have 16...d4 17.e4 Bxa2.

15.Bf3

Somehow I was so focused on Nxc6 that I forgot about Bf3.

15...Rd8 16.Ne2



Position after 16.Ne2

My opponent is playing very logical positional chess. I realized that he's getting comfortable so I was looking for tactics to unbalance the game. Suddenly I spotted an interesting tactic to trap his bishop, but I wasn't sure at all about whether it was truly good for me or not.

16...Nb4!

It is important to start with this. 16...g5?! 17.Rxc6! is very strong. 17...gxf4 18.Ng6! Qe8 (18...fxg6 19.Qxg6+ Kf8 20.Qxh6+ Kg8 21.Qg5+ Kh7 22.Rxe6 Qxe6 23.Nxf4±) 19.Rxe6 fxe6 20.Ngxf4.

17.Qb1

17.Qa3! was important to keep in contact with my knight on b4. 17...g5 18.Bg3 g4 19.Rc7!! Qxc7 20.Nxg4 Qe7 21.Nxf6+ Qxf6 22.Qxb4±. Here White has tremendous compensation for the exchange.

17...g5 18.a3?!

Hoping for ...Nc6, but it was an inaccuracy. 18.Bg3 g4 19.Bh4. I was more worried about this since I thought the pin was very annoying. Indeed it does seem like White has enough compensation here. 19...gxf3 20.Nf4! Very important to keep up with the momentum. 20...d4 (20...Bb8 I was planning this actually but it fails to a brilliant... 21.Neg6!! If this happened, this game might've been good for a brilliancy prize! 21...fxg6 (21...Qd7 22.Bxf6) 22.Qxg6+ Qg7 23.Qxg7+ Kxg7 24.Nxe6+--+) 21.Nh5 Nbd5 22.exd4 fxg2 23.Qd3 Nxh5 24.Bxe7 Nxe7 25.Qf3 Ng7 with a very unclear position.

18...gxf4

Of course not 18...Nc6?? 19.Rxc6.

19.Nxf4

19.axb4 fxe3 is completely lost for White.

19...Nc6 20.Nxc6

20.Rxc6 bxc6 21.Nxc6 Qd6 also didn't really help.

20...bxc6 21.Rxc6 Rd6 22.Ng6!?

Good try but too little too late. I don't have to take.

22...Qd8 23.Rdc1?!

This loses more material. 23.Rxd6 Qxd6 24.Nf4 was still lost in the long run but much more tenacious.

23...Rxc6! 24.Rxc6 Qe8!

Now White loses more material.

25.Rxa6

25.Ne5 Bb8+.

25...fxg6 26.Rxe6 Qxe6 27.Qxg6+ Kf8 28.Qxh6+ Ke7 29.h4 Rg8



Position after 29...Rg8

Just too much extra material for me. It was a very interesting game. I was happy though to navigate through the complications well.

0-1

**Aleksandr Lenderman (2717) –
Jose Martinez Alcantara (2692) [E32]**
Vancouver Open Chess.com
(R5), July 26, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

In the last round I played a strong GM from Peru, Jose Martinez, whom I've already played several times online in shorter time controls and even played him in 2013 over-the-board when he was a 14-year-old 2200 kid. Already then, I recognized a special talent in him. At least I was happy to get White in the last round.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4

I decided to repeat this line against him since I saw he almost exclusively plays ...d6 against it and I thought I'll be able to get a game here.

4.Qc2 d6 5.Nf3

I played 5.Bd2 in the decisive blitz game against him in Rushaan's Learn to Chess tournament and won a nice game. However I thought he would prepare for this, so I decided to change it a little bit.

5...Nbd7 6.g3 b6 7.Bg2 Bb7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Nd1!?



Position after 9.Nd1

The principled choice. I didn't have a lot of time to prepare, but I saw that some people played this. The idea is to try to play against the b4-bishop, and at the moment I'm threatening to trap it. However, perhaps since I didn't have time to check it deeply, it might've been better to play a more solid option. Also I didn't feel great so it was possibly better to play a less-dynamic game this time.

9...c5

This move I didn't really analyze since I thought it's not really playable, but in fact I needed to play precisely to get an advantage here. 9...d5 is another logical choice. 10.a3 Bd6 11.cxd5 exd5 12.Nc3 with a slightly more comfortable position due to Black's bishop on b7 blocked in. Obviously the whole line isn't totally forced.

10.a3 Ba5 11.Qa4?!



Position after 11.Qa4

I thought this is quite strong, but I missed a few details. 11.Ne3 seemed to give some advantage to White. 11...Rc8 12.b4 (or the more ambitious 12.d5 b5 (12...exd5 13.Nf5!) 13.dxe6 fxe6 14.cxb5) 12...cxb4 13.axb4 Bxb4 14.Rxa7±; 11.b3 with a slower idea of Qb2 seems also decent,

though in that case Black can play b5 and try to get some compensation for the pawn, for example 11...Qb8! 12.Qb2 b5! 13.cxb5 cxd4 14.Nxd4 Bxg2 15.Kxg2 e5.

11...Rc8

This is the move I expected, but it wasn't the best, surprisingly to me. I saw 11...b5!, but I thought I would be better here somehow. It turns out Black has hidden compensation here. 12.Qxb5 (12.cxb5 a6 This move I didn't see somehow. (12...cxd4 13.Nxd4) 13.bxa6 Rxa6 14.Ne3 Qa8= This feels like a good Benko gambit for Black.) 12...Rb8 13.Qa4 Qc7 14.b4 cxb4 15.axb4 Bxb4=.

12.b4 cxb4 13.axb4 Rxc4 14.Ba3

I calculated up to here, and from far away before I played Qa4, I missed Black's next move.

14...Nd5

If 14...Bxb4 right away, I thought I was much better with 15.Qb3 Bxa3 16.Qxc4 d5 17.Qb3 Bd6 18.Rxa7± and Black loses a very important a7-pawn.



