

# VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

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# VIRGINIA CHESS

## Newsletter

2017 - Issue #4

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*We reported the prizewinners of the 2017 Cherry Blossom Classic in VIRGINIA CHESS #2017/3 and promised an expanded report with annotated games this time. Here it is!—ed*

# Cherry Blossom Classic is a Memorial Day Classic NOW!

*by Anand Dommalapati*

Chess Players preferred to play chess rather than visit the cherry blossoms in Washington, DC over Memorial Day weekend 2017! This year's Cherry Blossom Classic, at the Crowne Plaza Dulles Airport in Herndon, attracted over 300 players including 6 Grandmasters and 4 International Masters.

For the event's fifth year the organizers bumped up the prize fund to \$10,000 and offered "conditions" for the GMs and IMs. The results was a very strong and top heavy field in the Open Section. After 7 hard rounds, grandmaster Alexey Dreev, of Russia, emerged as the clear winner.

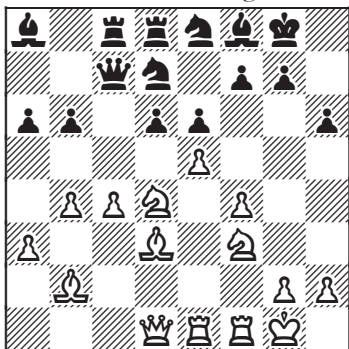
## Alexey Dreev - Michael Rohde Bogo Indian

*Notes by GM Alexey Dreev*

This game was played in the last round. My opponent was in the lead by half a point ahead of several participants, including me. **1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 Bb4+ 4 Nbd2 O-O 5 a3 Be7 6 e3** [Of course this is not a principal move. With two rounds per day, there is no time for preparing or refreshing in the memory of analysis, so I decided not to enter the sharp main line 6 e4 d5. While on the topic, I would like to comment further on the time control. To play two rounds of "classic" chess in a day is very difficult, physically first of all. There is no need to explain this to the participants of such tournaments. I understand that two rounds per day is necessary to limit the duration the event and limit expenses of both participants and organizers. However, I don't understand why the organizes couldn't make our life easier by reducing the time control to the official FIDE 90 minutes per game with increment of 30 seconds after every move. In this case the players' work day would be shorter while the opportunity for those seeking title norms would not be affected as this would still qualify as a 'classic' time control.] **6...b6** [In case of 6...d5 I would continue 7 b3] **7 Bd3 Bb7 8 O-O c5 9 b3 d6 10 Bb2 Nbd7 11 Qc2 Rc8 12 Rad1 h6** [A small inaccuracy; in some cases the pawn is better on h7. 12...b5!?] **13 Qb1** [13 e4 would be premature because of 13...cxd4 14 Nxd4 Nc5 =] **13 Rc7** [Not too successful a maneuver, because White can change the pawn structure, after which the position of the rook on c7 is bad. 13...d5!? would have led to unclear play.] **14 e4!** [White could not improve the position without this move.] **14...cxd4 15 Nxd4 a6** [So on the board is the famous "hedgehog"]



but in quite a promising version for White. Thanks to the dark-squared bishop standing on b2 instead of the usual at e3, he can gradually develop an attack on the Black king.] **16 f4 Rc8** [It was more important to move the bishop, 16... Re8 17 b4 Bf8, to prepare the possibility ...e6-e5.] **17 b4 Ba8?!** [Clearly a bad move. It is obvious that Black don't really understand what to do. 17...Re8 was still correct.] **18 Rde1 Qc7** [18...e5!? 19 Nf5 Re8] **19 Qd1** [Involves the queen in White's attack, but 19 Re3! Rfe8 20 Qe1 Bf8 21 Qh4 was an even better way to do this.] **19...Rfd8 20 N2f3?!** [20 Re3!±] **20...Bf8?** [He simply cannot allow White to play e4-e5, so 20...e5! was essential. Black probably didn't want to give the f5 square, and after 21 Nf5 Bf8 22 Nd2 White is better, but the fight is still ahead.] **21 e5! Ne8** [White is winning after 21...dxe5 22 fxe5 Ng4 23 Qe2 when the creative 23...Ngxe5 24 Nxe5 Qxe5 25 Qxe5 Nxe5 26 Rxe5 g5 doesn't help because of 27 Re2!± Bg7 28 Rd2 Rxd4 29 Bh7+ Kxh7 30 Bxd4 etc] (diagram)



**22 f5!?**

Here I spent about 12 of the remaining 25 minutes counting 22 Ng5!± I understood this should win, but after 22...hxg5 (if 22...dxe5 23 Bh7+ Kh8 24 Nxf7+ Kxh7 25 Nxe6 Qc6 26 Qc2+ winning) I thought 23 Qh5 seemed necessary. Then 23...g6 24 Bxg6 fxg6 25 Qxg6+ Ng7 26 exd6 and here 26...Bxd6 27 Nf5 was good enough, but I could not find a clear way after 26...Qxc4 and stopped the calculation. In fact, even here White wins by

27 Nf5! Qc2 (if 27...exf5 28 Re7) 28 Ne7+ Kh8 29 Qh6+ Qh7 30 Qxe6 Rc2 31 Rf2 Rxf2 32 Kxf2 Bxe7 33 dxe7 Re8 34 Qf7! But going back to move 23, there was a more compelling continuation 23 Nxe6 White's attack is irresistible after 23...fxe6 (or 23...Qc6 24 Be4) 24 Qh5 Nef6 25 exf6 Nxf6 26 Bxf6 gxf6 27 Rxe6.

**22...Bxf3** [22...exf5 23 e6] **23 Rxf3** [23 Nxf3!±] **23...Nxe5 24 fxe6 Nxf3+** [if



Tournament winner GM Alexie Dreev.  
Photo by Bill Simmons

24...Nf6 25 Nf5 fxe6 26 Nxf6+ gxh6 27 Rxf6 wins] **25 Qxf3 Nf6 26 Nf5** [White's attack is irresistible] **26...fxe6 27 Rxe6 Re8 28 Rxf6** [28 Nxf6+!± gxh6 29 Rxf6 also wins] **28...gxf6 29 Qg4+ Kf7 30 Qh5+ Kg8** [if 30...Ke6 31 Ne3!± Kd7 32 Nd5] **31 Qg6+ Bg7 32 Bxf6 Re1+ 33 Kf2 1-0** Remarking again on the tournament, I would like to note the many young, talented and already quite strong players; I made a draw with one of them. The tournament was well organized thanks to the efforts of its main organizer, Anand Dommalapati.



81<sup>st</sup> Annual...

## Virginia Closed State Championship

Sept 2-4, 2017

Hilton Garden Inn Innsbrook

4050 Cox Rd, Glen Allen, Virginia

Open to all Virginia residents, military stationed in Virginia, and students attending any Virginia school or college (must show student ID or other proof of Fall 2017 school enrollment). 6-SS, 30/90, SD/1 d5. \$\$3500 b/90 paid entries. *Open*: \$700-400-250; top X, A each \$120. *Amateur (U1800)*: \$525-300-200; top C, D each \$95. *Under 1200 & Unrated*: \$300-200-110, top unrated \$85, unrated place award limited to \$200. *Both*: EF \$75 by Aug 27, \$90 thereafter and on-site. Rds 1-7, 11-5, 9:30-3:30. **Alternate Schedule** play rds 1 & 2 Saturday 5 pm and 8 pm at G/60 d5, merge with rest of tournament Sun and Mon. Hotel \$94, 804-521-2901 mention tournament and ask for chess rate. W. *Enter*: Mike Hoffpauir, Attn: Virginia Closed, 405 Hounds Chase Yorktown, Va 23693-3356. Info [www.vachess.org](http://www.vachess.org) including online entry and payment via PayPal, or email [mhoffpauir@aol.com](mailto:mhoffpauir@aol.com) or phone 757-846-4805.

