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Washington Challengers Cup Champion Vinesh Ravuri.
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.

Back Cover

Susan Polgar (L) presents GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez first place trophy at the 19th SPICE Cup.
Photo credit: Ani Barua.

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Table Of Contents

Clicking on a Table Of Contents entry takes you to that page; clicking on any page-footer will take you back to the Table Of Contents page.

<p>Vinesh Ravuri Meiling Cheng..... Front Cover</p> <p>Love, Chess The Chess Friends 4</p> <p>Oregon Junior Closed Wilson Gibbins 6</p> <p>2025 Washington Challenger’s Cup Josh Sinanan 18</p> <p>2026 Washington State Championship (Ad) Seattle, Washington February 6-8 and 21-22..... 22</p> <p>National Chess Day Scholastic Chess Rekha Sagar 23</p> <p>Challenger’s Cup Scholastic Rekha Sagar 24</p> <p>Washington President’s Cup (Ad) Bellevue, Washington February 14-15..... 25</p> <p>Presidential Scholastic Chess Tournament (Ad) Bellevue, Washington February 15 26</p> <p>A Conversation With Ted Wang Ken Lee..... 27</p> <p>Decatur Elementary Gator Fest (Ad) Seattle, Washington February 28..... 29</p>	<p>WCF Spring Scholastic (Ad) Bothell, Washington March 7 30</p> <p>NW Players at 2025 US Senior Women’s Championship Mary Kuhner and Chouchanik Airapetian..... 31</p> <p>Internat Candidates Chess Tournament (Ad) Bellevue, Washington March 7-8 33</p> <p>19th SPICE Cup Josh Sinanan 34</p> <p>Mount McKinley was named by William A. Dickey John Donaldson 42</p> <p>Washington State Barber/Rockefeller/Ashley (Ad) Bellevue, Washington March 15..... 43</p> <p>Open Window School Spring Tornado (Ad) Bellevue, Washington March 21..... 44</p> <p>St. Anne Celtic Challenge Spring 2026 (Ad) Seattle, Washington March 22..... 45</p> <p>Seattle Chess Club (Various Events) (Ad) Various Events of the Seattle Chess Club..... 46</p> <p>13th Annual Reno Larry Evans Memorial Open (Ad) Reno, Nevada April 3-5 or April 4-5 47</p> <p>Susan Polgar (L), GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez Ani Barua Back Cover</p>
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**A SPECIAL
 48-PAGE ISSUE!**

Love, Chess

The Chess Friends

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

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

Howdy! It's the Chess Friends!
It's February, and love is in the air. With Valentine's Day approaching, we explore what it's like to love chess.

There are so many aspects of love, but despite tons and tons of poems, songs, and novels about love, [social psychologists and neuroscientists are still debating](#) what love actually is. Several theories and models out there attempt to explain love, and how interpersonal relationships evolve, like the [Triangular Theory of Love](#), the [Knapp's Staircase Model](#), or [The Conception of the Long-term Relationship](#).

In this article, we reflect on how our love for chess changes with time, and propose our own model to describe the development of one's relationship with chess. With a tip of the hat to the great Hungarian-American chess master and scientist Arpad Elo, the creator of the Elo chess rating system, may we present...

The Chess Friends' E.L.O. Model for Three Stages of Chess Love:

Enchantment

Labor

Odyssey

The Legend Vivi, 8, describes *Enchantment*. The Myth Sarang, 12, discusses *Labor*. The Man Benji, 14, explores *Odyssey*. Our friend Peshka travels back in time, to Ancient Greece, where chess doesn't exist yet, and illustrates each E.L.O. step in a game *Guess the Classical Mythology Character!* Let's get started!

The Legend Vivaan: Enchantment

(Falling in Love with an Amazing Game)

I first fell in love with chess when I was a baby. I would lay down on my belly on the dining table, watching my brother do a chess lesson with uncle Josh. Until I was three, I loved chess as a toy. I loved the feel of the pieces. I loved playing with them. I loved knocking them down. Not going to lie, I also enjoyed seeing the reactions of everyone else when I did!

In my threes and fours, I fell in love with the game itself. How the pieces moved. The shapes. The patterns. The ideas. The thrill of checkmating the opponent's King! The joy of making friends while playing over-the-board. Everything was amazing! Even when I lost, though I got a bit upset, I would always chat with my opponent and learn from them and make a new friend.

In my fives and sixes, I loved medals and trophies. They were so shiny, so fun, and made me feel like I accomplished something every time I got one. In some

ways, all these awards helped fuel my love for chess. I also enjoyed seeing my rating shoot up after most tournaments because it felt like a confirmation that I was getting better and better.

In my sevens, much like I outgrew all my youth S clothes, I outgrew this love for awards and rating gains, though they are still fine. I coach chess now, help TD events, and study and play a lot more intentionally. My love for chess has evolved into a love for creative ideas and tricky patterns I come up with after a lot of thought and hard work. Much like a maze, sometimes you hit roadblocks, sometimes you run into a dead end, but how you move on from those moments becomes a lovely thrill.

The Myth Sarang: Labor

(How Work Shapes the Game and the Player)

The longer I play chess, the more I realize it's less about talent and more about work. Real work. Hard work. The work that tests your patience and focus. When you're a beginner, progress comes fast. You learn to hang fewer pieces, spot tactics, castle early, etc. But after that first stretch of improvement, the climb gets way steeper.

When you get better, the game demands more from you. It's not enough to simply know openings, you need to understand them. Studying endgames changes from just memorizing a few positions to long, precise analysis that can take hours, months and even YEARS to master. The better you get, the more invisible the progress feels. But that's also what makes it relevant.

At some point, I learned that loving chess means loving the work behind





it. You can't just chase huge dubs or quick breakthroughs. Most days, for me, improvement arrives in very small steps: understanding one more detail in a position, figuring out a new defense, or realizing why an old mistake keeps on happening. Those examples of small gains may not look like much, but they will help immensely over time.

Eventually, the grind itself becomes part of the reward. If you find joy in reviewing bad losses, you are in for a bright future. In a way, chess teaches you how to keep trying even when results come slowly. It shows that lasting growth comes from steady effort; and that the real magic of the game is learning to love the work that makes you better.

The Man Benji: Odyssey

(The Game Becomes Who We Are)

When we start playing chess, we get under its spell. The game enchants us: magic on the board, gifts for our brains, trophies and quick rises all fill us with good feelings. As we get better, the deep study and the grind enter the picture, which we learn how to love.

Is that all, then, a grind-grind-grind forever? No! After many months, or maybe years, of hard work and grinding, chess starts sticking with you. It becomes part of your everyday life; you think about chess, you think about the world around you like it's chess. When that happens,

congratulations! You have entered the third stage of your relationship with chess: Odyssey!

The word Odyssey, originating from [Homer's epic poem](#) about the Greek hero Odysseus, means journey. It's not your trivial road trip on a big Honda Odyssey though, but a long winding quest filled with adventures and trials. Trials that test your character, your smarts and resilience. That journey for us is chess itself.

We sail on this journey not for big prizes or big rating gains (though that would be nice!). We travel because that's who we are. Chess becomes our character. Our identity. *Hello, I'm The Man Benji, and I'm a chess player.*

Unlike the hero Odysseus, who traveled for years to reach his home, we, the heroes of our own epic chess journeys, are already home. What's that feeling you have when you enter the chess playing hall you've already seen thousands of times? *Ah, it's nice to be home.* The atmosphere, the chess friends, the new exciting positions on the board... *I am home at the chessboard, playing my favorite game.*

I only recently entered the Odyssey stage in my relationship with chess. I knew I was there when I stopped worrying about my opening prep or what my opponent would play, and whether I could win. I just go with the flow now, finding the enjoyment in every stage of the game. It feels like the joy of enchantment and labor all in one! And it's still just the beginning.



Would I eventually get bored and tired of chess to the point I quit? Don't think it's going to happen. I've had my tough moments, when after many hours of hard work, I felt like I couldn't go on any longer, then something would spark, and I would forget about all my struggles. It could be a brilliant position, or a cool

tactic. Or it could be the middle of a hard, intense game where both you and your opponent are playing your hearts out. That's when you realize, what fun it is! There is always something new to learn, something else to get better at. With chess odyssey, there are always ways to go even further. The sky is the E.L.O. limit!

Well, there you have it. The three stages of our love of chess. Before we let you go, how about some silly knee-slappers, Valentine's chess day edition?

Why didn't Peshka solve the chess puzzle?

Because it was too heart!



Why do chess players use magnetic sets on Valentine's Day?

They find them attractive!



Two cookies played a chess game on Valentine's Day!

It was a match made in oven!



What Valentine's Day gift always forfeits their chess game?

Choco-LATE!



Roses are red, DGT boards are brown.

My trusted Sicilian will never let me down.



Roses are red, Peshka is wise,

If you read [Q&A Chess](#), your rating will rise!



Roses are red, violets are blue,

We all love chess, and Northwest Chess too!



Three Cheers, Fellow Future Master Chess Friends!

The Man Benji,
The Myth Sarang,
The Legend Vivi

Oregon Junior Closed

By
Wilson Gibbins



*Austin Tang holding the Championship trophy.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.*

This year's Oregon Junior Closed marked the beginning of a new era in Oregon Junior Chess. For the last four years either Roshan Nair or Zoey Tang has held at least part of the title (and in 2021 they tied each other!) With neither of them participating this year, it was time to look at the next generation of Oregon Junior talent.

That said, there were a lot of familiar faces in the lineup. Last year's co-champion Austin Tang took over as the top seed in the Championship Section. Previous Challengers Section winners participating this year included Saahil Gupta, Emel Bayrambeyli, and Ademidun Adebolu. Other regulars attending were Kai Lewis, William Nobles, Hayul Lim, and Varun Iyengar. But to truly have the beginning of a new era you need some new players, so Karthik Bimod, Lucas Maokhampio, Yian Lin, and Jiro Plaunty volunteered to join the fray.

But enough with the preliminaries—let us dive into the action.

Round One

All three games in the Championship Section are drawn. But they are not all bloodless draws, as you can see below in the game between the top two seeds, Hayul Lim and Austin Tang.

In the Challengers Section, the lower seeds do the scoring, as Emel Bayrambeli is the only top seed who is able to hold a draw. Karthik Bimod gets a good opening against Yian Lin, but Yian defends well and is able to navigate through the complications to get the full point. Ademidun Adebolu defends well in a difficult but complicated Sicilian position to upset 2025 Oregon Open U2000 co-champion Lucas Maokhampio.

Hayul Lim (2064) –

Austin Tang (2172) [B23]

Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)
Portland, OR (R1), December 5, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Round one game between the top two seeds in the Championship Section. Hayul normally plays 1.Nf3, so his first move 1.e4 indicates he has something prepared against Austin's Sicilian. White makes a lot of strong, aggressive moves, but ends up grabbing a draw by perpetual from an exchange-down position where Stockfish still prefers White.

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 d6 3.f4 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bc4

Nc6 6.0-0 e6 7.d4!?

This is fun. But not original—there are hundreds of games in my database.

7...Nxd4

Capturing the “free” pawn while preserving Black's pawn structure. Better is 7...cx4, which gains time by attacking the knight on c3. Black will lose the pawn on d4 but will complete his development and obtain an equal position. 8.Nb5 Nge7 9.Nbxd4 d5∞

8.Be3!± Qb6

8...Nf6±

9.e5!± Nf5

9...Nxf3+ 10.Qxf3 Ne7 11.Bb5+ Kf8 12.b4! is also better for White.

10.Bb5+ Kf8 11.Bf2 a6 12.Be2 Qc6

12...Qxb2? 13.Na4 (*13.Ne4*)

13.exd6±

13.g4! is a riskier way to pursue White's attack.

13...Bxc3 14.bxc3 Nxd6

Black is defending creatively, but White is still better.

15.Ne5 Qc7 16.Qd3 Nf6 17.Bf3 Kg7 18.Rfd1 Nfe8! 19.Nc4 Nf5

19...Nxc4 20.Qxc4 Nd6 21.Qxc5 Qxc5 22.Bxc5 Nc4 23.Bd4+ f6 24.Rab1±

20.g4!

Not sure if I would have the courage to play this move.

20...Ne7 21.Qe3 Nf6

21...Nd5

22.Nd6 Nfd5 23.Bxd5 Nxd5 24.Rxd5! exd5 25.Qe5+ Kg8



Position after 25...Kg8

Black is an exchange and a pawn up, but his rooks are not participating and the dark squares around his king are vulnerable. White is winning, but the way forward is not obvious.

26.Qe8+

26.Bh4! Bd7 27.Qe7 Rf8 28.Bf6+- White is threatening 29.Bxh8 Kxh8 30.Qxf8. If Black moves is queen to the back rank to defend the rook on f8, he loses material. 26.f5 is also good.



Austin Tang. Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

26...Kg7 27.Qe5+

Hayul grabs a perpetual and a half point against the top seed.

1/2-1/2

**Karthik Bimod (1999) –
Yian Lin (1778) [D30]**

Oregon Junior Closed (Challengers)
Portland, OR (R1), December 5, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Karthik was the top seed in the Challengers section, and tournament-time ratings would have put him in the Championship Section. Karthik sacrifices a knight to obtain a winning position, but Yian keeps his cool and emerges from the complications with the full point.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nbd2 e6 5.g3 dxc4 6.Nxc4 b5 7.Nce5 Bb7 8.Bg2 Nbd7 9.0-0 Be7 10.Nxf7 Kxf7 11.Ng5+ Ke8 12.Nxe6 Qb6 13.Nxg7+ Kf7 14.Nf5 c5 15.d5 Rad8 16.e4 Rhe8 17.Kh1 Bf8 18.Bg5 e4 19.f4 Nc5 20.e5 Bxd5

20...Rxd5

21.Nd6+ Rxd6!

21...Bxd6 22.Bxd5+-

22.exd6 Bxg2+ 23.Kxg2 Qxd6 24.Qxd6 Bxd6 25.Bxf6 Kxf6 26.Rfe1 Rd8 27.Re2 Nd3 28.a4 b4 29.Rc2 Scoresheets became illegible, but Black won in seven moves.

0-1

**Lucas Maokhampio (1934) –
Ademidun Adebolu (1749) [B56]**
Oregon Junior Closed (Challengers)
Portland, OR (R1), December 5, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.f3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.Nd5 a5 8...Be7

9.a4± Bxd5 10.exd5 Nb4 11.Bb5+!± Nd7 12.c3 Na6 13.Bxd7+ Qxd7 14.Nxa5 14.0-0 Be7 15.f4±

14...Nc5 15.b4 Be7 16.0-0 Bd8 17.Nc4 Nxa4 18.Nxd6+ Ke7 19.Nf5+ Kf6



Position after 19...Kf6

This middlegame king centralization is very brave—borderline desperate. Perhaps desperation is called for, as the saner 19...Qxf5 20.Rxa4 is much better for White.

20.g4+ Bb6+ 21.Be3 Nxc3 22.Qc2

22.Qd3+-

22...Bxe3+ 23.Nxe3 Nxd5 24.g5+

24.Qd3! Nb6 25.g5+ Ke7 26.Nf5+ Kd8 27.Qe3+-

24...Kxg5 25.Qd2± Nf6 26.Qg2+ Kh5 27.Kh1 g5=

27...Rxa1 28.Rxa1 g5♣

28.Rg1 h6 29.f4 exf4 30.Qe2+ g4

30...f3 31.Qxf3+ Kg6

31.Rxa8

31.Rad1♣

31...Rxa8 32.Nc4 Qd5+ 33.Qg2 Qxc4 34.h3 Qe4 35.hxg4+ Kg5 36.Qxe4 Nxe4 37.Re1 Ng3+ 38.Kg2 Kxg4

0-1

Round Two

Championship Section top seed Austin Tang will have the white pieces in rounds two and three but finishes with the black pieces in rounds four and five. He needs to make the most of these next two rounds. He stays on course with a surgical win over Varun Iyengar, but second seeded Hayul Lim wins with Black to keep pace.

Ademidun Adebolu wins again to gain the lead in the Challengers Section as the only player in tournament with a perfect score after two rounds.

**Austin Tang (2172) –
Varun Iyengar (2003) [B31]**

Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)
Portland, OR (R2), December 6, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

Austin chooses the Rossolimo Attack.

This is just as effective as 3.d4 for keeping White's first-move advantage while avoiding the memory-intensive Sveshnikov 3...cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5 He is rewarded with a kingside attack without allowing significant counterplay.

3...g6 4.Bxc6

This unprovoked trade of a bishop for a knight's first appearance in my database was in 1857, played by John Cochrane of Cochrane Gambit fame (1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nf3 g5 4.Bc4 g4 5.Ne5 Qh4+ 6.Kf1 f3) and Simon Alapin of Alapin Sicilian fame (1.e4 c5 2.c3). They were both



Jiro Roland Plaunty (L) makes a move against Emel Bayrambeyli.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

ahead of their time, as it did not come into fashion until 1990, getting a big boost in popularity in 1992 when Bobby Fischer played it twice against Boris Spassky and Gary Kasparov played it against Valery Salov.

4...dxc6 5.d3 Bg7 6.a4 a5 7.h3 Nf6 8.Be3 b6 9.Nc3 Nd7 10.Qd2 h6 11.Nh2 e5 12.0-0 Nf8 13.f4 exf4 14.Rxf4

The move 14.Bxf4 is more popular and is Stockfish's preference. Austin's move scores better and gets his rooks doubled on the f-file more quickly.

14...g5

This looks weakening, but Stockfish says it is best.

15.Rf2 Ne6?!

This looks like a good idea, getting the knight to the active square d4 before posting the bishop on e6. But it turns out to be too ambitious. 15...Be6=

16.Raf1 0-0?!

16...Ra7± is shaky for Black, but it avoids castling into the attack.

17.Ne2!



Position after 17.Ne2

A nice knight maneuver. White's knights are finding some targets on light squares around Black's king. Black's bishops are not providing much counterplay.

17...Qd6

17...Bxb2?! gives Black a pawn and a series of tricks to prevent the immediate loss of a the semi-trapped dark-squared bishop. But the bishop is needed for defense of the kingside, so the tricks will not keep him out of trouble. 18.c3 Ba3 19.Qa2 Qxd3 20.Ng4 h5 21.Nf6+ Kh8 22.Rf3 Ba6 23.Qxa3 Qxe2 24.Qc1, and some of Black's kingside pawns will soon fall, making it difficult to maintain a defense for the king.

18.Ng4

The rest is carnage. White's pieces walk into Black's kingside without much resistance. Predictable results ensue.

18...Ba6 19.h4 h5 20.Nf6+ Bxf6 21.Rxf6 g4 22.Bh6 Qe7 23.R1f5 Bc8 24.e5 Bd7 25.Rg5+ Kh7 26.Rxh5 Kg8 27.Rg5+ Kh7 28.Bxf8 Qxf8 29.Ng3 Ng7

Stockfish is predicting mate in 8. 30.Rg6+ is an attractive start, as 30...Kxh6 allows 31.Rh5+ Kg6 32.Rh6#

1-0

William Nobles (1967) – Hayul Lim (2064) [A36]

Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)
Portland, OR (R2), December 6, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Will has switched from 1.e4 to 1.c4 recently. Hayul has been playing positional openings like this as White for as long as I can remember, so he is comfortable playing this style of chess.

