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Zoey Tang at the 2025 Oregon Class Championship.

Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

Back Cover

Jason Cigan at the 2025 Oregon Class Championship.

Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

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Submissions of games (PGN format is preferable for
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News Flash:

Vihaan Jammalamadaka becomes National Master!

By Josh Sinanan

Congratulations to Vihaan Jammalamadaka, an eighth grader from Willows Prep School in Redmond, who recently became Washington State's newest National Master!

Vihaan achieved a US Chess rating of 2203 as a result of scoring five points from nine games in the 19th Annual SPICE Cup, a nine-round norm tournament co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and the Washington Chess Federation November 19-24, 2025, in Bellevue.

Along the way, Vihaan drew against GM Denes Boros (2492), FM Stephen Willy (2313), and FM Ryan Porter (2261) and defeated NM Ravi Krishna Govindavajhala (2215) and CM Aayansh Guntaka (2177).



Chess Resolutions

The Chess Friends

The Man Benji, The Myth Sarang, and The Legend Vivi

<https://www.chessfriendsbooks.com/blog>

Howdy! It's the Chess Friends!
Happy New Year, everyone! January 1st always feels like a fresh start... Like taking a first step in fresh, crunchy snow. You unpack your daily chess puzzle calendar on your desk, thinking... *"This is it. This year, I'll definitely solve a puzzle every day!"*

New Year's Resolutions are popular among people all over the world. Exercise more regularly... Eat healthier... Read more... But the hard truth is [around 80% of people abandon their goals by 19 January!](#) After not even three weeks! How crazy is that?! The snow melts, daily responsibilities take over, priorities shift, distractions pile up, and the goals feel unreachable without a plan.

What about the other 20% who keep going towards their goals? What about the [9% who actually stick to their goals](#) and complete them? Their secret: they know how to set the right goals! You may have heard about the S.M.A.R.T. goals framework (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound goals), which is a classic concept on goal setting, [first introduced in the 1980s](#). There is actually a [whole theory developed and tested around goal settings](#), and the Internet is full of advice on how to stick to your goals.

In this article, we want to share our own goal setting theory, developed last year when we worked on our book. We hope it can help you on your journey toward achieving your New Year resolutions! We call our process... **P.E.S.H.K.A.!** When you set your goals, try focusing on:

- Process
- Experimentation
- Specificity
- Hard work
- Kindheartedness
- Ambition

Last year we had an **Ambitious** goal to write a book. Early on, we narrowed down the ideas to a **Specific** topic and book format, and established our **Process** to write consistently. We wrote and met every week, and, after four months of **Hard work**, had the first draft! We **Experimented** with our writing style, and with the book's title and layout, and we were always **Kind** to each other by listening when we disagreed. With the power of friendship, hard work, and dedication, not only did we publish the book, but we also got much better at writing, had fun with friends, and made many new ones!

Now we would like to look ahead, and share our personal goals, chess and otherwise, and how we might use **P.E.S.H.K.A.** to help us reach them. As usual, our friend, Peshka the pawn, joins the discussion to remind us to dream big and focus on the process rather than the results. Peshka shares its own goal, inspired by the quote of American author of positive thinking, Norman Vincent Peale: *"Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars."*

The Myth Sarang

Become Arena International Master (AIM) as soon as I can!

Finish Precalculus and begin Calculus by the end of 2026!

Here's how I plan to use P.E.S.H.K.A. to achieve my goals.

PROCESS

My chess goal is to earn the AIM (Arena International Master) title ASAP, which means maintaining a high rating on FIDE Online Arena in 50 games of rapid, 100 games of blitz, or 150 games of bullet. To get there, I am focusing on consistent daily training (openings, master games, tactics, endgames, etc.), sharpening my brain, and building habits

around reviewing my games. So far, I have already achieved the AFM (Arena FIDE Master) title and, before that, the ACM (Arena Candidate Master) title. Next up for me is AIM, followed by AGM (Arena Grand Master), but I will have to improve considerably to reach those levels.

EXPERIMENTATION

A big part of my journey to AIM is experimenting with my openings and training instead of thinking that one fixed routine will always work. I usually treat my studying like a series of small experiments: I try something for a week or two, see how it affects my games and rating, then decide whether to keep it, tweak it, or replace it. This method helped me choose what my main openings were!

SPECIFICITY

As I said before, you can play 50 games of rapid, 100 games of blitz, or 150 games of bullet to get the title. I chose 100 games of blitz initially because it is usually what I play online, and that quickly got me the ACM title. Then I transitioned to 150 games of bullet and that helped me reach the AFM title. It was fast, fun, and I got many reps to practice my ideas. It's also the most popular time control, so it is more than likely I get games fast. We will see what time controls I use to pursue AIM, probably a combination of all of them!

HARD WORK

My other goal for this year is to finish Precalculus by the end of the year. Finishing Precalculus is not just about talent, it demands consistent hard work. For me, hard work means showing up even when I'm tired or not fresh-minded, and still doing my equations instead of skipping days. I do math lessons with my dad multiple times weekly and work on math websites every weekday. As for chess, yes, I play online and study the game daily.

KINDHEARTEDNESS

Kindheartedness in my AIM journey means practicing good sportsmanship online, like on some websites disabling chat to avoid mean comments, never raging after a bad loss, and keeping a growth mindset. By prioritizing kindheartedness online, I create a cycle of positive experiences that boosts focus and makes the grind toward AIM enjoyable. I'm also kind to myself because I know it's a journey that'll have ups and downs, and, as long as I enjoy the ride and keep seeing growth, it's bound to happen.

AMBITION

Ambition powers my goal of AIM a lot. I'm not just playing for fun, I'm entering large daily arenas, targeting consistent performances against strong players, and holding that high rating threshold without dipping below. It is also ambitious in that my first iteration of FIDE Online Arena got me to ACM, and the most recent cycle of games got me to AFM, but I haven't been able to come too close to the threshold required for AIM yet. That said, I still believe in myself and know I can get that AIM.

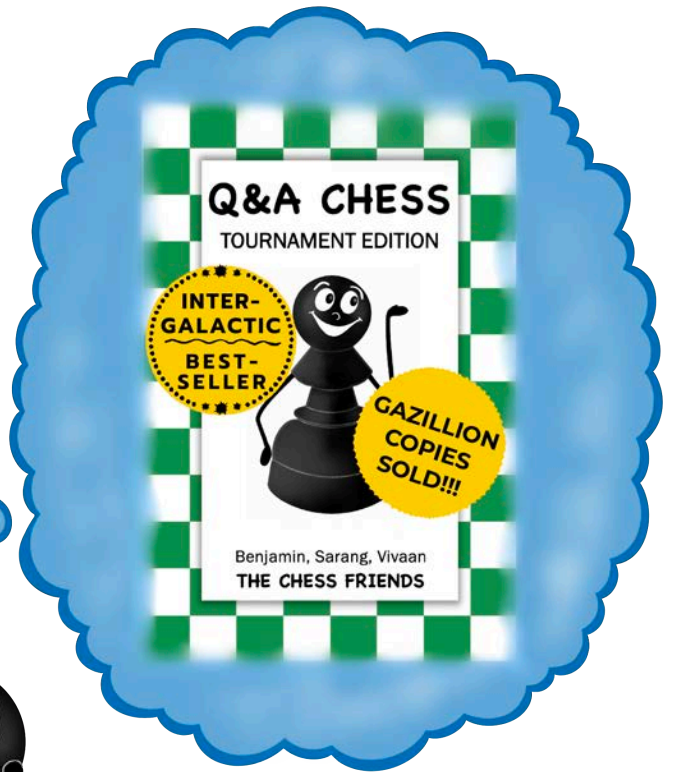
The Legend Vivaan

Become a FIDE Master (FM) (2300) when I'm 10!

Invent teleportation!

For me, the three things in P.E.S.H.K.A. I'm really good at are Ambition, Experimentation, and Process. My goals are super-duper ambitious. I may be a 1500 seven-year-old, state and national champion, but getting FM at ten is very difficult, but I believe in myself! Teleportation is something we see in movies and that's about it. People have tried to invent it, but no one has ever succeeded. I will do it. That is ambitious.

Process for me is how I can work toward my goals. I come up with new inventions every day and practice being creative and thinking outside the box (well inside the box if you call my house a box haha). As for the FM goal, I study and play chess every day. I experiment a lot and always try to learn from my experiments and keep working hard to get better. I would encourage you all to dream big, and even if you don't reach the ultimate goal, you will grow and achieve many smaller goals along the way



**DREAM
BIG**

The Man Benji

Become a National Master (NM) (USCF 2200) by the end of 2027!

Do 50 push-ups in a row by the end of July 2026!

Before embarking on the journey to reach your goals, you need to know: Why these goals exactly? Why are they important to you? To answer those questions, you need to imagine your future. Where do you see yourself in two, three, or even twenty years from now?

I close my eyes and see myself as a GM, but the image is a bit hazy; it's too far into the future. GM is my ultimate

goal that can be achieved if I have a few checkpoints along the way, like my current goal of becoming a National Master. The other current goal, being able to do 50 push-ups in a row, is a smaller goal too. The ultimate goal, or the reason behind this goal, is to get stronger so I can help my volleyball team have more success.

This is how I'll achieve my goals with P.E.S.H.K.A.!

PROCESS

I'd like to become a National Master as soon as possible, but I know it's a long journey that requires discipline and a well-thought-out process! Each day, I'll

find two hours just for chess: 30 minutes of puzzles, 30 minutes of opening or endgame practice, 30 minutes of looking at master games, and the rest of the time playing blitz or rapid and analyzing. My first checkpoint is getting CM (Candidate Master) at 2000, and then I'll make my way to 2200 and the NM title!

EXPERIMENTATION

I also have a fitness goal: Do 50 push-ups in a row by the end of July 2026. A big factor that can help me achieve this goal is by not staying fixed on one type of push-up all the time but instead try something new. For example, I could try a clapping push-up or even try switching to a few sit-ups instead. As for my chess goal, in my games, I will try something new and unusual to practice different ideas and be ready for anything. Too much experimentation might be bad,

though. It can take you on a detour, which might be scenic, but could distract you from your main goal.

SPECIFICITY

In my chess goal, I said I was going to train 30 minutes of puzzles. 30 minutes?! The average time it takes to solve a puzzle is 30 seconds! That means I'll complete 60 puzzles in one sitting! No, that's not really how I'm going to do it! Instead, I'll spend about 5–10 minutes for each puzzle, taking my time to write down ideas and my thought process in my chess journal. That way, instead of rushing carelessly through each puzzle, I'll build up my logic and reasoning in different types of positions!

HARD WORK

Like Peshka showed here, you have to work hard. There's no way around

it! You have to take steps towards your goals every day. Even in days when I feel I don't have the strength; I still have to push through that feeling and go through my process. Why? Because my goal and my future self-motivate me.

KINDHEARTEDNESS

I have to be kind to myself. When I'm getting to my limits, I stop, so my body and mind have a chance to recover. Having a good night's sleep means being kind to yourself. When I'm solving a chess puzzle or playing a game and I lose, I don't get mad at myself or my opponents. Instead, I think to myself that my opponent played a great game and then analyze where I went wrong.

AMBITION

Ambition is wondering how much I can achieve when I stay true to my goals. I want to see where this journey can take me. Ambition is the rocket that will take you to the moon or to those coveted chess titles! Dream big!

Here's a summary of some takeaways to help you achieve your resolutions.

The Chess Friends Tips To Setting And Achieving Your Goals

To be more organized and accountable on your journey to your goals, every day make a plan, and celebrate smaller goals achieved along the way!

Dedicate yourself to your goal. Really mean it. Even if you feel a little blue today, challenge yourself! One of the best swimmers, Michael Phelps, once said "There are going to be some days when you don't feel like training, it's what you do on those days that matter." It doesn't have to be much, but consistent practice goes a long way.

Sometimes, less is more and more is less! Instead of trying to cram everything into one sitting, spread it out and give yourself some breaks! Every day, strive to take at least one step toward your goal. If you don't have time to do ten chess puzzles, do one or two. It still counts.

Remember: "A happy mind is a healthy mind." Every day, express your gratitude toward life. Sometimes, we get lost in what we're doing and forget how to live happily.

**WORK
HARD**



Be kind to yourself. Be kind to others. Sometimes, we get frustrated that something isn't working out, but that's no reason to rage or complain. Even the greats make mistakes. It's how you learn from those mistakes that will help you grow.

Don't be afraid to adapt your process. One of the greatest ways to learn is to experiment with many things, do enough of each to know whether or not it's right for you, don't be afraid to fail, learn from those failures, and run with what works best for your growth.

Never compare yourself to others. Compare your current self to your past self. Growth is personal, and it's critical that you run your own race.

Be ambitious. Trust your process. Work hard. Experiment often. Anything is possible when you set your mind to it, but don't let yourself be disappointed if you don't reach your ambitious goals in the time you want.

We hope you find this helpful and have fun reaching your own goals! We are rooting for you!

Three Cheers, Fellow Future Master Chess Friends!

The Man Benji,
The Myth Sarang,
The Legend Vivi



Winter Fun Bughouse

Sunday, January 11, 2026

Grand Knights Chess Academy

13620 NE 20th St, Suite K, Bellevue, WA 98005



Format: A 7-round Single Swiss in one section.

Eligibility: All ages welcome. No memberships required. Max average team rating: 1800.

Ratings: Unrated. Higher of Jan 2026 USCF Blitz and current NWSRS ratings (if unrated, up to 1300 based on age) will be used to determine average team rating, pairings, and prizes.

Rules: We will follow the latest US Chess published [bughouse rules](#) (see Appendix B).

Rounds: 7:30PM, 7:40, 7:50, 8:00, 8:10, 8:20, 8:30PM. Awards ~8:45PM or ASAP.

