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Ads and submissions must be received by the fifth of the
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**Judged Best Magazine/Newsletter for 2009 and
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Front Cover

Wilson Gibbins (L) presents Jim Tarjan with the US Chess
Frank J. Marshall Award at the 75th Oregon Open.
Photo credit: Lilly Tang.

Back Cover

Assistant TDs Lilly Tang (L) and Mike Morris.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

Submissions

Submissions of games (PGN format is preferable for
games), stories, photos, art, and other **original** chess-
related content are encouraged! Multiple submissions are
acceptable; please indicate if material is non-exclusive. All
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I learned via Instagram on October 20 (only a few hours ago at the time of this writing) from [wachessfed](#) that one of my favorite chessplayers/commentators passed away on October 19, 2025. It came as a total shock to me.—Editor.

The image is a composite of two parts. On the left, there is a portrait of Daniel Naroditsky, a young man with curly hair, sitting at a chessboard. He is wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. The text "Daniel Naroditsky 1995-2025" is overlaid on the image. On the right, there is an Instagram post from the account "wachessfed". The post includes a caption: "On behalf of the Washington Chess Federation Board, we are deeply saddened by the passing of Grandmaster Daniel "Danya" Naroditsky. His talent, kindness, and contributions to the chess world inspired countless players across all levels. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family, friends, and the entire chess community during this difficult time." It also includes a photo credit to "Photo Credit: Benjamin Robson" and a timestamp of "11h". The Instagram interface shows standard interaction icons (like, comment, share) and a "Post" button at the bottom right.

Executive Chess

The Chess Friends

The Man Benjamin Frederick, The Myth Sarang Sankrithi, and The Legend Vivaan Sankrithi

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

Get their new book, *Q&A Chess: Tournament Edition* here (published 9-15-2025): <https://a.co/d/hMYdF7B>



The Myth Sarang + The Man Benji + The Legend Vivi = The Chess Friends.
Photo credit: Sasha Frederick (Benji's Mom).

Howdy! It's the Chess Friends!

Many coaches, parents, and friends in the chess world talk about how chess can grow Executive Functions, the mental skills that help us successfully navigate learning and life. But when we study rook endgames, or look for mate-in-threes, or play in a blitz tournament, we don't think about all that brain stuff or math homework. We play and study chess because we love it! How can *that* help with Executive Functions?

Executive Functions is a loaded concept, usually tackled by neuroscientists

and psychologists. What does this concept even mean for us? In this article, we answer this question, relating Executive Functions to our experiences in both chess and life.

When we researched this topic, we came across a nice article in the *Annual Review of Psychology* (<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-psych-113011-143750>) that groups Executive Function skills into three core functions: **Working Memory**, **Cognitive Flexibility**, and **Inhibitory Control**. In this article, each of us reflects on one of these skills, suggesting how chess can

improve them. Our friend Peshka joins us, and, in preparation for Thanksgiving, demonstrates how to use these essential mental processes in the kitchen! Let's get started!

The Myth Sarang: Working Memory

Working memory is how your brain can get and store information, and access and use that information. In one of my college neuroscience courses, I learned that most people can only remember three distinct things at the same time, and when

they try to add a fourth, they may lose one of the original three. In my experience, it doesn't have to be that way, and that's largely thanks to the power of chess and brain training. You may have seen many strong chess players playing blindfold games, even blindfold simul, where they are able to play pretty good chess against many people at once, without moving any physical pieces. I'll show you how to build the memory to get there!

In chess, it is possible to remember opening patterns many moves deep, middle game tactics, and super long endgame calculations. For example, with my coach, I can have conversations 60 plies (note 1.e4 c5 is two plies) deep, without moving a single piece on the board. How did this happen? Chess-wise, I started training my brain over the board with vision exercises: we would put a tricky position on the board with a friend or coach and discuss as many moves as possible without moving any pieces. If you do this consistently, you will create a mental map of the chess board and see patterns and make plans mentally. That way, when it comes to game time, you can analyze critical positions very deeply before making a move. It's totally fine

WORKING MEMORY



if you can only see a few plies deep to start. It takes a lot of practice to grow your memory! You can also try blindfold chess and look only when you need. As you do more, you will need to look less!

There are also brain training apps like Impulse and New York Times Games that help with your pattern recognition and

efficiency. Some of my favorite ones for young learners are Tower of Hanoi with more and more disks, Simon says, and matching card games. Just make sure you focus on speed of calculation in addition to accuracy. As you train your brain, you will see marked improvement in more interesting games like Bridge and Chess. If you're able to remember every card that was dealt perfectly and who has what, you will play cards much better! Likewise in chess, if you remember positions and patterns that you've studied and are able to mentally calculate lines that lead to those positions, you will become a much better player!

One caution as you build your working memory is to use technology carefully. When you're analyzing a chess game on a computer, it's very easy to move the pieces on an analysis board. This actually works against you when you're playing a real OTB game and want to calculate everything mentally, because your mind is so used to digitally analyzing and moving. I have a cell phone now and it's easy for me to store contacts. Before my cell, I had everyone's phone number memorized. Now I just store them in my contacts. Though I now have a GPS on my phone to help navigate my parents, I have built a mental map of everywhere I have gone, complete with timestamps that account for traffic, and do my best to use it rather than the GPS.

The Legend Vivaan: Cognitive Flexibility

Cognitive flexibility is how the brain can change its thinking quickly and react creatively to unexpected situations. I like being creative in chess and in life! In chess, I think about ideas that my opponent won't expect me to play in addition to the best moves I've studied. Depending on how my opponent reacts to my plans, I am able to quickly switch between crazy attacks and lockdown defense and never worry if they see my plan or not, because I can always change it! I can also go through many plans very quickly in my brain and anticipate lots of different paths so I am rarely surprised.

An important concept that goes along with Cognitive Flexibility is *Neuroplasticity*. This is how the brain can change, and it is something you can improve with practice! The best way to improve your neuroplasticity and cognitive flexibility is to experiment with

lots of things and not stick to a script. For example, I love cooking and cook almost every day. I never follow recipes. I see what my parents make and then deviate in fun and creative ways to make the food even better! Sometimes it tastes amazing and sometimes it doesn't taste very good. That's great because you tried something new and learned from the experience! The key to improving your cognitive

COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY



flexibility is trying everything and seeing what works and not worrying about failure. People are often afraid to fail and that stops them from being creative or improving by trying lots of things.

Another example is tennis and table tennis, two sports I love. I enjoy trying new serves, new spins, and new techniques every time I play. I also like to play lefty whenever I can, even though I'm righty. Well, I'm ambidextrous, meaning I can use either hand for whatever. This is another example of cognitive flexibility, where we can train ourselves to use both hands effectively! Kids have the greatest neuroplasticity and ability to grow our brain function, but adults have it too, so it's never too late to train your brain! You don't have to take my word for it. Check out this recent review in the *Brain Research* journal! (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006899325002021>)

Circling back to chess: yes, you need to learn your openings, you need to learn your tactics, and you need to learn your endgames, and, as you get better, some deeper positional ideas! That said, never

lose your creativity and always come up with fun new ideas to try! If you're the type of person who worries about rating, try these ideas online or OTB in practice games or in any setting where you can truly experiment and play freely. If for any reason, you feel unable to play free, it makes it very hard to be creative and flexible. Good luck!

The Man Benji: Inhibitory Control

Inhibitory Control is how you can stay in charge of your impulses, thoughts, and actions, and maintain your focus without being distracted. Just like with Working Memory and Cognitive Flexibility, chess can also help with Inhibitory Control. With Working Memory, sure we need to memorize openings and be able to convert winning positions in our sleep. But when we are playing, we can't be on auto-pilot. Our opponent might set up a trap or a stalemate trick! So, we should stay mentally alert and focused in all situations. Likewise, it is great to be creative in chess, and to spot interesting ideas. But it doesn't mean we should play those ideas right away, no matter how brilliant they might seem at the moment. We need to answer questions: *What would be my opponent's response? Can they counter-attack? Do I have a better option?*

"When you see a good move, look for a better one," as Emanuel Lasker, the second World Chess Champion, famously said.

Another big thing about Inhibitory Control is being able to control your thoughts. In chess, when we find ourselves in a bad position, we can fall down the rabbit-hole of sinking thoughts: *"How did I get myself into this mess?" or "I'm so bad at chess, I shouldn't even be here."* Those thoughts are unhelpful and often lead to resigning. Instead, we can use our Inhibitory Control to suppress these thoughts, and think more productively: *Can I set up some traps? How can I complicate the position?* Staying on task and focusing on what's in front of you will help you find counterplay and hopefully have fun playing new ideas.

The same can be applied to situations when you are completely winning. Say you got yourself into a winning position. You are excited, thinking everything is going great, and you start getting

overconfident. Overconfidence can negatively affect your focus, and that's never a good thing, as you might mess up and blunder. You have to stay cool and finish the game in style.

It was also Emanuel Lasker who said "The hardest game to win is a won game." No wonder he still holds the longest tenure as Chess World Champion, a whopping 27 years, from 1894 to 1921! He was not only a chess player but also a mathematician and a philosopher, and he probably knew a lot about Executive Functions, though the term didn't gain popularity until the 1970s!

Even though it's good to control your impulses, there are some chess situations

INHIBITORY CONTROL



where you should trust your instincts. In a blitz game, or in time trouble, you can let it go, trust your chess training, and just go with it!

We use Inhibitory Control in many life situations, outside of chess! Say I see a scrumptious looking chocolate bar on the table. Thanks to my Inhibitory Control function sharpened by chess, instead of instantly devouring that bar, I might stop and think about whether that would really be a good idea.

Another example would be playing video games or online blitz games. We've all been there: it's late in the night, and you are blitzing nonstop. You should call it a night, really, but you want to get that 20 rating points back you lost this evening, so you keep playing, losing

100 points more in addition to losing a good night's sleep! Instead of doing that, remember about your brain power and use its Inhibitory Control function, unplugging early and going to sleep!

It's a cool thing being able to control your thoughts and channel your energy into a productive and stable state of mind! Playing chess can help you get practice with focus, fighting back instead of draining in negative thinking, and staying on the road of reaching your goal!

To summarize, here are...

The Chess Friends Tips to Improve Executive Functions

- Do chess vision exercises: analyze positions mentally and verbally without moving any pieces and grow your depth of calculation by tracking your ply count. **#workingmemory**
- Practice blindfold chess as deep as you can to create a mental map of the chessboard and chess pieces. **#workingmemory**
- Play with brain training apps and try to memorize every card dealt in card games, calculating odds as you play. **#workingmemory**
- Try routine things like memorizing phone numbers, addresses, and navigation, without technology like contacts and GPS. **#workingmemory**
- Think of moves that maximize the chances of the opponent making a mistake. **#cognitiveflexibility**
- Anticipate several paths your opponent may take and come up with creative ideas in each one before making your move. **#cognitiveflexibility**
- Move away from the script. Once you've mastered the fundamentals, try some new things and breakaway from conventional thinking. **#cognitiveflexibility**

- Experiment often and don't be afraid to fail. **#cognitiveflexibility**
- Stay focused during your chess (and not only chess) studies by setting specific times for training and turning off notifications. **#inhibitorycontrol**
- Reward yourself when you finish a task with a blitz game, or with that scrumptious looking chocolate bar (ok, maybe a half of it). **#inhibitorycontrol**
- Follow the advice of the great Emanuel Lasker: When you see a good tactic, or move, slow down and think about your opponent's response and other candidate moves. **#inhibitorycontrol**
- When triggered, don't react immediately and calm down first. Maybe count to ten before speaking, or breath in and out to clear your brain from that first impulse response. **#inhibitorycontrol**

That's all for now! We hope you enjoy improving your Executive Functions, chess, and life!

Three Cheers, Fellow Future Master Chess Friends!

The Man Benji

The Myth Sarang

The Legend Vivi

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



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19th Annual SPICE Cup Open



November 19-24, 2025



Hilton Bellevue

300 112th Ave SE, Bellevue, WA 98004

Co-hosted by the Susan Polgar Foundation and the WA Chess Federation.

A 9-round, dual USCF and FIDE-rated Swiss. One section; minimum rating 2000 FIDE or 2200 USCF required.

Entry fee:

- GMs: Free entry.
- Foreign IMs: \$250 by 9/15, \$300 by 10/15, \$350 after.
- US Flag IMs: \$395 by 9/15, \$445 by 10/15, \$495 after.
- Foreign FIDE-rated players (2000+): \$395 by 9/15, \$445 by 10/15, \$495 after.
- US players 2200+ FIDE: \$595 by 9/15, \$645 by 10/15, \$695 after.
- US players 2000-2199 FIDE: \$895 by 9/15, \$945 by 10/15, \$995 after.

Schedule:

Wednesday 11/19: Arrival & Check-in – 3:00-4:30 PM, Rd. 1 – 5:00 PM.

Thursday 11/20: Rd. 2 – 10:00 AM, Rd. 3 – 4:00 PM.

Friday 11/21: Rd. 4 – 10:00 AM, Rd. 5 – 4:00 PM.

Saturday 11/22: Rd. 6 – 11:00 AM.

Saturday 11/22: SPICE Cup Blitz Championship (9SS, G/3; +2) – 7:00 PM.

Sunday 11/23: Rd. 7 – 11:00 AM, Rd. 8 – 5:00 PM.

Monday 11/24: SPICE Cup Rapid Championship (5SS, G/15; +5) – 10:00 AM.

Monday 11/24: Rd. 9 – 4:00 PM, Closing Ceremony – 8:00 PM or ASAP.

Prize Fund: \$12,500 Guaranteed! GM, IM, WGM, and WIM norms are possible.

1st – 3rd: \$5000-3000-2000, Top U2450: \$500-250, Top U2300: \$500-250.

Special Prizes (which can be won in addition to a place or class prize):

Top Female: \$500, Top Senior (50+): \$500, Brilliance Prize: \$100.

Time Control: G/90; +30. Forfeit time: 60 minutes.

Byes: Players may request up to two half-point byes in rounds 1-7 if announced by the start of the tournament. Zero-point byes are available for any round.

Rating: Dual USCF and FIDE-rated. November 2025 FIDE ratings will be used to determine pairings and prizes.

Memberships: A current US Chess membership is required at the time of the tournament.

Hotel Rates: \$199 for a King room or 2 Queens. Complimentary guest room Wi-Fi and event day parking. Discounted overnight parking of \$18 per vehicle per night. Many restaurants are within 1-2 miles of the hotel. For online hotel reservations, use the [booking link](#). Group Code: WACFRL. For phone reservations, call 425-455-1300 and reference the Chess SPICE Cup. Cut-off date for discounted hotel reservations is **October 30, 2025**.

Registration: Online at nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration or send registration form and payment to: Washington Chess Federation, 4174 148th Avenue NE, Building I, Suite M, Redmond, Washington 98052. Limited space available; please register early. Registration will stay open until capacity is reached or by the **deadline of 11/18** at 12:00 PM (noon) PT. Partial refunds (less PayPal fees + \$20 processing fee) are available until the registration deadline.

Miscellaneous: Limited free hotel accommodation available for GMs. Players receiving conditions may not take any byes without express permission from the organizer. All equipment is provided. Anti-cheating measures will be strictly enforced.

Questions – Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206-769-3757, WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com



20th Susan Polgar Foundation National Open for Girls & Boys



Saturday-Sunday, November 22-23, 2025

Hilton Bellevue: 300 112th Ave SE, Bellevue, WA 98004

Info: spfno.com Register: ChessReg.com
Email: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com
Phone: 206-769-3757

2-day Championship sections

K-5 Open	K-5 Girls
K-8 Open	K-8 Girls
K-12 Open	K-12 Girls

Format: A 5-Round, G/60; +30 Swiss.
Dual NWSRS + USCF rated. K-12
sections are also FIDE rated.

Rounds: Sat: 10am, 1:30pm. Sun: 10am,
1:30pm, 5pm. Awards ~ Sun 8:30pm.

1-day Scholastic sections (Sat-only)

K-1 U700	K-3 Open
2-3 U700	4-6 Open
4-6 U700	7-12 Open

Format: A 5-Round, G/25; +5 Swiss.
NWSRS rated. Open sections are also
USCF rated.

Rounds: Sat: 9am, 10:45am, 12:15pm,
1:30pm, 2:45pm. Awards ~ 4:30pm.

All Sections: Trophies awarded to top-scoring individuals and teams. Medals for first-time players who do not earn a trophy. Higher of November USCF or current NWSRS rating will be used to determine section and pairings.

WA State Scholastic Qualifier!

Hotel Rates: Hilton Bellevue for \$159 (1 King/2 Queen) per night, address above. Complimentary guest room Wi-Fi and event day parking. Many restaurants are within 1-2 miles from hotel. Phone: 425.455.1300, request SPFNO room block. Group Code: WACFCI. [Booking link](#) for online hotel reservations. Cut-off date for discounted hotel reservations is **October 30, 2025**.

Entry Fees: (by Nov. 1 | Nov. 2 – 14 | Nov. 15 or after)

- 2-Day Championship sections EF: \$90 | \$105 | \$125
- 1-Day Scholastic sections (Sat-only) EF: \$55 | \$70 | \$90

Registration & Payment: [Registration and payment](#)

deadline Fri 11/21 @ 5pm at ChessReg.com (pay by credit/debit/PayPal).

Fun Side Events!

[Parents and Coaches Seminar:](#) Sat @ 10:15-11:15am.

[SPFNO Girls Workshop:](#) Sat @ 11:15-12:15pm.

[GM Susan Polgar Book Sale & Signing:](#) Sat @ 2-3pm & Sun @ 11am-12pm.

[All-Comers Blitz with FM Megan Lee:](#) Sat @ 3:15-4:30pm.

[SPFNO Puzzle Solving Competition:](#) Sat @ 5:30-6pm.
EF: \$30 by 11/15, \$45 after.

[SPFNO Blitz Championship:](#) Sat @ 6:30-9pm.
EF: \$30 by 11/15, \$45 after.

[GM Susan Polgar Simul:](#) Sun @ 1-4pm.
EF: \$65 by 11/15, \$85 after. Max 20 players.

Scholarships: Scholarships available for the main tournament and side events. Contact WCF for info. Seminar, Workshop, and All-Comers Blitz are free.

75th Oregon Open

Wilson Gibbins

After holding the Oregon Open at the Lloyd Center DoubleTree for the past few years, we moved the tournament to Airport Holiday Inn, tempted by a large ballroom and a \$79 hotel rate. The low hotel rate may have lured a few players to make the trip from Washington, whose names you will see among the prize winners. I am too lazy to do the math to see if our record turnout of 247 players was driven by players from Washington, the growth in scholastic players, or Zoey Tang's marketing emails.