1.c4 c5 2.Nc3 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 Nc6 5.d3 a6 6.e4 b5 7.f4

7.cxb5 axb5 8.Nxb5 and Black has more than enough compensation for his pawn, with the long-term positional idea of putting his rooks on b8 and a8 to exert queenside pressure as one does in the Benko gambit, and the short-term tactical idea of playing 8...Ba6 (8...Qa5+!? 9.Nc3 Bxc3+ 10.bxc3 Qxc3+ 11.Bd2 Qxd3)

9.Nc3 Nb4

7...b4 8.Nce2 d6 9.h3 Bd7

What ever happened to developing the kingside and castling? Hayul has a good feel for these positions, realizing that the position is mostly closed and he does not need to make kingside commitments. Will has a history of kingside attacks—why give him a target?

10.Nf3 Rc8

10...Qc8 is another idea, putting Black's queen on a slightly awkward square to prevent White from castling.

11.0-0 e6 12.g4 Nge7 13.Rb1 Qa5 14.a3

14.Be3!? Qxa2 15.Qe1

14...Rb8 15.axb4



Position after 15.axb4

15...Qa2?!

Hayul presses his luck, and gets rewarded



*L-R: Karthik Bimod, Lucas Maokhampio, Yian Lin, Ademidun Adebolu.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.*

for his courage. 15...Qxb4

16.Be3!± Rxb4 17.Ra1±

White retains a small advantage. But there was a large advantage available 17.e5! dxe5 18.Nc3 Qb3 19.fxe5 Qxd1 20.Rfxd1 Nxe5 21.Nxe5 Bxe5 22.Bxc5±

17...Qxb2 18.Rxa6± 0-0 19.e5 Be8 20.Ra8 Rb8 21.Rxb8 Qxb8 22.exd6 Qxd6 23.Ng3 Nd4 24.Ne4 Qc7 25.Qd2 Rd8 26.Rd1 Bb7 27.Nxd4 cxd4 28.Bf2 e5

Black can get away with 28...f5 in spite of it creating a seemingly weak pawn on e6 29.Ng5 Bxg2 30.Kxg2 (30.Nxe6!/? Qd6 31.Nxd8 Bf3 32.Re1 Qxd8∞) 30...Qc6+

29.Bg3 Bxe4 30.Bxe4 exf4 31.Bxf4

31.Qxf4!±

31...Be5

As Black, I too would be hoping for some sort of good knight vs. bad light-squared bishop ending, but according to Stockfish, White is still a shade better.

32.Bh6 Bg7 33.Bf4 Be5 34.Rf1 f6 35.h4 Qd7 36.Qg2 Qd6 37.Bd2 Rb8 38.Qf3 Rb2 39.Rf2 Bg3 40.Re2 Bxh4

Black has tricked White out of a pawn, but White still has sufficient compensation, partly due to Black's offside bishop on h4.

41.Bf4 Rb1+ 42.Kh2 Qd8?!

Black should prevent White's pawn on c4 from advancing. 42...Qc5; 42...Qa3

43.c5!±

Black's extra pawn isn't going anywhere soon. White's c-pawn is becoming dangerous.

43...Be1

Trying to get the bishop back to help with the defense against the advance of the c-pawn.

44.Ra2 Kg7 45.Ra7 Rb2+ 46.Kh1

46.Kh3+-

46...Rb1

46...Rf2! 47.Qd1 (47.Bc7 Qd7 48.Qd1 Nc6 and lots of material is hanging, but Stockfish says roughly equal.) 47...Rf1+ 48.Kg2 Rxf4 49.Qxe1 Rxc4+ 50.Kf1 Rg5 51.Qb4 and believe it or not, Stockfish says that this position is balanced.

47.Kg2+- Rb2+ 48.Kh3 Rf2 49.Qg3 Rf1 50.Qh2 h5 51.Qa2?

51.Bg3! is the only move to retain White's winning advantage.

51...hxc4+

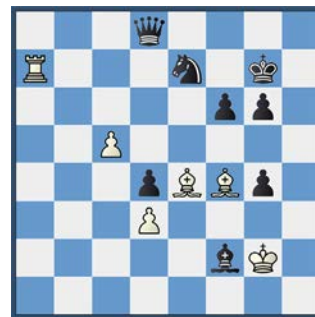
Now Black has the overwhelming Stockfish advantage in an overwhelmingly complicated position.

52.Kg2 Rf2+

Natural, but the winning line is 52...Rxf4 53.Qe6 Kh6+ as 54.Qxe7 (or 54.Rxe7 Rf2+ 55.Kg1 Qb8 and while both sides seem to have good attacking positions, Stockfish says Black gets there first.)

54...Qxe7 55.Rxe7 Rf2+ 56.Kg1 Rc2+-. White's passed c-pawn is under control. Black's kingside pawns cannot be controlled.

53.Qxf2 Bxf2



Position after 53...Bxf2

54.Bd6?

Clever, but not good enough. 54.Kxf2= The material balance does not look good, but White's c-pawn and active pieces will keep Black from realizing his material advantage.

54...Bh4 55.Rxe7+ Kh6 56.Bf4+ Bg5 57.Bxg5+ Kxg5 58.Ra7 Qb8 59.Rb7 Qf4 60.c6 Qd2+ 61.Kg3 Qf4+ 62.Kg2 Qd2+ 63.Kg3 f5 64.Rb5 Qe3+ 65.Kg2 Qh3+ 66.Kg1 g3 67.Bg2 Qh2+ 68.Kf1 Qh5 69.Ke1 Qh2 70.Kf1 Qh5 71.Ke1 Qh7 72.Rb7 Qh8 73.c7 Qe5+ 74.Kd1 Qc5 75.Bd5 Kf4 76.Bg2 Qc3 77.Bd5 Ke3

0-1

Ademidun Adebolu (1749) –

Yian Lin (1778) [E04]

Oregon Junior Closed (Challengers)
Portland, OR (R2), December 6, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

The game starts as a civilized Catalan and breaks loose into chaos.

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 c6 3.d4 d5 4.Nc3 e6 5.g3 dxc4 6.Ne5 b5 7.Bg2 Nd5

7...a6 8.Nxc6 Qb6

8.e4 Nxc3 9.bxc3 Bb7

9...Be7±

10.Qh5!± g6 11.Nxg6! fxc6 12.Qe5 Qe7 13.Qxh8 Nd7 14.h4 0-0-0 15.Bg5 Qf7 16.Bxd8 Bg7! 17.Qxh7 Nf8! 18.Qxg7 Qxg7 19.Ba5± Nd7 20.0-0-0 Nf6

20...Qf8! 21.Kb1! (21.Bb4 Qxf2 22.Rd2 Qe3±; 21.a4 Qa3+ 22.Kd2 Nf6.) 21...Qxf2 22.Bh3!∞



L-R: Saahil Gupta, Hayul Lim. Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

21.Kb2± Qh6 22.Bf3 Kd7 23.e5 Ng8
 24.h5 g5 25.g4 Qf8 26.Rh3
 26.h6 Nxb6 27.Be4
 26...Nh6 27.Rg3
 27.Ka1; 27.Bb4
 27...Nxb4!± 28.Rxg4
 28.Bxg4 Qxf2+-+
 28...Qxf3 29.Rdg1 Qxf2+
 29...c5 30.dxc5 Be4=

30.Ka1 c5 31.dxc5 Bf3 32.Rxg5 Bxb5
 33.R1g2
 33.Rg7+ Kc6 34.Rb1!
 33...Qe1+=



Position after 33...Qe1+

34.Kb2 Be2
 34...Bf3=
 35.Rg7+! Kc6 36.Rc7+ Kd5 37.Rd7+
 Kxe5 38.Bc7+ Kf6 39.Bg3
 1-0

Round Three

Austin Tang “wastes” one of his whites, as Saahil Gupta continues his impression of [Salo Flohr](#) and completes his third draw in a row. Hayul Lim wins with Black again to take the lead in the Championship Section with 2.5/3 points.

Jiro Plaunty uses an offbeat line to gain an opening advantage against Ademidun Adebolu’s Sicilian, but Ademidun defends well in the complications as he did in round one and goes to 3.0/3, a full point ahead of Karthik Bimod and Yian Lin.

**Austin Tang (2172) –
 Saahil Gupta (1970) [C07]**
 Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)
 Portland, OR (R3), December 6, 2025
 [Wilson Gibbins]



L-R: William Nobles, Kai Lewis. Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

1.e4 e6
 Saahil varies from the Sicilian he played in round one.
 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.Ngf3



Position after 4.Ngf3

4...cxd4
 Wolfgang Uhlmann had a deep understanding of the French Defense, but Saahil finds a steadier opening approach than the one Wolfgang tried against Tal a mere 54 years earlier. 4...Nc6 5.Bb5 dxe4 6.Nxe4 Bd7 7.Bg5 Qa5+ 8.Nc3 cxd4 9.Nxd4 Bb4 10.0-0 Bxc3 11.bxc3 Qxc3 12.Nf5 exf5 13.Re1+ Be6 14.Qd6 a6 15.Bd2 Qxc2 16.Bb4 axb5 17.Qf8+ Kd7 18.Red1+ Kc7 19.Qxa81-0 Tal,M-Uhlmann,W Alekhine Memorial-02 Moscow 1971 (6)
 5.Nxd4 Nc6 6.Bb5 Bd7 7.Nxc6 Bxc6 8.Bxc6+ bxc6 9.c4 Nf6 10.Qa4 Qc7

11.exd5 exd5 12.0-0 Be7 13.cxd5 Nxd5 14.Nf3 0-0 15.Bd2 Bf6 16.Qc2 Rab8 17.Rab1 h6 18.b3 Rfe8 19.Rfe1 Qb6 20.Rbc1 Rxe1+ 21.Rxe1 Bd4 22.Re2 c5 23.Qc4 Rd8! 24.Nxd4 cxd4 25.Re5 Nc3! 26.a4 Qg6 27.g3 Ne4 28.Ba5 Ng5! 29.Rxg5 Qxg5 30.Bxd8 Qxd8 31.Qd3 Qd5 32.Kf1

1/2-1/2

**Kai Lewis (1947) –
 Hayul Lim (2064) [A30]**
 Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)
 Portland, OR (R3), December 6, 2025
 [Wilson Gibbins]

Many of the participants were playing positional openings like the English and 1.Nf3. Kai usually played 1.e4 in the past. Hayul has always played positional openings as White, so he seems comfortable in these positions.

1.c4 c5 2.g3 g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nc6= 6.e3 Nf6 7.Bg2 0-0 8.0-0 Nxd4 9.exd4 d5 10.b3
 10.c5=; 10.cxd5=
 10...Bg4 11.Qd3 Bf5 12.Qc3 dxc4 13.Bb2
 13.bxc4 Ne4 14.Bxe4 Bxd4
 13...cxb3 14.axb3 Qd7 15.Nd2 Rac8 16.Qb4 b6 17.Nc4 Rc7 18.Rfe1 Nd5 19.Bxd5 Qxd5 20.Rxe7 Rxe7 21.Qxe7

Bh3 22.Ne3 Qxb3 23.Ba3 Rc8 24.Qh4



Position after 24.Qh4

24...Qc3

24...Qxa3!

25.Rd1 Qxa3 26.Qxh3 Rc1 27.Qf1 Rxd1 28.Qxd1 Qd6 29.d5 b5 30.Qc2 a6 31.Qc6 Bf8 32.Kg2 b4 33.Kf3 b3 34.Qb7 Qb4 35.Qxb4 Bxb4 36.Nc4 a5 37.Nb2 Bc3 38.Na4 Bf6 39.d6 b2 40.Nxb2 Bxb2 41.Ke4 Kf8 42.Kd5 Ke8 43.Kc6 Kd8 44.Kb5 Bc3 45.Kc4 Bb4 46.Kd5 a4 47.h3 a3 48.Kc4 a2 49.Kd5 a1N

0-1

Jiro Plaunty (1755) –
Ademidun Adebolu (1749) [B20]
Oregon Junior Closed (Challengers)
Portland, OR (R3), December 6, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Jiro tries a speculative gambit and is rewarded with a great position. But Ademidun hangs in there and gets the win.

1.e4 c5 2.a3 Nc6

2...g6 avoids the complications that follow.

3.b4!?

This isn't a theoretical way to play for an advantage, but it is a practical one.

3...cxb4

Black can decline the pawn with 3...e6; or 3...Nf6!? 4.b5 Nd4 5.c3 Ne6 both resulting in decent positions for Black, but very chaotic.

4.axb4 Nxb4 5.c3 Nc6 6.d4 d5

6...d6

7.exd5 Qxd5 8.Na3± e6?! 9.Nb5!± Bd6 10.Bc4!?

This leads to an advantage, but not strongest. 10.Qg4; 10.c4

10...Qe4+

10...Qxc4 11.Nxd6+

11.Ne2 Bb8 12.0-0 Nge7 13.Ba3 0-0 14.Nd6 Qh4±

White still has compensation, but Black has survived the worst.

15.Ng3 Bxd6 16.Bxd6 Rd8 17.Ba3 b6

17...Nd5

18.Re1 Bb7? 19.Re4!+-



Position after 19.Re4

White is back on the attack.

19...Qf6 20.Nh5 Qg6 21.Rg4 Qxh5 22.Rxg7+ Kxg7 23.Qxh5 Ng6 24.Re1 Na5 25.Bd3 Rd5 26.Re5 Rad8 27.Bxg6 hxg6 28.Qe2 Nc4

White is still winning, but Black is continuing to pose problems.

29.Rxd5

29.Be7! R8d7 30.Rxe6! fxe6 31.Qxe6 would be hard for mortals to find over the board.; 29.Qxc4 Rxe5 30.h3 is still a little better for White.

29...Bxd5=

Stockfish says that Black is fine.

30.Bc1

Black's dark squares give the impression that White may be able to invade with his queen and Bishop.

30...a5 31.h4 Rh8 32.g3?

A natural defense to the h-pawn, but Stockfish disapproves. 32.Qg4

32...a4!± 33.Qa2 a3 34.f4

34.Bxa3 Ra8

34...Ra8 35.g4 Ne3 36.Qe2 a2 37.Bb2 a1Q+ 38.Bxa1 Rxa1+ 39.Kf2 Ra2 40.Qxa2 Nxc4+ 41.Kg3 Bxa2 42.Kxc4 Kf6

0-1

Round Four

Championship Section leader Hayul Lim gets a win over Varun Iyengar to stay in the lead. Austin Tang wins with Black to stay half a point behind. Saahil Gupta gets his first win of the tournament to obtain an undefeated 2.5/4 record, a full point behind Lim and a half point behind Tang.



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

In the Challengers Section, top seed Karthik Bimod wins with Black over Ademidun Adebolu for his third win in a row to tie Ademidun for the lead at 3.0/4.

Hayul Lim (2064) –

Varun Iyengar (2003) [A13]

Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)
Portland, OR (R4), December 7, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

1.Nf3

After his round one experiment with 1.e4!? Hayul returns to his usual positional approach to the white openings.

1...Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.e3 Bf7 5.b3 c5 6.cxd5 exd5 7.d4 0-0 8.Bb2 Nc6 9.Be2 b6 10.0-0 Bb7 11.Rc1 cxd4 12.Nxd4 Nxd4 13.Qxd4

White is close to an ideal position against Black's IQP. Black will need to develop activity quickly if he wants to avoid defending a buildup on the pawn on d5.

13...Bc5 14.Qf4 Bd6 15.Qh4

15.Qf5

15...Be5

So far, so good. Black still has equality.

16.Ba3 Re8

16...Ne4 17.Be7 g5! =

17.Bb5 Re6

17...Bxc3!? 18.Bxe8 (18.Rxc3 Re4) 18...d4 19.exd4 Qd5 20.Qh3 Bxd4

18.Rfd1

18.Ne2

18...Rc8 19.Ne2 a6 20.Rxc8 Bxc8 21. Bd3



Position after 21.Bd3

21...Rc6?

Black misses a nice tactic. 21...Re8± defends the queen, which is critical, as you will soon see.

22.Bxh7+! Kh8 23.Rxd5! Bxh2+

23...Qxd5 24.Be4+; 23...Qc7 24.Rxe5 Qxe5 25.Be4+ Kg8 26.Bxc6 Qa1+ 27.Nc1

24.Qxh2 Qxd5 25.Be4+

1-0

Kai Lewis (1947) –

Austin Tang (2172) [A23]

Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)
Portland, OR (R4), December 7, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

1.c4 e5

Austin needs to win his last two games and hope Hayul can't maintain perfection. He probably would have preferred a Sicilian, but perhaps a reversed Sicilian is the next best thing.

2.g3 c6 3.Nf3 e4 4.Nd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Qb6

This is a theoretical move and probably strongest. So much for teaching players not to bring their queen out too early.

6.e3

I would be nervous about the weak squares on d3 and f3, but this is a theoretical move that is perfectly playable. The game is still roughly equal.

6...d5 7.d3 Bb4

Black needs to pin the knight on c3 to prevent his center from crumbling, but if he has to exchange it for the knight it will be a small price to pay for the easy

development he has in the resulting position.

8.Bd2 Bg4 9.Be2 Bh3?!

9...Bxe2 10.Qxe2 exd3 11.Qxd3 Qa6∞

10.cxd5

10.dxe4 dxe4? (10...Nxe4±) 11.g4±

10...cxd5

10...exd3 distracting the bishop from supporting the pawn advance g3-g4
11.Bxd3 0-0 =

11.Qa4+

11.a3 Bd6 (11...Bxc3 12.Bxc3 Bd7±) 12.g4±

11...Nbd7?!

11...Bd7

12.Nxe4! Bxd2+ 13.Nxd2 0-0 14.Qb3 Qc7



Position after 14...Qc7



L-R: Jiro Roland Plaunty, Emel Bayrambeyli, Lucas Maokhampio, Karthik Bimod, Yian Lin, Ademidun Adebolu. Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

15.g4?!

15.Bf1±

15...Bxg4= 16.Bxg4 Nxg4 17.Qxd5 Nde5 18.Ke2?!

A decent try—White’s king looks as safe in the center as it is on the kingside. Stockfish suggests 18.0-0 and says White is equal in spite of White missing the g-pawn from the King’s protective cover. 18...Nxd3 19.N2f3

18...Rad8! 19.Qb3

19.Qg2 Qb6

19...Rfe8

19...Rxd4 20.exd4 Nc6 21.Nf3 Re8+ 22.Kf1 Qf4 23.Kg2 Re2 24.Raf1 Ne3+

20.h3 Rxd4! 21.hxg4

21.exd4 Nxd3+ 22.Kxd3 Nxf2#

21...Rxd3 22.Qb5 Rxd2+ 23.Kxd2 Nf3+ 24.Ke2

24.Kd1 Qd6+ 25.Kc2 Rc8+ 26.Kb3 (26.Kb1 Nd2#) 26...Nd2+ 27.Ka4 Rc6 28.Rac1 Ra6+ 29.Qxa6 Qxa6+

24...Nd4+

0-1

Ademidun Adebolu (1749) – Karthik Bimod (1999) [E66]

Oregon Junior Closed (Challengers)
Portland, OR (R4), December 7, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Ademidun is 3.0/3 and Karthik is 2.0/3, so Karthik needs a win with Black. Luckily for Karthik someone created the ideal defense for his predicament—the King’s Indian. I am adding lots of unfair punctuation to this game. It is extremely difficult to consistently make accurate moves in King’s Indian positions. The players are coming up with admirable ideas in spite of what Stockfish says.

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 5.0-0 d6 6.d4 c5 7.Nc3 Nc6 8.d5 Na5 9. Nd2



Position after 9.Nd2

9...Re8

I thought Black had to rescue his errant knight with 9...a6 10.Rb1 Rb8; or start staking a claim in the center with 9...e6; or 9...e5, but Stockfish says Karthik’s choice is just as good as the main lines.