Position after 14...Nd5

15.Qb3

Another tough choice. I considered 15.Ne3 seriously, but then I didn't like it because of 15...Bc6 (15...Nxe3 16.fxe3 Bxb4 17.Qb3 Bxa3 18.Qxc4 d5 19.Qd3 Be7 20.Rxa7 Qb8 is relatively best for Black perhaps, but here White is of course better, since Black only has one pawn for the exchange.) 16.Qb3 (Even better is 16.Qd1!±) 16...Rxb4 17.Bxb4 Nxb4 18.Rfc1. However here I am much better somehow still.

15...Rxb4 16.Bxb4 Nxb4 17.Ne3

17.Nb2 might've been better.

17...d5 18.Rfc1 Nc6 19.Qa4 Qa8 20.Rc2 Rc8?!

20...a6± was probably better.

21.Rac1

Suddenly for a few moves I have initiative, though during the game I didn't realize that I'm doing well here.

21...a6



Position after 21...a6

22.Bh3?!

The right idea, the wrong execution. Here I had the unexpected resource 22.Ng5!!, which I totally didn't see. Amazingly I am much better in all the lines. 22...h6 (22...Nf6 23.Bh3! Even here despite Black being seemingly solid, because of his queen on a8 far away from action, as well as his bishop on a5, I have these dynamic possibilities. 23...b5 (23...Rc7 24.Nxe6 fxe6 25.Bxe6+ Kh8 26.Nxd5 Nxd5 27.Bxd5+-) 24.Qa3 Bb4 25.Qb2 and now Black has no good defense against Nxe6. 25...Rc7 26.Nxe6 fxe6 27.Bxe6+ Kh8 28.Nxd5 Nxd5 29.Bxd5 Be7 30.Bf3 Bf6 31.Qa3!+- Black's pieces are very poorly coordinated still, White has potentially very strong points and Black can easily lose more material. The lines can really get fun here, for example 31...b4 32.Qxb4!! Nxb4 33.Rxc7 Bc6 34.Bxc6 Qg8 35.Bb7 Bd8 36.Rc8 Nd5 37.Rb8 Nb6 38.Rc6 Nd7 39.Rxd8 Qxd8 40.Rc8+- and finally after all the smoke clears, White ends up being in a winning endgame.) 23.Nxf7!! Kxf7 24.Nxd5! Somehow he is uncoordinated and I am crashing through. 24...b5 25.Qa3 b4 26.Qe3 b3 27.Nf4!! The only move for an advantage. 27...Re8 28.Rb2+-.

22...Nf6?!

22...Rc7! 23.Nxd5 exd5 24.Bxd7 Rxd7 25.Rxc6 Bxc6 26.Rxc6 b5 27.Qc2 Qb7 28.Ne5 Rd8 was relatively best for Black.

23.Ne5?

Officially losing the plot. 23.Ng5! was my second chance to transpose into these winning lines for White.

23...b5 24.Qa1

24.Qa3 Bb4 25.Qb2 Bd6 26.N3g4 was somehow better.

24...Bb6

24...Bd8

25.Nxc6 Rxc6 26.Rxc6 Bxc6 27.Nc2?!

27.Qa3 was better. 27...Bxd4 28.Ng4 Ne4 29.Bg2 with counterplay.

27...a5 28.Nb4 Be8 29.Nd3 g6 30.e3

Qb8 31.Qc3 Kg7 32.Qc8 Qa7



Position after 32...Qa7

I was very surprised that my opponent offered me a draw here. I thought he is much better here, with two bishops, two nice passed pawns, and I don't really have any counterplay. I was very happy to accept the draw here even though it didn't give me much. I was very surprised though that my opponent didn't want to play for a win here, since a win would give him shared first-second, while draw was only second-fifth. Anyway, it was a very interesting game!

1/2-1/2

Eshan Guha (2129) – Sophie Tien (1916) [E09]
Vancouver Open Chess.com
(R3), July 25, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

In this game, my student, Eshan Guha is playing against a talented girl from Seattle, Washington, Sophie Tien. I knew this game would be tough for Eshan since despite her 1900 rating, Sophie is very resilient and a tough defender. From what I saw, she also gave a tough battle to an eventual winner of the tournament, David Shahinyan, possibly being very close to making a draw. In fact, they played each other in a serious online game one month earlier.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.g3 Be7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 Nbd7

I prefer here the more flexible 6...c6, waiting to see what White does. 7.Qc2 (7.Nc3. After this I would prefer Nbd7. 7...Nbd7 to meet Nd2 with... 8.Nd2 b5! 9.cxb5 cxb5 10.Nxb5 Qb6 11.a4 a6 12.Nc3 Qxd4=). Here I prefer 7...b6 in order to keep the d7-square for the other knight in the following line: 8.Nbd2 Bb7 9.e4 Na6 10.e5 Nd7 and Black will get ...c5 in and should be fine.

7.Qc2 c6 8.Nbd2 Bd6?!

I was surprised to see that Sophie didn't seem to learn the opening line after getting a tough position the last time they played.

This move seems very illogical, to go ... Be7 and a few moves later ... Bd6 without developing the c8-bishop. 8...Re8?! was played in an earlier game where White also got an advantage, though later after a back and forth game, the game ended up being a draw. 9.e4 Nxe4 10.Nxe4 dxe4 11.Qxe4 Nf6 12.Qe2± 1/2–1/2 (50) Eshan Guha (1774)-Sophie Tien (1920) Chess.com 2020; 8...b6 is the main line here with many possibilities for Black after e4. 9.e4 Bb7 (9...dxe4 10.Nxe4 Bb7 11.Nxf6+±; 9...dxc4!? 10.Nxc4 Bb7 is probably the most logical move.) 10.e5 Ne8 11.cxd5 cxd5 is also theory though probably supposed to be slightly better for White.