Washington players dominated the 2000+ section, with Daniel He scoring 5.5/6 points to claim first and the \$2557.50 prize that goes with it. He conceded only one draw to his brother

Samuel in round four. Samuel tied for second with Luca Tessiore, another Washington player, both players finishing undefeated with four wins, two draws, and a \$1773.75 paycheck. Derek Heath scored 4.5/6 points to win \$660 for the U2150 prize. Eric Erard, Ujwal Garine, Kai Sebastian Lewis, Varun Iyengar, and Vijay Patankar split the second and third U2150 prize five ways for \$165, enough to cover the entry fee and the play-up fee. Matt Zavortink was the highest-scoring Oregon player and thus qualified for entry into the upcoming Oregon Closed Championship.

Oregon was able to represent in the U2000 section, with Lucas Maokhampio and David Murray tying for first. Both had four wins and two draws, including

a last-round draw that you can see in the games section below. They each received \$742.50 for their efforts. Saahil Gupta and Benjamin Himmelman split the third prize to earn \$247.50. Fedor Semenov took the \$600 U1850 prize. Chen Yuan and Dale Bradley split the U1850 second and third place prizes for \$412.50 each.

Andy Chen took home \$825 by winning the U1700 section. He started with five wins and finished with a round six draw to Daniel Vasey. Daniel tied for second with Tyler Cheng and Oliver He. Daniel also played a stunning queen sacrifice in round three, which you can see for yourself in the games section below. Daniel, Tyler, and Oliver split the combined second and third prizes and U1550 prize for \$605. Sriram Badri, Khai

Le, Liam Sliwinski, Forrest Holt, Leo Kuhl, Misha Von Dassow, and Elliott Kayser split second and third U1550 prizes for \$137.50.

Christopher Heden and Mitch Allen tied for first in the U1400 section for the usual \$742.50. Oscar Baldivieso, Skyler Qin, Adit Mukalel, David Gorlachev, and Axl Arun tied for third through seventh, but received different prize payouts based on their ratings. Oscar and Axl were rated above 1250 and split third prize, giving them \$247.50. Skyler, Adit, and David split the three U1250 prizes and each received \$495.

Since 2023, the winning score in the U1100 section has been 6-0. Khang Minh Nguyen continued that tradition to pick up \$825 to add to his \$85 check from the Saturday night blitz tournament. Charles Droege finished second to take home \$660. Jeffrey Levine finished third to win \$495. Blake Anable won the top U950 prize of



Assistant TD Wilson Gibbins and Chief TD Norm May.
Photo credit: Mike Morris.

\$660. Angel Garibay Ramos, Alexander Curteman, Samuel Kim, Drake Gabel, and Bhuvana Vuta split the U950 second and prizes for \$165 each.

Nick Raptis and Vidip Kumar Kona ended up at the top of the Blitz Championship crosstable, the same as in 2024. But there were some changes—last year Vidip won their individual meetup and was first alone, while this year Nick beat Vidip and they tied for first with each receiving \$191.50 for their record of 7.0/8.

Akim Pikh and Varun Iyengar each scored 6.0/8 and won \$85 for the U2050 and U1800 prizes. As referenced earlier, Khang Minh Nguyen scored 5.0/8 to take the \$85 U1550 prize. Liam Sliwinski and Andrew Russo scored 4.0/8 to take home the \$85 U1300 and U1050 prizes of \$85.

Jim Tarjan received his plaque for the Frank J. Marshall award between the first and second rounds of the tournament, joining Arthur Dake who won the award in 1995. The award goes to excellent ambassadors for chess. This adds to Jim's list of awards which include induction into the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame in 2022 and his numerous Olympiad medals. The award was officially given at the U.S. Open in Wisconsin this year, but as Jim was unable to attend, Carl Haessler bravely traveled to the Upper Midwest to retrieve it and return it where it belongs, here in Portland. Jim did not merely show up to get the plaque—he finished the tournament with two wins, two draws and two byes for an undefeated four points.

Thanks to FIDE arbiter Norm May who conducted another drama-free Oregon Open, just the way the players

like it. The assistant directors' duties were handled by Lilly Tang, Mike Morris, and your author. Lilly was the only assistant TD who showed up for every round (thanks Lilly). Mike drew the unenviable task of the longest day, with his duties starting Saturday morning and ending at 11:30 PM Saturday night at the completion of the Blitz Championship. I focused on learning the intricacies of half-point and zero-point byes from Mike and Norm. And finally, thanks to Greg Markowski for helping us launch the first round, the round that is always the most difficult for the tournament directors to manage and the round that I conveniently skipped.

It was a great tournament, and we hope to see you back next year at the same location.



The top boards in the final round of the over 2000 section: Jason Cigan (Black) against Daniel He (White) on Board 1, Samuel He (Black) against Matt Zavortink (White) on Board 2, Eric Christian Erard (Black) vs Luca Giorgio Tessiore (White) on Board 3, and Jim Tarjan (Black) vs Nick Raptis (White) on Board 4.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

Games

Ted Wang (2313) – Luca Giorgio Tessiore (2095) [C54]
75th Oregon Open (R3),
August 31, 2025
[Luca Tessiore]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4

The Italian, Ted Wang's typical choice for White.

3...Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d3

A slight deviation from the other main lines.

5...d6 6.0-0 0-0 7.h3 h6 8.Re1 a6 9.a4 Ba7 10.Nbd2

The opening stage ended, we now have to figure out our strategies and points of attack.

10...Be6 11.Bxe6 fxe6

The most favorable way to play these positions, exchanging on e6 gives a semi open file and lots of attacking play.

12.b4

An attack on the queenside will ensue.

12...Nh5

12...Ne7 This approach is slower and objectively better, passing the ball to White, also improving the misplaced knight.

13.Nf1 Nf4?!

While the engine finds this acceptable, I think it's a mistake as it allows White the chance to exchange his undeveloped bishop for Black's knight. 13...Qe8 Qe8 is favorable, and Black will try to carry out his plan on the kingside.

14.Bxf4 Rxf4 15.b5

White already has a clear target, and Black lacks one.



Itai Pearl.

Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

15...Ne7 16.d4?!

Perhaps too rushed, as it gives Black an edge, but still playable.

16.N1h2±

16...exd4 17.cxd4 d5?!

This move can be attributed to lack of thinking. After this move, Black has no

clear attack and created a weakness. This sparked my downfall.

17...Qd7

18.Qd3 a5?

Not realizing my mistake and continuing to ignore it.

18...dxe4 19.Rxe4 Rxe4 20.Qxe4 Qd5



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21.Qd3 White is playing for the win, although if played correctly, all should be equal.

19.Rac1 Bb6 20.Ng3 Qd6 21.Nh5 Rf7?

Trying to bait Ted into a tactic only to be flipped around, better was 21...Rxe4 22.Rxe4 dxe4 23.Qxe4 Nf5±.

22.Ne5 Rxf2

I thought I had him here, but little did I anticipate what was going to happen next.

23.Qg3!

A silent killer, hitting my undefendable pawn on g7. Here I thought that all hope was lost, but there is a way to squeeze out of here alive. 23.Kxf2 Losing on the spot 23...Qxe5 24.g4 (24.Ng3 Bxd4+ 25.Ke2 Ng6-+) 24...Qh2+ 25.Ke3 e5-+

23...Rf7! 24.Nxf7??!

24.Rcd1+- A quiet move that almost nearly seals Black's fate 24...Raf8 25.Kh1

24...Bxd4+ 25.Kh2 Qxg3+ 26.Nxg3 Kxf7



Position after 26...Kxf7

27.exd5?

Equalizing on the spot.

27.Rxc7 The only move to fight for an advantage. It seems obvious, but risky 27...Be5 28.Rxb7 d4 29.h4 (29.Rf1+ Ke8 30.Rb6 Rc8 31.Rxe6 Bb8 32.h4 Rc3 33.e5 Kd7 34.Rd6+ Bxd6 35.exd6 Nd5 36.Ne4 Rc8 Black has a lot of counterplay, but if played to perfection White should see this out to a win 37.Rf7+ Ke6 38.Rxg7 Nb6 39.Rc7 Rf8 40.Kg3 Nd7) 29...Rc8 30.Kh3 Rc3 31.Rf1+ Ke8 32.Rf3 d3 33.Nf1 Ng6 34.g3 Bf6 35.Ra7 Ne5 36.Rf2 Nd7 37.Rxa5 Bd4 38.Rd2 Nf6 39.Ra6 Ke7 40.Rc6 Rxc6 41.bxc6 Nxe4 42.Ra2 Kd6+- If perfectly played White should be winning, but likely in a human game there would be very high chances for a draw.

27...Nxd5



Luca Giorgio Tessiore.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

Ted opted for the easy thing, but Black actually has a fortress.

28.Rf1+ Ke8 29.Rce1 Kd7 30.Rf7+ Ke8 31.Rf3 Kd7 32.Rd3 Bf6 33.Ne4 Be5+ 34.g3 Bd6 35.Kg2 Rf8 36.h4 Rf7 37.Rc1 Rf8 38.Rcd1

No matter what, Black can always defend f7 and c7 squares, so White had to opt for a draw.

38...Ke7

Although this is my worst game in the tournament, I thought this game was a good example of defending a lost position.

1/2-1/2

Luca Giorgio Tessiore (2095) – Eric Christian Erard (2016) [A65]
75th Oregon Open (R6), September 1, 2025
[Luca Tessiore]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3

The Sämisch variation.

5...0-0 6.Nge2 c5 7.d5 e6

Black chooses a Benoni style way to approach this structure, which is often considered to be the most accurate way as the pawn on f3 acts as a wasted tempo.

8.Be3 exd5 9.cxd5

Neither typical nor correct as this move



Sam Loh-Menendez.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

separates the queen from the defense and does not pose any threat to White.

9...Qa5??



Position after 9...Qa5

10.a4!

The correct way to approach as 10.Ng3 falls shorter. 10.Ng3 h5! 11.Qd2 Nbd7 12.Be2 h4 13.Nf1 Rb8 14.a4 a6 15.Bf4 Qc7∞ White has wasted too much time, and Black's position is perfectly fine.

10...a6 11.Ng3 Re8??

The final mistake that seals White's advantage.

12.Be2!

Realizing how ...Nxd5 fails to work, effectively gaining a tempo.

12...Nbd7

12...Nxd5 ?
13.Qxd5 Bxc3+
14.bxc3 Qxc3+
15.Kf2+ Black missed how Kf2 now connects the rooks.

13.0-0 h5 14.Qd2

White is not afraid to give Black ...h4, as after Nh1 the knight has a good spot on f2, and Black is left with a weak pawn.

14...Ne5



Position after 14...Ne5

15.h3??

15.Nh1! More precise, rearranging the knight into a more prominent position.
15...Bd7 16.Nf2 Nh7 17.h3 f5 18.f4 Nf7 19.exf5 Bxf5 20.g4 hxg4 21.hxg4 Bd7 22.Bd3± Due to space and better pieces, White enjoys a very comfortable game.

15...Qb4??

15...h4! A seemingly dubious move would cut White's advantage in half.
16.Nh1 Qb4 17.Qc1 (17.f4?? The natural way is losing the game on the spot!
17...Nxe4! 18.Nxe4 Nc4!! 19.Bxc4 Rxe4 20.Bd3 Rxe3-+) 17...Bd7 White has no good way to dislodge the Queen 18.Bg5 b5 19.Bxh4 Rab8± White is pawn up, but Black has immense pressure on the b-file.
20.axb5 Bxb5 21.Nxb5 axb5 22.Be1 Qd4+ 23.Kh2 Nd3 24.Bxd3 Qxd3 25.Bg3. Black is trying to equalize, but White no longer enjoys a firm grip on the game 25...Re6.

16.a5

16.Rfc1 Slightly more accurate 16...h4 17.Nf1 Nh5 18.Qe1 Bf6 19.f4 Nc4 20.Bxh5 Nxe3 21.Nxe3 gxh5 22.Kh1± Black enjoys the bishop-pair, but the messed-up pawn structure gives White a comfortable advantage.

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16...b5 17.axb6 Qxb6?!

The final nail in the coffin. 17...h4! Black's last chance to salvage the game 18.Nh1 Rb8 19.Rfb1 a5 20.b7 Rxb7 21.Ra4 Qb6 22.f4 Ned7 23.Nf2±.

18.b4!?

Removing Black's last stronghold on d6. 18.f4! A more dynamic alternative, but I opted to not risk the advantage 18...Ned7 19.e5 dxe5 20.f5 e4 21.d6 Bb7 22.Bc4 Ne5 23.Ba2 g5.

It was here where I missed the critical move to seal a big advantage. 24.b4!+-

18...Ned7 19.bxc5 Nxc5 20.Na4 Qc7 21.Nxc5 dxc5 22.Bf4 Qd8



Position after 22...Qd8

23.Rac1?

Too slow in such a position. 23.Bc4 Nd7 24.Bg5 Bd4+ 25.Kh1 Bf6 26.Bxf6 Qxf6 27.f4+-

23...Nd7

23...h4 Better was h4 capitalizing on Rac1 24.Nh1 Nh5 25.Be3 a5 26.Rxc5 a4± Black still struggles, but the game is more dynamic with precise moves required for White to win.

24.Be3 Rb8

24...a5 still gives Black a fighting chance.



Ethan Morehouse.

Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

25.Rb1 Rxb1 26.Rxb1 Qf6 27.f4 h4
28.e5 Nxe5 29.fxe5 Qxe5

My opponent tries to complicate things but I made sure to cut him off.

30.Nf1 Bf8 31.Bf3 Bd7 32.Bf2 c4 33.Re1 Qf6 34.Rxe8 Bxe8 35.Qd4+-

Forcing a queens' trade into a winning endgame.

35...Qxd4 36.Bxd4 Bb4 37.Ne3 Bb5

38.Be2 c3 39.Bxb5 axb5 40.Nc2 Ba5 41.Bc5 f5 42.Kf2 Kf7 43.Ke3 g5 44.Kd3

Calculating from 35.Qd4, I saw that I can put my opponent in a zugzwang.

44...g4 45.Kd4 Kf6 46.Bd6 g3 47.Bf4 Bb6+ 48.Kxc3 Bc5 49.Nd4 b4+ 50.Kc4 b3 51.Nxb3 Bf8 52.Nd4 Ba3 53.Nf3

1-0

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Eric Erard.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

Jim Tarjan (2326) –
Austin Tang (2147) [A20]
 75th Oregon Open (R4),
 August 31, 2025
 [Jim Tarjan]

1.c4 e5 2.g3 c6 3.d4 e4 4.Nc3 d5 5.Bg2
Bb4 6.Bd2 Bxc3 7.Bxc3 Ne7

Black is looking to reinforce his center with ...f5. A logical plan, but it seems it is better to develop normally with 7...Nf6 8.cxd5 cxd5 9.Nh3 0-0 10.0-0 Re8 11.f3 Nc6 Something like this, with Black standing at least equal. (or 11...Bxh3!?)

8.cxd5 cxd5 9.Nh3 0-0 10.0-0 h6

And this one does not make sense to me.

Crucial that he develop something.

11.f3 f5

Black is too far behind in development for this to work well. Yes, the Bg2 is shut in, but it has ways to break out.

12.Qb3

12.fxe4

12...Kh7?

Although Black would still be in the game after 12...Qb6.

13.fxe4 dxe4

13...fxe4 14.Rxf8 Qxf8 15.Rf1+- the variations are tricky, but the gist is clear:

Black doesn't get his queenside out in time.

14.Nf4+- g5



Position after 14...g5

15.Ne6

Good enough. 15.Nh5! is more convincing, with a white g4 breaking out the Bg2, a crucial element.

15...Bxe6 16.Qxe6 Nbc6

16...Qd7!? though Black is still in trouble.

17.Bxe4

This, I could calculate. Too much for me were the computer lines 17.Kh1 Qc8; or even 17.Rf2.

17...Nxd4! 18.Qc4! Rc8! 19.Qxd4 Qxd4+ 20.Bxd4 fxe4 21.Rxf8 Rxf8 22.Bxa7

White is a pawn ahead. Now, a matter of actually winning with the extra pawn.

22...Rd8 23.Rc1 Nc6 24.Be3 Kg6 25.g4 Kf6 26.Kf2 Ke6 27.h3 Ke5 28.Rc5+ Rd5 29.Rxd5+ Kxd5

Which side profits from the trade of rooks? In practice I was content to trade, thinking that with Black's kingside pawns on dark squares, the win should be there. In any case, easier for me to play.

30.Bd2 Nd4 31.Bc3 Ne6 32.Bf6 Nf4

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But in fact some problems still to work out. The N hops about.

33.h4?



Position after 33.h4

A serious error, as I realized after I made the move.

33...Ke6?

Missing his chance. 33...gxh4 34.Bxh4 h5! trading off the kingside pawns and making the win very difficult. Note that White's a-pawn is the wrong color. A perfect Black N. 35.Bg3? Nh3+ is what I missed.

34.hxg5 hxg5 35.Bd8

Now I have what I want: weakness on g5, possibility of Ke3, and clean extra pawn on the queenside.

35...Kd5

35...Kd7 36.Ba5 comes to the same.

36.Ke3 Ne6

36...Ng2+ 37.Kd2

37.Bf6

Zugzwang.

37...b6 38.b3 b5 39.a4 b4 40.a5 Nc5 41.Be7 Nxb3 42.Bxb4 Nd4 43.a6 Nc6 44.Be7

1-0

**Fedor Semenov (1795) –
Lucas Maokhampio (1786) [A00]**
75th Oregon Open (R3),
August 31, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Lucas gets a key win over third-place finisher Fedor Semenov, who was otherwise undefeated.

1.b4 Nf6

The attempt to punish White's provocative opening choice is 1...e5 2.Bb2 Bxb4 3.Bxe5 Nf6 with Black trading a center

pawn for smooth development. But since White chose this opening, it is likely he is more familiar with the resulting positions, especially since Black rarely faces this opening. Lucas takes a pragmatic approach, setting up a King's Indian formation.

2.Nf3 g6 3.Bb2 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Bc4 0-0 6.d3 e5 7.0-0 a5 8.c3 axb4 9.cxb4 Nc6 10.Qb3 Qe7 11.Nbd2 Nh5 12.Bd5 Nf4 13.b5



Position after 13.b5

13...Na5!

This move decentralizes the knight but gains time on White's queen and stops any White plans of playing a4–a5–a6. The knight will not move for another 23 moves in a position where Black has an

overwhelming endgame advantage. I'd be tempted to keep my knight centralized with 13...Nd8 14.Bc4 Nde6, but Black's forcing choice is better than my lazy maneuvering approach.

14.Qc2 Nxd5 15.exd5 f5

Black gains space on the kingside for his attack.

16.Rac1 Rf7

A standard King's Indian position for the rook—it protects the pawn on c7 while contributing to the kingside attack.

17.Rfe1 Qd8!

Avoiding tricks based on the e-pawn being pinned by the rook on e1. White would like to use the pin on Black's e-pawn to activate the knight on f3. 17...h6?! 18.b6 cxb6 19.Nd4∞

18.Nf1 b6

Black has a knight on the rim, a backward pawn on c7, an undeveloped bishop on c8, yet remarkably stands better! Positional evaluation is hard, King's Indian positional evaluation is doubly so.