10.a3 Ng4?!

10...Bd7 11.b4?! (11.Rb1 a6 12.b3 b5; 11.Qc2 Rc8 12.b3) 11...cxb4 12.axb4 Nxc4 13.Nxc4 Qc7

11.Qc2! Ne5 12.b3 a6 13.h3 b5 14.cxb5

14.f4! Nd7 15.Bb2±

14...axb5 15.Bb2= Rb8

15...Qb6

16.f4!± Nd7 17.b4

17.Nce4 Bxb2 18.Qxb2 Nb6 19.Nc3±

17...Nc4

17...cxb4 18.axb4 Nc4

18.Nxc4 bxc4 19.b5!± Qa5 20.Rfb1

20.a4 Nb6 21.Nd1 Bd4+ 22.Kh2± (22.e3? Bf5)

20...Nb6 21.Nd1?

21.a4=; 21.e4=

21...Bxb2 22.Nxb2 c3! 23.Nd1 Na4 24.b6 Ba6 25.e4 Rb7 26.Rc1 Rxb6 27.Nxc3 Nxc3 28.Qxc3 Qxc3 29.Rxc3 Reb8 30.g4 h6 31.h4 Be2 32.g5 hxg5 33.hxg5 Rb1+ 34.Rc1

34.Rxb1 Rxb1+ 35.Kf2=

34...R1b3

34...R1b2 35.a4 R8b3 36.a5 Kg7 37.a6? Bxa6 38.Rxa6 Rg3

35.Ra2 Bd3!-+



Position after 35...Bd3

The game has gone back and forth up to here, but at this point, Black seizes the advantage and never lets go.

36.e5 Ra8 37.exd6 exd6 38.Rca1 Bb1 39.Re2 Raxa3 40.Rxa3 Rxa3 41.Re8+ Kg7 42.Rd8 Ra6 43.Re8 Bd3 44.Re6 Bb5 45.Rc7 Ra8 46.Bh3 Kf8 47.f5 gxf5 48.Bxf5 Re8 49.g6 fxe6 50.Bxg6 Re5 51.Rf7+ Kg8 52.Rf6 Kg7 53.Rxd6 Rg5+ 54.Kf2 Rxe6 55.Rd8 Kf7 56.Re8 c4 57.Ke3 Rg4 58.Rc5 Ba4 59.Rc7+ Kf6 60.Ra7 Bb3 61.Ra6+ Ke5 62.d6 Rg7 63.Ra5+ Kxd6 64.Kd4 Rg4+ 65.Kc3 Kc6 66.Rh5 Rg6 67.Kb4 Rd6 68.Re5+ Kd7 69.Rh5 Rf6 70.Rd5+ Ke6 71.Rd8 Ke5 72.Rd2 Ke4 73.Rd8 Rf5 74.Kc3 Rf3+ 75.Kb4 Rd3 76.Re8+ Kf3 77.Re7 Re3 78.Rh7 Ke2 79.Rh2+ Kd3 80.Rh7 Re2 81.Rh3+ Ke2 82.Ka3 Rd2 83.Rc3+ Kb1 84.Rh3 Rd3 85.Rh8 Ba2+ 86.Kb4

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c3 87.Rh1+ Kb2

0-1

Saahil Gupta (1970) –

William Nobles (1967) [E02]

Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)

Portland, OR (R4), December 7, 2025

[Wilson Gibbins]

Saahil gets a smooth positional win. Kids today—where are the gambits of yesteryear?

1.c4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 dxc4 5.Qa4+ Nbd7 6.Qxc4 a6 7.Qc2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.d4 c5 10.Nc3 cxd4 11.Nxd4 Bc5 12.Nb3 Ba7 13.Ne4 Nxe4 14.Bxe4 Nf6 15.Bg2 Qe7 16.Bd2 e5 17.a3 Re8 18.Bb4 Qe6 19.Rad1 e4 20.Rd6 Qe5 21.Rfd1 Qh5

21...Bg4

22.Bc5 Bxc5 23.Nxc5 Bf5 24.e3= Rac8 25.b4 Bh3 26.Qd2 Ng4?!

26...Bxg2 27.Kxg2 Qf3+ 28.Kg1 h5 29.h4=

27.Qd5! g5 28.Bxh3 Qxh3 29.Qxg5+ Kh8 30.Qh4 Qxh4 31.gxh4 Ne5 32.Kf1 Nf3 33.Ke2 Nxh4 34.Nxb7 Nf3 35.Nc5 Nxh2 36.Rxa6 Ng4 37.Ra7 Ne5 38.Rb7 f5 39.Rh1 Rcd8 40.Rbxh7+ Kg8 41. Rh8+ Kf7 42.Rxe8 Rxe8 43.Rd1 Rh8 44.Rd5 Kf6



Position after 44...Kf6

45.Nd7+

Drops the a-pawn, but avoids complications and simplifies into a clearly winning rook ending.

45...Nxd7 46.Rxd7 Ra8 47.Rd2 Rxa3 48.Rb2

With the rook behind the passed pawn, the win is straightforward.

48...Ra6 49.b5 Rb6 50.Kd2 Ke5 51.Kc3 Kd6 52.Kc4 Kc7 53.Kd5 Rf6 54.Rc2+ Kb7 55.Rc6 Rf8 56.Ke5 Ra8 57.Rf6 Ra5 58.Kxf5 Rxb5+ 59.Kxe4 Kc7 60.Re6 Kd7 61.Re5 Rb6 62.Kf5 Rb8 63.f4 Rf8+ 64.Ke4 Kd6 65.Rh5 Ke6 66.Rh6+ Ke7 67.Ke5 Rg8 68.Rh7+ Ke8 69.f5 Rg3 70.e4 Ra3 71.f6 Kf8 72.Kf5 Rf3+ 73.Ke6 Kg8 74.Rd7 Rf4 75.e5 Rf1 76.Rd8+ Kh7 77.Ke7 Rf5 78.e6 Ra5 79.f7 Ra7+ 80.Rd7

1-0

Round Five

Going into the final round, three players can potentially win at least a piece of the Championship Section. Hayul can win outright with a last round win. If he draws, Austin can catch him for a tie for first with a win. But if Saahil beats Hayul, then there is a three-way tie for first if Austin draws, a two-way tie for first between Saahil and Hayul if Austin loses, or Austin can win it outright if he wins. And that is how it went down.

Austin Tang wins another game on the Black side of a reversed Sicilian to become the leader in the clubhouse with 4.0/5. Saahil Gupta grinds out a 65-move win over Hayul Lim's Benoni.

Karthik Bimod has one the shortest games of the round with a 22-move win over Jiro Plaunty, and Ademidun Adebolu wins the longest game of the round, a

71-move struggle over Emel Bayrambeli resulting in a 4.0/5 tie for first place in the Challengers Section between Karthik Bimod and Ademidun Adebolo.

William Nobles (1967) –

Austin Tang (2172) [A22]

Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)

Portland, OR (R5), December 7, 2025

[Wilson Gibbins]

Will used to play 1.e4, but has gone to 1.c4 for this tournament. Austin probably would have preferred a Sicilian in a must-win round but has plenty of experience with 1.c4 e5. Austin is still half-a-point behind Hayul.

1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.g3 Bb4 4.Bg2 0-0 5.d3 c6 6.Nf3 Re8

6...d5 7.Nxe5? d4

7.0-0 h6 8.a3 Bf8

8...Bxc3 9.bxc3 d5 10.cxd5 cxd5 11.c4 dxc4 12.dxc4 Qc7

9.b4

9.e4

9...d5 10.cxd5 cxd5 11.e4 a5

11...d4 12.Nd5 Nxd5 13.exd5 Bg4 (13...Qxd5 14.Re1 Qd6)

12.Rb1 Na6 13.b5?

13.Nxd5 Nxd5 14.exd5 axb4 15.axb4 Nxb4 16.Bb2

13...Nc5 14.Qc2 g6

14...d4 15.Na4 Nxa4 16.Qxa4 Nd7

15.Nd2 dxe4

15...d4

16.Ndxe4 Nfxe4 17.dxe4 Be6= 18.Rd1 Qf6 19.Nd5 Bxd5 20.Rxd5 Rac8 21.f4 exf4 22.Bb2! Qe7 23.Bh3

23.Qc3 f6 24.e5 fxe5 25.Rxe5 Qxe5 26.Qxe5 Rxe5 27.Bxe5 fxg3 28.Bxg3 and Stockfish claims equality.



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23...Ne6! 24.Qd3 fxc3 25.hxc3 Bg7
 25...Rcd8
 26.Bxc7 Kxc7 27.Rd7?
 Tempting, but 27.Rf1=

27...Qc5+!-+ 28.Kh1 Qh5 29.g4 Qe5
 30.Rf1 Nf4 31.Qf3 g5 32.Bg2 Qxb5
 33.e5? Qxd7

0-1

Saahil Gupta (1970) –
 Hayul Lim (2064) [A43]

Oregon Junior Closed (Championship)
 Portland, OR (R5), December 7, 2025
 [Wilson Gibbins]

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 c5 3.d5 b5 4.Bg5 b4 5.a3
 bxa3 6.Rxa3 d6 7.Bxf6
 7.e4!? Nxe4 8.Bb5+ Bd7 9.Bd3 Nf6
 10.0-0 and Stockfish says +2.; 7.Nc3
 7...exf6 8.e4 g6 9.Bb5+ Bd7 10.Qe2
 10.Bd3!?

10...Bg7 11.0-0 0-0 12.Bxd7 Nxd7
 13.Nc3 Qe7 14.Qd3 Nb6

14...Rfb8=

15.Nd2 Rfb8 16.b3 Rb7 17.Nd1 a5
 18.Nc3

18.Ne3±

18...f5 19.exf5 gxf5

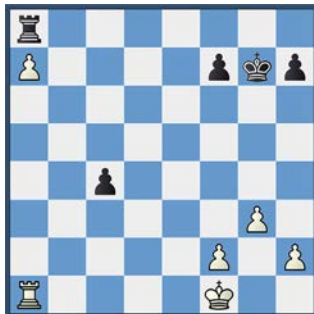
19...Qe5=

20.Na4±

White grabs a clear advantage and never
 relinquishes it.

20...Nxa4 21.Rxa4 Qd7 22.Nc4 Rbb8
 23.Ne3 Rb4 24.Nxf5 Rxa4 25.bxa4 Re8
 26.Nxc7 Kxc7 27.Qc3+ Kg8 28.Qxa5
 Qf5 29.Qb5 Kf8 30.Qb3 Re2 31.c4 Qc2
 32.Qb8+ Kg7 33.Qxd6 Qxc4 34.Qc6
 Rd2 35.d6 Qd5 36.Qxd5 Rxd5 37.g3
 Rxd6 38.Rc1 Rd4 39.a5 c4 40.a6 Rd6

41.Ra1 Rd8 42.a7 Ra8 43.Kf1



Position after 43.Kf1

Not all rook endings are drawn.

43...Kf6 44.Ra5 Ke6 45.Ke2 Kd6
 46.Kd2 Kc6 47.Kc3 Kb6 48.Ra2 Kb5
 49.g4 Kc5 50.h4 f6 51.f4 Kd5 52.g5
 Ke6 53.Ra5 fxc5 54.hxc5 Kf7 55.Ra6
 Kg7 56.Kxc4 Kf7 57.Kb5 Kg7 58.Kb6
 h6 59.gxh6+ Kh7 60.Kb7 Re8 61.a8Q
 Re7+ 62.Kc6 Re6+ 63.Kb7 Re7+
 64.Kb8 Re8+ 65.Ka7

1-0

Karthik Bimod (1999) –
 Jiro Plaunty (1755) [E73]

Oregon Junior Closed (Challengers)
 Portland, OR (R5), December 7, 2025
 [Wilson Gibbins]

Karthik wins quickly in round five to claim
 a share of the Challengers championship.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2
 0-0 6.Bg5 h6 7.Be3 e5 8.d5 a5 9.g4 Kh7
 10.h4 Nfd7 11.Nf3 Na6 12.Nd2

Black has made normal King's Indian
 moves, yet White has obtained a clear
 advantage. But there will be a little King's
 Indian Chaos™ before the dust settles.

12...Ndc5 13.Nf1

After 13.h5 g5 White's king will be

perfectly safe castling kingside. 14.0-0

13...f5

Black is riskily opening lines towards his
 own king, but he must play this move to
 create complications. If moves like this
 look foolhardy to you, consider taking up
 the Queen's Gambit Declined.

14.gxf5 gxf5 15.exf5 Bxf5 16.Ng3 Qf6
 17.Qd2 Nb4 18.Bxc5! dxc5 19.Nge4
 Bxe4 20.Nxe4 Qf5 21.f3!+-

White has an overwhelming advantage.
 He can castle long and build up an attack
 on Blacks King.

21...h5?

Black's bishop on g7 is the worst piece on
 the board, so he finds a way to activate it
 on h6. However...

22.a3!



Position after 22.a3

22...Bh6

Not sure if White actually played
 24.Ng5+! or Black saw it and resigned
 before he played it.

22...Na6 still loses. One line is 23.Rg1
 Qf4 24.Qxf4 exf4 25.Ng5+ Kh8 26.Ne6
 Bxb2 27.Rb1 Bc3+ 28.Kf1 Rg8 29.Rxb7
 and Black's weak pawns start to fall.

1-0

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**Ademidun Adebolu (1749) –
Emel Bayrambeyli (1866) [E02]**
Oregon Junior Closed (Challengers)
Portland, OR (R5), December 7, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Ademidun also wins round five to claim a share of the Challengers championship.

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.d4 Be7 5.
Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Qc2 Bd7 8.Qxc4
Bc6 9.Nc3 a6 10.Bg5 b5 11.Qd3



Position after 11.Qd3

11...b4

11...Nbd7

12.Bxf6 Bxf6 13.Ne4 Be7 14.Rac1 Bb5

15.Qc2 c6 16.Rfd1 Nd7 17.Ne5 Rc8
18.Nc5 Nxc5 19.dxc5 Qc7 20.f4 Rfd8
21.a4 bxa3 22.bxa3 Qa5 23.Rxd8+
Bxd8 24.Qb3 Be7 25.Qe3 Bf6 26.Nc4
Bxc4 27.Rxc4 Qe1+ 28.Bf1 Rd8 29.Rc1
Qa5 30.Kg2



Position after 30.Kg2

30...Bd4

30...g6

31.Qe4 Rd5 32.f5 e5 33.f6 Qd8 34.fgx7
Qf6

34...Qg5 35.Rc2=

35.e3 Bxc5

35...Qh6

36.Bd3 Qxg7 37.Rf1 Be7

37...Rd6

38.Bc4 Rd2+ 39.Kh1 Bf6 40.Qxc6 Qh6
41.Qe8+ Qf8 42.Bxf7+ Kg7 43.Qxf8+
Kxf8 44.Rxf6 Ke7 45.Rf1 Rd3 46.Bc4
Rxe3 47.Rf7+ Kd6 48.Rxh7 Rxa3
49.Rh6+ Kc5 50.Bxa6 e4 51.Kg2 Ra2+
52.Kf1 Kd4 53.g4 Ke3 54.Rh3+ Kf4
55.Be2 Ra1+ 56.Kf2 Rh1 57.Bf1 e3+
58.Kg2 e2 59.Bxe2 Ra1 60.Rf3+ Kg5
61.Rf5+ Kg6 62.Bf3 Ra3 63.Kg3 Ra7
64.h4 Kg7 65.h5 Kh6 66.g5+ Kg7
67.Rf4 Ra5 68.Kg4 Kh7 69.Be4+ Kh8
70.h6 Ra8 71.Bxa8

1-0

Thanks to Zoey Tang for organizing this tournament. Thanks to the Portland Chess Club for providing the facility for this event, perhaps for the last time as the Lloyd Center Mall is making new plans for the site. And finally, thanks to the parents who support their children at this event.

I look forward to seeing most of you back next year. We will miss you, Kai.



Karthik Bimod. Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.



Ademidun Adebolu. Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

2025 Washington Challenger's Cup

Josh Sinanan

The 2025 Washington Challenger's Cup was held National Chess Day weekend, Saturday-Sunday October 11-12, at Hotel 116 in Bellevue. Held as five-rounds, FIDE rated Swiss in two sections—Gukesh Open and Praggnanandhaa U1700—the event attracted 108 players and was held alongside the Washington Women's Championship and a scholastic event held concurrently each day in the same room. Needless to say, there was plenty of chess happening in Bellevue in celebration of National Chess Day, which takes place every second Saturday in October to honor the game of chess as a national pastime in the United States. As proclaimed by President Gerald Ford in 1976 during its inaugural year: "For both professionals and amateurs, chess is a game that sharpens the mind, tests human faculties, and encourages healthy competition. It has captivated the attention of players and spectators worldwide and will continue

to do so as long as competition and excellence challenge mankind."

As is the tradition for the Washington Challenger's Cup, the highest-finishing Washington State resident in the Gukesh Open section seeds directly into the Championship section of the 2026 Washington State Championship, set to take place at Lakeside School in Seattle over two weekends in February. Players in the Praggnanandhaa U1700 section were vying for a seed into the Rising stars section of the 2026 Washington State Championship, which now consists of eight 10-player Round Robins and continues to grow each year!

The two seeds into the Washington State Championship, along with both sections now being FIDE rated, attract many of the region's strongest players. This year's Gukesh Open featured a star-studded lineup of three FMs, six NM's, five CM's, and one WCM taking

part: FM Aziz Degenbaev, FM Ted Wang, FM Ryan Porter, NM Siddarth M. Sundaram, NM Vinesh Ravuri, NM Vidip Kona, NM Jason Cigan, NM Viktors Pupols, NM Aaryan Deshpande, CM Vihaan Jammalamadaka, CM Ananth Gottumukkala, CM Rafael Palathingal, CM Leonid Gavrysh, CM Luca Tessiere, and WCM Becca Lampman.

Chess players from throughout the Pacific Northwest were well represented from cities including: Lake Stevens, Bothell, Bellevue, Redmond, Portland, Spokane, Olympia, Sammamish, Richland, Mill Creek, Seattle, Brier, Bremerton, Shoreline, Tenino, Silver Spring (MD), Kenmore, Duvall, Lynnwood, Kirkland, Issaquah, Normandy Park, Kingston, Gig Harbor, Lake Forest Park, Beaverton, Medina, Hunts Point, Port Townsend, Ravensdale, University Place, and Burnaby (BC)! The tournament was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation, organized by WCF President Josh Sinanan, and directed by NTD Jacob Mayer, WCF Member-at-Large Ani Barua, WCF Scholastic Director Allen Messenger, and WCF Co-Vice President Rekha Sagar.

NM Vinesh Ravuri (4.5, 2332 → 2335), an Amazon software engineer based in Bellevue, won the 58-player Gukesh Open outright with an impressive 4.5 points from five games! Ravuri, who typically prefers the faster time controls, played a Swiss Gambit and drew his first-round game against Oregon Expert Karthik Bimod (2015) before winning his next four games to clinch the title. His clutch final-round victory against CM Vihaan Jammalamadaka, who had just won against FM Aziz Degenbaev (2402) and NM Vidip Kona (2194), was enough to earn him clear first place, as Oregon Master Jason Cigan (2215) only



Vinesh Ravuri (L) vs Vihaan Jammalamadaka.
Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.



