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PA TODAY

Tournament and Club News from around the Keystone State
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61st Lancaster County Championship

LANCASTER, 3/28-5/30/2008 - Years ago, there used to be several county championship tournaments around Pennsylvania, but they are apparently a dying breed. To the best of my knowledge, out of the sixty-five counties in Pennsylvania, only Lancaster County holds a county championship today. Only eighteen players entered, which is only slightly more than half of the size of last year's field. Participation in chess tournaments has been dropping pretty much statewide, and those who did enter this event represent a hard core of the county's players.

The contest was scheduled for six rounds, and for the first two, things went as expected. Defending champ Marty Frank was the only player to have a perfect score at the halfway mark when he defeated director Ron Gross in round three. Mucerino-Gary Rubright was drawn after I missed a tactic that would have won a couple of pawns. Joining Gross with two points were Ronald Raush, Andrew Spore, Vladimir Botsmanov, Ron Evans, and Sanel Torres.

The two highest rated players met on top board in round four. Frank-Mucerino was a fairly dull draw. At one point, he could have captured my light-squared bishop for a knight, but he spurned the opportunity. Gross beat Rubright, Raush defeated the young Torres, and Spore bested Botsmanov. Evans won his third game in a row, after an opening round loss to Frank, by defeating octogenarian Dr. Winsor Schmidt, who was hospitalized earlier in the event (he has since fully recovered). Not much changed in the penultimate round. Frank downed Spore, I came back from a bad position to beat Raush, Rubright scored against Botsmanov, and Gross topped Evans. Frank led your author by half a point entering the final round.

The final round came down to the wire. In a long game, Rubright was able to hold Frank to a draw. That gave me my chance. I won the exchange after about twenty moves in Gross-Mucerino, but as we traded down, winning chances for Black looked bleak. I stopped keeping score after 69 moves, and in that position, White had a rook, bishop, and g-pawn, and Black had two rooks and an h-pawn. In a time scramble, I was able to win the bishop using a pin and went on to win to pull even with Frank. With four points there was a logjam tie for third place between Rubright, Gross, Raush, Spore, and the provisionally rated Robert Eichelberger, who had a great tournament.

Lackawanna County Open

SCRANTON, 9/6/2008 - Tournament director Bernie Sporko's tournaments have been growing in size, and this one had the best turnout so far, with twenty players, including four unrated. Not surprisingly, the three highest-rated, NM Terry Panetta, Michael Kagel, and myself, all tied for first with 3½/4. Panetta drew Antonio Scalzo in round three, and Kagel and I split the point in our game in the same round. Michael

Kizis, who led the tournament after three rounds with a perfect score, gave Panetta a good game in the final round before eventually capitulating. Tying with Kizis for fourth were Michael Crane of New York and the unrated Max Lassiter, who had an impressive debut.

David Elliott Memorial

ALLENTOWN, 9/27/2008 - David Elliott was the most active player in Allentown in recent years, with 644 tournaments listed on his USCF MSA - more than your author! Last year he passed away due to a lung infection, and his family asked the Center City Chess Club to hold this tournament in his memory. Twenty-nine players turned out, including a few faces that have not been seen for quite some time. All of the stops were pulled out to make this an enjoyable tournament. There was a demo board to present the moves played on board one, Elliott's family was kind enough to provide the players with a free lunch, and even a photograph of Elliott was available for friends to take.

After a moment of silence, the tournament got underway. Greg Nolan, as the highest rated player, had his first round victory against Persio Capellan displayed on the demo board. Nolan would remain on the top board for the remainder of the tournament. Linda Kleinfeld upset Rahul Yukich. Interestingly, Yukich would win his last four games, while, sadly, Kleinfeld lost all of her remaining games. Unrated Aaron Laudiero did very well in his first rated game, by defeating the 1644 rated Joseph DeRaymond. After a more quiet second round, things began to heat up at the halfway mark. Nolan defeated Richard Blank, a man who has given him some problems recently. Jack Mongilutz was declared the winner against Isara Thanakit when Thanakit's cell phone rang. I had difficulty against James Drasher but prevailed in the end. The three highest rated players now were the only ones with perfect scores. In round four, Mucerino-Nolan was a hard fought draw, with both players having chances at some point. Mongilutz pulled into the lead with a victory over Thomas Fang. On top board in the final round was Mongilutz-Nolan. Nolan appeared to be slightly better, but then lost a rook and the game. Mongilutz took home first place money and a nice cup. I beat Richard Blank to give me a clear second with 4½ points, and Rahul Yukich was a clear third with four points, making TD Eric Johnson's job of figuring out the prizes quite easy indeed!

North Penn Chess Club Membership Drive

LANSDALE, 9/5-10/3/2008 - Turnout was disappointingly low this year for this tournament, which is effectively the club championship. Only thirteen players took part (and, even worse, only four people played in all five rounds). Last year there were 21 players, and as recently as 2005 there were 33. The dropoff has been explained as players moving away or quitting chess altogether, while extremely few players have joined the club to replace them.

No upsets in round one, but round two's Mucerino-Robert Kampia matchup already paired two of the top contenders together. White won when Black blundered his rook. Father Joseph Farrell defeated Donald Funk to become the only other perfect score. Farrell took a bye at the midpoint, and I was paired with director Eric Funk, who only played if there was an odd number of players in a particular round. After having a slightly worse position out of the opening, I

turned the tide and wound up avenging my loss to Eric from this year's Winter Round Robin. Kampia defeated Will Moyer, and John Gall beat William Campion to give the winners two points each. Father Farrell was realistically my last hurdle in the event. Normally very solid and difficult to beat, the priest erred early and I scored an easier than expected victory. Kampia bested Gall, but because I had already played against Kampia, the top pairing on board one in the final round would be Mucerino-Gall. Gall played very well despite losing a piece in the middlegame, but eventually succumbed to the inevitable, giving me a perfect score. Kampia's half-point bye in the last round gave him clear second with 3½ points. Farrell, Moyer, and Joe Kennedy tied for third, a further half-point back.

Chaturanga Chess Club Championship

HATBORO, 9/4-10/16/2008 - As always, the Thursday after Labor Day was the beginning of this popular club championship. Twenty-five players entered, down four from last year, but those four were some pretty big names: 2007 winner Adam Weissbarth, Dan Yeager and James Larsen who tied for second last year, and 2006 winner Brian Polka. Topping the wallchart this time out was strong expert Lorand Bela Kis, with your author right behind him.

I don't think there were any upsets at all in round one. There were a few minor upsets in round two, but those were on the lower boards. Kis won a difficult game against Jorge Amador, while Ronald Stokes-Mucerino was the first game completed, with my Benko Gambit scoring a quick point. Alan Lindy was the only other perfect score after he beat Manan Pandya. A logjam of players was a point behind.

In the penultimate round came the board one pairing of Mucerino-Kis. I played Kis twice before and lost both times, but I probably had drawing chances in those games, so I was not too worried. Kis, who arrived on time, poorly managing his clock. It took him twenty minutes to play **1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bg5 Bg7 4.Nbd2 O-O**. Later, he spent almost half an hour on a move. Kis was trying to find a plan, but the plan he found was not very original and only gave Black equality. At one point in the middlegame, I could not find a way to improve my position, so I repeated moves. Kis wanted to win, so he varied. Soon he was in time pressure, and blundered one pawn, and then a second right before losing on time. Alan Lindy defeated Joe Rossi to set up the final round pairing.

Lindy could not play on the scheduled date for round five, so we pushed the game back. Kis-Edward McKenney apparently also could not be played on this date, or any other, so they took a "forfeit draw", one of those "Z"s that you rarely see on the wallchart. They both tied for fourth place with 3½ points each. In the only other top game, Amador defeated Stokes to guarantee himself a tie for second with four points.

Lindy-Mucerino was played two weeks late, making the championship game the only game contested on that night. A few other players were on hand to spectate. This was my very first encounter with Lindy, and while he normally does very well in the tournaments he plays, he is not that active, while, of course, I am.

I played cautiously at the beginning. A draw would be a satisfactory result to me. At one point, Lindy could have forced the exchange of queens and some of minor pieces, but he decided to play for a win. I was happy to slug it out. I built up a slight advantage, but then Lindy blundered, leaving me with three minor pieces for a rook. An easy cleanup job gave me my third club championship of the year (along with the Harrisburg West Shore and North Penn club titles). Lindy tied for second with Amador.

State Championship Warm-Up

SHIREMANSTOWN, 10/18/2008 - This was the 600th tournament of my career, played in my 60th different town in Pennsylvania, and, sadly, only six players showed up. Because of the low turnout, the players agreed to reduce the number of rounds from four to three. Sam Lamonto directed, and, instead of having drawings to determine who would win a door prize, he simply gave every participant their choice of one book or other chess related item. The players were also treated to a free breakfast and lunch!

Your author swept the event, scoring consecutive victories against the three highest rated players other than myself, Nate Carabello, Ed Chong, and Eric Brandt. Chong and Brandt tied for second with two points.

Pittsburgh Chess League Quick Quads

PITTSBURGH, 11/2/2008 - To my knowledge, the Pittsburgh Chess League (PCL) is the fifth largest tournament in Pennsylvania every year (behind the World Open, Carlisle, the National Chess Congress, and the Liberty Bell Open), and the biggest in the western half of the state, with 150-175 players taking part. There is one round a month on a Sunday afternoon from September to April. With a starting time of 2pm, there is time to hold quick (G/15) quads prior to the round, which a few players take advantage of. I had never played in the PCL before, and, like my trip to Erie I wrote about in the last issue, I wanted to experience it just in case gas prices go through the roof again.

There were three quads today. Arthur Traldi swept the top quad 3-0, his only challenge apparently coming from Franklin Chen. Hibiki Sakai finished second, I finished with three goose eggs. Kent Weber took quad two, and Mark Unico and David Milliern split quad three.

About an hour or so after of the conclusion of the quads was round 3 of the PCL. My team, Phalanx I, was playing Ceanrgie Mloeln Unisvteiry I (that is how the Carnegie Mellon University team spells their name - don't ask me why). I was playing for the first time and had white on board three. In board order, we had William Hughes, Arthur Traldi, myself, and Paul Duerig, our team captain. Two CMU players arrived, but they had no idea who else on their team was coming, so they were not sure on what boards they should be playing. The higher rated one decided to sit down on board two, probably because they had white on that board. Although Duerig was a bit late, the other three boards began CMU's clocks. The other player decided to play, and, not surprisingly, chose board four because they had white on that board too. One final member arrived later, and since he was higher rated than their player on board two, he had to play on board one. So your author picked up a forfeit win. My teammates were apologetic because they knew how far away I live (Pittsburgh is about 283 miles from Douglassville). I did not mind; I took one for the team, and Phalanx beat CMU I 3½-½ to stay in a tie for first place, although we have some strong teams that we still need to face. I hope to play another game or two this season.

2nd Annual October Gallery Chess Tournament

PHILADELPHIA, 11/7/2008 - A pretty strong field of seventeen players turned out on a Friday at the Liacouras Center at Temple University, home of the Temple Owls. This nonrated event was the first of three separate events, played in as many days, being held as part of the annual Art Show that Temple hosts. Many genres of art were available for sale, and just about anything with the likeness of President-elect Barack Obama could be had for a price.

The tournament was held in a back room near the basketball court (which was carpeted for the occasion), where many of the vendors were located. Two thousand dollars in prizes (half guaranteed) tempted several stronger players to come out of the woodwork, including GM Rogelio Antonio, Jr., IM Bryan Smith, the Pennsylvania State Champion, and FMs Farai Mandizha and Norman Rogers. A few players even came down from New York City to attend. Dr. Ira Lee Riddle directed the event.

There were several surprises in the opening round. GM Antonio was held to a draw by David Apelo, rated 1879. I later learned that Apelo is a friend of Antonio, so perhaps they decided not slug it out. Peter Moss beat Ray Robinson in a mild upset, and Mandizha and Rogers took half point byes because they did not arrive in time, possibly due to public transportation. In round two, Smith won his second game, this time against Larry Pugh, and Larry Saxby's victory over Nigel Mitchell made him the only other perfect score. I had the bishop pair and an extra pawn against Moss's knight and bishop, but I could not find a breakthrough with only two minutes on my clock, so I settled for a draw. Antonio notched his first victory with black against Rogers, and Mandizha did the same against Leteef Street.