9.e4 dxe4 10.Nxe4 Nxe4 11.Qxe4 c5 12.Rd1 Rb8?!

Another move that turns out awkward tactically.

13.dxc5! Nxc5

13...Bxc5 14.Ng5 g6 15.Qh4+- h5 16.g4→.



Position after 13...Nxc5

14.Qd4?

This is a very natural move that Eshan played very quickly, but unfortunately this move blows a lion's share of White's advantage since now the black bishop can safely move away and the queens will be probably exchanged, making Black survive.

The lesson here is that it is very important that when we see a good move that we like, even if it is safe and natural, we should be disciplined enough to always consider other candidate moves. 14.Qc2 just wins since White has too many threats, in particular, b4 and c5. 14...Qe7 and this is met with... 15.Rxd6! Qxd6 16.Bf4+- taking advantage of Black's misplaced rook.

I think that had White spent more time here, and looked for better moves it was very easy to spot this. 14.Qe1 also works.

14...Be7 15.Qxd8 Rxd8 16.Rxd8+ Bxd8 17.Bf4 Ra8 18.b4 Na6 19.Rd1 Be7 20.a3 f6

White is obviously still much better but now Black is still in the game at least.

21.Bd6

Maybe 21.Be3 e5 22.Nd2 was better, not exchanging pieces, and also preventing ...Rb8 followed by ...b6. Here it is very difficult for Black to untangle.

21...Kf7 22.c5 e5 23.Nd2 Nb8

23...Bxd6 24.cxd6 Rb8

24.Bd5+ Ke8 25.Nc4 Nc6 26.b5?!



Position after 26.b5

This was based on a forced concrete line which leads to a favorable endgame for White. However, the problem for White is that the endgame isn't nearly as easily winning as it seems at first. Here again, White would be better off not calculating this line deeply, but instead to look around and look for simpler possibilities which don't allow Black much counterplay. 26.f4! was simpler and clearer.

Here Black just doesn't have a satisfactory move. Black's main source of counterplay is with the knight on d4 and pawn on e5 and now White just gets rid of it. 26...exf4?! (26...Bxd6 27.Nxd6+ Kf8 28.fxe5 Nxe5 29.Nxb7+-). White is up a pawn with a much better game, and Black has no counterplay.) 27.Bxc6+ bxc6 28.Re1.

26...Nd4 27.Rxd4!

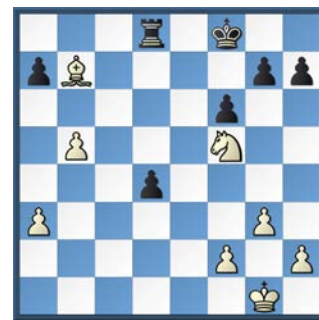


Position after 27.Rxd4

The point of White's last move.

27...exd4 28.c6 Bxd6 29.Nxd6+ Ke7 30.cxb7 Bxb7 31.Nf5+ Kf8 32.Bxb7 Rd8

[Diagram top of next column]



Position after 32...Rd8

However this endgame turns out to not be easy to win.

33.Kf1 g6 34.Nh4 d3 35.Ke1

This is fine but there was an interesting alternative. I think 35.Bf3!? was simpler. 35...d2 36.Bd1 trying to play a4 and defend the pawn.

36...Ke7! 37.Nf3 Kd6 38.Ke2 Kc5 39.Nxd2 Kxb5 40.Bb3 with good winning chances for White.

35...Re8+ 36.Kd2 Re2+ 37.Kxd3 Rxf2

Now this gets sharp and calculation is required.

38.Nf3

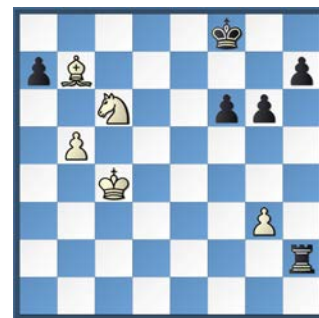
A natural human move but possibly an inaccuracy. 38.Kc4!? Rxb2 39.Nf3 Rg2 40.a4 and apparently White's pawns are faster. However this was far from obvious.

38...Ra2 39.Kc4 Rxa3 40.Nd4 Ra2?!

40...Ke7 was better.

41.Nc6! Rxb2?!

41...Ke8.



Position after 41...Rxb2

42.Nxa7?

I assume this was a blunder since I saw Eshan thought for a while after Black's reply. It looks like White is winning with 42.Ba6 since Black's pawns will be slow, and White's pawn and two pieces should produce a queen. Then White will just need to prove he knows how to mate with bishop and knight.

42...Rc2+ 43.Kd5 Rc7 44.Bc6

Thankfully White's b-pawn saves the day and White can still draw.

44...Rxa7 45.b6 Ra2 46.b7 Rb2 47.Kc5 Rxb7!

This is forced because otherwise White plays Bb5 and blocks the rook and queens the pawn.

48.Bxb7 f5 49.Kd6 Kg7 50.Ke5 h5 51.Bd5 Kh6 52.Kf4 h4! 53.gxh4 Kh5 54.Kg3 g5 55.Bf7+ Kh6 56.h5

Sadly for White, he cannot win because he has the h-pawn and a wrong-colored bishop.

56...Kg7 57.Be8 Kh7 58.Bg6+ Kh6 59.Kf3 g4+ 60.Kf4 g3 61.Kxg3 f4+ 62.Kxf4 Kg7 63.Kg5 Kg8 64.Kf6 Kh8 65.h6 Kg8 66.Bd3 Kh8 67.Kg6 Kg8 68.Bc4+ Kh8 69.h7

A very nice battle!

1/2-1/2

Griffin McConnell (2051) – Eshan Guha (2129) [B23]
Vancouver Open Chess.com
(R5), July 26, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

This was a last round game that Eshan played against a young player, Griffin McConnell, rated 2051 from Colorado. I was happy with Eshan on how he played that last game and with how he finished the tournament.