WCF President Josh Sinanan makes his opening announcements.
Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

managed to draw against Arjun Krishnamachari (2319). For his victory, Vinesh is seeded into the Championship section of the 2026 Washington State Championship. Three chess musketeers tied for second-fourth place a half-point back: NM Jason Cigan (4.0, 2215 → 2226) of Portland, CM Vihaan Jammalamadaka (4.0, 2157 → 2191) of Redmond, and Ananth Gottumukkala (4.0, 2147 → 2165) of Sammamish. The U2100 prize was split evenly between three rising chess stars: Hayul Lim (3.5, 2023 → 2048) of Portland, Miles Kuipers (3.5, 1994 → 2015) of Bellevue, and Saahil Gupta (3.5, 1929 → 1972) of Portland. Young Aiden Yin (3.5, 1832 → 1937) of Burnaby, BC captured the first U1900 prize with an impressive undefeated “plus two” score.

The biggest upsets in the Gukesh Open section were achieved each round by the following players: Karthik Bimod (round one, 399/2 points), Sambuddha Das (round two, 595 points), Aiden Yin (rounds three and four, 332 and 252 points, respectively), Saahil Gupta (round five, 157 points). The Best Female prize was awarded to WCM Becca Lampman for her 2012 tournament performance rating (TPR), while CM Leonid Gavrysh, took home the Best Senior prize with a stunning TPR of 2209. The best dressed prizes in the Gukesh Open were awarded to

2025 Washington Challengers Cup: Gukesh 1700+										
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total	
1	1	NM Vinesh Ravuri	2333	D39	W29	W44	W24	W3	4.5	
2	2-4	NM Jason Cigan	2264	W45	W12	D4	W25	D6	4	
3		CM Vihaan Jammalamadaka	2164	W30	W19	W33	W9	L1	4	
4		CM Ananth Gottumukkala	2156	W40	W55	D2	D5	W16	4	
5	5-14	NM Siddarth M Sundaram	2463	W20	W35	L9	D4	W24	3.5	
6		Arjun Krishnamachari	2319	W57	W15	H---	H---	D2	3.5	
7		FM Ted Wang	2307	W21	L24	D13	W44	W25	3.5	
8		FM Ryan W Porter	2287	W27	D11	H---	W18	D12	3.5	
9		NM Vidip Kona	2243	W28	W16	W5	L3	D11	3.5	
10		CM Rafael Palathingal	2111	W58	L44	W27	W36	D14	3.5	
11		Hayul Lim	2024	W48	D8	D18	W19	D9	3.5	
12		Miles Kuipers	2006	W49	L2	W41	W39	D8	3.5	
13		Saahil Gupta	1950	D51	W32	D7	D15	W23	3.5	
14		Aiden Yin	1833	H---	D54	W34	W35	D10	3.5	
15	15-21	NM Aaryan Deshpande	2076	W42	L6	W31	D13	D17	3	
16		Gabriel Razmov	2005	W50	L9	W48	W21	L4	3	
17		Andrew Yin	2003	H---	W46	L25	W49	D15	3	
18		Neevan Reddy Saddi	1982	D32	W51	D11	L8	W39	3	
19		Jeffrey Wei	1943	W53	L3	W43	L11	W40	3	
20		Vijay Patankar	1942	L5	L41	W56	W47	W44	3	
21		Shuyi Han	1917	L7	W47	W53	L16	W36	3	
22	22-32	NM Viktors Pupols	2200	D29	D39	H---	D26	D27	2.5	
23		WCM Becca Lampman	2107	W31	L33	H---	W38	L13	2.5	
24		CM Leonid Gavrysh	2049	W47	W7	H---	L1	L5	2.5	
25		Yevgeniy Rozenfeld	2012	H---	W26	W17	L2	L7	2.5	
26		Leonardo Wang	1943	D56	L25	W46	D22	D32	2.5	
27		Isaac Vega	1892	L8	W42	L10	W48	D22	2.5	
28		Aarav Bharathy Mohan	1869	L9	L48	D42	W56	W49	2.5	
29		Yuchen Zhou	1858	D22	L1	H---	D50	W51	2.5	
30		Valentin Razmov	1831	L3	L53	W57	D51	W52	2.5	
31		Vishnu Mohan	1766	L23	W57	L15	D53	W50	2.5	
32		Austin Wentz	1705	D18	L13	H---	W55	D26	2.5	
33	33-44	FM Aziz Degenbaev	2408	W38	W23	L3	U---	U---	2	
34		Benjamin Mukumbya	2165	L55	W56	L14	U---	W53	2	
35		Harishkumar Karthikeyan	2085	W41	L5	W55	L14	U---	2	
36		Akim Pikh	1981	D43	D52	W50	L10	L21	2	
37		Nikhil Ramkumar	1944	U---	D58	D51	D41	D42	2	
38		Yuan Jiang	1941	L33	H---	W58	L23	H---	2	
39		Karthik Bimod	1934	D1	D22	W52	L12	L18	2	
40		Zane Wirkkala	1801	L4	L50	W45	W43	L19	2	
41		Benjamin Frederick	1763	L35	W20	L12	D37	H---	2	
42		Arnav Gadde	1751	L15	L27	D28	W58	D37	2	
43		Imai Maharaja	1673	D36	H---	L19	L40	W58	2	
44		Sambuddha Sekhar Das	1516	B---	W10	L1	L7	L20	2	
45	45-53	Shawn Li	1881	L2	L49	L40	W57	D47	1.5	
46		Ziqian Gao	1786	D54	L17	L26	H---	D48	1.5	
47		Lorenzo Patton Jr	1749	L24	L21	B---	L20	D45	1.5	
48		Miranda Meng	1728	L11	W28	L16	L27	D46	1.5	
49		William Chen	1727	L12	W45	H---	L17	L28	1.5	
50		Jinmo Nam	1724	L16	W40	L36	D29	L31	1.5	
51		Vihaan Pai	1615	D13	L18	D37	D30	L29	1.5	
52		Sarang Sankrithi	1609	H---	D36	L39	H---	L30	1.5	
53		Oliver He	1549	L19	W30	L21	D31	L34	1.5	
54	54-56	CM Luca Tessiore	2152	D46	D14	U---	U---	U---	1	
55		Roger Hanson	1851	W34	L4	L35	L32	U---	1	
56		Christopher Gilbert	1577	D26	L34	L20	L28	D57	1	
57	57-58	Odbayar Yondon	1932	L6	L31	L30	L45	D56	0.5	
58		Davey V Jones	1767	L10	D37	L38	L42	L43	0.5	

classy gents Sarang Sankrithi, Benjamin Frederick, and Isaac Vega on Saturday and to Jason Cigan on Sunday.

In the 50-player Praggnanandhaa U1700 section, Skyview Middle School eighth grader Rian Raja (4.5, 1625 → 1643) of Bothell emerged victorious with an impressive 4.5 score by winning his first four games before taking a fifth-round draw in the final round against Dheeran Koripella (1462) to clinch first place! For his victory, Rian is seeded into the Rising Stars section of the 2026 Washington State Championship. A trio of chess prodigies shared second-fourth place honors with four points apiece: Dheeran Koripella (4.0, 1462 → 1484) of Sammamish, Daniel Hyman (4.0, 1422 → 1494) of Silver Spring (MD), and Sai Navaneeth Satish Kumar (4.0, 1092 → 1267) of Olympia. Five rising chess superstars split the first U1500 prize, each finishing with a solid “plus two” score: Deepak Rao (3.5, 1312 → 1333) of Bellevue, Skandha Raj (3.5, 1376 → 1396) of Bellevue, Patrick Zhang (3.5, 1190 → 1259) of Sammamish, Balbir Singh (3.5, 1391 → 1397) of Seatac, and

James Hamlett (3.5, 1400 → 1414) of Shoreline. Redmond Chess King Kevin Cui (3.0, 1004 → 1183), recovered well after a difficult start and won three of his next four games to claim the first U1300 prize. Eighth-grade chess phenom Aariv Shah (2.5, 912 → 1044) of Issaquah took home the first U1100 prize with an even score.

The Biggest Upset prizes in the Praggnanandhaa U1700 section were achieved by: Aariv Shah (round one, 427 points), Brannon Underwood (round two, 342 points), Baoshuo Yao (round three, 269 points), Kevin Cui (round four, 183 points), and Liam Glaser (round five, 258 points). Bellevue Chess Queen Kaiyi Han won the Best Female prize with a TPR of 1070 while Spokane’s Steve Brendemihl claimed the Best Senior prize with a TPR of 1557. The best dressed prizes in the Praggnanandhaa U1700 were awarded to Mithran Anbuselvam on Saturday and to Vicky Yin on Sunday for their fleek ensembles!

Congratulations to the winners, and many thanks to all who contributed to this fantastic event!



Lorenzo Patton Jr. (L) vs Vijay Patankar.
Photo credit: Meiling Cheing.

Vinesh Ravuri (2333) –
Vihaan Jammalamadaka (2164) [D77]
2025 Washington Challengers Cup
Bellevue, WA (R5) October 12, 2025
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.d4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0
5.0-0 d5 6.c4

My pgn software calls this “King’s Indian: fianchetto (without c4).” This seems a bit ironic, considering White’s sixth move. It looks more like a Grünfeld to me, though as with many queen-side openings, transpositions abound.

6...dxc4

Queen’s Gambit Accepted?

7.Na3 c3 8.bxc3 c5



Position after 8...c5

9.Bb2

Still in known territory, but committing the bishop to this blocked-up diagonal seems premature to me. 9.e3 Nc6 10.Qe2 Bf5 11.Rd1 seems most played here, though the bishop very well may end up on b2 eventually. I’d be interested to see 9.Qb3 Nc6 10.Rd1 Na5 11.Qb2, evaluated as equal by Stockfish, but showing a considerable plus for White in practical human results.

9...Nc6 10.Re1

The engine approves. The only theory in my small database is 10.e3 Bf5 11.Qe2 e5, when Black is doing fine.

10...cxd4 11.cxd4 Ne4 12.Nh4

Maybe just a little decentralizing. I’d probably prefer completing development while essentially guaranteeing the central pawn duo: 12.Qc2!? Nd6

a) 12...Bf5? 13.g4! wins material.;

b) 12...f5?! 13.Qb3+ e6 (13...Kh8 14.d5±) 14.Nc4±;

13.e4± (or 13.Rad1±)

12...f5

12...Nd6^o is solid, complex, and interesting.

13.Qb3+ e6 14.Red1

14.Rad1 seems natural. White prefers the d- and c-files for the rooks.

14...Kh8?!

14...b5!?^o 15.Rac1 Qb6

15.Rac1 Qd5 16.Nc4 b6 17.f3

Nf6 18.e4 Qd8

18...fxe4 19.fxe4± Nxe4?? 20.Qe3+-

19.Ne5 Na5 20.Qe3 Nh5?!

20...Kg8±, while not good for Black, reduces the impact of some of the tactics aimed at g6.

21.Ba3

21.exf5 exf5 22.f4 Rb8 23.d5 looks dominating.

21...Rf6

Trying to save the f8-rook seems a lost cause; one reason is the white bishop has become a much better piece than the rook. 21...f4 22.Qe1 Qe8 23.Bxf8 Bxf8 24.Bh3 Ba3 doesn't really offer enough compensation for the material, and White remains positionally better as well, but it's arguably better than the game continuation.

22.g4 f4 23.Qe1 g5 24.gxh5



Position after 24.gxh5

24...gxh4

24...Qe8 25.Rc7 Qxh5 26.Bh3 Qxh4 27.Qxh4 gxh4 28.Kh1+-, with a fun attack along seventh rank, g-file, and diagonals. (28.Be7 is also a direct path to win material without much diminishing the attack.)

25.Qxh4 Ba6 26.d5 exd5 27.Rxd5 Qe8 28.Rc7 h6 29.Rxg7

29...Kxg7 30.Rd7+ wins the house.

1-0

2025 Washington Challengers Cup: Praggnanandhaa U1700

#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total
1	1	Rian Raja	1600	W46	W24	W11	W3	D2	4.5
2	2-4	Dheeran Koripella	1561	D18	W31	W36	W4	D1	4
3		Daniel Hyman	1400	W45	W21	W22	L1	W15	4
4		Sai Navaneeth Satish Kumar	1370	W49	W12	W9	L2	W21	4
5	5-11	Lewis Ma	1531	D42	W18	D14	H---	W24	3.5
6		Steven Brendemihl	1500	W34	W43	H---	D22	D11	3.5
7		Deepak Sri Kartikeya Rao	1464	D35	W42	D10	D19	W30	3.5
8		Skandha Raj	1449	L36	W26	H---	W39	W22	3.5
9		Patrick Zhang	1433	W47	W29	L4	W36	D10	3.5
10		Balbir Singh	1417	H---	W37	D7	W31	D9	3.5
11		James Hamlett	1414	W30	W32	L1	W38	D6	3.5
12	12-20	Alex Ye	1506	W19	L4	W28	D24	D14	3
13		Sanjay Urali	1490	W27	L36	D29	W42	D19	3
14		Snehil Ghosh	1429	W28	D38	D5	D30	D12	3
15		Kshitij Narkhede	1418	L29	W34	W44	W35	L3	3
16		Satish Kumar Chandra Ramachandran	1381	L38	W47	L30	W37	W36	3
17		Skyler Qin	1380	W20	L22	W48	H---	H---	3
18		Varshith Reddy Avula	1337	D2	L5	H---	W48	W38	3
19		Ziliang Ma	1310	L12	W33	W45	D7	D13	3
20		Kevin Cui	1004	L17	W46	L24	W47	W35	3
21	21-32	Stanley Deng	1691	W50	L3	D35	W32	L4	2.5
22		Naaditha Nawagamudewage	1558	W26	W17	L3	D6	L8	2.5
23		Alexander Alvarado	1409	L31	L48	W34	D29	W43	2.5
24		Guru Harshith Reddy Avula	1388	W48	L1	W20	D12	L5	2.5
25		Inura Nawagamudewage	1380	L32	L28	W46	W49	D31	2.5
26		Raghav Murthy	1325	L22	L8	D41	W50	W44	2.5
27		Olin Martin	1291	L13	H---	L42	W41	W40	2.5
28		Liam Glaser	1172	L14	W25	L12	D43	W39	2.5
29		Mikhail Lagzdin	1169	W15	L9	D13	D23	H---	2.5
30		Mithran Anbuselvam	1155	L11	W41	W16	D14	L7	2.5
31		Baoshuo Yao	1147	W23	L2	W40	L10	D25	2.5
32		Aariv Shah	953	W25	L11	W43	L21	H---	2.5
33	33-38	Harvey Wang	1439	L43	L19	D37	H---	W48	2
34		Rohit Sreraman	1297	L6	L15	L23	X46	W45	2
35		Rahul Sreraman	1262	D7	W39	D21	L15	L20	2
36		Jacob Rish-Brown	1242	W8	W13	L2	L9	L16	2
37		Yang Xu	1182	D39	L10	D33	L16	W47	2
38		Ved Dixit	1021	W16	D14	H---	L11	L18	2
39	39-45	Atharv Rao	1430	D37	L35	W49	L8	L28	1.5
40		Ryan Lai	1416	H---	D44	L31	H---	L27	1.5
41		Dmitriy Bondar	1371	U---	L30	D26	L27	W49	1.5
42		Jackson Rish-Brown	1318	D5	L7	W27	L13	U---	1.5
43		Aryan Pande	1190	W33	L6	L32	D28	L23	1.5
44		Matvei Ivanov	1166	H---	D40	L15	H---	L26	1.5
45		Jonathan Wu	1117	L3	W50	L19	H---	L34	1.5
46	46-49	Arihant Chaudhuri	1338	L1	L20	L25	F34	B---	1
47		Kaiyi Han	1187	L9	L16	W50	L20	L37	1
48		Brannon Underwood	1067	L24	W23	L17	L18	L33	1
49		Vicky Yin	864	L4	B---	L39	L25	L41	1
50	50	Ferris Samara	1353	L21	L45	L47	L26	U---	0

2026 WASHINGTON STATE CHAMPIONSHIP



February 6-8 & 21-22, 2026

Lakeside Upper School

14050 1st Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98125

Format: Eight invitation-only 10-player Round Robins by rating: Championship, Premier, Invitational, Challengers, Rising Stars, Prodigies, Wizards, and Sensations. The field of each section is determined by seeding and by the highest rated eligible players to register by the due date based on the average Jan 1st, 2026 *live* ratings of:

- (a) USCF Regular & FIDE - for the top 2 sections; or
 - (b) USCF Regular & NWSRS - for all other sections.
- All sections are triple-rated in NWSRS, USCF, and FIDE.

Time Control: 40/120; SD/30; +10.

Late default: 60 minutes (except for Round 1).

Eligibility: Open to WA residents who have resided in WA for the past 6 months and who meet the two-event activity requirement (for classical games) between Mar-Dec 2025.

Entry Fee / Deposit:

- Championship / Premier: Free, with a \$450 deposit required via check, Zelle, or SettleKing by Jan. 31, to be refunded upon successful completion of all 9 rounds.
- Invitational / Challengers / Rising Stars / Prodigies / Wizards / Sensations: \$225.

Pay by Zelle (ID: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com), SettleKing (Washington Chess Federation), or write a check made out to WCF.

Registration: Online via [online registration](#). By registering and paying, each player is confirming their ability to play in all 9 rounds, as scheduled. We will take the top 80 players (including seeded players) who have met the eligibility requirements and **confirm + pay their entry fee / deposit by the due date of Sat, Jan 31st**.

Byes: Since this is a prestigious round robin, there will be **no byes or rescheduling of games allowed** in any section. All games must be played on site under TD supervision at the scheduled round times. Players who drop out of the event will be ineligible to play in the next two years and will forfeit their entry fee / deposit / prize.

Schedule:

Check-in (mandatory): Fri, Feb 6 @ 4:30pm (before Rd. 1).

Round 1: Fri, Feb 6 @ 5pm. No late arrivals!

Rounds 2-9: Feb 7, 8, 21, 22 @ 10 AM and 5 PM.

Drawing of lots: Sun, Feb 1 @ 10 PM at the Orlov Chess Academy, Greenlake. Attendance is optional & encouraged.

Prizes: The prize fund for each section is guaranteed by WCF and may be increased based on donations.

**Championship: \$1750, Premier: \$1500,
Invitational: \$1250, Challengers: \$1000,
Rising Stars: \$750, Prodigies/Wizards/Sensations: \$500.**

Prizes (per section): **1st-5th: 45%, 25%, 15%, 10%, 5%**
Best Annotated Game: **\$50**

The winner of the Championship section receives the title **Washington State Champion**.

Seeded Players (may qualify for a higher section based on rating):

Championship: FM Ryan Porter (State champ), FM Aziz Degenbaev (Championship runner-up), CM Ananth Gottumukkala (Premier champ), NM Siddarth M. Sundaram (WA Open champ), NM Vinesh Ravuri (Challenger's Cup champ), Harishkumar Karthikeyan (WA Class - Master HFWR), TBA (Junior Closed champ).

Premier: NM Advait Vijayakumar (Premier runner-up), Pratik Thorve (Invitational champ), NM Bertrand Wan (Winter Classic winner), Shawn Li (WA Class, Expert winner).

Invitational: Emerson Wong-Godfrey (Invitational runner-up), Gabriel Razmov (Challengers champ), CM Leonid Gavrysh (Senior champ), NM Advait Vijayakumar (President's Cup champ), Saiya Karamali (Women's champ), Arnav Gadde (WA Class - Class A winner), Valentin Razmov (Harmon Memorial HFWR).