The Pennsylvania State Champion, IM Bryan Smith, took the lead in the third round by beating Saxby. I took a beating against Antonio, Mandizha bested Moss, and Apelo defeated Robinson to put those winners in a tie for second behind Smith. Dr. Riddle asked Smith to hand in the score of the top board in the final round for this publication, and Smith was kind enough to do so (Antonio was also nice enough to help reconstruct the ending).

IM Bryan G. Smith - GM Rogelio Antonio, Jr.

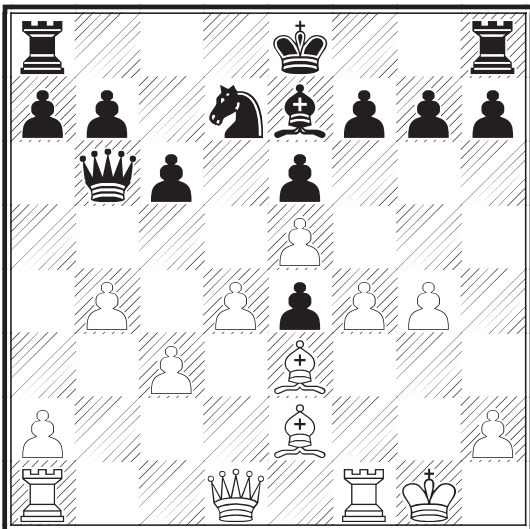
October Gallery Tournament, Round 4, Philadelphia, 11/7/2008

Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

Because this game was played by two players who are stronger than I'll ever be, I am going to rely more heavily on Rybka (my new computer program) than I normally do. I thank both contestants for submitting this game, and making sure that the game score was accurate.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Be3 e6 5.Nd2 Nd7 6.Be2 Ne7 7.Ngf3 Bg6 8.Nh4 Nf5 9.Nxf5 Bxf5 10.O-O Be7 11.f4 Bg6 12.g4 Be4 13.Nxe4 dxe4 14.c3 Qb6 15.b4

Rybka suggests 15.Qc2 with advantage to White.



15...g5

Because White has pushed the pawns in front of his King, Black wants to open up lines for attack.

16.fxg5 Nxe5 17.Qc2 Nf3+ 18.Bxf3 exf3 19.Rxf3 Qb5?

The question mark is from Rybka. It suggests 19...Qd8 20.Raf1 Bxg5 21.Qd3.

20.h4

The computer would have continued 20.c4 Qxb4 21.Rb1 Qa3 22.Rxb7 Qa6. It claims that White is winning here.

20...a5 21.c4 Qa6 22.bxa5 Qxa5 23.a4 h6?

Again, Rybka's question mark, not mine. It suggested castling kingside.

24.gxh6 Bxh4 25.Qd2

The computer gives 25.Qb2!? Bg5 26.Qxb7 Bxe3+ 27.Rxe3 Rxh6 28.Rf1 and White is winning. Exchanging queens apparently was not the best move, because while White is still better, he is no longer winning.

25...Qxd2 26.Bxd2 O-O-O 27.Kh2 f6 28.Rh3 Rxd4 29.Rxh4 Rxd2+ 30.Kg3 Rd3+ 31.Kg2 Rd4 32.Rf1 f5 33.h7

Perhaps a bit premature. White pretty much loses his advantage after this. Rybka says White is winning after 33.Kg3!? Rd3+ 34.Rf3 f4+ 35.Kg2.

33...Kd7 34.Rb1 Kc7 35.Rbh1 fxg4 36.Kg3 Rxc4 37.Rxg4 Rxg4+ 38.Kxg4 b5 39.axb5 cxb5 40.Kg5 b4 41.Kf6 Kc6 42.Kxe6 b3 ½:½

This is a dead draw. White's King comes to g7 while Black's joins his pawn. Black sacrifices his rook on h7, and then White must also sacrifice his rook for White's pawn.

Mandizha was able to catch Smith for a tie for first place when he beat Apelo. I self destructed in time pressure against Saxby, which allowed him to tie with Antonio for a piece of third place.

This was a very nice event in a great venue. I was surprised to hear that it was the "second annual" event because I did not know it was held last year. Had I known, I probably would have played. There always seems to be a tournament or two every year that I miss because it is not heavily advertised and it slips under my radar. If you know of a tournament that is coming up somewhere in Pennsylvania that is not being advertised in *Chess Life*, by all means, drop me an email and tell me about it. I don't care how "minor" it may be. It does not have to be USCF rated or have big prizes; this tournament was not rated and I was happy to play. Of course, I cannot play in scholastic events, but anything else I would like to know about, so please drop me a line.

2nd Annual October Gallery Chess Tournament - Part 2

PHILADELPHIA, 11/7-9/2008 - For the second year in a row, October Gallery of Philadelphia sponsored a non-rated tournament as part of its International Art Expo, at the Liacouras Center of Temple University. For the second year in a row, attendance was horrible, although the players did enjoy the prize fund, which was guaranteed at \$1000 per day for each of the three days of the event.

On the first day of the event, Friday November 7th, 17 players entered the fray. Local IM Bryan Smith, who cleaned up all three days of the previous year's event, found some serious competition this year, as he wound up tied with Farai Mandizha of New York City at 3½-½. GM Rogelio Antonio placed third at 3-1. Larry Saxby, also with 3, took the top U2000, followed by Peter Moss and David Apelo. Top unrated prizes were shared by Kenneth Johnson and Dr. Polly Riddle (Yes, that name should be familiar. I twisted my wife's arm to play so

that both prizes could be “awarded” and to avoid a bye situation. She gave Ken a good battle, lasting longer than any of the spectators expected. She donated her prize to the October Gallery’s Art Expo.)

On Saturday, November 8th, form held as GM Antonio took clear first with 4, followed by Mandizha at 3½-½. An improvement in attendance saw 20 players fight it out. Philadelphian Norman “Pete” Rogers took third with 3. Top U2000 went to Apelo at 3-1, followed by Saxby at 2½-1½ and a host of others at 2-2. In the Unrated section, Polly again split the prizes, this time with Ramon Diamante, who was shocked to win some money for his efforts.

Philly ASAP, which sponsors numerous clubs and tournaments throughout the year, also held a scholastic event at the site. It was quite crowded, but they seemed happy with the 150+ turnout.

On Sunday, the 9th, attendance was down to 16 players. GM Antonio took clear first with 3½, followed by Smith and Rogers at 3-1. Top U2000 were Nigel Mitchell and Apelo. Top Unrated was Paul Kuhn (Polly could not make it that day!).

With a \$1000 prize guaranteed, I was not happy with the turnout. The organizer, Mercer Redcross, was not worried about the loss, telling me the previous year that the Art Expo was a 20+ million dollar event, so \$6000 or so did not make much difference.

It was unfortunate that the two weekend days conflicted with the State Championships, but the Liacouras Center was booked for the International Art Expo several years in advance.

- Dr. Ira Lee Riddle, tournament director

112th Pennsylvania State Championship

HARRISBURG, 11/8&9/2008 - When Harrisburg was announced as the host for this year’s state championship, I did some research and was shocked to learn that this is the first time that the state championship, which began in 1897, would be held in the state capital. It should be noted that while the venue, the Plumbers and Pipefitters Union Building, has a Harrisburg address, it is actually located about ten to twelve miles northeast of where Harrisburg is on the map, and is actually north of Hershey.

Ninety-four players played in one of four sections (three championship and one scholastic), which was a very good turnout, considering that there was a low number of advance entries. At one point I thought that there would be fifty players tops, but I have heard that over thirty players entered on site. Defending champion IM Bryan Smith did not attend, he presumably spent the weekend playing in the final two October Gallery Chess Tournaments in Philly (see my article on the Friday edition of that tournament elsewhere in this issue).

The smallest section was the open section, with only fifteen players, but it included some titans as FMs Daniel Yeager and Rodion Rubenchik, and NMs Peter Minear and New Yorker Evan Rosenberg. Throw in a few experts and some strong class A players and it was a tough field. Your author found that out in round one:

Vincent G. Waters, Sr. - Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

Pennsylvania State Championship, Rd 1, Harrisburg, 11/8/2008
Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c4 c6 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.Nc3 e6 6.Bg5 Be7 7.Bxf6 Bxf6 8.e3 Nc6 9.Bd3 O-O

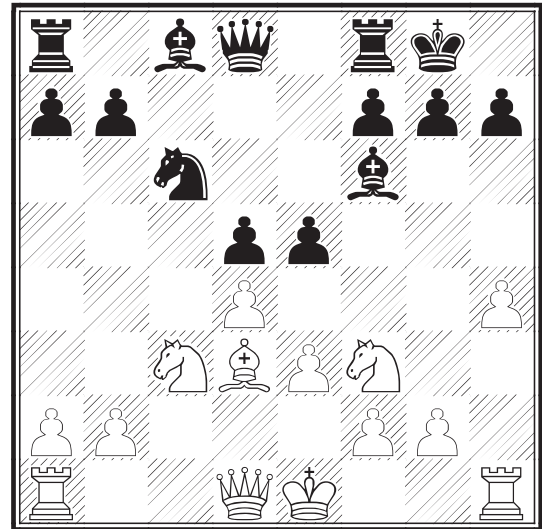
Waters and I have had this position a few times before in our games.

10.h4

Waters is known for being very aggressive, and attacking prior to castling.

10...e5?

This already loses a pawn. I wanted to open up the center with White’s King still there.



11.dxe5 Nxe5 12.Nxe5 Bxe5 13.Bxh7+ Kxh7 14.Qh5+ Kg8 15.Qxe5 Be6 16.Rd1 Rc8

Facing the loss of a second pawn, Black needs to find some way of unbalancing the position.

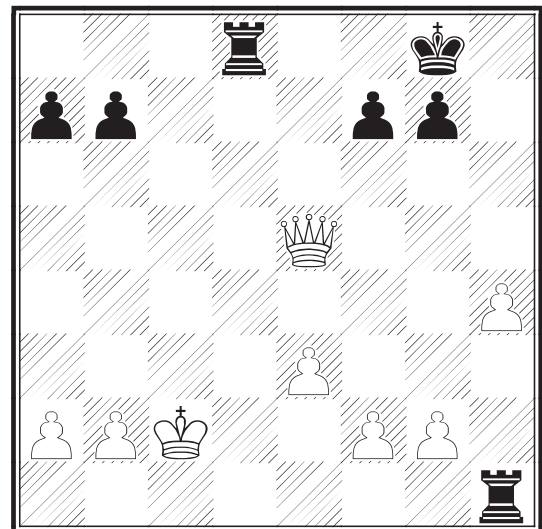
17.Nxd5 Bxd5 18.Rxd5

Obviously the alternative is 18.Qxd5. Black then plays 18...Qxd5 19.Rxd5 Rc1+ 20.Rd1 Rc2. Black is happy to repeat the position after 21.Rd2 Rc1+; if instead 21.Rb1, Black doubles rooks on the seventh with 21...Rd8 and 22...Rd2.

18...Rc1+ 19.Kd2

I would have played 19.Ke2, so that when Black recaptures on d8, it is not with check.

19...Rxh1 20.Rxd8 Rxd8+ 21.Kc2



21...Rc8+?

Perhaps the critical move of the game. The main alternative is 21...Rhd1, doubling the rooks. That move probably gives Black better drawing chances than the text. I chose the text because I was afraid of White's Queen entering the c7-square and winning my queenside pawns.

22.Kb3 Rxh4 23.f4

White tries to prevent Black from connecting his rooks. A very good alternative is 23.Qa5, when Black's best defense is the ugly 23...Ra8.

23...Rh6 24.a4 Re6 25.Qd4 Rce8 26.Qxa7 Rxe3+ 27.Ka2 R3e4 28.f5 Rg4 29.Ka3 Re1 30.b3 Rxc2?

While Rybka did not give this move a question mark, I will. Black needs to hang onto his b7-pawn as long as possible. In order to save the game, he must trade the b7-pawn for one of White's queenside pawns, and then trade off the rooks for the queen and White's other queenside pawn. Then, the battle will shift to the kingside, where the Black King already is, while the White King will almost surely still be on the queenside.