**Blitz Tournament** (G/5 d0) on Friday, Sept 1 at 7pm

Annual **VCF Business Meeting** Saturday, Sept. 2, 9-11am



Another notable achievement was former state champion Andy Samuelson's securing his FIDE Master title.

### Andrew Samuelson - Alex Hallenbeck Sicilian

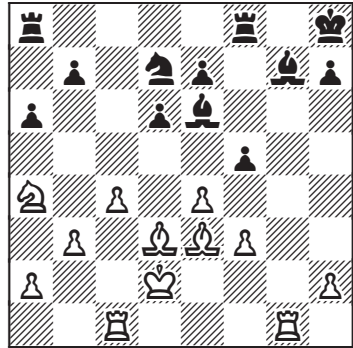
*Notes by Andrew Samuelson*

It seems to be quite difficult to win a game based on preparation now. Every once in a while I still manage to catch an opponent in a tricky line though. This game was played in round 5 after I lost my previous two games, and I really wanted to win one and get back on track. **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 g6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6 5 c4 Nf6 6 Nc3 d6 7 Be2 Nxd4 8 Qxd4 Bg7 9 Be3 O-O 10 Qd2 Be6 11 Rc1 Qa5 12 f3 Rfc8 13 b3 a6 14 Na4 Qxd2+ 15 Kxd2 Nd7 16 g4 f5 17 gxf5 gxf5 18 Rhg1 Kh8** [So far, this is one of the main lines of the Gurgenidze system of the Maroczy Bind Sicilian. There are of course many deviations possible along the way.] **19 Bd3!?** [This may not be the objectively best move (19 Nc3 is probably better), but my preparation convinced me it's quite tricky to meet. Also, I had already tried 19 Nc3 against the same opponent in this tournament last year and we drew a long game.] **19...Rf8?**

This natural move is definitely not the right response! In discussing the game with my opponent later, he indicated he didn't expect my next move. Admittedly, it's a rather shocking idea for anyone who hasn't seen it with the benefit of an engine running in the background. (*diagram*)

#### **20 Rxf7!**

This is not a new idea, but it's still quite strong in this exact position. From here on we played the main line of my preparation for several turns. My opponent was able to find all the moves despite not having looked at this in advance. However, this effort cost him a lot of time on the clock.



#### **20...Kxg7 21 Rg1+ Kh8 22 Bd4+ Nf6 23 exf5**

[White now has a pawn and the bishop pair for the exchange.] **23...Bd7 24 Nb6 Rad8 25 Re1!** [This is a key idea, as White will now capture a second pawn for the exchange to go with the bishop pair and better placed pieces. It took me a minute to get the point when I saw this come up in the engine window during my preparation!] **25...Bc6** [25...Rfe8 26 Rxe7 Rxe7 27 Bxf6+ skewering Black's rooks is the main tactical reason 25 Re1 is so strong.] **26 Rxe7 Kg8 27 Be4** [aiming to reconnect my pawns] **27...Rde8** [This was the first move I hadn't looked at prior the game, so now I had to think.] **28 Rxe8** [Immediately a bit of a misstep. 28 Bd5+ Bxd5 29 Bxf6 Bxf3 30 Rg7+ Kh8 31 Bc3 Re2+ 32 Kd3 Re5 33 Rg3 Be4+ 34 Kd2 h5 35 Bxe5+ dxe5





36 Re3 Bxf5 37 Rxe5 wins back the exchange with an extra pawn.] **28...Nxe8 29 Nd5 Rf7** [29...Kf7 30 Ke3 Rg8 31 Kf2 b5 was a more tenacious defense, as Black is able to activate his rook on an open file.] **30 Bc3** [There's no rush, but this doesn't really do anything to improve my position.] **30...Kf8 31 Nf4 Nf6 32 Kd3 Ke7 33 Ne6 Nd7 34 Ng5?** [This looks tempting, but may not be best. 34 Ke3 was more accurate, dodging knight checks. White keeps an edge, but there's still work to do to convert it.] **34...Nc5+?** [Probably the final mistake, played in time pressure. Black needed to try and activate his rook. After 34...Bxe4+ 35 fxe4 Rf8 36 Bd2 b5 37 Nf3 bxc4+ 38 bxc4 Rg8 39 Bg5+ Kf7 40 h4 Rc8 he should be back in the game.] **35 Ke3 Bxe4 36 fxe4!** [Greed definitely doesn't pay this time—taking the exchange back would be a big mistake. 36 Nxf7? Bxf5 37 Ng5 Bb1 38 b4 h6 39 bxc5 hxg5 40 cxd6+ Kxd6 Black would likely draw this opposite color bishop ending.] **36...Rf8 37 Bg7 1-0** I had originally thought about taking h7, but this is much stronger. The f-pawn will cost Black a lot of material, so he resigned.

### Daniel Leach - Andrew Samuelson

#### English

*Notes by Andrew Samuelson*

I've had quite a few bad results lately playing chess on Friday nights after work. I was hoping to reverse the trend and get a decent game in to start the tournament. **1 g3 c5 2 c4 Nc6 3 Nc3 g6 4 Bg2 Bg7 5 Rb1 d6 6 a3 a5 7 d3 e5 8 Nd5 h6?!** [8... Nge7 9 Bg5 O-O is probably more accurate.] **9 b4 axb4 10 axb4 cxb4 11 Be3 Nd4** [White's probably only a little better after 11...Ra6 12 Nf3 Nf6 13 Nxb4 Nxb4 14 Rxb4 O-O 15 O-O but the b7 pawn is a bit weak.] **12 Nf3 Ne7 13 Nxe7** [13 Nxd4 exd4 14 Bd2 Nxd5 15 Bxd5 is clearly better for White thanks to Black's shattered pawn structure.] **13...Qxe7 14 O-O Nc6 15 Qd2** [If 15 Ne1 O-O 16 Nc2 Bd7 17 Nxb4 Nxb4 18 Rxb4 Bc6 19 Qb3 Qd7 20 Bd5 White's a little better thanks to his pawn structure and b-file control, but it seems manageable to me.] **15...g5 16 h4 g4 17 Ne1 f5 18 Nc2** [18 Qd1 O-O 19 Bd2 Bd7 20 Nc2 f4 21 Bd5+ Be6 22 Be4 seems about equal, but there's lot of play left.] **18...Ra2** [18...f4 is stronger and leads to an edge for Black. White has a hard time keeping his kingside together and my bishop on g7 may be freed.] **19 Ra1** [After 19 Qc1 f4 20 Bd2 O-O 21 Bxc6 bxc6 22 Nxb4 Ra8 23 Nxc6 Qd7 White has an extra pawn, but Black has decent compensation

with the bishop pair and extra space.] **19...b3 20 Rxa2 bxa2 21 Nb4 Nxb4 22 Qxb4 f4 23 Bb6 O-O 24 Bd5+?** [24 Ra1 might have led to a draw: 24...e4 25 Rxa2 fxg3 26 fxg3 Qe5 27 Bf2 Rxf2 28 Kxf2 e3+ 29 Kf1 Qxg3 30 Qe1 Qf4+



Photo: Bill Simmons



31 Kg1 Be5 and Black will check on h2 and f4.] 24...Kh8? [Returning the favor and letting White off the hook. 24...Be6! 25 Bxe6+ Qxe6 26 Qa5 fxg3 27 Qxa2 Qf6 28 Qa5 Qxh4 wins for Black.] 25 c5? [White loses the thread. He needed to eliminate the a2 pawn immediately. 25 Ra1 e4 26 Rxa2 Be5 27 Qe1 e3 28 gxf4 Bxf4 29 fxe3 Bxe3+ 30 Bxe3 Qxe3+ 31 Kg2 might have led to another perpetual. 31...Qh3+ 32 Kg1 and if 32...g3 33 e3 defends.] 25...fxg3 0-1 Now the a-pawn (26 fxg3 Rxf1+ and queens) or the kingside attack (26 cxd6 Qxh4 27 Rc1 Rxf2 28 Rxc8+ Bf8 29 Rxf8+ Rxf8 followed by mate) decides. Perhaps this was not a great game, but I was able to win on a Friday night for once. After this game I was up to 2298 FIDE and could qualify for the FM title by drawing my next game.