Challengers: Akim Pikh (Challengers runner-up), Brook Ayalew (Rising Stars champ), NM Andrew Fletcher (Bellingham Open winner), Zane Wirkkala (WA Open - U1800 winner, WA Class - Class B winner), Thrinay Subramanian (Mid-year Scholastic - Section 1 winner), Rian Raja (WA Winter Classic, U1800 section winner), TBA (Junior Invitational champ).

Rising Stars: Haituka Anandkumar (Rising Stars runner-up), Rian Raja (Prodigies champ, Challenger's Cup - U1700 winner), Rushil Singh (WA Class, Class C winner), Loida Guo (WCF nominee).

Prodigies: Shanna Wu (Prodigies runner-up), Harry Wu (Wizards champ), Ryan Lai + Ashwin Vijayaguru (Winter Classic - U1400 winners).

Wizards: Daniel Yun (Wizards runner-up), Vivaan Sankrithi (Sensations champ).

Sensations: Emma Ge (Sensations runner-up).

Memberships: Current US Chess and WCF memberships required. Memberships must be paid at the time of registration.

Info: Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206.769.3757,
WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

National Chess Day Scholastic Chess

Rekha Sagar

The 2025 National Chess Day Scholastic Chess Tournament took place on National Chess Day, Saturday, October 11, at Hotel 116 in Bellevue. The 63-player event kicked off the National Chess Day festivities hosted by the Washington Chess Federation (WCF).

In 1976, President Gerald Ford, an avid chess fan, proclaimed the *second Saturday of October* as National Chess Day, encouraging Americans of all ages to celebrate chess as a timeless and intellectually enriching pastime. Nearly 50 years later, the tradition continues, and this year's scholastic tournament brought together a new generation of players to honor the game.

Participants ranged from grades K-12 and competed across four sections divided by grade and rating strength:

- K-3 U800
- K-3 Open
- 4-12 U900
- 4-12 Open

For three young chess ninjas, this tournament marked their first-ever USCF-rated event, making National Chess Day even more memorable.

Thanks to its convenient Bellevue location, the tournament attracted players from across the Pacific Northwest, including Snohomish, Renton, Redmond, Seattle, Bellevue, Bothell, Mill Creek, Bellingham, Issaquah, Gig Harbor, Hillsboro, Sammamish, Clyde Hill, and Mercer Island.

The cadence of play was lightning-fast in the younger sections and more measured among the older competitors. Throughout the day, players displayed remarkable creativity and confidence—

with daring sacrifices, sharp tactical shots, and resourceful defensive ideas. As noted by Chief Tournament Director Rekha Sagar, the students showed *impressive sportsmanship, discipline, and respect at the boards*, embodying the spirit of scholastic chess.

The event was directed by WCF Vice President Rekha Sagar, with assistance

from WCF President Josh Sinanan and WCF Women's and Girls' Director Chouchan Airapetian. Beautiful event photos and videos were captured by Meiling Cheng and Rekha Sagar, helping preserve the energy and excitement of the day.

Congratulations to the winners:

National Chess Day Scholastic Prizes				
Individual Prizes - Amazon Gift cards awarded in each section. 1st - 4th: \$70-65-60-\$55.				
Section	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	4th Place
K-3 U800	Jairam Ishaan Kakarlapudi	Ayaan Karthik	Ary Cheng Jerry Zhao	
K-3 Open	Kyle Liu	Leo Gu Dhruv Bangard		William Zhang
4-12 U900	Aaron Huang	Luke Shi Sharvil Gunadekar		Aaron Dai
4-12 Open	Ron Li	Ian Gagnier Justin Lee Julian Chen		

Special Prizes - Medals for first-timers (awarded at-site), best female player, best dressed, and biggest upset win.			
Section	Best Female Player	Best Dressed	Biggest Upset Win
K-3 U800	Nora Saha	Nora Saha	Kevin Dai
K-3 Open	N/A	N/A	Leo Gu
4-12 U900	Shivani Dalakoti	N/A	Aiden Lee
4-12 Open	Yuanyi Jiang	N/A	Bryan Li

Challenger's Cup Scholastic

Rekha Sagar

The 2025 Challenger's Cup Scholastic took place on Sunday, October 12, 2025, at Hotel 116 in Bellevue, a centrally located venue known for its spacious event rooms, friendly staff, and easy access for families traveling from across the region. This was the first time the scholastic section was held alongside the adult tournaments and the Washington Women's Championship, which allowed many young players to observe higher-level games and even have their own games annotated by Chouchan Airapetian. A total of 55 scholastic chess players in grades K–12 participated from throughout the Pacific Northwest.

The event was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation and directed by WCF Vice President Rekha Sagar. Beautiful photos were taken throughout the day by chess mom and photographer extraordinaire Meiling Cheng, whose work captured the excitement, focus, and joy of the young competitors.

The tournament featured a dual format, consisting of two classical and two rapid sections. The rapid sections—K–3 U800 and 4–6 U1000—were each run as a six-round G/25; +5 Swiss, ideal for developing players gaining tournament experience. For the older, more advanced players, the classical sections—K–5 Open and 6–12 Open—featured three rounds of G/50; +10, providing a meaningful stepping-stone for students transitioning to deeper, longer time-control games.

As an extra incentive to participate in the classical sections, the top-finishing player (by performance rating) in both the K–5 Open and 6–12 Open sections earned free entry into the 2025 Washington Class Championships.

Congratulations to all the courageous chess warriors who participated—including three students for whom this was their first NWSRS-rated chess

tournament! Our vibrant scholastic chess community continues to grow and thrive with every event, with many juniors already seeking early qualifications for

the Washington State Elementary Chess Championships in April.

Special congratulations to the Amazon gift card prize winners:

Challengers Cup Scholastic Prizes

Individual Prizes - Amazon Gift cards awarded in each section.

1st - 4th: \$70-65-60-\$55.

Section	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place	4th Place
K-3 U800	Eli Zhang	Bobby Chai	Ary Cheng Brayden Wei	
4-6 U1000	Rohan Borkar Jethro Xia		Owen Chen Nolan Yin Vihaan Singh	
K-5 Open	Samik Kulkarni (wins free entry into WA Class) Ren Wadhwani		Farhan Mohammed Evan Lin	
6-12 Open	Leo Luo (wins free entry into WA Class) Jake Bravenboer		Jizhou He Easton Ren Vyom Joshi William Kang Owen Zhang Felix Han	

Special Prizes - Medals for first-timers (awarded at-site), best female player, best dressed, and biggest upset win.

Section	First-Timers	Best Female Player	Best Dressed	Biggest Upset Win
K-3 U800	Veronica AstafyevaSamyukta Siddhartha			Sushant Deshpande
4-6 U1000		Sanjana Siddhartha		Hrithick Thoppay
K-5 Open		Alice Li		Evan Lin
6-12 Open				Viet Nguyen

WASHINGTON PRESIDENT'S CUP



FEBRUARY 14-15, 2026

HOTEL 116 BELLEVUE

625 116TH AVE NE, BELLEVUE, WA 98004

Highest finishing Washington resident in the Open section seeded into the 2027 Washington State Championship – Invitational section.

Format: A five-round Swiss in three sections:
Kennedy Open, Johnson U1700 & Nixon U1300

In case of a tie for 1st place, a future follow-up playoff match will determine the seed for the Invitational section of the 2027 Washington State Championship.

Time Control: G/90; +30 sec. increment.
Late default: 60 minutes.

Schedule: Sat @ 9 AM, 2 PM, 7 PM. Sun @ 10 AM, 3 PM. Games that go long may request a late start for the next round.

Prize Fund: \$5,500 based on 100 paid entries.

Kennedy Open: 1st-4th: \$500-\$400-\$300-\$250,
1st-2nd U2100: \$175-\$150, 1st-2nd U1900: \$175-\$150.

Johnson U1700: 1st-4th: \$400-\$300-\$200-\$150,
1st-2nd U1600: \$125-\$100, 1st-2nd U1400: \$125-\$100.

Nixon U1300: 1st-4th: \$300-\$250-\$200-\$150,
1st-2nd U1100: \$100-\$75, 1st-2nd U900: \$100-\$75.

Special Prizes (per section):

Biggest Upset Win: \$20/rd., Best Female Player (by TPR): \$50, Best Senior Player (by TPR): \$50,
Best Dressed: \$20/day.

Entry Fee: \$110 by 2/7, \$140 after. Free entry (pending completion without withdrawals) for GMs, IMs, WGMs, and WIMs. Chess Senators rated 2200+ USCF receive a \$50 discount. \$60 play-up fee if rated 1600-1699 or 1200-1299 in both NWSRS and USCF and playing up in Kennedy Open or Johnson U1700, respectively. Maximum of 200 players.

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

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

Rating: Triple rated in NWSRS, USCF, and FIDE. Higher of February 2026 US Chess or current NWSRS rating used to determine section, pairings, and prizes. Higher of USCF or foreign rating used at TD discretion.

Registration: Online at nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration. Pay by SettleKing (Washington Chess Federation), Zelle (ID: see email below), or mail a check to WCF. Registration and payment **deadline: Fri. 2/13 @ 5pm**. No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline.

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

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

Contact: Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206.769.3757

Email: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

Presidential Blitz: Sunday 7-9pm (after rd. 5 of main tournament). **Entry Fee:** \$30. **Format:** A 9-Round Single Swiss in one section, 2 half-point byes available. Dual US Chess Blitz + FIDE Blitz rated. **TC:** G/3; +2. **On-site registration:** 6:00-6:45pm. Rds. Sun @ 7pm, 7:15, 7:30, 7:45, 8, 8:15, 8:30, 8:45, 9pm. Closing Ceremony ~ 9:15pm or asap. Current US Chess membership required. Higher of February 2026 US Chess Blitz or Regular rating used to determine pairings and prizes. **Prize Fund: \$750** (b/o 50 pd. entries)
1st – 3rd: \$170-120-90,
1st U2000/U1800/U1600/U1400/U1200/U1000/Unrated: \$40. Biggest upset win: \$10/rd.

PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLASTIC

CHESS TOURNAMENT

Sunday, February 15, 2026

Chinook Middle School

2001 98th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA 98004



FORMAT

A 5-round G/25; +5 Swiss in 7 sections:

- K-1 U700**
- 2-3 U700**
- K-3 Open**
- 4-6 U800**
- 4-6 Open**
- 7-12 U900**
- 7-12 Open**

Dual NWSRS + USCF rated, with US Chess 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 U700. All equipment is provided courtesy of WCF.

SCHEDULE

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

ELIGIBILITY

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

ENTRY FEE

\$55 by Feb. 8th, \$65 after.
Room for 250 players.

AWARDS

Section Prizes: Amazon e-gift cards awarded in each section:
1st – 5th: \$70-65-60-55-50.

Team Prizes: Plaques awarded to:

The top 5 finishing teams (top 4 scores from same school comprise team score) across all sections. The team that brings the most players across all sections wins an exclusive lesson with NM & WCF President Josh Sinanan.

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

RATING

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

THE DETAILS

Online Registration:

NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/
Pay by Zelle (ID:

WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com),
SettleKing (Washington Chess Federation), or mail a check to WCF.

100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Sat. Feb. 14th @ 5:00pm. Unpaid players by the deadline will be withdrawn from the tournament.

WA State Scholastic Qualifier!

This event is a qualifier for the WA State Scholastic Championships on April 25, 2026, in Tacoma. Players scoring 3.0+ points will qualify for the Championship sections of State. No qualification required for kindergarten players; all are eligible to play at State!

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

Questions? Rekha Sagar, WCF Vice President: rekha4chess@gmail.com

A Conversation With FIDE Master Ted Wang

Three-time US National Champion

FIDE Master At 11

National Master At 10

Ken Lee

Ken: When did you first start playing chess?

Ted: I started playing chess about six years ago when I was in Pre-K. I just started playing with some friends and I liked it right away. I'm 11 years old now.

Ken: Do you remember your first chess tournament?

Ted: Yeah, my first chess tournament was in kindergarten. It was kind of nerve-racking, and I remember blundering a bunch of checkmates. I ended up winning three out of five games.

Ken: Who was your first chess coach?

Ted: My first coach was GM Gregory Serper.

Ken: That's interesting. Were you

and your family very intentional about working with a GM right away?

Ted: Actually, it wasn't even on our radar to work with a GM right away. Normally, working with a GM is for advanced players, but we were fortunate to meet Coach Serper by accident.

Ken: How did that happen?

Ted: I have an older sister who studies piano with a teacher named Irina Akhrin.

She asked me if I would like to play piano too and I said no :). She then asked me what hobbies I enjoyed, and I mentioned chess.

Irina said that she happened to know a good chess coach and she introduced me to Coach Serper.

Ken: That's amazing. Do you think that Coach Serper noticed your chess potential early on?

Ted: Coach Serper noticed that I liked to work on tactics. Back then, I liked to watch a lot of YouTube chess videos. He advised me to be much more selective about what

I watch and how I train. He said quality was more important than quantity.

Ken: What did he mean by that?

Ted: He encouraged me to go deeper with individual lessons rather than trying a bunch of different things.

For example, that would mean learning how to play and defend against a particular line thoroughly versus jumping around from tactic to tactic.

Ken: What other elements do you think contributed to your rapid rise in the chess world?

Ted: I think at any stage in your chess career, it's helpful to work on chess puzzles. When you are younger, it's hard to sit still, and so you work on mate in two, mate in three, mate in four, and so on.

As you get more experienced/seasoned, the puzzles require more time and hard work to solve.

Ken: What are some of your favorite puzzles to work on?

Ted: In 2020, during the COVID pandemic, my lessons switched from in-person to online with Coach Serper.

That time gave me a lot of time to work on puzzles. I think I cycled through all the puzzles on Chess.com that were available at the time. So, eventually, I switched to puzzles on ChessTempo.



Don't miss out on the opportunity to make your next move in the game of real estate. Your kingdom awaits!

Contact Lin S. Shih
(206) 954-0963
lin@linshih.com

Coldwell Banker Bain

Ken: Were there other factors that you think contributed to your fast ascent in chess?

Ted: When I lost a game or a tournament, I used that disappointment to come back and train harder.

Ken: You were able to use setbacks as motivation to work harder?

Ted: Yeah. When I lost a tough match, I wanted to work even harder and beat that opponent the next time I faced them.

Ken: What does your training schedule look like?

Ted: It's not that structured really. I like doing puzzles and I review all my games with Coach Serper. He's good at finding key tilting points in my games and helping me work on those areas.

Ken: What is your favorite chess tournament?

Ted: The FIDE World Cup Tournament in Batumi, Georgia in 2024 was a lot of fun.

It's a small tournament consisting of 48 players in each section where each federation nominates three to four representatives.

I didn't do very well, but to me it was a good experience because I got to see my friends and made a lot of new friends from different countries. All the games were broadcast live on Chess.com and Lichess which was cool.

Ken: What four elements do you think are required to be an excellent chess player?

Ted: First, you should be able to focus deeply.

Second, you need the motivation and discipline to work hard.

Third, you must be good at pattern recognition.

Lastly, you should be consistent with your training program.

Ken: Can you expand on your ideas about your training program?

Ted: It differs from person to person. For me, I have never read any chess books from start to finish. But that's just me.

I like to work on puzzles, and I spend a lot of time studying tactics.

Ken: How does your tournament prep change as you get better?

Ted: Up until about 1500 ELO, you just go in and play your game. But when you are in the 1800 plus range, the competitive nature of the game requires that you spend time studying your opponent's individual games.

Ken: What's the best way to do that?

Ted: I go to Chessbase and look at their games.

Chessbase shows, for example, my opponents' favorite openings for White and Black.

Then I use that information to prepare for a specific opponent and style.

Ken: How do you measure your success or progress when you train?

Ted: I keep it simple. When I train, I work on four tactics per day. I figure that if I get three out of four tactics correct it might translate into a tournament draw or win.

If I get four out of four tactics correct during my chess training sessions, I think it will likely translate into a win during a tournament.

Ken: What are your future goals in chess?

Ted: My next goal is getting my norms for an International Master title.

Ken: What advice do you have for your fellow chess players around the world?

Ted: I think it's good to have chess heroes.

By analyzing games on Chess.com, I found the aggressive style of play that I enjoy. By looking at their games first, I discovered my chess heroes are Fischer and Kasparov.

I also think that it's a good idea to experience out-of-state tournaments like Nationals or Superationals.

Ken: How is playing in those tournaments different from those in the PNW?

Ted: First, you are playing as a team, so you shift your mentality from an individual to representing Washington State. Second, it adds a whole different level of fun.

Ken: What do you mean by that?

Ted: Washington has great coaches like Josh Sinanan and mentors like Siva Sankrithi who really know how to create a fun team atmosphere when we are travelling out of state.

Ken: How so?

Ted: Many Washington players travel to out of state tournaments. We often have our own team room. Best of all, we cheer and support each other throughout the tournament!

Ken: Any other advice for chess players?

Ted: I think the most important thing to remember is the long timeline of chess. I've been playing and working hard on this game for six years. I've had some success, but when I really think about it, what I really am most proud of is that I still love to play the game.

When I play, I also think of this Grandmaster Savielly Tartakower quote to help me stay focused:

"The player who wins the game is the player who makes the next to the last mistake." To me, that means that you never give up and keep fighting all the time.

Ken: Check and mate. Thank you.

“When it comes to chess training, quality is more important than quantity.”



Ted Wang—First Place Finish at North American Youth Chess Championship 2024 U12 Section.



GATOR FEST

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2026

@ DECATUR ELEMENTARY - 7711 43RD AVE NE, SEATTLE, WA 98115

FORMAT

A 5-Round G/30 Swiss in six grade-level sections:

- 👶 **Kindergarten**
- ♟️ **1st Grade**
- ♟️ **2nd Grade**
- ♟️ **3rd Grade**
- ♟️ **4th Grade**
- ♟️ **5th Grade**

Sections may be combined depending on attendance. Players in lower grades are welcome to play in higher grade sections.

SCHEDULE

Rd. 1 – 9:00am
Rd. 2 – 10:00am
Rd. 3 – 11:00am
Lunch
Rd. 4 – 12:30pm
Rd. 5 – 1:30pm
Awards Ceremony ~ 2:30pm

ENTRY FEE

\$35 by 2/21, \$45 after.
Room for 160 players.

AWARDS

Trophies awarded to the top-scoring players in each section. Trophies to the top 5 finishing teams (top 5 scores from same school comprise team score) across all sections. Medals for first-timers who do not earn a trophy.

RATING

NWSRS rated. NWSRS ratings will be used to determine board order and pairings.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all students in grades K-5 as of the 2025-26 school year. Out-of-state players welcome!

REGISTRATION

Register online at [Chessreg.com/](https://chessreg.com/)
Pay by Credit/Debit/PayPal. 100% preregistered, no on-site entries or payments. **Entry + payment deadline Feb 27 @ 5:00pm.** No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline.

WA State Scholastic Qualifier!

CLOCKS

Clocks will not be used from the start but will be placed in unfinished games after 35 minutes of play and set to 10 minutes per player with a 5-second increment.

CONCESSIONS

Pizza lunch available for pre-order only. Other refreshments available for purchase on-site.

QUESTIONS?