Time Control: G/3; +0.

Prize Fund: \$450 (based on 20 paid teams)

Team Prizes:

1st-3rd: \$100-\$70-\$50;
1st-3rd K-6: \$60-\$40-\$30;

Special Prizes:

Biggest Upset Win: \$30;
Best Sportsmanship: \$30;
Best Dressed Team: \$30.

Registration: Online at NWChess.com/OnlineRegistration. Online registration and payment due Sat, Jan 10 @ 5pm, or else register at site: Sun, Jan 11 @ 7PM-7:15PM.

Entry Fee: \$20 per player.

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

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

A Conversation With National Tournament Director And FIDE Arbiter Jacob Mayer

Ken Lee

I sat down with Jacob Mayer, a long-time player, coach, and tournament director, to discuss how chess can train your mind for endurance and the unique ways that chess can impact your career and life.

Ken: When did you first start playing chess?

Jacob: I started playing in kindergarten at the Evergreen School. Although I transferred schools shortly after, I made friends in chess clubs wherever I went. I took to the game right away and it's been a part of my life ever since.

Ken: What was your elementary school chess journey like?

Jacob: Two of my teammates and friends at Wedgwood elementary were Michael Omori, now a National Master, and Matthew Yang. They were both top players for our grade every year. But more than that, they were my friends on and off the chess board. I learned a lot from them.

Ken: Who was your coach at that time?

Jacob: I didn't have a private coach but was fortunate enough to learn from many very talented coaches. FM Curt Collyer (former Washington State Champion) and Fred Kleist coached my elementary school. I also got to learn from many other master coaches such as NM Matt Fleury, FM's Bill Schill and David Roper, IM Georgi Orlov, former US Women's Champion Elena Donaldson, and many more.

But I also attribute a lot of my learning to my friends. I learned a lot from Michael and Matthew and without them I

likely wouldn't have continued. Having strong friends and coaches propelled my chess journey all the way through grade school.

Eventually I went to Roosevelt High School and re-started the chess team there too.

Ken: What was your high school chess team experience?

Jacob: I found some friends who had played chess before and were willing to join me on the team. We didn't have a big team, but we were still competitive and committed to having fun.

Additionally, I also took a unique opportunity to train with the Lakeside High School chess team. I had known and competed with many of them since elementary school and they welcomed me with open arms.

I wasn't a member of the Lakeside team, but it was a great learning experience just to play and hang out with other enthusiastic players.

Ken: That's interesting. So, you found different ways to express your interest in chess?

Jacob: Yes, that's exactly what happened.

The chess community is really unique in that it's both small and large at the same time.

Ken: What do you mean by that?

Jacob: While chess can attract 1,500 kids to the Washington State Elementary Chess tournament and host dozens of tournaments every year, it's still relatively small compared to other sports activities. What I really want chess players to

understand is that they can be a part of any chess community they want to join.

It can extend way beyond your school or club and can grow as much as you like. It can even mean meeting new friends and chess players out of state and out of the country. And many of these friendships extend beyond the board, or even beyond your time playing chess.

Ken: What did you do with chess during your university years?

Jacob: I moved to Minnesota and majored in economics and Japanese. My chess definitely took a back seat to my studies.

Ken: When did you decide to switch your focus from playing to directing?

Jacob: I worked hard and eventually obtained my Class A level (US Chess rating between 1800 and 1999). But I realized that I couldn't commit the time needed to take my playing skills to the next level. Additionally, I saw that what the local community needed was not another Class A level player, but additional help in organizing and directing tournaments.

Ultimately, it became a simple decision. I liked the chess community more than I liked playing. So, that's how I started turning my attention to becoming a TD.

Ken: What kind of training is required to run and organize chess tournaments?

Jacob: In Washington we have our own niche NWSRS system. It's free to participate with no membership dues. For that there is no official training or certification required.

Ken: What about USCF training?

Jacob: That's an entirely different ballgame.

That requires more rigorous training and experience. There are also formal tests required.

But like most things, experience is the best teacher. You learn to run big tournaments by running small tournaments. As the tournaments get progressively bigger and more complex, you learn how to scaffold and adjust along the way.

Ken: Are you surprised that chess continued to be part of your life for all these years?

Jacob: Not at all. I knew I loved chess. I just found a way to express that love in a different way than just as a player. I also coach chess and I love doing that as well.

Ken: What makes chess so unique?

Jacob: It's one of my greatest beliefs that chess is what you make of it. For example, a coach can teach you a lot during a one-hour session; they can give you some ideas and concepts to think about. But chess is a game that requires a lot of self-study. That's where the real growth happens.

Ken: It sounds like being a Class A player has significantly influenced your role as a tournament director?

Jacob: Definitely. I know my experience as a chess player makes me a better TD. I understand not only the technical aspects of the game, but I have a great deal of empathy and understanding of the dynamics of actually playing and participating in tournaments.

Also, I think it's been an excellent grounding principle for me to understand that chess is my passion but not the main way I make my living.

Ken: Can you expand on that?

Jacob: I do make a little money from working as a TD, but again, my main motivation is to help and be a part of this community. I want my decisions to be

based on what's best for the player and never consider how it affects my finance or job security.

My primary job is working for Eddie Chang at Realogics Sotheby's International Realty. Working with Eddie has allowed me the freedom to continue my directing and coaching. And we may have a chess board in our office for blitz breaks.

Ken: How has chess influenced your career?

Jacob: I met Eddie through the chess community, and we approach our business with the same critical thinking required in chess.

Ken: What do you mean by that?

Jacob: We take a lot of what we learn on the chess board and translate that to our business model.

For example, we are constantly changing and adapting to what's happening in the real estate market. We are making decisions and helping our clients by solving problems, anticipating changes in the marketplace, and staying several steps ahead of our competition.

Ken: That's amazing. What do you think are other benefits of playing chess?

Jacob: Without a doubt, mental stamina. Playing long games with long time controls builds mental endurance.

If you are getting to play and enjoying long three to four hour matches, it turns out that things like standardized tests or loop interviews, which often require multiple hours, are a piece of cake.

Chess provides unique training for the brain and temperament because it requires sustained concentration for long periods of time.

Ken: What other unique benefits do you see in chess that you don't see in other sports or activities?

Jacob: This is going to sound counter intuitive, but I think the social aspects of chess are often overlooked.



*Jacob Mayer at the 2019 Washington Class.
Photo credit: Josh Sinanan.*

I've been around chess tournaments for years, and I've noticed that chess can fulfill the social quota needs of kids (and adults) in ways that many other activities can't.

You are in a room with 100 or more players and you are speaking the language of chess with each other. So, even though you may not actually talk to anyone (more than exchanging pleasantries) all day, you are still connecting with others. Yes, it might look different than the way many parents think social interactions should look, but it's a very real and meaningful way for those players to connect.

Ken: That makes sense. I am especially aware of the dynamic of post-game conversations where I see a lot of growth and connection happening.

Jacob: Absolutely. I can't think of another sport where competitors go head-to-head and then after the game, have an opportunity to review and discuss their game in real time. Often your frequent competitors become your friends as well, and you find you have even more in common off the board.

Or, if they don't review their game with their opponent, I often see players discussing their games with friends or coaches.

Ken: Any other final thoughts or advice to chess players in our community?

Jacob: Always remember to focus on your enjoyment of chess. I've found that the players who keep the passion going for the game and focus on the journey (and not just the destination) are the ones that have the best mindset related to chess.

If you keep that in mind, chess can take you along for a beautiful ride in ways that you can't imagine.

"I've been around chess tournaments for years, and I've noticed that chess can fulfill the social quota needs of kids (and adults) in ways that many other activities can't."

Oregon Class Championship

Wilson Gibbins

The 134 competitors at the Oregon Class Championships provided evidence that chess is still a growth industry. I was initially worried that we would struggle to match last year's 118 attendees, but some last minute and even post deadline entrants pushed us to a record turnout.

Zoey Tang won the Master/Expert section and an unneeded qualification for the Oregon Closed this coming February (as the highest rated Oregon player she was already guaranteed a slot). She conceded two draws and a few rating points along the way, as Jason Cigan and Austin Tang did the damage.

This is a travesty of justice in my humble opinion—if you win the tournament, you are entitled to at least one rating point. Austin, who won the tournament in 2024, had to settle for a tie

for second with Harishkumar Karthikeyan and Pratik Thorwe, a half point behind Zoey with 3.5 points.

Moshe Rachmuth won the Class A section with three wins, a draw, and a bye. William Nobles, Alan Rhoades, and Vishnu Mohan tied for second with 3.5 points.

Yian Lin won Class B by scoring 4.5 points, same as his score he needed to win Class B in 2024, and also same as the score he used to win Class E in 2023. Admirable consistency. Christopher Ade, the 2024 Class C Champion, finished second with four points, losing only to Yian.

Shyam Pujara finished with a perfect 5.0/5 score to claim the Class C prize and gain 291 rating points in the process. David Gorlachev and Akshs Inghal finished second with four points each.

Class D was the only section with a tie for first, as Danielle Nicholas and Garrett Logan each scored four points. Danielle won the head-to-head game in round four but gave up draws in rounds three and five, allowing Garrett to catch her in the last round. Danielle gained 137 rating points in this tournament and 114 points in the 2025 North Carolina Open, a 251-point increase over two tournaments. Not bad for an adult improver.

Charles Ewel took Class E with four wins and a third-round bye. He needed a clutch last round win against previously undefeated Sai Seethamraju which you can see in the games section below. Sai finished tied for second with Philip Adzhigirey and Oleg Gorlachev with four points each.

Alexander Curteman won all five rounds to claim first in Class F, including a third-round win over second-place finisher Scott Christensen.

Thanks to Zoey Tang for organizing this event. Thanks to Milo Tang for serving as chief director. Thanks to Dave Murray and Lilly Tang for serving as assistant directors. Additional thanks to Lilly for providing pictures for this article.

Finally, thanks to Yian Lin for providing a game for this article, and extra thanks to Mike Morris, Pratik Thorwe, Danielle Nicholas, Austin Tang, Charles Ewel, Moshe Rachmuth, and Zoey Tang for providing annotations as well as game scores.

**Zoey Tang (2431) –
Pratik Thorwe (1974) [D35]**
Oregon Class Championships
Masters/Exp (R4), November 2, 2025
[Zoey Tang]

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5
5.Bg5 c6 6.e3 h6 7.Bh4 Be7 8.Bd3 0-0
9.Nge2 Ne4 10.Bxe7 Nxc3 11.Nxc3**

Debated 11.Bxd8 Nxd1 12.Be7 (12.Kxd1!
Rxd8) 12...Nxb2 13.Bh7+ Kxh7 14.Bxf8



L-R: Austin Tang, Zoey Tang. Photo credit: Lilly Tang.

Nd7 15.Bd6 Nc4, but decided the Nc4 would be too annoying.

11...Qxe7 12.0-0 Nd7 13.Re1 Nf6 14.f3

Preventing ...Ne4 and preparing potential e4.

14...Be6 15.Bc2 Rad8 16.Rb1

16.Qd3 g6 17.Qd2 was more provocative.

16...Qd6 17.b4 b5?! 18.a4 a6



Position after 18...a6

19.Ne2?!

Couldn't come up with something better during the game. 19.a5, preventing Nd7-Nb6-Nc4, was better. 19...Qd7 20.Qd3 g6 21.Nd1 Ne8 22.Nf2 Nd6 23.Qc3± with the plan of Nd3-Nc5.

19...bxa4 20.Bxa4 Rb8 21.Qd2 Rb6 22.Bc2

Preventing ...Bf5

22...Rfb8 23.e4 dxe4 24.fxe4 Ng4?!

A good-looking tempo, but the knight is almost trapped.

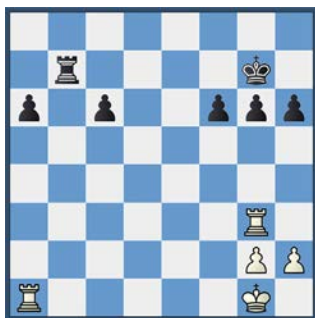
25.Nf4 Ne5 26.Qc3 Nd7 27.Nd3 Rd8 28.Nc5 Nf8 29.Rbd1 Bg4?

I was happy to see this move, as now my rook gets to lift for free.

30.Rd3 Rdb8 31.Rg3 Bh5 32.d5

Attack!

32...Bg6 33.e5 Qxd5 34.Bb3 Qd8 35.e6 Qf6 36.Qxf6 gxf6 37.e7 Rxb4 38.exf8Q+ Kxf8 39.Nd7+ Kg7 40.Nxb8 Rxb8 41. Bc2 Rb7 42.Bxg6 fxe6 43.Ra1



Position after 43.Ra1

The game continued on for ~20 moves.

1-0

Austin Tang (2159) –
Jesse Hutton (1947) [C86]
Oregon Class Championships
Masters/Exp (R4), November 2, 2025
[Austin Tang]

This was my fourth round game. I am at 2.0/3 and need a win if I want to win a prize.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Qe2 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.Rd1 Na5 10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7 12.d5

This is the mainline of the Worrall, it is supposed to be decent for White according to the engine, though it's not clear in human play.

12...g6

12...Bd7 is the mainline.

13.b3

The idea is to respond to ...c4 with b4, and respond to ...b4 with c4. This way, the knight on a5 is stuck there.

13...Nh5 14.h3

Black can't play ...f5 anyway, so I was just making slow improvements to see what he would play. 14.Bh6 was better to avoid ...Bf6-Bg7 and force ...Ng7 here.

14...Nb7?!

The Rubinstein maneuver, though it's probably not the best idea. The queenside is weak; this is too slow. 14...Bf6

15.Bh6 Re8 16.Nbd2 Nd8 17.a4 bxa4 18.bxa4 f6



Position after 18...f6

Completing the Rubinstein maneuver, though the queenside is too open for Black to create initiative.