19.h4 h6 20.g3 Bb7 21.Ne3 f4 22.gxf4

22.Ng2 fxg3 and White's position is collapsing.



Joey Stenbeck.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

22...exf4!?



Position after 22...exf4

Begins the tactical fireworks. The prosaic 22...Rxf4 23.Nh2 Rxh4 also gets the job done.

23.Bxg7 fxe3! 24.Bxh6

24.Ba1† is White's best chance with opportunities to set up a Q+B battery on the long diagonal, but Black stands significantly better in this chaotic position.

24...Rxf3-+

Black is winning.

25.Rxe3 Rxe3 26.Bxe3 Qxh4 27.Qxc7 Bxd5 28.Kf1 Bf3 29.Ke1 Re8 30.Qxb6 Qb4+ 31.Kf1 Qg4 32.Qd4 Be2+ 33.Ke1 Qxd4 34.Bxd4 Bxd3+ 35.Kd2 Bxb5 36.Rc7 Nc6 37.Be3 Re7 38.Rc8+ Kf7 39.Ra8 Ne5 40.Kc3 Bc6 41.Ra6 Rc7 42.Ra7 Rxa7 43.Bxa7 Ke6 44.Kb4 Be4

45.a4?

Oversight, but Stockfish says Black is winning without this error.

45...Nc6+

0-1



Khang Nguyen.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

Lucas Maokhampio (1786) –

David Murray (1905) [C01]

75th Oregon Open (R6),

September 1, 2025

[David Murray]

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.Bd3 Bd6 5.h3 Nc6 6.c3 Nge7 7.Nf3 Bf5 8.0-0 Qd7 9.Bxf5 Qxf5 10.Re1 0-0-0 11.b4 g5

The normal plan would have been ...f6, followed by ...g5 and ...h5 etc., but it felt like I needed to act faster, and I knew about the idea to sacrifice with ...g5 to open the file.

12.a4 f6 13.a5 Rdg8 14.b5 Nd8 15.Ba3 Bxa3 16.Nxa3 Ng6 17.b6 a6 18.bxc7 Kxc7 19.c4 g4

With a draw offer: we were ahead of the field by a point, and I would have loved to share the first and second prize. My young opponent did not have the same motivation.

20.hxg4 Qxg4 21.Nh2 Qxd1

I saw the knight maneuver coming and thought I would have decent chances in the endgame where both sides have weak pawns to target. I don't recall much of what I evaluated for non-queen trades, such as 21...Qg5. Eventually I felt positive about the endgame.

22.Rxd1 Nf4 23.g3 dxc4!

23...Nc6 and White can move their king, when I don't get the d5 "outpost."

24.Nxc4 Nd5 25.Nf1

A resource that I did overlook. Things are going to get choppy soon.

25...Nc6 26.Kg2 Re8



Position after 26...Re8

With a second draw offer.

27.Nfe3 Ncb4 28.Rc1!

Wouldn't have been possible without the resource of ...Nd3 Nxd5 with check.

28...Nxe3+ 29.Nxe3+ Kb8

29...Kd6 30.Rb1 Nc6 31.d5±

**30.Red1 Rc8 31.d5 Rhd8 32.Kf3 b6
33.Rxc8+ Kxc8 34.axb6 Kb7 35.Ke4?**

35.Rb1 a5, and I missed that 36.Nc4 Rxd5 37.Nxa5+ Kxb6 38.Rxb4+ Kxa5 is a winning endgame for White.

35...Kxb6 36.Kf5 Kc5 37.Ke6?!

Finally a slip-up! It felt like we both realized that the momentum had stopped when I played my next move and we made eye contact.

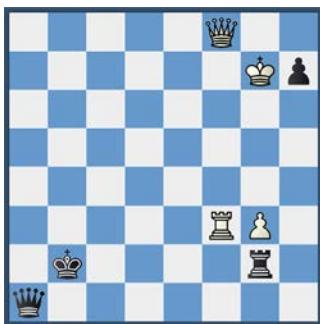
**37...Rd6+ 38.Ke7 Nxd5+ 39.Nxd5 Rxd5
40.Rc1+**

An important moment. From here, I wasn't convinced I was winning at any point. I've had too many heartbreaks (mostly in online rapid games) where I promote a pawn and win a piece on one side of the board, and my opponent is able to win on the other side. This is why I made sure to target White's pawns later on, which may have saved me the important half point.

**40...Kb4 41.Kxf6 Rd2 42.Rf1 a5 43.f4
a4 44.f5 Rg2 45.Rf4+ Kb3 46.Rf3+**

46.g4 a3 47.Kg7 a2 48.f6

**46...Kb2 47.Kg7 a3 48.f6 a2 49.f7 a1Q
50.f8Q**



Position after 50.f8Q

This position caught the attention of GM Jim Tarjan for a few moments. Spoiler from the engine analysis: there is one move that doesn't lose for Black here, and I did not make it. After that, there is another only move. After 50...Qa7+, I was fortunate that Lucas played 51.Qf7 quickly and did not capture on h7.

50...Qa7+ 51.Qf7

After the game, a spectator wanted to show us how Black was winning from this position, and I kind of rudely told him that we didn't need to see that. I felt bad and let him set the position up, and he suggested that Black play ...h8=Q+!



Advaith Vijayakumar.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

here. Lucas pointed out which way the pawns were going, and I wondered what the kibitzer had in mind after Kxh8.

51...Qxf7+ 52.Kxf7 Ke2 53.Kg7

53.Ra3 Kd1 (53...Kd2?? 54.Ra2++-)
54.Ra1+ Ke2 55.Ra2+ Kf3=

53...Kd2

A frustrating long think for Lucas, who seemed to have a hard time accepting the we were going to draw after all. To be fair to me, I thought the position was a draw with me forcibly capturing g3 and missed the game line where we trade rooks and the pawn runs but Black survives because White has not yet captured h7.

54.Rb3

54.Kxh7 Ke2 55.Ra3 Kf2 56.Ra2+ Kxg3=

**54...Ke2 55.Rb2+ Kf3 56.Rxg2 Kxg2
57.g4 Kg3 58.g5 Kg4 59.Kh6 Kf5
60.Kh5 Kf4**

This time, Lucas offered the draw, and I took it without asking him to make a move. After the game, Lucas told me that he was winning at some point, with something about pushing g4. That does make sense to have the extra advance in, but I haven't seen when it can be played

without losing the pawn promotion race.
1/2-1/2

**Joachim Schuder (1585) –
Daniel Vasey (1559) [A13]**
75th Oregon Open (R3),
August 31, 2025
[Daniel Vasey]

**1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.e3 Be7
5.b3 0-0 6.Bb2 Nbd7 7.Bd3 e6 8.Bc2
e5 9.d3 Re8 10.0-0 Bd6 11.cxd5 cxd5
12.Nb5 Bf8!?**

...Bb8 was a better response, but I was afraid of Ba3 followed by Nd6. Later my opponent told me he couldn't play Ba3 because of Qa5.

13.a4 a6 14.Nc3 Nb8!

Rerouting the knight to c6 where it is much better placed while also preparing to develop the c8-bishop.

15.Ne2 Ne6 16.Rc1 Bg4 17.h3?

h3 is unnecessary and allows the kingside to be too exposed in the long term. Ng3 would have been better, preparing h3 instead.

17...Bxf3 18.gxf3 Nh5?!

This move is speculative, it's unclear if

this attack will work, but black remains better. A better option was ...d4, breaking open the center and continue to build on the weaknesses instead of going for an attack right away.

19.Kh2 Bd6 20.Rg1 Qh4

I applaud my opponent for not being afraid of ...e4+, as he will always be able to respond with f4.

21.Rg2 Re6 22.Ng3 Rg6 23.Qe2 Rf8??

From this point on I had tunnel vision on the kingside. Here I missed 23...Nd4! which is a crushing tactical shot. If 24.exd4 then 24...Nf4 leads to a decisive advantage.

24.Rcg1 f5 25.Bd1??



Position after 25.Bd1

After the game my opponent told me the idea of this move was to prepare f4 to try to force liquidation, unfortunately it's too late. Instead, he should have traded on h5, which would have resulted in only a slightly worse position for him.

25...Qxh3+

The purpose of the last two moves ...Rf8 and ...f5 was to prepare this queen sacrifice. Now that the g4-square is covered, this is a forced mate in five.

26.Kxh3 Nf4+ 27.exf4 Rh6+ 28.Nh5 Rxh5+

White resigns. After 29.Kg3 exf4 is checkmate.

0-1

Tyler Cheng (1514) – Kruti Thanikonda (1287) [C50]
75th Oregon Open (R1),
August 30, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Bc4

The Scotch Gambit, a sound opening and dangerous for the unprepared.

4...h6?!

Stopping 5.Nf3–g5, but too slow for an



*Jai Dayal.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.*

open position. The moves 4...Nf6 and 4...Bc5 are popular and good, but neither is a refutation. Stockfish's first choice 4...Bb4+ is only fifth on the human popularity list and scores 67% for White. Black may be equal, but there are lots of ways to go wrong after 5.c3 dxc3 6.0-0 in a wide-open position with Black falling behind in development.

5.0-0± Bc5?!

It is tempting to try to hang on to the d-pawn, but there is no time for that. 5...Nf6 6.e5 d5 is the usual recipe in these positions, but Black is a little worse here after 7.Bb5 Nd7 8.Re1.

6.c3! Qf6

6...dxc3 7.Bxf7+ Kxf7 8.Qd5+±

7.e5 Qd8 8.cxd4 Bb6

8...d5! 9.exd6 Bxd6 10.Qb3 is better for White but prevents White from getting an overwhelming advantage.

9.d5 Nb8 10.Nc3 Ne7 11.d6 Ng6 12.Qc2 Nh4

12...0-0? 13.Qxg6

13.Qe4 Nxf3+ 14.gxf3 0-0 15.Bxh6! gxh6 16.Qg6+ Kh8 17.Qxh6+ Kg8 18.Kh1



Position after 18.Kh1

There are other moves that lead to checkmate, but this is the fastest and most cheeky.

18...Re8 19.Rg1+ Qg5 20.Rxg5#

1-0

Oliver He (1470) – Pragit Arunkumar (1213) [D55]
75th Oregon Open (R5),
September 1 2025
[Oliver He]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.Bg5 b6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.e3 0-0 8.Bd3 Bb7 9.0-0 Nbd7 10.Qc2 g6

This seemed like a weird move to me when he played it, but it's actually good.

11.Bh6 Re8 12.h3 c5 13.Rad1 c4 14.Be2 a6 15.Nb1? Nh5 16.Nh2?

Black is now better because White has two passive knights on b1 and h2.

16...Ng7 17.Bxg7?

Giving away the bishop pair turned out to be really bad later because he created passed pawns on the queenside and got the open c-file.

17...Kxg7 18.Nd2 Bd6 19.Nhf3 Nf6 20.Rfe1 b5 21.a3 Ne4 22.Rf1?

Rf1 is passive. He has more space, so I need to play actively.

22...Rc8 23.Rc1

23.Nxe4 would have been better here because after 23...fxe4 24.Nd2 Black can't play c3.

23...c3 24.bxc3 Nxc3 25.Qd3 Nxe2+ 26.Qxe2 Bxa3 27.Ra1 Bb4 28.Rfb1 Bxd2

If he kept the bishop pair, I think he could have won.

29.Qxd2 Qf6 30.Ne5 Qf5 31.Nd3 Re7 32.Nc5 Rec7 33.Rc1 h5 34.Rc2 h4 35.Rac1 g5??



Position after 35...g5

36.Qe2??

36.Ne6+ I should have played this, but I was super-focused on calculating an e4, Nxb7 tactic, so I didn't look at it.

36...Kg6 37.e4 dxe4 38.Nxb7 Qf4??

38...Rxc2 39.Rxc2 Rxc2 40.Qxc2 Qd5 41.Nc5 Qxd4 Black has compensation here because of his queenside passers.

39.Rxc7 Rxc7 40.Rxc7 Qxc7 41.Nc5

41.Qxe4+ would have been better.

41...Qb6 42.Qxe4+ Kg7 43.Qb1 a5 44.Qa1 a4 45.Qb2 Qa5 46.d5+ Kg8 47.Nd3?? a3 48.Qa2 b4



Andrew Russo wins a check for the U1050 prize in the Oregon Open Blitz.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

48...Qc3 Black has compensation here because White's queen is passive now.

49.Nc1 b3 50.Nxb3 Qe1+ 51.Kh2 Qe5+ 52.g3

After this the game is basically over.

52...hxg3+ 53.fxg3 Qxd5 54.Qxa3 Qf3 55.Qa2 Qd5 56.Qc2 Qe6 57.Nd4 Qe5 58.Nf5 Qe6 59.Qc8+ Qxc8 60.Ne7+ Kg7 61.Nxc8 Kg6 62.Nd6 f6 63.g4 Kg7 64.Kg3 Kg6 65.Kf3 Kg7 66.Ke4 Kg6 67.Nc4 Kf7 68.Kf5 Kg7 69.Nd6 Kh6 70.Kxf6 Kh7 71.Kxg5 Kg7 72.h4 Kh7 73.h5 Kg7 74.h6+ Kh7 75.Nf7 Kg8 76.Kg6 Kf8 77.h7 Ke7 78.h8Q Ke6 79.Qe5+ Kd7 80.Qd6+ Kc8 81.Qe7 Kb8 82.Nd6

1-0

**Dylan Randall (1372) –
Mitch Allen (Unr.) [B22]**
75th Oregon Open (R2),
August 30, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Both sides had their chances, but in this tactical battle, Black found his way through the complications to gain the full point.

1.e4 c5 2.Bc4

The Bowlder attack. It looks fishy to me, but once you turn on the engine you discover that White is still equal. Perhaps that seems like a small accomplishment for the white pieces, but as someone who has experienced some of the traps along the way, I recognize it as modern chess. White tests Black on his opening knowledge of an obscure line, and if Black passes the test, White can still draw.

2...Nc6 3.c3 e5 4.Nf3 Be7 5.d4 cxd4 6.cxd4 exd4 7.Nxd4 d6 8.Bb5 Qc7 9.Qc2 Bd7 10.Bxe6 bxc6 11.Nc3 a6 12.0-0 Nf6 13.Bg5 0-0 14.Nf5 Bxf5 15.exf5 Rac8 16.Rac1 Ng4 17.Bxe7 Qxe7 18.Nd5 Qh4 18...Qe5!+ Black threatens checkmate on h2 and the knight on d5.

19.h3 Ne5

The surprising 19...Qd8 holds White's advantage to a minimum; 19...cxd5? 20.Qxc8±.

20.f6!±

Threatens Ne7+ by cutting off the black queen's defense of e7.

20...Ng6!

Best defense, though Black still faces problems in this position.

21.fxg7 Rfe8 22.Nb6 Rc7



Derek Heath.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

White has played good moves to maintain his advantage, and Black has defended well to keep things from deteriorating. Now White starts to miss some chances.

23.Qc3?=

23.Nd5 Rcc8 24.Ne3 consolidates an advantage for White.

23...Qg5 24.Rfd1?



Position after 24.Rfd1

Allows Black to take the advantage.

24.Qg3=

24...Nf4!+- 25.Qf3

25.Qg3 Ne2+

25...Ne2+ 26.Kh1 Nxc1 27.Nc4 d5 28.Nd6 Re6 29.Nf5 Rf6 30.g4 Nxa2 31.Qb3 Rxf5

The second-best move, leading to equality if White can find the best response on his next move. 31...Rc8! 32.Ne7+ Kxg7 33.Nxc8 Rxf2# and White can't take Black's knight on a2. 34.Qxa2? Qf4

32.gxf5?

32.Qb8+ Kxg7 33.gxf5= Qf4 34.Rg1+ Kf6□ (34...Kh6 35.Rg4+-) 35.Qd8+ Kxf5

32...Qxf5+ 33.Qxa2 Qf3+ 34.Kh2 Qxf2+ 35.Kh1 Qf3+ 36.Kh2 Qxd1 37.Qa3 Rc8 38.Qxa6 Re8 39.Qa3 Re2+ 40.Kg3 Qg1+ 41.Kf3 Qg2+ 42.Kf4 Re4+ 43.Kf5 Qg6#

0-1

Siana Razmov (833) – Khang Nguyen (1507) [B07]
75th Oregon Open (R1),
August 30, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

1.e4 g6!

Obviously, this is my subjective annotation. But in the age of engines that

love space advantages, it is nice to see someone playing in the spirit of Duncan Suttles, an iconoclastic player from the 1960s and 1970s with ties to the Pacific Northwest.

2.d4 d6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.c3 Nf6 5.Bd3 Nbd7 6.Bf4 0-0 7.0-0 c5 8.d5 Qb6

Black's queen generates a little queenside activity. But it is clearly cut off from the kingside, right? Check back in ten moves.

9.Qc2 e6 10.Bc4 exd5 11.exd5 Nh5 12.Be3 Ne5 13.Nxe5 Bxe5 14.Nd2 Bf5 15.Qb3 Qc7 16.Bh6 Rfe8 17.f3?

A step in the wrong direction, weakening squares around White's king.

17...Qe7



Position after 17...Qe7

And Black's queen continues her journey towards White's king.

18.Rae1?

Appears to pin the bishop on e5 to Black's queen, but appearances are deceiving.

18...Bxh2+! 19.Kxh2 Qh4+ 20.Kg1 Rxe1 21.Bb5 Rxf1+22.Nxf1 Ng3 23.Qa4 Qh1+ 24.Kf2 Nxf1 25.Bxf1 Qxh6 26.Qb5 Qh4+ 27.Kg1 Qe1 28.Qxb7 Re8 29.Qb5 Qe3+ 30.Kh1 Re5

0-1

Alexander Curteman (631) – Charles Droege (Unr.) [C10]
75th Oregon Open (R6),
September 1, 2025
[Wilson Gibbins]

Black plays steady chess, slowly improves his position, and brings home the full point.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nc3?

The theoretical way to play this position is 5.Nxf6+ Qxf6 (5...gxf6?!) 6.Nf3 hoping for Black to fall into the trap 6...b6 (but

after 6...h6 White is still better) 7.Bd3 Bb7 (7...h6±) 8.Bg5 Bxf3 9.Qd2.

5...c5 6.Bb5+ Bd7 7.Bxd7+ Qxd7 8.Nf3 Ne6 9.dxc5 Qxd1+ 10.Nxd1 Bxc5

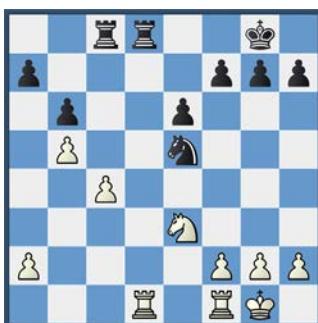
Black has an easy position, though nowhere close to winning. Even with queens and a pair of minor pieces traded, there is a lot of chess yet to play. The slightly unbalanced pawn structure means that both sides have something to play for—White has a queenside majority, and Black has more influence in the center.