Contact: Libin Xu:
decaturchessclub@gmail.com

Tournament Director - Josh Sinanan:
joshsinanan@gmail.com

CO-HOSTED BY MONROE CHESS CLUB AND WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION

2026 WCF SPRING SCHOLASTIC



SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2026

COUNTRY INN & SUITES BY RADISSON

19333 N CREEK PKWY S, BOTHELL WA-98011

FORMAT

A 5-round, G/25; +5 Swiss tournament in five sections:

K-1 U700

2-3 U700

K-3 Open

4-12 U900

4-12 Open

SCHEDULE

Rd. 1 – 9:00am

Rd. 2 – 10:30am

Lunch

Rd. 3 – 12:30pm

Rd. 4 – 1:45pm

Rd. 5 – 3:00pm

Awards ~ 4:30pm

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all students in grades K-12 as of the 2025-26 school year. Out-of-state players welcome!

ENTRY FEE

\$55 by 2/16, \$65 after.
Room for 150 players.

AWARDS

Prizes: Trophies for 3 points and above in each section.

Special Prizes (per section):

Medals for first-time players, best female player, best dressed, and biggest upset win.

RATING

Dual NWSRS and US Chess rated, with **US Chess membership required in all sections.** Higher of current NWSRS or March US Chess regular rating will be used to determine section and pairings.

WA State Scholastic Qualifier!

CLOCKS + NOTATION

Chess clocks set to G/25; +5 will be used from the beginning in all games. Chess notation required in all sections except for K-1 U700. All equipment is provided courtesy of WCF.

REGISTRATION

Register online at NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/
Pay by SettleKing/Zelle/Cash/Check.
100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Friday March 6th @ 5:00pm.

No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline.

PROCEDURE

Pairings will be posted in the hallway near the parent waiting area.

Questions?

Contact: Rekha Sagar, WCF VP,
rekha4chess@gmail.com,
425-496-9160

Northwest Players At U.S. Senior Women's Championship

WCM Mary Kuhner and WFM Chouchanik Airapetian

The third annual Senior Women's Championship was held in Salt Lake City, Utah on November 14-16 as a US Chess/FIDE event.

The ten-player field was drawn from the top US women age 50 and over, including NW players WFM Chouchanik Airapetian and WCM Mary Kuhner, as well as WIM Alexey Root, who grew up in the NW but now lives in Texas. The event was organized by Maureen and David Grimaud, directed by Chief Tournament Director NTD/IA Karen Pennock and NTD/IA Kiki Huerta, supported by the Utah State Chess Association and David Day, and sponsored by Precision Care Auto Tune.

Several players were lured out of semi-retirement for this event. Mary's hopes that her first-round opponent would be rusty were dashed: she leads an active kids' club and was in excellent form. This was typical: participants were broadly



Chouchanik Airapetian (R) earning an upset prize against Jennifer Skimore Smith (left) in round three. Photo credit: Alexey Root.

engaged with their chess communities as coaches, organizers, mentors, journalists, book authors, and/or players. As several speakers said during the opening ceremonies, seeing older women actively participating sends a powerful message that chess is for everyone. US Chess Co-Chair Women's Committee and Chief Organizer Maureen Grimaud highlighted that top senior women are the pillars for younger female chess players.

In addition to the generous place prizes, Mike Mulford, the former chair of the US Chess Senior Committee, donated an upset prize for each round. Chouchanik scored an upset prize against Jennifer Skidmore Smith in round three in an unusual game (see below) in which Jennifer gave up her queen for two pieces in the opening and fought to move 58. Even at the end of the game a draw would have been possible. The other four upset prizes went to WCM Natasha Christiansen, who might be a bit underrated.

These tournaments have been dominated by the struggle between WGM Anjelina Belakovskaia (2023 winner) and WFM Natalya Tsodikova (2024 winner). From the games we've seen, they have similar styles, featuring whole board play, positional domination, and ruthless suppression of the opponent's counterplay. Anjelina took the sole lead after defeating Natalya in round three and seemed set to win the event. However, Chouchanik held Anjelina to a draw in round four, as did WFM Olga Sagalchik in round five, while Natalya won her remaining games (against Mary and Chouchanik) to tie up the score. The



Mary Kuhner (R) defeating WIM Shernaz Kennedy (L) in round two. Photo credit: Alexey Root.

tournament rules stipulated a blitz playoff for the title and trophy, but the exhausted players, one of whom had to go to the airport, would have preferred a different way to resolve the tie. Eventually the match was played, featuring memorably intense games and ending in Armageddon after a 1-1 tie in standard blitz. Natalya prevailed in Armageddon, flagging Anjelina despite starting with a 1 minute time disadvantage.

Third place went to Olga, and fourth to Chouchanik. Mary tied for seventh-eighth, but at least her games were memorable. After round five the live-streamer WGM Sabina Foisor commiserated on the "tough loss," only to learn that after Sabina had given up on that apparently hopeless position, Mary had somehow drawn it (see below).

For more information, you can find daily bulletins and links to all the games online at <https://new.uschess.org/2025-us-senior-womens-championship>.

Chouchanik Airapetian (1894) – Jennifer M. Skidmore (1968) [C41]
 US Chess Senior Women's Ch.
 Salt Lake City, (R3), November 15, 2025
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 Nf6

3...exd4 will likely transpose to the game after 4.Nxd4 (but 4.Qxd4; and 4.Bc4 head in other directions.)

4.Nc3

By choosing this move order, Black appears to be inviting the other main line: 4.dxe5 Nxe4 5.Qd5 Nc5 6.Bg5, when 6...Be7 (or 6...Qd7 7.exd6 Bxd6 8.Nc3 0-0 9.0-0-0±) 7.exd6 Qxd6 8.Nc3± seems a bit better for White.

4...exd4 5.Nxd4 Be7 6.Bc4

Perfectly acceptable, but 6.Be2; 6.g3; and 6.Bf4 are seen more often.

6...0-0 7.0-0 c5?!

Creating a backward pawn on d6 and a weak potential outpost for White on d5. Something approaching equality can be found defending 7...c6; 7...Nc6!?, or perhaps even 7...Nxe4.

8.Nde2 a6 9.a4 Nc6 10.Nf4 Re8 11.Nfd5 Nxd5 12.Nxd5 Bf8 13.Re1 Be6 14.Bf4 Nd4?! 15.Ra3

15.a5; 15.c3

15...Rc8

15...b5

16.Rg3 b5?

16...Kh8

17.Bg5! Qa5

17...Bxd5 18.Bxd8 Bxc4 is another way to gift the queen.



Position after 17...Qa5

18.b4!

White wins the queen, but even stronger is 18.Nf6+!! Kh8 (18...gxf6 19.Bxf6+ Bg7 20.Rxg7+ Kf8 21.Rxh7 and mate



L-R: US Chess Interim Executive Director Franc Guadalupe, Chief Tournament Director NTD/IA Karen Pennock, WFM Chouchanik Airapetian, Chief Organizer Maureen Grimaud, WGM Sabina Foisor, US Chess Women's Committee Co-Chair Kimberly Doo McVay. Photo credit: Alexey Root.

follows.) 19.c3 Be7 (19...Bxc4 20.Qh5 h6 21.Bxh6 g6 22.Bxf8+ gxh5 23.Bg7# is a pretty mate.) 20.Bxe6 Nxe6 21.Nxe8+-

18...Bxd5

18...cxb4 19.Nf6+ Kh8 20.Qh5 checkmates soon. White's 18.b4 was needed first to interfere on the a5-e1 diagonal.

19.bxa5 Bxc4 20.axb5 axb5 21.Ra3

21.Bf6± Things have been going White's way so far. Now Black starts to put up stiff resistance, and control slips a bit.

21...b4 22.Ra4 Bb5 23.Ra1 Ra8 24.Bf4 Bc4 25.e5 d5 26.Re3 g6 27.Kh1 Ne6 28.Bg3 d4 29.Re1 Red8 30.Bh4 Rd7 31.Qf3

Stockfish's 31.f4 is a little too subtle for me. One idea is 31...Nxf4 32.Qf3 forces 32...Nd5, when 33.Qg4 Rda7 34.e6 offers open lines and some edge.

31...Bd5 32.Qg3 Bh6 33.Red1 Nf4?!

33...c4. Black's advanced pawns are becoming dangerous.

34.f3

Stockfish again suggests clearance with 34.e6±

34...Ne2?

34...Ne6∞

35.Qg4 Rda7 36.Bf6 Nc3 37.Rf1 Be6 38.Qh4 Bf8 39.Bd8 Nd5 40.f4 Ne3 41.Bb6 Nxf1 42.Rxf1 Rxa5 43.Bxa5 Rxa5 44.g4 Bd5+ 45.Kg1 Ra2

45...Ra8 46.f5± Now things again turn decisively in White's favor.

46.Qd8 Be4 47.Re1 Bf3 48.e6 fxe6 49.Rxe6?!

49.f5!+-

49...Ra8 50.Qc7 Bxg4 51.Rf6 Bf5 52.Qf7+ Kh8 53.Rc6?

There's an important tempo gain here that avoids the possible defense in the next note. 53.Ra6!!, intending 54.Ra7 and forced mate after rook moves along the eighth rank.

53...b3??

Black must defend against the checkmate and attempt to build a fortress: 53...Bg7 54.Rxc5 Rf8 55.Qe7 (55.Rxf5 gxf5 56.Qb7 d3 57.cxd3 is a slightly different version.; 55.Qc4 d3 56.cxd3 b3) 55...d3 56.Rc7 Rg8 57.cxd3 b3 58.Qb4 b2 59.Rxg7 Rxg7 60.Qb8+ Rg8 61.Qxb2+ Rg7 62.Qb8+ Rg8 63.Qe5+ Rg7 64.d4± Lots of work still to do here.

54.Rc7 g5 55.Qf6+ Kg8 56.Qxf5 Bg7 57.Qf7+ Kh8 58.Qxg7#

1-0

INTERMAT CANDIDATES

CHESS TOURNAMENT

Saturday-Sunday, March 7-8, 2026

Hotel 116 Bellevue

625 116th Ave NE, Bellevue, WA 98004



FORMAT

Thirteen 16-player Swiss sections by grade level, grades K-12. Each section is comprised of the sixteen highest rated WA players in each grade who accept the invitation.

The two highest finishers in each grade-level section will be selected as the two honored players who will play for Team Washington in the 2026 WA vs BC International Scholastic Match, scheduled to take place in May-June in the Seattle/Bellevue area.

SCHEDULE

Rounds: Sat @ 9 AM, 1:30 PM, 6 PM. Sun @ 10 AM, 3 PM.
Delayed start available upon request if games go long.
Playoff rounds, if needed, to break ties for top two places immediately after the last round:
Two G/5; +2 blitz games. If still tied, G/6; +2 White, G/5; +2 Black with draw odds.

MEMBERSHIPS

Current US Chess and WCF membership are required. Memberships must be paid at time of registration.

TIME CONTROL

G/90; +30.
Late default: 60 minutes.

ENTRY FEE

\$100 by Feb. 28, \$125 after.

BYES

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

PRIZES

Section Prizes

(b/o 16 pd. entries/section)
1st: \$225 + Plaque, 2nd: \$180 + Plaque
3rd: \$150, 4th: \$120, 5th: \$100, 6th: \$75.

RATING

All games will be triple rated in FIDE, USCF, and NWSRS. Higher of 2026 March USCF Regular or current NWSRS rating will be used to determine player eligibility and pairings.

REGISTRATION

NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/.

Pay by Zelle (ID: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com), SettleKing (Washington Chess Federation), or write a check to WCF.

Mail To: Washington Chess Federation

c/o Orlov Chess Academy, 4174 148th Ave. NE, Building I, Ste. M, Redmond, WA 98052

Contact: Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206.769.3757

Email:

WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

Registration + payment deadline is Friday, March 6th at 5pm. No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline. The highest rated alternate in each grade level will be called up in case someone withdraws. Alternates should be standing by on the morning of March 7th in case a spot becomes available.

19th SPICE Cup

Josh Sinanan

The 19th SPICE Cup, co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and the Washington Chess Federation, was held November 19-24, 2025, at the Bellevue Hilton. Traditionally run as a nine-round norm event during the fall, the SPICE Cup was held for the time ever in Washington State after several consecutive years in Saint Louis. Since its inauguration in 2007 in Lubbock, Texas, the SPICE Cup has developed into GM Susan Polgar's annual flagship event and attracts the strongest players from throughout North America each year.

This year was no exception, as the main event attracted 37 players from places including Washington, Texas, California, British Columbia, Arizona, Hawaii, Illinois, and Florida. The SPICE Cup was directed by Chief TD IA Judit Sztaray and Deputy Chief FA Jacob Mayer with assistance from FA Mani Atikankhotchasee, who managed the Clono tablets and the Chess.com live games broadcast. SPF Founder GM Susan Polgar, WCF President Josh Sinanan, and Eddie Chang organized the event and orchestrated the complicated logistics associated with a multi-day norm

tournament. Amazing photographs and video footage were taken throughout the week by SPF Co-Founder Paul Truong and WCF photographer extraordinaire Meiling Cheng.

A total of 37 players participated in the six-day main tournament, a nine-round Swiss in one Open section. The star-studded field, one of the strongest ever in Washington State history, included GM Jianchao Zhou, GM Illia Nyzhnyk, GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez, GM Vladimir Belous, GM Denes Boros, IM Josiah Stearman, IM Gabriel Bick, IM Michael



(Back row L-R): Tymur Keleberda, Ananth Gottumukkala, Daniel He, Neeraj Harish, Neil Doknjas, Gabriel Bick, Ashton Taylor, Kai Pisan, Ryan Porter. 2nd Row (L-R): Arjun Krishnamachari, Stephen Willy, Harishkumar Karthikeyan, Neil Doknjas, Ray Kaufman, Ravi Govindavajhala, Jonathan Kogen, Shriyan Vuyyuru, Jacob Mayer. 3rd Row (L-R): Mani Atikankhotchasee, Rafael Palathingal, Susan Polgar, Megan Lee, Judit Sztaray, Aayansh Guntaka, Zhihan Xu. Front row (L-R): Illia Nyzhnyk, Vladimir Belous, Denes Boros, Luca Tessiore, Vihaan Jammalamadaka. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

Lee, IM Ray Kaufman, FM Megan Lee, FM Ted Wang, FM Aziz Degenbaev, FM Tymur Keleberda, FM Stephen Willy, and FM Ryan Porter, in addition to several NMs and CMs.

The SPICE Cup Blitz Championship, which was open to all, attracted 41 players on Saturday evening. Rounding out the chess festivities was the SPICE Cup Rapid Championship on Monday morning before the ninth round.

GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez (2597 → 2616, 7.5), originally from Cuba and now based in the Bay Area, emerged victorious with an undefeated 7.5 points from nine games, allowing only three draws against GM Zhou (2665), GM Nyzhnyk (2602), and IM Stearman (2573). Corrales started off well by winning his first three games, which set up a big fourth round showdown on the top between him and GM Belous. A complex Taimanov Sicilian ensued, with Corrales getting the better of the tactical complications and eventually converting a superior queen + bishop vs two-rook endgame. Now in a commanding position as the sole player with a perfect four-point score, Corrales played it safe and made quick draws with fellow GMs Zhou and Nyzhnyk in the next two rounds. A wild seventh round encounter against IM Stearman resulted in a drawn rook vs two-bishop ending. Favorable pairings in the final two rounds enabled Corrales to retake the lead with clutch wins against Sundaram (2382) and Kaufman (2303), while Zhou and Nyzhnyk drew against each other in the eighth round to remain a half-point back.

GM Jianchao Zhou (2665 → 2666, 7.0), a professional chess player based in Massachusetts, finished in Second Place with five wins and four draws. Zhou, a man of few words, has a habit of quickly leaving the board after making his move, preferring to think about the position while on “walkabout.” GM Illia Nyzhnyk (2602 → 2598, 6.5), originally from Ukraine and now based in Saint Louis, captured Third Place a half-point back. Nyzhnyk recovered well from a first-round loss against local star Nikash Vemparala (2244), caused by a time-pressure induced royal pawn-fork, and won five of his next six games to catch up with the leaders.

IM Ray Kaufman (2303 → 2332, 6.0) of Vancouver, British Columbia and NM Daniel He (2389 → 2409, 6.0) of Redmond shared the Top U2450/U2300

prizes, each scoring an impressive six points. A trio of local chess celebs shared the Second U2450/2300 prizes with a solid “plus two” score: NM Siddarth M. Sundaram (2382 → 2400, 5.5) of Bellevue, CM Nikash Vemparala (2244 → 2267, 5.5) of Redmond, and FM Megan Lee (2297 → 2306, 5.5) of Bellevue. It was an especially lucrative week for Megan Lee, who also took home the Top Female prize of \$500 as well as the \$100 Brilliancy Prize for her eighth-round miniature against Zhihan Xu (2116), which featured some deep preparation in the so-called Dubov Gambit of the Giuoco Piano.