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4

The Grand Prix Attack.

3...g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bb5 Nd4 6.0-0 a6 7.Bd3 d6 8.Nxd4 cxd4 9.Ne2 Nf6 10.b3

10.Nxd4? Qb6 doesn't work for White. I think 10.c3 should be played.

10...0-0 11.Ng3 b5 12.Qe2 Nd7 13.Bb2 Nc5 14.Rae1 Bb7 15.c3 dxc3 16.Bxc3 Qb6 17.Qe3 Bxc3 18.dxc3 Nd7



Position after 18...Nd7

Smart play by Black, neutralizing any aggressive play from White by exchanging the queens and getting into a decent endgame thanks to White's weak

c3-pawn and Black potentially controlling the c5-square.

19.Qxb6 Nxb6 20.Rc1 Rfc8 21.Rc2 Rc7 22.Rfc1 Rac8 23.Kf2 Nd7 24.c4 Nc5 25.Ke3 b4!



Position after 25...b4

Showing good understanding, ensuring that White's d3-bishop remains bad because of all the queenside pawns being on the color of the bishop.

26.Be2

26.Rd2 a5 27.Bc2 was more tenacious.

26...a5!

Planning to open up the queenside.

27.Rb1 Ra8 28.Bf3 a4 29.bxa4 Rxa4 30.Rcb2 Ra3+ 31.Kd2 Nd3

31...h5! 32.h4 f5! was even stronger for Black.

32.Rb3 Nxf4 33.Rxa3 bxa3 34.Rb4 Bc6 35.Kc3 Ne6 36.Rb3 Ra7 37.Rb6 Bd7 38.Ne2 Nc5 39.Rb1 Na4+ 40.Kc2 Nb2 41.Kc3 Be6 42.Nd4 Bxc4 43.Ra1 Rc7 44.Nb3 Be6+ 45.Kb4 Nd3+ 46.Kb5 Rb7+ 47.Ka4 Bd7+ 48.Ka5 Rb5+ 49.Ka6 Nb4+ 50.Ka7 Bc6



Position after 50...Bc6

A very nice mating net for Black and a very cute finish to a great game played by Eshan. A good ending to a tournament that started tough for Eshan with a loss to a lower-rated player. Eshan proved to be a great fighter.

0-1

Ananth Gottumukkala (1785) – Sounak Bagchi (1995) [C54]
Vancouver Open Chess.com
(R3), July 25, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

This is a game of another one of my students who is rated around 2000, Sounak Bagchi. Here in round three, he's playing against a tough young player slightly below 1800, but he is dangerous since he beat Eshan very convincingly in the first round and in an earlier tournament beat FM Nick Raptis. He gave me a very good battle in the Seafair Open where if he played one more accurate move at some point he could've more or less secured a draw.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.e5 d5 7.Bb5

This line has become fashionable lately.

7...Ne4 8.cxd4 Bb6

The right way of playing. 8...Bb4+?! 9.Bd2.

9.Nc3 0-0 10.Be3 Nxc3

10...Bg4 is another possibility.

11.bxc3



Position after 11.bxc3

11...Bf5

Here Black should probably play 11...f6 right away.

12.0-0 f6 13.exf6 Qxf6 14.Be2

14.Bg5 Qg6 15.Qd2± might be a slightly better option.

14...h6

14...Rae8.

15.a4 Rae8 16.Qb3 Be6

Slightly passive. 16...Qd6 in order to play ...Be4 in some cases.

17.Bb5

17.Rae1.

17...Na5 18.Qb4 c6 19.Bd3 Nc4!?

An ambitious move. 19...Bf5 20.Bxf5 Qxf5 21.Ne5 Bc7 22.f4 b6 was very solid for Black.

20.a5 Bc7

20...Bd8 was interesting to not lose a tempo. 20...Bh3!? was also possible but probably White can make a draw if he wants: 21.axb6 Bxg2 22.Kxg2 Qxf3+ 23.Kg1 Qg4+ (23...Nxe3 24.fxe3 Qxe3+ 25.Kg2 Qxd3 26.Rxf8+ Rxf8 27.bxa7. Here Black has nothing better than a draw.) 24.Kh1 Qf3+.

21.Bxc4 dxc4 22.Qxb7 Bd6?!



Position after 22...Bd6

This move is strange since it loses a tempo. 22...Bb8; 22...Re7 23.Qxc6 Qf7.

23.Qxc6 Rd8 24.Ne5

Now White is in control, but Sounak fights well.

24...Bxe5 25.dxe5 Qf5 26.Rad1 Rd3 27.Rxd3

27.Bd4 is probably much better for White.

27...cxd3 28.Qd6 Rf7 29.Bxa7?!

A little bit too greedy. 29.f4±.



Position after 29.Bxa7

29...Rd7?

29...d2! is the strongest. 30.Be3 (30.Qxd2 Rxa7) 30...Rd7 31.Qb8+ Kh7 32.Bd4 Qc2 33.Qb1 Bb3. Black wins a rook but White is still in the game thanks to his amount of passed pawns creating counterplay.

30.Qb8+ Kh7 31.Bd4 Bd5 32.Qb2

32.e6 was the best chance for White to continue the game.

32...Bxg2

Forcing a draw, probably rightfully so, since otherwise he's just worse down a

few pawns.

33.Kxg2 Qg4+ 34.Kh1 Qf3+ 35.Kg1 Qg4+

A very interesting fight. Black could've considered delaying taking the draw and instead pose a few questions, but if White plays precisely it should still be a draw. 35...Rf7 36.h3 (36.Re1) 36...Rf5 37.Be3 Rh5 38.Qd2 Qxh3 39.f3=.

