



## McCutcheon: The Man and His Moves

by Neil R. Brennen

High on a hill above the Ohio River in what is now Pittsburgh, John Lindsay McCutcheon has rested in his family's mausoleum (pictured here) for just over 100 years. However, the opening he championed is still alive. At the US Championship on March 9, 2006 there was:

**Nick E. De Firmian - Hikaru Nakamura**

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Bb4 5.e5 h6 6.Bd2 Bxc3 7.bxc3 Ne4 8.Qg4 g6 9.Bd3 Nxd2 10.Kxd2 c5 11.Nf3 c4 12.Be2 Nd7 13.h4 Qe7 14.a3 b6 15.Kc1 Bb7 16.Nd2 0-0-0 17.f4 f5 18.exf6 Nxf6 19.Qh3 h5 20.Qe3 Rhf8 21.g3 Bc6 22.Re1 b5 23.Bf1 Rd6 24.Nf3 Bd7 25.Ne5 Rg8 26.Bg2 Ra6 27.Kb2 Ne8 28.Nf3 Nc7 29.Ng5 Ra4 30.Bh3 Re8 31.Qe5 a5 32.Qe3 Kb7 33.Nf3 Ra8 34.Reb1 Kc8 35.Qe1 Rb8 36.Ne5 Be8 37.Nf3 Rb6 38.Ne5 b4 39.axb4 axb4 40.Rxa4 Bxa4 41.Kc1 b3 42.cxb3 Qa3+ 43.Kd2 Qa2+ 44.Ke3 Rxb3 45.Rc1 Qh2 46.Bf1 Nb5 47.Nxc4 dxc4 48.Bxc4 Rb2 49.Bxe6+ Kd8 50.f5 gxf5 51.Bxf5 Nd6 52.Bd3 Rg2 53.d5 Rxxg3+ 54.Kd4 Qxh4+ 55.Kc5 Qf4 56.Qe6 Nb7+ 0-1 -editor

At the time of his death he was widely eulogized in the chess community as a player, organizer, and sponsor. His major contribution to opening theory was in the repertoire of the era's top players, and on his passing it was described by no less a player as William Napier as "last[ing]to the end of time". It has continued to maintain a reputation as a playable variation of the French defense, despite the whims of opening fashion and the efforts of the analysts. He played, and defeated, many of the top players in the United States, including World Champion Emanuel Lasker. And yet, on the rare occasions he is remembered today, many chessplayers can't even spell his name correctly.

John Lindsay McCutcheon (not "MacCutcheon" as his name is often misprinted<sup>1</sup>) was born in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania on May 28, 1857. His parents had emigrated to the United States from Scotland, settling in the Pittsburgh<sup>2</sup> area and entering the iron-manufacturing business. If part of being successful in commerce is to have good timing and choose a good location, the McCutcheon's were already ahead; Pittsburgh was just beginning to establish itself as the iron capital of the United States. The elder McCutcheon entered into a partnership with a fellow Scott, James Lindsay, and the firm of Lindsay and McCutcheon soon was producing iron from its Star Iron Works foundry. As a compliment to his business partner and friend, McCutcheon gave

<sup>1</sup> As an example, James Eade's otherwise interesting book *Remember the MacCutcheon!*

<sup>2</sup> During the nineteenth century, there were alternate spellings of "Pittsburgh". In many instances, the 'h' was dropped. In this article, the modern spelling is used, except when it is used in the name of a newspaper.



his newborn son John the middle name of "Lindsay".

The demand for iron and steel in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was enormous; railroads were overstretching the country, and ships were being constructed with steel hulls. The McCutcheon's rode that boom, living in a large house in Allegheny City with a half-dozen servants. Allegheny City was a neighbor of Pittsburgh, lying on the North side of the Monongahela River, and affluent families such as the McCutcheon's moved there in an attempt to escape the smoke-belching foundries of Pittsburgh. Thus the young John McCutcheon grew up with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth, but the spoon had an iron core.

When John McCutcheon reached young adulthood, he decided to study law. He left sooty Pittsburgh to study at Columbia, graduating in 1881, and passing the New York bar exam in June of that year. A year later he was admitted to the bar in Allegheny City, allowing him to practice as a lawyer for his father's firm. Yet he retained a connection to New York City, traveling there frequently, and in 1883 marrying Louise Taylor, daughter of a local hotelier. And it was in Brooklyn that chess enters this story, for in that New York borough the McCutcheon Variation made its debut.

When and where McCutcheon learned chess is unknown. Likewise unknown are the circumstances of the birth of the McCutcheon Variation. It's been suggested by some authors, with no documentation of course<sup>3</sup>, that McCutcheon was experimenting with the opening in the early 1870s. Perhaps, but the idea of a 15 year old opening theorist going unnoticed in the chess press of the era seems a tad unrealistic. Until records of an earlier use of the opening are uncovered by historians, the official "first" McCutcheon French was played as part of a 25 board simultaneous display given on Thanksgiving day, 1885, by Wilhelm Steinitz. The *Brooklyn Chess Chronicle's* annotator commented that "Mr. McCutcheon is to be congratulated on his very skillful maneuvering against such a redoubtable antagonist."

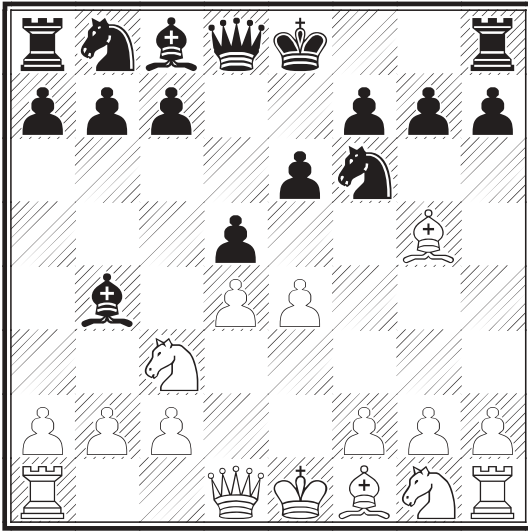
<sup>3</sup> Lutes, in his *French Defense: McCutcheon Variation*, gives as his "considerable" evidence supporting an early 1870s use of the Variation a comment by Tartakover and Dumont in their *500 Master Games of Chess*. Tartakover and Dumont offer no contemporary citation to back their claim.

**Wilhelm Steinitz - John L. McCutcheon**

Simultaneous Display, New York, 11/26/1885

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Bb4**

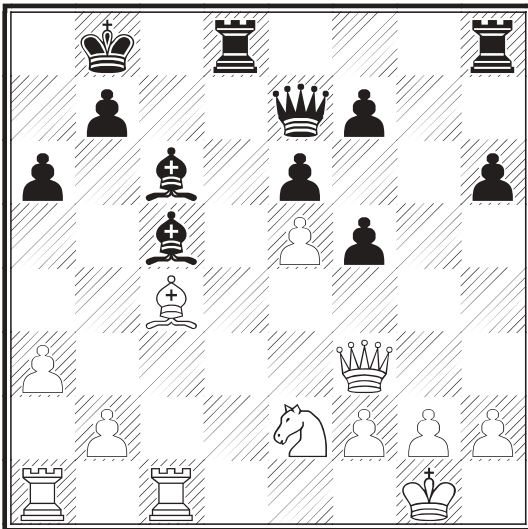
A novelty to us in the French opening.

**5.e5 h6 6.Bxf6**

6.Bh4 also merits consideration.

**6...gxf6 7.Nf3 f5 8.Bd3 c5 9.dxc5 Bxc5 10.O-O Nc6 11.Qd2 Qe7 12.Qf4 Bd7 13.Nb5 O-O-O 14.c4 Be8 15.Rfc1 Kb8 16.a3 a6 17.Nc3 dxc4 18.Bxc4 Nd4 19.Ne2 Nxf3+ 20.Qxf3 Bc6**

Black, who has quickly but effectively developed his forces, now has a manifest advantage in position.

**21.Qh3 Ka7**

Anticipating 22.b4 Bb6 23.Bxa6, etc.

**22.b4 Bb6 23.Nc3 Rhg8 24.Bf1 Rd2 25.Nd1 Qg5 26.Rxc6 bxc6 27.Qc3 Qf4**

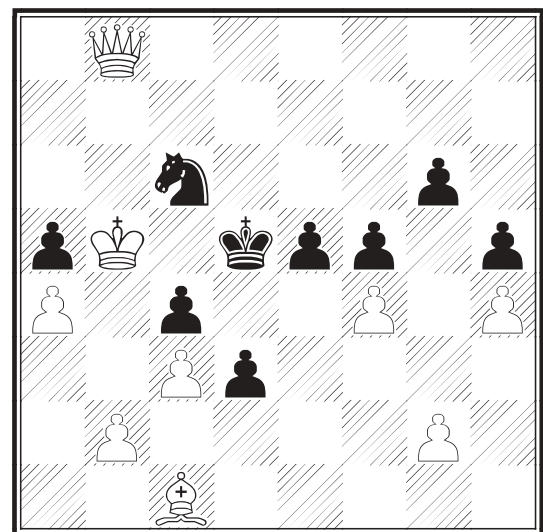
Inviting 27...Bd4 28.Qxc6 and draws the game should Black capture Rook. This was probably the reason Mr. Steinitz sacrificed the exchange on move 26.

**28.Qxc6 Rxd1** Which puts an end to all further resistance. **0:1***Brooklyn Chess Chronicle*, December 15, 1885

The annotator of the above game called Black's first move a "novelty", but it seems a logical progression from other experiments in the French Defense over the previous quarter century. Louis Paulsen had revived 3...Bb4 in his 1861 match with Ignatz Kolisch, and more than one published game in the 1870s had transposed into a tabiya from the McCutcheon Variation. But ultimately it matters little if McCutcheon merely added to existing theory or truly devised the opening from whole cloth. His main contributions to the McCutcheon Variation were to refine and define the move order, develop analysis of the opening, and promote its use among masters. It was a tall order, and one made more difficult by McCutcheon's status as a non-professional player.

As a lawyer practicing in a "Western" city far from New York, the main chess center of the United States, McCutcheon had little opportunity to face strong opposition over the board or to analyze the McCutcheon Variation with leading players. Aside from occasional trips to New York City, Philadelphia, and the New York State Chess Association's Midsummer Meetings in the Finger Lakes region, McCutcheon was largely homebound. Not all iron and steel businessmen fit the description Willa Cather wrote in her short story *Paul's Case*: "...these legends of the iron kings that were told and retold on Sundays and holidays; these stories of palaces in Venice, yachts on the Mediterranean, and high play at Monte Carlo..." McCutcheon had little use for yachts and palaces, and "high play at Monte Carlo" for him meant a chess tournament.

Pittsburgh was not a strong chess community in the 1880s, and McCutcheon had to wait for chessmasters to visit the Smoky City on a exhibition tour in order to face top-notch opposition. Unfortunately, his want of over the board practice often hurt his results when he traveled to play. For instance, McCutcheon's one appearance in the United States - Great Britain cable matches, in 1897, was an opening disaster for the Pittsburgh player, and lead to a 27 move loss. He did better with simultaneous play, defeating Johannes Zuckertort during a ten board blindfold display in 1884; the game was a French Defense, but not the McCutcheon Variation. One of McCutcheon's happier moments at the chessboard is the following ending against William Henry Pollock:

**William H. Pollock - John L. McCutcheon**  
Offhand Game, Pittsburgh

The following fine ending arose in a game played in Pittsburgh, between Mr. Pollock, of Albany, NY, and John L. McCutcheon. Black

drew elegantly, as follows: **1...Nxb8 2.Kxa5 Nd7 3.Kb5 Nc5 4.a5 Nb3 5.Bd2 Nxd2 6.a6 Ke4 7.a7 Kxf4 8.a8=Q Ke3** and the game is drawn. ½:½

*Pollock Memories*, p 156

Under the dual handicap of living in distant Pittsburgh and having a livelihood that demanded a lot of time, McCutcheon found chess by correspondence a good substitute for over the board competition. He entered the Continental Correspondence Tournament of 1893, and in addition contested postal matches with the better players in the country. Chess, then as now, is not the easiest means to earn a living, and playing correspondence chess for money with wealthy gentlemen probably helped a number of masters survive.

McCutcheon often chose such correspondence games to test his French line, but not always. William Pollock, for instance, contested a four game thematic match with McCutcheon, finishing with two and a half points. McCutcheon's win was with the White pieces in a Muzio Gambit.