19.Be3 Nf4?!

I felt like this was his final "mistake," Black loses all chance of counterplay after this.

20.Bxf4 exf4 21.a5 Bf8 22.Nc4 Ra7 23.Nfd2 Nf7 24.Rdb1 Bb7 25.Qd3 Raa8 26.Rb6 Rab8 27.Rab1 Be7 28.Ba4 Rec8 29.Qc2 Ba8?

29...Nd8 30.Qb2 Technically, White can't win material, though just look at the position... Black can't do anything. White could plan Bd1-Bg4 next.

30.Qb2 Rb7

30...Rxb6!? 31.axb6 Qb7 32.Na5 Qb8

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33.b7

31.Rxb7

1-0

Pratik Thorwe (1974) –

Hayul Lim (2048) [B31]

Oregon Class Championships

Masters/Exp (R3), November 1, 2025

[Pratik Thorwe]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 g6 4.Bxc6 dxc6 5.d3 Bg7 6.Nc3 c4 7.d4

7.dxc4 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 Qxd1+ 9.Kxd1 Nf6 10.Re1 Bg4 11.Be3 0-0-0+ 12.Kc1 Bxf3 (12...Nxe4 13.Ne5 Be6 14.Bxa7 Nd6 15.c5 Nc4 16.Nxc4 Bxc4 17.Bb6 Rde8) 13.gxf3

7...Bg4 8.Be3

8.0-0 Bxf3 9.Qxf3 Qxd4 10.Be3 Qe5

11.Qe2

8...Bxf3 9.gxf3

9.Qxf3 Bxd4 10.0-0 Bxe3+ 11.Qxe3 Qb6 12.Qf4 Nf6 13.e5 Nd5 (13...Nd7 14.Kb1 Nc5 (14...Qc5) 15.Qxc4) 14.Nxd5 cxd5 15.Rxd5

9...Nf6 10.Qd2

10.Qe2 b5 11.a4 a6

10...b5

10...0-0 11.Ne2 (11.h4 h5 12.Ne2 c5 13.dxc5 Qxd2+ 14.Bxd2 (14.Kxd2 Rac8 (14...Rfd8+ 15.Ke1 Nd7 16.Nc3 Bxc3+ 17.bxc3) 15.Rad1 (15.Nc3 Rfd8+ 16.Ke2) 15...Nd7 16.c3 Nxc5))

11.Ne2

11.a4 b4 12.Ne2 Qa5 13.Bh6 Bxh6 (13...0-0 14.h4 (14.e5 Nh5 15.Ng3 c3 16.bxc3 bxc3 17.Qg5 Bxh6 18.Qxh6

Ng7 19.h4 f6 20.h5 g5 21.f4 Qd5 22.fxc5 fxc5 23.Qxg5 Kh8 24.h6 Ne6 25.Qxe7)) 14.Qxh6 b3+ 15.c3

11...a5 12.Bh6 Bxh6 13.Qxh6 e6 14.Qg7 Rg8 15.Qh6 Qe7

15...g5 16.e5 Nd5 17.Qxh7 Ke7 18.h4 Rh8 19.Qe4 gxh4 20.Rxh4 Kd7 21.Rxh8 Qxh8 22.0-0-0 Qh2

16.a3 e5?!

16...g5 17.e5 Nd5 18.h4 0-0-0 19.hxg5 Rxg5 20.Qxh7 Rf5 21.Rh5 Rxh5 22.Qxh5

17.Qg5

17.Qd2 exd4 18.Nxd4 Qc5 19.0-0-0; 17.dxe5 Qxe5 18.0-0-0 g5 19.Qh3 Rd8

17...Nd7 18.Qd2 exd4 19.Nxd4 Qc5



Position after 19...Qc5

20.Rd1


20.0-0-0 b4 (20...Ne5 21.f4 (21.Kb1 0-0-0 22.Qxa5 Rxd4 23.Rxd4 Qxd4 24.Qa8+ Kc7 25.Qxg8) 21...Nd3+ 22.cxd3 Qxd4) 21.Ne6 c3 (21...fxe6 22.Qxd7+ Kf8 23.Qxe6 bxa3 24.Rd7 axb2+ (24...Qg5+ 25.Kb1 Rg7 26.h4 Qf4 27.Rhd1 Re8 28.Qxc6) 25.Kb1)

20...Nf6??

20...Ne5 21.f4 Nd3+ 22.cxd3 Qxd4 23.dxc4 Qxe4+ 24.Qe2 Qxe2+ 25.Kxe2 bxc4 26.Rhe1 Kf8 27.Rd6 Kg7 28.Rxc6; 20...0-0-0 21.Qxa5 Kb7 22.Qb4 Rge8



L-R: Lucas Maokhampio, Mike Morris. Photo credit: Lilly Tang.

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23.0-0 Qg5+ 24.Kh1 Qh5

21.Qf4 Nh5 22.Qc7 Kf8 23.Nxc6?

23.Nf5 gxf5 (23...Nf6 24.Rd6 gxf5
25.Rxf6 Qe7 26.Qxc6 Rd8 27.Rxf5 Rg6
28.Qxb5 Rgd6) 24.Rd8+ Rxd8 (24...Kg7
25.Rg1+ Kh6 26.Rg8) 25.Qxd8+ Kg7
26.Rg1+ Kh6 27.Rxg8 fxe4 28.Qd2+ e3
29.Qxe3+ Qxe3+ 30.fxe3

23...c3??

23...Qg5 24.h4 (24.Nd8 Qf4 25.e5
Qxf3 26.Rg1 Qe4+ 27.Kf1 Qf5 28.e6
Kg7 (28...fxe6 29.Qd6+ Kg7 30.Qe7+
Kh6 31.Nf7+)) 24...Qf6 25.Qd6+ Qxd6
26.Rxd6 Ra6 27.0-0 Kg7 28.Rfd1 c3
29.b3

24.Rd7 Kg???

24...Rh8 25.Rxf7+

**25.Rxf7+ Kh6 26.Rxh7+ Kg5 27.h4+
Kf6 28.Qf7#**

1-0

**Jason Cigan (2215) –
Pratik Thorwe (1974) [C10]**

Oregon Class Championships
Masters/Exp (R5), November 2, 2025
[Pratik Thorwe]

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7
5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 7.c3 Be7**

7...c5 8.Ne5 (8.Bb5+ Bd7 9.Bxd7+ Qxd7
10.Ne5 Qd5 11.Qa4+ Nd7 12.Be3 cxd4
13.Nxd7 Qxd7 14.Qxd4 Qxd4 15.Bxd4
Bd6 16.0-0-0 Ke7 17.g3 f6) 8...cxd4
(8...Qd5 9.Bb5+ Nd7)

8.Bd3 0-0

8...b6 9.Ne5 Bb7 (9...0-0 10.Nc6 Qd6
11.Qf3 Bd7 12.Nxe7+ Qxe7 13.Qg3)
10.Bb5+ c6 11.Bxc6+ Bxc6 12.Nxc6
Qd5 13.Qf3 Qxf3 14.gxf3 Bd6; 8...c5
9.dxc5 Qc7 10.b4 0-0 11.Bb2 e5 12.Qc2
Rd8 13.Bc4 Bg4 14.0-0 Bxf3 15.gxf3 b6
16.cxb6



L-R: Jason Cigan, Pratik Thorwe. Photo credit: Lilly Tang.

9.Qe2 b6

9...c5 10.Be3 (10.dxc5 Qc7 11.Be3

a) 11.Bg5 Qxc5 12.0-0-0 h6 13.h4 b5
(13...Rd8) 14.Bxf6 Bxf6 15.Qe4;

b) 11.b4 b6 12.Qe5 Qd7 13.Nd4 bxc5
14.bxc5 Bb7 15.Ba3 Bxg2 16.Rg1
Bc6 17.Bc1 Rfd8 18.Bg5 Kf8; 10...b6
11.0-0-0

10.Bg5 Bb7 11.0-0-0 h6

11...Qd5 12.Kb1 c5 13.c4 Qd6 14.dxc5
Qxc5 15.Ne5

12.h4 Qd5?!

12...c5 13.dxc5 Qc7 14.cxb6 (14.Ne5
bxc5 15.Bc2 Rfd8 16.Bf4 Qb6 (16...c4
17.Qxc4 Qxc4 18.Nxc4 Bxg2 19.Rhg1

Rxd1+ 20.Kxd1 Bf3+ 21.Kc1 h5))
14...axb6 15.Kb1; 12...Bxf3 13.Qxf3 (13.
gxf3 hxg5 14.hxg5 Nd5 15.Bh7+ (15.
Qe4 g6) 15...Kh8 16.Be4+ Kg8 17.f4
(17.Rh8+ Kxh8 18.Rh1+ Kg8 19.Bh7+)
17...Nxf4) 13...Qd5 14.Bxf6

a) 14.Qxd5 Nxd5 15.Bxe7 Nxe7 16.Be4
Rad8;

b) 14.Qg3 hxg5 15.hxg5 Ne4 16.Qh3
Bxg5+ 17.Kb1 Bh6;

c) 14.Qe3 Ng4 15.Qg3 hxg5 16.Qxg4
gxh4 17.g3 (17.Kb1 Qg5 18.Qe4 g6 19.f4
Qg4 20.g3 h3 21.Be2 Qf5 22.Qxf5 exf5
23.Rxh3 Kg7 24.Rdh1 Rh8 25.Rxh8 Rxh8
26.Rxh8 Kxh8 27.Kc2);

14...Qxf3 15.gxf3 Bxf6

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13.c4 Qa5



Position after 13...Qa5

14.Ne5

14.Bxh6 gxf6 15.Ne5 Qxa2 16.Qe3 Kg7 17.Rh3 (17.d5 Qa1+ 18.Bb1 Rh8 19.Rh3 Rae8 20.Qd4 Bc8 21.Rf3) 17...Qa1+ 18.Bb1 Be4; 14.Qe3 b5 15.cxb5 Qxa2 16.Ne5 c5 (16...Qa1+ 17.Kc2 Qa4+ 18.Kb1 Bd5 19.Bxh6 Qa2+ 20.Kc1 Bb3 (20...Ne8) 21.Bb1)

14...Rfd8

14...Qxa2 15.Ng4 (15.Rh3 Rfd8 16.Rg3 Rxd4 17.Bxh6 Bf8 18.Bh7+ Kxh7 19.Rxd4 gxf6 20.Nxf7 Qa5 21.Ne5 Bg7 22.Qd3+ Kh8 23.Qg6 Nh5 24.Rg5 hxg5 25.Qxh5+ Kg8 26.Qf7+ Kh8 27.hxg5 Qe1+ 28.Rd1 Qxd1+ 29.Kxd1 Bxe5 30.g6 Bg7 31.Qxe6 Bxg2 32.f4) 15...hxg5 (15...Qa1+ 16.Bb1 (16.Kc2 Qa4+ 17.Kb1 Nxg4 18.Bxe7 Rfe8 19.Bg5 f5 20.Bc2 Qc6 21.f3 hxg5 22.hxg5 Rad8 23.Rh4) 16...hxg5 17.Nxf6+ Bxf6) 16.Nxf6+ Bxf6 17.Bh7+ Kxh7 18.hxg5+ Kg8 19.gxf6 Rfd8 20.Qg4 g6 21.Qh4

15.Bb1 b5 16.c5

16.cxb5 Bd5 (16...Rd5 17.Rh3 Qxb5 18.Bd3 Qe8 (18...Qa4 19.Bc4 hxg5 20.hxg5 Rxe5 21.Rdh1 Nh7 22.Rxh7 Bxg5+ 23.Kb1 Be4+ 24.Bd3 Bxd3+ 25.Qxd3 Bh6 26.dxe5 Qf4 27.R7xh6 gxf6 28.Qe3 Qxe3 29.fxe3) 19.Be3) 17.Bd2 Qa4 18.Rh3 Bxa2 (18...c6 19.bxc6 Rac8

20.Rc3 Bb4 21.g4 Bxc3 22.Bxc3 Bxc6 23.g5 Nd5) 19.Bc2 Qxd4 20.Nc6 Qc5 21.Rc3 Qd6 22.Bxh6

16...Bd5?

16...Rd5 17.c6 Ba6 18.Qe3 b4 19.Bxh6 b3 20.axb3 Bd6 21.Qg5 Ne8 22.f4 Rxd4 23.Rxd4 Qc5+ 24.Rc4 Qe3+ 25.Kc2 Qe2+ 26.Kc1 (26.Kc3 Bxc4 27.Nxc4 Be7 28.Qxe7 Nf6) 26...Qe3+; 16...Qb4 17.c6 Ba6 18.Qd3 Qa4

17.Rh3 b4 18.Bd2

18.Bxh6 b3 19.Rg3 bxa2 20.Rxg7+ Kf8 21.Rh7+ Kg8 22.Rg7+ Kf8 23.Bxa2 Qxa2 24.Qb5 Be4 (24...c6 25.Rxf7+ Ke8 26.Qb7)

18...Qa4

18...Bxc5 19.dxc5 Qxc5+ 20.Bc2 Bxa2 21.Rg3 b3 22.Rc3 Qf8 23.Bxb3 Bxb3 24.Rxb3 Rd5



Position after 18...Qa4

19.Rg3?!

19.Bxh6 Kf8 20.Qe3 Bd6 21.Bxg7+ Kxg7 22.Qg5+ Kf8 23.Qxf6 Bxe5 24.Qxe5 Bxa2

19...Bxa2?!