1/2-1/2

Sounak Bagchi (1995) –
Lavindu Devadithya (1535) [B53]
Vancouver Open Chess.com
(R1), July 25, 2020
[Aleksandr Lenderman]

This is Sounak's round-one win. Even though he's playing a lower-rated, I thought it was a nice win.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4

Sounak's pet line.

4...a6 5.Be2 Nc6 6.Qe3 Nf6 7.c4 g6 8.Nc3 Bg7 9.h3 Nd7 10.0-0 0-0 11.Rd1

White gets a nice Maroczy Bind structure.

11...Nde5?!

11...Nc5 was probably better.

12.Rb1

12.Nxe5 Nxe5 13.c5 was probably stronger.

12...Bd7

12...Nxf3+ 13.Bxf3 e5 was interesting, fighting for the d4-square.

13.Nxe5?!



Position after 13.Nxe5

Here I don't like this move since it's one move too late and now Black can take with the pawn and control the d4-square.

13...Bxe5?!

13...dxe5! was fine for Black.

14.b3

14.b4!?

14...Na7?!

Too passive. 14...Qa5.

15.f4 Bg7 16.Bb2 b5 17.Nd5

17.c5; 17.e5.

17...Nc8 18.Bxg7 Kxg7 19.Qc3+

19.c5 is probably better right away.

19...Kg8

19...f6 20.c5.

20.c5 dxc5 21.Qxc5 e6 22.Nb4?!

22.Nc7 Ra7 23.Rbc1 was even stronger, since here Black cannot move his pieces.

22...Qb6 23.Qxb6 Nxb6 24.Rd6 a5 25.Nd3

25.Nc6.

25...Rfb8 26.Ne5 Be8 27.f5 exf5 28.exf5 Nc8 29.Rd4 Ne7 30.fxg6 fxg6 31.Bg4



Position after 31.Bg4

31...Nc6?!

White played imprecisely and lost his advantage, and now Black could've equalized with 31...Rd8 32.Rbd1 Rxd4 33.Rxd4 a4=.

32.Nxc6 Bxc6 33.Rc1!

Seizing the initiative now.

33...Be8 34.Rc7 Rd8?

Missing White's idea and loses on the spot. White is better after 34...Ra6, but Black is still in the game.

35.Be6+ Kh8 36.Rf4!

Now it is all over. Black's pieces are uncoordinated, and Black cannot defend against mate without losing lots of material.

36...Rd1+ 37.Kh2 Be6 38.Rff7

A nice start by Sounak, demonstrating good opening preparation and tactical alertness.

1-0

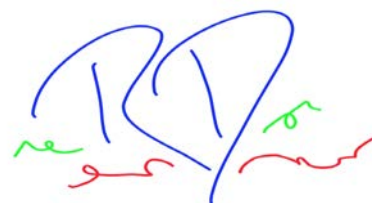




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15th Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Boys & Girls

Saturday-Sunday, October 10-11th 2020

Online via 



Info: spfno.com **Register:** nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration
Email: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com **Call:** 206.769.3757

2-day Championship Sections

Open	Girls
K-5	K-5
K-8	K-8
K-12	K-12

Format: 6SS, G/70;+10. Dual NWSRS and US Chess Online Rated. Paired by TD using US Chess ratings. Zoom monitoring with webcam required.

Rounds: Sat/Sun @ 8 AM, 12 PM, and 4 PM PDT.

Prizes include \$100,000 in Scholarships to [Webster University!](#)

1-day Sections (Saturday-only)

Open	Reserve
K-3	K-1 U800
4-8	2-3 U800
9-12	4-8 U900

Format: 5SS, G/25;+5. NWSRS Rated, US Chess Unrated. Paired by TD using higher of NWSRS or US Chess ratings. Zoom help desk available; Zoom monitoring not required.

Rounds: Sat 8 AM, 9:15 AM, 10:30 AM, lunch break, 12:15 PM, 1:30 PM

WA State Elementary Qualifier.

Fun Side Events (via Zoom): Saturday 10/10: 11am-12pm – Parents & Coaches Seminar, 2-3pm – Girls Workshop. Sunday 10/11: 10am-3pm – Polgar Chess Camp, 5-5:30pm – Puzzle Solving Competition, 5:30-7pm – Blitz Championship.

All Sections:

Registration **deadline Fri. Oct 9th @ 5pm.** \$15 Late Fee for payments accepted after the deadline. Unpaid players will receive a zero-point bye for round 1. Trophies for top-scoring individuals and teams. Higher of October 1st US Chess or NWSRS rating will be used to determine section and pairings.

Procedure: Pairings will be released prior to the start of each round. Games will be started automatically by the TD in the [Live Chess](#) area. Players must report their result upon completion of the game.

Fair Play Policy: All players and parents (if U18) are required to sign the [WCF Fair Play Agreement](#) prior to the start of the tournament. Zoom monitoring required during all games in 2-day Championship sections, Puzzle Solving Competition, and Blitz Championship. WCF's fair play committee will review any suspicious games on a case-by-case basis. Cheating of any kind is strictly prohibited.

Seattle Classic Scholastic

By Jacob Mayer

The Seattle Classic Scholastic Chess Tournament was held online via Chess.com August 1-2, 2020. Scholastic chess players participated from throughout the U.S., including Washington, Oregon, and Wisconsin. The event was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation and directed by WCF Scholastic Coordinator Jacob Mayer. A total of 96 players competed across seven sections: Kindergarten, 1-3 U900, 1-3 Open, 4-8 U1200, 4-12 Open (merged), K-6 Open (2-day), and 7-12 Open (2-day).

In the one-day sections, a special congratulations to Owen Xu, who scored 5.0/5 in the 1-3 Open Section for the only perfect score in the entire event! Kindergartener Lena Ivanovic overcame a fourth-round loss to finish in first place on tie-breaks over Sankalp Malugu. In the 1-3 U900, Ankita Swaminath persevered past a second-round defeat to finish with 4.0/5 and first place on tie-breaks over Aarush Jagtap. In the 4-8 U1200, Derek Borden overcame a half-point deficit in the final round, winning his game on board one to take clear first with 4.5/5 points. And in the 4-12 Open, Lily Deng proved why she was the top seed, conceding only a final-round draw which clinched her finish in sole first place with 4.5/5 points.