### Alex Lenderman, - Levan Bregadze, King's Indian

*Notes by GM Alex Lenderman*

I first heard of the Cherry Blossom Classic from my friend and student Carla Naylor, who lives in northern Virginia and spoke very highly of this tournament. She was inviting me for several years, but usually I had scheduling conflicts. Finally, this year I decided that the Cherry Blossom would fit well in my busy schedule.

The organization was excellent. I have nothing bad to say about this tournament, and I would only suggest for the future maybe to not place the top boards so close to the air conditioner vents! Everything else was excellent. Rounds started on time, pairings were known far in advance.

I expected this tournament to be reasonably strong and well-organized, but I did not quite anticipate just how strong it would be. There were six GMs, including me, as well as several strong IMs and FMs and other strong titled players and masters. I realized that I probably would not have enough energy to play at a very high level since I had just returned from a tough round robin tournament in St Louis. Therefore, I decided for this tournament just to experiment and work on my weaknesses. That allowed me to take some pressure off, not worry about the result, and just enjoy my time here while meeting some of my friends and students. The result, as expected wasn't great; I was making more blunders than usual, and on the last day I couldn't quite squeeze a win from what I thought was promising positions. However, I felt like I got a lot out of the experience, played some interesting games, and hopefully will learn a lot for the future. I thought my back and forth win against IM Levan Bregadze was the most interesting and probably the most instructive game I played here.



*GM Alex Lenderman.  
Photo by Bill Simmons*

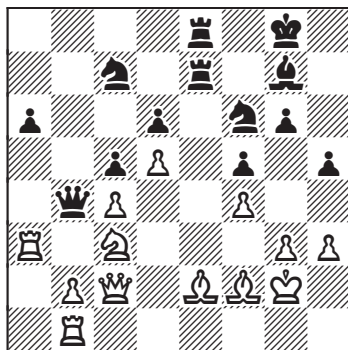




I chose to play the 3-day schedule, which meant I had to play 3 games that first day. This was the third round. I had 1½ out of 2 while Levan had a perfect 2-0 after beating GM Priydarshan Kannapan the previous round. I've played Levan before and I knew he is a very creative, original and all-around strong player, so I had my work cut out for me. I just wanted to play a good game and whatever happened, happened.

**1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 O-O 6 Be2 Bg4 7 Be3 Nfd7 8 Rc1 c5 9 d5 Na6 10 O-O Nc7** [We've already had this position in a blitz game from a few months ago.] **11 h3** [11 Qd2 a6 12 a4 e6 13 dxe6 Nxe6] **11...Bxf3 12 Bxf3 a6** [Levan played 12...e6 in our blitz game, to which I reacted to with a dull 13 Qd2 instead of trying to win that pawn by 13 dxe6! Nxe6 14 Qxd6 and probably Black doesn't get quite enough compensation.] **13 a4 Qb8!?** [A very interesting multi-purposeful move, trying to protect d6 and also thinking about playing ...b5. The alternative 13...e6 might have led to 14 dxe6 Nxe6 15 Qxd6 Ne5 (15...Nd4 16 Nd5 Ne5 17 Qxd8 Raxd8 18 Bd1 Nd3 19 Rb1) 16 Qxd8 Raxd8 17 Nd5 Nxf3+ (17...Nd3 18 Rb1 Nxb2 19 Be2) 18 gxf3] **14 Be2** [Simplest, stopping b5] **14...e6 15 Qd2 exd5 16 exd5 f5 17 f4** [The computer doesn't like this move. My idea was to stop him from playing ...Ne5-f7. If he gets in ...Ne5-f7, he can then have his knight from c7 go to f6 and try to build harmony. In retrospect though, maybe 17 a5 was better. This would discourage ...Qa7 (which he did later in the game): 17...Qa7?! 18 b4 ±. Because of this strong b4 idea, his options are limited. 17...b6 18 axb6 Qxb6 19 Ra1 ±; or 17...Ne5 18 Na4! +-] **17...Qa7 18 Rfd1** [Playing against ...Bd4 ideas. I thought about 18 g4! but I was worried it might be premature. 18...Rae8 19 Kg2 Qb6 20 gxf5 gxf5 21 Rf3 Qb4 22 Qc2 b5 etc] **18...Rae8 19 Bf2 Qb6 20 Ra1 Qb4 21 a5 b6 22 axb6** [22 Qc2 bxa5] **22...Qxb6** [22...Nxb6! 23 Qc2 Rxe2! would've been a very interesting exchange sac for the pawn and Black's pieces would suddenly come to life here. I probably prefer Black there.] **23 Ra2 Re7 24 Bf1 Rfe8 25 g3 Qb3 26 Ra3 Qb8 27 Rb1 h5 28 Kg2 Nf6 29 Be2** [29 Qc2 Qc8] **29...Qb4 30 Qc2!?** [After a bunch of shuffling around, suddenly I make a blunder. I just never saw the coming tactical idea, and when my opponent played his next move it was like a lightning from a clear sky. Meanwhile 30 Qd3 would have prevented his tactic and preserve a small plus thanks to my space advantage.] (*diagram*)

**30...Nfxd5!** [After this shock I was really pleased with how I was able to regain my composure.] **31 Rb3!** [Best chance. I spent 15 minutes and was very happy to find this practical try. I'm giving up a second pawn but am able to gain some initiative and shift the momentum a bit in my favor. The other options aren't nearly as attractive. 31 Ra4? Nxc3 32 Rxb4 Rxe2 +- is a non-starter; 31 Na2? Qxa3 32