31.Qxb7 Ra1+ 32.Kb4 Rg4+

Yes, rooks belong behind passed pawns, but Black cannot afford to trade the rooks off for White's Queen and only one of the passed queenside pawns. Therefore, I decided to win White's f-pawn, try to slow down White's progress on the queenside, and try to push my own kingside pawns. Of course I realized I was facing an uphill battle.

33.Ka5 Rf1 34.Ka6 Rg5 35.b4 Rxf5 36.b5 g6 37.Qc8+ Kh7 38.Qc3

I was hoping (praying) that White would try 38.Qxf5??, with the idea that White's connected passed pawns are stronger than the rook. But Black plays 38...gxf5! (getting the pawn closer to the queening square!) and play would continue something like 39.Ka7 f4 40.b6 f3 41.b7 Rg8 and Black wins.

38...Rc5 39.Qb4 Rge5 40.b6 Rc6 41.a5 Rc8 42.b7 Rb8 43.Ka7 Ree8 44.a6

Rybka points out that 44.Qf4 is a quicker win, but the text is more than sufficient.

44...f5 45.Qd6 Rbd8 46.Qxd8 Rxd8 47.b8=Q Rxb8 48.Kxb8 f4 49.a7 g5

Black is one tempo too slow to play 49...f3. All hope is lost now.

50.a8=Q Kg6 51.Qe4+ Kh5 52.Qf5 Kh4 53.Kc7 g4 54.Qxf4 Kh3 55.Qh6+ Kg2 56.Kd6 g3 57.Ke5 Kg1 58.Kf4 g2 59.Kf3 1:0

Of course, 59...Kf1 60.Qc1 is mate.

Another first-round surprise was Gary Rubright holding Yeager to a draw on board one with his solid English opening. Expert Alex Palanker was also held to a draw by Tom Ostrosky.

As early as round two there was a heavyweight matchup on board one, Minear-Rubenchik. As time was winding down, Rubenchik won a piece, but Minear had connected passed pawns on the kingside that were halfway down the board. In a time scramble, with Minear having only three seconds and Rubenchik only one single second left (with delay), Minear was going to be able to queen a pawn, so Rubenchik resigned. He was not happy. Rosenburg defeated Waters to become the only other perfect score. Yeager and Palanker won, but I still could not get going, and was held to a draw by Ron Gross.

The two NMs, not the two FMs, were paired on board one at the halfway point, and Rosenburg-Minear was drawn. I too had another draw against Rubright, and Yeager also had to concede another half point, to Palanker. Rubenchik beat Ostrosky, and Waters and Douglas Burgwin won, to give five players a tie for third with two points.

All four masters played on the top two board in round four. Board one was Minear-Yeager, where the players castled on opposite sides of the board and attacked each other down opposite wings. Minear's attack broke through first, and he scored the full point. Yeager withdrew after this. White also won in Rubenchik-Rosenberg. Rubenchik obtained a passed pawn and forced the win of a piece. Burgwin was victorious against Ostrosky, and Waters bested Palanker to give those winners three points. I finally got my first victory against Ron Raush.

The final round was somewhat anticlimactic. Minear had already faced all of the masters, so he was paired with the leading expert, Burgwin. Minear gambited a pawn in the opening, and obtained a lead in development, but the queens had been exchanged. If Burgwin could equalize in development, he would be a pawn ahead. But Minear was able to use his lead in development to win the game and the state championship. Congratulations to him! Waters-Rubenchik was won by Black, and Rubenchik took a clear second place. Rosenberg beat Rubright to take clear third with 3½ points. Mucerino-Palanker was a strange game. I blundered a pawn in the opening, and also had a poor position. I decided to sacrifice first one pawn and then a second in a somewhat feeble attempt to keep the initiative and attacking chances alive. At one point Palanker could have forced the exchange of queens, but made another move, which gave me some chances and I emerged with a mating attack. I tied for fourth place (my best ever finish in the state championship) with Burgwin and Waters.

Jason Leddington had a super tournament in the U1800 section, scoring 4½ points and upsetting such veterans as Winsor Schmidt, Eric Brandt, and Ron Evans along the way. His rating skyrocketed from 1445 to 1653! Tying for second place with four points were Yuhao Xu and Robert Graham. They both had two draws. Edward Mereminsky was clear fourth, a half point further back.

Nate Carabello submitted this game from that section:

Natal J. Carabello - Brian Fortson

Pennsylvania State Championship, Rd 1, Harrisburg, 11/8/2008

Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

1.g4

Carabello's bread and butter.

1...d5 2.Bg2

To my surprise, Rybka said that this is the "last book move". Black's next move seems awfully natural to me.

2...Bxc4 3.c4

Putting pressure on Black's pawn located on the h1-a8 diagonal, which White would love to completely control.

3...c6 4.cxd5 Nf6

Offering a gambit.

5.Nc3

Which White declines. While I do not know much about the Grob, I would have accepted the pawn, because it lies on the same diagonal as the bishop on g2. Of course, Black would gain a lead in development in return.

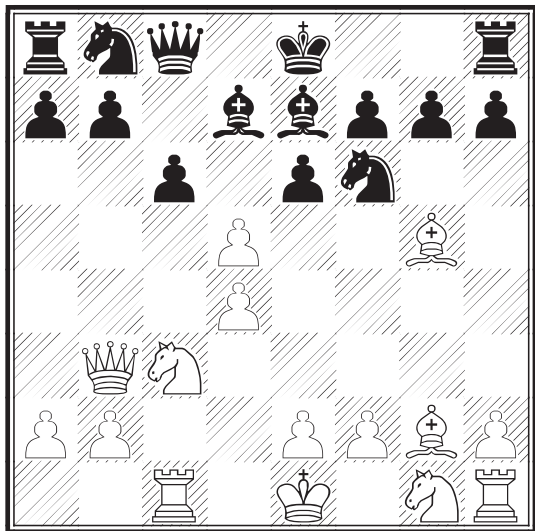
5...Bd7?!

This appears retrograde. The computer gives Black a slight advantage after 5...cxd5 6.Qb3 Qd7 7.Nxd5. A move like 5...Qc8, defending both b7 and the bishop, is also good.

6.Qb3

In the Grob, White hopes the pawn on b7 will be in the crossfire of the Queen on b3 and the Bishop on g2.

6...Qc8 7.d4 e6 8.Bg5 Be7 9.Rc1?

**9...O-O?**

Both players missed that Black could have snatched a pawn with 9...Nxd5. Black can make this move on his next turn too.

10.e4 Re8 11.Nge2

Rybka found 11.d6! If Black captures this pawn, then 12.e5 is a fork. If Black does not capture the pawn, then 12.e5 anyway gives White a protected passed pawn, and also cramps Black's position. If 11.d6 h6, then White can simply move the bishop away, for example to d2.

11...exd5 12.e5

Gaining space on the kingside, and driving the knight away from f6, where it can protect the h7-pawn.

12...Nh5?

Rybka prefers 12...Ne4 13.Bxe7 Nxc3 14.Nxc3 Rxe7 15.Nxd5 Re8.

13.Bxe7 Rxe7 14.Bxd5??

White blows his advantage. So much easier would have been 14.Bf3 g6 (also bad is 14...Bg4 15.Nxd5 [threatening to fork the King and Queen on e7 with check] 15...Re8 16.Bxg4 Qxg4 17.Nc7) 15.Bxh5 gxh5. Now White will get to play both Nxd5, heading to f6, and Rg1+.

14...Be6 15.Qc2??

Rybka preferred 15.Qa3!? Qf8 16.Bf3.

15...Na6??

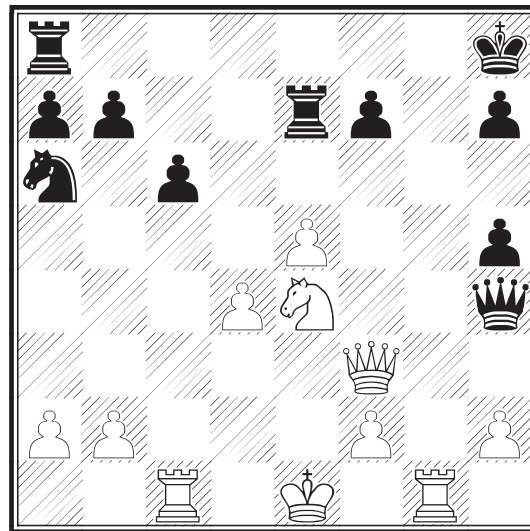
It's safe to take the Bishop! After 15...cxd5 16.Nxd5 Qxc2 17.Nxe7+ Kf8 18.Rxc2 Kxe7 19.Rc7+ Kd8 Black has two minor pieces for the rook. Of course after 20.Rxb7 Bd5 wins.

16.Bf3 Bg4 17.Qe4 Bxf3 18.Qxf3 g6 19.Rg1 Kh8

Now the game is about equal.

20.Ng3 Qh3 21.Nce4 Qh4?

This allows White to open the g-file. The silicon machine prefers to keep things closed with 21...f5 22.Ng5 Qg4 23.Qxg4 fxg4.

22.Nxh5 gxh5**23.Nd6**

In his letter to me, Carabello wondered if 23.Ng5 was stronger. Yes it is, Nate. It threatens 24.Qf6+ with a deadly discovered check. The computer says now 23...f5 24.Qxf5 Rg7. Here, 25.Qf6 will be fatal for Black. He can try 25...Kg8 26.h3! (A very subtle move Rybka found. The idea is to play 27.Qxg7+ Kxg7 28.Nf3+. With the pawn on h2, Black can interpose with 28...Qg4 and get the rook back. With the pawn on h3, White keeps the extra rook). 26...Rf8 27.Qxg7+ Kxg7 28.Nf3+ Qg4 29.hxg4 Rxf3 and White wins.

23...Rd7 24.Nxf7+ Rxf7 25.Qxf7 Qe4+ 26.Kf1 Qd3+ 27.Kg2 Qg6+ 28.Qxg6 hxg6 29.Kh3?

What was wrong with moving closer to the center with 29.Kf3?

29...Nb4 30.a3

Stronger is 30.Rxg6 Nd3 31.Rcg1 Nf4+ 32.Kh4 Nxg6+ 33.Rxg6. White is winning with all of his passed pawns.

30...Nd5 31.Kg3 Kg7 32.f4 Ne3

I would prefer to keep the knight on d5, because it will sit there forever. Going to f5 gives White a trick shot.

33.Kf3 Nf5 34.Ke4?

White misses his chance. Black has a strong pawn formation on the queenside. White can weaken it immediately with 34.d5! This is not a sacrifice because White can regain the pawn after 34...cxd5 35.Rc7+ and 36.Rxb7. While the Black Knight may come to e4 in the future in this line, it would not be quite as secure there, because the pawn on d5 would be isolated and vulnerable. Had Black kept the knight on d5, it would have been protected by the pawn on c6, which is protected by the pawn on b7, which is a much more secure position.

34...Rd8

Preventing 35.d5.

35.Rcd1

White can simplify if he wants with 35.Rxg6+ Kxg6 36.Rg1+ Kf7 37.Kxf5 Rxd4 38.e6+ Kf8.

35...Rd5 36.a4 a5 37.Rg2 b6 38.Rd3 b5 39.Rc2 bxa4 40.Rxc6 Rb5 41.Rc2 Ne7 42.d5 Rb4+ 43.Rd4 Rb3 44.d6 Nf5 45.Rc3?!

White can queen with 45.d7 Nxd4 46.Kxd4 (sure, White can queen here, but there is no reason to give away the rook on c2 if you do not have to).

45...Rxb2 46.d7 Nxd4 47.Kxd4 Rb8 48.Rc7?? ½:½

Carabello writes, "After 47...Rb8, I was in severe time pressure, and rejected a forced win with Rc8! in favor of Rc7?? We eventually traded

Carlisle March 6, 7 & 8, 2009

2008 PA Quick Chess Championship

2008 PA State Scholastic Championships

2008 Carlisle Open & PA Collegiate Championship

my passed pawns for Black's doubled rook pawns, and I had to settle for a draw."