19...Kf8 20.Rxg7 (20.Bxh6 gxf6 21.Qe3 Bd6 (21...Bxa2 22.Qxh6+ Ke8 23.Qh8+ Bf8 24.Qxf6) 22.Qxh6+ (22.cxd6 cxd6 23.Qxh6+ Ke7 24.Ng6+ Kd7 25.Qg7 Kc7 26.Qxf7+ Nd7 27.Kd2 Qb5 28.Kel)

22...Ke7 23.cxd6+ cxd6 24.Ng6+ Kd7 25.Qg7) 20...Kxg7 21.Bxh6+ Kxh6 22.Qe3+ (22.Qd2+ Kg7 23.Qg5+ Kf8 24.Qh6+ Ke8 25.Qh8+ Bf8 26.Qxf6 Rd7 27.h5 Bxa2 28.Bc2 Bb3 29.Bxb3 Qxb3 30.h6 Qd5 31.h7 Qe4 32.h8Q b3) 22...Kg7 23.Qg5+ Kf8 24.Qh6+ Ke8 25.Qh8+ Bf8 26.Qxf6 Rd7 27.h5 b3 28.a3 Bxg2

20.Bxh6 Bf8



Position after 20...Bf8

21.Bg5?!

21.Qf3 Bxb1 22.Kxb1 Kh7 23.b3 (23.Qd3+ Kh8 (23...Kg8 24.Qf3 Kh7 25.Bg5 Be7 26.Nc6 b3 27.Nxe7 Qa2+ 28.Kc1 Qa1+ 29.Kd2 Rxd4+ 30.Kel Rxd1+ 31.Qxd1 Qxd1+ 32.Kxd1 Ne4 33.Rxb3 Nxc5 34.Rb5)) 23...Qe8 24.Bg5 Nd5 25.Bxd8 f6 26.Bxc7 Nxc7

21...Bxb1 22.Bxf6?

22.Kxb1 b3 (22...Ne4 23.Rgd3 Nc3+ 24.bxc3 bxc3 25.Qa2 Rdb8+ 26.Kal Qxa2+ 27.Kxa2 f6 28.Bf4 fxe5 29.Bxe5 Rb2+ 30.Ka3 Rxf2 31.Rxc3 Rxg2 32.Bxc7 Rc8 33.Be5) 23.Bxf6 Qa2+ 24.Kc1 Qa1+ 25.Kd2 Rxd4+ 26.Kel Rxd1+ 27.Qxd1 Qxb2 28.Nd7

22...Bf5

22...Qa1 23.Kd2 (23.Bxd8 Rxd8 24.Qe3 Bxc5 25.dxc5 (25.Nc6 Rd7 26.Kd2 Bxd4 (26...Bd6 27.Ne5 Qxb2+ 28.Kel Bxe5 29.Qxe5 Bg6))) 23...Qxb2+ 24.Kel

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Qxe2+ 25.Kxe2 Bc2 26.Rd2

23.Bxd8 Rxd8 24.Rgd3

24.Qc4 Qa1+ 25.Kd2 Qxb2+ 26.Ke1 a5
27.Re3 Qc2 28.Qb5 0-1 Black wins.

24...b3 25.g4 Bxd3 26.Qxd3 Bxc5
27.Nf3 Bb4 28.Ne5 Rxd4 29.Qb1 Qc6+

29...Rd6 30.Rxd6 Bxd6 31.Nd3 Qe4

0-1

Mike Morris (2002) –
Leonardo Wang (1939) [C95]

Oregon Class Championships
Masters/Exp (R4), November 2, 2025
[Mike Morris and Wilson Gibbins]

Annotations from Mike Morris are preceded by an “MM—”, all others by Wilson Gibbins. So don’t blame Mike for the tedious engine analysis—that is all Wilson’s fault.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6
5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 0-0
9.h3 Nb8

The Breyer Variation of the Ruy Lopez. It often leads to long maneuvering games. That said, both players need to stay alert for tactics which may appear later in the game, just as the players’ time starts to run short.

10.d4 Nbd7 11.Nbd2 Bb7 12.Bc2 c5
13.d5 Qc7

This seems natural. 13...c4 is the most popular move, creating a square on c5 for Black to post a knight.

14.Nf1

14.c4 would stop Black’s c5–c4 plan.

14...c4

Black does not give White a second chance.

15.Ng3 g6 16.Bh6 Rfb8 17.Nh2 Bf8 18.

Be3 a5 19.Rf1 b4 20.f4 Bh6 21.Qd2
bxc3



Position after 21...bxc3

This seems logical, opening a file for Black’s rooks to provide a queenside distraction to White’s kingside buildup.

21...b3!? might generate even more open queenside lines and a bigger distraction. 22.axb3? (22.fx5 is best, but Black has some surprising responses that lead to equal-ish but not drawish looking positions. 22...Qb6 (22...Qc5 23.Bxc5 Bxd2 24.Bxd6 bxc2) A position that looks unbalanced to me that Stockfish calls equal.; 22...Bxe3+ 23.Qxe3 Nxd5 24.exd5 bxc2 is also roughly equal.) 23.Bxb6 Bxd2 24.axb3 cxb3 25.Bxb3 is roughly equal despite both sides having some loose material.) 22...cxb3 23.Bd3 (23.Bxb3? Ba6 and the bishop on b3 and rook on f1 are both under attack.) 23...Ba6 24.Bxa6 Rxa6 25.fx5 Bxe3+ 26.Qxe3 dxe5.

22.bxc3 exf4 23.Bxf4± Bg7

Best. 23...Bxf4? 24.Rxf4 and White’s kingside attacking chances are much more relevant than Black’s control of the outpost on e5.

24.Rf2± Re8 25.Raf1

With all White’s pieces aimed at Black’s king and Mike Morris controlling White’s pieces, you can expect fireworks soon.

25...Nc5 26.Re1

26.Bh6! Nfxe4 27.Bxe4 Nxe4 28.Nxe4 Rxe4 29.Bxg7 Kxg7 30.Qg5! Rf8 31.Ng4 and Black must give up the exchange for the knight on g4 to stop White’s invasion on either f6 or h6.

26...Ra6

26...h5! prevents White’s knight from reaching g4 though White still stands better based on his kingside attack.

27.Bg5 Nfd7 28.Ng4 Ne5 29.Nf6+ Bxf6
30.Rxf6 Rb6 31.Ref1 Rb2 32.Bh4 Ncd7



Position after 32...Ncd7

33.Qh6?

33.Nh5! Rxc2 34.Qxc2 gxh5 35.Qd2 Nc5 36.Qg5+ Ng6 37.Rxf7 Qxf7 38.Rxf7 Kxf7 39.Qf6+ Kg8 40.Qxd6 and Black’s rook and two pieces are not sufficiently coordinated to fend off White’s hyperactive queen.

33...Rxc2

Equal, despite Black’s extra piece. Sometimes White has a perpetual, sometimes Black.

34.R6f5=

Stockfish says 34.Nh5; 34.Nf5 gxf5 35.R6xf5 f6! 36.Bxf6 Nxf6 37.Rg5+ Ng6 38.Rxg6+ hxg6 39.Rxf6 Qb6+ 40.Kh2 Rxg2+ 41.Kxg2 Qb2+ with a perpetual; 34.Rxf7; 34.Kh2; and 34.Kh1 are all

equal.

34...f6! 35.Rh5?

35.Nh5 gxh5 36.Bxf6 Nxf6 37.Rg5+ Ng6! 38.Rxf6 Qg7 39.Rg5+ hxg6 40.Rxg6 Re7 41.Rxg7+ Rxg7 42.Qe6+ and White's hyperactive queen single-handedly holds the draw with a perpetual.

35...Nf8?

Back to equal. 35...Re7! ♣

36.Bxf6! Bc8?

36...gxh5 37.Bxe5 dxe5 38.Nxh5 Qe7 39.Nf6+ Kh8 40.Nxe8 Ng6! 41.Rf6 Qxe8 42.Rxg6 Qxg6 43.Qf8+ Qg8 44.Qf6+ Qg7 45.Qd8+=

37.Rg5+- Re7 38.Bxe5 Rf7 39.Bf6 Qb6+ 40.Kh1±

40.Bd4+-; 40.Kh2+-

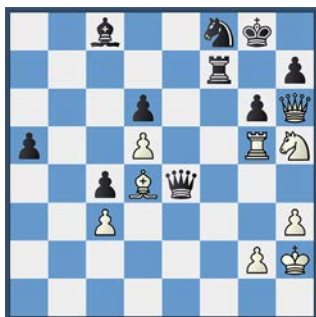
40...Rf2

40...Qb2 41.Nh5!±

41.Rxf2 Qxf2 42.Bd4 Qxa2 43.Nh5

43.Kh2!

43...Qb1+ 44.Kh2 Qxe4



Position after 44...Qxe4

44...Qb7 45.Nf6+ Rxf6 46.Bxf6

45.Rg3

MM—Missing 45.Qg7+! Rxg7 46.Nf6+ Kh8 47.Nxe4

45...Qf5 46.Rg5 Qf1 47.Rg3 Qf5 48.Rg5

MM—With both of us under a minute, a draw was agreed.

½-½

Moshe Rachmuth (1894) – Alan Rhoades (1824) [B06]
Oregon Class Championships
Class A (R4), November 2, 2025
[Moshe Rachmuth]

On Friday, two days before this game, I saw a fantastic game, Short-Ljubojevic, Amsterdam, 1991. Short sacrificed a knight and followed with highly accurate moves to eventually enter a winning endgame some 12 moves later. On Saturday, I felt inspired, and tried very hard to produce a brilliant attack against Roger Hanson, ending up losing my queen for a rook and a bishop. I was lucky to survive after my opponent blundered in time-trouble. On Sunday, I entered the tournament hall telling myself, “Remember, you are not Nigel Short. Try not to hang any of the bigger pieces. That should be enough.”

1.f4

The move of a player who knows they are not world-champion material.

1...g6 2.e4 Bg7

2...d6

3.d4 d6

3...d5 would be the only option to get into a line I prepared. With 3...d6, I was out of my opening preparation. I had a feeling so was Alan. I decided on three rules to go by: 1.) Play healthy moves; 2.) It's OK to lose a pawn; and 3.) It's not OK to lose a piece. The only challenge with this rule was to judge what makes a move “healthy.”

4.Nf3 Nh6?!±

4...c5 leads to equality according to Stockfish.

4...c5 5.d5 Nf6 6.Nc3 0-0 7.Bd3 c4 8.Bxc4 b5 9.Nxb5 Nxe4 10.0-0 Qb6+ 11.Nbd4 Nf6 12.Qe2 Bb7 13.Kh1 Qc5 14.f5 Bxd5 15.Bxd5 Qxd5 16.b3 Nc6=

5.c4?!±

5.Nc3 seemed

“healthier” (developing a piece) but the wall of four pawns attracted me: if the pawns are in the front, I can only lose a pawn, not a piece.

5.Nc3±

5...c5 6.d5 0-0 7.Nc3



Position after 7.Nc3

7...Bg4?!±

Stockfish shouts for 7...f5, which makes a lot of sense after Black played ...Nh6. After 7...Bg4, I immediately wanted to play 8.h3 (the best move, according to Stockfish) and win the bishop-pair. I decided it was not healthy for two reasons: it opens the e1–h4 diagonal before I have castled and puts my queen in the center (after 8...Bxf3 9.Qxf3) too early. When I had decided not to think too much about the opening, I accepted that I might miss some early big advantages, so there you are.

7...f5 8.Bd3=

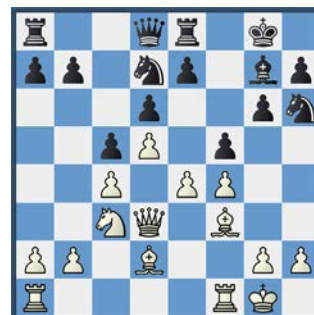
8.Be2?!±

8.h3 Bxc3+ 9.bxc3 Bxf3 (9...Bd7 10.g4) 10.Qxf3 Nd7 11.Be2 Kg7 12.Rb1 Qc7 13.g4

8...Nd7?!±

8...e5! This was the moment to gain some space in the center.

9.0-0 Bxf3 10.Bxf3 f5 11.Qd3 Re8 12. Bd2



Position after 12.Bd2

NM BERTRAND WAN
USCF Rating 2205
Shared 1st in Master 2200+ Section at WA Class Championships 2024
2023 WA State Chess960 Champion
2023 WA State G60 Champion
Contact for lessons
ranbw@uw.edu

White keeps playing those “healthy” moves and the rooks are now connected. I was willing to lose a pawn after 12...fxe4 13.Nxe4.

12...Rb8

12...fxe4 13.Nxe4 Bxb2 14.Rae1 This was my plan. It’s not ideal play by White but would have been enough for a +1.9 according to Stockfish.

13.Rae1

I was still willing to playing according to my rule that losing a pawn is fine. My only piece that is not fully happy is the bishop on d2, but even that piece has a future after moving to c3.

13...Nf6

“Is e4–e5 a healthy move?” The answer is yes, it’s a close-to-winning move. During the game I thought I might be going too far with the pawns.

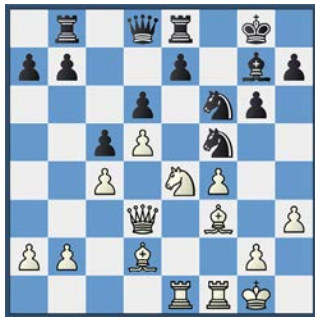
13...fxe4; 13...fxe4 14.Nxe4 Bxb2 15.Ng5 and the knight would soon land on e6. Then White would play Bc3, exchange the dark-squares bishops and put a lot of pressure on g7.