For the first time, there were two two-day sections available to our scholastic players. In the K-6 Open, talented Kindergartener Ted Wang finished with 4.5/5 points, only dropping half a point to a requested bye. And in the 7-12 Open, Bainbridge High School student Drew Bunch finished in clear first with 4.0/5 points in a very tough section full of hard-fought draws and tough competition. For their efforts, Ted and Drew will both receive free entry into the 2020 Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Boys & Girls October 10-11. Congratulations to all of the amazing chess competitors; our vibrant chess community continues to thrive despite these uncertain times!

**Ted Wang (1529) –
Hansol O’Brien (1349) [C54]**
Seattle Classic Scholastic
(K-6 Open 2-Day) Chess.com
(R4), August 2, 2020
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6

Northwest Chess



Photo credit: Philip Peterson.

5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Bb4+ 7.Bd2 Bxd2+
8.Nbxd2 d5 9.exd5 Nxd5 10.Qb3 Nce7
11.0-0 0-0 12.Rfe1 c6 13.a4 a5 14.Ne5
Ra7 15.Ne4 b6 16.Nxc6?!

16.Rac1±.

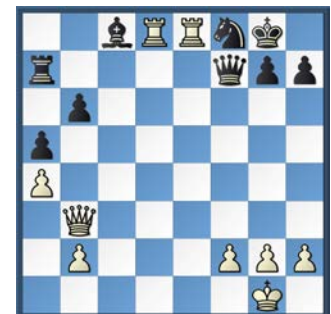
16...Nxc6 17.Bxd5 Nxd4 18.Qc4 Nf5

18...Rd7!±.

19.Rad1 Qc7 20.Qb3 Ne7 21.Bxf7+!±
Rxf7?

21...Kh8 struggles on.

22.Ng5 Ng6 23.Nxf7 Qxf7 24.Re8+ Nf8



25.Rdd8!

Position after 25.Rdd8

25...g6 26.Rxf8+ Kg7 27.Rxf7+ Rxf7
 28.Qxf7+ Kxf7 29.Rxc8 h5 30.Rc6 g5
 31.Rxb6 g4 32.Rb5 g3 33.Rxh5 gxf2+
 34.Kxf2 Ke7 35.Ke3 Ke6 36.Ke4 Kd6
 37.Re5 Kc6 38.Rd5 Kb6 39.Kd4 Ka6
 40.Kc5 Ka7 41.Rd6 Kb7 42.Rc6 Ka7
 43.Rb6 Ka8 44.Kc6 Ka7 45.Kc7 Ka8
 46.Ra6# 1-0

Lily Deng (1432) –
 Edward Cheng (1526) [B07]
 Seattle Classic Scholastic
 (4–12 Open) Chess.com
 (R4), August 1, 2020
 [Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 d6 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Bc4 Bg7
 5.h3 0-0 6.0-0 e5 7.d3 Nc6 8.Be3 Kh8
 9.Qd2 Nh5 10.Rfe1 f5 11.exf5 gxf5



Position after 11...gxf5

11...Bxf5 12.g4?! Bd7.

12.Bg5 Qe8 13.Nd5 Qd7 14.c3 Na5
 15.Be7 Nxc4 16.dxc4 Rf7 17.Qg5 Nf4
 18.Nxf4 exf4?

18...Rxe7±.

19.Rad1 b6 20.Ne5 dxe5 21.Rxd7 Bxd7
 22.Bd8 c5 23.Bc7 Re8 24.b4 Bc6 25.Bd6
 Be4 26.Qh5 Rfe7 27.Bxe7 Rxe7 28.Rd1
 h6 29.Rd8+ Kh7 30.Rd6 Kg8 31.Qg6
 Rf7 32.Rd8+ Rf8 33.Rd7 Rf6 34.Qxg7#
 1-0

Sharvesh Arul (1342) –
 Owen Xu (1524) [C55]
 Seattle Classic Scholastic
 (1–3 Open) Chess.com
 (R2), August 1, 2020
 [Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Nc3 Nxe4
 5.Nxe4 d5 6.Bd3 dxe4 7.Bxe4 Bd6 8.0-0
 0-0 9.d3 Bg4 10.c3 Kh8 11.h3 Bh5
 12.Be3

12.g4 Bg6 13.Be3.

12...Re8

12...f5±.

13.g4 Bg6 14.Bxg6 fxc6 15.d4 e4 16.Nd2
 Qh4 17.Kg2 g5 18.f4? exf3+



Position after 18...exf3+

18...gxf4 19.Bxf4 Bxf4 20.Rxf4 e3
 21.Nc4 e2 22.Qe1 Qd8.

19.Rxf3 Rf8 20.Bf2

20.Ne4.

20...Qh6 21.Qe2 Rae8 22.Rxf8+ Rxf8
 23.Nf3 Qf6 24.Re1 Qf4 25.a3 h5
 26.gxh5?

26.Qe4±.

26...g4 27.hxg4 Qxg4+ 28.Kf1 Qxf3
 29.Qd2 Bg3 30.h6 Qxf2+ 31.Qxf2
 Bxf2 32.hxg7+ Kxg7 33.Re2 Bxd4+
 34.Ke1 Bf6 35.Rg2+ Kh6 36.Rh2+ Kg5
 37.Rg2+ Kh4 38.Rh2+ Kg3 39.Rf2
 Bxc3+ 40.Rd2 Bxd2+ 41.Kxd2 Rf2+
 42.Kc3 Kf3 43.Kb3 Ke3 44.Kc3 Rd2
 45.Kb3 Nd4+ 46.Kc3 a5 47.b4 Rc2# 0-1

A NORTHWEST CHESS GRAND PRIX EVENT

WASHINGTON CHALLENGER'S CUP

OCTOBER 24-25TH, 2020

Site: Online via Chess.com

Format: A 5-Round Swiss in two sections: Open and Reserve (U1800).