Cesar Bautista swept the U1400 section with a perfect 5-0 score. Splitting second and third with four points were Brendan Zeiset and Suyash Hodawadekar. Christopher Moritz and Austin Henninger tied for fourth place. In the one day Scholastic U1000 section, there were two perfect scores with Kai Heen and Jared Roman as the winners, and the both gained tons of rating points. Three kids tied for third: Rahul Thaiparambil, Jacob Heybey, and Gabe Savercool.

All of the PSCF officers were re-elected, except for Sam Lamonto, who will be replaced by Ron Gross as the Vice President of Central Pennsylvania. The 2009 Pennsylvania State Championship will be in Western Pennsylvania, and the University of Pittsburgh will almost surely be the host once again. The PSCF is hoping to hold the event around October.

Main Line Chess Club Championship

GLADWYNE, 10/14-11/18/2008 - This is the final club championship of the year, and, perhaps surprisingly, there was a modest increase of participants this year, with twenty-seven entrants, up five from a year ago. Defending champ Dan Yeager was not back to defend his crown, so we were going to have a new man at the top (no women played).

Accelerated pairings were used (which I really do not like for a tournament this small since the first round pairings seemingly are just postponed to about round three) so some of the first round pairings were more evenly matched up than expected. I had a sweet tactic that gave me a quick win against Dennis Baluk (it will be one of my puzzles in a future issue). Returning member Mordecai Schwartz was upset by new member Daniel Weissbarth (younger brother of Adam, I believe). Another new member Douglas Burgwin was victorious against veteran Arnold Shafritz. Vinko Rutar and Richard Pariseau also scored victories.

Youth prevailed in round two when Weissbarth scored a second big scalp against Rutar. Burgwin beat Mark Furey. Mucerino-Pariseau was a steadily played draw. I did have an opportunity, in an all bishop ending, to sacrifice one of my bishops and have three connected passed pawns (which were not very far up the board), but with only eight minutes on my clock, I played it safe and split the point. Computer analysis says it was still drawn even if I had taken that route. Shafritz had a draw, and Schwartz and Baluk both had victories.

The showdown at the halfway mark was Burgwin-Weissbarth, where Black won a long game to take the lead. Pariseau and I both won to stay in the hunt, but Pariseau effectively withdrew after this round, so he was out of the picture. Schwartz and Rutar took half-point byes, hurting their chances.

Board one in round four was a very tense battle:

Daniel B. Weissbarth - Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

Main Line Chess Club Championship, Rd 4, Gladwyne, 11/11/2008
Annotations by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

1.e4 d5 2.d4!?

In round one of this tournament, Weissbarth and I were paired and played a few moves until it was discovered that one person who was paired had not entered! That game began 1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Nf6 3.d4 Bg4 before it was annulled. I suppose that 2.d4 was meant to surprise me but I've had a few players over the years turn the Center Counter

into a Blackmar-Diemer Gambit (BDG). Plus, I used to play the BDG myself as white, so I was not worried.

2...dxe4 3.f3

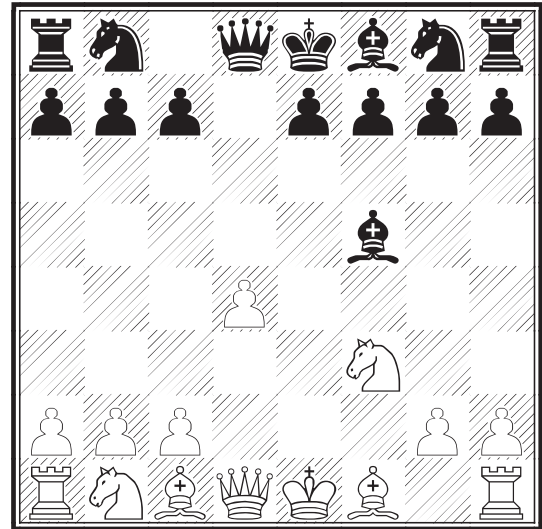
More common and probably better is 3.Nc3 Nf6 and then 4.f3.

3...exf3

I had forgotten the theory that said that Black was better after 3...e5 4.dxe5 Qxd1+ 5.Kxd1. Exchanging queens that early in the game would probably not be a good idea for me anyway, because I was in a must win situation.

4.Nxf3 Bf5

This is why I gave up the BDG. White wants to develop his bishop to d3 and attack the h7-square. Now if White plays 5.Bd3, Black simply exchanges it off, and White has lost one of his best attacking pieces. If you want to play the BDG, you must have an answer to ...Bf5!



5.Bc4 e6 6.O-O Nf6

Black simply wants to develop and obtain a nice, solid position and neutralize White's lead in development. If he does that, he will simply be a pawn up. He has to watch out for tricks, though. One idea for White is to play 7.Ne5 threatening 8.Rxf5 exf5 9.Nxf7. That may not be possible in this exact position because of 7...Bxc2 8.Qd2 (8.Qxc2 Qxd5+) 8...Bg6, but it shows that Black must be careful.

7.Bg5 Be7 8.c3 Nc6 9.Nbd2 O-O 10.Qe1 Nd5 11.Bxe7 Qxe7? More solid is 11...Ncx7.

12.Ne5 Qd6 13.Ne4 Bxe4 14.Qxe4 Nxe5 15.dxe5 Qc5+ 16.Kh1 Rad8

My original intention back when I played 12...Qd6 was to play 16...Ne3 here, but White can refute this simply with 17.Bd3, threatening mate.

17.Bd3 g6

Rybka thinks Black is still slightly better, but I would take White here. Black has holes on f6 and h6, and White can mobilize his rooks faster than Black can. Thank goodness White does not have a knight!

18.Rf3 Kg7

The computer preferred 18...Ne7, heading to f5. I have to agree, but White may be able to trade it off with the bishop or perhaps try a well timed g4.

19.Raf1 Qe7 20.c4 Nb4 21.Bb1 Nc6

I am afraid that White will place his Queen on the c1-h6 diagonal, followed by Rh3, and the Queen will land on h6. Again, if ...h5, a timely g4 may rip Black open.

22.Qf4 Rd4 23.Be4 h6

Threatening 24...Qg5, forcing the trade of queens.

24.Rh3 Qg5 25.Qf6+

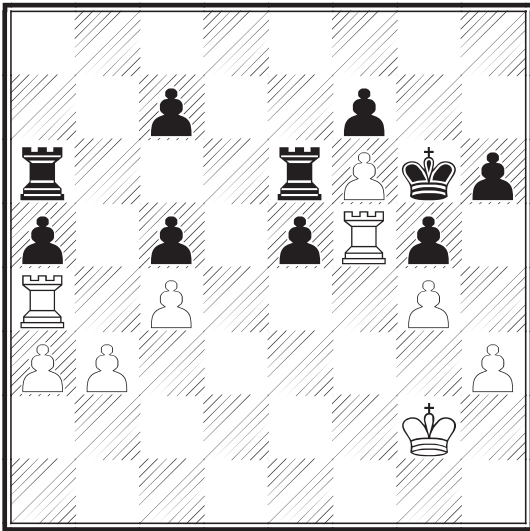
25.Qxg5 looks stronger because of 25...hxg5 26.Bxc6 bxc6 27.Ra3. While this is similar to the game, I think White has a bit more pressure here. If 27...Ra8 28.Raf3 Rf8, White can repeat with 29.Ra3, unless Black wants to give his extra pawn back with 28...Rf4. It also takes Black longer to mobilize his King in this variation, especially if he does not want all isolated pawns.

25...Qxf6 26.exf6+ Kh7 27.Bxc6 bxc6 28.Ra3 Ra8 29.b3

29.Ra6 looks like a normal move, but of course it loses to 29...Rxc4. I tried to trap White's Rook on the queenside for as long as possible.

29...a5 30.Kg1 g5 31.g3 Kg6 32.h3 Ra6 33.Kg2 c5 34.Ra4 e5 35.g4 Rdd6

Not 35...Rxf6 because White will trade rooks, capture on a5, and his other rook will be free. I want to keep the rook on the queenside locked up until the right moment.

36.Rf5 Re6 37.a3**37...e4 38.Rxc5 e3**

Don't bother with the pawn on f6, go for it!

39.Kf1 Rxf6+

The computer liked 39...e2+, but that looks a bit premature to me. I wanted to bring my other rook into the game first.

40.Ke2 Rae6 41.Raxa5??

White was in time pressure. He can still fight on with 41.Rf5, forcing one pair of rooks off the board.

41...Rf2+ 42.Ke1 f6

To prevent a rook from coming to e5.

43.Rxc7 e2

Of course if 44.Kxf2 e1Q+.

44.Rf5 Rh2 0:1

This victory gave me the lead. Shafritz won his second game in a row, as did Ernest Cronin, who started out with two half-point byes. Schwartz and Rutar also scored full points to stay in the periphery.

The new club champion was going to come from the top two boards in the final round. The pairings were: Mucerino (3½)-Cronin (3), and Shafritz (2½)-Weissbarth (3). A win gave me the title no matter what, but if Weissbarth drew, than I could afford to draw too. If there is a tie for first, normally there is a playoff, and, after the game above, I defi-

nately did not want a blitz playoff against Weissbarth. I had one prior encounter with Cronin, and that was a difficult win, so I had my work cut out for me.

Due to the large turnout on the final day, Cronin and I played not in the main room, but in the neighboring art room, so I would run back and forth to see what was happening on board two. Things started off fairly well for me. I acquired the bishop pair and my pieces were somewhat better placed, so I thought I had a slight advantage. We eventually traded down to a bishop against knight ending, where I had an extra pawn on the kingside, and Cronin had an extra pawn on the queenside. On board two, Weissbarth had a rook for a knight and pawns, but Shafritz had two connected passed pawns in the center with his knight close by, so I did not think he would lose. I thought about offering Cronin a draw, but thought it would make sense to wait for board two to finish, and besides, I did not think I could lose either, so there was no harm playing on.

Later, when I glanced at board two, Shafritz's knight had retreated way back. It seemed to me that Weissbarth's rook could fairly easily capture Shafritz's two passed pawns in a few moves, so I deemed Black to be winning. That meant that I would need to grind out a win. I stopped running back and forth to save time on my clock.

Cronin wisely put his pawns on the opposite color of my dark square bishop, and tried to trade off pawns whenever he could. He even gave up a pawn by trading off both his queenside pawns for my rook pawn in order to simplify the position. Time was also running down too. We reached a position where he had a king, knight, and a pawn on f7, and I had a king, bishop and pawns on e5 and f5. I tried to force the exchange of minor pieces, but that did not work, and Cronin forced my pawn to f6, giving his knight the nice e6 square. With his king on e8 and his pawn on f7, both light squares, the only thing he needed to do to secure the draw was place his knight on e6 and move it back and forth from there and a square I was not controlling (it was not possible for me to control all of the squares the knight could go to). Cronin's knight easily found the e6 square. I dreaded the inevitable playoff against Weissbarth. We both made moves, and then I played 69.Kg8. Then, shockingly, Cronin, instead of returning his knight to e6, played 69...Ne2 (assuming my memory is correct; I had to reconstruct the end of the game), which allowed me to play 70.e6! and White will get a new queen. Cronin resigned, and I was the new club champion, my fourth club title of the year, along with the Harrisburg West Shore, North Penn, and Chaturanga titles.

Then, just as surprising was the news that Weissbarth had lost. I did not need to win after all! Apparently, if Weissbarth had retreated his rook to attack Shafritz's pawns, Shafritz's knight had a route it could take to force the queening of one of his pawns. In fact, I have been told that Weissbarth had to give up his rook for one of the passed pawns. So I completely misjudged the position in my haste.

Shafritz's third consecutive victory gave him clear second with 3½ points. Schwartz and Rutar drew each other to tie for third place with three points with Burgwin, Weissbarth, Cronin, and Kyle Cameron.

39th Annual National Chess Congress

PHILADELPHIA, 11/28-30/2008 - Former Pennsylvania State Champion IM Bryan Smith upset two Grandmasters and drew another to take a clear first place in the Premier Section of the 39th Annual National Chess Congress, held over Thanksgiving weekend, in Philadelphia. While none of our representatives at the recent Chess

Olympiad in Dresden, Germany, entered this event, the field was still strong, with seven GMs and numerous other titled players. Smith has been on a roll, as he tied for first place at the King's Island Open only two weeks prior to this event, defeating GM Dermen Sadvakasov and drawing GM Alexander Shabalov there.