bxa3 Rxe2 is also losing; 31 cxd5?! Bxc3 is just down a pawn for nothing; 31 Nxd5!? was possible but did not seem attractive after 31...Nxd5 32 Bf3 Ne3+ 33 Bxe3 Rxe3 and here I only looked at 34 Rxa6? Rxf3 -+ but didn't see 34 g4!, which would give me good counterplay, eg 34...hgx4 35 hxg4 fxg4 36 Bd5+ Kf8 37 Rxe3 Rxe3 38 Kf1! Qb3! 39 Qxg6 Qd3+ 40 Qxd3 Rxd3 41 b4 and most likely I can save this endgame after 41...cxb4 42 Rxb4.] **31...Nxc3 32 bxc3 Qa4 33 Bf3!** [The point. I'm happy to give up my weak c4 pawn to activate all of my pieces.] **33...Qxc4 34 Qd1!** [The last important move, attacking d6. Even though I'm down two pawns, the counterplay is real and I'm not worse by much.] **34...Kh7** [If 34...d5 35 Rb6! (35 Rb7!?) 35...Kh7 36 Rc6! d4 37 cxd4 Bxd4 38 Bxd4 Qxd4 39 Qxd4 cxd4 40 Rd6 I'll get one pawn back and have excellent drawing chances; and if 34...Rd8? 35 Rb8 would even be better for me; finally, if 34...Qe6 35 Rb6 Rd8 36 Rxa6! =] **35 Qxd6 h4!** [Now the game becomes a mess. But considering I just blundered a pawn, to come back into something unclear is already a success.] **36 Qxc5?!** [Maybe not the most accurate. 36 Rb7! hxg3 (36...Nb5?? 37 R1xb5) 37 Bxg3 (37 Kxg3!?) g5 38 Kg2 Qxf4 39 Qxf4 gxf4 40 Bxc5 Rd7 41 Bc6 Rd2+ 42 Kf1 Rc8 43 c4 is a computer line. Black has to play a bunch of 'only' moves to reach a position where he's up a pawn but I have a ton of compensation thanks to my strong passed pawn, two bishops, and generally more active pieces.) 37...Qf7 38 Bh4 Rd7 39 Qxc5] **36...Qf7** [I got both pawns back but now my opponent has the initiative and I commit a few inaccuracies.] **37 Rb7** [37 Rb6] **37...hxg3 38 Bxg3** [38 Kxg3 Nb5 39 Rxe7 Rxe7 40 c4 Nc3 41 Re1 Rc7 42 Bd5] **38...Nb5! 39 Rxe7 Rxe7 40 c4 Nc3 41 Rb4?!** [I spent 5 out of my 30 minutes on this awkward move, but I couldn't find anything too good here.] **41...Ne4** [41...Rd7!? would have been very difficult for me to defend.] **42 Qd5 Qf6 43 c5** [Hoping for a trick which, thankfully for me, my opponent allowed.] **43...Qc3?!** [I was much more worried about 43...Nxc3! 44 Kxg3 Qa1 45 Kg2 Qc3 For instance, 46 Rb7 Qc2+ 47 Kg3 Rxb7 48 Qxb7 Qxc5 ♣] **44 Rxe4!** [the main point of 43 c5] **44...fxe4 45 Bxe4 Qe3** [if 45...Rxe4 46 Qxe4 Qxc5 47 Bf2 =] **46 Qh5+ Kg8 47 Qd5+** [I can't go greedy to play for win here yet. 47 Bxg6?! Bd4! ♣; or 47 Bd5+? Kf8 48 Qxg6?? Qd2+ Black wins] **47...Kf8** [Black is still trying to play for a win, but I was happy to see this move. Of course 47...Kh7 would just be a draw by perpetual.] **48 Bxg6** [I could've forced a draw (48 Qd8+ Re8 49 Qd6+ Re7 50 Qd8+) but at this point I decided to play for a win myself since I thought my position is now easier to play.] **48...Qe2+ 49 Bf2 Bf6 50 Kg1!?** [50 Bd3 Rg7+ 51 Kh1 Qxf2 52 Qd6+ is only a draw] **50...Kg7 51 Bf5 a5 52 c6 a4 53 Bd3 Qd1+ 54 Kg2 a3?** [The final decisive blunder is a consequence of Black's position being a bit difficult to play, with his exposed king and also having to worry about my pawn. That said, 54...Qb3 55 Qf5 Qc3 was still equal; and so was 54...Qd2 55 Qf5 Bd4.] **55 Qf5! Bb2** [There is no salvation, White is winning after 55...Qa1 56 c7 Rxc7 57 Qh7+; or 55...a2 56 Qg6+ Kh8 57 Qh6+! Kg8 58 Bc4+ Rf7 59 Qxf6; or 55...Kg8 56 Qxf6 Rg7+ 57 Bg6.] **56 Qg6+ Kf8 57 Bc4 Bg7** [57...Rg7 58 Bc5+] **58 Qh7** [58 c7 Qd7 59 Bc5 would be a bit quicker but involved some calculation: 59...



Qd2+ 60 Kg3 Qe1+ 61 Kg4 Qd1+ 62 Kg5] 58...Ke8 59 Qg8+ Bf8 60 Qg6+ Kd8 61 Bb6+ Rc7 62 Qf6+ Ke8 63 Qe5+ Be7 [63...Re7 64 Qb8+ would be pretty] 64 Bxc7 Qc2+ 65 Qe2 1-0 I stop his a-pawn and he's just down a piece, so he resigned. This game shows how important it is to stop, think, relax, take a deep breath, and try to regain your composure when something unexpected happens to you. Try to start looking at the position like you're seeing it for the first time. Thankfully in this game I was able to do that. Not only did I avoid immediate collapse, but luck favored me and I was even able to come all the way back and win. Even if something goes wrong against a strong player, it's still often possible to recover.

### Aaron Jacobson - Jennifer Yu Sicilian

*Notes by GM Alex Lenderman*

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bg5 Nbd7 7 Qe2 Qc7 8 O-O-O e6 9 f4 Be7 10 g4 h6 11 Bxf6 [11 Bh4!? is also a very testing move and by far the preference of Stockfish] 11...Bxf6 12 h4 b5 13 a3 Rb8 14 Rh3 b4 15 axb4 Rxb4 16 Nb3 Bb7 17 Qe1! [17 Bg2 Nc5 18 Nxc5 dxc5 19 e5] 17...Nc5! [The strongest move. Stockfish approves. This invites favorable complications.] 18 Nd5 Bxd5 19 Qxb4 Bxb3 20 Rxb3 [20 e5 Be7 21 Rxb3 deserves attention too.] 20...Nxb3+ 21 Qxb3 O-O 22 e5! [If white doesn't go for complications he's just going to be attacked for free.] 22...dxe5 23 g5 Be7 24 g6 Rb8?! [24...Bxh4 ♣ was more accurate] 25 Rd7 [not sure if Jennifer saw this coming] 25...Qxd7 26 Qxb8+ Qd8 27 gxf7+ [27 Qxe5 is maybe slightly more precise. No point in releasing the tension too soon. 27...Bf6 28 Qe4 =] 27...Kxf7 28 Qxe5 Bf6 29 Qh5+ [29 Qe4 Qb6] 29...g6 30 Qxh6 Qa5 31 Kd1 Qa1+ 32 Ke2 Qxb2 33 Qh7+ Bg7 34 Kd2? [34 h5 Qxc2+ 35 Kf3 is enough counterplay for equality] 34...Qc3+ [34...Qd4+!? 35 Bd3 Qxf4+ 36 Kd1 Qg4+ 37 Be2 Qg1+ 38 Kd2 Kf8] 35 Kd1 Qa1+ 36 Ke2 Qc1 37 h5 Qxc2+ 38 Ke1? [Likely a time pressure mistake. 38 Kf3 =] 38...Kf8 39 Bxa6 [39 Be2 Qc1+ 40 Kf2 Bd4+] 39...Qb1+ [39...Bc3+ was also good enough, indeed was a bit stronger. 40 Kf1 Qd1+ 41 Kg2 Qg4+ 42 Kf2 Qxf4+ 43 Ke2 Qe4+ 44 Kf2 Bd4+] 40 Kf2 Qb6+ 41 Kg3 Qxa6 42 Qxg6 Qa3+ 43 Kg2 Qb2+ 44 Kf3 Qf6 45 Qe4 Qf5 46 Qa8+ Kf7 47 Qb7+ Kg8 48 Qc8+ Bf8 49 Kg3 Kf7 50 Qb7+ Be7 51 Qf3 Kg7 52 Qb7 Qf6 53 Qb5 Kh6 54 Kf3 Qf5 55 Qb8 Qxh5+ 56 Kg3 Bh4+ 57 Kh3 Be1+ 58 Kg2 Qe2+ 59 Kh1 Qf3+ 0-1 A nice game by Jennifer—very interesting opening, quite good calculation, and very good technique. Even the mistakes are hard to criticize, since they're not easy to spot without a computer.