14.h3?!±

14.e5 Nd7 I was expecting dxe5 here. (14...dxe5 15.fxe5 Nfg4 (15...Nd7) 16.Bf4 Threatening h3. 16...Nf7 I “saw” this far and thought the e5 pawn would

fall, but of course White is winning after 17.Bxg4 fxe4 18.Qg3 and Black is pushed off the board. 17.e6 also keeps a nice edge. 17.Bxg4 fxe4 18.Qg3) 15.e6 Nf6 16.h3

14...fxe4 15.Nxe4 Nf5



Position after 15...Nf5

Here was my longest thinking of the game (12 minutes). I thought about 16.Ng5 (Stockfish: the best move, +2.6) and 16.g4 (Stockfish: the second-best move, +2.3) but thought to myself, “Don’t weaken g3, don’t open your king, just keep improving your pieces. Remember that you are not Nigel Short.” So, I made a move that was just “not terrible.”

16.Bc3?!±

16.Ng5 b5 17.b3 Nd4 18.Bc3 Qc8 19.Bd1 Qf5 20.Qd2 a5 21.Bxd4 cxd4 22.Bc2 is

the beginning of the computer line.

16...Nxe4 17.Bxe4 Nd4?!+-

17...Rf8 would have demanded me to decide whether or not I had the courage to play g4 and start a pawn storm in front of my own king. White is winning but I would at least have to take some risk. After 17...Nd4, I thought, “18.f5 cannot be anything other than winning. It opens lines for the f1 rook, for the light-squares bishop, and for the queen.” 17...Rf8 18.g4 Nd4 19.f5 gxf5 (19...g5 20.h4) 20.Bxf5 Nxf5 21.Rxf5 Bxc3 22.bxc3

18.f5 g5

18...Rf8 19.fxe6 h6 I thought this would be the best for Black. Stockfish says it’s still winning after 20.Rf7.; 18...gxf5 19.Bxf5 Nxf5 20.Rxf5 I thought this would have to be a winning attack because White has the rook, the queen and the bishop in the attack against the weak duo of the g7 bishop and h7 pawn. Stockfish agrees. 20...Bxc3 21.Rh5

19.f6 Bxf6?+-



Position after 19...Bxf6

A happy moment. With the pawn still stuck on e7. There’s no way for Black to get the queen involved with the defense. 19...exf6 20.Bxh7+ Kf8 White is winning but there is neither mate nor material advantage. The game is still long ahead of us.

20.Bxh7+ Kh8 21.Qg6 Rf8

22.Bg8 is a cute way to finish the game, but I didn’t see it.

22.Qh6 Bg7

The only thing that bothered me was that Alan seemed very calm. I had never met him, so I didn’t know if he was seeing something I wasn’t. Two moves looked very winning: 23.Qh5 and Bxd4. Was he seeing that only one of them is winning? After seven minutes of deliberating I decided to randomly choose one of them.



L-R: Dale Bradley, Ekam Sardar. Photo credit: Lilly Tang.



L-R: Nikhil Astekar, Alexander Curteman. Photo credit: Lilly Tang.

(Stockfish: both are easily winning).

23.Qh5 b6 24.Bg6+

Mate in two.

24.Bg6+ Bh6 25.Qxh6+ Kg8 26.Qh7#

1-0

**Danielle Nicholas (1164) –
Chris Dewey (1020) [B90]**
Oregon Class Championships
Class D (R2), November 1, 2025
[Danielle Nicholas]

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6
5.Bd3 a6 6.Nc3 e5 7.Nf3 Be7 8.0-0 b5
9.a3 Bb7 10.Nd5?**

This was my first moment of concern. If Black had replied with 10...Bxd5 11.exd5, the pawn push on e4 would have forked my f3-knight and my d3-bishop, supported perfectly by his knight on f6.

Luckily for me, Chris chose:

10...Nbd7

And my pieces lived to blunder another day.

**11.Nxe7 Qxe7 12.Re1 0-0 13.b4 Rac8
14.Bb2**

This was awkward at best, self-sabotage

at worst. The bishop wandered to b2 and immediately started questioning its career choices. The healthier plan was the direct 14.a4 bxa4 15.Rxa4 challenging Black's queenside. Instead, I chose passive development and soon paid the positional tax.

**14...Nb6 15.Qe2 Rc7 16.Nd2 Qe6 17.f3
Rfc8 18.Rac1 Nh5 19.g3 g6 20.Rf1
Qa2**



Position after 20...Qa2

His queen landing on a2 felt a little spooky and demanded precision from me.

21.Rb1 Rxc2??!

Black sacrifices material; the initiative is heating up. He had a comfortable position, but decided to steer the game into sharp,

unclear territory.

22.Bxc2 Rxc2 23.Qe3!=

Qe3! is strong because it immediately targets the knight on b6 while also removing the pin on Nd2, allowing White to meet the potential knight threat on c4. If Black captures on b2, White can reply with Rxb2; after ...Qxb2, Qxb6, ...Qxd2, and Qxb7, the reciprocating captures dissolve Black's pressure on the second rank. White would remain up the exchange for the pawn.

23...Na4 24.Bc1 Nc3 25.Rb3 Na4

25...Ne2+! 26.Qxe2 Qxb3=

**26.Rd3 Qe6 27.Qa7 Bc8 28.Qb8 Nc3
29.Rxd6 Qh3**

Black builds pressure on the kingside and the position looks dangerous over the board. The turning point.

30.Rd8+ Kg7 31.Qxe5+!

A quiet but targeted infiltration that sets up the key tactic.

31...Kh6



Position after 31...Kh6

32.Nb3+!

My favorite move of the game. The discovery forces Black to respond with ...Rxc1 to avoid immediate mate. After the recapture Nxc1, White wins the exchange and secures control of e2, stopping the knight check. This single idea neutralizes the threat and flips the momentum.

32...Rxc1 33.Nxc1 Qg2+

For a moment I wondered if I had miscalculated and whether my king was about to be ensnared by his knights. Was my fate sealed? Fortunately, not. Chris gave the check with a smile.

34.Kxg2

And he promptly resigned, a lighthearted finish to a sharp and lively game.

1-0

Charles Ewel (1201) – Sai Pryanka Seethamraju (1101) [C56]
Oregon Class Championships
Class E (R5), November 2, 2025
[Charles Ewel]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4 Nf6 5.e5 d5 6.Bb5 Ne4 7.Nxd4 Bd7 8.Bxc6 bxc6 9.0-0 c5

This was the first move that took me out of book. The moves I was prepared for here were 9...Bc5 10.f3 Ng5 11.Be3 Bb6 12.f4; 9...Be7

10.Ne2

10.f3 cxd4 11.fxe4 dxe4 12.Qxd4 Bc6 I considered this line as well, but I thought it was very boring and I didn't see much advantage here; 10.Nb3 c6 (10...Bc6? 11.Na5) 11.c4 dxc4 12.N3d2 Nxd2 13.Nxd2 According to the notes in my repertoire book this is what I should have played against c5, as the tripled pawns are impossible to defend. I didn't consider Nb3 as a candidate move, it seems it is good because it forces black to defend with c6 and not Bc6 as Bc6 is well met by Na5.

10...c6 11.f3 Ng5 12.f4 Ne4

It's funny that f3, f4 actually saves us a tempi compared to going f4 on move 11.

13.Nbc3

I was fine with Black damaging my structure with ...Nxc3 since now the open b-file doesn't matter as much and I can use the doubled c-pawns to attack Black's center.

13...Bg4

This seems like it loses a pawn since after the line I played unpins the e2-knight with check and I don't see a good way for Black to defend the e4-pawn after that.

14.Nxe4 dxe4 15.Qxd8+ Rxd8 16.Ng3 Bd1 17.Rf2

17.c3 Bc2 18.Be3 I thought about something like this, but after ...Bd3 by my opponent it might be rather tricky to dislodge the bishop as we don't have a light-squared-bishop, and that gives my opponent time to castle.

17...Bg4 18.Be3 Be7 19.Nxe4 Rd5 20.c4

I recognized that this move gave up control of d3, but thought it was worth it to win a second pawn.

20...Rd3 21.Bxc5 Bxc5 22.Nxc5 Rd4 23.b3 0-0

I thought for a while here, I'm up two

pawns, but I am a little worried about my opponent doubling up on the d-file. I played h3 both to give myself luft and to break my opponents control of d1, but in retrospect that may have been a mistake as I think the bishop could be stronger on f5.

24.h3

Somewhere in the upcoming sequence my game goes bad, and I go from winning to drawn or possibly worse on move 30. 24.Nb7 prevents Rd8 and prepares Nd6 which seems like a good square for the knight. I also maybe threaten Na5 hitting the c6-pawn, which if advanced, gives me the d5 square as well.

24...Bf5 25.Nb7 f6 26.Nd6 Be6



Position after 26...Be6

27.c5??

I missed that this move gave up control of d5. I saw fxe5 fxe5 Rxf2 Kxf2 Rd2+ but figured my king was just getting more active after Kg3, I missed that Black had the strong follow up of ...Bd5. I think 27.Raf1, if I had played it ever in this sequence from move 24–27, would have saved my advantage, it gets this rook more active and makes it so that ...Rxf2 doesn't have to be met with Kf2, giving Black access to my second rank with check. 27...fxe5 28.fxe5 Rxf2 29.Rxf2 Rd1+ 30.Kh2 Now I am doing much better, of course Re1 does seem a bit annoying, but it turns out I can tactically defend the e-pawn with Nf5 30...Re1 31.Nf5 Rxe5 (31...g6 32.Ne7+ Kg7 33.Nxc6) 32.Ne7+ Kh8 33.Rf8+; 27.Re1 fxe5 28.fxe5 Rxf2 29.Kxf2 Rd2+ 30.Re2 This is also good, possibly better, as now Rd2+ is met with Re2 controlling my own second rank and I don't need to do tactics with the knight to defend e5.

27...fxe5 28.fxe5 Rxf2 29.Kxf2 Rd2+ 30.Kg3 Rd5

30...Bd5 31.Rg1

a) 31.Kf4 I think I would have played this over Rg1, simply because having that rook be passive just seems like a non-starter. After Rxc2 maybe I can play Re1 and start pushing the e-pawn, which is essentially what I did in the game. 31...Rxc2 32.Re1 Be6 33.b4 Rxa2 34.b5 cxb5 35.Nxb5 Rc2 36.Nd4 Rc4 37.Re4 Bd5 (37...Rxc5) 38.c6 Bxe4 (38...Bxc6 39.Nxc6 Rxc6 40.e6 Kf8 41.Ra4 a6) 39.Kxe4 a5 40.Kd5 Rc1 41.Ne6 a4 (41...Rd1+ 42.Kc5 a4 43.c7 Rc1+ 44.Kb4 Kf7 (44...Rc6 45.Kb5 Rc1 46.Nc5) 45.Nc5) 42.Nc5 a3 43.c7;

b) 31.Re1 Rxc2+ 32.Kf4;

31...Rxa2 This looks pretty miserable, we're now only up one pawn and our rook is tied to the defense of g2.

31.Re1 Rxc5 32.Re2

Now I feel like I am back in control, the second rank is secure and I can try to push my e-pawn.

32...h5

I think this is where the game slipped away from my opponent, now my king can infiltrate and help the e-pawn promote. 32...h6

33.Kf4 Kh7 34.Kg5 Rc3 35.Kxh5 g6+

35...Rg3 I was worried about getting checkmated here when my opponent declined to protect their h-pawn. But I saw that on h4 the h3 pawn protected my king from rook checks, and I had my knight currently controlling the f7-square to protect from a bishop check so I couldn't find a mate for black here.

36.Kg5 Rg3+ 37.Kf6 Bd5 38.e6 Bxg2 39.e7 Rf3+ 40.Kg5 Rg3+ 41.Kf4 Rf3+ 42.Kg4 Rd3 43.e8Q Bf3+ 44.Kf4 Bxe2 45.Qxe2 Rxd6 46.Qe7+ Kh6 47.Qxd6 Kh5 48.Qf6 Kh6 49.Qh8#

1-0

Yian Lin (1687) –

Merrick Liu (1479) [A48]

Oregon Class Championships
Class B (R1), November 1, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

White plays solid chess and Black's King's Indian aggressive predilections lead him to create sufficient weaknesses for White to exploit for the win.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bf4 Bg7 4.h3 d6 5.e3 Bf5 6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 Re8 8.c4 h6 9.Nc3 g5 10.Bh2 Nbd7 11.Rc1 e5

[Diagram Top of Next Page]



Position after 11...e5

When I have played these positions with Black, I am undeservedly proud of myself whenever I am able to block White's dark squared bishop with pawns on e5, d6, and c7. But I generally get carried away "attacking" by advancing my pawn from e5 to e4 and re-awakening White's Bishop to support White's queenside pawn advance.

12.b4 Ne4 13.Nxe4 Bxe4 14.Nd2 Bh7 15.Nb3 Rb8 16.Bf3 e4?

So tempting, gaining space for Black's attack on the kingside and time on the bishop. But it is exactly what White wants. 16...exd4 17.Nxd4 Ne5 is roughly equal.

17.Be2 Nf6 18.a4 b6 19.b5 Bf5 20.c5

White's queenside attack is much more effective than Black's kingside attack. White will open files and his rooks will invade. This is a rare game where White wins without needing tactics, only logical positional moves.

20...Rb7 21.cxd6 cxd6

From the once proud string of pawns on e5, d6, and c7, only the pawn on d6 remains, as a weakness to drop off on move 37.