Smith started out with a win over veteran master Denis Strenzwilk, and followed up by beating two of the strongest juniors in Pennsylvania, WFM Alisa Melekhina and NM Alexander Heimann. Then he mowed down GMs Leonid Kritz and Sergey Erenburg back-to-back, before drawing GM Giorgi Kacheishvili in the final round to take the top prize. It was an impressive performance! Tying for second with five points each were Kacheishvili, Canadian IM Zhe Quan, and NM Daniel Ludwig. Shabalov started out 3-0, but then drew Erenburg, lost to Kacheishvili, and drew IM Alex Lenderman.

Not only was the National Chess Congress strong, it was huge! There were 581 players entered, up almost a hundred from last year. There was one fewer section this year (there was no unrated section), but let us compare the number of entrants from last year to this year:

	2007	2008	Difference
Premier	64	69	+5
U2200	45	58	+13
U2000	59	65	+6
U1800	75	77	+2
U1600	80	78	-2
U1400	63	55	-8
U1200	41	77	+36
U1000	37	41	+4
U800	16	43	+27
U600	14	39	+25
Unrated	15	N/A	-15
Total	509	602	+93

(These numbers are higher than 581 because of cross-section pairings and re-entries. The Premier section was open to those rated 2000 or higher or under age 18 and rated 1800 or higher.)

Only two sections experienced a very modest decline, while all of the others, especially the lower sections, had increases. There were so many entries that some of the lower boards of the two-day schedule had to play in another room!

Here is the list of winners:

Premier:	Bryan Smith 5½/6
Top PA:	Smith
Top NJ:	Mackenzie Molner, Thomas Bartell 4½
U2200:	Arthur Shen 5½
Top PA:	Lorand Bela Kis 5
Top NJ:	Shen
U2000:	Sebastian Gueler, Michael Williams, Adonis Turner 5
Top PA:	Williams, Turner
Top NJ:	Daniel Karbownik, Christopher Wu 4½
U1800:	Albert Freeman 5½
Top PA:	Steve McLaughlin, Jr. 4½
Top NJ:	Donald Carrelli, Andrew McCurdy 4

U1600:	Gus Colas 6
Top PA:	Yiqun Ying, Calvin Baldwin, Lucas Knight, David Blumin, Gregory Whitehorn, Marc Meola 4½
Top NJ:	Thomas Stanics 5
U1400:	Randall McEvelly 6
Top PA:	McEvelly
Top NJ:	Timothy Priestley 4½
U1200:	David Grigoryan 5½
Top PA:	Grigoryan
Top NJ:	Daniel Zhu 4½
U1000:	Amar Shah 5½
Top PA:	Sean Rich, Yasasvi Hari 4
Top NJ:	Shah
U800:	Daniel Recalde, Shiling Zhao, Vishal Gumidyala, Allan Gorbulsky, Yumiko Kakutani 5
Top PA:	Gorbulsky
Top NJ:	Recalde, Gumidyala
U600:	Zsofia DeCredico, Paul Kuhn, Kyria Sample, John Peterson 5
Top PA:	Sample, Peterson
Top NJ:	Kuhn

Playing to the Gallery

by FM Alex Dunne

When a player has a choice between a safe, sound move that will eventually win and a snappy, unclear “brilliancy”, he is said to be playing to the gallery. This tendency can be found even on the internet when no one is watching...

Alex Dunne - Ehab

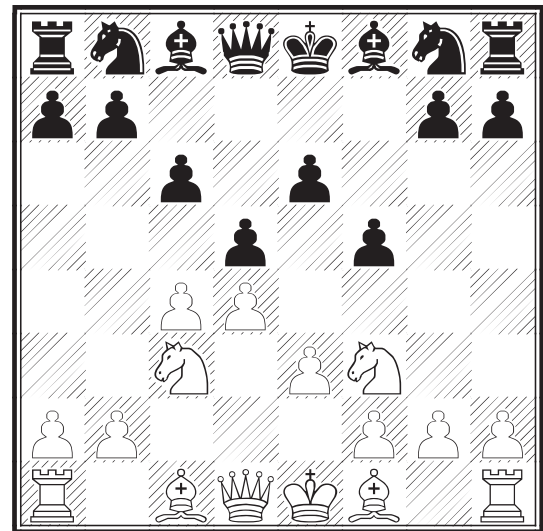
ICC November, Online, 11/2008

Annotations by Alex Dunne

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 e6 4.e3

Safe, sound, and good, White declines to fight a theoretical battle after 4.Nc3 dxc4.

4...f5 5.Nc3



5...a6

This move does not fit in with the aggressive Stonewall formation.

6.Bd3 Nf6 7.O-O Bd6 8.Ne5 O-O 9.f4

One of the best ways to combat the Stonewall is with a Stonewall in return, especially here where a6 is a wasted tempo.

9...Bxe5 10.fxe5 Ng4

After 10...Ne4 11. Nxe4 fxe4 12. Bc2 Rxf1+ 13. Qxf1 the two bishops have some pull.

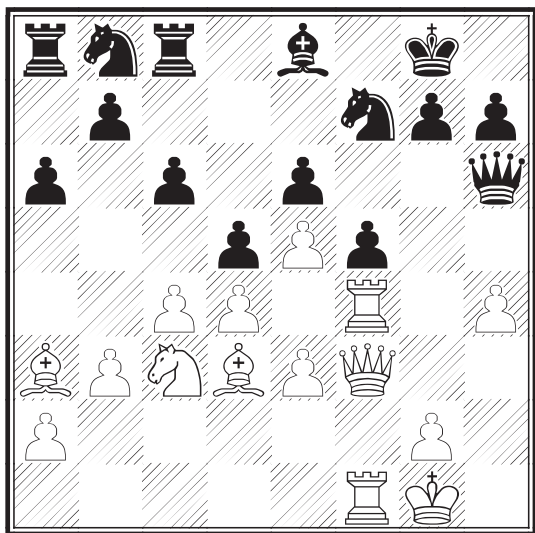
11.h3 Nh6 12.b3 Bd7 13.Ba3 Re8 14.Qh5 Nf7 15.Rf4

While Black's pieces are tied up on the queenside, White starts the fight on the kingside.

15...Qg5 16.Qf3 Qh6 17.h4

Stopping ...Ng5-e4 but this improvement of one Black piece does not compensate for the five badly placed Black pieces. Still, the best way to prepare an attack is to not let your opponent improve his position.

17...Rc8 18.Rf1 Be8



Now is the time to begin the decisive assault. The Knight on c3 isn't doing much for White so...

19.cxd5 exd5 20.Nxd5! exd5 21.Bxf5 Rc6 22.Be4!?

This still wins, but simple chess was better with 22. Bg4 or Bh3. Also strong was 22. Qxd5 which leaves Black in a hopeless position. Now the battle heats up, but Black's lagging pieces on the queenside make defense impossible.

22...Rf6! 23.exf6 dxe4 24.Qxe4

The clock (Game/60 Minutes) also plays a role here - 24. Rxe4 was clearer.

24...Nc6 25.fxg7

Black has two knights for the rook, but White has four (!) extra pawns. Now the end is easy and the gallery can still be entertained.

25...Rd8 26.Rf6 Qxg7 27.Bb2

Once the long diagonal is cleared, Black will be mated.

27...Nb4 28.d5 Qg3 29.Qxb4 Qxe3+ 30.Kh1 Qe2 31.Qd4 1:0

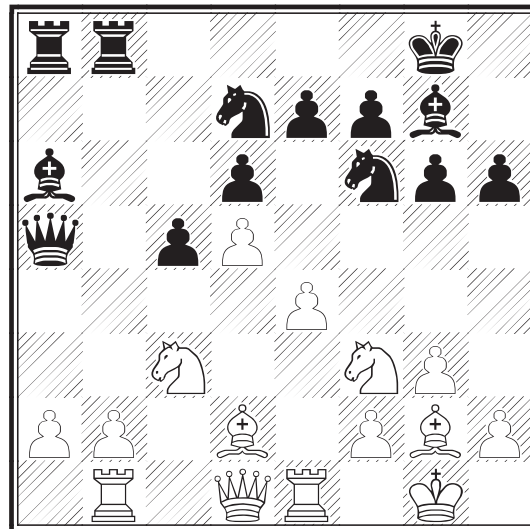
Games From PSCF Members

Jeffrey G. Schragin - Federico Garcia

Fred A. Sorensen Memorial, Round 3, Pittsburgh, 9/23/2008

Annotations by Federico Garcia

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 d6 6.g3 Nbd7 7.Bg2 g6 8.Nc3 Bg7 9.Nf3 O-O 10.O-O Bxa6 11.Re1 Qc7 12.Bg5 Rfb8 13.Rb1 Qa5 14.e4 h6 15.Bd2

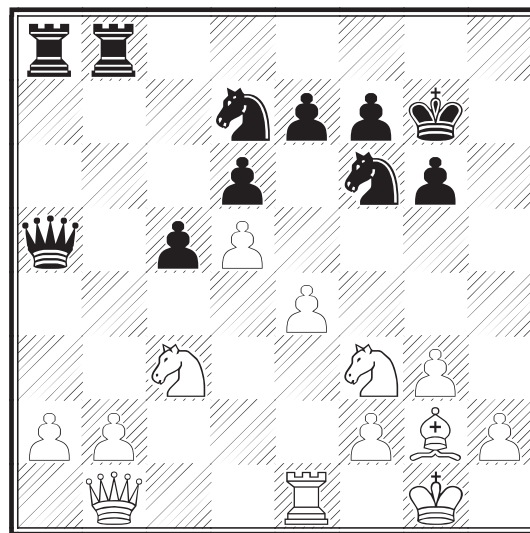


15...Bd3 16.Bxh6!?

Better is 16.Ra1! c4! (If 16...Rxb2!? then 17.Bc1 with an unclear position.)

16...Bxb1 17.Bxg7 Kxg7 18.Qxb1

I felt very uneasy with all those lines ready to open (the e-file, the light long diagonal), and those knights, unlike my heavy pieces, ready to jump onto the kingside. I suspect that Jeff agrees, since he chose this way, among several options, to deal with the threat to his rook. So strong was my discomfort that I decided to give the exchange back, and enter a forced variation that would leave White in bad shape, even though he still retains the original Benko Gambit extra pawn.



18...Qxc3!!

One of my most elegant moves ever.

19.bxc3 Rxb1 20.Rxb1 Nxe4 21.Rb7

What did this combination achieve? Black is hitting a2 and c3, so he can take pride on being on the verge of recovering the gambit. But to give back the exchange for this? What Black really achieved was that the remaining White pieces, instead of being poised to set the board on fire, are in each others way. In concrete terms: f2 cannot be defended as fast as it can be attacked; there will be first-rank checks and pins; and forks from e3 or d2, etc. Meanwhile White can't do much. The Black Knight on e4 is going to stay right there, covering d6 and g5,

and the White minor pieces can't cooperate with the rook on the seventh rank. The game went:

21...Ndf6 22.c4 Rxa2 23.Rxe7 Kf8!

In this way the Rook has to take the long route back home.

24.Rb7 Ng4!

The Knight on e4 stays put. There's time for a knight tour through g4-f2-g4-e3-c4. If 24 Nxf2? Ng5 with counterplay.

25.Rb1

Now that the rook is defending, the way is faster.

25...Nexf2

Threatening Nd3.

26.Rf1 Ne4

Better is 26.Nd3! with Ne3 to follow.

27.Nh4 Nd2! 28.Rc1

Not 28.Nxg6+? Kg7.

28...Nxc4! 29.Rxc4 Ra1+ 30.Bf1 Rxf1+! 0:1

and here Jeff resigned. Maybe it is a little premature, but Black's win is imminent. For example after 31..Kxf1 Ne3+ 32.Ke2 Nxc4 33.Kd3 (33.Nf3 Nb6) 33...Ne5+, it's just a matter of time.