### John L. McCutcheon - William H. Pollock Correspondence, 1892

**1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 exf4 4.Nf3 g5 5.Bc4 g4 6.O-O gxf3 7.Qxf3**

The moves thus far, inclusive, were stipulated by White.

**7...Qf6 8.Nd5**

Reckless of his minor pieces.

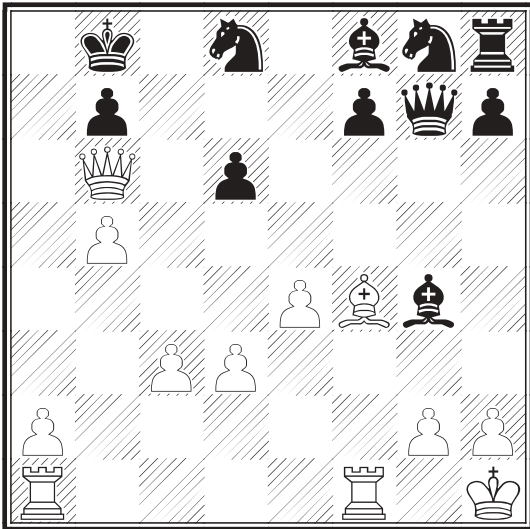
**8...Qd4+ 9.Kh1 Qxc4 10.d3 Qd4 11.Nxc7+ Kd8 12.Bxf4 d6 13.c3 Qg7 14.Nxa8 Bg4 15.Qf2 Kc8 16.b4 Kb8**

If 16...Qxc3 17.Rfc1 Qxb4 18.Qxa7

**17.b5 Nd8**

If 17...Na5 White wins the knight by the text continuation.

**18.Nb6 axb6 19.Qxb6**



**19...Ne6**

19...Qf6 is probably better, as the reply 20.Be5 is not greatly to be feared.

**20.Be3 Nc5 21.d4**

A very fine continuation.

**21...Nxe4 22.d5 Nc5 23.Bxc5 dxc5 24.d6 f6 25.Qd8+ Bc8 26.Rae1 Bxd6**

Black has nothing better. Mr. McCutcheon finishes in great style.

**27.Qxd6+ Qc7 28.Qf8 h5 29.Re8 h4 30.Rd1 h3 31.Rxc8+ Qxc8 32.Rd8 hxg2+ 33.Kxg2 Qxd8 34.Qxd8+ Ka7 35.Qa5+ Kb8 36.b6 1:0**

*Baltimore Sunday News*, August 5, 1893

The next game was annotated by both Emil Kemeny, considered one of the best game annotators in the United States, and William Ewart Napier, the 1890s chess wunderkind who went on to become the first official British Champion in 1904. Kemeny's introduction to the game in his *Philadelphia Public Ledger* chess column gives insight into both correspondence play and McCutcheon's chess. "Many defeats", wrote Kemeny, "are caused by one hasty, or, at least, not sufficiently considered, move, and many times the position on the board becomes complicated to such an extent that it is quite impossible to penetrate a combination deep enough. Chess played by correspondence is generally considered a more reliable test. A player having about three days to consider for each move should be able to meet all emergencies. Yet so complicated sometimes are the positions that even such a length of time seems insufficient. The game below was contested between two well-known experts, and it required about six months to play it. As will be seen, Mr. Ferris captured a pawn, and his opponent was enabled to establish a winning attack. Mr. McCutcheon's play was of an exceedingly high order."

### William Ferris - John L. McCutcheon Continental Finals, Correspondence, 1896

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Bc5 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.Nxe5 Nxe5 6...Bxf2+ comes to naught. -Napier**

**7.d4 Bd6 8.O-O O-O 9.f4 Nc6**

The opening is pretty similar to the one in the fourteenth game of the Showalter - Kemeny match. Steinitz recommends 9...Nc4 and not 9...Nc6 as played. -Kemeny

**10.e5 Bb4 11.exf6 Bxc3 12.bxc3**

12.fxg7 could not be played on account of 12...Bxd4+ followed by ...Re8 or ...Kxg7. -Kemeny (*The simple 12...Bxg7 seems best. -editor*)

**12...Qxf6 13.f5**

Considered as a powerful play, Black cannot well move his Queen on account of White's answer 14.f6. It must be admitted, however, that it is quite difficult to guard the pawn properly. g4 is hardly recommendable, on account of weakening of the kingside. -Kemeny; This pawn can only be defended at a tremendous loss in position; hence the maneuver executed with this as a key move is not to be commended. 13.Bb3 was more to the point. -Napier

**13...Ne7**

13...b5 appears better, since White on his next turn might have played 14.Qf3, in a measure retrieving his position. -Napier

**14.g4 b5 15.Qf3**

15.Bb3 at once was better. -Kemeny

**15...Rb8 16.Bb3 Bb7 17.Qg3 Qc6 18.Bf4 Nd5**

This move is, by reason of its triple significance, the finest in the game. It threatens to win a piece by 19...Nxf4, It compels an exchange favorable to Black, and it lures White to an ill-advised capture, to which the loss of the game is attributable. -Napier

**19.Bxd5 Qxd5 20.Bxc7**

An error in position judgment. White's Queen is kept busy on the kingside to guard the mate, and should have, under no circumstances, captured the c-pawn, which gives Black the open c-file, enabling him to establish a winning attack on the queenside. -Kemeny

**20...Rbc8 21.Ba5**

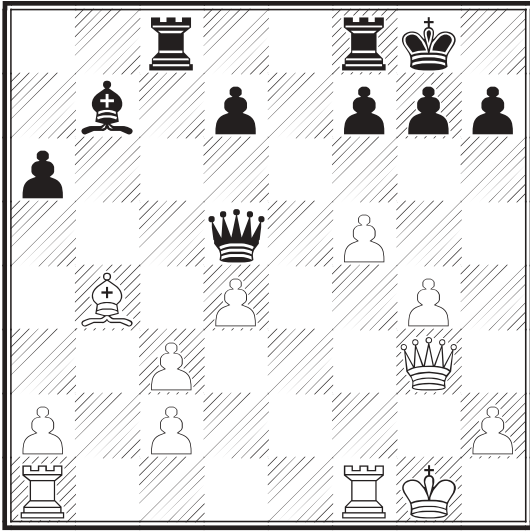
Necessary, since Black threatened 21...Rxc3, winning at once. -Kemeny

**21...b4**

Simply charming. If 22.cxb4 Qh1+ 23.Kf2 Rxc2+ 24.Ke1 Qe4+ and mates in two moves. -Napier

**22.Bxb4**

He could not play 22.cxb4 on account of 22...Rc3. -Kemeny

**22...a5**

Splendid play. White cannot capture the rook on account of Black's reply, 23...Rxc3. -Kemeny

**23.Bc5**

23.Bxf8 Rxc3 and wins, practically as in the previous note. -Napier

**23...d6 24.c4**

White is numerically strong, but disorganized; Black is outnumbered, but has an economic disposition of forces that more than compensates. -Napier

**24...Qxc4 25.Qxd6 Rfe8 26.Rae1 Qxc2 27.Qg3 Qxa2**

Time is on Black's side--he can afford to gather small things. -Napier

**28.h4 Bc6 29.g5 Rb8 30.h5 Qd5**

Threatening ...Qh1+, followed by ...Rb2+, winning in a few moves. -Kemeny

**31.Rxe8+ Rxe8 32.Qh2 a4 33.g6 fxe6 34.hxe6 hxe6 35.Qg3**

White could not play 35.fxe6, on account of 35...Qg5+, followed by an exchange of Queens or ...Qe3, mate. -Kemeny

**35...gxf5 36.Qh2 a3 37.Ra1 a2 1-0**

Excellent play. White cannot answer 38.Rxa2 on account of ...Re1+, followed by ...Qxa2+ and ...Qxh2. Nor can he play 38.Qxa2. Black would continue ...Re1+, followed by ...Rxa1. Should White answer 40.Qxa1, then ...Qf3+ and ...Qh1+, winning the Queen. Otherwise, Black forces a win with ...Re3 or ...Re6 or ...f4. -Kemeny

*Philadelphia Public Ledger*, September 22, 1896

*Pittsburg Dispatch*, December 10, 1900

Having made a spectacular debut in 1885, the inventor of the McCutcheon Variation wasted little time in promoting the line. Aside from paying masters to analyze it with him via postal chess, McCutcheon also sponsored special prizes at the 1902 and 1903 Monte Carlo tournaments for the best game played with the opening. Top masters such as Marshall, Showalter, and Pillsbury played it; Pillsbury even contested a two game correspondence match with McCutcheon, alternating colors. Pillsbury drew one game and won the other, a partial success for the variation.

Perhaps McCutcheon's greatest triumph as a chessplayer was, oddly enough, in a game in which his Variation was unsuccessful. In 1904, he persuaded World Champion Emmanuel Lasker to play a two game correspondence match to test the Variation. White won both games. The gamescores, along with comments from the postcards and letters exchanged by the opponents, were first printed in Napier's chess column in the *Pittsburg Dispatch*. We take them from the *Literary Digest* chess column of September 5, 1904. The friendly, informal tone of the correspondence shows the high level of respect and familiarity both men had for each other.

**John L. McCutcheon - Emmanuel Lasker****Correspondence Match, Game 1, 1904**

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Bb4 5.e5 h6 6.Bh4 g5 7.Bg3 Ne4 8.Nge2 f5 9.f4 c5 10.a3 Ba5**

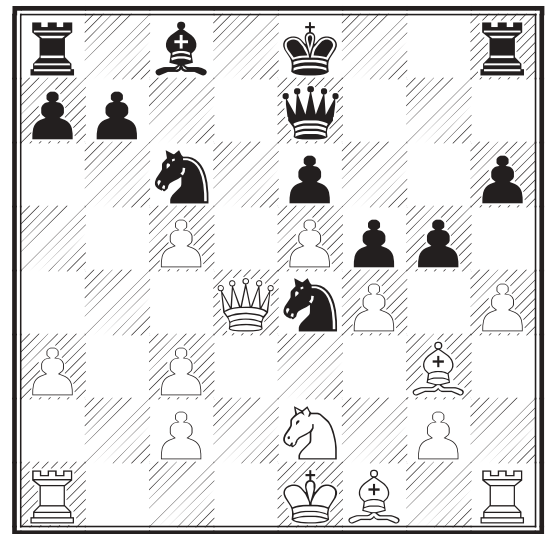
10...Bxc3+ 11.Nxc3 cxd4 12.Qxd4 Nc6 13.Bb5 O-O leads to an even game. -Lasker

**11.dxc5 d4**

How do you like the mixtures? The theorists will have food for analysis to last them some time. -Lasker; The mixtures suit me so far; but as Voigt said when I showed him the position recently, "Just wait until Lasker gets you into the end-game!" -McCutcheon

**12.Qxd4 Bxc3+ 13.bxc3 Qe7**

13...Qc7 was much better; 14.h4 would then lead to 14...Nc6 15.Qe3 Nxe3 16.Qxe3 gxf4 winning ultimately the e-pawn. -Lasker

**14.h4 Nc6**

This game is now of a very open character. You disdain to hide behind rocks, but charge on open ground. Beware, however, of the artillery fire; I mean later to open on your troops. I must be very careful of your splendid cavalry and light artillery (the Bishops) that you wish to maneuver into my flanks, if I read your intentions correctly. -Lasker; I have hope of making my cavalry and light artillery effective before you can get your siege-guns into play; besides, I have now an extra company of infantry which I can afford to sacrifice, if it becomes necessary to divert your fire. -McCutcheon

**15.Qe3 Nxe3**

Alas, that I had to part with that fine Knight, but that Bishop had a mischievous air about him! Your cavalry is worthy of compliment, but what of the shrapnel fire that will soon come? -Lasker; I overlooked here the strength of the combined attack of White's Queen and Knight. 15...g4 and if 16.h5 Qxc5 would still have yielded a game good enough

to draw. After the move actually made, White had no difficulty in keeping his two pawns ahead until the sacrifice of one of them enables him to win. White's fourteenth move is a beauty. -Lasker