11.0-0 Nd4 12.Nxd4 Bxd4 13.c3 Bc5 14.Bg5 Ne4 15.Be3 0-0 16.Bxc5 Nxc5 17.b4 Nd3 18.Ne3 Rac8 19.c4 b6 20.b5?!

White's queenside majority advantage is no longer relevant—it will be difficult to create a passed pawn from this formation.

20.a3

20...Ne5 21.Rac1 Rfd8 22.Rcd1?!



Position after 22.Rcd1

22...h6?!

Making an escape square for the king, but the move 22...Rxd1 is better, if Black avoids 23.Rxd1 Nxc4?? (23...f5 24.Rd4 g5! threatens to drive the defending knight on e3 away with f5–f4, allowing Black to win a pawn. White can keep the pawn with 25.f4 gxf4 26.Rxf4, but Black stands well in this position, as his pawn majority (f5, e6) is mobile while White's is blockaded.) 24.Nxc4 Rxc4 25.Rd8#

23.f4?

23.Rxd8+ Rxd8 gives the d-file to Black, but Stockfish says White can still hold on with 24.f4.

23...Rxd1! 24.Rxd1 Nxc4 25.Nxc4

25.Rc1 Nd6

25...Rxc4 26.Rd7?

But 26.Rd8+ Kh7 27.Rd7 Ra4 28.Rxf7 Kg6 29.Rb7 Rxa2

26...Rc1+!

26...Ra4 also wins easily.

27.Kf2 Rc2+! 28.Ke3 Rxa2

While rook endings are always hard, Black has an overwhelming advantage. In addition to his two extra pawns, the pawn on b5 is vulnerable.

29.Rd8+ Kh7 30.g4 g6 31.h4 Rb2 32.Rd7 Kg7 33.Rxa7 Rxb5 34.Rb7 Rb4 35.Kf3 b5 36.Ke3?! Rb3+ 37.Kd4 Rb4+ 38.Ke5 Rb1 39.Kd6 Rf1 40.Rxb5 Rxf4 41.Rb7 Rg4 42.Re7 Kf6 43.Kd7 Rxh4 44.Ke8 Ke5 45.Rxf7 Ra4 46.Rg7 Ra8+ 47.Ke7 Ra7+ 48.Kf8 Rg7 49.Kxg7 g5 50.Kg6 g4 51.Kh5 g3 52.Kh4?! g2 53.Kh3 g1Q 54.Kh4 Kf4 55.Kh5 Qg5#

0–1

Pranav Vijayaraghavan (1399) –

Andy Chen (1532) [B13]

75th Oregon Open (R3),

August 31, 2025

[Wilson Gibbins]

Andy Chen the U1700 champion, accepts an isolated pawn in the opening and lives to tell the tale.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Bd3 Nf6 5.h3 Nc6 6.c3 e5 7.dxe5 Nxe5 8.Bc2

More popular are the positional moves

8.Nf3 Nxd3+ 9.Qxd3 that Jason Cigan played against me in the 2024 Oregon Closed Championship; and the more tactical try 8.Qe2!? where Black has the choice between the solid 8...Qe7 (and the wild 8...Ne4).

8...Bd6 9.Nf3 Qe7 10.0-0 0-0 11.Be3 Nc4 12.Re1 Nxe3

12...Nxb2 is also playable, but takes a lot of courage to play. Andy's move is more sensible.

13.Rxe3 Qc7 14.Nbd2 Bc5 15.Re2 Nh5 16.Nb3 Bb6 17.Qd3 g6 18.Rd2 Bf5 19.Qf1 Bxc2

19...Be4 is an interesting try.

20.Rxc2 Ng3 21.Qd3 Rad8 22.Nbd4 Ne4

Black piece activity balances the slight weakness the isolated pawn.

23.Re2 Rfe8 24.Rae1 Qd7 25.Qb1 f5 26.Qc1 Bc7 27.a3 a6 28.Qe3 Re7 29.Ng5 Rde8 30.Nxe4 Rxe4 31.Qd3 Qd6 32.Nf3 R8e7 33.g3 Qe6 34.Nd4 Qd7 35.Rxe4?!

The game has been equal for the last 15 moves, but this improves Black's pawn structure resulting in a slight space advantage.

35...fxe4 36.Qf1 b5 37.Qg2 Bb6 38.Kh2



2022 Oregon Open Champion Matt Zavortink.
Photo credit: Wilson Gibbins.

Qc8

Good, but not best. 38...Bxd4 gives up the strong bishop for Black's strong knight and ends all worries about the isolated d-pawn. 39.cxd4 Qc6 leaves Black in control of the position.

39.Nc2

Black will not be given a second chance to take the knight. But it is better to protect the knight with 39.Rd1 if 39...Bxd4 40.Rxd4=.

39...Rf7!†

Black will tie White down to the backward f-pawn.

40.Ne3 Rf3 41.Re2 Qe6 42.Qf1

42.Nc4 is a better try 42...Rxf2 43.Rxf2 Bxf2 44.Qxf2 bxc4 45.Qe3 is still worse for White, but queen endings can be tricky.

42...Qf7

And Stockfish inexplicably goes from clear advantage for Black to roughly equal. Stockfish suggests that Black should soften up White's king position with 42...h5 43.h4 Qf7 44.Kg2 g5 45.hxg5 h4 46.gxh4 and now 46...Rf4 is the only

move to retain an advantage. Not easy to see over the board.

43.Kg2

White gets his king to work for a living, freeing up one of his major pieces to generate counterplay.

43...Bxe3 44.Rxe3 Kf8 45.Qe2 Rf5 46.f3 exf3+ 47.Rxf3 Rxf3 48.Qxf3 Qxf3+ 49.Kxf3

An equal pawn endgame. But pawn endings are surprisingly difficult to play well, as I have learned trying to work thelichess pawn ending puzzles.

49...Kf7 50.Ke3 Ke6 51.g4 g5 52.Kd4 Kd6 53.b3 a5 54.a4 bxa4 55.bxa4 Kc6 56.c4!

The only move to maintain equality. 56.Ke3 Kc5 57.Kd3 h6! Black uses his reserve pawn move to win. 58.Kd2 Kc4 59.Kc2 d4!-+

56...dxc4 57.Kxc4 h6!

In the game, Black uses his reserve pawn move to hold the draw. All others lose.

58.Kd4

Black has the opposition, White has the more advanced king. Still equal.

58...Kd6



Position after 58...Kd6

59.Ke4?

59.Kc4! Kc6 (59...Ke5? 60.Kb5 and White is promoting his a-pawn long before Black promotes one of his kingside pawns.) 60.Kd4 Kd6=

59...Kc5!-+

Now the shoe is on the other foot. Black promotes his a-pawn long before White promotes one of his kingside pawns.

60.Kf5 Kb4 61.Kg6 Kxa4 62.Kxh6 Kb3 63.Kxg5 a4 64.h4 a3 65.h5 a2 66.h6 a1Q

0-1

Get Ready!

AMERICAN OPEN
CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP est 1965

November 24 - 30, 2025

SCAN ME

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

Main Event: Championship Section
9 Rounds; 6-Days; FIDE and US Chess rated; NORM possible

Chess Camp

Welcome Reception

Main Tournament: Expert, Section A, B, C, & Under 1400
4-day Schedule start Thursday | 3-day starts Friday

Grandmaster Lectures

Scholastic: Novice (non-rated) Tournament

Grandmaster Simul Exhibition 6:30 pm

Scholastic: Varsity Tournament

Scholastic: Junior Varsity K-5th Blitz Tournament at 9:30 pm

Scholastic: Junior Varsity K-12th ACTION Tournament at 12:00 pm

Hyatt Regency Orange County 11999 Harbor Blvd, Garden Grove, California 92840

Register at www.americanopen.org

2025 Eastern Idaho Open

(Cody Gorman wins)

Jay Simonson

Twenty-four hours before the start of the 34th Eastern Idaho Open, there were only ten players registered. As the tournament director, I spent all day Friday, September 19, 2025 answering the phone and getting late registrants into the tournament. On Saturday morning, September 20, 2025, as soon as the doors to the Idaho State University Pond Student Union Building opened, there were several other players who wanted to participate, including Cody Gorman, who became the 2025 Eastern Idaho Champion.

Even though I was rushed and a little overwhelmed, I managed to get everyone entered and started the first round on time, at 9:00 AM. There were 13 players in the Open section and eight in the Under 1400 section. During the first round, two other players showed up and entered the tournament. Since we still had an uneven number, Jerek Flora, who had a forced bye in the first round, persuaded a friend and spectator to join the chess battle. With these additions and some switching from the Open section to the Under 1400 section, the tournament was finally set with fourteen players in the Open section and ten in the Under 1400 section.

This was a four-round Swiss System tournament. Each round featured some intense chess battles in both sections.



Under 1400 section.
Photo credit: Jay Simonson.



Open section.
Photo credit: Jay Simonson.

When the final round ended, Cody Gorman, from Nampa, was the clear winner with a perfect score of 4.0/4. He received the Champion's plaque and \$100. Michael Munafo won clear second place with a score of 3.0/4 and received \$75 cash.

The Under 1400 section ended in a four-way tie. Michael MacDonnell, of Idaho Falls, Matthew Moretti, from Pocatello, Sterling Fellows, and Benjamin Rollins each received \$31.25. All the winners except one who had left before the presentation of the prizes received their prize on site.

When I uploaded the tournament to US Chess, I discovered that despite

my best efforts to verify everyone was a current member of US Chess, one player had not completed his US Chess registration process and was not a current member. This delayed the tournament being rated. I was eventually able to contact the errant individual who paid his US Chess membership fee, enabling the tournament to be rated.

This writer and tournament director considers the 2025 Eastern Idaho Open Chess Championship a success, even considering all the challenges it presented. The tournament concluded with an admonition and pleading for all players to register for all future chess tournaments before the registration deadline.



Cody Gorman, first place.
Photo credit: Jay Simonson.



Michael Munafo, second place.
Photo credit: Jay Simonson.



(L-R): Michael MacDonnell, Benjamin Rollins, Sterling Fellows, all tied for first-fourth in the U1400 section. Not pictured is Matthew Moretti.
Photo credit: Jay Simonson.



Washington Class Championships

Fri-Sun, Nov 28-30, 2025

Embassy Suites Seattle North/Lynnwood

20610 44th Avenue West, Lynnwood, WA 98036-7701

\$16,500 Prize Fund (based on 200 paid entries)

Format: A 6-round Swiss event in 8 class sections. Sections with <12 players may be combined.

Entry Fees (EF) (by Oct 31 / Nov 14 / on-site) & **Prizes** per section:

- **Carlsen (2200+)** EF: \$170 / \$180 / \$190
Prizes: \$800, \$600, \$400; U2300 \$250, \$200
- **Anand (2000-2199)** EF: \$160 / \$170 / \$180
Prizes: \$600, \$400, \$300; U2100 \$200, \$150
- **Kramnik (1800-1999)** EF: \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$500, \$350, \$250; U1900 \$170, \$130
- **Kasparov (1600-1799)** EF: \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$400, \$300, \$200; U1700 \$170, \$130
- **Karpov (1400-1599)** EF: \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$400, \$300, \$200; U1500 \$170, \$130
- **Fischer (1200-1399)** EF: \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$400, \$300, \$200; U1300 \$170, \$130
- **Spassky (1000-1199)** EF: \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$400, \$300, \$200; U1100 \$170, \$130
- **Petrosian (under 1000)** EF: \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$400, \$300, \$200; U800 \$170, \$130; U600 \$100, \$50; Unrated \$100, \$50

Seeds: Highest finishing WA resident in Carlsen, Anand, Kramnik, Kasparov, and Karpov sections seeded in the 2026 WA State Championship: Championship, Premier, Invitational, Challengers, and Rising Stars sections, respectively. Ties for a seed to be resolved by post-event playoff games.

Mixed Doubles Prizes: Best mixed gender (incl. male-female) two-player team's combined score: 1st \$200, 2nd \$150, 3rd \$100. Average team rating must be under 2000; may play in different sections.

Register (no extra fee) before round 3. Awarded in addition to other prizes.

Special Prizes (per class section):

- **Best Female Player***** (by TPR): \$50.
- **Best Senior (50+)** Player*** (by TPR): \$50.
- **Highest (USCF) Rating Gain***: 1st \$50, 2nd \$25. Requires an established (non-provisional) rating. May not be combined with Biggest Upset Win.
- **Biggest Upset Win (per round)*****: \$25.
- **Fair-Play, Kindness, Spreading Joy:** \$25.
- **Best Dressed (per day)*****: \$25.
- **Best Annotated Game:** 1st \$75, 2nd \$50.

Notes: * = May not combine with higher prizes.

** = Requires a minimum of 3 eligible players.

*** = Player may not win this prize repeatedly.

Hotel Rates: \$239 King suite with queen sofa; incl. buffet breakfast and evening reception. Call 425-775-2500 to request the Washington Chess Federation block, or reserve [online](#). Cut-off date for reservations at the above rate is Sat, Nov 22.

Main Event

Note: We encourage you to play in the Main Event *and* to take part in side events (see next page). Our schedule allows this with minimum or no half-point byes!

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

Registration & Payment:

Before event: (by Thu, Nov 27 @ 5pm) NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration (pay by Zelle / SettleKing) or write a check to Washington Chess Federation. On-site (payment by cash possible too): Fri 8:30-9:30am for 3-day schedule, or 4:30-5:15pm if entering with 1 half-point bye. Sat 8-8:30am for 2-day schedule, or 9-9:30am if entering 3-day schedule with 2 half-point byes. *Late registrations receive a half-point bye for round 1.*

Byes: Two half-point byes available; if interested, request before end of round 2. (You may play on any two of the 3 days and take a full day off, if using 2 half-point byes.)

Rating: Dual rated US Chess and NWSRS. Carlsen / Anand / Kramnik / Kasparov sections also FIDE rated (except any G/55 games). Highest of Nov 2025 US Chess and current NWSRS ratings used to determine class sections, pairings, and prizes. Higher of US Chess and CFC ratings used for Canadian players. Other foreign ratings used at TD discretion; foreign ratings also used for players with no US Chess rating.

Unrated players are eligible only for 1st / 2nd / 3rd prizes in the Carlsen (2200+) section or for the Unrated prizes in the Petrosian (U1000) section.

Entry Fee Adjustments: Playing up into a higher section is allowed (for \$85 extra) if the player's USCF rating is within 200 points of that section's lower limit (e.g., min USCF 1600 for the 1800-1999 section). Seniors (age 50+) may subtract \$50. Free entry to GMs, IMs, WGMs, and WIMs. Reentry for 1/2 of original entry fee. Canadians may pay CAD\$ at par.

Rounds:

3-day schedule: Fri @ 10am & 6pm; Sat @ 10am & 6pm; Sun @ 10am & 4:30pm.
2-day schedule: Sat @ 9am, 11:45am, 2:45pm, then join 3-day schedule from round 4 @ 6pm.

Time Controls:

3-day schedule: 30/90, SD/30; +30. Late default: 60 mins.

2-day schedule: G/55; +15 (rounds 1-3); rounds 4-6 same as in 3-day schedule.

Miscellaneous: Current US Chess membership and WCF/OCF/ICA membership required. Other states accepted. Memberships may be paid at the time of registration.

Wheelchair accessible.

Please bring a digital clock, if available.

Procedures: Pairings posted near the playing hall and online ~20 mins before each round. If withdrawing or skipping a round, please inform organizers at least 30 mins before the start of the round.

Washington Class Championships, Nov 28-30 (cont.)

Fun Side Events!

(many run between rounds of the Main Event)

WA Class Erdogmus Thanksgiving Scholastic

Fri, 11/28 @ 9 AM – 4 PM (during round 1)

Open to K-12 students. Dual sections: Open and Challengers:

- **Open:** A 4-round G/40;+5 Swiss in two sections: **K-3 Open** and **4-12 Open**. For intermediate to advanced players. Dual NWSRS and USCF rated. US Chess membership req'd. Clocks & notation req'd. Rounds: 9:15am, 10:45, lunch, 12:45, 2:15pm. Awards: ~4pm.
- **Challengers:** A 5-round G/25;+5 Swiss in two sections: **K-3 U800** and **4-12 U900**. For novice to low-intermediate players. Dual NWSRS and USCF rated. US Chess membership req'd. Clocks req'd from the start. Notation req'd in 4-12 U900, and optional in K-3 U800. Rounds: 9:15am, 10:30, lunch, 12, 1:15, 2:30pm. Awards: ~4pm.

Entry fee: \$50 by Fri, 11/21; \$60 after. Room for up to 132 players.

Awards (per section):

- 1st-5th place: \$65-\$60-\$55-\$50-\$45 (in Amazon e-gift cards).
- Medals for first-timers, best female player, & biggest upset win.
- Top performing player (by TPR) in Open sections earns free entry into the 2-day Washington Class (Main Event) (see previous page).

Rating: Higher of Nov 2025 USCF or current NWSRS ratings used for sections & pairings.

Registration: NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/ - pay by Zelle / SettleKing / check; no on-site entries or payments. Registration & payment deadline: Wed, 11/26 @ 5pm. Unpaid players are withdrawn.

WA Class Dorfner Memorial Adult Novice Swiss

Fri, 11/28 @ 11 AM – 4 PM (during round 1)

A 4-round Swiss in one section. For U1200 or unrated adults (18+). 1 half-point bye available. Unrated. TC: G/30;+5. EF: \$25. No memberships req'd. Register: 10-10:45am. Rounds: 11am, 12:15, 1:30, 2:45pm.

Prizes: \$400/b20. 1st \$150, 2nd \$100, 3rd \$60, 1st U900 / U700 / Unrated \$30.

WA Class Chess960 Freestyle Fischer Rapid

Fri, 11/28 @ 2:15 PM – 4:30 PM (between rounds 1 & 2)

A 4-round Swiss in one section, 1 half-point bye available. Unrated. TC: G/12;+3. EF: \$20. No memberships req'd. Register: 1:30-2pm. Rounds: 2:15pm, 2:50, 3:25, 4pm. Higher of Nov 2025 USCF and current NWSRS used for pairings & prizes. A new (randomized) opening position in each round. Players have 2 mins before clocks start to examine initial positions. Prize fund: \$300/b20: 1st-3rd \$80-\$60-\$40, 1st U2000/U1700/U1400/Unr \$30.

WA Class Robson Puzzle Solving

Fri, 11/28 @ 4:45 PM – 5:30 PM (between rounds 1 & 2)

Solving 16 chess puzzles in 45 mins, on paper. Evaluation based on both accuracy and completeness. EF: \$15. Register: 3:45-4:30pm. No memberships req'd. Prize fund: \$250/b30. 1st \$60, 2nd \$45, 3rd \$25, 1st U2000 / U1700 / U1400 / U1100 / U800 / Unrated \$20.