Anand Dommalapati organized and directed, assisted by Andy Rea, Grishmeshwar Sinha, Jack Scheible, Sathish Nath, Ravi Ponugoti, Greg Vaserstein, Georgina Chin & scholastic scorekeeper Daly Chin. Special thanks to Jonathan Kenny for providing the wooden sets year after year for the Open and U200 sections, and to Bill Simmons for his professional photos. For more information, visit [cherryblossomchess.com](http://cherryblossomchess.com)



## Charlottesville Open

by *Andrew Rea*

Fifty-three players came out for the 2017 Charlottesville Open, a nice uptick from 2016! The top-rated entry in the Open Section was Yuri Barnakov, making a welcome, albeit fleeting, return to Virginia! He had a  $\frac{1}{2}$  point bye for round 1, and given the several upsets that was not the worst choice. I survived the damage—only to go down in flames in round 2, ouch! The die was cast in rd 3 as Yuri won again—would he be stopped?

It turns out that the top-rated player wins the event quite less than half the time, but here Yuri was not concerned about the stats. He continued to score with good moves and good plans! His win in round 4 left him  $\frac{1}{2}$  point ahead going to the final round. There he was held to a draw by Victor Guzman, but my draw against Bob Fischer meant that no one was catching Yuri. So the favorite scored first place alone, well done! Bryant Lohr won his final round to catch Guzman and Fischer at  $3\frac{1}{2}$ - $1\frac{1}{2}$  and tie for 2<sup>nd</sup> place—well played by this trio!

Our Under 1700 Section proved to be the more popular section. Here the top rated entry in this section did not win the group. Those honors instead went to Gideon Lohr, who started with a 4 game winning streak and ended with a final round draw against Vadim Barnakov. Congrats to Gideon! As might be expected with our more populated section, it was a scramble to see who would join Vadim at 4-1 and tie for second. When all had settled, it was D Eric Cecil and Roy Adrian Rhodes in the 4-Point Club alongside Vadim, well done!

Class prize winners in both sections, indeed the complete crosstables, can be viewed by clicking the Final Results button under Charlottesville Open on the VCF website, [www.vachess.org](http://www.vachess.org)

Many thanks to organizer Mike Hoffpauir, who was also set to be our Chief TD. As at chess, plans do not always survive contact, but our TD bench is good, and Josh Hibban was able to capably step in for Mike's absence, receiving many compliments from our players during the tournament. As noted, our bench is good, no question others would also have fared well—especially as we had not so many problems from our players; good sportsmanship is always well appreciated. Wait 'til next year!





# Roanoke Valley Chess Club Championship

by Michael Huff

Chase Bailey scored  $4\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$  to win the 2017 Roanoke Valley Chess Club Championship over the June 24-25 weekend. Courtney Barnes finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> with 4-1, and Felix McCain ( $3\frac{1}{2}$ ) placed 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Bailey, 21 years old, learned to play chess from his father at the age of 7, and was a part of Northside High School's chess team in Roanoke. Eventually, he discovered that the game of chess was his true calling in life. Casually playing online, going to chess clubs, looking over books, and enjoying the beauty of history's finest chess games all combined to ignite a passion in him for the Royal Game.

After practicing tirelessly for months, he prepared himself for his first major test of strength. Hard work pays off, and he won over \$7,000 at the 2016 Millionaire Chess tournament in Atlantic City. Chase felt with growing confidence that he could turn the game into a career for himself.

Outside of chess, Chase is an aspiring astrophysicist working at a convenience store to pay for chess tournaments and college tuition. He also dabbles in writing, having had a poem published in an online newsletter. He is also a jewelry maker. As a part-time amateur chess instructor, Chase offers inexpensive private lessons online or in person. Interested students can contact him at Chase.chak@gmail.com.

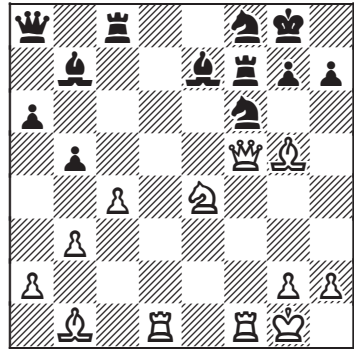
## Courtney Barnes - Chase Bailey Sicilian

Notes by Chase Bailey

**1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 a6** [Sicilian: Kan Variation. I was an 1...e5 player for years until I switched to the Najdorf Sicilian. I found that the Najdorf is far too sharp for me and often times I find myself in post-analysis missing 'only' moves that do nothing but maintain equality. For that reason I switched to the Sicilian Kan, a more positional reply that much resembles many positions that arise from 1 d4.]  
**5 Bd3** [Much like Mr Barnes' style to remain flexible and leave open the option of committing to a Maroczy bind setup with c4 or playing Nc3. It's surprising to me, however, that 5 Bd3 is the most-played move according to my database, as I feel that most people when given the opportunity to play a Maroczy bind will happily oblige immediately.]  
**5...Qc7 6 c4** [Again I am surprised by my database, as it gives this move as the 4th most played reply to Qc7]  
**6...Nf6 7 Nc3 d6** [Second-most-played move in this position. Most people go for 7...Nc6, and after 8 Nxc6 they take with the d-pawn, so that they have a c-pawn again, giving the option to play ...c5 clamping on the dark squares, and opening the d-file. The downside is that it takes a few moves to get the queenside going for Black. So I concede to playing a safer hedgehog setup with d6, b6, and fianchettoing my light-squared bishop earlier to get



faster pressure on the c-file and the long a8-h1 diagonal.] **8 Be3 Nbd7 9 Rc1 b6 10 O-O Bb7 11 f3 Rc8 12 b3 Qb8** [A novelty. More typical is to fianchetto the dark-squared bishop and castle. The point with 12...Qb8 is to get the queen off of the same file as the Rc1 and prepare ...Qa8, where Black intensifies pressure on the long diagonal, preparing a ...d5 break. Objectively speaking this is a flawed plan, as White has many opportunities to lessen the effects of ...d5, seeing as how Black's king is still in the center and will take a few moves to get castled.] **13 Qe2 Be7** [Looking to get castled quickly, as f4-f5 could be an issue with the queen on e2 and my king still in the center.] **14 Bb1** [Maintaining the bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal, as it could be a useful piece once the center is opened.] **14...O-O 15 Rcd1** [White's first inaccuracy. Leaving the defense of the knight on c3 gives Black the opportunity to weaken White's pawn structure and ultimately control of d5, eventually making the ...d5 push and this Qb8-Qa8 idea more effective.] **15...b5 16 f4** [Another misstep, trying to justify the mistake from the previous move by launching something on the kingside. Sometimes the best way to patch up a mistake, however, is to admit that it was a mistake. Stockfish gives simply bringing the Rook back with 16 Rc1 as the best move.] **16...Qa8 17 e5** [A decisive blunder. This just loses a pawn for nothing. White is looking for sacrifices to bring his pieces to life, but Black can adequately defend.] **17...dxe5 18 fxe5 Nxe5 19 Bg5 Ng6 20 Nxe6** [Another flawed sacrifice, though again I can understand that it was played in the effort to bring pieces to life against Black's king while the queen is seemingly out of commission on a8.] **20...fxe6 21 Qxe6+ Rf7 22 Ne4 Nf8 23 Qf5** (*diagram*) **23...Bxe4** [I played this trying to simplify into a better endgame against the higher-rated White player. I felt that if I could get more pieces off the board, I would have a better chance to grind out the endgame with two minor pieces against a rook. However, of course, the fearless engine