Entry Fee: \$65 by 10/17, \$75 after. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs, or US Chess 2400+. \$40 play-up fee if rated under 1800 playing in Open section.

Time Control: G/75;+10.

Rounds: Sat. 10 AM, 2 PM, 6 PM; Sun. 10 AM, 2 PM.

Prize Fund: \$1,800 (based on 40 paid entries).

Open: 1st \$325, 2nd \$250, 3rd \$175

1st U2100: \$100, 1st U1900: \$100, Biggest Upset: \$50

Reserve: 1st \$200, 2nd \$150, 3rd \$100

1st U1600/U1400/U1200: \$100, 1st U1000/unrated: \$100
 Biggest Upset: \$50

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

Highest finishing Washington resident in the Open Section seeded into the 2021 Washington State Championship.

Memberships: Current US Chess and WCF membership/Northwest Chess subscription required. Memberships must be paid at time of registration. A Chess.com and Zoom account are required.

Rating: US Chess Online Rated and NWSRS Rated. US Chess October 2020 rating supplement will be used to determine pairings and prizes. Higher of US Chess or foreign ratings used at TD discretion.

Procedure: Pairings will be released prior to the start of each round. Games will be started automatically by the TD in the [Live Chess](#) area. Players must report their result to the TD upon completion of the game.

Fair Play Policy: All players and parents (if U18) are required to sign the [WCF Fair Play Agreement](#) prior to the start of the tournament. All players will be monitored by Zoom during the games. WCF's Fair Play Committee will review any suspicious games on a case-by-case basis. Cheating of any kind is strictly prohibited.



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

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

Contact: Josh Sinanan, WCF President
Phone: 206-769-3757

Email:
 WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

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

Registration **deadline Fri. 10/23 @**

5pm. \$15 Late Fee for payments accepted after the deadline. Unpaid players will receive a zero-point bye for round 1.

A NORTHWEST CHESS GRAND PRIX EVENT



WASHINGTON CLASS CHAMPIONSHIPS

NOVEMBER 27-29TH, 2020

ONLINE VIA 

\$3,500 based on 100 Paid Entries

Master (2200+): \$200, \$125, \$75 U2300 \$50

Expert (2000-2199): \$200, \$125, \$75, U2100 \$50

Class A (1800-1999): \$200, \$125, \$75 U1900 \$50

Class B (1600-1799): \$200, \$125, \$75 U1700 \$50

Class C (1400-1599): \$200, \$125, \$75 U1500 \$50

Class D (1200-1399): \$200, \$125, \$75 U1300 \$50

Class E (1199 & Under): \$200, \$125, \$75,
U1000/unr. \$50

Upset Prizes: 1st \$25 per section, 2nd 1-yr NWC
subscription extension

Annotated Brilliancy Prize Competition: \$25 per
section. Submit one annotated game that you
consider to be *Brilliant*. A panel of judges will select
the winner in each section.

Format: A 6-Round Swiss in seven class sections as
shown above. Sections may be combined if less
than 12 players in a section.

Entry Fee: \$60 if postmarked or online by Nov. 20,
\$70 after. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs. Rated
players add \$40 to play up one class only (can't play
up two classes). Reentry for 1/2 of your original
entry fee. Canadians may pay C\$ at par for entry
fee.

Time Control: G/90;+30.

Rounds: Fri./Sat./Sun. @ 10 AM & 3 PM.

Byes: Two half-point byes available. Request before
end of round 2.

Online Registration: <https://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration/> –
pay by Credit/Debit/PayPal. **Registration deadline Thurs. Nov 26
@ 5:00pm.** \$15 Late Fee for payments accepted after the deadline.
Unpaid players will receive a zero-point bye for round 1.

Rating: US Chess Online Rated. US Chess November 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.

Memberships: Current US Chess and WCF membership/Northwest
Chess subscription required. Memberships must be paid at time of
registration. A Chess.com and Zoom account are required.

Procedure: Pairings will be released prior to the start of each
round. Games will be started automatically by the TD in the [Live
Chess](#) area. Players must report their result upon completion of the
game.

Fair Play Policy: All players and parents (if U18) are required to
sign the [WCF Fair Play Agreement](#) prior to the start of the
tournament. All players will be monitored by Zoom during the
games. WCF's fair play committee will review any suspicious games
on a case-by-case basis. Cheating of any kind is strictly prohibited.

Info/Entries: Make checks payable to Washington Chess
Federation. **Mail To:** Josh Sinanan, WCF President
c/o Orlov Chess Academy: 4174 148th Ave. NE Building I, Ste. M
Redmond, WA 98052. **Phone:** 206-769-3757
Email: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

Washington Class Blitz Championship: Sunday 11/29 at 7 PM.
Format: A 9-Round Swiss in one section. Games start at 7 PM in the
[Live Chess](#) area. TC: G/3;+2. EF: \$25. Prize Fund: \$400/b20. 1st \$120,
2nd \$80, 1st U2000 \$50, 1st U1700 \$50, 1st U1400 \$50, 1st U1100/unr.
\$50. US Chess Online Blitz rated. Current US Chess and WCF
membership/Northwest Chess subscription required. A Chess.com
and Zoom account are required.

The 2020 Mike Neeley Memorial Northwest Grand Prix

Murlin Varner, Administrator

Here we are, two-thirds of the way through the weirdest Grand Prix year in my 18-year tenure. We have only had eighteen Grand Prix events this year, but twelve of those have had multipliers. It is likely that all the remaining events for 2020 will also carry multipliers as such is the nature of our online existence. Currently, there are four more events on the calendar for 2020, but I fully expect at least two more to be added before year's end. Those currently scheduled events are the Seattle Fall Open (September 26-27), the Washington Game/60 Championships (October 3), the Washington Challengers' Cup (October 24-25) and the Washington Class Championships (November 27-29), all on Chess.com. The first three carry 2x multipliers, meaning all your points are doubled, and the last has a 3x multiplier.