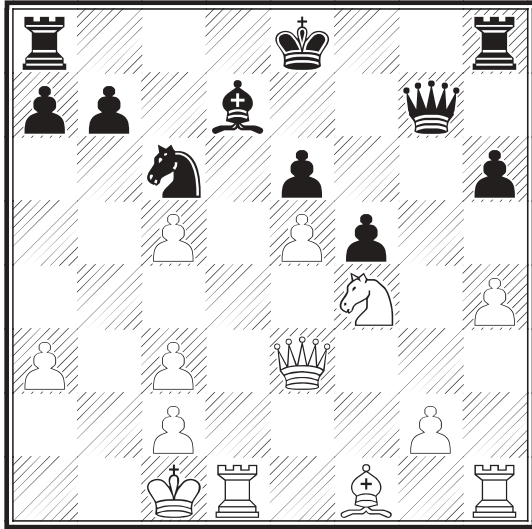
### 16.Qxg3 gxf4

Fearlessly proceeding with my plan of campaign, although already fears assail me that the mine exploded too soon. -Lasker

### 17.Nxf4 Bd7 18.Qe3 Qg7

My reply to your powerful 18.Qe3 is somewhat tame, namely as above. You play this game very well, but I butchered Black's chances! Black should get a very good game out of the opening - which perhaps would be more to your satisfaction than the reverse. -Lasker

### 19.O-O-O



### 19...Qxe5

I am reluctantly compelled to play as above. A draw is at your disposal whenever you see fit to ask for it. -Lasker

**20.Qxe5 Nxe5 21.Re1 Nc6 22.Nxe6 Kf7 23.Bc4 Kf6 24.Nd4 Ne5 25.Bd3 Nxd3+ 26.cxd3 Rac8 27.c6 bxc6 28.Rhf1 Rhg8 29.Rf2 Rg3 30.Nxf5 Bxf5 31.Ref1 Rxd3 32.Rxf5+ Ke6 33.R5f3 Rxf3 34.Rxf3 Rg8 35.g3 Kd5 36.Kd2 1:0**

I resign. I see no prospect for my King except slow retreat, which can only end beyond the edge of the board. As for the other game I have there strong hopes of revenge. -Lasker

## Emmanuel Lasker - John L. McCutcheon

Correspondence Match, Game 2, 1904

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Bb4 5.e5 h6 6.Bd2 Bxc3 7.bxc3 Ne4 8.Bd3 Nxd2 9.Qxd2 c5 10.dxc5 Qc7**

Better is 10...Qa5 as played by Showalter against the Champion in a game where the former obtained a drawn position, but finally lost by taking too much risk to win. -McCutcheon

**11.Qe3 Qa5 12.Ne2 Nd7 13.f4**

This game is of a much milder stamp than the other game, and a lot of little questions are likely to crop up - a fight about a hill, ambushes, etc. I congratulate you on the success of the McCutcheon Variation. It has now become one of the standard variations, and will remain so. -Lasker

**13...Nxc5 14.O-O O-O 15.g4**

I go boldly ahead and ask the reason this should not be done? -Lasker

**15...Bd7**

Your fire grows hot! I considered ...g5 before castling, but now fear

my analysis was not deep enough. But look out for your Bishop. He may be cut off in the prime of life! -McCutcheon

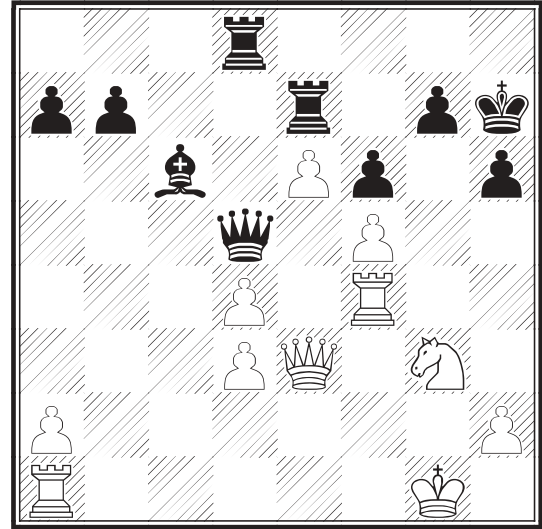
**16.f5 Nxd3 17.cxd3 exf5 18.gxf5 Kh7 19.Rf3 Rae8**

My eleventh move caused a rift in the lute. However, I can not see that my game is lost, although my position is critical. -McCutcheon

**20.Kf2 d4 21.cxd4 f6 22.e6 Bc6 23.Rf4 Re7 24.Ng3 Rd8**

My compliments on your last move. I had dreams of sacrifices with Rg1, Rxg7+ etc, but they are postponed now, to say the least. -Lasker

**25.Kg1 Qd5**



At this stage I was of opinion that Dr. Lasker must play with a view to force an exchange of Queens, if he hoped to win. I however, trusted to gain 'tempo' and 'position' while he endeavored to exchange. Later on, when we had played several moves across the board, I neglected to follow my theory and forced the exchange myself! -McCutcheon

**26.Qd2 g6 27.fxg6+ Kg8 28.Re4 Rd6**

A precipitant and ill-considered move! The obvious move was 28...f5 then if 29.Nh5 Rf8 30.g7 (On the other hand, if 30.Rf1 f4! yields a good defense, a draw being the main object.) 30...Rxg7+ 31.Nxg7 Kxg7 32.Rh4 Rf6 and Black's game is quite satisfactory. -McCutcheon

**29.Qxh6 Rdx6 30.Nh5 Qg5+ 31.Qxg5 fxg5 32.Rc1 1:0**

McCutcheon was to have but a short time to savor his defeat of the World Champion. He died after a short illness on July 16, 1905<sup>4</sup>, during a sweltering heat wave in the Pittsburgh area. The combination of the heat and unhealthy air undoubtedly hastened his death. He was 48 years old.

Among the obituary notices published for McCutcheon, perhaps the most eloquent was provided by his friend and sparring partner William Napier, chess columnist of the *Pittsburg Dispatch*. Napier wrote, "chess has suffered a grievous loss in the death a week ago of John L. McCutcheon of this city. For nearly twenty years the name has been a household word among lovers of the game and sorrow at his untimely end will be universal. As a player of the game, equally as a connoisseur, Mr. McCutcheon fell nothing short of genius. His style of play and the finish of mastery and his critical research was conspicuously keen. What has come to be known as the 'McCutcheon-French' - perhaps his chief contribution to the literature of the game - will doubtless last to the end of time. United in him were so many graces and accomplishments that as host or as bon vivant he was classical; and to

<sup>4</sup> Jeremy Gaige, in *Chess Personalia*, gives the date of July 17, but the Pittsburgh newspapers state McCutcheon died July 16.

those who knew him as friend he was not less.”

McCutcheon's mortal remains are interred in the family vault in Pittsburgh. But it appears in the century of chess play after his death that the McCutcheon Variation lives on among both amateurs and professional players. Today Grandmasters Korchnoi and Morozivich, among others, keep the McCutcheon French in their opening repertoire. But fittingly, the Variation has found friends among non-professional players, both in correspondence play and over the board, just as its inventor did during his life. And, as Napier might have said, in that John L. McCutcheon was “nothing short of genius”.

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## PA TODAY

Tournament and Club News from around the Keystone State  
by Joe Mucerino, Roving Reporter  
patzerpounder@hotmail.com

It's spring time! And spring time means spring cleaning. For the PSCF, that means going through our club listings to make sure that everything is still accurate.

Everyone who belongs to a club, please double check the information that we have to make sure that it is correct. Sometimes we make a typo, or sometimes a club changes the night on which it meets and does not tell us. If you know that a club folded, please let us know of that too.

There are several clubs whose existence I question. In some cases, we do not have any contact information at all, so we are dependant on what you tell us. In other cases, we have contact info, but the contact did not bother to respond to my email message and/or phone call, leaving me in the dark.

Therefore, unless someone tells us differently, all of the following clubs will be deleted from the next issue of *Pennswoodpusher*:

Clearfield  
Greensburg  
Mansfield (Wellsboro-Mansfield CC)  
New Castle  
Shamokin  
Warren

If you are a club member, please do not assume that a club officer or organizer will contact us. They may not be a PSCF member and wouldn't receive this issue, or, if they are, there is a chance that they will not read this article. So please take a minute to check the information, and, if something is incorrect, contact us with the appropriate changes.

On another note, I have decided not to play in this year's World Open. The Continental Chess Association has raised their early entry fee from \$225 to \$345 in order to have huge prizes like last year's HB Global Chess Challenge. Sorry folks, but I decided to play in the state championship, which will be held in Pittsburgh, regardless of what the price of gas is (it is already \$2.79 a gallon in Douglassville as I write this on April 15). In order to save money, something had to go, and paying \$38.33 for each of the nine games, not to mention gas to and from Philly every day, and \$5 parking every day, made the decision as to which tournament(s) to drop pretty easy.

Since I will not be at the World Open, I will not write an article about it. Sure, I can type up a prize box, but unless someone else writes an article on the event, you will have to settle for Jerry Hanken's report in *Chess Life*.

Thank you very much!  
Joe Mucerino

### Warminster Delaware Valley Grand Prix

**WARMINSTER, 4/2/2006** - The first event this year of Steve McLaughlin's popular grand prix took place in Warminster. Only four people entered the Octo, with Leteef Street and your author tying for first. With Dan Yeager and Josh Bowman absent, it was very interesting to see who would win the Scholastic Open section. Emerging victorious were David Lakata and Ben Cohen, scoring 3/4. Joseph Kovacs won the U1100 section, Kavin Aravind swept the K-6 U750, and there was a three-way tie in the K-3 U500 between Kevin Liu, Patrick Liu, and Mike Wiest.

### West Chester Chess Club Championship

**WEST CHESTER, 1/26-2/16/2006** - It was time once again for me to defend a club championship -this time the West Chester title, which I have won for the last two years. The same group took part once again, with one exception: former club champ Michael Bury rejoined the club late last year after several years of absence. It was obvious he would be my main competition.

But he would not be my only competition. In the first round, Lassaad Sanane missed the win of a piece against me, and I was fortunate to win. Charles Jay pulled off the round's only upset, against Jim Merickel. In round two, top seed Bury was held to a draw against 2003 champ Mel Ross. I won against Roy Eikerenkoetter to become the only perfect score in the tournament. Merickel lost to Don Anderson, and Sanane drew Jay. Merickel and Jay both withdrew at the halfway point. The third round saw the Bury-Mucerino pairing, and, although this was only the penultimate round, this game was for all intents and purposes the championship game. Since I was a half point ahead of Bury, I felt a draw would be fine. I won the only prior encounter, in 2002. What would happen?

**Michael J. Bury - Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.**  
**West Chester CC Championship, Round 3, 2/9/2006**  
*Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.*

**1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.Nc3 Nxd5 4.Bc4 Nb6 5.Bb3 Nc6 6.Nf3 Bf5 7.O-O e6 8.d3 Be7 9.Bf4 O-O 10.h3 Na5 11.Qe2 Nxb3 12.axb3 Bf6 13.Be5 a6 14.Rfe1 Nd7 15.Bxf6 Qxf6 16.Qe3 Rfe8 17.Qf4 e5 18.Qb4 Rab8 19.Nd5 Qd6 20.Qxd6 cxd6 21.Ne3 Be6 22.Ng5 Nb6 23.Nxe6 Rxe6 24.Ra5 Rc8 25.c3 f6 26.Nf5 g6 27.Ne3 Re7 28.f3 Kf7 29.b4 Rd7 30.Re1 d5 31.b5 axb5 32.Rxb5**

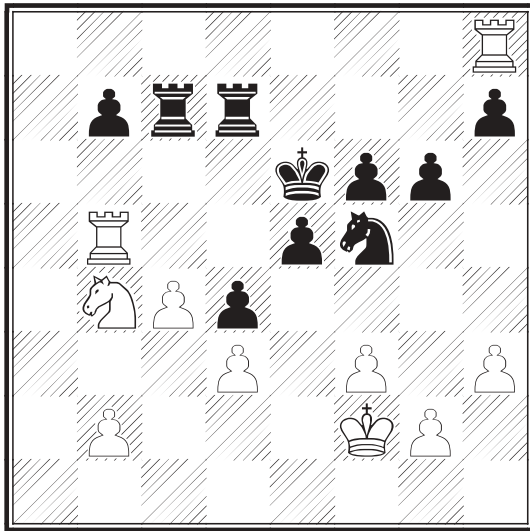
The game has been pretty straightforward so far. Fritz says that this position is equal, but I prefer White. He has the open a file, the Black knight is under attack, and it does not have a good square to go to.

**32...Rc6 33.Nc2 Rcd6 34.Ra3 Nc8?**

This probably loses the game, because it allows the White rook into a8. I was in time pressure (40/80 SD/30), so the quality of my moves suffered.