## Roanoke Valley Chess Club

The Roanoke Valley Chess Club has a new location and meeting schedule, as well as a revised program of events that includes a weekly rated game challenge ladder. The club now meets in the Community Room of the Raleigh Court Branch Library, 2112 Grandin Road, SW, Roanoke, Va 24015, on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 9:30 pm. For further information contact Mike Huff ([info@roanokechess.com](mailto:info@roanokechess.com) / 540-345-7365) or visit the club's online portals at [www.roanokechess.com](http://www.roanokechess.com) or [www.facebook.com/roanokechess](http://www.facebook.com/roanokechess)





disagrees, saying that the position is now close to equal and Black has given away most of his advantage. Something like 23...bxc4 24 Bxf6 Bxf6 25 Qg4 h5 26 Nxf6+ Rxf6 27 Qe2 Rc7 would have been a way to keep the game complex and favorable for Black.] **24 Bxe4 Qxe4 25 Qxc8 h6 26 Rde1 Qd3 27 Rf3 Qc2 28 Rf2 Qd3** [At this point I was content with a draw against the higher-rated Barnes. I went to the bathroom expecting to come back to a draw offer. Instead, I returned to a shocking blunder.] **29 Be3** [Probably 29 Bc1 was best, trying to bring the bishop to a square where it supports White's queenside pawn majority, though the position still affords a slight edge to Black. Barnes acknowledged after the game that he initially intended 29 Bc1, but opted instead for the text based on a miscalculation.] **29...Bb4 30 Bd2** [Simply giving up the bishop on e3 by 30 Re1 was better, but of course White is busted anyway.] **30...Bxd2 31 Rd1 Ne4 0-1** White resigned. 32 Rxf7 would fail to 32...Be3+



Daniel Maxwell - Geoff McKenna  
DC Chess League 2017  
Queen's Indian

*Notes by Geoff McKenna*

**1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 b6 4 Bg2 Bb7 5 O-O Be7 6 Nc3 O-O 7 d4** [It is may be more precise to inhibit exchanges with 7 Qc2, but both sides opt for a main line.] **7...Ne4 8 Bd2 Bf6 9 Rc1 c5 10 d5 exd5 11 cxd5 Nxc3 12 Bxc3 d6** [Kind of like a Benoni, only a lot less intense.] **13 e4** [Both bishops are bad for different reasons.] **13...Nd7 14 Re1 Re8 15 Rc2 b5 16 Bxf6 Qxf6 17 Rce2 b4** [Black plans to advance his queenside pawn blob, while White aims at e5.] **18 b3 a5 19 Nd2 Ba6 20 Nc4 Bxc4 21 bxc4 Nb6 22 Qd3 Na4?!** [Maybe 22...a4 is better, but I was worried about White advancing a2-a3] **23 Re3 Nb6** [Black wimps out. After 23...Nc3 White can play a3 to reduce Black's pawn mass, and after 23...Nb2 the knight might get overextended.] **24 f4** [Now it feels like White's preparations are advancing a lot faster than Black's.] **24...Qd4 25 Qxd4 cxd4 26 Rd3 Nxc4 27 Rxd4 Nb6?!** [It looks more natural to play 27...Na3] **28 Rc1 Na4 29 Rc6 Nc3 30 Rd2 a4 31 Rb2?** [Too slow. After 31 Rxd6 White is a whole move ahead of the game, although Black can still try the same ideas.] **31...Nxa2!** [Now Black is faster.] **32 Rxa2 b3 33 Ra3 b2 34 Rb6 Re8 35 Rxb2 Rxb2 36 Bf1 Rb3 37 Ra2 Re3 38 e5 dxe5 39 fxe5?!** **Rxe5 40 Bc4 Re4 41 Bb3 Rb4 42 Bc2 Kf8 0-1** No more back rank mates, so White resigned.



# Reflections REFLECTIONS



Looking Back on an Amateur Chess “Career”

by Mark Warriner

VICTORY 2.0 “RELOADED” –

1990-94 VA CORRESPONDENCE CO-CHAMPION REVISITED, PART I

I was at the local club a couple of months ago when then-Expert Jason Morefield (now newly minted Master; congrats!) was asked whether we had any good players. He modestly responded that we had one good player, State Champion Qindong Yang. I couldn't help but rib poor Jason, a junior, who is obviously pretty good himself. “Hey! What am I over here, chopped liver?!” He gave me a blank stare. Of course he was quite correct; I'm a club patzer these days and typically Jason beats me quite soundly. In his defense, at 14 he's too young to know that once upon a long time ago I won the Virginia State Correspondence Championship and so can rightly claim to be a Virginia Champion. Okay, co-champion (there was a tie for first). In my defense, life takes twists and turns and, as is unfortunately the case for so many of us, the time one can devote to studying the game sometimes dwindles with the passage of time. Caissa cares not one whit. Such a perfectionist!

I remember a photo of VCF State Champions taken a few years ago and posted on the VCF website. I remember because I was sitting there just a dozen feet away, watching as it was taken, and feeling more than a tad miffed that I was roundly ignored by the then-VCF President as he gathered the illustrious players present for the occasion. Correspondence Chess just doesn't get the respect it deserves. And how quickly they forget. Painfully I recognize that some of the games in this column have proven I'm most definitely not illustrious. Put the Ego and the pieces back in the box. *Sigh...*

Any-who, and perhaps in a fit of vanity, with the advent of strong engines and blazing fast multi-core CPUs, I thought it would be fun to revisit some of the games from way back in 1990-1994. The evaluations certainly change! Besides, at least a third to possibly half of the readership wasn't even born when the event took place. Egads!

Mark Warriner – Dr Thomas Reach

1990 VA Correspondence Championship - Preliminaries

Caro Kann

**1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Bf5 5 Ng3 Bg6 6 h4 h6 7 Nf3 Nd7 8 h5 Bh7 9 Bd3 Bxd3 10 Qxd3 Ngf6** [No comments up until this point as all this has been played thousands of times before. 10...e6 is more typical than 10...Ngf6] **11 Bf4** [also 11 Bd2 is played more often] **11...Qa5+** **12 Bd2 Qc7 13 O-O-O O-O-O** [and again, more common 13...e6, delaying castling] **14 Ne4 e6 15 g3 Nxe4 16 Qxe4 Nf6 17 Qe2 Bd6 18 Ne5** [Still “theory”, though much less usual than 18 c4] **18...c5 19 Rh4** [This