WA Class Deshmukh Girls & Women Workshop

Fri, 11/28 @ 6 PM – 8 PM (during round 2)

A workshop led by WFM Chouchan Airapetian (chormya@msn.com, 206-799-6087), experienced chess coach, organizer, promoter, former US Women's Championship contender, WCF Girls' & Women's Chess Director. Register: 5:45-6pm. EF: Free! Schedule: 6-7pm: "How to develop & cultivate girls' and women's chess." 7-8 pm: Q&A, complimentary pizza & refreshments, and ladies' bughouse.

WA Class Piper Memorial Adult Swiss

Sat-Sun, 11/29-11/30 @ 11 AM and 4:30 PM (during rounds 3-6)

Sponsored by *Seattle Chess Club* in memory of Dr. August Piper (1944-2024), with generous support from Gerald Larsen & Henry Yan. A 4-round Swiss in two sections: Botvinnik (Open) and Korchnoi (U1500); may be merged based on entries. 1 half point bye available. USCF rated only. TC: G/120;+30. EF: \$60 online (by Fri, 11/28) or \$70 on-site; \$20 discount for SCC members. EF waived for unrated players who purchase memberships. Register: Sat, 11/29 @ 10-10:30am (unless starting with a half-point bye). US Chess and WCF/OCF/ICA memberships req'd. Nov 2025 USCF ratings used for sections, pairings, & prizes. Guaranteed prize fund: \$1,000.

Botvinnik (Open): 1st \$240, 2nd \$150, 3rd \$120, 1st U1650 \$80; Korchnoi (U1500): 1st \$120, 2nd \$100, 3rd \$80, 1st U1300 \$60, 1st Unr. \$50.

WA Class Casablanca Rapid

Sat, 11/29 @ 2 PM – 5 PM (between rounds 3 & 4)

A 4-round Swiss in one section. 1 half-point bye available. Unrated. TC: G/15;+5. EF: \$30. No memberships. Register: 1-1:45pm. Rounds: 2pm, 2:45, 3:30, 4:15pm. Higher of Nov 2025 USCF Quick and current NWSRS ratings used for pairings & prizes. Each round starts in a new middlegame position from a historical game. Players have 2 mins before clocks start to examine initial positions. Prize fund: \$400/b20. 1st \$110, 2nd \$85, 3rd \$60, 1st U2100 \$50, 1st U1800 \$40, 1st U1500 \$30, Biggest Upset Win: \$25.

WA Class WaldowChess Rapid Championship

Sat, 11/29 @ 2:45 PM – 8:45 PM (during round 4)

With generous support from Mark Waldow. A 6-round Swiss in one section. 1 half-point bye available, if requested by the end of round 2. Unrated. TC: G/20;+5. EF: \$50. No memberships req'd. Registration: online (by Fri, 11/28) or on-site (Sat @ 2-2:30pm). Check-in req'd by 2:30pm, incl. for online registrants. Rounds: 2:45pm, 3:45, 4:45, 5:45, 6:45, 7:45pm. Higher of Nov 2025 USCF and current NWSRS ratings used for pairings & prizes. Rules: Play begins with White to move, having already played e4 & d4. Games in rounds 1-3 start with the Black king on e8 (as usual), but games in rounds 4-6 start with the Black king on d8 (swapped with the Black queen, which also flips how castling works for Black). In all cases Black receives draw odds. Guaranteed prize fund: \$5,000. 1st-10th: \$1,000 / \$850 / \$700 / \$600 / \$500 / \$400 / \$300 / \$250 / \$200 / \$150; Biggest Upset Win \$50.

WA Class Naroditsky Memorial Bullet

Sat, 11/29 @ 9 PM – 9:50 PM (after round 4)

A 5-round Swiss in one section. 2 half-point byes available. Unrated. TC: G/2;+1. EF: \$10. No memberships. Register: 8:15-8:50pm. Rounds: 9pm, 9:10, 9:20, 9:30, 9:40pm. Higher of Nov 2025 USCF Blitz and current NWSRS rating used for pairings & prizes. Prize fund: \$200/b20. 1st \$50, 2nd \$40, 3rd \$30, 1st U2000 / U1600 / U1200 / Unrated \$20.

WA Class Carlsen Rapid Championship

Sun, 11/30 @ 2 PM – 4:30 PM (between rounds 5 & 6)

A 4-round Swiss in two sections: Kasparov (1600+) and Anand (U1600); may be merged based on entries. 1 half-point by available. USCF Quick rated; Kasparov section is FIDE Rapid rated too. TC: G/12;+4. EF: \$35. Players rated 1500+ may play up for a \$10 fee. Current US Chess and WCF/OCF/ICA memberships req'd. Register: 1-1:45pm. Rounds: 2pm, 2:35, 3:10, 3:45pm. Higher of Nov 2025 USCF Quick and current NWSRS ratings used for sections, pairings, & prizes. Prize fund: \$850/b30. Kasparov (1600+): 1st \$140, 2nd \$110, 3rd \$80, 1st U2100 / U1800 \$60; Anand (U1600): 1st \$100, 2nd \$80, 3rd \$60, 1st U1400 / U1100 / Unrated \$40; Biggest Upset Win (in each section): \$25.

WA Class Aronian Bughouse

Sun, 11/30 @ 3 PM – 4:15 PM (between rounds 5 & 6)

A 7-round Single Swiss in one section. 2 half-point byes available. Max avg team rating: 1800. Unrated. TC: G/3;0. EF: \$20/player. No memberships req'd. Register: 2:15-2:45pm. Rounds: 3pm, 3:10, 3:20, 3:30, 3:40, 3:50, 4pm. Higher of Nov 2025 USCF Blitz and current NWSRS ratings (if unrated, up to 1300 based on age) used for pairings & prizes. Team prizes: \$400 (based on 20 teams): 1st-3rd \$100-\$70-\$50; 1st-3rd K-6 \$50-\$40-\$30; Biggest Upset Win: \$30; Best Sportsmanship: \$30.

WA Class "Knight-Time" Blitz

Sun, 11/30 @ 8:30 PM – 10:45 PM (after round 6)

A 7-round Swiss in two sections: Nakamura (1600+) and Tal (U1600); may be merged based on entries. 2 half-point byes available. USCF Blitz rated; Nakamura section is FIDE Blitz rated too. TC: G/5;+2. EF: \$30. Players rated 1500+ may play up (\$10 fee). Current US Chess and WCF/OCF/ICA memberships req'd. Register: 7:30-8:15pm. Rounds: 8:30pm, 8:50, 9:10, 9:30, 9:50, 10:10, 10:30pm. Higher of Nov 2025 USCF Blitz and current NWSRS ratings used for sections, pairings, & prizes. Prize fund: \$750/b30. Nakamura (1600+): 1st \$120, 2nd \$100, 3rd \$75, 1st U2100 / U1800 \$60; Tal (U1600): 1st \$90, 2nd \$75, 3rd \$60, 1st U1400 / U1100 / Unrated \$40.

Maestros Degenbaev and Sundaram Top

Seattle Chess Classic

Josh Sinanan

The busy summer tourist season attracts thousands of visitors from throughout the globe to visit the Pacific Northwest for a variety of reasons, including playing in local chess tournaments. The Seattle Chess Classic, now in its ninth consecutive year, has become one of the most popular summer events that both locals and out-of-towners alike look forward to due to its long schedule of classical chess! This year's edition was held August 16-17 during the dog days of summer at Hotel 116 in Bellevue and attracted 98 players in two sections, the Tiglon Open and the Seirawan U1600. The format was shortened from previous years to six rounds over two days to encourage more participation from out-of-region players seeking to save on travel costs and to accommodate everyone's increasingly busy summer schedules.

The popular G/90;+30-second increment time control was used in both sections, which were triple-rated in NWSRS, USCF, and FIDE. An even mix of junior and adult players turned out from throughout North America, from locales including Glen Rock (New Jersey), Redmond, Portland, Seattle, Sammamish, Bothell, Richmond (British Columbia), Honolulu (Hawaii), Mill Creek, Issaquah, Renton, Duvall, Bellevue, Kirkland, Beaverton, Post Falls (Idaho), Denver (Colorado), Lynnwood, Vancouver (Washington), Kingston, Gig Harbor, Kent, Mercer Island, Bellingham, Lake Stevens, Edgewood, Kenmore, and Fall City. The depth and finesse of classical chess were on full display, as players launched creative attacks, surprising sacrifices, and ingenious defenses throughout the late summer weekend.

The event was hosted by Washington Chess Federation and directed by WCF FIDE Liaison Mani Atikankhotchasee, Member-at-Large Ani Barua, and

Scholastic Director Allen Messenger. The field was split evenly between two sections—the 57-player Tiglon Open and the 41-player Seirawan U1600—named in honor of the two Northwest Chess legends who became Grandmasters! Thanks to some technical wizardry by Mani and her tech-savvy boyfriend who works at Microsoft, the top boards of both sections were broadcast live on LiChess.org, much to the delight of curious family members and friends who could not follow the action in real-time without needing to poke their heads into the playing hall!

At the conclusion of the fun-filled weekend, only two chess artists emerged unscathed and shared first place, each with a dominant 5.5 points from six games: NM Siddarth M. Sundaram (5.5, 2401 → 2412) of Bellevue and FM Aziz Degenbaev (5.5, 2387 → 2398) of Seattle. The two chess heavyweights cruised through the first four rounds with a perfect four points from four games, each downing a fellow master in the fourth round to set up a big fifth-round clash on board one. While many players in a similar situation might opt for a quick draw, these two certainly did not and played an interesting game that Aziz has kindly annotated to share with our readers. The two chess virtuosos still had some gas left in the tank for their last-round game, each scoring the full point once again to keep pace with each other and share the tournament victory.

A trio of chess trumpeters shared third-place honors a full point back: NM Vedic Panda (4.5, 2303 → 2302) of Seattle, NM Rishabh Chinni (4.5, 2177 → 2176) of Bothell, and CM Ananth Gottumukkala (4.5, 2168 → 2156) of Redmond. Four chess fiddlers—Leonardo Wang (4.0, 1874 → 1911) of Fall City, Shawn Li (4.0, 1749 → 1857) of Bellevue, Andrew Fletcher (4.0, 2048 → 2049) of Bellevue,

and Vijay Patankar (4.0, 1876 → 1861) of Redmond—shared first U2100/U1900 honors, each with a solid “plus two” score. Chess drummers Yash Syal (3.0, 1526 → 1630) of Sammamish and Ed Strong (3.0, 1607 → 1646) of Seattle split the U1700 prize with a par three-point score. This was an especially notable result for Ed, who was playing in his first major OTB chess tournament since 2017!

In addition to the overall prizes, several “special” prizes were also awarded for the biggest upsets in each round—the best female player, best senior player, and the best dressed each day. The following chess percussionists won the upset prizes: Aarav B. Mohan (round one, 413 points), Kenneth Yuodelis (round two, 447 points), Shawn Li (round three, 204 points), Leonardo Wang (round four, 414 points), Owen Scallon (round five, 204 points), and Shawn Li (round six, 175 points). Reigning Washington State Girls Champion Deeksha Shankaranand won the best female player prize with a tournament performance rating (TPR) of 1823 while Richmond ringer Severo Caluza earned the best senior player prize with a TPR of 1830. Sammamish chess soloist Yash Syal and Redmond reedman Akim Pikh collected the best dressed prizes for their classy ensembles.

A pair of chess pipers—Noah Condit (5.0, 1410 → 1515) of Honolulu (Hawaii) and Riaan Babbar (5.0, 1417 → 1498) of Sammamish—emerged victorious atop the Seirawan U1600 section, each with an impressive 5.0 points from six games. Noah Condit, a high school sophomore who recently relocated from Kirkland to Honolulu, came back to visit for the summer and decided to play in his first Washington tournament since 2023. Condit remains underrated due to the small pool of active chess players in Hawaii, so he takes the opportunity to play outside the tropics seriously

when the opportunity presents itself. For Babbar, the victory came thanks to clutch victories on the last day against Tran (1447) and Avula (1206), respectively.

Redmond chess recitalist Kedar Venkatachalam (4.5, 1464 → 1476) and Lynnwood lead soloist Naaditha Nawagamudewage (4.5, 1413 → 1433) shared third-place honors a half-point back. Seattle symphonist Aiden Zhu (4.5, 1216 → 1318) captured the first U1500 prize, recovering well from a second-round setback to win three of his next four games! Bellevue-based sixth grader Clora Huang (3.5, 1201 → 1223) earned the first U1300 prize with clutch victories against Maokhampio (1241) and Rengarajan (1098) in the last two rounds. Young chess accompanist Richard Rogov (3.0, 1064 → 1166) of Kirkland took home the first U1100 prize.

Srikanth Hanumanthappa (2.0, unrated → 830) of Issaquah and Nitin Kumar (2.0, unrated → 840) of Seattle launched their debut albums and shared first unrated royalties for their platinum efforts. The following chess flutists were awarded the best upset prizes: Vihaan Kesavan (round one, 257 points), Sujatha Avula (round two, 838 points), Richard Rogov (round three, 360 points), Guru Harshith Reddy Avula (round four, 209 points), Sujatha Avula (round five, 400 points), and Richard Rogov (round six, 162 points). Sammamish chess singer Kruti Thanikonda won the best female prize with a tournament performance rating of 1427. Seattle chess saxophonist Thien Tran and Kenmore clarinetist Oliver Wakeman won the best dressed prizes for their stylish attire.

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

Games

Austin Wentz (1701) – Akim Pikh (1959) [C78]

2025 Seattle Chess Classic
Bellevue, WA (R1), August 16, 2025
[Austin Wentz]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 b5 6.Bb3 Bc5

An energetic variation of the Ruy Lopez championed by none other than Fabiano Caruana. Black develops the bishop actively, hoping to generate dynamic play. Since I didn't have much experience with this variation, I decided to play an



Noah Condit, co-Champion of the Seirawan U1600 section.
Photo Credit: Ani Barua.

objectively less challenging move to avoid a theoretical battle.



Position after 6...Bc5

7.d3

7.Nxe5 Nxe5 8.d4 Bxd4 9.Qxd4 d6 10.f4 Nc6 11.Qc3 Bb7 12.e5 Ne4 13.Qe3 Na5 14.Nd2 Nxb3 15.axb3 Nxd2 16.Bxd2 0-0

17.Bc3 dxe5 18.Qxe5=

7...0-0 8.Bg5

Preventing the thematic d5-break by Black.

8...h6 9.Bh4 Be7



Position after 9...Be7

A symbolic victory. Black retreated the active bishop, but in reality, White doesn't have much here.

10.Re1 d6 11.c3 Nh5!?

This move caught me by surprise, so I took my first serious think of the game.

12.Bd5!? Bb7!?



Position after 12...Bb7

My opponent seemed worried about losing a pawn, but Black can actually take on h4. 12...Bxh4 13.Bxc6 Rb8 14.g3 (Not 14.Nxe5?? Bxf2+! 15.Kxf2 Qh4+!+) 14...Be7 and White can't play 15.Nxe5 due to 15...dxe5 16.Qxh5 Qxd3#

13.Bxe7

Missing a chance to win a pawn. 13.Nxe5 Nxe5 (13...dxe5 14.Bxe7 Qxe7 15.Qxh5±) 14.Bxe7 Qxe7 15.Bxb7 Ra7 16.Qxh5 Rxb7 17.Qe2± (Not 17.d4? Nd3 18.Re3 Nxb2=)

13...Qxe7 14.Nd4!? exd4

If 14...Nxd4?? 15.Bxb7 Rab8+- and Black wishes they had two moves in a row.

15.Qxh5 dxc3 16.bxc3



Position after 16.bxc3

During the game, I thought White was better here because of increased central control, but the computer claims the position is equal. With fewer pieces on the board, it's difficult for White to generate any real chances.

16...Rab8 17.Nd2 Nd8 18.Bb3

Attempting to keep Black's bishop bad.

18...Ne6 19.Re3 c5 20.Nf1

Trying to keep the option of a rook swing open.

20...Qf6 21.Rc1 Nf4 22.Qf3 Qg5



Position after 22...Qg5

23.Rce1

I played this move since Black was threatening ...Nxd3. However, to quote Hikaru, "the computer literally doesn't care" and just sacks the rook. 23.Ng3 Nxd3 24.h4! Qf4 (24...Qxh4 25.Rxd3 c4! 26.Rxd6 cxb3 27.axb3=) 25.Rxd3 Qxc1+ 26.Rd1 Qb2= Apparently the only move that doesn't lose for Black, but I will leave it to you dear reader to analyze this.; 23.h4 can also be played immediately, since Black can't take due to 23...Qxh4 24.g3+- but that's not as cool.

23...Bc8 24.Qg3

Black's queen is rather annoying, and White wouldn't mind an endgame.

24...Qf6 25.Rf3!? Qxc3



Position after 25...Qxc3

And with that, we arrive at one of the most beautifully complex positions I've ever seen. I'll try to do it justice, but it's impossible to cover everything. If you've made it this far, take a moment to analyze it yourself: how should White continue, and what's the evaluation?

26.Qxf4!

This is objectively the strongest continuation. White launches an immediate counterattack, ignoring the hanging rook on e1. 26.Ree3 is also an interesting but rather unintuitive move. I'll just give the top computer line. 26...Ne6 27.Qxd6 Rb7 28.Qxa6 Rd7 29.Qxb5 Nd4 30.Qc4 Nxf3+ 31.Rxf3 Qxc4 32.Bxc4#

26...Qxe1 27.Bxf7+!

The only move. If 27.Qxd6 Be6!+- and Black is an exchange up with no compensation.

27...Kh8 28.Qxd6!

The obvious follow-up—anything else simply loses. Now it's Black's turn to find the only moves!

28...Bg4!

Suddenly, it looks as if White is in huge trouble because of Black's threat of Be2— but White has an ace up their sleeve!

29.Rf6!!



Position after 29.Rf6

Now it looks like Black is busted, but it turns out that they can survive with an amazing move.

29...Qc1!!

The brilliance of this move can only be fully appreciated after analyzing the ensuing complications. It looks counterintuitive because of White's next move, but it actually saves the game! The immediate 29...Rxf7 fails due to 30.Qxb8+ Kh7 31.Rxf7 Be2 32.h4 Qxf1+ 33.Kh2 and without the inclusion of f4, Black has no counterplay.

30.f4

Cutting off the queen from defending h6, but also shutting out White's queen from defending her own monarch!

30...Rxf7! 31.Qxb8+ Kh7 32.Rxf7 Be2! 33.Kf2 Qxf1+ 34.Kg3 Qe1+ 35.Kh3 h5

Threatening ...Bg4 mate!