SPICE Cup Blitz Championship

The 2025 SPICE Cup Blitz Championship was held on Saturday November 22 in the evening at 7:00 PM. The popular blitz side event was open

to all and provided an outlet for fun and friendly blitz action amongst friends and competitors alike. It especially appealed to those with busy schedules who were too busy to play in the main tournament but could spare a few hours on a Saturday evening. The strong 41-player turnout reflected the popularity of blitz chess amongst the local players and provided the opportunity for players of all levels to joust with the illustrious cast of titled SPICE Cup players. The organizing team of Judit Sztaray and Jacob Mayer ran the event, which featured a time control of game in three minutes with a two-second increment. The nine-round Single Swiss format drew players ranging from unrated to Grandmaster, which made for many wild and unpredictable matchups. All games were dual USCF Blitz and FIDE Blitz rated, with the higher of the November USCF regular/blitz or November FIDE regular/blitz rating used

19th SPICE Cup: Open														
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Rd 6	Rd 7	Rd 8	Rd 9	Total	
1	1	GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez	2519	W21	W19	W11	W4	D2	D3	D5	W8	W7	7.5	
2	2	GM Jianchao Zhou	2591	D20	W28	W8	W18	D1	D6	W11	D3	W4	7	
3	3	GM Illia Nyzhnyk	2544	L10	W31	W9	W32	W14	D1	W6	D2	D8	6.5	
4	4-7	GM Vladimir Belous	2495	W27	W13	W6	L1	W7	L11	W12	W5	L2	6	
5		IM Josiah Stearman	2477	W36	W14	D18	L11	W20	W16	D1	L4	W12	6	
6		Daniel He	2288	W37	W10	L4	W21	W8	D2	L3	D18	W11	6	
7		IM Ray Kaufman	2213	D31	W15	D16	W19	L4	W20	W18	W11	L1	6	
8	8-10	Siddarth Meenakshi Sundaram	2220	W29	W17	L2	W12	L6	W28	W26	L1	D3	5.5	
9		FM Megan Lee	2214	W30	L11	L3	W24	L16	D21	W25	W22	W18	5.5	
10		CM Nikash Vemparala	2193	W3	L6	L12	W30	D19	L22	W33	W27	W17	5.5	
11	11-15	FM Tymur Keleberda	2370	W23	W9	L1	W5	W17	W4	L2	L7	L6	5	
12		IM Michael Lee	2319	D28	D20	W10	L8	W21	W23	L4	W16	L5	5	
13		CM Neil Doknjas	2259	W22	L4	L21	L28	W34	D33	W35	W19	D14	5	
14		FM Ted Wang	2224	W34	L5	W33	W16	L3	L18	W22	D17	D13	5	
15		CM Vihaan Jammalamadaka	2084	D16	L7	L28	D29	W31	W36	D19	D20	W21	5	
16	16-22	GM Denes Boros	2391	D15	W33	D7	L14	W9	L5	W27	L12	D20	4.5	
17		IM Gabriel James Bick	2370	W35	L8	D20	W36	L11	D19	W23	D14	L10	4.5	
18		FM Aziz Degenbaev	2302	W24	W26	D5	L2	D28	W14	L7	D6	L9	4.5	
19		FM Stephen John Willy	2269	W25	L1	W26	L7	D10	D17	D15	L13	W28	4.5	
20		FM Ryan W Porter	2200	D2	D12	D17	W22	L5	L7	W24	D15	D16	4.5	
21		Aayansh Guntaka	2132	L1	W25	W13	L6	L12	D9	W28	W26	L15	4.5	
22		CM Zhihan Xu	2012	L13	D27	X37	L20	W25	W10	L14	L9	W26	4.5	
23	23-25	Vidip Kumar Kona	2053	L11	H---	W29	H---	W32	L12	L17	D28	D24	4	
24		Ananth S Gottumukkala	2046	L18	W30	L32	L9	D33	W29	L20	W35	D23	4	
25		Yash Darvekar	2018	L19	L21	W38	D26	L22	W30	L9	D34	W33	4	
26	26-31	Arjun C Krishnamachari	2207	W38	L18	L19	D25	W36	W35	L8	L21	L22	3.5	
27		CM Neeraj Harish	2107	L4	D22	D36	W31	L35	W32	L16	L10	D30	3.5	
28		Paul Yuu Iinuma	2047	D12	L2	W15	W13	D18	L8	L21	D23	L19	3.5	
29		CM Rafael Palathingal	1984	L8	D35	L23	D15	D30	L24	W31	D32	D34	3.5	
30		Harishkumar Karthikeyan	1948	L9	L24	W34	L10	D29	L25	X36	D33	D27	3.5	
31		Ashton Taylor	1941	D7	L3	D35	L27	L15	D34	L29	B---	W32	3.5	
32	32-34	Jonathan Kogen	2235	L33	W37	W24	L3	L23	L27	D34	D29	W31	3	
33		Shriyan Vuyyuru	2006	W32	L16	L14	D35	D24	D13	L10	D30	L25	3	
34		Kai Pisan	2003	L14	L36	L30	W38	L13	D31	D32	D25	D29	3	
35	35	Luca Giorgio Tessiore	2083	L17	D29	D31	D33	W27	L26	L13	L24	U---	2.5	
36	36	Ravi Krishna Govindavajhala	2096	L5	W34	D27	L17	L26	L15	F30	U---	U---	1.5	
37	37-38	Zachary Hankun Liu	2034	L6	L32	F22	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	0	
38		WFM Manunthon Atikankhotchasee	1687	L26	U---	L25	L34	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	0	

to determine pairings and prizes. Due to the high number of titled players and free entries, only 55% of the based-on \$1000 prize fund was paid out. Despite this, all the players had a great time and enjoyed an enchanting evening of fun and exciting blitz games!

Two chess kings—GM Jianchao Zhou (2588 → 2602, 7.5) & GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez (2523 → 2530, 7.5)—and one chess prince—NM Vidip Kona (2251 → 2333, 7.5)—emerged victorious with 7.5 each from nine games in the star-studded 41-player Open section. The historically strong blitz field included an illustrious lineup of five GMs, three IMs, six FMs, and four CMs. NM Nicholas Bartochowski (2100 → 2130, 6.0) won the First U2400 prize thanks to a clutch final round victory against IM Ray Kaufman (2246). Young CM Rafael Palathingal (1948 → 2016, 5.5) of Bothell took home the First U2100 prize with an impressive “plus two” score. Bellevue chess aficionado Kosta Kalenteridis (unrated → 1635, 4.0) captured the First U1800 prize for his speedy efforts. Rising Sammamish chess star Sambuddha S. Das (1489 → 1517, 3.0) scored the biggest upset win thanks to a 610-point knockout in the first round. FM Megan Lee (2099 → 2082, 5.0) of Bellevue won the Top Female prize with five points. IM Georgi Orlov (unrated → 2367, 4.5) of Sammamish and FM Tian Sang (2164 → 2132, 4.5) of Redmond shared the Best Senior prize with a par score. Congratulations to the winners!

SPICE Cup Rapid Championship

The 2025 SPICE Cup Rapid Championship, a five-round, G/15; +5 Swiss in one section, took place on Monday November 24 at 10:00 AM under

2025 SPICE Blitz: Open														
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Rd 6	Rd 7	Rd 8	Rd 9	Total	
1	1-3	GM Jianchao Zhou	2658	W24	W22	W8	W33	W9	W4	D3	D2	D5	7.5	
2		GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez	2598	W29	W17	W14	L3	W10	W16	W4	D1	W9	7.5	
3		Vidip Kumar Kona	2202	W39	W21	W6	W2	L4	W15	D1	W16	W10	7.5	
4	4	GM Denes Boros	2492	W26	W7	W12	W5	W3	L1	L2	W15	W8	7	
5	5-7	GM Illia Nyzhnyk	2608	W19	W10	D9	L4	W21	W7	L8	W14	D1	6	
6		IM Prasanna Raghuram Rao	2474	W27	L12	L3	W28	W32	L9	W19	W24	W16	6	
7		Nicholas Bartochowski	2186	X43	L4	W32	W25	W33	L5	L10	W20	W15	6	
8	8-13	FM Aziz Degenbaev	2393	W31	W18	L1	L9	W26	W12	W5	D10	L4	5.5	
9		FM Tymur Keleberda	2327	W32	W23	D5	W8	L1	W6	L15	W13	L2	5.5	
10		FM Ted Wang	2289	W28	L5	W24	W23	L2	W18	W7	D8	L3	5.5	
11		CM Vihaan Jammalamadaka	2191	W38	L33	L25	L13	W28	D31	W26	W29	W17	5.5	
12		Paul Yuu Iinuma	2175	X44	W6	L4	L15	W27	L8	W32	D22	W23	5.5	
13		CM Rafael Palathingal	2080	W20	L15	D21	W11	L14	W25	W24	L9	W22	5.5	
14	14-20	FM Stephen John Willy	2313	W34	W36	L2	L18	W13	L23	W29	L5	W25	5	
15		IM Ray Kaufman	2304	W35	W13	L33	W12	W17	L3	W9	L4	W7	5	
16		FM Megan Lee	2298	L36	W34	W26	W31	W18	L2	W23	L3	L6	5	
17		CM Nikash Vemparala	2247	X42	L2	W36	W20	L15	L24	W25	W23	L11	5	
18		CM Zhihan Xu	2121	W40	L8	W35	W14	L16	L10	L22	W32	W28	5	
19		Jamie Zhongyun Zhu	1989	L5	L32	W39	L36	W41	W21	L6	W35	W30	5	
20		Krishna Dhakshinamoorthy	unr.	L13	W27	W29	L17	L25	W26	W21	L7	W24	5	
21	21-22	IM Georgi Orlov	2501	W25	L3	D13	W22	L5	L19	L20	W39	W31	4.5	
22		FM Tian Sang	2288	W37	L1	L31	L21	W35	W34	W18	D12	L13	4.5	
23	23-28	CM Neeraj Harish	2166	W41	L9	W40	L10	W31	W14	L16	L17	L12	4	
24		Owen Xu	2050	L1	W37	L10	W34	W36	W17	L13	L6	L20	4	
25		Akim Pikh	1935	L21	W41	W11	L7	W20	L13	L17	W31	L14	4	
26		Pratik Thorwe	1926	L4	W28	L16	W35	L8	L20	L11	W38	W36	4	
27		Emerson P Wong-Godfrey	1913	L6	L20	W37	W41	L12	L32	W36	L28	W35	4	
28		Kosta Kalenteridis	1580	L10	L26	W30	L6	L11	W41	W34	W27	L18	4	
29	29-32	Albert Alex Eksarevskiy	1949	L2	D39	L20	D30	W40	W36	L14	L11	D32	3.5	
30		WFM Chouchanik Airapetian	1947	L33	L35	L28	D29	W38	W39	L31	W34	L19	3.5	
31		Edward Shunan Li	1910	L8	W38	W22	L16	L23	D11	W30	L25	L21	3.5	
32		Siddharth Shenoy	1821	L9	W19	L7	W40	L6	W27	L12	L18	D29	3.5	
33	33-38	GM Vladimir Belous	2584	W30	W11	W15	L1	L7	U---	U---	U---	U---	3	
34		Te Wei	1678	L14	L16	W38	L24	W37	L22	L28	L30	W41	3	
35		Imai Subramonia Maharaja	1627	L15	W30	L18	L26	L22	W38	W40	L19	L27	3	
36		Sambuddha Sekhar Das	1593	W16	L14	L17	W19	L24	L29	L27	W40	L26	3	
37		Joshua Yeung	1424	L22	L24	L27	B---	L34	L40	L38	W41	W39	3	
38		Christian Daniel Jordan	1256	L11	L31	L34	W39	L30	L35	W37	L26	W40	3	
39	39	Snehil Ghosh	1286	L3	D29	L19	L38	B---	L30	W41	L21	L37	2.5	
40	40	Duong Pham	unr.	L18	B---	L23	L32	L29	W37	L35	L36	L38	2	
41	41	Hrithick Thoppay	541	L23	L25	B---	L27	L19	L28	L39	L37	L34	1	
42	42-44	Krishang Gupta	1419	F17	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	0	
43		Ishayu Sinha	787	F7	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	0	
44		Coby Schemmer	713	F12	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	0	

the direction of Judit Sztaray and Jacob Mayer. Fifteen players ranging from unrated to Grandmaster competed in the dual USCF Quick and FIDE Rapid rated tournament, which took place between the eighth and ninth rounds of the main

event.

Top seed GM Jianchao Zou (2591 → 2596, 5.0), who used to play for China but now plays for the United States, dominated the tournament and won First



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Place with a perfect five points from five games. Sammamish chess prince FM Stephen Willy (1918 → 1952, 4.0) finished in Second Place a full point back, dropping only one game against Zhou in the third round. A trio of chess gladiators shared Third Place/First U2400 honors with three points apiece: FM Tian Sang (2320 → 2299, 3.0) of Redmond, FM Ryan Porter (2081 → 2079, 3.0) of Bellevue, and CM Gordon Xu (2068 → 2059, 3.0) of California. Rising chess stars Kai Pisan (1490 → 1533, 2.5) of Woodinville and Akim Pikh (1479 → 1539, 2.5) of Redmond split the First U2100 prize with an even score. Kirkland chess prodigy Karsh Havaladar (1299 → 1365, 2.5) won the biggest upset prize with a third round, 556-point knockout. Congratulations to the winners!

Harishkumar Karthikeyan (1948) – Kai Pisan (2003) [B15]
 19th Annual SPICE Cup Open
 Bellevue, (R3), November 21, 2025
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6
 5.Nxf6+ exf6 6.c3 Bd6 7.Bd3 0-0 8.Qc2
 Re8+ 9.Ne2 h5 10.0-0 h4 11.h3 Nd7
 12.Bf4 Nf8

12...Rxe2? 13.Qxe2 Bxf4 14.Qe4±

13.Bxd6 Qxd6 14.Rae1



Position after 14.Rae1

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2025 SPICE Cup Rapid: Open									
#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total
1	1	GM Jianchao Zhou	2658	W7	W4	W2	W6	W3	5
2	2	FM Stephen John Willy	2313	W8	W11	L1	W4	W9	4
3	3-5	FM Tian Sang	2288	W9	L6	W11	W5	L1	3
4		FM Ryan W Porter	2275	W12	L1	W13	L2	W6	3
5		CM Gordon Zhenyu Xu	2202	D10	W7	D6	L3	W12	3
6	6-10	Paul Yuu linuma	2175	W13	W3	D5	L1	L4	2.5
7		Shriyan Vuyyuru	2100	L1	L5	B---	W13	D8	2.5
8		Kai Pisan	1997	L2	W10	L9	W11	D7	2.5
9		Akim Pikh	1935	L3	D12	W8	W10	L2	2.5
10		Karsh Havaladar	1265	D5	L8	W12	L9	B---	2.5
11	11	CM Rafael Palathingal	2080	X14	L2	L3	L8	W13	2
12	12	Siddharth Shenoy	1821	L4	D9	L10	B---	L5	1.5
13	13	Mia Lu	unr.	L6	B---	L4	L7	L11	1
14	14	GM Denes Boros	2492	F11	U---	U---	U---	U---	0

14...c5?!

This looks like a freeing move, almost standard in many roughly similar central structures. Here, however, it doesn't serve to free anything in Black's position. It does open the position a little, but that slightly favors White, with better development, as well as giving the e2-knight a nice central outpost on d4. Also, in a long-term general sense, it's easier to defend a three versus four queenside structure than a two versus three. 14...g6

15.dxc5 Qxc5 16.Nd4 Be6 17.Qa4

With 17.Re4! g5 18.f4 White's advantage is growing.

17...Bd7 18.Qb3 Be6

18...b6

19.Nxe6 Nxe6 20.Qa4

20.Bc4±

20...Qd6

20...Rad8 21.Re3 Qg5∞

21.Re3

21.Bb5 Red8 22.Qxh4±

21...g5 22.Rd1 Qf4 23.Re4 Qc7 24.Re3

Qf4

24...Kg7∞

25.Re4 Qc7 26.Bb1 Red8 27.Ree1 Rxd1
 28.Qxd1 Rd8 29.Qh5 Rd2?!

29...Nf8

30.Qh6! Nf8



Position after 30...Nf8

31.Bh7+!

31.Qxf6?! Qf4 is only a relatively small edge for White.

31...Kh8 32.Bc2+!

This pretty bishop maneuver guards the back rank.

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32...Kg8 33.Re8

1-0

**Illia Nyzhnyk (2544) –
Nikash Vemparala (2193) [D37]**
19th Annual SPICE Cup Open
Seattle, (R1), November 19, 2025
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 h6

Rare. 4...Be7, 4...c6, and about a bazillion other moves are more common. 4...h6 is understandable, though. It does no real harm and avoids all of the lines that players might prepare involving the standard Bg5 for White.

5.g3 Nc6 6.Bg2 Bd6 7.0-0 0-0 8.h3



Position after 8.h3

This one I don't get. There's an appreciable weakening of the king position, and it doesn't appear to threaten or prevent

anything. 8.b3 makes more sense.

8...dxc4 9.e4 e5

This central counter is consistent with Black's ...Nc6/...Bd6; so much so that one wonders why White allowed it. Possible was a change of structure back around move seven: 7.c5!? Be7 8.Bf4!?, perhaps.

10.d5?!

Releases tension and makes it hard for White to recover the gambit pawn. White can maintain the tension with something like 10.Be3, which even makes 8.h3 look reasonable, as both...Ng4 and...Bg4 are discouraged.

10...Na5 11.Nd2 e6 12.dxc6 bxc6 13. Qe2 Be6 14.f4 Bc5+ 15.Kh2 Qd3



Position after 15...Qd3

Black is satisfied with a small, safe, advantage out of the opening. Very practical.

16.Qe1 exf4 17.gxf4 Rfe8 18.e5 Bd5 19.Nxd5 Nxd5 20.Ne4 Bb4 21.Qf2 c3 22.Ng3

22.Rg1∞ White's bishop-pair and activity are compensation for the pawn.

22...cxb2

22...Nc4!? 23.Be4 (23.bxc3 Bxc3 24.Be4 Qd4 25.Qxd4 Bxd4 26.Rb1) 23...cxb2 24.Bxb2 Qd2∞

23.Bxb2 Ne3 24.Rg1 Rad8 25.Ne4 Kf8

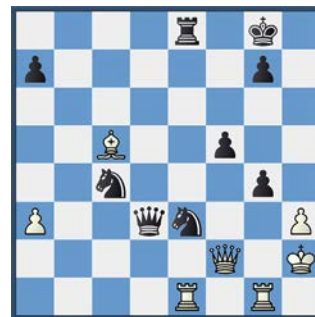
Stockfish believes Black has plenty of compensation for the exchange in the line 25...Nac4 26.Nf6+ Kf8 27.Nxe8 Bc5.; 25...Kh8∞ is also reasonable.

26.a3

26.e6!?

26...Be7 27.f5 Bg5 28.Bc3 Nac4 29.Bb4+ 29.e6 is still plausible.

29...Kg8 30.e6 fxe6 31.Nxg5 hxg5 32. Bxc6 exf5 33.Bxe8 Rxe8 34.Rae1 g4 35.Bc5



Position after 35.Bc5

35...f4?!

The engine loves Black's compensation after 35...Re6.

36.Bxe3??

36.Qxf4∞

36...g3+

0-1

**Aziz Degenbaev (2393) –
Illia Nyzhnyk (2608) [B90]**
19th SPICE Cup Blitz
Seattle (R7), November 23, 2025
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.h3

8.f3 is the main move here.

8...h5 9.Qf3



Nikash Vemparala (L) versus Illia Nyzhnyk.
Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.



Aziz Degenbaev.
Photo courtesy of Susan Polgar Foundation.

9.f4!?
9...Nbd7 10.0-0 Rc8 11.Rg1 h4 12.g4
hxg3 13.fxg3



Position after 13.fxg3

13...Be7

Northwest Chess

Black has a promising (even if the theme is rather well-known) exchange sacrifice here. 13...Rxc3! 14.bxc3 Qc7 15.Rd3 Qc6 16.Bg2 Be7 Black might threaten to occupy c4 with a knight (...Nb6), essentially forcing White to exchange the e3-bishop. Or, with...Qa4, force the king to b2 and try...Nc5, as the b3-knight would be pinned to the a2-pawn. White must wait passively for an opportunity to give back material, but those doubled, isolated pawns, not to mention the other pawn weaknesses, will still be there.

14.g4 Nh7 15.Kb1 Ng5

Once again, 15...Rxc3 16.bxc3 Ng5 looks promising. 17.Bxg5 Bxg5 18.Rxd6 Qc7 seems to give Black compensation for the exchange and a pawn. White might try

returning some material now: 19.Rxe6+ fxe6 20.Rh1, but after 20...Nb6 the knight is swinging to a4.

16.Bxg5 Bxg5 17.Rxd6 Qc7 18.Rd1 b5 19.Bd3 g6 20.Rh1 Kf8 21.Nd5 Qa7 22.h4



Position after 22.h4

22...Rxb4

22...Bxb4 23.g5 (23.Ne3 Rh6 24.Rh2 Bg5 25.Rxb4 Bxb4) 23...Kg7 24.Ne7 Bxg5 (24...Rce8 25.Nf5+ gxf5 26.exf5 with favorable complications for White: 26...Bxb3 27.f6+ Kf8 28.axb3 Qb6 29.Qg4 Nxf6 30.Qb4+ Kg7 31.gxf6+ Qxf6 32.Rd1 Qd8 33.Qg4+ and the black king is in jeopardy. In fact, Stockfish now thinks 33...Bg5 34.Bh7! is best, and White is winning.) 25.Nxc8 Rxc8. One of these exchange sacrifices is not like the others... Black doesn't have quite enough for the material.

23.Rxb4 Bxb4 24.Rh1 g5 25.Rf1 Kg7 26.Nf6 Rf8 27.Nxd7 Qxd7 28.Qf6+



Position after 28.Qf6+

28...Kh7??

Black cracks. Necessary was 28...Kg8 29.Nc5 (29.Qxe5 is also possible.) 29...Qd6 30.Nxe6 Qxe6 31.b4 White is still better, but perhaps not yet winning.