Mladen Kolar - Daniel E. Malkiel

Pittsburgh Chess League, Round 2, Pittsburgh, 10/13/2008

Annotations by Daniel E. Malkiel

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.h4

A modern, double-edged line in which White aims to provoke kingside weaknesses before deciding how to develop his pieces.

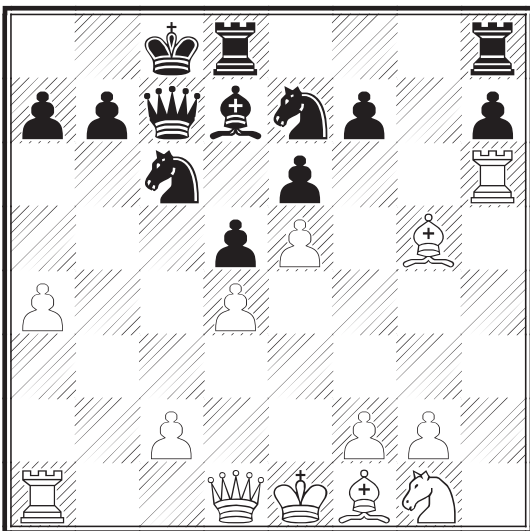
7...Nbc6 8.h5 Qa5 9.Bd2 Bd7 10.a4?

Unnecessary. White loses a tempo in a line in which he is already behind in development. The immediate 10.h6 is critical. There can follow 10...gxh6 11.Nf3 O-O-O 12.Bd3 c4 13. Be2 Ng8! (Uhlmann), with something like dynamic equality.

10...O-O-O 11.h6 gxh6 12.Rxh6?!

The h6-pawn is not going anywhere, and the rook is exposed on this square. Developing with Nf3 was better.

12...Qc7 13.Bg5 cxd4 14.cxd4



14...Nf5!

A strong positional exchange sacrifice whereby Black detonates the White center, accelerates his lead in development, and obtains two active knights, each of which will be more powerful than either White

rook for some time to come.

15.Bxd8 Rxd8!?

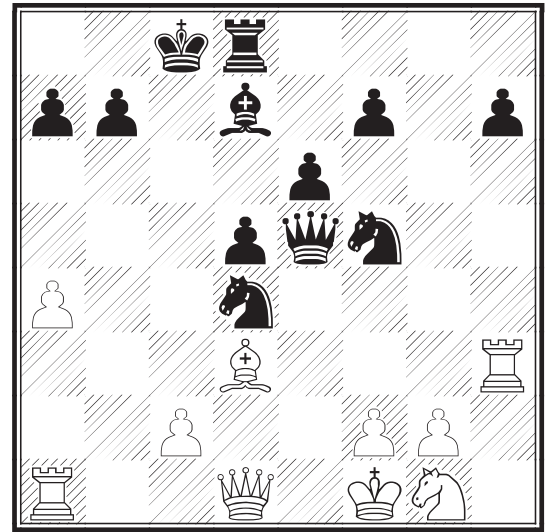
Taking with the King is another approach. By keeping h7 guarded, Black forces the Rook to an inferior square. For example: 15...Kxd8 16.Rh3 Nxd4 17.Bd3 Qxe5+ 18.Kf1. On the other hand, the Rook on h8 remains inactive and White will be able to hit the b7-pawn with tempo.

16.Rh3?!

Returning to guard along the third rank looks correct, but it was better to take on h7 - not so much to win a pawn as to put the Rook on a safe and active square. On h3 the rook will eventually come under attack from the Bishop on d7. If 16.Rxh7 Nfxd4 (16...Nb4 17.Kd2 is better for White; 16...Ncx4 17.Ra2 and White is slightly better) 17.Bd3 (if 17.Rc1 Qxe5+ 18.Ne2 Nxe2 19.Qxe2 Qf4 Black is better) Nb4 with compensation similar to that of the game continuation.

16...Ncx4 17.Bd3 Qxe5+ 18.Kf1

The position is dynamically balanced, but Black's position is much easier to play. White is undeveloped and uncoordinated, while Black, with his entire army mobilized, can just play simple moves.



18...Qf6 19.c3 Nc6 20.Qb3 Nd6

Better is 20...Ne5! 21.Bb5 Qg6 with a slight advantage.

21.Bb5?

A mistake, but White's position is difficult and he was in time trouble to boot. Maybe 21.Rxh7 e5 22.Qxd5 e4 23.Be2 which looks unclear.

21...Ne4 22.Qc2 e5 23.Rf3 Qg6 24.Bd3 Rg8! 25.g3 f5 26.c4? Nd4 27.Qc3??

In time trouble with a lost position, White blunders.

27...Nxc3 0:1

Book Reviews

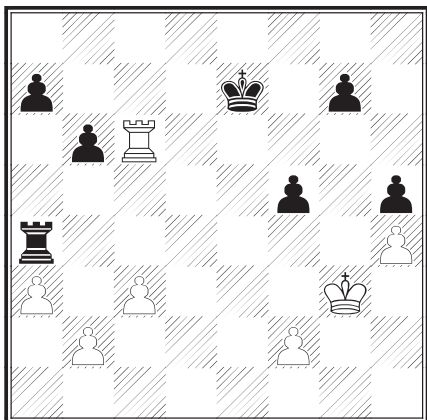
by Dr. Ira Lee Riddle

Play 1.b4! (\$24.95) by Yury Lapshun and Nick Conticello: This opening is also known as the Sokolsky. I have often fianchettoed with 1.b3, but never used 1.b4 myself. The opening first seems to have been used in the 1800s, with dire results for White. Tartakower used it in his match with Reti in 1919 with much success, but it has languished since then. Through seven chapters, the reader is shown many variations, including some Queen's Indian Defenses. Conticello comments that his first job was to ensure that Lapshun's fractured English was readable, then he became a full collaborator on the book. It reads very well, contains a full index, and is a lot of fun. If for no other reason than the shock value, it is worth reading and studying this book.

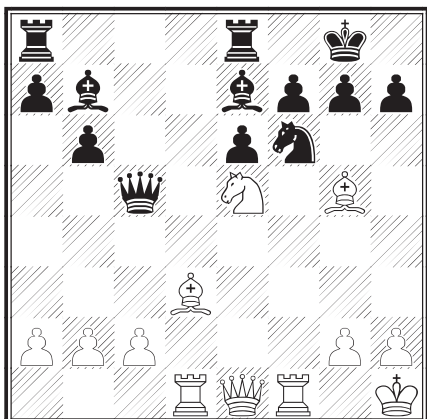
Mucerino Mindbenders

by Joseph J. Mucerino, Jr.

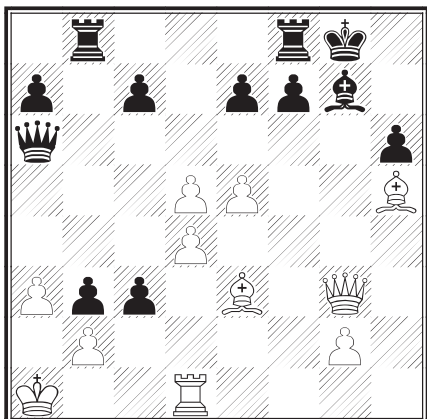
1. Bernard P. De Luca - Mucerino
 Bloomsburg Open, Round 4,
 Bloomsburg, 3/10/2002
Black's 40th move?



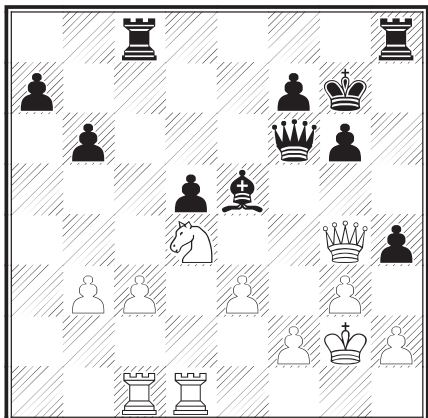
2. Mucerino - Aaron Demby Jones
 33rd Annual National Chess Congress, Rd 6, Philadelphia, 12/1/2002
White's 16th move?



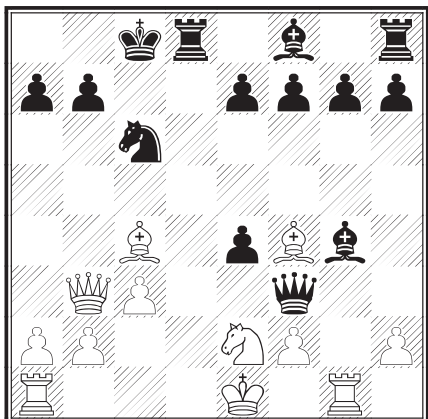
3. William G. Duley - Mucerino
 North Penn CC Winter Round Robin, Rd 5, Lansdale, 2/27/2003
Black's 25th move?



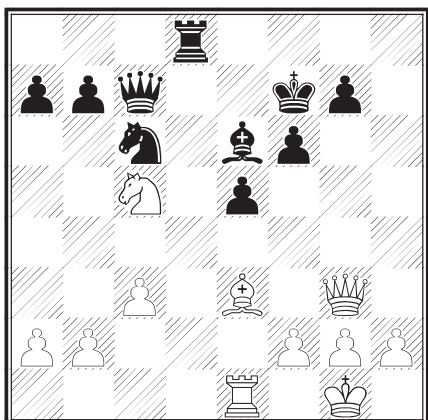
4. Mucerino - Norman Rogers
 Greater Philadelphia Championship, Rd 2, Gladwyne, 3/29/2003
Black's 32nd move?



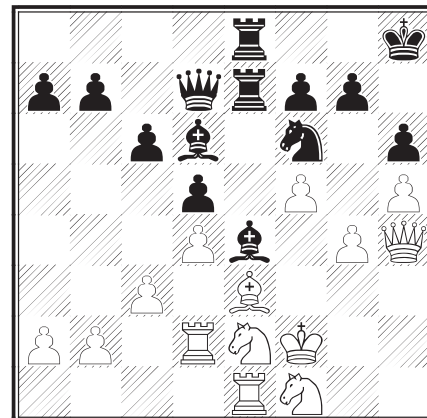
5. Mucerino - Joseph V. Weber
 North Penn CC Summer Double Quads, Rd 4, Lansdale, 6/19/2003
White's 13th move?



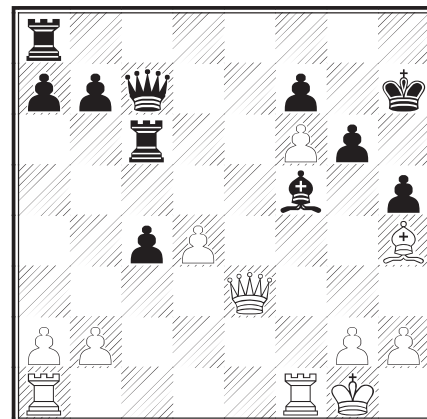
6. Mucerino - Joshua A. Bowman
 Main Line CC G/30 Championship, Round 3, Gladwyne, 7/22/2003
White's 23rd move?



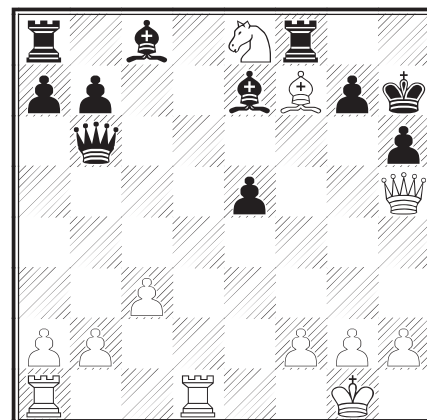
7. Matthew C. Russell - Mucerino
 21st Tullah Hanley Grand Prix, Round 3, Bradford, 7/26/2003
Black's 28th move?



8. Mucerino - Ronald S. Gross
 Lancaster County Championship, Round 3, Lancaster, 4/16/2004
White's 25th move?



9. Mucerino - Andrew E. Tichenor
 Pottstown Chess Club April Quads, Round 1, Pottstown, 4/30/2004
White's 23rd move?



Coaches Corner: 4th and Inches at the Goal Line

by IM Igor Khmel'nitsky

The NFL playoffs are approaching fast and there is still a chance for both of Pennsylvania's teams, the Pittsburgh Steelers and Philadelphia Eagles, to qualify.