Position after 35...h5

36.Rxg7+

At this point we were both playing on increment and I bailed out early, but White can keep testing Black! 36.g3 Bf1+! (36...Qf1+?? 37.Kh4+ Qg2 38.h3 (38.Kg5 Qh3!) and White has to bail out with 39.Rxg7+=) 38...Bf1 39.Qc8!+-(39.Kg5?? Qxg3+ 40.Kf5 Bxh3+ 41.Ke5 Qxd3-+)) 37.Kh4 Qe2! 38.h3 Bxh3! 39.Kxh3 (39.Kg5?? Qg4#) 39...Qg4+= 40.Kg2 Qe2+=

36...Kxg7 37.Qe5+ Kf8 38.Qf6+ Ke8 39.Qe6+ Kd8 40.Qd6+ Ke8 41.Qe6+ Kd8 42.Qd6+ Ke8 43.Qe6+

1/2-1/2

**Aziz Degenbaev (2387) –
Siddarth Sundaram (2401) [C84]
2025 Seattle Chess Classic
Bellevue, WA (R5), August 18, 2025
[Aziz Degenbaev]**

My opponent and I both entered this round with a perfect 4.0/4 score. I had the white pieces and was eager to make use of that advantage. However, I had just finished an intense 4.5-hour game and only had a short 15-minute break, so I couldn't prepare as well as I wanted. Still, I was motivated to keep my winning streak going.

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6
5.0-0 Be7 6.d3 b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.a4**

Since we had played this variation against each other before, I anticipated a similar continuation. Surprisingly, he deviated from our previous game and chose a different line, which caught me slightly off guard.

8...b4

I guess it was more of a sideline, since the main move here is ...Bd7, which leads to a lot of established theory. In this position,

as I remember, Black has several possible continuations.



Position after 8...b4

9.a5

I consider this the best and most logical move. Its main purpose is to prevent Black from playing ...a5 and consolidating their b4-pawn, which would otherwise give them a comfortable queenside expansion. Later, White can consider ideas like Ba4 or Ra4, increasing pressure on the b4-pawn.

9...0-0 10.h3

I should have played 10.c3 here instead of wasting time, immediately asking Black how they plan to proceed. The variation could continue like this 10...Be6 11.Ba4 Nxa5 12.cxb4 Nb7 13.d4± This would lead to a slight advantage for White, since Black's knight on b7 is misplaced and White has established control over the center.

10...Rb8 11.c3 bxc3 12.bxc3



Position after 12.bxc3

12...Be6

He could have played 12...d5 immediately to gain space in the center 13.Nbd2 dxe4 14.dxe4 Qd3! 15.Qc2 Qxc2 16.Bxc2 Rd8 17.Nc4 Rb5∞ with an unclear position.

13.Bxe6 fxe6 14.Nbd2 Nh5

Again 14...d5 was possible 15.Re1 Bc5 16.Qc2 Qd7∞

15.Nc4 Rb5

15...Nf4?! It looks like a logical move after ...Nh5, but since Black had doubled pawns on e6 and e5, I wanted to trade some pieces and leave him with those structural weaknesses. 16.Bxf4 Rxf4 (16...exf4? 17.d4±) 17.Rb1 Rf8 18.Qa4 Qd7 19.Ne3±

16.Re1

I was maintaining some tension in the position while gradually improving my pieces. My plan was to wait and see how Black would proceed, but first I wanted to ensure that my pieces were well-coordinated and active.

16...Qe8 17.Be3 Qg6 18.Qe2

I continued to hold the tension while preparing a potential rook lift to b1. I was also keeping an eye on Black's f8-rook—if it moved, I planned to play Reb1 instantly, preventing him from reinforcing the b-file with ...Rfb8.

18...Nf4 19.Bxf4 exf4

19...Rxf4 20.Reb1 Rc5 21.Rb7±

20.Reb1

I thought that exchanging a pair of rooks would be good for me. My plan was to place my queen on a2, where she would both pressure the e6-pawn and defend the a5-pawn at the same time. That would free my rook to move toward the center and prepare for a possible d4-break.

20...Rfb8 21.Rxb5 Rxb5 22.Qa2

22.d4 d4 immediately was also possible, for example 22...h6 23.Ncd2 Qe8 24.Qc4 Qd7± with the game still going.

22...d5 23.exd5 exd5 24.Nce5 Nxe5 25. Nxe5 Qe6



Position after 25...Qe6

26.d4?

This was a mistake. White's advantage disappeared, and the position has now become equal. 26.Re1! was preferable,

since it avoids wasting time with d4 and allows me to develop Nf3, which was part of my plan anyway. Additionally, White gains a tempo by threatening the queen on e6, while maintaining the original strategic ideas 26...Bd6 27.Nf3 Qd7 28.Nd4 (another idea of not playing d4) 28...Rc5 29.Ne6± with a big advantage for White.

26...Bd6 27.Re1 h6 28.Nf3 Qf5 29.c4 dxc4 30.Qxc4+ Qd5 31.Qc2 Rb8



Position after 31...Rb8

The game ended in a draw, as neither side had any clear targets. My earlier advantage had completely dissipated. Although both sides have pawn-weaknesses on a5 and a6, they are well-defended and hard to attack effectively.

1/2-1/2

Noah Kulick (1832) –
Siddarth Sundaram, (2401) [D53]
2025 Seattle Chess Classic
Bellevue, WA (R1), August 16, 2025
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 Be7
5.cxd5 exd5 6.Bg5 h6 7.Bh4 0-0 8.e3
Bf5



Position after 8...Bf5

Provocative, discouraging the aggressive placement of the white bishop on d3, but leaving behind some weakened light squares on the queenside. 8...b6 9.Bd3

Bb7 10.0-0 (10.Qc2 c5 11.0-0; 10.Ne5!?) 10...Nbd7± is fairly normal.

9.Qb3

9.Bxf6 Bxf6 10.Qb3 could transpose into the game while avoiding a possible...g5.

9...c6

9...g5 10.Bg3 Nc6 11.Rc1± (11.Qxb7 Nb4 12.Rc1 Rb8 13.Qxc7 Qxc7 14.Bxc7 Rb7 offers Black pretty decent compensation. (14...Rbc8 is less clear: 15.a3 Nc2+ 16.Kd2 Rxc7 17.Bd3 Bxd3 18.Kxd3 Nxa3 19.bxa3 Rfc8 20.Rc2 Bxa3 (20...Ne4?? 21.Nxd5! Rxc2 22.Nxe7+ Kf8 23.Nxc8+- 21.Nd2 Bb4 22.Ndb1±))

10.Bxf6 Bxf6



Position after 10...Bxf6

11.Qxb7!

Of course it's necessary to grab the cheese and to dive into the gambit-style complications now, even if it looks a bit like a prepared trap. After a quiet alternative like 11.Be2 Qb6± White has gifted the bishop-pair for less than nothing.

11...Nd7!?

11...Qb6 12.Qxb6 axb6 13.Kd2—and 14.Bd3 doesn't offer much for the pawn, so Black offers more.

12.Qxc6! Rb8



Position after 12...Rb8

13.Bb5

White again finds the most incisive continuation, temporarily blocking the b-file and keeping the threat to the d-pawn. But 13.Qxd5 must have been tempting. Three extra pawns, right? 13...Be6 14.Qe4 Rxb2 Down to two. 15.Bd3 g6 Threat:...Bf5. 16.Qc6 Qa5 Threats:...Rb6 or...Nb8. 17.Rc1 Nb6 Threat:...Rc8. 18.Qc5 Qxc5 19.dxc5 Bxc3+ 20.Rxc3 Nd5 21.Rc1 Nb4 22.Bb1 Bxa2 One now. 23.0-0! Bd5± Black has activity to compensate for the pawn. It's still a game.

13...Nb6 14.0-0?

There's a very subtle net being cast here, and White doesn't see it. Moving the bishop is necessary in order to begin a rather tortuous queen extraction. 14.Be2 Be7 15.Qb5; or 14.Ba6 Be7 15.Qb5 give White fair chances to regroup while maintaining some of the extra cheddar.



Position after 14.0-0

14...Be7!!

Sneaky. The queen finds her paths home cut off. Threat:...Bd7.

15.Ne5 f6 16.Nxd5

16.Bd3 fxe5 17.Bxf5 Rxf5 18.Qe6+ Rf7±

16...fxe5

16...Nxd5

17.Nxe7+ Qxe7 18.a4?

18.Qc5 Qxc5 19.dxc5 Nd7 20.Bxd7 Bxd7 21.Rfd1 Bc6± Sometimes three pawns compensate for a piece. This is really not one of those times, but it's still White's best chance.

18...Rbc8 19.Qf3 Bd3+ 20.Qxf8+ Rxf8 21.Bxd3 exd4 22.exd4 Qb4 23.a5 Nd5 24.Rae1 Qxd4 25.Be4 Nf6 26.Bb7 Qxb2 27.a6 Rd8 28.Rd1 Rd2 29.Rxd2 Qxd2 30.Bf3 Qd6 31.Bb7 Nd7 32.g3 Nc5 33.Rc1 Kf7

0-1

Michael Lin (1923) –
 Brandon Jiang (2181) [A41]
 2025 Seattle Chess Classic
 Bellevue, WA (R5), August 18, 2025
 [Ralph Dubisch]

1.d4 d6 2.c4 e5



Position after 2...e5

There's a young IM who posts online game videos on YouTube in which he heavily advocates for two "unbeatable" openings: Colle/Zukertort for White (d4, Nf3, e3, Bd3, b3, Bb2) and Philidor/Old Indian for Black (...d6, ...e5). Makes you wonder what happens if Black meets the C/Z with 1...d6.

3.d5 Be7 4.e4 Bg5 5.Nf3

5.Nd2∞

5...Bxc1 6.Qxc1 Nf6 7.Nc3 0-0 8.Bd3 a5
 9.0-0 Na6 10.Nd2 Nh5 11.g3 g6 12.Qd1
 Bh3 13.Re1 Ng7 14.Bf1 Bxf1



Position after 14...Bxf1

15.Nxf1

15.Rxf1 f5 (15...Nc5 16.Nb3) 16.exf5 gxf5 (16...Nxf5 17.Nde4) 17.f4

15...f5 16.exf5 gxf5 17.f4 Qf6 18.Ne3 Rae8 19.fxe5 dxe5 20.Rf1??

LPDO: Loose Pieces Drop Off. 20.Kh1∞ anticipates the pin.

20...Qb6 21.c5

21.Re1 f4+

21...Qxc5 22.Qd3 Nb4 23.Qd2 f4 24.Ne4

Northwest Chess

Qxe3+ 25.Qxe3 fxe3 26.Nf6+ Rxf6 27.Rxf6 Nc2 28.Rc1 e2 29.Kf2 e1Q+ 30.Rxe1 Nxe1 31.Kxe1 Rf8 32.Rh6 Rd8 33.Rh4 Rxd5 34.Rc4 c6 35.Ke2 Ne6 36.Rg4+ Kf7 37.Rh4 Kg6 38.Rg4+ Kf5 39.Rh4 Rd7 40.Rh5+ Ke4 41.Rh4+ Kd5 42.Kd3 Rf7 43.Ke2 Nd4+ 44.Kd1 Rf1+ 45.Kd2 Nf3+

0-1

Vihaan Kesavan (1376) –
 Sambuddha Sekhar Das (1394) [C15]
 2025 Seattle Chess Classic
 Bellevue, WA (R4), August 17, 2025
 [Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Bd3

Unusual. Normal is 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 reaching positions seen thousands of times.

4...c5

Now the most common line runs 4...dxe4 5.Bxe4 Nf6 6.Bf3 with rough equality.



Position after 4...c5

5.Bb5+

5.exd5 Qxd5 (5...exd5 6.dxc5; 5...cxd4 6.Bb5+ Bd7 7.Bxd7+ Qxd7 8.Qxd4 Bxc3+ 9.Qxc3±) 6.Bd2 Bxc3 (6...Qxd4 7.Nf3; 6...Qxg2?? 7.Be4) 7.Bxc3 cxd4 8.Bxd4 Qxg2 9.Qf3 Qxf3 10.Nxf3 f6 11.Rg1 Kf7 12.0-0-0 gives White a great deal of development and the bishop-pair, while Black has an extra pawn. Let's call it unclear.

5...Nc6 6.exd5 exd5 7.Nf3 a6 8.Bxc6+ bxc6 9.0-0 Ne7 10.h3 0-0 11.Bf4 Ng6 12.Bg3 Bf5 13.a3 Bxc3 14.bxc3 Qa5??

14...c4!? disallows future use of d4, among other things.

15.Qd2

15.Bd6 Rfe8 16.dxc5 Qxc3 17.Nd4±

15...Rfe8 16.Ra2

This seems unnecessarily passive.

16.dxc5!? Qxc5 17.Nd4 Bd7∞

16...Qb5

16...Be4!? 17.Ne5 cxd4 (17...Nxe5 18.dxe5) 18.Nxc6 dxc3 (18...Qxc3 19.Qxc3 dxc3 20.f3 (20.Nd4 Nf8) 20...Bf5 21.Nd4) 19.Nxa5 cxd2 20.Rd1 Bxc2 21.Rxd2 Re1+ 22.Kh2 Bf5±

17.Raa1 Re2 18.Rab1?

18.Qg5 Bxc2 19.dxc5

19...Rxd2 19.Rxb5 axb5 20.Nxd2 cxd4

20...Rxa3 21.dxc5 Rxc3 22.Nf3 Be4 23.Nd4 Rxc5±

21.cxd4 Rxa3 22.Re1 h6 23.Rc1 Rc3 24.Nf3

24.Nb3

24...Rxc2

24...Bxh3

25.Rxc2 Bxc2 26.Ne5?



Position after 26.Ne5

26.Bd6

26...Nxe5?

26...b4 27.Nxg6 (27.Nxc6 b3 28.Nb4 b2) 27...b3 28.Ne7+ Kh7 29.Nxc6 b2+

27.Bxe5 b4 28.Bd6 b3 29.Ba3 f6 30.Kf1 Kf7 31.Ke2 Ke6 32.Kd2 g5 33.Ke2 Kf5 34.Ke3 h5 35.g3

35.f3 h4



Position after 35.g3

35...g4??

35...h4-- locks the white h-pawn on h3, where it will eventually become a target for the bishop.

36.h4 Be4 37.Bb2 Ke6 38.Ba3 Kd7
39.Kd2 Kc7 40.Kc3 Bc2 41.Kb4 Kb6
42.Bb2 Bd1 43.Ba1 Ka6 44.Bb2 Kb6
45.Ba1 Bc2 46.Bb2 Bd1 47.Ba1

1/2-1/2

**Brandon Jiang (2181) –
Aziz Degenbaev (2387) [B30]**
2025 Seattle Chess Classic
Bellevue, WA (R6), August 18, 2025
[Ralph Dubisch]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.e5 Nd5
5.0-0 a6

5...Nc7 6.Bxc6 dxc6 is theory.

6.Bc4

6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.d3, when Black has spent a move on...a6, instead of beginning the reroute of the knight to d4 via c7 and e6.

6...Nb6 7.d3 d5 8.exd6 Qxd6 9.Bb3
Na5 10.h3 Nxb3 11.axb3 e6 12.Re1
Nd7 13.Nc3 Be7 14.Bg5 f6 15.Nb5 axb5
16.Rxa8 Nb6 17.Rxc8+ Nxc8 18.Bd2
0-0 19.Qe2 e5 20.Qe4 Qd7 21.Ra1 Nb6
22.Ra7 Rb8 23.g4 Ne8 24.Ra1 Qe6
25.Nh4 Nd6 26.Qg2 c4 27.bxc4 bxc4
28.dxc4 Qxc4 29.Be3 Rd8 30.c3 Qb3
31.Ra7 e4 32.Bf4 Qxb2

Stockfish prefers 32...e3 33.fxe3 g5
34.Bxd6 Bxd6 35.Nf3 Bc5= with initiative.

33.Bxd6 Bxd6 34.Qxe4



Position after 34.Qxe4

And now, a short tactical interlude.

34...Bg3! 35.Qc4+! Kh8 36.Qd4! Bc7
37.Qb4

Bravo to both players for sharing the last three moves with our viewing audience.

37...Qe2 38.Ra1 b6 39.Kg2 Qe6 40.Qb5

g6 41.Nf3 Qd6

41...Qd5

42.Re1 Kg7 43.Qc4 Rf8

43...Qd7 44.Nd4±

44.Re6 Qd7 45.Rc6 Rf7??

45...Bd8 avoids anything concrete, for the moment.

46.Nd4 Be5 47.Ne6+ Kh6 48.Rxb6

48.h4

48...Qd2 49.Qe4 Qxc3 50.Rb4 g5 51.h4
gxh4



Position after 51...gxh4

52.Rb1??

This part is going to get painful for White to rehash. White misses a win: 52.Qf5!! h3+ (52...Qxb4 53.Qh5#) 53.Kf1 Qa1+ (53...Qc1+ 54.Ke2 and no more checks!) 54.Rb1 Qa6+ 55.Kg1 h2+ 56.Kh1 Qc6+ 57.f3 and Black must part with the queen to avoid mate.

52...h3+ 53.Kh1 Re7 54.g5+! fxg5
55.Nxg5! Kxg5 56.f4+! Kh6 57.fxe5
Qxe5 58.Qh4+

58.Qxe5. Rook endings with any number of extra h-pawns is a trivial draw.

58...Kg7 59.Rg1+ Kh8 60.Qxh3

60.Qg4

60...Re6

A hint of a threat.

61.Rf1 Qd5+ 62.Qf3?

62.Rf3

62...Rh6+ 63.Kg2 Qd2+??

63...Qg8+! 64.Kf2 (64.Qg3 Rg6)
64...Rh2+ 65.Ke3 Rh3 66.Qxh3 Qb3+
67.Kf2 Qxh3-+

64.Rf2 Rg6+ 65.Kh2 Qh6+ 66.Qh3 Qc1

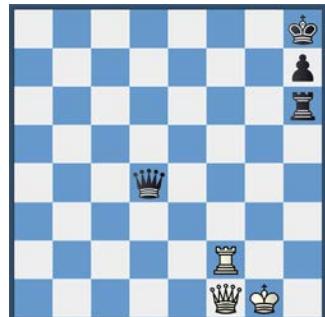
67.Qf1??

Spectacular opportunity missed: 67.Rf8+
Kg7 68.Rf7+!! Kxf7 69.Qf1+!! Qxf1

stalemate.

67...Qc7+ 68.Kh1 Rh6+ 69.Kg1 Qg7+
70.Rg2 Qd4+ 71.Rf2

71.Qf2 Qd1+ 72.Qf1 Rh1+ 73.Kxh1
Qxf1+-+



Position after 71.Rf2

71...Rh5??

If I understand the ending, the proper winning method is to transfer the move to White in this position. 71...Qg7+ 72.Rg2 Qa7+! 73.Rf2 Qd4! Now 74.Qe2 (74.Qe1 Rg6+ 75.Kf1 Qd3+ 76.Re2 (76.Qe2 Qb1+ 77.Qe1 Rg1+) 76...Qf3+ 77.Rf2 Qh1+ 78.Ke2 Re6+) 74...Qg7+ 75.Rg2 Qa1+ 76.Kf2 Rf6+ brings the king out into the open. For example, 77.Kg3 Qc3+ 78.Kg4 Rg6+ 79.Kh4 Qf6+ 80.Kh3 Rh6+ 81.Kg3 Qh4+ 82.Kf3 Rf6+ 83.Ke3 Re6+-- Zugzwang in major piece endings can be tough to pull off.