**35.Ra8 Rc7 36.Nb4 Ke6 37.Kf2 d4 38.c4 Ne7 39.Rb8 Rdd7 40.Rh8 Nf5??**

The last move of the time control seals the deal.40...h5 was better.



**41.Nd5!**

Now white is winning.

**41...Rc6 42.Rf8 Rf7 43.Rxf7 Kxf7 44.Rxb7+ Ke6**

I decided to jettison the h-pawn because if I played 44...Kg8 then White's b-pawn would go from coast to coast and queen.

**45.Rxh7 Ne3**

Offering the exchange of knights while down may seem strange, but after the exchange, I can win the dangerous pawn on b2.

**46.Nc7+ Kd6 47.Ne8+ Kc5 48.Rb7 Ra6 49.b4+!**

Simplifying into an easily won ending. I play on only because it is an important game.

**49...Kc6 50.b5+ Kxb7 51.bxa6+ Kxa6 52.Nxf6 Ka5 53.Nd7 Kb4 54.Nxe5 Kc3 55.g4 Nd1+ 56.Ke2 Ne3 57.h4 Ng2 58.Nxg6 1:0**

Mel Ross drew Charles Jay. They joined Eikerenkoetter, Santo Mazzeo (who had a one point bye in round three) and myself for a logjam tie for second place with two points. In the final round, Eikerenkoetter put up a good fight against Bury, but got ground down in the ending, giving Bury the title back. I beat Ross, Anderson beat Jay, and Mazzeo could not play in the final round, so that gave me clear second. The win gave Anderson clear third with 2.5 points.

**Greater Philadelphia Championship**

**HAVERFORD, 3/24-26/2006** - This year, the tournament moved out of the University of Pennsylvania and moved to Haverford College (remember, do not confuse this with Haverford School. You want the campus whose speed limit is 13 mph!), where the Main Line Chess Club runs quads and the Greater Philadelphia Junior Invitational. The players responded with a record 103 in attendance. Two GMs (Ehlvest and Wojtkiewicz) took part, which is actually down one from last year as GM Alexander Stripunsky did not return. But I was able to play for the first time since 2003.

There were three sections to play in: Open, U1800, and U1400. You don't need me to tell you that Ehlvest and Wojtkiewicz drew each other and won the rest of their games to tie for first. Tying for third were NM Carl Boor, Peter Minear (who lost to Ehlvest and Wojtkiewicz respectively), and Alisa Melekhina, who lost to FM Bryan Smith. Smith tied sixth place with Alex Guziak (rated only 1721!) with 3½ points.

Guziak's last round opponent, New Jersey's Andrew Ng, was the sensation of the tournament. Rated 1848, he showed why he is on the road to stardom. In the first round, he upset FM Boris Baczynskij and sent him packing. In the next round, he beat FM Rodion Rubenchik, who had a poor tournament and finished at only fifty percent. In round three, Ng drew NM Yi Song of Delaware. On Sunday, he began by drawing the 2424 FM Bryan Smith. In the final round, he was paired with Guziak, who was not a master, and lost. Guziak, though, had a great tournament in his own right.

I had an average result of three points. This was my best game.

**Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr. - Donald K. Quiring**

**Greater Philadelphia Champ, Round 4, Haverford, 3/26/2006**

*Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.*

**1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Nbd2 c5 4.e3 Nc6 5.c3 b6 6.Bd3 Bb7 7.O-O Be7 8.Qe2 d5 9.Ne5!?**

This allows Black to double my e-pawns with 9...Nxe5 but 10.dxe5 would send the Black knight backwards, because 10...Ne4 would be met by 11.Bb5+ forcing 11...Kf8. It should be noted that after 10.dxe5, at some point in the future, Black can play d4, opening the diagonal for the bishop on b7.

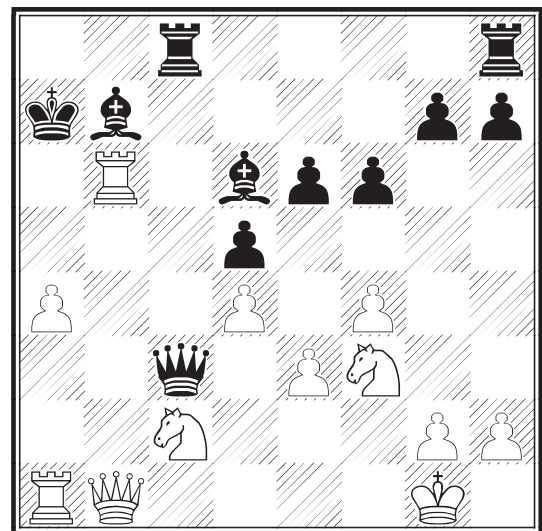
**9... Qc7 10.f4 Bd6 11.Ndf3 O-O-O 12.Bd2 Kb8 13.a4 Na5 14.Qd1**

Fritz did not like this, preferring 14.b4 cxb4 15.cxb4. But I did not want to deal with 15...Nb3

**14...Ne4 15.Be1 f6 16.b4 c4 17.bxa5 cxd3 18.axb6 axb6 19.Nxd3 Nxc3 20.Bxc3 Qxc3 21.Qb1 Qa5 22.Rf2 Ba6 23.Rb2 Ka7 24.Nb4**

I wanted to play 24.Rb5 with the idea that 24...Bxb5 (But Black has 24...Qc3 If the rook moves, the knight is lost, for example, 25.Rxb6 Bxd3 26.Rb7+ Ka8 27.Qb6 Qxa1+ 28.Kf2 Qxa4) 25.axb5 pinning the queen.

**24...Bb7 25.Nc2 Rc8 26.Rb5 Qc3 27.Rxb6**



**27...Qxc2??**

Black should try 27...Bc6

**28.Rxb7+ Ka8 29.Qb6 1:0**

In the U1800 section, two out-of-state players, Jeremiah Williams of New Jersey and Vladyslav Anderson of Maryland tied for first with 4.5 points. Vincent Piskorski was the only clear winner in the event. He took the top prize in the U1400 section.

## Western PA Interscholastic Chess League

by Bruce W. Leverett

The 2005-6 season has finished. In section AA, defending champions Mt. Lebanon and Allderdice withdrew, and Baldwin finished first ahead of Penn Hills and North Allegheny. In section A, Central Catholic finished first ahead of Western PA School for the Deaf, Vincentian, Quigley, and Oakland Catholic. Quigley, which is new to the League, is from Beaver County.

### Final Standings

Section AA		Section A	
1. Baldwin	2-0-1	1. Central Catholic	6-0-0
2. Penn Hills	1-1-1	2. WPSD	6-2-0
3. North Allegheny	0-2-0	3. Vincentian	3-2-0
		4. Quigley	1-6-0
		5. Oakland Catholic	1-7-0

### Pennsylvania State Game/29 Championship

**PITTSBURGH, 4/8/2006** - I think I now have played chess in just about every room of the William Pitt Union at the University of Pittsburgh. This event took place in the Lower Lounge, which had a very attractive view of the street. Although 53 players took part, and all of the rounds began on time, the event was marred by two cell phones going off (One went off three times. The owner did not know how to turn it off. Read the instructions!) and an alarm went off three times when prospective students who were taking a tour of the university opened a door leading outside. They simply walked around a sign that was on a stand that clearly said an alarm would go off if the door was opened.

As for the event itself, defending champion Mark Eidemiller did not attend, and anyone who had a quick rating (which were used for pairings) of about 1900 or higher had a chance of winning.

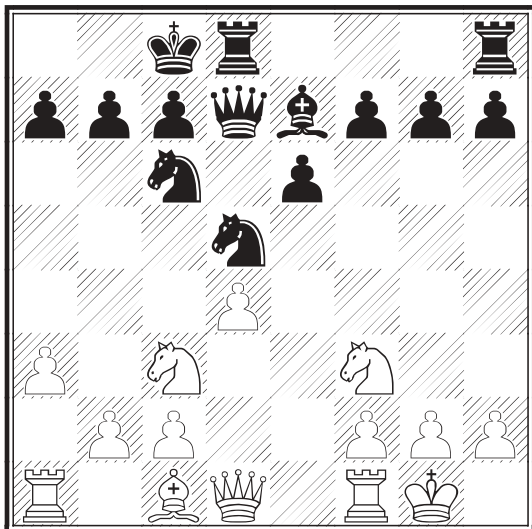
There were no upsets in the first round, although the top two seeds, Robert Renk and Tom Magar, had some difficulty against James Neral and Michael Black respectively. My game turned into a comedy.

#### Mark J. Stuckel - Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

PA State Game/29 Champ, Round 1, Pittsburgh, 4/8/2006

Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.Bb5+ Bd7 4.Bxd7+ Qxd7 5.Nf3 Nxd5 6.O-O Nc6 7.Nc3 O-O-O 8.d4 e6 9.a3 Be7



#### 10.Nxd5?

A major mistake. Black's lead in development and pressure along the d-file now prove significant. Necessary was 10.Ne2 to keep the Black knight on the board, where it temporarily shields the d-pawn. After this the goal would be c4 followed by Be3 to complete development and gain space. Though White might be forced to settle for c3 in order to solidify d4.

10...Qxd5 11.Bf4 Nxd4 12.Qxd4 Qxd4 13.Nxd4 Rxd4 14.Be5 Rg4 15.h3 Rg6 16.b4 Bd6 17.Rfe1 Rd8 18.Rad1 Rg5 19.f4?!

It is very tempting to make this move, but it weakens the g3 square. I would play 19.Bh2

#### 19...Rg3 20.Bxd6?

This gives black two center pawns against none.

20...cxd6 21.Ra1 Rc3 22.Ra2 Kd7 23.Re2 Rdc8 24.Kf1 R8c4 25.Ke1 Rxf4 26.Rb2? Rxa3 27.Rf2 Rxf2 28.Kxf2 f5 29.Ke2 e5 30.c4 Rc3 31.c5 d5

Black does not exchange in order to get a mass of pawns in the center. 32.Kd2 Rg3 33.Ke1 a6 34.Kf2 Rc3 35.Ke2 Kc6 36.Kf2 Kb5 37.Ke2 Rc4 38.Kd3 Rxb4 39.Rxb4+ Kxb4 40.g4 f4 41.g5 Kxc5 42.g6 hxg6 43.h4 e4+ 44.Ke2 d4 45.h5 gxh5 46.Ke1

Since my opponent decided not to resign, I decided to have some fun. Some of Fritz's comments gave me a giggle so I decided to share them with you.

46...g5 47.Ke2 g4 48.Kf2 h4 49.Ke2 g3 50.Kf1 h3 51.Kg1 f3 52.Kf1 e3 53.Ke1 d3 54.Kd1 f2 55.Kc1 g2! "The end of the story." (Fritz). 56.Kb2 Kc4! "Surprise!" (F) 57.Ka2 Kc3! "Final destruction." (F) 58.Ka3 h2! "Leaving no more doubts." (F) 59.Ka4 b6! "The final blow." (F) 60.Ka3 e2! "An unexpected blow." (F) 61.Ka2 d2! "The decision." (F) 62.Ka3 h1=Q

I could get five knights, but with less than twenty minutes on the clock, I did not want to risk stalemate.

#### 63.Ka2 g1=Q 0:1

In round two, the only unexpected result was Donald Meigs' draw with Viktor Semenov. Meigs played Qxg7 expecting mate, but Semenov's knight on e8 protected the pawn, so Meigs was down a queen. However, Semenov was running out of time with an analog clock, his king was exposed, and many of his pieces were undeveloped, while Meigs was fully developed and his pieces were aimed right at the opposing king. Semenov was able to safely trade down into a king, queen, bishop and pawns ending against Meigs's king, knight, and lone pawn. Then, Semenov's flag fell, which would mean a win for Meigs since he still had a pawn left, but he did not notice that the flag was down. Some kid whispered to the players that the game was over, but, thankfully, neither player heard him, and I motioned to him to keep quiet. Spectators, you cannot say anything! A few more moves were played, and Semenov won Meigs' final pawn before Meigs noticed the flag was down. After a slight dispute about the result, the game was declared a draw.

The top players began to be paired with each other in round three. Franklin Chen toppled Renk on board one, Magar defeated Thomas Messineo on board two, and this game was played on board three:

#### Tyler Lelis - Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

PA State Game/29 Champ, Round 3, Pittsburgh, 4/8/2006

Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

#### 1.d4

Played after a few seconds thought. I saw Lelis play 1.e4 in his first round game. Perhaps he did not want to play against my Center Counter Defense? He would not be the first player to fear it.



1...e5 2.dxe5 Nc6 3.Nf3 Qe7 4.c3

A bit passive, but it gets us out of book.