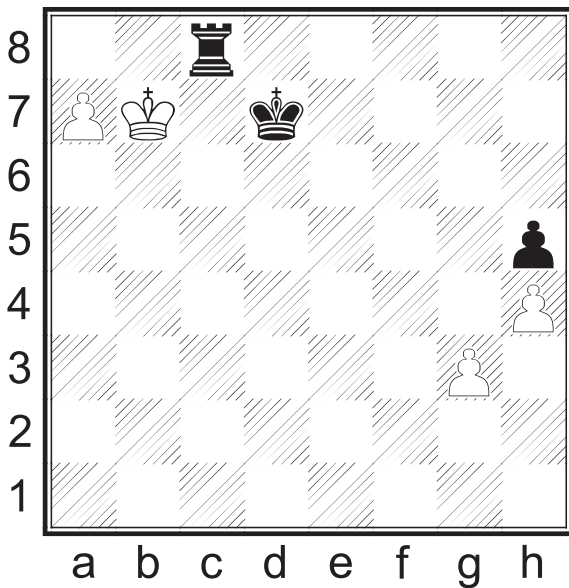
One of the most exciting plays in football is "4th and inches" at the goal line. Offense can pick a variety of plays ranging from using brute force running up the middle to trying sneaky trick plays. The defense, on the other hand, is set for the "do or die" last stand knowing that making a stop here will provide a tremendous boost for the entire team.

Can you think of anything similar in chess? How about the struggle surrounding the attempted promotion of a pawn? The defense is building roadblocks and the offense is working on clearing the path for the pawn to "score a touchdown" by promotion into a Queen.

Here are some interesting examples of this "4th and inches" on the chessboard.

Assess each of the positions, find candidate moves and the best variation. Write it down. Give it your best shot before proceeding to the answers. The difficulty of these positions varies so don't get discouraged if you miss something.

1. Black to move.



Spend 5 to 10 minutes thinking about your answer.

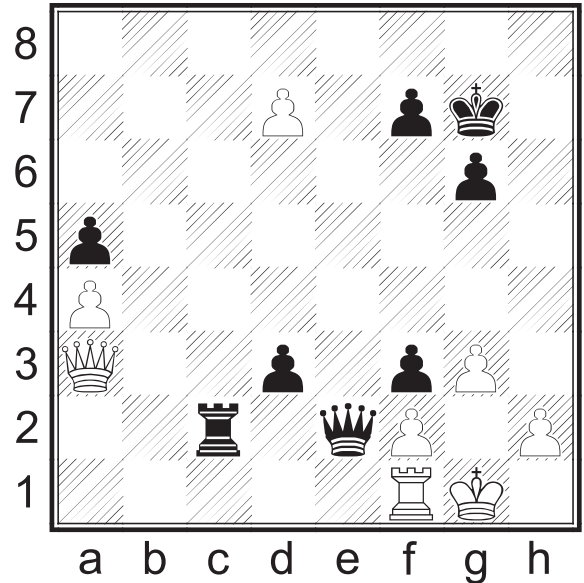
This is a problem created by the Italian Giulio Cesare Polerio (1548-1612).

Black has a fairly simple winning strategy: give up the Rook for the a-pawn and rush his King to win White's pawns. The problem though is that the White King reaches the h1-square or is able to box in the Black King on the h-file and obtain a draw. For example: 1...Rc7+? 2.Kb8 Rxa7 3.Kxa7 Ke6 4.Kb6 Kf5 5.Kc5 Kg4 6.Kd4 Kxg3 7.Ke3 Kxh4 8.Kf2 or 1...Rh8? 2.a8/Q Rxa8 3.Kxa8 Ke6 4.Kb7 Kf5 5.Kc6 Kg4 6.Kd5 Kxg3 7.Ke4 Kxh4 8.Kf3.

Thus Black must be a bit more creative and find the stunning 1...Ra8!!

(This move reveals an entirely different tactical strategy based on zugzwang.) 2.Kxa8 Kc7 (2...Kc8 would be a major mistake since White's h-pawn would Queen with check!) 3.g4 (White is forced to make this losing move) hxg4 4.h5 g3 5.h6 g2 6.h7 g1/Q 7.h8/Q (and no check!) Qg2#.

2. Evaluate 1...Qxf1+.



Spend 5 to 10 minutes thinking about your answer.

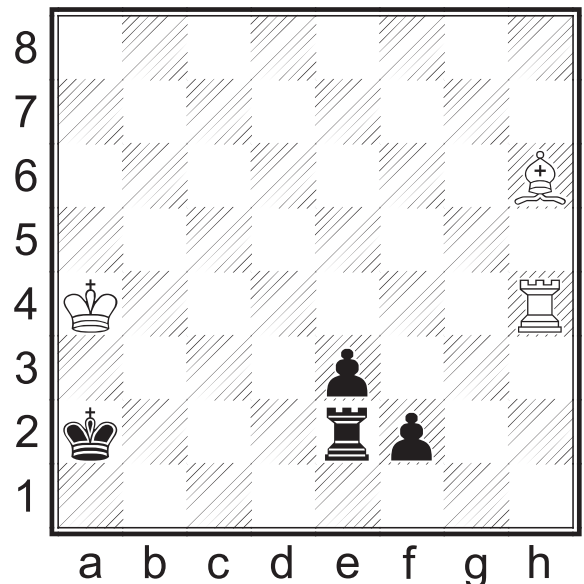
In Evgenij P. Ermenkov - Gyula Sax (1970), Black sacrificed the Queen to give the d-pawn a push: 1...Qxf1+ 2.Kxf1 d2.

What should White do now? Well, there are two ideas and two good candidate moves.

First, is a draw via perpetual check: after 3.Qf8+?! White can get out of trouble by having the newly promoted Queen harass the Black King.

The second idea is even trickier, but maybe you will guess what it is: 3.Qxf3! Rc1+ 4.Qd1! Rxd1+ 5.Ke2 and White forces a won pawn ending after 5...Rc1 6.d8/Q d1/Q+ 7.Qxd1 Rxd1 8.Kd1.

3. White to move.



Spend 5 to 10 minutes thinking about your answers.

This is a problem created by the Russian chess composer Alexey Alexeyevich Troitsky (1866-1942).

One of the two Black pawns supported by the Rook seems to be poised for promotion. The first thing that you must do is to identify the “big picture” plans. White needs to stop the pawns and can give up either of his two pieces (but not both) for the pawns (R vs. B is an easy Draw). Next, consider the candidate moves. There are two: 1.Rf4 and 1.Rh1.

The natural 1.Rf4 has a point: 1...Re1? (“brute force”) 2.Rf8 and White will succeed in eliminating the pawn. 2...f1/Q 3.Rxf1 Rxf1 and 4.Bxe3. moves On other moves, 3.Bxe3 and 4.Rxf2 will eliminate the pawns at the cost of the bishop. But after the sneaky 1...Kb1! planning 2...Ra2+ and 3...e2, White has no defense. For example: 2.Bg7 Ra2+ 3.Kb3 e2 4.Rxf2 e1/Q 5.Rxa2 Qe6+.

What about 1.Rh1? Well, now the brute force approach seems to seal the deal. 1...Re1! But wait, White just “stuffs” the line with 2.Rf1!! After 2...Rxf1 (2...Kb2 3.Bxe3 Rxf1 4.Kb4 transposes) 3.Bxe3 Kb2 (Black can’t lose the f2-pawn) 4.Kb4 Kc2 5.Kc4 Kd1 6.Kd3 Ke1 7.Bd2+ Kd1 8.Be3 Draw!

In summary, in this article I have shown you examples that have one rare idea in common: Stop or slow down a pawn on the 7th rank from promotion by attracting that pawn’s own supporters onto the promotion square.

(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, or *Chess Exam and Training Guide 2: Tactics*, please contact IM Igor Khmelinsky via his website <http://www.iamcoach.com/>)

Mucerino Mindbenders Solutions (from page 12)

1. De Luca-Mucerino: After 40...Rg4+ 41.Kh3 (or any other king move) 41...Kd7 trapped White’s Rook!

2. Mucerino-Jones: White wins material with 16.Bxf6! Black played 16...Bxf6 (16...gxf6 17.Qg3+ is similar to the game) 17.Rxf6! gxf6 18.Qg3+ Kh8 (18...Kf8 19.Ne7+ wins the Queen) 19.Nxf7#.

3. Duley-Mucerino: White does not have a good response to 25...c2! White tried 26.Rc1 Qxa3+! 27.bxa3 b2+ and White resigned because of 28.Ka2 b1Q+ 29.Rxb1 cxb1Q#.

4. Mucerino-Rogers: 32...hgx3 opens up the h-file decisively for Black. White did not see the danger and played 33.hgx3 (33.f4 was better) 33...Rh2+! and White resigned. Mate is forced: 34.Kxh2 Qxf2+ 35.Kh1 Rh8+ 36.Qh4 Rxh4+ 37.gxh4 Qh2#.

5. Mucerino-Weber: 13.Rxg4! wins a piece. 13...Qxg4 (no better is 13...Qh1+ 14.Rg1 Qf3) 14.Bxf7 (threatening 15.Be6+) 14...Rd6 15.Bxd6 (again threatening 16.Be6+) 15...Qf3 16.Be6+ Kd8 17.Qxb7 exd6 18.Qd7#.

6. Mucerino-Bowman: White wins a piece with 23.Qxg7+ Kxg7 24.Nxe6+ Kf7 25.Nxc7 and soon won.

7. Russell-Mucerino: 28...Bxf5! makes room for the Knight on e4. The game finished 29.gxf5 Ne4+ 30.Kg2 Nxd2 31.Nxd2 Rxe3 32.Qg4 Qe7 33.Kf1 Bg3 and White resigned.

8. Mucerino-Gross: Black has just played 24...Kh7 to prevent 25.Qh6 and 26.Qg7#. I found 25.Rxf5! which wins material. The game continued 25...gxf5 26.Qg5 Rxf6 27.Qxf6 Qf4 (better was 27...Qd7)

28.Bg5 Qg4 29.Qxf7+ Kh8 30.Bf6+ Qg7 31.Qxg7#

9. Mucerino-Tichenor: Black had to give up his Queen after 23.Rd6! because there was no other way to prevent 24.Qg6+ Kh8 25.Qxg7#. White won in 28 moves.

UPCOMING PSCF EVENTS

January 31. 2009 Pennsylvania Amateur Team Championship. 4-SS. G/75. Assembly Room, Main Floor, William Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh, 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh PA 15213. Team average rating must be under 2200. EF: \$60/team by 1/23, \$80 later. Reg 9-9:30am. Rds 10am - 1pm - 4pm - 7pm. \$\$: (700/b16 teams, 350G): 250-100, U2000 \$95, U1800 \$90, U1600 \$85, U1400 \$80. 4-player teams, alternates allowed, Top 4 rated used for team average rating. PSCF required \$5 OSA. **Info:** martinak_tom_m@hotmail.com, 412-908-0286. **Ent:** PSCF, c/o Tom Martinak, 25 Freeport St., Pittsburgh PA 15223-2245. Checks payable to PSCF. W. *Sponsored & Organized by the PA State Chess Federation & University of Pittsburgh Chess Club.*

March 6 GPP:6 Pennsylvania (QC) 2009 Pennsylvania Quick Chess Championship. 6-SS, G/10, T/D3. Hotel Carlisle & Embers Convention Center, 1700 Harrisburg Pike, Carlisle PA 17013, Exit 52A NB/Exit 52 SB off I-81, Exit 226 off PA Turnpike. 3 sections, EF rec’d by 2/17: **Open:** \$12. **U1500:** \$10. **U1100:** \$8. \$\$ (730G): **Open:** 175-100-50, U1800 \$45, U1600 \$40. **U1500:** 125-75-50, U1200 \$40, Unrated \$30. **U1100:** Trophies to 1st-5th, Top U800, Top U600, 1st-2nd Unr. **All:** EF: \$20 after 2/17, PSCF \$5 OSA. Reg: 6-6:30pm. Rd 1: 7pm. February 2009 Regular ratings used. Bye: limit 1, ask by rd 2. **Loser’s Chess:** Reg on-site only Fri 3/6. Rds begin Fri 3/6 after completion of PA State Quick Chess Championship. EF: \$10. **HR:** Mention “PA States” for best rate as early as possible; Hotel Carlisle & Embers Convention Center 800-692-7315 \$75 (Stay at the tournament site!). **Ent:** PSCF, c/o Tom Martinak, 25 Freeport St., Pittsburgh PA 15223-2245. Checks payable to PSCF. **Info:** martinak_tom_m@hotmail.com, 412-908-0286. W.