72.Qg2 Ra5 73.Qg3 Rb5 74.Qf4 Qg7+
75.Rg2 Qa1+ 76.Kf2 Qa7+ 77.Kf3??

77.Kg3 Qg7+ 78.Kh4! (78.Kh2 works as well, but requires a bit more accurate dodging and weaving.) 78...Qe7+ (78...Qxg2 79.Qf8+ Qg8 80.Qf6+ Qg7 81.Qd8+) 79.Kh3 Rb4 80.Qg5=

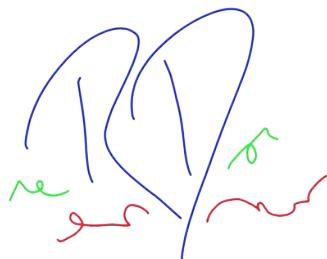
77...Rb3+ 78.Kg4 Qd7+ 79.Kh5

79.Qf5 Rb4+ 80.Kg5 Rb5

79...Rh3+ 80.Kg5 Qd5+ 81.Kf6 Rf3

A good grapple, with big swings and tight escapes.

0-1



Sizzling Summer Rapid

Josh Sinanan

The Sizzling Summer Rapid, a scholastic chess event now in its third-time hosted as an OTB event, took place on Saturday, August 16, at Hotel 116 in Bellevue. A modest turnout of just 25 chess samurais in grades one through ten competed in four sections parsed by grade level and rating: K-3 U700, 4-12 U900, K-3 Open, and 4-12 Open. Due to lower-than-expected attendance during the dog days of summer, the K-3 U700 was merged with the 4-12 U900 to create a K-12 U900 and the K-3 Open was merged with the 4-12 Open to create a K-12 Open.

Instead of the typical five rounds, the event featured a marathon seven-round Swiss format—three games in the morning and four more in the afternoon after a short lunch break! The “extra” rounds combined with smaller sections in each made interesting pairings in the final rounds, since most of the leaders had already faced each other earlier in the tournament! Despite the anti-climactic matchups late in the day, the “bonus” rounds were greatly appreciated by the ambitious youngsters eager to hone their chess skills in preparation for the upcoming scholastic chess season.

The convenient and easily accessible central Bellevue location provided players from throughout the area with the opportunity to compete in an all-day mini chess fest. Between rounds, many parents could be seen soaking up the sun in the outdoor dining area while sipping a refreshing beverage from Woods coffee.

Chess families from cities throughout the region took part in the day-long event, including Redmond, Bellevue, Kirkland, Sammamish, Seattle, Belfair, Richmond (British Columbia), Gig Harbor, Monroe, Bothell, and Renton. The tournament was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation and directed by WCF Scholastic Director Allen Messenger with

assistance from WCF Member-at-Large Ani Barua and WCF FIDE Liaison Mani Atikankhotchasee.

Many thanks to the wonderful volunteers who helped with setup and

take down. We hope to continue the Sizzling Summer Rapid as an annual summer tradition in the years to come!

Congratulations to the winners:

2025 Sizzling Summer Rapid Chess: K-12 Open

#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Rd 6	Rd 7	Total
1	1	Andrew Inforzato	1321	W7	W8	W6	W2	W3	D5	D4	6
2	2-3	Yuvan Oruganti	868	W5	L6	W4	L1	W7	L3	W8	4
3		Lydia Xiong	772	U---	W5	W8	L6	L1	W2	W7	4
4	4-5	Krishna Anand	492	L6	W7	L2	L5	B---	W8	D1	3.5
5		Ethan An Tong Chang	unr.	L2	L3	L7	W4	W8	D1	B---	3.5
6	6-7	Samuel Cha	1273	W4	W2	L1	W3	U---	U---	U---	3
7		Atlas Bigelow	685	L1	L4	W5	W8	L2	B---	L3	3
8	8	Venkatesh Srinivas	102	B---	L1	L3	L7	L5	L4	L2	1

2025 Sizzling Summer Rapid Chess: K-12 U900

#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Rd 6	Rd 7	Total
1	1-2	Luke Shi	unr.	W10	D5	W6	L2	W4	W7	W3	5.5
2		Avery Leung	unr.	W12	W6	D4	W1	W5	L3	W9	5.5
3	3	Felix Han	269	L9	W14	W16	W8	W7	W2	L1	5
4	4-5	Anay Khandelwal	661	W14	W9	D2	L5	L1	W13	W15	4.5
5		Vihaan Vikram Singh	unr.	W15	D1	W7	W4	L2	L9	W10	4.5
6	6-9	Rameses Khambatti	642	W13	L2	L1	W16	W11	L10	W14	4
7		Aaron Dai	283	W8	W16	L5	W9	L3	L1	W13	4
8		Arden Gao	unr.	L7	W15	W13	L3	L9	W12	W11	4
9		John Petito	unr.	W3	L4	W10	L7	W8	W5	L2	4
10	10	Suryaa Srishankar	501	L1	W11	L9	W12	D13	W6	L5	3.5
11	11-12	Aarush Shah	203	B---	L10	L12	W15	L6	W14	L8	3
12		Sushant Deshpande	unr.	L2	L13	W11	L10	W15	L8	W16	3
13	13	Maxwell Ginal	unr.	L6	W12	L8	W14	D10	L4	L7	2.5
14	14	Kevin Dai	105	L4	L3	W15	L13	W16	L11	L6	2
15	15-16	Arohan Pulla	unr.	L5	L8	L14	L11	L12	W16	L4	1
16		Harshal Sampat	unr.	X17	L7	L3	L6	L14	L15	L12	1
17	17	Nivaan Anand	261	F16	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	U---	0

Seattle Classic Scholastic

Josh Sinanan

After a fast and furious Sizzling Summer Rapid on Saturday, the calmer and more relaxed 2025 Seattle Classic Scholastic took place on Sunday, August 17. The event was played with a leisurely four-round format featuring a generous G/45+5 time control designed for deliberate and careful youngsters seeking to transition from rapid to classical chess. The extra time encouraged the young masterminds to plan out their strategies several moves ahead and to anticipate their opponent's responses when possible.

The tournament took place at Hotel 116 in Bellevue alongside the second day of the Seattle Chess Classic and attracted 58 players in grades 1-11 who competed across four sections separated by grade level and rating: K-3 U800, K-3 Open, 4-12 U1000, and 4-12 Open.

The tournament drew players from throughout the West Coast, including the towns Woodinville, Redmond, Mill Creek, Bothell, Shoreline, Seattle, Sammamish, Bellingham, Kirkland, Snoqualmie, Richmond (British Columbia), Beaverton,

Shoreline, Vancouver (Washington), North Bend, Portland, and Mercer Island!

The pace of play was contemplative and calculated, with many games being decided by thin margins deep into the game. The event was hosted by the Washington Chess Federation and run by WCF Scholastic Director Allen Messenger with assistance from WCF FIDE Liaison Mani Atikankhotchasee and WCF Member-at-Large Ani Barua, who were also directing the co-located Seattle Chess Classic in the same room.



2025 Seattle Classic Scholastic Chess: 4-12 Open

#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total
1	1	Gavin Shi	1640	W9	W5	W2	W4	4
2	2-3	Danny Kang	1558	W7	W8	L1	W9	3
3		Weston Hughes	1388	W12	D6	D4	W8	3
4	4-7	Kevin Zhang	1404	W11	W14	D3	L1	2.5
5		Ren Wadhwanı	1347	W13	L1	W6	D7	2.5
6		Elon Tsay	1193	W10	D3	L5	W11	2.5
7		Mithran Anbuselvam	1090	L2	W16	W17	D5	2.5
8	8-11	Justin Lee	1270	W16	L2	W14	L3	2
9		Dhruv Grandhi	1188	L1	W17	W10	L2	2
10		Ari Ferris	1003	L6	W12	L9	W16	2
11		Rebecca Li	832	L4	B---	W15	L6	2
12	12-15	Saahan S Chadha	1081	L3	L10	W13	D14	1.5
13		Gautha Alagumalai	1066	L5	D15	L12	B---	1.5
14		Joyce Gui	1007	W15	L4	L8	D12	1.5
15		Emad Memon	unr.	L14	D13	L11	W17	1.5
16	16-17	Anjalik Mukherjee	1037	L8	L7	B---	L10	1
17		Caroline Ma	990	B---	L9	L7	L15	1

2025 Seattle Classic Scholastic Chess: 4-12 U1000

#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total
1	1-2	Svanik Kalya	855	W11	W9	W13	D5	3.5
2		Anay Khandelwal	661	D7	W14	W10	W11	3.5
3	3-5	Eric Tsen	650	W4	L10	W6	W13	3
4		Emery Spearman	379	L3	W16	W9	W10	3
5		Adi Kamath	unr.	W14	D6	W7	D1	3
6	6-7	Vasishta N Komara	640	W12	D5	L3	W16	2.5
7		Vitaly D Astafiev	438	D2	W15	L5	W12	2.5
8	8-13	Nirvan Tummuru	617	W17	L13	L11	W18	2
9		Anirudh Raghavan	561	W18	L1	L4	W17	2
10		Aariv Shah	487	W16	W3	L2	L4	2
11		Rishima Singh	458	L1	W18	W8	L2	2
12		Ananya Dua	237	L6	W17	W14	L7	2
13		Avery Leung	unr.	W15	W8	L1	L3	2
14	14-16	Jethro Xia	544	L5	L2	L12	W15	1
15		Mridula Raghavan	466	L13	L7	W18	L14	1
16		Matthias Casal	unr.	L10	L4	W17	L6	1
17	17-18	Luc Ngo	unr.	L8	L12	L16	L9	0
18		Aiden Lee	unr.	L9	L11	L15	L8	0

2025 Seattle Classic Scholastic Chess: K-3 Open

#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total
1	1	Samik Kulkarni	788	W2	W8	W3	W4	4
2	2-4	Corina Mackhampio	1007	L1	D6	W8	W5	2.5
3		George Lucas Yeh	739	D---	W9	L1	W7	2.5
4		Nickrad Ahsant	701	D6	W10	W5	L1	2.5
5	5-8	Aarav Namjoshi	929	W10	W7	L4	L2	2
6		Xingyue Luna Lin	869	D4	D2	L7	W9	2
7		Samarth Swain	732	B--	L5	W6	L3	2
8		Reuben Iyp Mathew	683	W9	L1	L2	W10	2
9	9	Liam Pham	818	L8	L3	W10	L6	1
10	10	Woochan Yi	929	L5	L4	L9	L8	0

2025 Seattle Classic Scholastic Chess: K-3 U800

#	Place	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Total
1	1	Veronic Astafyeva	124	W9	W10	W5	W2	4
2	2-4	Anirudh Ajay Iyer	424	B---	W13	W7	L1	3
3		S Kalyanasundaram	153	L6	B---	W13	W7	3
4		Lincoln Breuninger	unr.	L5	W9	W12	W8	3
5	5-6	Krishna Anand	492	W4	D6	L1	W10	2.5
6		Arden Gao	unr.	W3	D5	L8	W12	2.5
7	7-9	Reya Tare	664	W11	W8	L2	L3	2
8		Nivaan Anand	424	W12	L7	W6	L4	2
9		Rian Kamath	unr.	L1	L4	B---	W13	2
10	10-13	Nicolas Casal	unr.	L13	L1	W11	L5	1
11		Aarav Rajkumar	unr.	L7	L12	L10	B---	1
12		Quan Ngo	unr.	L8	W11	L4	L6	1
13		Sam Ferris	unr.	W10	L2	L3	L9	1

CO-HOSTED BY WATA AND WASHINGTON CHESS FEDERATION

WATA SCHOLASTIC CHESS TOURNAMENT



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2025

REDMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

16800 NE 80TH ST, REDMOND, WA 98052



FORMAT

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

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

SCHEDULE

Rd. 1 – 10:00am
Rd. 2 – 11:30am
Lunch
Rd. 3 – 1:30pm
Rd. 4 – 3:00pm
Rd. 5 – 4:30pm
Awards ~ 6:30pm

ELIGIBILITY

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

ENTRY FEE

\$50 by 11/16, \$60 after.
Room for 100 players.

AWARDS

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

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

RATING

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

WA State Scholastic Qualifier!

CLOCKS + NOTATION

Chess clocks set to G/25; +5 will be used from the beginning in all games. Chess notation required in all sections except for K-1 U700 and 2-3 U700. All equipment is provided courtesy of WCF.

REGISTRATION

Register online at NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/
Pay by SettleKing/Zelle/Cash/Check.
100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Fri December 5 @ 5:00pm. No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline.

PROCEDURE

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

Questions?

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

Covington Library Chess Tournament

Rekha Sagar

The Covington Library came alive with strategy, focus, and excitement as it hosted its first-ever official chess tournament on August 23, 2025, organized by the Washington Chess Federation (WCF). The event marked a milestone for the Covington community, showcasing the growing popularity of chess among players of all ages and skill levels.

The tournament was made possible through a collaboration between the WCF, Children's Librarian Ms. Monica Sands, and Library Manager Ms. Philis Bodle, who worked together to create an engaging and welcoming atmosphere for participants and families alike.

Under the skilled direction of WCF Co-Vice President Rekha Sagar and organization by WCF President Josh Sinanan, the event drew an impressive 32 enthusiastic players. Competitors were divided into two sections—the Open Section and the Casual U600 Section—allowing both seasoned players and newcomers to enjoy fair and exciting matches.

The Open Section, featuring ten talented players, saw a four-way tie for first place among Mithran Anbuselvam, Hanish Tallapaneni, Ishayu Sinha, and Vihaan Vikram Singh, each scoring an impressive 3.0 points out of four rounds.

In the Casual U600 Section, which welcomed 22 developing players, Sumith



Covington Library Chess Tournament organizers (Adults L-R) Monica Sands, Philis Bodle, and Rekha Sagar alongside the medal winners at the awards ceremony.
Photo Credit: Priyanjali Manoharan.

Madhavapeddi and Arohan Pulla shared top honors, both finishing with a perfect 4.0/4 points.

Throughout the afternoon, the library buzzed with quiet intensity as players carefully planned their moves and spectators admired their focus and sportsmanship. The event fostered a strong sense of community spirit, uniting students, families, and chess enthusiasts

in celebration of learning and friendly competition.

The success of this inaugural event sets a promising foundation for future tournaments in Covington. The Washington Chess Federation and the Covington Library hope to continue offering opportunities that promote critical thinking, patience, and connection through the timeless game of chess.



Covington Library tournament players gather for the awards ceremony.
Photo Credit: Rekha Sagar.

2025 National K-12 GRADE Chess Championships

Thu-Sun, December 11-14, 2025

Spokane Convention Center

334 West Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, WA 99201



ELIGIBILITY

Open to all US students in grades K-12 as of the 2025-2026 school year.

FORMAT

A 7-round, G/90; d10 Swiss tournament in 13 grade-level sections, K-12.

ENTRY FEES

\$105 online or postmarked by **10/27**

\$160 online or postmarked by **11/17**

\$235 online **ONLY** by **12/1**

\$360 online **ONLY** by **12/10**

\$400 on-site until **10am Fri 12/12**

See [Scholastic Regulations](#) for details on required byes for on-site entries.

\$40 for section changes requested **after 11/3**.

100% Entry refunds available if notified by email to nationalevents@uschess.org by **11/3**.

Refunds requested **after 11/3** or in person at Chess Control by 11am PT on **12/11** will incur a \$40 service charge.

No refunds after **11am 12/11**.

SCHEDULE

Thursday 12/11: Bughouse Championship

(11am-2pm), **National Puzzle Solving**

Championship (3-4pm), **Blitz**

Championship (5-9pm)

Friday 12/12: Opening Ceremony

(12:30pm), Rd. 1: 1pm, Rd. 2: 6pm.

Saturday 12/13: Rd. 3: 9am, Rd. 4: 1:30pm,

Rd. 5: 6pm.

Sunday 12/14: Rd. 6: 9am, Rd. 7: 2pm,

Awards Ceremony ~ Sun. 6pm.

Note: K-1 sections start 30 min later for morning rounds and 30 min earlier for evening rounds. Please check full [schedule](#) for details.

AWARDS

All players who complete the event will receive an award! Medals awarded to the top-scoring players in each section. Players will be able to collect medals following the completion of round 7. For team award info, see [Nationals Website](#).

RATING

US Chess rated. December 2025 US Chess rating supplement will be used to determine pairings and prizes. Converted ratings used for players with higher NWSRS ratings. See page 7 of [Scholastic Regulations](#) for details.

EVENT WEBSITE

new.uschess.org/k12-2025-championships

ONLINE REGISTRATION

kingregistration.com/event/2025nationalk12

QUESTIONS?

Josh Sinanan, WCF President,
US Chess Scholastic Council Rep,
WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com,
Call or text: 206-769-3757



A Conversation With Coach Tim Moroney

Ken Lee

Tim Moroney has been sharing his passion for chess with students for 25 years. A five-time national scholastic champion and US Candidate Master, Tim brings his deep knowledge of chess at the highest level to help students grow their skills. As a certified FIDE Instructor, Tim is an expert in the tools that players need to succeed and provides valuable insight into every student's chess journey. His background in childhood development and counseling makes him an expert in working with students of all ages and skill levels. Tim is committed to helping every student learn and grow at their own pace.

I sat down with Coach Tim to discuss critical thinking, the benefits of chess, and the psychological world of games.

Ken: When did you first start playing chess?

Tim: When I was eight my older brother taught me the basic moves. It wasn't until I was 11 that I learned about tournaments and took more interest in chess.

I came across a chess store in a mall in Warren, Michigan, that hosted a chess club and local events. My family gave me the opportunity to try out an unrated

beginner's tournament.

Ken: What did that first tournament mean to you?

Tim: I remember vividly that I won my first game and then lost all the remaining games. I wasn't concerned about the results, but the tournament made a significant impression on me.

I remember soaking in the experience of it and thought it was a lot of fun.

Ken: Who was your first chess coach?

Tim: My first coach was a gentleman who worked at that chess store. His name was Louis Cyccone, and he worked with me for a few years. He was a great mentor, and we became lifelong friends.

Later, I branched away and did mostly self-teaching and worked with some other coaches here and there.

Ken: What was your experience with chess during your middle school years?

Sometimes, you hear about middle school students getting burned out on chess and losing interest.

Tim: Sometimes kids push hard in too many tournaments over a short period of time. In other cases, the emphasis on competition and ratings discourages them. You have to love doing it for the game to not feel burnout, and keep a healthy balance between playing for enjoyment, for learning, and for rating growth.

For me, my opportunity to be involved in the competitive scene

was completely self-driven.