line has a slight tendency to favor White, though Black chooses the statistically most favorable response.] **19...Nd5 20 Kb1** [We're down to only one game in my database, which White also won.] **20...f6?** [Not so hot, but White doesn't find the refutation. Medvegy-Kiss, Budapest 2000 went 20...Bxe5 21 dxe5 Ne7 22 b3 Rd5 23 Bc3 Rhds 24 Rxd5 Rxd5 25 Rh1 Nc6 26 Qg4 Nd4 27 Bxd4 cxd4 28 Qxg7 Qxe5 29 Qxh6 Qf5 30 Qf4 Qh7 31 h6 d3 32 Qc4+ Kb8 33 cxd3 Rxd3 34 Qc2 and White eventually won.] **21 Nd3?** [21 Ng6 Rhe8 22 dxc5 Bxc5 23 b4! Black has problems on the c-file (Rh4-c4). 23...Qd6 (neither 23...Bxb4 24 Bxb4 Nxb4 25 Rxd8+ Rxd8 26 Rxb4 b ); nor 23...Nxb4 24 Bxb4 Bxb4 25 Rxd8+ Rxd8 26 Rxb4 are any good) 24 bxc5 Nc3+ 25 Bxc3 Qxd1+ 26 Qxd1 Rxd1+ 27 Kb2. I'm not going to pretend I fully understand why this is considered favorable for White, but our Metal Friend says he's in the driver's seat. I see that White has two minor pieces for a rook and a bit more space.] **21...Rhe8?** [21...c4 22 Qxe6+ Kb8 23 Qxd5 cxd3 24 c4 was preferable] **22 dxc5 Be5** [or 22...Bf8 23 c4 Ne7 24 Qxe6+ Qd7 25 Qxd7+ Rxd7 26 Bc3 Red8 (26...Nc6 27 b4) 27 Kc2] **23 c3?** [Maybe not as accurate as 23 Re4] **23...Ne7** [23...Qc6] **24 f4?** [24 Re4 and then if 24...Nc6 25 b4 a6 26 Nb2; or if 24...Qd7 25 Nxe5 fxe5 26 Rxe5 Nc6 27 Re4] **24...Nf5?** [24...Qd7 25 fxe5 Qxd3+ 26 Qxd3 Rxd3 27 exf6 gxf6 28 Rh2 (or 28 g4)] **25 Rh3 Bd4 26 cxd4 Nxd4 27 Qf1 b6?** [Not as good as a couple of the alternatives (27...Nc6; 27...Rd5) but Black was in trouble anyway.] **28 Rc1 b5** [28...Kb7 29 g4 Ka8 30 Qg2+ Qc6 31 Qxc6+ Nxc6 32 cxb6] **29 Bc3?** [Inaccurate. 29 c6 Nf5 30 g4 Nd6 31 Bb4] **29...Qc6** [29...Nc6 30 g4] **30 Nb4?** [Again, inaccurate. 30 g4 or 30 Ba5] **30...Qe4+ 31 Qd3?** [And again. 31 Ka1 a5 32 Bxd4 axb4 33 Bf2] **31...Qg2?** [And that will end the game.] **32 Bxd4 Rxd4 33 Qxd4 Rd8 34 Rh2?** [There was a long forced mate beginning with 34 Qe3] **34...Qxh2** [Forced mate back on!] **35 Qe4 Rd2 36 Qxe6+ 1-0**

Mark Warriner – Robert Wilson

1990 VA Correspondence Championship - Preliminaries

Sicilian

**1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Bd7 4 Bxd7+ Nxd7 5 O-O Ngf6 6 Qe2 g6** [6...e6 is more common and has tended to score better for Black than the text.] **7 c3 Bg7 8 d4 cxd4 9 cxd4 d5** [9...e5, 9...O-O & 9...e6 have all scored better for Black than the game move, in order of statistical favorability.] **10 e5 Ne4 11 Qb5** [I went for a line that's only been played once in today's databases, but that game was a win for White. I say "today's" databases were in their infancy because back when this game was played, and most players didn't have access to them. Foldi-Blasko, Gyongyos 1998 now continued 11...e6 12 Qxb7 O-O 13 Qa6 Nb6 14 Nbd2 f6 15 exf6 Bxf6 16 Qe2 Nd6 17 Qxe6+ Kh8 18 Ne5 Qc7 19 Qh3 Bxe5 20 dxe5 Ne4 21 Nxe4 dxe4 22 Bd2 Nd5 23 Qe6 Qb7 24 Rad1 Rfe8 25 Qd6 Rad8 26 Qc5 Nb6 27 Bg5 Rc8 28 Bf6+ Kg8 29 Qb5 h6 30 Rd6 Qf7 31 Rfd1 Qxa2 32 b3 Qc2 33 Bd8 Rf8 34 Bxb6 axb6 35 Qd5+ Kh8 36 Qd4 Qc5 37 Qxc5 Rxc5 38 Rxc6 Rxe5 39 Rxh6+ Kg7 40 Rxb6 Ref5 41 Rf1 1-0] **11...Qc7? 12 Qxd5** [White's in the driver's seat. Black tries some tricks, but not good ones.] **12...Qc2** [12...f5 13 Qb3 Nb6 14 Na3 (14 Nbd2)] **13 Na3** [13 Qxb7 was better] **13...Qc6 14 Qb3** [14 Qxc6 bxc6 15 Re1 (15 Nc4 O-O 16 Re1 f5 17 Nh4) 15...f5 16 Nh4] **14...f5?** [14...O-O 15 Ne1 (15 Bf4 Qb6 or 15...e6) 15...h6 16 Qh3 Ng5 17 Bxg5 hxg5 18 Nf3] **15 Ng5 Nxc6 16 Bxc6 e6** [16...Nb6] **17 Rac1** [17 Nb5; 17 Rfc1] **17...Qb6** [17...Qd5 18 Qxd5 exd5 19 Rc7] **18 Nc4?** [18 Nb5



O-O 19 Rc7 Rf7 20 d5] 18...Qxb3 19 Nd6+ Kf8 20 axb3 h6 [20...Nb6] 21 Rc7 [21 Bd2] 21...hxg5? [21...Nb6 22 Bd2 Nd5 23 Rxb7] 22 Rxd7 b6? [22...Kg8; 22...a5] 23 g3? [23 Rc1] 23...Kg8 24 Rc1 a6 25 Nf7? [25 Rcc7] 25...Rh5 26 Rcc7 [26 Rc6; 26 Nd8] 26...Bf8 [26...g4] 27 Nd8? [27 Nd6] 27...g4 28 Nxe6 Bh6 [28...Re8] 29 Rds+? [29 d5] 29...Rxd8 30 Nxd8 Bd2 [30...f4] 31 e6 [Wins, but 31 d5 was superior] 1-0