22.d5 Nh7 23.Nd4 Bg6 24.Nc6 Qd7 25.Qb3 Bf8 26.Qb4 Rc7 27.a5 Rb7 28.axb6 axb6 29.Ra1 Rc8 30.Ra6 Qc7 31.Rfa1 Qd7 32.Rc1 Re8 33.Rca1 Rc8 34.Ra8 Rbc7 35.R1a6 Rb7 36.Rxc8 Qxc8 37.Bxd6 Qd7 38.Bxf8 Nxf8 39.Qd4 Qd6 40.Rxb6 Rxb6 41.Qxb6 Kh7 42.Qd4 Nd7 43.b6 Nxb6 44.Qxb6 Qxd5 45.Nd4 Qd7 46.Qc6 Qe7 47.Qd5 Qf6 48.Bd1 Qb6 49.Bc2 Kg8 50.Bxe4 Bxe4 51.Qxe4 Qc7 52.Qc6 Qd8 53.Qxh6 f6 54.Nf5 Kf7 55.Qh7+ Ke6 56.Nd4+ Kd6 57.Qf5 Qe7 58.Qc2 Qd7 59.Qb3 Ke7 60.Qb5 Qc7 61.Qc6 Qxc6 62.Nxc6+ Ke6 63.Nd4+ Kf7 64.g4 Kg6 65.Kg2 Kf7 66.Kg3 Kg6 67.h4 gxh4+

68.Kxh4 Kf7 69.g5 fxe5+ 70.Kxg5 Ke7 71.f4 Kf7 72.f5 Ke7 73.Kg6 Kf8 74.f6 Kg8 75.f7+ Kf8 76.Ne6+ Ke7 77.f8Q+ Kxe6 78.Qf5+ Ke7 79.Qf6+ Kd7 80.e4 Kc7 81.e5 Kb7 82.Qd6 Ka7 83.e6 Kb7 84.e7 Ka7 85.e8R Kb7 86.Re7+ Kc8 87.Qc7#

1-0

Scott Christensen (969) – Alex Curteman (916) [B30]
Oregon Class Championships
Class F (R3), November 1, 2025

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 e6 4.a3 Bd6 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.h3 0-0 7.0-0 b6 8.Re1 Ne5 9.Ba2 Ba6 10.d4 Nxf3+ 11.Qxf3 Be7 12.e5 Ne8 13.Qg3 cxd4 14.Ne4 d6 15.exd6 Nxd6 16.Bh6 Nf5 17.Qb3 Nxb6 18.g4 Rc8 19.Rad1 Bc4 20.Qxc4 Rxc4 21.Bxc4 e5 22.c3 Kh8 23.Ng3 Qc7 24.Bb5 Rd8 25.cxd4 exd4 26.Bd3 g6 27.Re2 Kg7 28.Rde1 Bh4 29.Ne4 Re8 30.g5 Nf5 31.Nf6 Rxe2 32.Rxe2 Qc1+ 33.Kh2 Qf4+ 34.Kh1 Qf3+ 35.Kg1 Qxd3 36.Re8 Bxg5 37.Ng4 Qxh3 38.Ne5 Nh4 39.Nf3 Qg2#

0-1

News Flash:

Daniel He becomes Washington State's newest FIDE Master!

By Josh Sinanan

Congratulations to Daniel He, a data scientist from Redmond (Washington), who recently became Washington State's newest FIDE Master!

Daniel surpassed the 2300 FIDE and 2400 USCF thresholds as a result of scoring six points from nine games in the 19th Annual SPICE Cup, an International Norm tournament co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and the Washington Chess Federation November 19-24, 2025 at the Bellevue Hilton.



Washington Junior Open

CHESS TOURNAMENT

Saturday, January 17, 2026

Highland Middle School

15027 NE Bel/Red Road, Bellevue, WA 98007



CLASSICAL SECTIONS

Open 1600+, Rising U1600, Challengers U1200

A 4-round G/50; +5 Swiss in three sections. Longer time control for intermediate to advanced players. Players rated 1500+ and 1100+ may play up into Open and Rising U1600 sections, respectively, for an additional \$20. Rounds: 9:15am, 11:15am, Lunch, 1:30pm, 3:30pm. Awards ~ 5:45pm. Armageddon playoff if needed to break tie for 1st Place in Open section immediately following the last round: G/10 white, G/8 black with draw odds.

RAPID SECTIONS

K-1 U700, 2-3 U800, 4-12 U900, K-3 Open, 4-12 Open

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

ALL SECTIONS

Dual NWSRS + USCF rated, with USCF membership required. Establish or update your national rating! Chess clocks will be used from the beginning in all games. Chess notation required in all sections except for K-1 U700 and 2-3 U800. All equipment is provided courtesy of WCF.

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

ENTRY FEE \$55 by Jan. 10th, \$65 after. Room for 320 players.

AWARDS

Section Prizes: Amazon e-gift cards awarded in each section: 1st – 10th: \$65-60-55-50-45-40-35-30-25-\$20.

Team Prizes: Amazon e-gift cards awarded to the top 4 players from the top 5 finishing teams (top 4 scores from same school comprise team score) across all sections: 1st – 5th: \$30-25-20-15-\$10.

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

RATING

Highest of January 2026 USCF regular or current NWSRS rating used to determine section and pairings.

WA State Scholastic Qualifier!

THE DETAILS

Online Registration:

NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration

Pay by SettleKing (Washington Chess Federation), Zelle (ID:

WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com), or mail a check to WCF.

100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Fri. Jan 16th @ 5:00pm. No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline. Unpaid players by the deadline will be withdrawn from the tournament.

Highest finishing WA resident in the Open section seeds into the Closed section of the 2027 WA Junior Invitational.

This event is a qualifier for the WA State Scholastic Chess Championships on April 25, 2026, in Tacoma. Players scoring 2.5+ points in the 4-round sections or 3.0+ points in the 5-round sections will qualify for the Championship sections of State.

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

Questions? Contact Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206.769.3757

WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

Washington Women's Championship

Rekha Sagar

The 2025 Washington Women's Championship took place October 11–12 at Hotel 116 in Bellevue. This year's tournament was divided into four sections by rating level—the Polgar Championship, the Wenjun U1300, the Koneru U700, and the Botez Casual Unrated—to provide competitive balance and harder-fought games for players of every level. The turnout was outstanding, as 57 female chess warriors from across Washington State came out to play. The field was heavily Eastside-based, but the geographic diversity was impressive, with players traveling from across Washington and Oregon.

The event was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation and organized by WCF President Josh Sinanan. WCF FIDE Liaison Mani Atikankhotchasee served as Chief Arbiter, assisted by WCF Girls & Women's Director Chouchanik (Chouchan) Airapetian, a USCF Club Tournament Director, Women FIDE Master, seven-time Washington State Women's Champion, three-time Regional Champion, and the 2012 U.S. Women's Open Champion. In addition to helping with the scholastic event, Chouchan spent hours motivating players between rounds, cheering them on, and offering encouragement—especially to first-time competitors and young girls. She also generously analyzed games for many of the women and girls throughout the weekend, helping them understand key tactical ideas, defensive planning, and deeper positional themes. Several players later credited her warm encouragement and sharp post-game insight as a key reason they were able to improve their play and finish strong in the standings.

One participant shared, *“Coach Chouchan helped me notice things I had never seen before in my games. After she reviewed my moves, I went into the*



*Washington Women's Championship group photo outside Hotel 116 in Bellevue.
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

next round with a whole new level of confidence—and I won!” A parent added, *“She didn't just teach chess skills, she made the girls feel seen, supported, and capable. That mattered just as much as the trophies.”*

WCF photographer extraordinaire Meiling Cheng was also on site capturing the key moments of the tournament, while her daughter Selina competed in the Polgar section.

The headline Polgar Championship section featured 21 players and was a tight battle through all five rounds. In the end, top seed Saiya Karamali (4.5/5) of Seattle emerged victorious and was crowned the 2025 Washington State Women's Chess Champion. A final-round draw against Selina Cheng sealed the title in dramatic fashion. For her win, Saiya receives automatic qualification into the Invitational section of the 2026 Washington State Championship, to be held next February. WCM Michelle Zhang (4.0) of Medina finished clear second, highlighted by a final-round victory against WCM Mary Kuhner.

Two players tied for first U1800 honors: Deeksha Shankaranand (3.5/5) of Redmond and Selina Cheng (3.5/5) of Seattle, while Zoe Yue Xu (2.5/5) of Bellevue and Emma Ge (2.5/5) of Sammamish shared the combined U1600/U1400 prize. The Polgar section also awarded special-category medals including biggest upset wins by Iris Runyi Zhang (rounds one and two), Saiya Karamali (round three), Mityl Biswas (round four), and Lakshana Anand (round five). Additional recognitions went to Emma Ge (Best Dressed – Saturday), Saiya Karamali (Best Dressed – Sunday), Mityl Biswas (Best Etiquette), Deeksha Shankaranand (Spreading Joy – Saturday), and Loida Guo (Spreading Joy – Sunday). The Best Mother/Daughter Team award, calculated by average TPR, was earned by Crystal Li and Emma Ge.

In the 24-player Wenjun U1300 section, Ann Jem (6.0/6) of Seattle dominated the field with a perfect score, winning all six of her games and taking home the top prize. Joyce Gui (4.5/6) earned clear second after recovering from a third-round loss and finishing strong, while a large group—including Bhuvana Vuta, Aditi Senbium, Eliza Wheeler, and Riya Sridhar—followed just behind with 4.0. Upset medals were awarded round by round to Eliza Wheeler, Siana Razmov, Kristina Velichko, Riya Sridhar, and Aadhya Telikicherla. Additional special prizes included Best Dressed (Sunday) – Ann Jem, Best Etiquette – Siana Razmov, Spreading Joy (Sunday) – Kristina Velichko, and Best Dressed (Saturday) – Mridula Raghavan & Anne Nishino.

The Koneru U700 section saw Crystal Li (5.0/5) sweep the field with a perfect score to take first place. A three-way tie for second at 3.0/5 points featured Harvintha Ramayemman, Jasmina Salimova, and Preme Tulsukhuentanat. Biggest upset wins were earned by Nora Saha in round one and Tricia Thomas in round three. Kindness and sportsmanship awards were also given to Preme Tulsukhuentanat, Akshata Tippabhotla, Nora Saha, Crystal Li, and Pearl Tulsukhuentanat.

In the most relaxed section of the tournament, the Botez Casual/Unrated, Zeynep Toprakbesti finished first with a perfect 4.0/5, followed by Rajshri Rajasekaran and Venya Krishna. Recognition medals in this section included Best Dressed, Best Etiquette, and Spreading Joy, shared among Zeynep, Rajshri, and Venya.

At the end of the weekend, many players and parents expressed heartfelt appreciation for the supportive, educational, and empowering environment created by the WCF team. Special gratitude goes to Chouchan Airapetian, whose mentorship, encouragement, and game-analysis sessions helped elevate not just results, but confidence—and reminded players that winning on the board begins with believing in yourself.

2025 Washington Womens Championship: Polgar Championship										
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total	
1	1	Saiya Karamali	1701	W21	W9	W3	W7	D4	4.5	
2	2	WCM Michelle Zhang	1854	W14	D5	W8	D3	W7	4	
3	3-6	Emel Bayrambeyli	1918	W17	W4	L1	D2	W13	3.5	
4		Selina Cheng	1698	W19	L3	W15	W13	D1	3.5	
5		Deeksha Shankaranand	1691	W12	D2	H---	D10	W11	3.5	
6		Zoe Yue Xu	1594	L9	W18	W16	H---	B---	3.5	
7	7-9	WCM Mary Kuhner	1788	W15	W11	W13	L1	L2	3	
8		Lily Deng	1720	W18	L13	W19	W19	W14	3	
9		Emma Ge	1223	W6	L1	L14	W21	W16	3	
10	10-12	Sangeeta Dhingra	2012	L13	W20	W17	D5	U--	2.5	
11		Aarya Pavan Patel	1586	W16	L7	H---	W12	L5	2.5	
12		Lakshana Anand	1226	L5	D14	W20	L11	W17	2.5	
13	13-16	Iris Runyi Zhang	1579	W10	W8	L7	L4	L3	2	
14		Kate Wong	1533	L2	D12	W9	D17	L8	2	
15		Anyi Li	1338	L7	W19	L4	L16	W21	2	
16		Mityl Biswas	1203	L11	B---	L6	W15	L9	2	
17	17-20	Loida Guo	1541	L3	W21	L10	D14	L12	1.5	
18		Aashi Mathur	1338	L8	L6	L21	W20	D19	1.5	
19		Darya Byelashova	1268	L4	L15	B---	L8	D18	1.5	
20		Elina Umi Khudiyev	1213	H---	L10	L12	L18	B---	1.5	
21	21	Alisa Rachiba	1289	L1	L17	W18	L9	L15	1	

2025 Washington Womens Championship: Wenjun U1300										
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Rd 6	Total
1	1	Ann Jem	1024	W23	W6	W2	W9	W10	W4	6
2	2	Joyce Gui	1225	W15	W13	L1	W5	W7	D6	4.5
3	3-6	Aditi Senbium	1199	L5	H---	H---	W12	W20	W11	4
4		Bhuvana Vuta	938	W24	H---	H---	W20	W11	L1	4
5		Eliza Wheeler	889	W3	H---	W16	L2	H---	W10	4
6		Riya Sridhar	856	W8	L1	W12	D13	W9	D2	4
7	7-9	Sofia Byelashova	1192	W14	L9	D20	W8	L2	W16	3.5
8		Sujatha Avula	1098	L6	D16	W21	L7	W15	W17	3.5
9		Siana Razmov	1004	W22	W7	D11	L1	L6	W18	3.5
10	10-14	Clara Dragusanu	1082	L16	W23	W15	W14	L1	L5	3
11		Emily Cai	1064	W21	W17	D9	H---	L4	L3	3
12		Luna Lin	1006	L17	W22	L6	L3	W19	W20	3
13		Ameya George	1001	W18	L2	D17	D6	D16	D14	3
14		Anne Nishino	935	L7	W24	W19	L10	D18	D13	3
15	15-18	Proud Tulsukhuentanat	927	L2	W18	L10	D23	L8	B---	2.5
16		Mridula Raghavan	837	W10	D8	L5	D17	D13	L7	2.5
17		Olga Astafyeva	779	W12	L11	D13	D16	D21	L8	2.5
18		Kristina Velichko	741	L13	L15	W23	W19	D14	L9	2.5
19	19-22	Aadya Telikicherla	1088	L20	W21	L14	L18	L12	W23	2
20		Claire Wong	856	W19	H---	D7	L4	L3	L12	2
21		Callie Jiang	834	L11	L19	L8	B---	D17	H---	2
22		Audrie Eloise Gordon	773	L9	L12	W24	H---	H---	U---	2
23	23	Josephine Armstrong	816	L1	L10	L18	D15	B---	L19	1.5
24	24	Paulina Hernandez	unr.	L4	L14	L22	U---	U---	U---	0