I was motivated because I've always seen chess as a way to challenge myself and compete against myself. Chess provides a platform to learn and improve skills and then go back into a tournament and test those new skills.

The results of an individual tournament were not what mattered in the long run. If I kept challenging myself and improving, the growth would come in time.

Ken: How about your high school years? Were you part of the chess team?

Tim: No, I wasn't part of a high school chess team. I was still very much a self-driven kid.

I used those years to compete and coach as well.

I was only 13 when I had my first opportunity to assist with after school chess classes. When I was 15, I started branching out on my own teaching classes and working with private students.

Ken: Did you develop your own personal coaching style?

Tim: Throughout the years, I developed my own syllabus for students reaching various goals. I would have lessons for students who were just starting in chess and just learning the basics. I also developed lessons for tournament competition.

Ken: What were some of the other benefits of coaching for you?

Tim: I found coaching helped me improve my own game. Additionally, I was starting to earn money at an early age and learning the value of hard work. That does a lot for a young person's sense of identity and confidence.

Ken: What did you decide to study



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during your university years and how did chess influence your decision?

Tim: One of the things that fascinated me in chess was how different people's personalities were expressed when they played.

You could see it in their opening choices and how temperament was reflected in their handling of different positions.

With this interest in the influences on decision making, I decided to study psychology.

Ken: What career did you pursue?

Tim: When I relocated from Michigan to Washington, I continued my schooling but also found work counseling at a residential facility for at-risk kids.

At that facility, I started a program that utilized chess as a part of a therapy program.

I wanted to reach kids and give them the opportunity to work on themselves, solve problems, and set themselves up for success.

Ken: Was there a definite fork in the road (pun intended) where you decided to work as a clinical therapist or chess coach?

Tim: For a long time, I couldn't work as a full-time chess coach, and so I had to work a couple of jobs to make it work.

That's how I imagined my life would be—a full-time job and teaching chess where I could on the side.

Ken: What was a turning point for you?

Tim: I was working with high-risk kids from the ages of six to 16, but I found it was important to me to be able to reach students at an earlier stage in their life circumstances.

I wanted to instill life skills and tools to help influence choices they were making very early in their lives so they could set themselves on a better path.

Ken: What was a critical step for you to make a direct connection to kids?

Tim: I had my eyes set on Seattle. It had the kind of chess community I was looking for where I could grow as a coach and a player. In 2016, I moved from Spokane to Seattle and was able to start coaching full time.

Ken: I've read many books which discuss the benefits of chess related to the development of executive function skills such as metacognition, planning, goal setting and resilience.

With your background in psychology, what other benefits do you see for young people playing chess?

Tim: Chess provides an excellent way to develop and practice critical thinking skills. It teaches people to seek out answers for themselves, to process new ideas, and to question and challenge those ideas.

The ability to critically think through material you're presented with is such an essential skill for everybody navigating the world.

What's amazing about chess is that you can continuously test yourself and your theories in a safe setting.

Ken: Can you expand on that idea?

Tim: Chess offers a competitive environment that ultimately has

minimal consequence.

You can sit down and play a game and if you make a wrong decision, you simply reset and start a new game.

If you are intentional in learning from every experience, you can repeat that exercise as many times as you want and can rapidly iterate. Every game is an opportunity to learn lessons and improve yourself.

Ken: Do you think that makes chess unique?

Tim: It's hard to find other scenarios where kids can navigate so much decision making and engage critical thinking skills so rapidly.

Chess provides a unique environment where you can be required to make high-pressure, split-second decisions, or have long games with lots of slow, carefully thought-out decisions. Chess offers a realm of flexibility for focused quality practice over time.

Ken: Do you prefer online or over the board coaching?

Tim: There are benefits to both. I tend to like in-person over the board. I find that particular learning environment helps students conceptualize their thoughts and connect with ideas more clearly.

Ken: When did you start your own coaching business?

Tim: I stepped away from Chess4Life in January of 2024. It was time for me to give more time to a larger volume of students. Now I work with Excel with Chess and coach at several public and private schools.

I also get to continue working with my private students. It's a perfect blend for me because I also now have more time to work on my own chess goals.



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Ken: What specific goals do you have for yourself?

Tim: I love tournaments and want to play more for the joy of it. I still get enormous satisfaction sitting at a board and uncovering what is happening in a position.

A chess tournament provides an environment where you can enter a flow state of deep concentration. It's one of my favorite places in the world—to just be present.

Ken: Do you currently work with a trainer?

Tim: I don't have a trainer I'm actively working with, but it's been on my mind to start working with one again.

One of the things I'm trying to be intentional about this year is not to overly focus on my rating.

I want to be in a space where I don't want to squash the love that I have for chess and embrace the feeling of just being in a tournament.

Ken: To the outside world, you peer into a chess tournament and see intensity and competition. They don't see the richness of all the stories that are going on in each individual competitor's head about what they're experiencing.

Tim: Everyone is experiencing their own individual story at a chess tournament and it's a beautiful thing.

Ken: To wrap up, do you have any suggestions for chess parents and others on how to support the chess community?

Tim: I think one challenge for a lot of parents is figuring out how best to support their kids, particularly if they don't have much chess experience themselves.

My mom was one of the fiercest advocates that I've ever known in all my years in the chess community. She did it through her unwavering support of me though she couldn't offer the chess knowledge, the emotional support she offered was invaluable.

Ken: What else can parents do to support their chess kids?

Tim: My mom was very observant.

She took a keen interest in what she saw from other parents and coaches. She noticed how they were reacting to circumstances and the choices they were making.

Ken: What do you think about the future of chess specifically in the Pacific Northwest?

Tim: Right here in Washington, we have one of the largest scholastic communities in the country and there's a lot of potential here to continue growing and nurturing the community.

We just finished the state championship with almost 1,500 kids

showing up and competing.

I think the next step for Washington is finding how to empower those kids to take their interest to another level.

This could be a golden age emerging when you have many young players who are playing at high levels. I'm very excited for the future of chess in the Pacific Northwest.



Tim Moroney at the 2025 Washington State Championship. Photo credit: Meiling Cheng.

AND NOW FOR A SPECIAL DOUBLE FEATURE...

A Conversation With NM Joshua Sinanan

Ken Lee

Ken: I understand that you began your chess journey in a unique way.

Josh: Although I learned to play chess at around seven years of age, I didn't start playing chess seriously until high school.

Ken: How did you start?

Josh: I was a martial artist during my early years. I obtained my third-degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do at 14 years of age.

When I asked to test for my fourth degree black belt, my sensei told me that I would have to wait until I was 18.

Ken: That's interesting. What did you do?

Josh: Well, I wasn't a very patient kid, so I decided to quit martial arts and redirect my focus to other things. Those turned out to be tennis and chess.

I joined the Edmonds-Woodway High School chess team my freshman year.

Ken: Compared to many kids today, that's a rather late start. What was it about that chess that drew you to the game?

Josh: I always liked patterns and math, so chess was a natural fit for me. Also, chess filled the competitive void from leaving martial arts. Instead of beating opponents on the mat, I learned to defeat opponents over the board.

Ken: How would you describe your path in chess during your high school years?

Josh: During my freshman year, I was on the junior varsity team and played on boards six to ten.

By my sophomore year, I moved up to the varsity team and I was one of the top five players in the state.

Ken: That's remarkable. What do you think contributed to your rapid ascent in chess?

Josh: I think the primary reason I progressed so quickly was that I simply loved the game.

If you really love something, then the hard work required to achieve your goals doesn't feel like work at all. For me, it became a healthy obsession.

Secondly, I had the ability to self-study, which was facilitated by the technology that was emerging.

Using the Internet Chess Club, I could study chess anytime I wanted to.

Finally, I also benefited from having an excellent mentor in chess.

Ken: Who was your mentor at that time?

Josh: The player that took me under his wing was JP Sarausad. In high school he was about a 1900-level player and one of the top players in the state.

I still keep in touch with him, and we've remained friends.

Ken: What else did you do to promote your high school chess team?

Josh: A simple strategy for us to recruit players was to tell students that they get to play, hang out with friends,

and travel to tournaments. As I mentioned before, if you show people how fun chess can be and tell them how much you love it, people will respond.

Ken: Did you play a lot of chess during your time at university?

Josh: I attended Harvey Mudd and majored in engineering. But my university chess experience was limited because there just wasn't a large pool of strong players.

Ken: What did you ultimately decide to do?

Josh: I wasn't very passionate about engineering, and I realized midway through my senior year that I didn't want to pursue that path.

Ken: So, what was your next move?

Josh: I reflected for a few months on what I really wanted to do with my life. I found chess is my passion, so I should lean into that.

My first job was working as a chess coach with WGM Elena Donaldson at Chess Star Academy in 2008.

About four years later, I partnered with IM Georgi Orlov.

We worked together through the Orlov Chess Academy. Even though I have since taken on many other responsibilities

as a coach, TD and President of the Washington Chess Federation, I still help run the Orlov Chess Academy to this day.

Ken: Is there something significantly different about the way you teach kids chess in the past vs now?

Josh: I think it's a question of attention span and the emergence of technology.

It's no longer the case that you can expect kids to play chess quietly and pay attention to a coach in front of a classroom with a demo board.

Today's kids just don't relate to that style of presentation. It's important for coaches to learn to incorporate technology into their lessons and utilize smart boards and projectors.

Ken: How did you get involved with the Washington Chess Federation?

Josh: In 2008 while on a family trip to Maryland, I got a call from Elston Cloy, who was attending the WCF annual membership meeting at the Washington Open. They were electing a new set of officers, and he said they need someone to run for vice president.

Ken: Interesting. So, it kind of happened by circumstance?

Josh: Well, the opportunity unfolded at the right time. In 2010, the Washington Chess Federation eventually asked me to be President, and I've been serving as President of the organization ever since.

Back in 2010, we were doing about half the tournament events that we are doing today.

Ken: What do you think are the three primary factors that contributed to the boom in chess in the Pacific Northwest?

Josh: First, I think a lot of it has to do with the people in our community.

People don't realize sometimes how unique our market is for chess. The players, coaches and parents are easy to work with.

When players and parents understand how things are run, they are supportive, and it makes things easier to operate smoothly.

Second, I think the culture of chess in the PNW is baked into our DNA here. Entities like Chess4Life, Orlov Chess Academy and the Seattle Chess Club have been around for years.

We don't have to sell the benefits of chess to our community.

If I could take a moment, I also want to acknowledge the parents in our community.

It takes a special level of commitment to be a chess family. I've become friends with many chess parents and it's amazing to me how dedicated and connected they are with their kids and the general chess community.

The third and final factor, which I think explains the spectacular growth in chess in the PNW, is our relative geographic isolation.

Ken: What do you mean by that?

Josh: We have our own unique niche market here. The local pool of talent is quite strong and when you play and compete against a variety of strong players, you are going to get better.

Ken: What level of chess rating do you think you need to achieve to be a successful chess coach or tournament director?

Josh: When I first started coaching chess, I believed that having a title was really important. So, I worked very hard and got my National Master title in 2007.

Ken: What did that require?

Josh: I had to travel out of state to compete in chess tournaments. It required a lot of time, money and dedication.

But now, I don't think being a Master is a prerequisite for creating your own lane in the chess world.

Ken: Why is that?

Josh: These days, people can express themselves in so many different ways in the world of chess.

There is content creation, publishing, AI development, curriculum development and more.

With regards to being a chess coach, I believe the single most important factor in being a good coach is having excellent people skills. A good coach needs to learn to communicate clearly with their

specific target audience.

A lot of the higher-rated players are not able to take complex ideas and communicate them to their students in a simple way. You have to break things down to meet the needs of each individual student.

Ken: What specific advice do you have for our Pacific Northwest players to continue growing in chess?

Josh: If feasible, I encourage my students to travel out of state for chess tournaments.

Ken: What are the benefits of playing in other communities?

Josh: When our players play in different markets, they are immediately exposed to different styles of play.

For example, in Canada you'll see more Slav Defenses and King's Indians. In my opinion, the players from the United States have a broad breadth of knowledge of the game but it doesn't go that deep.

In Europe, they have a narrower repertoire, but their knowledge goes much deeper.

While it's not for everyone, I think planning a trip around a chess tournament can be a great idea.

It supports the passion, exposes players to different styles of play and, of course, is a lot of fun.

That being said, I think it's important for families to incorporate some free time into their trips, so that they are not sitting at the chess board for 99% of their time.

Ken: What other benefits are there of travelling out of our area to compete in chess tournaments?

Josh: For our more competitive

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President

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players, they have noticed that when they leave Pacific Northwest it's lot easier to gain ELO in their USCF ratings.

Ken: Why is that?

Josh: We have some rating deflation here because of our NWSRS rating system. The kids play at a level much higher than what their USCF ELO might indicate since most of their early games were NWSRS only. Things are changing now with far more USCF-rated tournaments in our area.

Also playing in other out-of-state tournaments helps players build resilience.

Ken: How so?

Josh: As players keep competing in more tournaments, particularly in varied settings, they are strengthening their grit and resiliency.

Ken: What recommendations do you have for players to improve their game through self-study?

Josh: I think it's important to do what you like to do in chess. Find the thing that you like to study the most whether it's tactics or opening theory and focus on that.

Also, I think the key is to pursue "active learning."

Ken: What do you mean by that?

Josh: Watching YouTube videos is not active. A video provides good information, but I don't think it engages the student in a way that makes learning engaging and long lasting.

A far better choice would be working on puzzles or reading some classic chess books.

When you combine something that you love with an active learning mode, that's a powerful combination.

There are many studies that support the notion of reading as being an active learning methodology.

If a player is motivated and reads books with the games of Capablanca, Kasparov, Tal and Karpov, to name a few, there are definitely going to be some great benefits.

Ken: Any final thoughts for all the players, coaches and parents in the chess community?

Josh: I've been enjoying your articles for several months now and I

think I've come up with something that I'd like to end with. It encapsulates how I think this mix of love, active learning and resiliency are the essence of chess.

"Every time you play a game of chess, you become a better person."

Ken: Check and mate. Thank you for your time.



Josh Sinanan at the 2024 Washington Open. Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.

TOURNAMENTS



Venue & mail

7212 Woodlawn Avenue NE, Seattle 98115

[info & events calendar](#)

www.seattlechess.club

club & tournament inquiries

contact@seattlechess.club

Wednesdays are for
casual play. Come
anytime 7-11pm. It's free.

November 8

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

November Quads

See below.

November 29-30

Piper Memorial Adult Swiss

November 7, 14, 21, 28

November Rains

One US Chess-rated round per night, 4 rounds per month, at 7:30pm. **Time control:** 40 moves in 90 minutes with 10-second increment, followed by sudden death 60 minutes with 10-second increment. **Entry:** Free for SCC members, \$5/night others. Drop in for any round! **Sign up:** <https://contact@seattlechess.club>

Coming up:

- December Quads – December 6; tentative, 2B confirmed
- December Tornado – December 28; tentative, 2B confirmed
- Seattle City Championship – January 10-11; tentative, 2B confirmed

Check our events calendar periodically for confirmed dates.

Club Notes

- Join our Discord – it's under new management! <https://discord.gg/wBTRH8FmFd>
- We're seeking to expand our roster of USCF-certified TDs. For info contact John Selsky at contact@seattlechess.club.

2ND ANNUAL PIPER MEMORIAL ADULT SWISS

NOVEMBER 29 - 30, 2025
IN CONJUNCTION WITH WA CLASS CHAMPIONSHIPS
(VENUE TBA)

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- **Format:** A 4-round Swiss in two sections: Botvinnik (Open) and Korchnoi (U1500); may be merged based on entries.
- **Time control:** Game/120 + 30 sec. increment. **Rounds:** 11am & 4:30pm both days.
- **Prize fund:** \$1,000 guaranteed.
- **Prizes:** Botvinnik (Open): 1st \$240; 2nd \$150; 3rd \$120; U1650 1st \$80
Korchnoi (U1500): 1st \$120; 2nd \$100; 3rd \$80; U1300 1st \$60; Unrated 1st \$50.
- **Entry fee:** \$60 online by 11/29, \$70 onsite; \$20 discount for SCC members.
EF waived for unrated players who purchase memberships. US Chess and
WCF/OCF/ICA memberships req'd.
- **Register:** <https://nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration/>. Deadline Fri. 11/28, 5pm.
- **Byes:** 1 half-point bye available via registration site.

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Format: A five-round Swiss in three sections:

Rudolph Open, Dasher U1800 & Prancer U1400

In case of a tie for 1st place, follow-up playoff games will determine the seed for the Premier, Challengers or Prodigies section of the 2026 Washington State Championship.

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

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

Prize Fund: \$5,000 based on 100 paid entries.

Rudolph Open: 1st-4th: \$450-\$350-\$250-\$200, 1st-2nd U2200: \$150-\$125, 1st-2nd U2000: \$150-\$125.

Dasher U1800: 1st-4th: \$400-\$300-\$200-\$150, 1st-2nd U1700: \$125-\$100, 1st-2nd U1500: \$125-\$100.

Prancer U1400: 1st-4th: \$300-\$225-\$175-\$125, 1st-2nd U1200: \$100-\$75, 1st-2nd U1000: \$100-\$75.

Special Prizes (per section):

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

Entry Fee: \$100 by 12/13, \$125 after. Free entry (pending completion without withdrawals) for GMs, IMs, WGMs, WIMs and chess Santas rated 2200+ USCF. \$50 play-up fee if rated 1700-1799 or 1300-1399 in both NWSRS and USCF and playing up in Rudolph Open or Dasher U1800, respectively. Maximum of 100 players – please register early.

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

Memberships: Current US Chess and WCF

membership/Northwest Chess subscription required. Memberships must be paid at time of registration.

Rating: Triple rated in NWSRS, USCF, and FIDE. Higher of December 2025 US Chess or current NWSRS rating used to determine section, pairings, and prizes. Higher of USCF or foreign rating used at TD discretion.

Registration: Online at nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration (pay by SettleKing/Zelle/check/cash). Registration and payment **deadline: Fri. 12/19 @ 5pm**. No registrations accepted or refunds offered after the deadline.

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

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

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

Holiday Blitz: Sunday 7-9pm (after rd. 5 of main tournament). **Entry Fee:** \$30. **Format:** A 9-Round Single Swiss in one section, 2 half-point byes available. Dual US Chess Blitz + FIDE Blitz rated. **TC:** G/3; +2. **On-site registration:** 6:00-6:45pm. Rds. Sun @ 7pm, 7:15, 7:30, 7:45, 8, 8:15, 8:30, 8:45, 9pm. Closing Ceremony ~ 9:15pm or asap. Current US Chess membership required. Higher of December 2025 US Chess Blitz or Regular rating used to determine pairings and prizes.

Prize Fund: \$750 (based on 50 paid entries)

1st – 3rd: \$170-120-90,

1st U2000/U1800/U1600/U1400/U1200/U1000/Unrated: \$40.

Biggest upset win: \$10/rd.