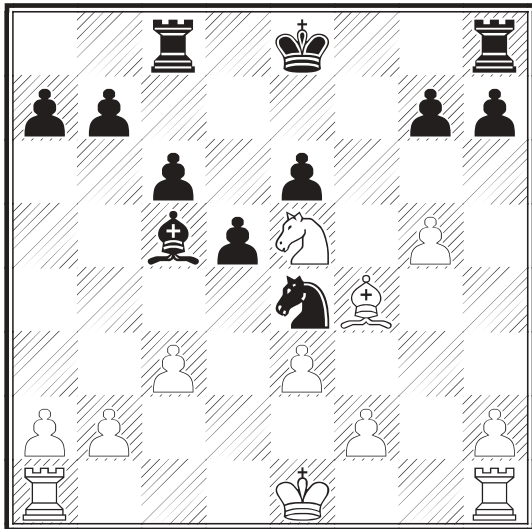
4...Nxe5 5.Nxe5 Qxe5 6.Nd2 d5 7.Nf3 Qh5 8.Bf4 c6 9.e3 Nf6  
10.Be2 Bc5 11.Ne5 Qf5 12.Bd3 Qh5 13.Be2 Qf5

I was willing to take a draw.

14.g4 Qe6 15.g5 Ne4 16.Bg4 Qe7 17.Bxc8 Rxc8 18.Qg4 Qe6??

Believe it or not, this should lose the game!

19.Qxe6+ fxe6



20.f3!

Only now did I realize that after 20...Nd6 21.Nd3, if Black moves his bishop, the knight falls. I thought about resigning here, but after a long think, I found an idea to keep me in the game.

20...Nd6 21.Nd3 e5 22.Bxe5 Nf7

22...Nc4 was better.

23.Bxg7 Rg8 24.Nxc5 Rxg7 25.h4 Ne5 26.Ke2 Re7 27.b3 Rcc7  
28.Nd3 Nf7 29.Rae1 Nd6 30.Kd2 Rf7 31.e4

I did not like this move because it breaks up the three to one pawn majority on the kingside. Fritz suggests 31.Nf4

31...dxe4 32.fxe4 Rce7 33.e5 Nb5 34.Rhf1 Nc7 35.Nf4 Rd7+  
36.Kc2 Rde7 37.h5 Rf5 38.g6 hxg6 39.Nxg6 Rxf1 40.Rxf1  
Rh7 41.Rf8+ Kd7 42.Rb8

In dual time pressure, we both missed that White can win with 42.Rh8  
42...Rxb8 43.Rxb7

Fritz found another win for White with 43.Nf8+ Ke7 44.Rxb7 Kxf8  
45.Rxc7 Rxe5 46.Rxa7

43...Rh2+ 44.Kd3

White should not try to save the pawn. If 44.Kb1 Rh1+ 45.Kb2 Rh2+  
46.Ka3 Kc8 47.Rb4 Nb5+ and White must give up the exchange to avoid mate.

44...Rxa2 45.Rb4 Nd5 46.Ra4

A better winning try is 46.Rd4

46...Rxa4 47.bxa4 a5 48.Kc4 Nb6+ 49.Kb3 Ke6 50.c4 Nd7  
1/2:1/2

In the penultimate round, Chen continued his march to victory by beating Magar. I defeated Joseph Elsleger, who was having a good

tournament, Lelis stayed in the picture by beating Avi Schreiber, and Renk rebounded by winning against Daniel Kirk.

Franklin Chen was the only perfect score in the championship round. Your author was the top player with 3½ points.

**Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr. - Franklin M. Chen**

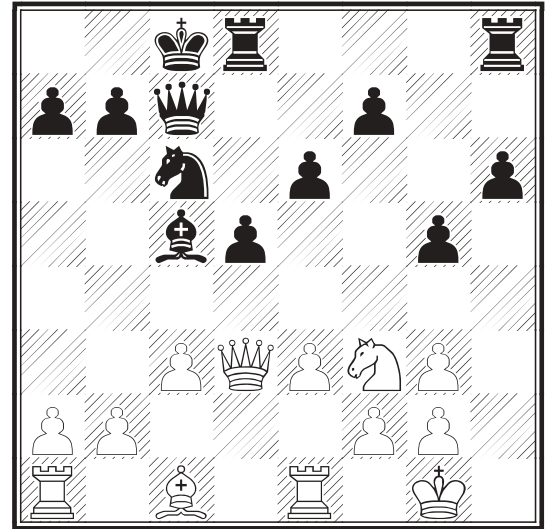
PA State Game/29 Champ, Round 5, Pittsburgh, 4/8/2006

Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 c5 3.e3 d5 4.c3 Qc7 5.Nbd2?

A very bad move order mistake. 5.Bd3 should be played.

5...Bf5 6.Be2 e6 7.O-O Nc6 8.Re1 h6 9.Nf1 g5 10.Bd3 Ne4  
11.Ng3 Nxg3 12.hxg3 Bxd3 13.Qxd3 O-O-O 14.dxc5 Bxc5



15.Bd2

Possibly 15.b4 with the immediate advance of the a and b-pawns. Castling on opposite wings tends to lead to a race to push your pawns and bare the opponent's king before he does the same to you.

15...f5 16.b4 Be7 17.a4 Rhf8 18.Rec1 e5 19.Qe2 g4 20.Ne1  
Kb8 21.a5 h5 22.Rab1 Qd6 23.c4 e4 24.c5 Qh6 25.b5 Ne5  
26.c6?!

Fritz likes 26.a6 better.

26...Nc4! 27.b6 Qxc6

I did not mind giving up this pawn since it opens up lines to the Black king.

28.bxa7+ Kxa7 29.Bc3 Bc5 30.Nc2 Qh6 31.Nd4?

According to Fritz, this loses the game. It recommends 31.Rb5 Rc8  
32.Qd1

31...h4!

Black's attack breaks through first.

32.Nb5+ Kb8 33.Be5+ Nxe5 34.Rxc5 hxg3 35.fxg3 Rh8  
36.Rb3 Qh1+ 37.Kf2 Nd3+ 38.Rxd3 exd3 39.Qf1?

White does have time to play 39.Qxd3

39...Qxf1+ 40.Kxf1 Rh1+ 41.Kf2 d2 42.Nc3 d1=Q 43.Nxd1  
Rxd1 44.Ke2 Ra1 45.Rb5 Ra2+ 46.Kf1 Rc8 0:1

So Franklin Chen is the new Pennsylvania State G/29 Champion! On board two, Lelis-Renk ended in a victory for black, and Messineo finished off a great tournament by beating Meigs. Renk and Messineo tied for second. In the Scholastic section, William Kramer of Eden Christian Academy could afford to draw against Guthrie Gintzler in the final round in order to secure victory.

July 23

2006 PA State Championship Scholastics

William Pitt Union, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA 15213

## Games From PSCF Members

Bruce W. Leverett - Mark A. Heimann

Triple Threat I vs. Bright Knights

Pittsburgh Chess League, Round 1, 9/26/2004

Annotations by Bruce W. Leverett

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3 b6 5.Bd3 Bb7 6.Nf3 O-O  
7.O-O c5 8.Na4

Ugly, but what other way to try for advantage?

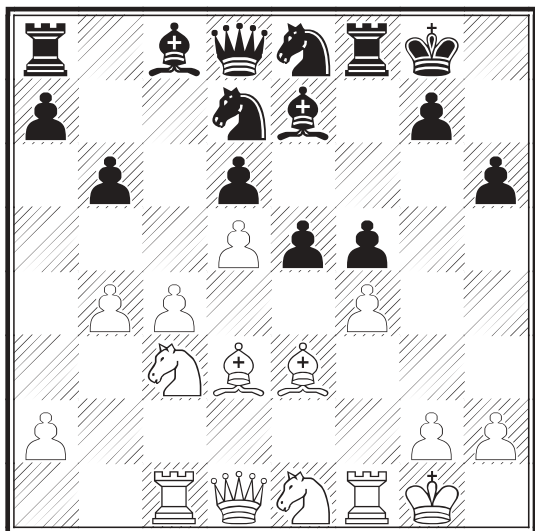
8...cxd4 9.exd4 Be7 10.Be3

Off the beaten track, possible are 10.Bf4 or 10.Bg5.

10...d6 11.Nc3 Nbd7 12.Rc1 e5

A strategic mistake. White will get there first on the queenside. Black should either sit tight or prepare ...d5.

13.d5 h6 14.Ne1 Bc8 15.b4 Ne8 16.f4 f5



17.Nf3! Nc7

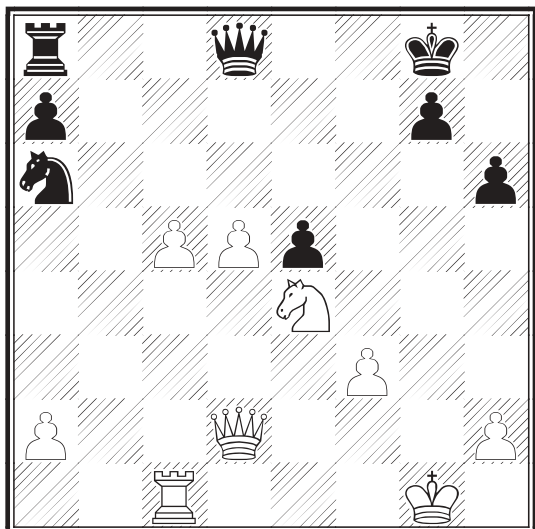
17...e4 18.Nd4 exd3? 19.Ne6

18.fxe5 Nxe5 19.Nxe5 dxe5 20.c5+- Bg5 21.Qe2 f4

21...Nxd5 22.Bc4 Be6 23.Nxd5 Bxd3 24.Rcd1

22.Bd2 f3 23.Rxf3 Rxf3 24.gxf3 Bxd2 25.Qxd2 bxc5 26.bxc5

Ba6 27.Bxa6 Nxa6 28.Ne4



28...Rc8 29.d6 Nb8 30.Qd5+ Kh7 31.Rb1 Nc6 32.Rb7 Qa5  
33.Nf6+ Kg6 34.Qf7+ Kg5 35.Qxg7+ Kf5 36.Qh7+ Ke6  
36...Kxf6 37.Qxh6+ Kf5 38.Rf7#  
37.Qf7+ 1:0

# July 22 & 23

## 2006 PA State Championship

William Pitt Union, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA 15213

### Alex's Column

by FM Alex Dunne

Every year the Internet Chess Club offers a series of Dos Hermanas Qualifying tournaments online. Only a very few qualify, but it gives players the opportunity to play titled players. This year I finished at 6½-5½ and had some fun. Here was some of the fun.

**Alex Dunne - encarnacao**

Dos Hermanas, Online, 2006

Annotations by Alex Dunne

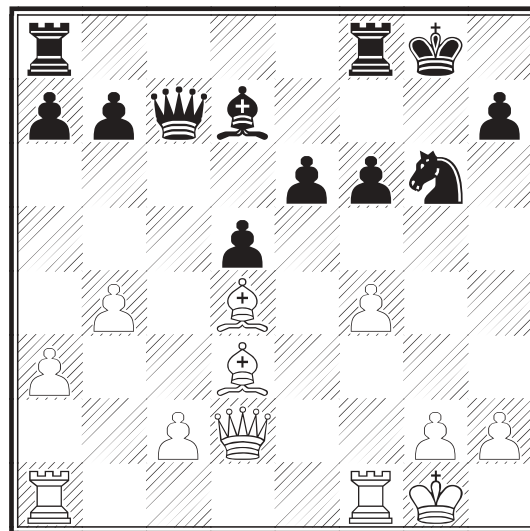
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Ba5 6.b4 cxd4 7.Nb5  
Bc7 8.f4 Bd7 9.Nxc7+ Qxc7 10.Nf3 Nc6

Standard is 10...Ne7 11.Bd3 a6 12.O-O Bb5 13.Nxd4 Bxd3 14.cxd3  
Nbc6 15.Be3 O-O 16. Nxc6 Nxc6 17.Bc5 with a small edge to White  
as in Lanin-Sambuev, Moscow 2003.

11.Bb2 Nge7 12.Bd3 Ng6

The Knight doesn't belong here. Better was 12...O-O or 12...a6.

13.Qd2 O-O 14.O-O f6 15.exf6 gxf6 16.Nxd4 Nxd4 17.Bxd4



White stands better here, but a quick end doesn't seem likely.