2025 Washington Womens Championship: Koneru U700										
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total	
1	1	Crystal Li	604	W6	W7	W3	W8	W5	5	
2	2-4	Harvintha Ramayanam	619	L8	L5	B---	W6	W3	3	
3		Jasmina Salimova	514	W9	W4	L1	W7	L2	3	
4		Preme Tulsukhuentanat	359	B---	L3	L7	W9	W8	3	
5	5-6	Lashawna Covey	655	L7	W2	D6	B---	L1	2.5	
6		Tricia Thomas	374	L1	W8	D5	L2	B---	2.5	
7	7-9	Pearl Tulsukhuentanat	460	W5	L1	W4	L3	L9	2	
8		Nora Saha	376	W2	L6	W9	L1	L4	2	
9		Akshata Tippabhotla	372	L3	B---	L8	L4	W7	2	

2025 Washington Womens Championship: Botez Casual Unrated										
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total	
1	1	Zeynep Toprakbasti	unr.	W3	W6	L2	W4	W5	4	
2	2-3	Crystal Li	604	L6	D5	W1	W3	D4	3	
3		Pearl Tulsukhuentanat	460	L1	W4	W5	L2	W6	3	
4	4	Rajshri Rajasekaran	unr.	W5	L3	W6	L1	D2	2.5	
5	5	Preme Tulsukhuentanat	359	L4	D2	L3	W6	L1	1.5	
6	6	Venya Krishna	unr.	W2	L1	L4	L5	L3	1	

Washington Women's Championship

Ian Holden, Ann Jem, Saiya Karamali, and Eliza Wheeler

The Washington Women's Championship was held on October 11-12, 2025. This is a great tournament that many female players look forward to every year. Not only do women get the rare opportunity of playing against other women, but it is a great opportunity to socialize and make new friends. This year's tournament had a record turnout of over fifty players, and it included U700 and unrated sections, which were great to introduce new players to tournament chess.

In this article, we discuss the experiences of the winner of the open tournament (Saiya Karamali, she/her), the U1300 champion (Ann Jem, she/they), a U1300 third place finisher (Eliza Wheeler, she/her), and a spectator (Ian Holden, she/her).

Saiya Karamali

I recall after playing in the Washington State Championship in 2024, I met with my research assistants at work the following day. They asked me how the tournament had gone, and I said, "chess is so male-heavy, sometimes I get back to my job and it's like I completely forgot other women exist!" As a PhD student, I don't get to play chess as much as I would like, but I always mark off my calendar for the women's championship. This was my third time playing.

The first year I played, there was only one section and less than thirty players, and it's been wonderful to see the growth that women's chess has experienced in Washington in the last two years. I returned to chess in 2022 mainly for the social aspect, camaraderie, and to be an example for younger female players, but I never dreamed of winning a major tournament like this. Getting to win a tournament which was already so special to me was beyond my wildest dreams.



L-R: Mary Kuhner, Saiya Karamali. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

Mary Kuhner (1784) – Saiya Karamali (1701) [B01]
Washington Women's Championship
Bellevue, WA (R4), October 12, 2025
[Saiya Karamali]

Mary absolutely crushed me in the Women's Championship last year, but I was feeling confident after my win the previous evening.

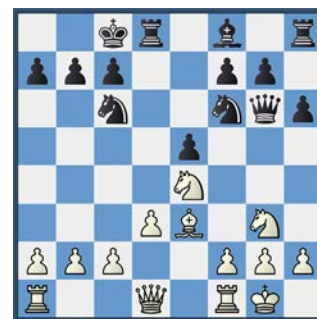
1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.Be2 Qxd5 5.0-0 Nc6 6.Nc3 Qf5

Funny, but I reached this position in my round one game, forgot my prep, and played ...Qh5?!, leaving me vulnerable to an h3 pawn advance. This move is preferable when White delays d4.

7.d3 8.Be3 e5 9.Ng5 Bxe2 10.Nxe2 Qg6
This move was unnecessary. The

immediate ...Nd5, followed by ...h6, was already possible.

11.Ng3 h6 12.N5e4



Position after 12.N5e4

12...Nd5?!

12...Nxe4 Again, I could have played

more decisively. 13.Nxe4 f5 14.Nc3 f4 15.Bd2 Nd4 16.f3 Bc5 17.Kh1 Nf5 and my knight heads for e3.

13.Nc3 f5?!

13...Nxc3 was better, not allowing White to gain a tempo with Qf3. 14.bxc3

14.Nxd5 Rxd5 15.Qf3 Ne7 16.Ne2 Kb8 17.Nc3 Rd8 18.a4

A bit slow, but White doesn't have any great options to attack. Meanwhile, Black's kingside attack is finally going to come.

18...Nc6 19.Rfb1?

19.Qd1 White's last chance to avoid allowing ...Nd4 with tempo. Black still stands much better though.

19...f4 20.Bd2 Nd4 21.Qd1 f3 22.g3 Qg4 23.Nb5



Position after 23.Nb5

23...Qh3?

Attempting to cash in too early, and giving White some counterplay as a result. 23...Ne2+ 24.Kh1 Bc5 25.Qf1 h5 simply bringing more pieces into the game. Black's attack is unstoppable, and if she tries h3, black need not move the queen! 26.h3 h4! 27.gxh4 (27.hxg4 hxg3+) 27...Rxb4

24.Qf1 Qxf1+ 25.Rxf1 Nxc2 26.Rac1

This turned out to be trickier than I expected, and I proceeded to play inaccurately.

26...c6?!

26...Nb4 was better, playing less materialistically. White's d-pawn is weak, and Nxc7 is not such a big threat. 27.Bxb4 Bxb4 28.Nxc7 Rxd3. My pieces are active, and White cannot bring a rook to e1.

27.Rxc2 cxb5 28.Bc3 Rd5 29.Re1 Bd6

[Diagram top of next column]

30.Re3??



Position after 29...Bd6

The position was quite holdable up to this point but allowing me to keep my b5-pawn is a big blunder. 30.axb5 Rxd3

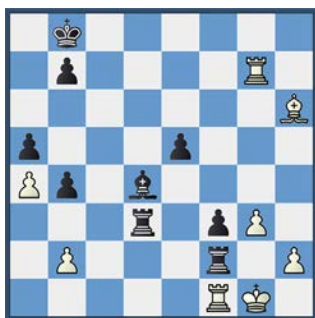
30...b4 31.Bd2 Rf8 32.Rc4 a5 33.Rg4 Bc5 34.Re1 Rxd3 35.Bc1 Bd4

Keeping the g4 rook out of position. 35...Rf7 I had been intending to defend my g pawn at this point, but I realized it was unnecessary.

36.Rxg7 Rc8 37.Bxh6

White cannot stop the rook from penetrating.

37...Rc2 38.Rf1 Rxf2



Position after 38...Rxf2

White resigned, as the only way to avoid mate is to give up the rook and run with the king. I was quite proud of this game! I played the opening well, got a strong attack, and then 35...Bd4 led to a nice finish.

0-1

**Saiya Karamali (1701) –
Emel Bayrambeyli (1918) [A70]**
2025 Washington Women's
Championship
Bellevue, WA (R3), October 11, 2025
[Saiya Karamali]

Going into this game, I was 2.0/2, having beaten two lower-rated players. Now, I found myself on board one, playing one

of the top seeds ...and I must say, I wasn't feeling particularly confident.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Bd3 Bg4

8...a6 9.h3 b5 10.0-0 is an alternative way of playing this for Black, where she gets queenside expansion but her light squared bishop is quite restricted.

9.Qa4+

Not allowing the bishop to be exchanged for the knight.

9...Bd7

9...Nbd7 10.Nd2 starts to get precarious for Black, as she needs to be very precise to avoid losing the bishop.

10.Qb3 Qc7

After 10...Qb6?, White simply trades queens and Black's d-pawn is far too weak.

11.0-0 0-0



Position after 11...0-0

12.Nd2?!

Premature. Getting the knight to c4 is one possible plan, but there's no rush. 12.Re1 is a natural developing move, preparing to play to push the pawn to e5 eventually.

12...Na6 13.Bxa6

Giving Black the open b-file in exchange for the doubled a-pawns. I was worried that leaving the a6-knight on the board would allow a quick ...b5, but it's not so easy: for instance, 13.a3 Rab8 14.Re1 b5 15.Nxb5 Qa5 16.a4

13...bxa6 14.Qc4?!

Avoiding ...c4, but it's really nothing to worry about. 14.Qc2 was the way to go, preparing to put the knight on c4. After 14...c4 15.Nf3, White's knight can jump to d4, and Black's c4-pawn is quite weak.

14...Qb6 15.a4

Avoiding ...Bb5



L-R: Saiya Karamali, Emel Bayrambeyli. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

15...Ng4 16.h3

16.Qe2 Ne5

16...Ne5 17.Qe2 g5!?

A creative way to stop me from playing f4, at the cost of weakening the light squares.

18.Nc4

White should act quickly to address possible ...g4 ideas. 18.Nf3 is a slightly better way to execute the same idea, where White's queen ends up better placed 18...Nxf3+ 19.Qxf3

18...Nxc4 19.Qxc4 f5 20.Bxg5

Initiating a complex continuation that seemed unclear to me.

20...Qxb2



Position after 20...Qxb2

21.Rfc1

I was terrified to play this move, keeping the pin on the long diagonal, but I could see nothing wrong with it. This move

frees my other rook to go to b1 and harass Black's queen. 21.Rac1 looks safer, but I couldn't really see how to continue from here.

21...Qb4 22.Qd3 fxe4 23.Qg3 Rf7 24.Rab1

24.Be3 was a possible improvement, depriving Black's queen of the d4 square.

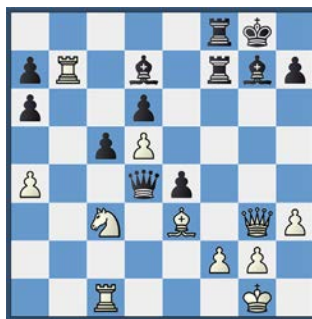
24...Qd4

Now, it's not so clear how to proceed. My c1-rook is tied down to the defense of the knight, and if I play Be3, Black's queen can go to d3.

25.Rb7!

Now Black has to play precisely.

25...Raf8 26.Be3



Position after 26.Be3

26...Qd3??

Attacking the knight, but this fails tactically. 26...Qe5 was the only defense. Up to this point, both players have played recklessly with our pawns, often

justifiably! But the d6-pawn is vital to the integrity of Black's position.

27.Qxd6 Bxh3 28.Rxf7 Rxf7 29.gxh3 Bxc3 30.Qxc5 Be5

Now White mates in seven.

31.Qc8+ Kg7

31...Rf8 32.Qe6+ Kh8 33.Qxe5+ Kg8 34.Bh6 Rf7 35.Rc8+

32.Qg4+ Kf8 33.Rc8+ Ke7 34.Qe6#



Position after 34.Qe6#

After this game, my heart was pounding and I truly had no idea what had happened and how I had won. When I played 21.Rfc1, I thought I might be in big trouble. A few moves later, I was mating, and I had no idea where White had gone wrong! This game left me with 3.0/3 and in clear first heading into the second day.

1-0

Ann Jem

I only started playing tournament chess a year ago—coincidentally, at the 2024 Washington Women's Championship, where I scored 2.0/5. To win my section the very next year with 6.0/6 would have been absolutely unimaginable. Though I find over-the-board chess intimidating, being able to play against people like me made me feel vastly more confident and welcomed in a sport where we are by far the gender minority.

Without a community of other women and non-binary chess players, it would have been much more challenging to persevere through failure and frustration. It's the kind of welcoming atmosphere that I hope every chess federation and every club will take action to foster. Having events like the Washington Women's Championship is a fantastic first step, but there is much more that needs to be done.

**Riya Sridhar (856) –
Ann Jem (1024) [B12]**

Washington Women's Championship
Bellevue, WA (R2), October 11, 2025
[Ann Jem]

Riya and I both won our round one games. Having never played her before, I sat down at our board for round two, uncertain what to expect. The game turned out quite positional, and I hope you find it as interesting as I did.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nf3 e6 5.h4

I was surprised to see this move, and indeed it is very rare, only happening around 0.1% of the time OTB and online.

5...h5 6.Nc3

6.c4 is the more commonly played move here according to Lichess's masters game database. 6...dxc4 7.Bxc4 Nd7; 6.Bd3 Almost half of Lichess online games that reached this position continued this way. 6...Bg4

6...c5 7.Bb5+ Nc6 8.Be3 c4

I decided that due to my lack of development, it would be much safer to keep the structure locked down.

9.a3 a6 10.Bxc6+ bxc6 11.Qd2 Be7?!

11...Ne7 with ...Bg6 and ...Nf5 to follow would be a better way to develop—the text move leaves the knight without a good developing square and keeps the king stuck in the center.

12.Na4



Position after 12.Na4

With a cramped position, a king in the center, and undeveloped pieces, I thought I was in big trouble. However, the engine considers this position equal.

12...Rb8 13.Ng5

Allows Black's knight to get to h6 and the king to castle at last.

13...Qc7



Ann Jem. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

Intending to make use of the semi-open b-file.

14.0-0 Rb5 15.Rab1

Now Nc3 to harass the rook is possible as b2 is defended.