29.Nc5 Qd8 30.Nxe6 Qxf6 31.Nxf8+ 1-0

Stephen Willy (2246) –
 Ryan W. Porter (2200) [B07]
 19th SPICE Cup Rapid Championship
 Seattle, (R4), November 24, 2025
 [Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.Be3 a6 5.f3
 b5 6.h4 h5 7.Qd2 Nbd7 8.Nh3 Bb7 9.
 Ng5 c5 10.dxc5 dxc5 11.0-0 e6



Position after 11...e6

12.Ne2

I like the maneuver of the knight to f4, but White could also consider 12.e5!? Nd5 (12...Nxe5 13.Qxd8+ Rxd8 14.Rxd8+ Kxd8 15.f4 (Or 15.Bf4 Nfd7 16.Bxe5 Nxe5 17.f4 Bg7 18.fxe5 Ke7 19.Nce4±) 15...Neg4 16.Nxf7+ Ke8 17.Nxh8 Nxe3 18.Nxg6±) 13.Nge4 Be7 (13...Nxe5 14.Bxc5±; 13...Nxc3?? 14.Qxd7+ Qxd7 15.Nf6+ Kd8 16.Rxd7+ Kc8 17.bxc3+-) 14.Bg5 Nxe5 15.Nxc5±

12...Qb6 13.Nf4 Bg7 14.g3 Rd8?!

14...0-0

15.Bh3



Position after 15.Bh3

15...0-0

15...e5 16.Nfe6 fxe6 17.Nxe6± forking d8, g7, and c5. One weird example continuation: 17...Bf8 18.Bg5! Rb8 (18...Be7 19.Nxd8 Qxd8 20.Bxf6 Nxf6 21.Qg5) 19.Nxf8 Nxf8 20.Qc3! N6d7 21.Rxd7 Nxd7 22.Rd1+- White, despite being down a rook, breaks through on e5.



Stephen Willy.
 Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

16.Qf2

After all that build-up, why not make the breakthrough on e6? 16.Nfxe6! fxe6 17.Nxe6 (17.Qd6 Qxd6 18.Rxd6 Ne5 19.Bxe6+) 17...Rde8 18.Nxf8 (Also 18.Nxg7 Re7 (18...Kxg7? 19.Bxd7 Rd8 20.Bh6+-) 19.Bh6 (19.Nxh5 gxh5 20.Qd6 Qxd6 21.Rxd6 is interesting.) 19...Rff7 20.Qg5± Rxg7 21.Bxg7 Rxg7 22.e5 Nh7 23.Qe3 Ndf8 24.Rd6±) 18...Nxf8 19.Qd6± White gets rook and two important pawns for the two minors. Black's pieces are suffering a bit of a traffic jam, and White's rooks look active and powerful.

16...Qc6

16...Rfe8 is an attempt to reinforce e6.

17.Qd2?

As this doesn't seem a likely position for an offer to draw by repetition, perhaps White wanted to journey one move into

the past and revisit the sacrifice on e6? In any case, there was no need to reposition the queen for that, as even here 17.Nfxe6! fxe6 18.Bxe6+ Kh8 19.Bf4 seems excellent compensation for the piece.

17...Rfe8 18.Qd6



Position after 18.Qd6

18...Bf8

18...Qxd6 19.Rxd6 Bf8 and Black has

equalized.

19.Qxc6 Bxc6 20.Nfxe6! fxe6 21.Nxe6 Rb8

21...Rxe6 22.Bxe6+ Kh7 23.Bf4±

22.Bf4

22...Nxf8! Rxf8 (22...Nxf8 23.Rd6 Nxe4 24.fxe4 Bxe4 25.Rf1±) 23.Rd6 Rb6 24.Rhd1±

22...Rb7

22...Be7 23.Nc7 (23.Bxb8 Rxb8 24.Ng5∞) 23...Rf8 24.Bd6 Bxd6 25.Rxd6 Ne5∞
Possibly the complications slightly favor White.

23.Nxf8 Rxf8 24.Rd6 Nb8 25.Bh6 Rff7 26.Be6 Kh7?!

26...Bd7 27.Bxf7+ Kxf7 28.Be3±

27.Bxf7 Rxf7 28.Bf4 Bb7 29.e5 Nd5

29...Bxf3 30.e6 Re7 31.Rf1 Bg4 (31...Bg2 32.Rf2 Ne4 33.Rxg2 Nxd6 34.Bxd6 Rxe6 (34...Re8 35.Rf2) 35.Bxb8+-) 32.Bg5+-

30.e6 Rf8 31.Be5

31.Bg5

31...Re8

31...Ne7 32.Rhd1 Kg8 33.Rd7 Nxd7 34.Rxd7 Nc6 35.Bd6±

32.Rd1 Ne3 33.Rd8

1-0

Fidel Corrales Jimenez (2519) – Vladimir Belous (2495) [B48]
19th Annual SPICE Cup Open
Seattle, (R4), November 21, 2025
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Qd2 a6 8.0-0-0 Bb4 9.f3 b5



Position after 9...b5

It's fairly rare to play...b5 this early. Far more often seen are the lines 9...Ne5 10.Nb3 b5; and 9...0-0 10.g4 b5.



Fidel Corrales Jimenez..
Photo courtesy of Susan Polgar Foundation.

10.Nxc6 Qxc6 11.Bd4 Be7 12.e5!?

Introducing a significant change in the pawn structure. White could instead choose to begin kingside play with 12.g4.

12...Nd5 13.Nxd5 Qxd5 14.Kb1 Bb7 15.Qe3 Bc5



Position after 15...Bc5

16.Bc4!

A flashy way to force the exchange of minor pieces on White's terms. After a more quiet developing move, such as 16.Be2, 16...Rc8 makes 17.Bxc5? unattractive. 17...Qxc5± leaves White with the worse bishop, multiple targets, and less coordinated forces. White has trouble hanging on to material here. For example: 18.Qxc5? Rxc5 19.f4 Bxg2 20.Rhg1 Be4±; White isn't forced to find 16.Bc4, though. In the line above, White can decline to capture 17.Bxc5, preferring 17.c3, perhaps, with a slight edge. The alternative 16.h4 here is also fine, gaining kingside space. 16...Rc8 17.h5 starts to look positionally dangerous for Black.

16...Bxd4 17.Rxd4 Qc5 18.Bd3 Rc8 19.h4 Bd5 20.h5 h6 21.Rd1 0-0 22.c3 d6 23.f4

23.exd6 Qxd6 (23...e5 24.d7 Rcd8 (24...Rc7?? 25.Rxd5 Qxe3 26.d8Q+-) 25.Re4 Qxe3 26.Rxe3 Rxd7 27.Rxe5 Rfd8 28.Re3 and White may be able to drag a tiny plus into the endgame.) 24.Bc2±

23...Rfd8

23...dxe5 24.fxe5 f5 25.exf6 Rxf6±

24.g4 dxe5 25.fxe5 Qe7 26.Bc2



Position after 26.Bc2

26...Qg5 27.Qd3

27.Qxg5 hxg5 28.Bb3 Kf8 29.Bxd5 Rxd5 30.Rxd5 exd5 31.Rxd5 Ke7 The proximity of the black king to the kingside pawns makes the extra white pawn of little value.

27...Qxe5 28.Rf1 Kf8 29.Qg6 Qc7

29...Rd7 30.Rdf4 Rcc7∞ defends.



Position after 29...Qc7

30.Qh7

30.g5!?! can lead to serious complications, requiring evaluation of some pawn-down endings. Also some rook-down positions. Not easy. 30...Bxa2+! 31.Kc1! (31. Kxa2?! Rxd4 32.gxh6 Qc4+ 33.Bb3 Qxf1 34.Qxg7+ Ke7 35.Qxd4∞; 31.Ka1 Rxd4 32.gxh6 gxh6 33.Qxh6+ Ke8 34.Qh8+ Ke7 35.Qf6+ Ke8 36.h6∞, likely favoring White.) 31...Rxd4 32.gxh6! gxh6 33.Qxh6+ Ke7 34.Qf6+ Kd6 35.Qxd4+ Bd5 36.h6 and despite being down material, White's remote passed pawn

combined with the less safe situation of the black king likely favors White.

30...Bxa2+ 31.Kxa2 Rxd4 32.Bb3

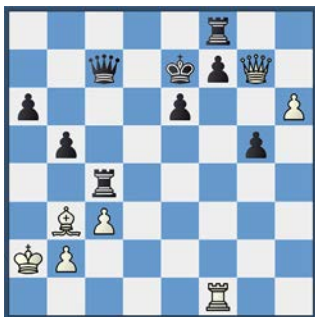


Position after 32.Bb3

32...Rc4?!

32...Ra4+ 33.Bxa4 bxa4 34.Ka1 Qc4 35.Rf2 Qxg4 36.Qh8+ Ke7 37.Rxf7+ Kxf7 38.Qxc8 Qxh5. It isn't certain that Black has actual chances, but at least it's clear that White can't win.

33.g5 hxg5 34.Qh8+ Ke7 35.Qxg7 Rf8 36.h6



Position after 36.h6

36...Re4?

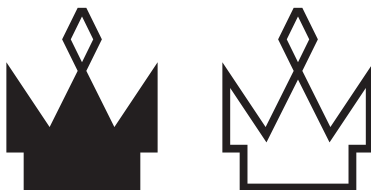
Stockfish claims 36...Qc5 has better chances to save the game.

37.h7 Qe5 38.Rxf7+! Rxf7 39.Qxe5 Rxe5 40.h8Q Re2 41.Qh6 Rff2 42.Qxg5+ Kd7 43.Qg7+ Kc6 44.Qa7 Rxb2+ 45.Ka3 Rbe2 46.Qxa6+ Kc5 47.Qb7 e5?

47...Kd6 48.Qxb5 Ke7 49.Bc4+-

48.Qc7#

1-0



John Donaldson submitted this interesting story originally published in *Alaska Weekly* on November 4, 1932.

And there is more on Dickey at <https://northernlightmedia.substack.com/p/william-a-dickey>

Apparently, Denali was named Mount McKinley by former Washington State Chess Champion William A. Dickey.—Editor.

MT. M'KINLEY
WAS NAMED BY
WM. A. DICKEY

Well Known Alaskan Located
 And Named Highest Point
 Of American Continent
 In 1896

W. A. Dickey, early-day pioneer of the Northland who enjoys the proud distinction of being the first white man to report the existence of Mt. McKinley, is back in his home at Seattle from a trip to his mining property on Knight Island in Prince William Sound. With his son he spent four months on the island where they were the only living souls.

Years back there was some discussion in the newspapers of the country as to who was the first man to report the highest point of the North American continent. At that time the honors were awarded to W. A. Dickey, who named the mountain in honor of the late President William H. McKinley, at that time the presidential nominee of the Republican party.

The New York Sunday Times carried the story of Mr. Dickey's discovery of the mountain which he named. The following year the National Geographic Magazine published the story of Denali—as the mountain was then called by the natives. The society elected to let the name of McKinley stand. Incidentally, in his article to the New York Times, Mr. Dickey estimated the height of the mountain to be 20,000 feet. This is a matter of record and can be traced through the columns of that great newspaper.

Mr. Dickey makes his home with his family in Seattle. He resides at 1424 7th West.

Republican National

WA State Barber/Rockefeller/Ashley

OPEN CHESS TOURNAMENT

Sunday, March 15, 2026

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CLASSICAL SECTIONS

K-3 Ashley Open

(Qualifier for Ashley Closed)

K-5 Rockefeller Open

(Qualifier for Rockefeller Closed)

6-8 Barber Open

(Qualifier for Barber Closed)

A 4-round Swiss. Longer time control for Intermediate to Advanced players. Time Control: G/60; +10. Late default: 30 minutes. Rounds: 9am, 12pm, 2:45pm, 5:30pm. Awards ~ 8pm or asap.

RAPID SECTIONS

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

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

ALL SECTIONS

Dual NWSRS and USCF rated, with US Chess 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 U700. All equipment is provided courtesy of WCF.

ENTRY FEE

\$55 by March 8th, \$65 after.
Room for 250 players.

AWARDS

Section Prizes: Amazon Gift Cards awarded in each section:

1st – 5th: \$80-75-70-65-60.

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

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

FOLLOW-UP CLOSED EVENT

Top 5 finishing WA State residents in the K-3 Ashley Open, K-5 Rockefeller Open, and 6-8 Barber Open section (by MSCO tiebreaks) will qualify for the Ashley, Rockefeller and Barber Closed Events on March 29 in Seattle. The other 5 spots in each closed event will be determined by rating. The winners of the closed (4-Round Swiss) events will earn a \$750 travel stipend (donated by the WCF) and will be the WA State representatives at the National Ashley (K-3), Rockefeller (K-5), and Barber (6-8) Tournament of Champions, respectively, held concurrently with the US Open in early August.

THE DETAILS

Online Registration:

NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/
Pay by Zelle (ID: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com), SettleKing (Washington Chess Federation), or mail a check to WCF.

100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Sat., March 14th @ 5pm. No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline. Unpaid players will be withdrawn from the tournament.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all students in grades K-12 as of the 2025-26 school year. Out-of-state players welcome!

RATING

Highest of March USCF Regular or current NWSRS rating used to determine section and pairings.

Questions?

Contact Josh Sinanan, WCF President at 206.769.3757 or WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com



OPEN WINDOW SCHOOL SPRING TORNADO

SATURDAY MARCH 21ST, 2026

OPEN WINDOW SCHOOL

6128 168TH PL SE BELLEVUE, WA 98006



DUAL FORMAT

Rapid Sections:

A 5-Round G/25; +5 Swiss
in four sections:

K-1 U700

2-3 U700

K-3 Open

4-8 U900

Schedule:

Rd. 1 – 9 am

Rd. 2 – 10:30 am

Lunch

Rd. 3 – 12:30 pm

Rd. 4 – 2 pm

Rd. 5 – 3:30 pm

Awards Ceremony ~ 5 pm

Classical Section:

A 4-Round G/45; +5 Swiss
in one section:

K-8 Open

Schedule:

Rd. 1 – 9 am

Rd. 2 – 11 am

Lunch

Rd. 3 – 1 pm

Rd. 4 – 3 pm

Awards Ceremony ~ 5 pm

ENTRY FEE

\$40. Maximum of 150 players.

AWARDS

Trophies awarded to the top-scoring players in each section.

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

Medals for first-time tournament players who do not earn a trophy.

RATING

NWSRS rated. Open sections will also be USCF rated; US Chess membership required only for Open sections. Higher of current NWSRS and USCF Regular rating will be used to determine section and pairings.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all students in grades K-8 as of the 2025-26 school year.

Out-of-state players welcome!

WA State Scholastic Qualifier!

THE DETAILS

Registration & Payment

Registration and payment deadline

Fri 3/20 @ 5 PM at chessreg.com

(pay by credit/debit/PayPal). No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline.

Concessions

Pizza lunch available for pre-order when registering. Other concessions will be provided for purchase on site.

Clocks

Chess clocks will be used from the beginning in the K-3 Open and K-8 Open sections. Clocks are not required for the other sections, until a judge places one in unfinished games after 40 minutes of play. All equipment is provided courtesy of OWS Chess Club.

Questions?

Parent Contact - David Lew,
davidglew@gmail.com

Tournament Director - Josh Sinanan, 206.769.3757,
joshsinanan@gmail.com

ST. ANNE CELTIC CHALLENGE SPRING 2026

In Memory of Coach Chris Hurley, 1965-2020.

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2026

ST. ANNE SCHOOL

101 WEST LEE ST SEATTLE, WA 98119



FORMAT

A 5-Round Swiss tournament in five sections:

♙ K-1 U700

♘ 2-3 U700

♚ K-3 Open

♜ 4-8 U900

♞ 4-12 Open

ROUNDS

Rd. 1 - 12:00pm

Rd. 2 - 1:10pm

Rd. 3 - 2:20pm

Rd. 4 - 3:30pm

Rd. 5 - 4:40pm

Awards Ceremony ~
6pm

TIME CONTROL

G/25; +5 sec. increment

**WA State
Scholastic
Qualifier!**

ENTRY FEE

\$25. Maximum of 150 players. Please register early to guarantee your spot!

AWARDS

Trophies awarded to the top-scoring players in each section. Trophies awarded to the top 5 finishing teams (top 4 scores from same school count for team score) across all sections. Medals for first-time tournament players who do not earn a trophy.

RATING

NWSRS rated. Open sections also US Chess rated. Higher of current NWSRS or March 2026 US Chess rating will be used to determine section and pairings. US Chess membership required only for Open sections.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all students in grades K-12 as of the 2025-26 school year. Out-of-state players welcome!

REGISTRATION

Online registration and payment deadline Sat 3/21 @ 5:00 PM at nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration

(pay by credit/debit/PayPal/Venmo)

No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline.

PROCEDURE

Pairings and standings will be posted near the playing area before each round.

CONCESSIONS

Available for purchase onsite.

CLOCKS

Chess clocks will be used from the start in the Open sections. Clocks not required for the other sections, until a judge places one set for G/10 minutes + 5 sec increment into unfinished games after 35 minutes of play. All equipment is provided courtesy of St. Anne Chess Club.

QUESTIONS?

Contact: Carlee Thorrington,
thorrington.mother@stannesea.org
St. Anne Chess Coach - Josh Sinanan,
joshsinanan@gmail.com

TOURNAMENTS



venue & mail
7212 Woodlawn Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98115
info & events calendar
www.seattlechess.club
club & tournament inquiries
contact@seattlechess.club

February 21-22 (Sat.-Sun.)

See below.

Winter Adult Weekend

February 28 (Sat.)

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/>.

February Quads

February 6, 13, 20, 27 (Fri.)

One US Chess-rated round per night, 4 rounds per month, at 7:30pm. **Pairing:** Standard Swiss. **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! **Sign up:** email contact@seattlechess.club. **Venue:** SCC, 28 players max.

Cabin Fever

Coming up:

- **March Quads** – March 14; tentative, 2B confirmed
- **SCC Spring Open** – April 11-12; tentative, 2B confirmed

Check our events calendar periodically for confirmed dates.

WINTER ADULT WEEKEND

for players 18 years and older
February 21-22, 2026

Saturday 2/21 - ADULT QUADS

- **Time control:** Game/90 + 10 sec. increment
- **Pairing:** round-robin; 4-player sections by close ratings
- **Rounds:** 10am, 2pm, 6pm
- **Entry fee:** \$25 SCC members, \$40 others
- **Prize fund:** \$280 based on 16 entries. **Prizes:** Each quad winner \$70.
- **No byes** - must play all 3 rounds!

Sunday 2/22 - ADULT TORNADO

- **Time control:** Game/50 + 10 sec. increment. **Pairing:** standard Swiss.
- **Rounds:** 10am, 12:30pm, 3pm, 5:30pm or ASAP
- **Entry fee:** \$30 SCC members, \$50 others
- **Prize fund:** \$350 based on 16 entries
- **Prizes:** \$140 (1st), \$100 (2nd), \$70 (U1600), \$40 (U1200)
- 1 half-point bye available.

- ❖ **Venue:** Seattle Chess Club, 7212 Woodlawn Ave. NE, Seattle 98115. **28 players max** in each tournament.
- ❖ **Register** at <https://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration>
- ❖ Register for one or both tournaments! If both: \$45 SCC members, \$80 others.
- ❖ Both tournaments are USCF rated. USCF membership required.

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)



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 • wackyykl@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 -----

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

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

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: \$ _____



2025 SPICE CUP
1st Place