17...e5

This loosening of the position is not fatal if followed up correctly, but Black doesn't see it.

18.Bc5 Rfe8?!

Black had to give up the exchange to keep his center and kingside sound - 18...Nxf4!? 19.Bxf8 Rxf8 with a playable, though shakey, position.

**19.fxe5 fxe5 20.Qh6!**

White could win a pawn with 20.Bxg6 hxg6 21.Qxd5+ Be6 with a long endgame to come. This strikes right at the weakness of Black's position, the king.

**20...e4 21.Rf6 Re6 22.Raf1?**

I had written 22.Rf7! down on my scoresheet, but chickened out. After 22.Rf7! Kxf7 23.Qxh7+ Kf6 24.Rf1+ Nf4 25.Bd4+ Kg5 26.h4+ Kg4 27.Qg7+ Rg6 28.Rxf4+ Qxf4 29.Qxg6+ Kxh4 30.Be2! Bg4 31.Bf6+ Kg3 32.Be5! and mates.

**22...Qd8? 23.Rf7 1:0**

## Center City Chess Club's 150th Monthly Quad by Eric C. Johnson

Allentown's Center City Chess Club will reach a special milestone on Saturday, August 12th - the 150th edition of its monthly quad tournament. The club has hosted a variety of USCF-rated events (including several editions of the PA State Championship), but the monthly quads are its single longest-running activity.

The history of Allentown chess is quite convoluted, with various clubs existing under different names but always being referred to as the "Allentown Chess Club" by outsiders. The current edition, the Center City Chess Club, has resided at St. Luke's Church in downtown Allentown since 1993. The club was started at that location by player Steve Miller (who has since moved to South Carolina) and church contact Thomas Heffelfinger (who passed away in 2000).

In late 1993, I suggested to Tom that he could boost attendance by running USCF-rated events during club meetings, and he readily agreed. Attendance went from a handful of players meeting in the church library to several dozen players filling the main church hall. The first event with the quad format was run in December 1993. Since that time, the club has faithfully held its monthly quad tournaments, missing just three times in all those years. The event started out on the third Saturday of the month, moved around a bit, even becoming an impromptu Swiss for a couple of months in the late 1990s, before settling in as the "Second Saturday Quad". But it did always retain the "quad" name in its title, as a search of the USCF's MSA rating website will confirm.

On Saturday, August 12th, besides holding the 150th version of "Second Saturday Quads", there will be special awards for players with the most points scored through all those events, the most 3-0 scores, the most active players, and so forth, plus plenty of surprises. We hope everyone will visit and help us break our quad attendance record - currently at 39 players.

If you plan to play:

**What:** Allentown's 150th Second Saturday Quads

**Where:** St. Luke's Church, 417 North 7th St., Allentown PA 18102

**When:** Saturday, August 12, 2006

**Registration:** Noon to 1:15 pm (do not be late if you expect to play)

**Rounds:** 1:30 - 3 - 4:30; Ending at approximately 6:15 pm

**Cost:** \$12 (USCF membership required)

**Prizes:** \$24/1st each quad

Our quad events have attracted some strong master/expert players from across the state over the years - and some home-grown ones. Here is a partial list: James Gwyn, Matt Traldi, Kurt Schneider, Aaron Pixton, Stanislav Kriventsov, Paul Fielding, Jack Mongilutz, David Locke,

Jeff Faust, Al Bingamin Jr., Peter Minear, Anthony Laster, and many others. Even former USCF Executive Director Frank Niro and PSCF's own Ira Lee Riddle have put in appearances over the years.

2005 US Amateur East Champion Dan Yeager is a frequent participant at our quads. Here is a game from the March 2006 edition:

### Daniel A. Yeager - Eric C. Johnson Second Saturday Quads, Allentown, 3/11/2006 Annotations by Eric C. Johnson

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 a6?!**

I'm not aware of any reason why this popular line cannot be played against both 4.e3 and 4.Nc3.

**5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Bd3 Nc6 7.Nc3 g6 8.h3 Bg7 9.O-O O-O 10.a3 Re8 11.b4 b5**

11...e5!? may be possible, but with more risk.

**12.Bb2 e6!?**

With the standard idea of Nd7-b6-c4.

**13.Rc1 Bb7 14.Nb1**

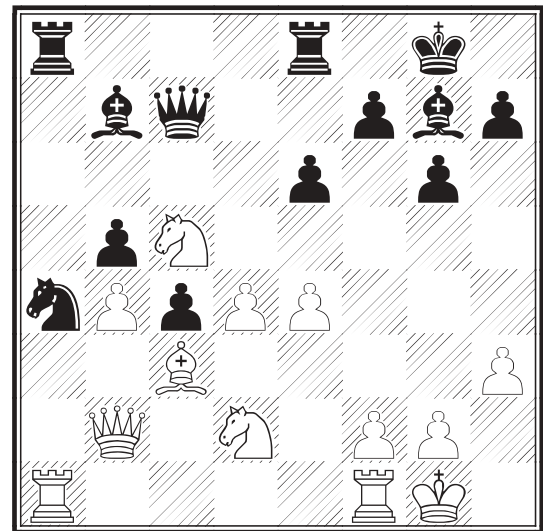
White gets the same idea.

**14...Nd7 15.Nbd2 Nb6 16.Nb3 Nc4 17.Bxc4 dxc4 18.Nc5 Qe7****19.Qc2 a5 20.Bc3 axb4 21.axb4 Qc7 22.Qb2 Ne7**

22...f5!? secures the d5-square.

**23.e4 Nc8 24.Nd2 Nb6 25.Ra1 Na4!**

Neutralizing his best piece.



**26.Nxa4 bxa4 27.b5 Qf4 28.Rfe1 Red8 29.g3 Qh6 30.Kh2 e5 31.d5 Bc8 32.Rh1 Qxh3+ 33.Kg1 Qg4 34.Bxe5 a3! 35.Qc3 Bxe5 36.Qxe5 Qe2 37.Qc3 Bg4**

During the time pressure stages of the game I was concerned about sacrifices on the h-file, so this move is designed to provoke f2-f3 to keep the White king in the way of such plans.

**38.f3 Bd7 39.Rh2 Qd3 40.Qxd3 cxd3 41.Kf2**

41.b6!? =

**41...Rdb8 42.Ke3 Rxb5 43.Kxd3 f5 44.Nc4**

44.Nb1!?

**44...Rb3+ 45.Kd4 Rb4**

45...Ra4

**46.Kc3 Raa4 47.Nxa3 fxe4 48.fxe4 Rxe4 49.Nc2 Rxa1 50.Nxa1 Re3+ 1/2:1/2**

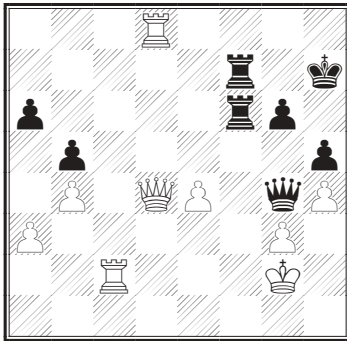
with the idea of Rxg3, but drawn after some additional moves.

**Play It Forward**

by **Ken Hamilton**

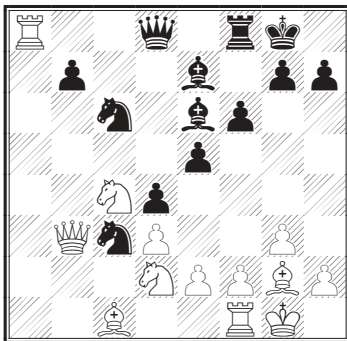
Yes, another brutal examination of your powers (hah!) to see ahead...this time featuring positions from Pal Benko's games.

**1. Pal C. Benko - Luben Popov**  
Reggio Emilia, 1970



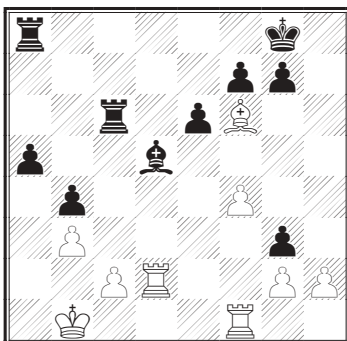
49.Qxf6!      Qxe4+  
50. ?

**2. Vladimir Bukal - Pal C. Benko**  
Sarajevo, 3/30/1970



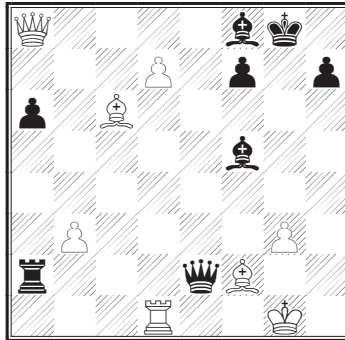
22...      Qxa8  
23.Re1      b5  
24.Nb6      Bxb3  
25.Nxa8      ?

**3. Robert E. Byrne - Pal C. Benko**  
US Championship, 1970



29.Bd4      gxh2  
30.Rh1      Be4  
31.Rxh2      ?

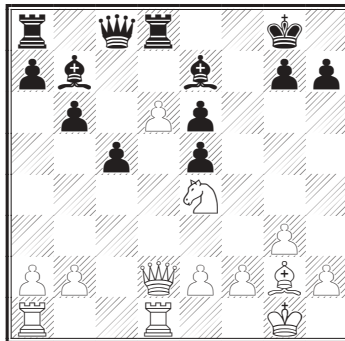
**4. Pal C. Benko - Samuel Reshevsky**  
Match, New York, 1960



34.Qxf8+!      Kxf8  
35.d8=Q+      Kg7  
36.Bd4+      Kh6  
37. ?

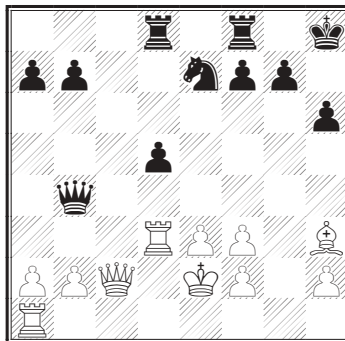
(Was this easy enough for you?....)

**5. Pal C. Benko - Klaus Darga**  
Olympiad, Varna, 1962



18.dxe7      Rxd2  
19.Rxd2      Qc7  
20.Rad1      Bd5  
21. ?

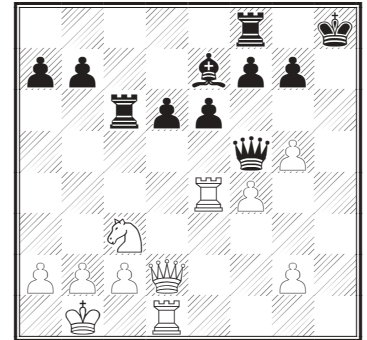
**6. Vitaly Zaltsman - Pal C. Benko**  
USA, 1983



23.Rb3?      Qh4  
24.Rxb7      d4!  
25.exd4      ?

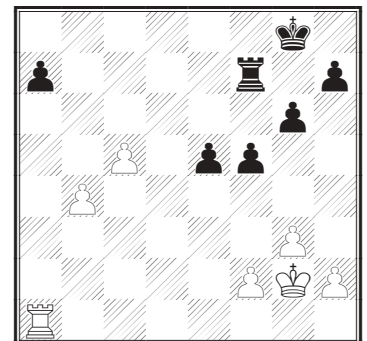
(Was this hard enough for you?....)

**7. Pal C. Benko - Harrison**  
Australian Open, 1985



19.g4!      Qg6  
20.Rh1+      Kg8  
21.Qh2      f5  
22. ?

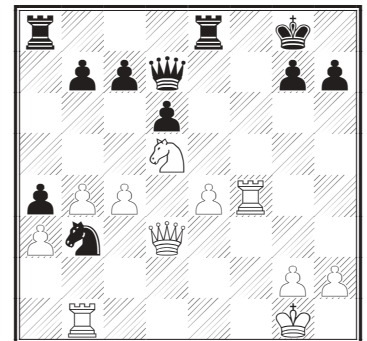
**8. Pal C. Benko - Yehuda Grunfeld**  
New York, 1986



31.c6      Kf8  
32.b5      Ke8  
33. ?

You should have nailed that one. Maybe this last one might tax your brain a bit more.

**9. Pal C. Benko - Guillermo Garcia**  
New York Open, 4/3/1988



32.Rbf1      Rf8  
33. ?

Well, maybe this wasn't too hard, but it's certainly a pleasing way to finish the game.