Harry Cohen – Mark Warriner

1990 VA Correspondence Championship - Finals

English

1 c4 g6 2 Nc3 Bg7 3 g3 e5 [There are several other good possibilities: 3...d6, 3...Nf6, 3...c5. My aim was two-fold, to contest the center ASAP and to let White know that I didn't intend to follow a "quiet" route.] 4 Bg2 d6 5 d3 f5 6 e3 [played about as often as 6 e4] 6...Nf6 7 Nge2 a5 [A much less common continuation compared to several other possibilities, but it scores well and certainly has top level adherents.] 8 O-O [8 b3 c6 9 Bb2 Na6 10 Qd2 O-O 11 O-O Re8 12 h3 Be6 13 Rad1 Qc7 14 d4 Rad8 15 Na4 b6 16 Qc1 Bf7 17 Qa1 Rd7 18 Nac3 g5 19 d5 c5 20 e4 f4 21 g4 h5 22 f3 Bg6 23 Kf2 Bf8 24 Ke1 Rh7 25 Kd2 Qd7 26 Rh1 Nc7 27 Rdg1 Kf7 28 Qf1 Bh6 29 Nc1 Rb8 30 Nb5 Nxb5 31 cxb5 hxg4 32 hxg4 Bg7 33 Rxh7 Bxh7 34 a4 Rh8 35 Nd3 Qc7 36 Nf2 Nd7 37 Rh1 Bg6 38 Nh3 Qd8 39 Bc3 Bf6 40 Kc1 Kg7 41 Kb2 Bf7 42 Ka2 Nf8 43 Rg1 Ng6 44 Qd3 Rh6 45 Ka3 Qh8 46 Qf1 Bd8 47 Nf2 Bc7 48 Nd3 Rh2 49 Nb2 Nf8 50 Nc4 Nd7 51 Be1 Kf6 52 Qf2 Ke7 53 Rf1 Rh6 54 Qg1 Bg6 55 Ka2 Bf7 56 Rf2 Bg6 57 Rd2 Bf7 58 Bf2 Qb8 59 Qc1 Qa7 60 Rc2 Kf6 61 Bg1 Qa8 62 Nb2 Bd8 63 Bf1 Kg7 64 Nc4 Qb8 65 Bg2 Rh8 66 Bf2 Rh6 67 Be1 Rh8 68 Bc3 Rh6 69 Qe1 Qa7 70 Qg1 Qb8 71 Bf1 Bc7 72 Rh2 Rxh2+ 73 Qxh2 Qd8 74 Kb2 Bg6 75 Kc1 Bf7 76 Nb2 Qh8 77 Qg2 Qd8 78 Kd1 Qh8 79 Bd3 Qd8 80 Ke1 Bg6 81 Kf1 Kf7 82 Kg1 Kg7 83 Nc4 Bf7 84 Qh2 Bg6 85 Kf2 Bf7 86 Ke2 Bg6 87 Qh1 Bf7 88 Qh2 Bg6 89 Qh1 Bf7 90 Qh2 ½-½, Nakamura-Short, London 2011] 8...O-O 9 b3 c6 10 Bb2 Na6 [Unbeknownst to me, a game Gurevich – Kasparov was played at about the same time: 1.c4 g6 2.Nc3 Bg7 3.g3 e5 4.Bg2 d6 5.d3 f5 6.e3 a5 7.Nge2 Nf6 8.0-0 0-0 9.b3 c6 10.Bb2 Na6 11.Qd2 Bd7 12.Kh1 Rc8 13.Rae1 b5 14.e4 Nc5 15.cxb5 cxb5 16.exf5 Bxf5 17.Ne4 b4 18.Rc1 Nfxe4 19.dxe4 Bd7 20.Rcd1 Bb5 21.Qe3 a4 22.Rfe1 Qb6 23.Nc1 a3 24.Ba1 Bd7 25.Nd3 Be6 26.f4 Rc6 27.Nf2 Nd7 28.Qd2 Nc5 29.Bh3 Bf7 30.fxe5 dxe5 31.Ng4 Be6 32.Nh6+ Kh8 33.Bxe6 Nxe6 34.Ng4 Nd4 35.Bxd4 exd4 36.Nf2 Rc3 37.Nh3 d3 38.Nf4 Rc2 39.Qxd3 Rxa2 40.Rf1 Rf2 41.Rxf2 Qxf2 42.Rd2 Qa7 43.Qe2 Bc3 44.Rc2 Qf7 45.e5 Qb7+ 46.Qg2 Qxg2+ 47.Kxg2 Bb2 48.Rf2 a2 49.Nxg6+ hxg6 50.Rxf8+ Kg7 51.Rf1 Bxe5 52.Kf3 a1 Q 53.Rxa1 Bxa1 54.Ke4 Kf6 0-1] 11 Rc1 [This goes down a route that has tended to favor Black, but there's still room for debate. Didn't know Harry and I were such trailblazers, lol!] 11...Bd7 12 Na4 Qc7 [My "novelty" and not a bad one, though maybe 12...b6 was a tad better.] 13 c5 [13 Qd2; 13 a3] 13...Nxc5 14 Nxc5 dxc5 15 Rxc5 Rfe8 [So we have sort of funky opposing pawn structures, but things should be fine for both sides. 15...Qd6 was possible too.] 16 Qb1 [Not at all bad, but I was more worried about 16 Qa1 Ng4 17 h3 Qd6 18 Rfc1 Qxd3 19 hxg4 Qxe2 20 Rd1 Be6 21 Bxe5] 16...Bf8 [16...b6] 17 Rcc1 Bg7 [17...Be6] 18 Qc2 [18 Rc5] 18...Qd6 [Nobody's getting very pugilistic now; so much for my intentions earlier. 18...Be6 & 18...Rad8 were also playable.] 19 Rfd1 [19 e4 Rad8 20 Rcd1 was a way to mix it up.] 19...Rad8 [I wish now that I'd given 19...Nd5 a



go.] **20 Qc5 Bf8 21 Qxa5 Ra8 22 Qc3 Rxa2?** [This mistake could have cost me. 22... Nd5 23 Bxd5+ cxd5 24 a3 and Black's comp' for the pawn is the bishop pair, space, and his pawns controlling the center.] **23 Ra1** [23 d4!] **23...Rxa1 24 Rxa1 Nd5 25 Qd2** [25 Qc1] **25...Nb4** [25...Be6] **26 d4 e4** [26...Be6; 26...exd4] **27 Bf1 Nd5 28 Ba3 Qf6** [28...Qc7] **29 Bxf8** [29 Nc3] **29...Rxf8** [29...Qxf8] **30 Ra7 Bc8 31 Nc3 Nxc3 32 Qxc3 g5 33 Qc5** [33 Qc2; 33 Bc4+; 33 Ra8] **33...f4 34 Bc4+** [34 gxf4 gxf4 35 Qe5 Qg7+ 36 Qxg7+ Kxg7 37 b4] **34...Kh8** [34...Kg7] **35 exf4 gxf4** [And we have what the aforementioned Nigel Short refers to as a "damp squib."]  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$

Harry has always been a tough opponent for me, so I was more than happy to obtain the draw. For those who don't know, Harry has been a strong Expert for decades. We first played back in the late eighties. I hope it's not an unpleasant memory (I think it's an honor), but Harry is featured in John Emms' excellent *The Survival Guide to Rook Endings* (ISBN 987-1-904600-94-7, Gambit, 2008). It's a loss, but it's against Grandmaster Georgy Timoshenko! Harry's definitely "got game!"

Okay, so maybe no works of art or brilliancies but suffice it to say that at least in correspondence chess, "I had a little game!" *To be continued...*



## FROM THE EDITOR

As I write, the US Open has returned to Virginia for the first time in over two decades. When I say "as I write" I mean literally—I am composing this in my Norfolk hotel room between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> rounds. Hosting the Open is a big accomplishment for Virginia chess organizers, and it deserves prominent coverage in our newsletter. One of my few regrets as editor is that VIRGINIA CHESS did not do more with the World Open during the years that it came to Virginia. But, like the World Open, the US Open is a national event that happens to be in Virginia, not a Virginia event *per se*. I see little point in a conventional tournament report, repeating the same list of prizewinners, etc that will surely appear in CHESS LIFE and elsewhere. VIRGINIA CHESS should feature the stories of Virginia players and the opportunity presented them by having this premier event close to home. So I want to make this special appeal to any of our readers who played the 2017 US Open. Send me something! **If you had a good game, if you took a good photo, if you have a good story to share, please send them to me.** You don't have to be a master! My hope is that next issue can include a compendium of Virginia US Open memories and adventures.



Of course, next issue will also feature coverage of the state championship, which by then will have occurred over Labor Day weekend. Does defending champion Qindong Yang repeat? Will a new star emerge? We shall see...

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