A Heritage Event

March 7 & 8. 2009 Pennsylvania State Scholastic Championships. 5-SS. 142 Trophies!! (With 107 Individual and 35 Team Trophies). Hotel Carlisle & Embers Convention Center, 1700 Harrisburg Pike, Carlisle PA 17013, Exit 52A NB/Exit 52 SB off I-81, Exit 226 off PA Turnpike. 8 sections (Sat & Sun 3/7 & 8 unless indicated): EF: **K-3 Open:** (Sat 3/7 only) \$29. **K-6 U800:** (Sat 3/7 only) \$27. **K-9 U1000:** (Sun 3/8 only) \$27.25. **K-6 Open:** \$30.50. **K-8 Open:** \$31.50. **7-12 U1000:** \$28.50. **7-12 U1300:** \$29.50. **K-12 Open:** \$32.50. **All:** EFs if rec’d by 2/17, \$10 more rec’d 2/18-3/3, \$20 more after 3/3. PSCF membership included. February 2009 ratings used. Bye: limit 1, ask by rd 2. \$\$ for College scholarships (amount to be determined) for top boy and girl in K-12 Open, for Castle Camp (scholarships) & (if possible) 1st team, player in K-6, K-8 & K-12 Opens for Nationals, Denker, Polgar. Reg Fri 3/6 6-10pm, Sat 3/7 9:30-10:15am, at site entries on day of 1st rd get ½-bye. Send name, USCF ID & exp, section, grade, school/club, birthday, gender, address, phone, email + EF. \$5 charge for changes/refunds after 2/17. Rds (Sat 3/7 1-day sections): 5-SS. G/40 T/D5; 10-11:45-2-3:45-5:30; (Sun 3/8 K-9 U1000): 5-SS. G/40, T/D5; 9-10:30-12:30-2-3:30; (2-day sections): 5-SS. G/90, T/D5; 10-2-5:30, 9-1. **Loser’s Chess:** Reg on-site only Fri 3/6. Rds begin Fri 3/6 after completion of PA State Quick Chess Championship. EF: \$10. **Bughouse:** Reg on-site only until Sat 3/7 8:30pm. Rds begin Sat 3/7 8:45pm. EF: \$20/team. **HR:** Mention “PA States” for best rate as early as possible; Hotel Carlisle & Embers

Convention Center 800-692-7315 \$75 (Stay at the tournament site!).
Ent: PSCF, c/o Tom Martinak, 25 Freeport St., Pittsburgh PA 15223-2245. Checks payable to PSCF. **Info:** <http://www.pscfchess.org/pascholasticchamp/>, Steve McLaughlin: piecebreaker@hotmail.com 215-784-5938; Dan Heisman: danheisman@comcast.net 610-649-0750; Tom Martinak: martinak_tom_m@hotmail.com, 412-908-0286. W.

March 7 & 8 GPP:6 Pennsylvania
2009 Carlisle Open & Pennsylvania Collegiate Championship. 5-SS, G/90, T/D5. Hotel Carlisle & Embers Convention Center, 1700 Harrisburg Pike, Carlisle PA 17013, Exit 52A NB/Exit 52 SB off I-81, Exit 226 off PA Turnpike. 2 sections: **Open & U1500.** \$\$ (1260G): **Open:** 180-120, U2200 \$110, U2000 \$100, U1800 \$90, U1600 \$80; **U1500:** 150-100, U1400 \$90, U1200 \$85, U1000 \$80, Unr \$75. **All:** College Trophies: 1st-2nd in each section, 1st-2nd team (4 players combined over both sections). EF: \$29 rec'd by 2/17, \$39 after, PSCF \$5 OSA. Reg: 8:45-9:30am. 10-2-5:30, 9-1. February 2009 ratings used. Bye: limit 1, ask by rd 2. **HR:** Mention "PA States" for best rate as early as possible; Hotel Carlisle & Embers Convention Center 800-692-7315 \$75 (Stay at the tournament site!). **Ent:** PSCF, c/o Tom Martinak, 25 Freeport St., Pittsburgh PA 15223-2245. Checks payable to PSCF. **Info:** martinak_tom_m@hotmail.com, 412-908-0286. W.

March 29 GPP:6 Pennsylvania
(QC) 2009 PA State Game/29 Championship. 5-SS. G/29. Ballroom, Main Floor, William Pitt Union, Univ. of Pittsburgh, 5th Ave. & Bigelow Blvd., Pittsburgh PA 15213. 2 sections: **Championship:** Open to all. EF: \$25 postmarked by 3/21, \$35 after. \$\$ (690G): 200-100, U2000 \$90, U1800 \$80, U1600 \$70, U1400 \$60, U1200 \$50, U1000 \$40. Trophies to Top 3 under 1400, Top 3 under 1200, and Top 3 under 1000. **Scholastic:** Open to K-12 who are unrated or rated under 900. EF: \$15 postmarked by 3/21, \$25 after. Trophies to Top 7, and Top 3 under 600. **All:** PSCF required \$5 OSA. Trophies to 1st-2nd club and school teams combining 4-7 players from both sections. Reg ends 10:30am. Rds 11am - 12:30pm - 1:45pm - 3pm - 4:15pm. **Info:** martinak_tom_m@hotmail.com, 412-908-0286. **Ent:** PSCF, c/o Tom Martinak, 25 Freeport St., Pittsburgh PA 15223-2245. Checks payable to PSCF. W. *Sponsored & Organized by the PA State Chess Federation & University of Pittsburgh Chess Club.*

April 18 & 19. 2009 PA State Amateur Championship. Comfort Inn, 58 SR 93, West Hazleton PA 18202, ½ mile from Exit 145 off I81. 2 sections. **Championship (Saturday & Sunday):** Open to U2200. 5-SS. G/90. **EF:** \$20 received by 4/17, \$30 after. Trophies to 1st-3rd, U1800, U1600, U1400, U1200/Unrated. 1st & 2nd receive paid advance entry into 2009 PA State Championship, Title to Top PA Resident. Trophy to Top School Team, any number of players may play, top 4 scores count for team. Rds 10am - 1:30pm - 5pm, 9:30am - 1pm. **Scholastic (Saturday-only):** Open to K-12 who are unrated or rated under 1400. 4-SS. G/40. **EF:** \$15 received by 4/17, \$20 after. Trophies to 1st-2nd, U1100, U800/Unrated. Trophy to Top School Team, any number of players may play, top 4 scores count for team. Rds 10:15am - Noon - 1:30pm - 3pm. **All:** Reg 9-9:30am. PSCF \$5 OSA. **HR:** Comfort Inn 570-455-9300, 1-877-424-6423 Special Chess Room Rate available before 3/18 of \$71.95 plus tax. **Info:** jem023@ptd.net, 570-455-9261. **Ent:** GHACC, C/O Michael Jemo, 567 Forest Hills Dr., Hazleton PA 18201-9648. Checks payable to GHACC. W. *Sponsored & Organized by the PA State Chess Federation & Greater Hazleton Area Chess Club.*

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Dues are \$5 for students/adults/clubs, \$100 for Life memberships. The PSCF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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ANY CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS/DELETIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED

ALLENTOWN

- (1) Center City CC; St Luke's Lutheran Church, 417 N 7th St; Sat Noon-6 pm
 (2) Lehigh Valley CA; St James Evangelical Lutheran Church, 710 N 11th St; Sat 12:30 pm, 610-821-4320

ALTOONA

Andrew Stergiou 814-941-8718

BLOOMSBURG

Kehr Union Bldg; Bob Ross 570-784-8571

BRADFORD

- (1) School Street Elementary; Wed 6:30-8:30 pm, Oct-Mar
 (2) 78 Main St Fl 3; Sun 1-5 pm, Wed 6-10 pm Mar-Sept, 814-368-4197

CARBONDALE

Public Library; 5 N Main St; Thurs 6 pm, 570-282-2793

CHAMBERSBURG

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

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 pm, Patrick Keeney 814-274-4428

DOUGLASSVILLE

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

DUNCANVILLE/ALTOONA

Lois Kaneshiki 814-693-9390

EPHRATA

Ephrata Public Library, 550 S Reading Rd; Tues 4-8 pm, Brandon Keath 717-733-9657

ERIE

Zurn Science Building, W 7th St between Peach and Sassafra, Room 348; 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

HARRISBURG

West Shore YMCA, 410 Fallowfield Rd, Camp Hill; 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; Tues & Thurs 8-11 pm, Bob Brubaker 570-384-4122

HUNTINGDON VALLEY

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

JOHNSTOWN

Starbucks, 109 Town Centre Dr; Tues 7-8:30 pm, 814-467-9759

LANCASTER

Rodney Park, Crystal & Rodney St; Wed 6:30-9 pm, 717-341-4711

LANSDALE

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

LEBANON

Library, 125 N 7th St; Wed 6-8 pm, Rene 717-279-7030

MAHONEY CITY

Library, 19 W Mahanoy St; Sat Noon-2 pm, Tom 570-773-3250

MONROEVILLE

Borders, 200 Mall Blvd; Wed 6:30-9:30 pm, Tom Magar 412-823-4493

MURRYSVILLE

First Presbyterian Church, 3202 N Hills Rd; Wed 7-11 pm, Jay 724-325-2484

NEW CASTLE

Lawrence County CC; Moose Lodge, 29 S Mercer St; Thurs 6:30-9 pm

PECKVILLE

Valley Community Library, 739 River St (Rt 247); Sat 1-4 pm, 570-487-1125

PETERS TOWNSHIP

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

PHILADELPHIA

- (1) FMCC; 2012 Walnut, Lower Level; Mon-Thurs 1-9 pm, Fri & Sat 1-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 & Fri 7-10 pm, Steve Slocum 215-455-6285
 (4) Jardel Recr Center, 1400 Cottman, Thurs 6:30-9:30 pm, Sat Noon-4 pm
 (5) Drexel Univ CC; Creese Student Center, Bookstore Lobby, Thurs 6-9 pm

PITTSBURGH

- (1) Univ of Pitt CC; William Pitt Union; Tues & 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 & Thurs 3-7 pm, Sat 1-5 pm, 412-361-6170
 (5) CMU CC; University Center Commons; Thurs 6-8 pm
 (6) Duquesne Univ; Union Bldg; Wed 3-6 pm & Fri 7:30 pm, Stanislav Kanev 412-867-9867

READING

Million Youth Chess Club; Mike 610-373-3061

RIDLEY PARK

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

SCRANTON

Northern Light Espresso Bar, 536 Spruce St; Sun 3-7 pm, Mike Evancavich 570-903-4031

SHAMOKIN

Shamokin CC; Mon 7 pm, Don Myers 570-648-8681

SHIPPENSBURG

Shippensburg Public Library, 73 W King St; Wed 6:30 pm, 717-477-0645

STATE COLLEGE

- (1) PSU CC; ASI Bldg, Room 16; Thurs 7 pm
 (2) Schlow Library, 211 South Allen St; Sat 1:45-4:45 pm, 814-571-9629

STROUDSBURG

YMCA, Main St; Thurs 7-11 pm, Eric 570-476-8939 or Jim 717-992-5475; & 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 6-9 pm, 724-567-6580

WARMINSTER

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

WASHINGTON

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

WEST CHESTER

- (1) West Chester CC; United Methodist Ch, High & Barnard Sts; Thurs 7 pm
 (2) WC Univ CC; Sykes Student Building; Thurs 5 pm

WYNCOTE

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

YORK

York Emporium, 343 West Market St; Thurs 6-9 pm, 717-845-9368

<http://www.pscfchess.org/clubs/>