**For solutions, see page 14.**

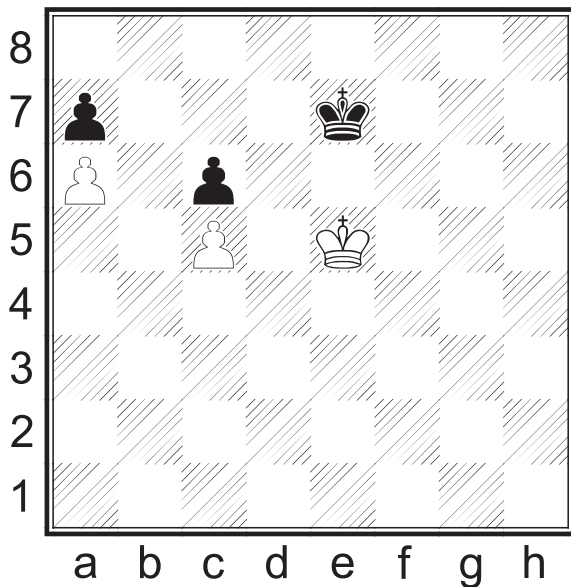
## Coaches Corner: Some basic endgames - Simple or not? You decide!

by IM Igor Khmel'nitsky

With hundreds of books on openings flooding the market, chess players are often caught up in an "opening frenzy" and forget about the basics. The examples below should remind you that knowing basic positions and ideas in the endgame can prove to be crucial at any level, even up to grandmaster. How devastating can this be - you are playing well for 60 or more moves and 4 to 5 hours only to blow everything just moments before the game should reach a well-deserved outcome? The knowledge of basic endgames is one of the 12 critical skills tested in my book on comprehensive evaluation and training - *Chess Exam and Training Guide* (<http://www.iamcoach.com/>).

Today's examples are taken from the games of grandmasters from regular (not rapid!) tournaments. First, a little warm up from the 2004 Sarajevo Super-GM Tournament:

### GM Viktor Bologan - GM Emir Dizdarevic



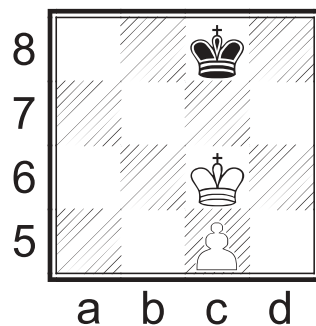
**What result do you expect? How should Black continue? Take 5 minutes to think about it before reading further.**

First, note how you should answer the questions - the outcome is likely to depend upon the move, thus you need to start with the second question before going back to the first one. In more complex static positions, the opposite is true; your best move will depend on your evaluation and the plan you select.

Back to the game. With Black to move, White has the **Opposition** and Black's pawn at c6 is doomed.

We also know that White wins the position in Example 1 - no matter whose move it is. However, the win would be much simpler if it is Black to move: 1... Kd8(b8) 2.Kb7(d7) and the c-pawn marches through. With White to move, it is a "nail biter": 1.Kd6 Kd8 2.c6 Kc8 3.c7 (*zugzwang*) Kb7 4.Kd7 etc... Now add the pawns

### Example 1

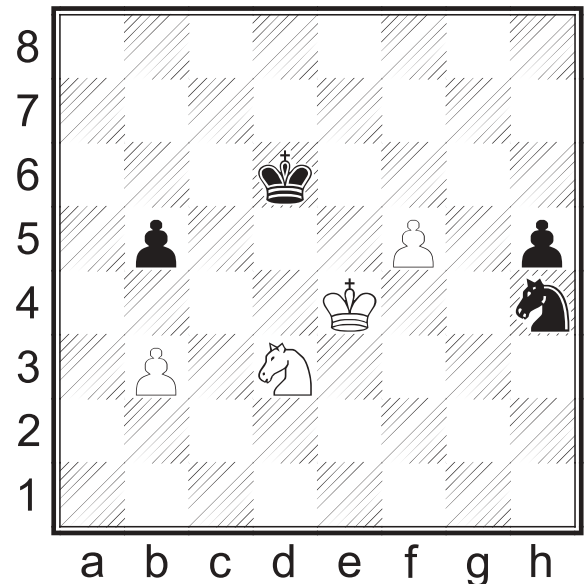


at a6 and a7 (as in the starting diagram) and you see that in the second line Black king doesn't have b7, thus it is stalemate.

So, Black should be aiming at either defending the pawn or at least gaining the opposition. And White can't prevent the later. The best line is 1...Kd7! 2.Kf6 Kd8! (diagonal opposition) 3.Ke6 Ke8 4.Kd6 Kd8 5.Kxc6 Kc8 6.Kd6 Kd8 7.c6 Kc8 (I hope you know how White wins if the a-pawns are shifted a row up at a5 and a6, but that is a subject for a different discussion) 8.c7 and stalemate. Remarkably, in the game Black played 1...Ke8 and after 2.Ke6 resigned as White gets both the pawn and the opposition.

Our second example is a knight endgame from the Russian Women's Championship:

### WGM Tatiana Shumiakina - WIM Tatjana Molchanova



**What result do you expect? How should Black continue? Take 5 minutes to think about it before reading further.**

Well, Black is worse, but the result will depend upon her immediate strategy and, specifically on the next move. White has a more active king and better-placed knight. However, Black has an outside pass pawn and, with only 2 White pawns left, needs to find a correct moment to trade her knight for both of them. Black has two reasonable ideas leading to two candidate moves. The first one is to activate the knight and combine pressure on the White pawns with distraction by advancing her h-pawn. The second possibility is more blatant - to sacrifice the knight, distract the White king with h-pawn and send the Black king to fight for the b-pawn against the clumsy knight.

If you missed either of these two options you have an issue to work on. If you missed 1...Ng2 - you probably were too preoccupied with the 1...Nxf5 idea and forgot that **no great move except for checkmate deserves to be played as soon as you see it**. There is always a chance for a better alternative. Work on your move selection process. If you missed 1...Nxf5 - you missed a common tactical idea and need to work on endgame tactics, specifically sacrificing in order to trade down.

Once you identify candidate moves, next you need to combine calculation, knowledge of standard ideas and judgment. After 1...Ng2 2.Kf3 (2.Nf4?? Nxf4 3.Kf4 h4 and Black is winning, thanks to the outside pass pawn) Nh4+! 3.Kf4 Ng2+ 4.Kg5 h4 White can't manage to

control the h-pawn, defend the f-pawn and make progress. Black should send his king toward the f-pawn (Ke7) and then sit and wait. This conclusion is based on judgment and knowledge of these types of endgames. Study this position in greater detail or better yet practice playing against a computer.

The tactical idea **1...Nxf5** is more definitive and thus might be more attractive to the defender, however, after **2.Kxf5** the 'clumsy' White knight may not be as clumsy as it looks when it comes to defending his last pawn.

Now, some standard ideas - with his king "absent" the knight has difficulty defending a pawn from the opponent's king. One of the best-known defensive setup is Example 2a. When the knight is placed behind the pawn, it is untouchable as otherwise the king won't catch the pawn on it's way to promotion.

Add a black pawn on b4 (Example 2b) and the strategy changes dramatically - now the best square for the knight is a5! After **Kd4-c5-b5**, White plays **Nc4** and Black can't make any progress. Thus White can find as much time as necessary to get her King back into the action.

The next step is to calculate to see if White can indeed reach this winning setup. Black either didn't know the setup or miscalculated as she went for the tactical **1...Nxf5** and the game continued **2.Kxf5 Kd5 3.Nb4+! Kc5 4.Nc2! Kd5 5.Kg5** (finally the King makes a little step!) **Ke4 6.Nb4 Kd4 7.Na6** (planning 8.b4) **b4 8.Kxh5 Kc3 9.Nc5 Kd4 10.Nb7! Kc3 11.Na5** and the winning setup is reached!

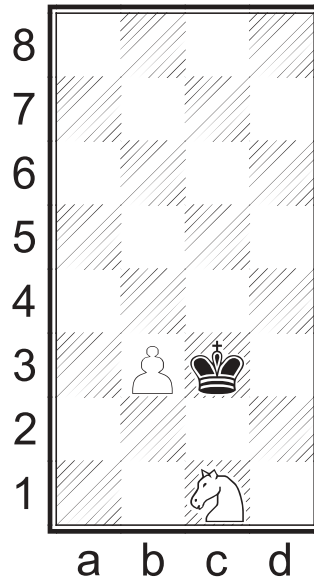
**Conclusion:** Study basic endgame ideas and positions well before you study more complex endgames.

**Future readings:** There are many good books on endgames and you should pick one based both upon your skills and also upon how you like the authors' methods. Check out the endgame books by Fine, Averbach, Dvoretzky, Alburt and Muller.

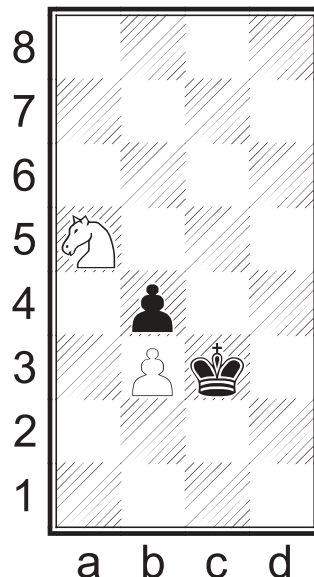
In my book, *Chess Exam and Training Guide*, I have specific instructions on what and how you should study based on the rating earned in my assessment.

(For comments, questions, training or to order an autographed copy of *Chess Exam and Training Guide*, which was declared the 2005 Best Chess Book by the Chess Journalists of America, please contact IM Igor Khmelnitsky via his website <http://www.iamcoach.com/>)

Example 2a



Example 2b



## Play It Forward Solutions (from page 12)

**1. Benko-Popov: 50.Kg1** is the move Benko *should* have played. Instead, he played **50.Kh2?** In his splendid book *My Life, Games and Compositions* he writes: "I was still under the spell of the combination and I reversed two moves in my mind. After the correct **50.Kg1 Qe3+ 51.Kh2** Black would have to resign. Instead, reality came crashing down on my head after **50...Qxc2+ 0-1**. It's often hard to recover from a shock like this!" (We know, we know....)

**2. Bukal-Benko: 25....Bd5!** Congratulations if you saw that the knight is trapped after the forced series of moves **26.Nc7 Bxg2 27.Kxg2 Rc8 28.Na6 Ra8 29.Nc7 Ra7 30.Ne6 Kf7**.

**3. Byrne-Benko: 31....Rd8!** and White must lose the c-pawn, so he resigned.

**4. Benko-Reshevsky: 37.Qf6+ 1-0.** "Black had no desire to experience **37...Bg6 38.Qf4+ Kh5 39.Qh4++**." (Benko).

**5. Benko-Darga: 21.Nc3!** Wins a material advantage, plus a crushing position whatever Black plays. Benko writes: "Black didn't want to suffer any more, so he gave up. Since **21...Re8 22.Nxd5 exd5 23.Bxd5+ Kh8 24.Bf7** wins immediately, that only left **21...Rb8**. Unfortunately, **21....Rb8 22.Bxd5 exd5 23.Nxd5 Qc6 24.Nc7! Kf7 25.Rd7 Re8 26.Nxe8 Kxe8 27.Rxa7** would make resignation seem desirable." Other winning lines are given by Fritz8 - after **21....Rb8 22.Bxd5 Qxe7 23.Bc4 Qf6 24.Rd7 h6 25.R1d6 Kh8 26.Ne4**, and after **21....e4 22.Bxe4 Re8 23.Nxd5 Qe5 24.Nc3 Qf6 25.Bc6 Rxe7 26.Ne4**. Other lines can also be considered, but with the same end result. This is not an easy exercise - but a good one!

**6. Zaltsman-Benko: 25....Nc6!** "Suddenly all of Black's pieces are participating in a furious attack against White's open king." (Benko). White played **26.Qxc6** and then resigned, as he must give up his queen after **26...Rfe8 27.Kf1 (27.Kd3 Qxd4+) Qxh3+ 28.Kg1 Re6**.

**7. Benko-Harrison: 22.Re6!** and after **22...Qxe6 23.Qh7+ Kf7 24.gxf5** (This, to my mind, was the hard move to find when sacrificing the rook on e6) and Black resigned, since **24...Qc4 25.Qh5+ Kg8 26.g6** leads to mate. It's all a matter of timing on when and how to get the g-pawn to g6. Incidentally, Benko notes that Black didn't play **19...Qxg4** because **20.Rh1+ Kg8 21.Qh2 f6 22.Rg1 Qf5 23.g6** ends the game.