15...Nh6 16.Rfe1 Ng4

Provoking f3. I knew it would come and drive my knight back, but I thought it would create greater weaknesses down the line.

17.Bf4 Qb7 18.f3

18.Rbc1

18...Nh6 19.Qc3 0-0 20.Be3 Bg6 21.Nc5 Bxc5 22.dxc5

White's bishop is locked behind its pawns, while the black counterpart enjoys an open diagonal.

22...Nf5 23.Bd4 Rb8

The pressure on b2 will become too much to bear.

24.f4?

24.b4 cxb3

24...Nxb4 25.Qg3?

An unnecessary attack, allowing the knight to retreat with tempo and take out a defender of b2.

25...Nf5 26.Qc3 Nxd4 27.Qxd4 Rxb2 28.Rxb2 Qxb2 29.Qxb2 Rxb2+ 30.c3



Position after 30.c3

30...Kf8

30...d4 I did not look at this move, not wanting to connect White's pawn chain and allow counterplay; however, Black's passed c-pawn would be much faster and too well-supported, particularly by the bishop on the long diagonal. 31.cxd4 c3 32.Rc1 c2 33.Kf2 Rb1

31.Kh2 Ke7 32.Kh3 Ra2

32...Rb3 would perhaps have been better, but in any case, there is no fear of Rb1. There is no way for White's rook to infiltrate.

33.Kh4 Rxa3 34.Nf3 Ra2 35.g3 a5 36.Nd4 Kd7 37.Kg5 Rg2 38.Kh4 f6 39.Ra1??

Rh1 or Kh3 is forced.

39...Rh2#

0-1

Eliza Wheeler

I never assumed when I started playing online chess because of *The Queen's Gambit* series on Netflix that I would be playing in the Washington Women's Championship. When I took the plunge into tournament chess, I knew stereotypes about chess players and socializing with others. I found that I loved classical chess, but it still proved to be a very lonely hobby at times. I was initially hesitant to sign up for the Washington's Women Championship. I wasn't sure it

was for me because I am not a scholastic player and I assumed I was not "good enough" at the game to enter for other reasons. I decided to enter in order to support the event and help grow the game for other women. Also, as someone who has shown up to her weekly club game and been the only woman playing that night on many occasions, I hoped I could forge new friendships with other women that play the game to have more people to share my hobby with. I was overwhelmed with the warmth within the event despite being one of fierce competition. I was lucky to meet so many new people. For the first time, I felt my presence in a chess community.

Ian Holden

The 2025 Washington Women's Chess Championship was a success; providing women in chess the opportunity to meet and compete with one another, with a record 54 players (a 28% increase from last year's 42). I was fortunate to have spectated the event for the first time this year, where two friends of mine went undefeated, and took home championship titles! I enjoyed watching their games by broadcast, and having the ability to view multiple matches at once. It was a major highlight during my spectating experience. Between rounds, dozens of women, girls, and non-binary players were seen in the halls analyzing games together, celebrating each other in wins and losses, and sharing their experiences and struggles as women who play chess. Notably, every player I met was encouraging to all, and excitedly introducing friends to newfound friends and opponents. Being a part of moments like this and having the opportunity to build community with other women at a Women's Championship is what keeps me motivated as an adult woman coming back to chess.

Our Washington Women's Championship players were uniquely able to win or lose a game, shake hands, and still feel an intrinsic camaraderie with their opponent. Prestigious events like the Washington Women's Chess Championship are essential in the advancement of women, nonbinary people, and girls in chess. This event demonstrated that women chess players show up for their chess, as well as each other. It is women who create community for women.



Eliza Wheeler. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

Conclusion

Although the tournament was a wonderful experience, there were things which we (and several other players we spoke to) felt could be improved. The Washington Women's Championship was held in the same hall simultaneously with the Challengers Cup and the Challengers Scholastic, which is unprecedented. Since all three tournaments were on different schedules and there were no room dividers, disruption and noise from players entering and exiting the hall and chatting between rounds were so constant that some players relied on earplugs on the second day. Moreover, the open and U1300 sections of the women's championship were both two-day classical tournaments, but were on slightly different schedules, which was completely unnecessary. It would have been so nice to have been able to hang out with our friends in other sections between rounds, but instead, one section's games were typically ending just as the other section was starting. TDs couldn't make loud announcements, so there was often confusion on whether our sections were officially cleared to start.

We found that the venue itself, Hotel 116, was unfortunately ill-equipped to

accommodate all three tournaments' players and their families, which caused serious safety and accessibility issues. The inadequate seating throughout the hotel, lack of rest areas for players, and having no dedicated waiting areas for parents created the hazard of constant overcrowding of the halls and lobbies. Some players and their families resorted to sitting on the floor, while others knew to bring camping chairs from their experiences at previous tournaments.

This cluttering of the halls frequently blocked emergency exits, and, more often than not, the walkways weren't clear. The hotel's parking lot was also far too small to accommodate its regular guests and patrons, in addition to attendees of the three chess tournaments. Several players were delayed due to a lack of both regular and disabled parking at the hotel, and there being no street parking available nearby. The overall lack of accessibility and safety oversight created less than ideal conditions for all tournament players and attendees and was especially unwelcoming to those with disabilities.

Finally, the Women's Championship also felt like an afterthought compared to the other tournaments at the venue: there was no signage directing people to the women's tournament, and many of

us weren't sure if we were in the right place; our round one started after the other tournaments', because our pairings were done last; and prior to round four, a haphazard photoshoot was taken behind the building by the dumpsters. The tournament has worked much better in prior years when it has been held as a standalone event, or at least with its own playing hall.

Overall, all of us had a great experience at this tournament, and we appreciate that the Washington Chess Federation has kept entry fees relatively affordable and has introduced U700 and unrated sections. In fact, the Washington Women's Championship got by far the most attendance of any women's championship on the west coast this year!

It was also great to see that all of the TDs were women, for the first time in a few years. We feel that the women's championship should be an opportunity for female TDs as well as players. We encourage any other female players to play in future years, and we hope the WCF will continue to hold and improve upon this tournament!



News Flash:

Andrew Fletcher becomes Washington State's newest National Master!

By Josh Sinanan

Congratulations to Andrew Fletcher of Bellevue, Washington, who recently became Washington State's newest National Master! Andrew achieved a USCF rating of 2209 as a result of tying for first place in the 2025 North Carolina Open with an undefeated 5.5/6 score followed by winning three more games at the recent Charlotte Chess Center Wednesday Action Quads.

Andrew defeated one National Master and three Experts—Miles Tisserand (2037), Chris Mabe (2228), Daniil Kozyrev (2104), and Andrew Duren (2117)—on his way to winning the winning the 2025 North Carolina Open, hosted by the Charlotte Chess Center November 28-30, 2025 in Charlotte.



TOURNAMENTS



venue & mail

7212 Woodlawn Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98115

info & events calendar
www.seattlechess.club

club & tournament inquiries
contact@seattlechess.club

January 18 (Sun.)

3-round round-robin. 4-player sections by close rating. **Time control:** Game/85 + 10 sec. increment. **Entry fee:** \$15 (+\$20 day membership for non-SCC ← note new day fee). Prepayment required. **Prizes:** winner of each 4-player quad wins free entry to next Quads played within 3 months. **Check-in:** 9:15-9:45am. **Rounds:** 10am, 2 & 6pm. **Byes:** 0 – must play all 3 rounds! **Venue:** TBA. US Chess rated, US Chess membership req'd. **Sign up:** <https://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration/>.

January Quads

January 24-25 (Sat.-Sun.)

See below.

Seattle City Championship

January 2, 9, 16, 23 (Fri.)

One US Chess-rated round per night, 4 rounds per month, at 7:30pm. **Time control:** 40 moves in 90 mins., then sudden death 60 mins.; 10 sec. increment in both TCs. Free for SCC members, \$5/night others. Play in any or all rounds! Email contact@seattlechess.club to sign up. 28 players max.

January Thaw

January 30 (Fri.)

4 or 5 rounds depending on turnout, beginning at 7:30pm. **Time control:** Game15, no increment! **Entry:** Free for SCC members, \$5 others. US Chess Quick rated. **Sign up:** contact@seattlechess.club.

Fifth Friday G/15

Coming up:

- **February Quads** – February 14; tentative, 2B confirmed
- **Winter Adult Swiss** – February 28; tentative, 2B confirmed

Check our events calendar periodically for confirmed dates.

2026 SEATTLE CITY CHAMPIONSHIP

JANUARY 24 - 25, 2026

A 5-round Swiss in 2 sections – Champion (USCF 1800+) & Reserve (U1800)
with time control of Game75 with 30-second increment

Prize fund: \$3,000 based on 70 paid entries, 3 per prize group

CHAMPION: FIRST \$750 SECOND \$500 U2000 \$350

RESERVE: FIRST \$470 SECOND \$360 U1600 \$225 U1400 \$175 U1200/UNR \$120

BIGGEST UPSET WIN IN EACH SECTION, RDS 1-4 \$10

- **Entry fees:** By 1/18 SCC members, Seattle University CC members & 2025 SCC 2-day tournament winners (see below) \$75, others \$105. After 1/18 add \$10.
- **Play up fee** for USCF 1700-1799 playing in Champion section: \$50 for SCC/SUCC members, \$70 others. Fee waived for 2025 SCC 2-day tournament winners (see below).
- **Rounds:** Saturday 10am, 2 & 6pm; Sunday 11am & 3pm. **Check in:** 9:00-9:45am.
- **Venue:** Seattle University, Sinegal Bldg., rooms 100-110, 12th Ave. & E. Marion St., Seattle, WA 98122 (southwest corner). **Max 80 seats.**
- **Byes:** 1 half-point bye available. Commit at registration for Sunday rounds.
- **Register** at <http://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration>. US Chess membership required.



Winners of SCC 2-day tournaments during 2025 are encouraged to participate: 2025 City Champion Aziz Degenbaev; Spring Open Aziz Degenbaev; Carol Kleist Memorial Adult Swiss Alex Kaelin; Emerald City Open Leonid Gavrysh & Ted Wang; Seafair Open Aziz Degenbaev & Ryan Porter; Fall Open Siddarth M. Sundaram; August Piper Memorial Adult Swiss Austin Wentz; and 2025 Friday Night Champion Matthew van Eerde.

13th Annual Reno Larry Evans Memorial Open

Apr 3-5 or Apr 4-5, 2026, 3 Day or 2 Day Schedule

US Chess
150 GPP (Enhanced)

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

\$17,000!! (Guaranteed)

F.I.D.E. Rated
OPEN Section

NEW LOCATION: J Resort Casino Hotel, 345 N. Arlington Avenue, Reno, NV 89501
Downtown Reno, formerly Sands Regency Casino Hotel

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

Open Section, F.I.D.E. Rated (2200 & above) EF: \$194, (2000-2199) \$250, (1999/below) \$300; GMs and IMs free but must enter by 3/6 or pay late fee at door. Guaranteed Prizes; (1-7 in Open Section plus 1/2 of all other prizes).

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

Section Expert	(2000-2199)	EF: \$194 (2-day EF: \$190)	\$2,000-1,000-500-300-200
Section "A"	(1800-1999)	EF: \$193 (2-day EF: \$190)	\$1,800-900-500-300-200
Section "B"	(1600-1799)	EF: \$192 (2-day EF: \$190)	\$1,700-800-400-300-200
Section "C"	(1400-1599)	EF: \$191 (2-day EF: \$190)	\$1,500-700-400-300-200
Section "D/Under"	(1399-below)	EF: \$180 (2-day EF: \$190)	\$1,000-500-300-200, (1199/below) \$400-200-100


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

Wed. 4/1: 7:00 pm - GM Sergey Kudrin Clock Simul w/ complete analysis of YOUR Game (Only \$30!-bring clock)

Thursday 4/2: 6 - 7:15 pm - Lecture by IM John Donaldson (FREE)

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

Saturday 4/4: 3 - 4:30 pm - Game/Position Analysis - IM John Donaldson (FREE)


Main Tournament

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

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

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

Room Reservation: Call J Resort Reno, 1-866-386-7829, Group Reservation Code: CHESS 42026

Hotel Rates: Sunday-Thursday \$92.66, Friday-Saturday \$149.41, all taxes and fees included. Reserve by 3/20

For TLA and to confirm receipt of entry see player list at: www.renochess.org

ENTRY FORM - 13th Annual Larry Evans Memorial Open - Reno, Nevada - Apr 3-5 OR Apr 4-5, 2026

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

PRINT Name _____ Phone# _____ USCF Rating _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

USCF ID# _____ Exp. Date _____ All pre-registered players check in at TD desk on arrival.

ENTRY FEE ENCLOSED: (CIRCLE SECTION AND FEE BELOW) BYE(S) REQUESTED FOR ROUND(S): (circle)

1	2	3	4	5	6
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----- OPEN SECTION -----

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

GM/IM • Masters • 2000-2199 • 1999-Below 2000-2199 1800-1999 1600-1799 1400-1599 1399-Below Free With

3-Day EF Free • \$194 • \$250 • \$300 \$194 \$193 \$192 \$191 \$180 USCF Dues

2-Day EF \$190 \$190 \$190 \$190 \$190 USCF Dues

FEES ALSO ENCLOSED FOR:

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

POSTMARK BY March 6, 2026. Add \$11 after 3/6. Add \$22 on site.

Do not mail after 3/27 or email after 3/31. Make check / m.o. payable to WEIKEL CHESS LLC or provide credit card info and signature. \$7 service charge on credit card entries. Visa Master Card Am.Ex
Name on Credit Card _____
Expiration Date _____ ZIP Code _____
Credit Card# _____ CVV Code _____
Signature _____

- Check Enclosed
- Charge My Card

TOTAL FEES: \$ _____