Our top players shuffled a bit due to the two events held in August. Northern Brown is now the Washington leader, with 107.5 points. Just a point-and-a-half back, both overall and in Class C, is Emma Li at 106. Third overall (and first Class D) is Lois Ruff at 100.5. Among "The Others," Aleksander Lenderman of New York has taken the lead over Nick Raptis of Oregon by a margin of 102 to 84. They are also the top two in the Master category.

As I explained in my last column, the players who remain unrated in the US Chess system are now rated in my tables, using their NWSRS rating, as that is the system being used to rate the majority of our local online events. Once we are able to leave the online events behind and return to the tables, standard US Chess ratings will be used again.

As of the end of August, we have had 585 entries in Grand Prix events from within Washington, and 188 from without, of which 32 are international. Of those we fondly call "The Others," 56 entries are from Oregon, along with 18 Canadians, 16 Californians, 15 Idahoans, 14 Montanans, and ten New Jerseyans. (New Jerseyites?) (What did Della Wear? She wore her New Jersey. You may groan now.)

Data below current through September 1.

2020 Memorial Northwest Grand Prix Standings								
Washington				Other Places				
	last	first	pts.		last	first	place	pts.
Masters				Masters				
1	Mahajan	Rushaan	52.0	1	Lenderman	Aleksander	NY	102.0
2	Levine	David	25.0	2	Raptis	Nick	OR	84.0
3	Pupols	Viktors	24.5	3	Shahinyan	David	ARM	71.0
4	Orlov	Georgi	22.5	4	Talukdar	Rohan	CAN	54.5
5	Kaufman	Ray	19.5	5	Tarjan	James	OR	51.0
Experts				Experts				
1	Vijayakumar	Advaith	81.0	1	Vega	Isaac	OR	58.0
2	Whale	Nicholas	79.5	2	Sairam	Pranav	NJ	39.0
3	Bell	Harry	62.0	3	Huang	Patrick M	CAN	37.5
4	Shubin	Daniel	56.5	4	Guha	Eshan	RUS	33.0
5	Jiang	Brandon	42.5	5	McConnell	Griffin	CO	25.5
Class A				Class A				
1	Tien	Sophie	90.0	1	Moore	Michael	OR	74.0
2	Qian	Daniel	79.5	2	Ingram	Richard	CAN	30.5
3	Razmov	Valentin N	79.0	3	Bagchi	Sounak	NJ	28.0
4	Chang	Eddie	59.0	4	Pang	Ashley	CA	19.5
5	Chen	Minda	54.5	5	Lu	Ryan	OR	19.0

Washington				Other Places				
	last	first	pts.		last	first	place	pts.
Class B				Class B				
1	Li	Edward	72.5	1	Guo	Yu Han (Veronica)	CAN	30.0
2	Vemparala	Nikash	67.5	2	Pai	Kushal	OR	21.0
3	Gottumukkala	Ananth	63.5	2	Zhao	Maxwell Z	IL	21.0
4	Wang	Felicity	62.0	4	Herr	Griffin G	ID	16.5
5	Velea	Stephanie	61.5	4	Kaur	Aradh	WI	16.5
Class C				Class C				
1	Brown	Northern	107.5	1	Zhu	Florina	NJ	31.5
2	Li	Emma	106.0	2	Martin	Andrew	CAN	29.0
3	Singh	Saket	81.5	3	He	Justin	ID	19.5
4	Ramkumar	Aditya	60.5	4	Gabunia	Davit	OR	18.0
5	Kompella	S Aditya	60.0	5	Three Tied at			15.0
Class D and Below				Class D And Below				
1	Ruff`	Lois	100.5	1	Malakar	Saarthak	OR	56.5
2	Kona	Vidip	81.5	2	Hack	Don	CAN	54.5
3	Wong-Godfrey	Emerson P	81.0	3	Arul	Sharvesh	AZ	44.0
4	Zhang	Michelle	79.0	4	LI	David	IL	40.0
5	Shanmugam	Meera	75.5	5	Morris	Brian L	CA	36.0
Overall Standings								
1	Brown	Northern	107.5	1	Lenderman	Aleksander	NY	102.0
2	Li	Emma	106.0	2	Raptis	Nick	OR	84.0
3	Ruff`	Lois	100.5	3	Moore	Michael	OR	74.0
4	Tien	Sophie	90.0	4	Shahinyan	David	ARM	71.0
5	Kona	Vidip	81.5	5	Vega	Isaac	OR	58.0
5	Singh	Saket	81.5	6	Malakar	Saarthak	OR	56.5
7	Vijayakumar	Advaith	81.0	7	Hack	Don	CAN	54.5
7	Wong-Godfrey	Emerson P	81.0	7	Talukdar	Rohan	CAN	54.5
9	Qian	Daniel	79.5	9	Tarjan	James	OR	51.0
9	Whale	Nicholas	79.5	10	Bernadskiy	Vitaliy	UKR	49.5
11	Razmov	Valentin N	79.0	11	Arul	Sharvesh	AZ	44.0
11	Zhang	Michelle	79.0	12	LI	David	IL	40.0
13	Shanmugam	Meera	75.5	13	Sairam	Pranav	CA	39.0
14	Devadithya	Hiruna	74.0	14	Huang	Patrick M	CAN	37.5
14	Zhang	Michael	74.0	15	Morris	Brian L	CA	36.0
13	Zhang	Michelle	61.0	14	Guo	Yu Han (Veronica)	CAN	30.0
15	Ramkumar	Aditya	60.5	14	Wang	Jalen	OR	30.0

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