**8. Benko-Gruenfeld: 33.Rxa7!** and after **33...Rxa7 34.b6** forces a pawn through to queen.

**9. Benko-Garcia: 33.Qh3!** To quote Pal Benko: "Black is losing his overloaded queen. (**33...Rfd8 34.Rf8+!**) since **33...Qxh3 34.Nxe7+** forces mate. Garcia pointed out that **33.Nb6!** also wins (**33....cxb6 34.Qd5+**), though in that case Black could cut his losses via **33...Qe6 34.Nxa8 Rxa8**."

If people are wondering what to buy you for Christmas or your birthday or whatever - tell them to give you Benko's book.

(Reprinted from the December 2004 *Chess IN Indiana*. For more information on the Indiana State Chess Association visit their website at <http://www.indianachess.org/portal/>)

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**June 24 & 25. 3rd Western Pennsylvania Junior Open.** 5-SS. Lower Lounge, Main Floor, William Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh, 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh PA 15213. Open to ages 20 & under. 5 sections: **2-day (Sat & Sun):** G/75. **EF:** \$18 postmarked by 6/16, \$28 later. Reg ends 11:30am. Rds Sat Noon - 3pm - 6pm, Sun Noon - 3pm. **Championship**, open to all. **1-day (Sun only):** G/40. **EF:** \$15 postmarked by 6/18, \$25 later. Reg ends 11:30am. Rds Noon - 1:30pm - 3pm - 5pm - 6:30pm. **Premier**, open to U1200. **Reserve**, open to U900. **Booster**, open to U700. **Amateur**, open to U500. **All:** Trophies to top 7 in each section, additional medallions; Teams of 4 to 7 players combined from all sections, Trophies to top 3 schools & top 3 clubs, PSCF required \$5 OSA. **Info:** martinak\_tom\_m@hotmail.com, 412-908-0286. **Ent:** PSCF, c/o Tom Martinak, 549 13th Avenue, New Brighton PA 15066-1208. Checks payable to PSCF. W. *Sponsored & Organized by the PA State Chess Federation & University of Pittsburgh Chess Club.*

**A Heritage Event**

**July 22 & 23 GPP:10 Pennsylvania 2006 Pennsylvania State Championship.** 5-SS. G/120. Lower Lounge, Main Floor, William Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh, 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh PA 15213. \$\$ (2510 b/90, 2/3 guaranteed) 4 sections. **Open**, open to all: \$\$ 500-250, U2200 \$140. **Premier**, open to those rated under 2000: 300-100, U1850 140. **Reserve**, open to those rated under 1700: 300-100, U1550 140. **Booster**, open to those rated under 1400: \$\$ 300-100, U1200 140. Unrated limited to \$125 in U2000, \$100 in U1700 and \$75 in U1400. **All:** Trophies to Top PA & Top PA Junior in each section. **EF:** \$40 postmarked by 7/14, \$50 later. Re-entry: \$20. PSCF required \$5, OSA. Reg ends 9:30am. Rds Sat 10am - 2:15pm - 6:30pm, Sun 11:30am - 3:45pm. **Info:** martinak\_tom\_m@hotmail.com, 412-908-0286. **Ent:** PSCF, c/o Tom Martinak, 549 13th Avenue, New Brighton PA 15066-1208. Checks payable to PSCF. W. *Sponsored & Organized by the PA State Chess Federation & University of Pittsburgh Chess Club.*

**July 23. 2006 PA State Championship Scholastic.** 5-SS. G/40. Dining Rooms A & B, 1st Floor, William Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh, 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh PA 15213. Open to those entering grades K to 12. 3 sections: **Premier**, open to U1100 & unrated in grades 9 to 12. **Reserve**, open to U900 & unrated in grades 6 to 8. **Booster**, open to U700 & unrated in grades K to 5. **All:** Trophies to top 7 in each section, additional medallions; Teams of 4 to 7 players combined from all scholastic and adult sections, Trophies to top 3 schools & top 3 clubs. **EF:** \$15 postmarked by 7/16, \$25 later. PSCF required \$5 OSA. Reg ends 11:30am. Rds Noon - 1:30pm - 3pm - 5pm - 6:30pm. **Info:** martinak\_tom\_m@hotmail.com, 412-908-0286. **Ent:** PSCF, c/o Tom Martinak, 549 13th Avenue, New Brighton PA 15066-1208. Checks payable to PSCF. W. *Sponsored & Organized by the PA State Chess Federation & University of Pittsburgh Chess Club.*

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**2006 Pennsylvania State Senior Championship.**

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**2006 Greater Philadelphia Middle School & High School Championships.**

**2006 Pennsylvania State Junior Championships.**

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(1) Univ of Pitt-Bradford Commons Building; Tues 8-11 pm

(2) School Street Elementary; Wed 6:30-8:30 pm

**CHAMBERSBURG**

Chessman; 600 Miller St; Thurs 7-10 pm, 717-261-9132, 717-263-2836

**CHESTER**

J Lewis Crozer Library, 620 Engle St; Tues 5:30-7:30 pm, 610-364-1212

**CLEARFIELD**

Shaw Library; Tues and Thurs 6-9 pm; Sat 9-noon, Ron 814-765-7788

**COATESVILLE**

Cultural Soc, 258 E Lincoln Hwy; Thurs 5-10 pm, Bob Jones 610-384-1790

**COUDERSPORT**

High School, 698 Dwight St; Fri 3-4:30, Patrick Keeney 814-274-4428

**DOUGLASSVILLE:**

Amity CC, St Paul's UCC, 1312 Old Swede Rd; Fri 7-10 pm, 610-385-6324

**ERIE**

Zurn Science Building, W 7th St between Peach and Sassafras, Room 341;

Fri 6:30-10 pm, James Walczak 814-870-7763

**GLADWYNE**

Main Line CC; Waverly Hts Ret Comm Game Room, 1400 Waverly Rd;

Tues 7 pm, Dan Heisman 610-649-0750

**GREENSBURG**

Courthouse Square; Wed 6-11 pm, 724-836-5625

**HARRISBURG**

Calvary United Methodist Church, 700 Market St (Rear), Lemoyne; Mon 7-10 pm, Brian Sheinfeld 717-761-3151

**HATBORO**

Chaturanga CC; Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church, County Line Rd W of Blair Mill Rd; Thurs 8 pm, 215-794-8368

**HAZLETON**

Greater Hazleton CC; Zola's Lamp Post, Rt 940; Thurs 8-11 pm, Bob Brubaker 570-384-4122; Also Checkers Pizza, Rt 309 &amp; 28th St; Tues 8-11 pm

**HUNTINGDON VALLEY**

Huntingdon Valley Chess Society Juniors; Huntingdon Valley Library, 625 Red Lion Rd; Tues 7:30-8:30 pm

**JOHNSTOWN**

East Hills Rec Comm, 445 Schoolhouse Rd; Mon 6 pm, 814-255-8614

**LANCASTER**

Rodney Park, Crystal &amp; Rodney St; Wed 6:30-9 pm, 717-892-6612

**LANSDALE**

(1) North Penn CC; St John's UCC Church, Main and Richardson Sts; Thurs and Fri 7 pm - 1 am, 215-699-8418

(2) Lansdale Public Library CC; 301 Vine St; last Sat of the month 10am

**LOWER BURRELL**

Volunteer Fire Co 3, 3255 Leechburg Rd; first Sun 2-4 pm, 724-448-7521

**MANSFIELD**

Wellsboro-Mansfield CC; Independence Bible Church, 33 East Ave; Irregularly 1st/3rd Mon 7-10 pm, Don Thompson 570-376-2452

**MONROEVILLE**

Wed 6:30-8:30 pm, Delbert Tyler 412-824-5015

**MURRYSVILLE**

1st Presbyterian Ch, 3202 N Hills Rd; Wed 7-11 pm, Jay Griffin 724-325-2484

**NEW CASTLE**

Lawrence County CC; Trinity Episcopal Ch, N Mill &amp; Falls; Thurs 6:30-9 pm

**PHILADELPHIA**

(1) FMCC; 2012 Walnut, Lower Level; Mon - Thurs Noon-9 pm, Fri &amp; Sat Noon-Midnight, 215-496-0811

(2) Univ of Penn CC; Chats Cafeteria, 3800 Locust; Wed 8 pm

(3) Masterminds CC; Fountains @ Logan Square East, 2 Franklin Town Blvd; Wed &amp; Fri 7-10 pm, Steve Slocum 215-455-6285

(4) Jardel Recreation Center, 1400 Cottman Ave, Thurs 6:30-9:30 pm, Sat Noon-4 pm

(5) Inglis House, 2600 Belmont Ave, 1st &amp; 3rd Mon 6 pm

(6) Temple Univ; SAC Dining Area, Mon/Wed 6-7 pm, Tues/Thurs 12-3 pm, 267-973-0765

**PITTSBURGH**

(1) Univ of Pitt CC; William Pitt Union; Tues &amp; Thurs 7-11 pm, 412-908-0286

(2) Pittsburgh CC; Wightman School Community Center, 5604 Solway St; Wed 1-9 pm, Sat Noon-10 pm, 412-421-1881

(3) Crafton Public Library, 140 Bradford; Sat 9 - Noon, 412-922-4234

(4) Hill Branch Library, 419 Dinwiddie St; Mon &amp; Thurs 3-7 pm, Sat 1-5 pm, 412-361-6170

(5) CMU CC; University Center Commons; Thurs 6-8 pm

(6) Mt Lebanon Lib, 16 Castle Shannon; Scholastics: 1st/3rd Mon Sept-May, Adults/Older Scholastics: Thurs 7-8:30 pm; 412-531-1912

**PETERS TOWNSHIP**

CRC, Peterswood Park, 700 Meredith Dr; Wed 6-7 pm, Eric 412-221-2394

**POTTSTOWN**

YMCA, 724 N Adams St; Fri 6:30-8:30 pm, Michael Mullin 610-323-7300

**READING**

Million Youth Chess Club; Olivets Boys &amp; Girls Clubs; 677 Clinton, Mon 5-7; 1161 Pershing, Fri 6:30-8:30; Mike 610-373-3061

**RIDLEY PARK**

Ridley Park United Methodist Church, 15 E Dupont St; Mon 6:15 - 11 pm, 610-586-8205

**SCRANTON**

Redman's, Main &amp; Elm; Sun 2 pm, Patrick Walker 570-347-5200

**SHAMOKIN**

Burger King, Rte 61; Mon 7:30 pm

**SHIPPENSBURG**

Health Care Center, 121 Walnut Bottom Rd; Wed 6-9:30 pm, 717-477-0645

**STATE COLLEGE**

(1) PSU CC; ASI Bldg, Room 16; Thurs 7 pm

(2) Schlow Library, 118 S Fraser St; Sun 2-5 pm, 814-571-9629

**STROUDSBURG**

YMCA, Main St; Thurs 7-11 pm, Eric 570-476-8939 or Jim 717-992-5475; &amp; Loder Senior Center, 62 Analomink St, East Stroudsburg; Tues 7-11 pm

**SWARTHMORE**

121 Park Ave; Sat 7-9 pm

**VANDERGRIFT**

St Paul's Lutheran Church, 714 Wallace St; Mon 6-9pm, 724-567-6580

**WARMINSTER**

WREC, 1101 Little Ln; Tues 6:30-8, 215-443-5428

**WARREN**

Warren Library, 205 Market St; 1st &amp; 3rd Sat 9am - 1pm

**WASHINGTON**

1st Lutheran Ch, 92 West Walnut St; Thurs 8:30-11:30pm, 724-743-4350

**WEST CHESTER**

(1) West Chester CC; United Methodist Ch, High &amp; Barnard Sts; Thurs 7 pm

(2) WC Univ CC; Sykes Student Building, Room 112; Thurs 11 am - 2 pm

**WILKES-BARRE**

199 S Main St; Fri 8:30-Midnight, George Trent 570-740-7662

**WYNCOTE**

Montgomery Youth CC; Calvary Presbyterian Church, 217 Fernbrook Ave; Wed 7-8:30 pm, Steve McLaughlin 215-784-5938

**YORK**

(1) Trinity United Meth Ch, 241 E King St Rear; Wed 6-9 pm, 717-845-9368

(2) Youth CC; Grace Brethren Ch, Newberry &amp; Parkway; Wed, 2-5:30 pm; &amp; Light of Life Arts, 41 Cherry, Seven Valleys; Fri 6-9:30 pm, 717-852-8434