

VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the
Virginia Chess Federation

2018 - #2



2018 Virginia Open: GM Jianchao Zhou Dominates

State Champion Balakrishnan, IMs Ostrovskiy & Ahuja tie for 2nd

Also inside...

State Scholastic Championship
Macon Shibut Remembers John Campbell



VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

2018 - Issue #2

Editor:

Macon Shibut
8234 Citadel Place
Vienna VA 22180
vcfeditor@cox.net

Circulation:

Georgina Chin
2851 Cherry Branch Lane
Herndon VA 20171
membership@vachess.org



Virginia Chess is published six times per year by the Virginia Chess Federation. Membership benefits include a subscription to *Virginia Chess*. Send material for publication to the editor. Send dues, address changes, etc to Circulation.

The **Virginia Chess Federation (VCF)** is a



non-profit organization for the use of its members.

Dues for regular adult membership are \$15/yr.

Junior memberships (under age 18 at expiration)

are \$8/yr. President: Adam Chrisney,

PO Box 151122, Alexandria, VA 22315

chrisney2@gmail.com Membership Secretary: Georgina Chin, 2851 Cherry

Branch Lane, Herndon VA 20171, membership@vachess.org Treasurer

Mike Hoffpauir, 405 Hounds Chase, Yorktown VA 23693, [mhoffpauir@](mailto:mhoffpauir@aol.com)

[aol.com](mailto:mhoffpauir@aol.com) Scholastics Coordinator: Mike Hoffpauir, mhoffpauir@aol.com

Women's Chess Coordinator Tina Schweiss, cschweiss2@cox.com Virginia/

Maryland/DC Tournament Clearinghouse: Mike Atkins, [matkins2@](mailto:matkins2@comcast.net)

comcast.net VCF Inc Directors: Andrew Rea, Akshay Indusekar, Ernie

Schlich, Michael Callaham, Andrew Rea, Adam Chrisney.





2018 Virginia Open

by Andrew Rea

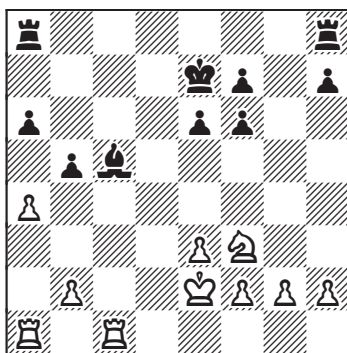
OUR 51st Virginia Open drew 127 players from all over the map—including China by way of Texas! The native Virginia players included notably a contingent from remote Chesapeake, as in north of the Bridge. Forty-eight players took aim at the Championship Section, headed by GM Jianchao Zhou. Satisfied with his win in the first Round 1, the GM notified the TDs he would take a ½ point for the final round. A fine decision, as he also won his next 3 games. Zhou's 4th rd4 victory against Virginia state champion IM Praveen Balakrishnan was most notable for deciding who would win the tournament. Not fearing simplification, the grandmaster cultivated a small but persistent positional advantage.

Jianchao Zhou - Praveen Balakrishnan

Trompowsky

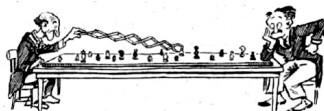
1 d4 Nf6 2 Bg5 d5 3 Bxf6 gxf6 4 e3 c5 5 dxc5 e6 6 c4 dxc4 7 Qxd8+ Kxd8
8 Bxc4 Bxc5 9 Nf3 a6 10 Nbd2 Ke7 11 Ke2 Nd7 12 Rhd1 b5 13 Bd3 Bb7 14
Be4 Bxe4 15 Nxe4 Bb6 16 a4 Nc5 17 Nxc5 Bxc5 18 Rdc1 (diagram)

18...Kd6 19 Rc2 Bb6 20 a5 Bd8 21 Rd1+
Ke7 22 Nd4 f5 23 Nc6+ Kf6 24 Rcd2 Be7 25
Rd7 Rhe8 26 Rb7 Rac8 27 Rb6 Bc5 28 Rxa6
Rc7 29 Rd8 Rxd8 30 Nxd8 Rd7 31 Ra8 Bb4
32 g3 Rd2+ 33 Kf1 Rxb2 34 Ra7 Be7 35
Nc6 Bc5 36 Rb7 Rc2 37 Nb8 b4 38 Nd7+
Kg6 39 a6 b3 40 Rxb3 Bd6 41 a7 Ra2 1-0



IM Aleksandr Ostrovskiy went to great lengths trying to defeat IM Tegshsuren Enkhbat in round 5, not letting up as the game went past move 100, beyond 120, into the 130s... However, he was not able to break his opponent's grim defense: draw. But Ostrovskiy conceded only one other draw, thus joining Balakrishnan and IM Rohan Ahuja in tie for 2nd-4th places at 4-1.

The Amateur section, for players rated under 1900, was no less fiercely competitive with 80+ players. Varun Vonteru ran well out of the gate, winning his first four games. Alas, there was a fifth round and Pinyi Hu was evidently not ready to concede anything. By defeating Varun he reached 4½-½ and with Donovan Chong & Ziyue Yang a 3-way tie for first prize.





Pinyi Hu - Varun Vonteru Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 g6 5 c4 Bg7 6 Be3 Nf6 7 Nc3 d6 8 f3 Bd7 9 Qd2 a6 10 Be2 Rc8 11 Rc1 O-O 12 O-O Re8 13 Rfd1 Ne5 14 b3 Qa5 15 Nd5 [15 a3!? Qxa3 16 Nb1 Qc5 17 Ne6 Qc6 18 Nxg7 Kxg7] 15...Qxd2 16 Nxf6+ Bxf6 17 Rxd2 Red8 18 Rcd1 Kf8 19 h3 Ke8 20 f4 [20 Nc2 Be6 21 f4 Nd7 (21...Nc6 22 Bb6 Rd7 23 g4) 22 g4 Bc3 23 Rd3 ±] 20...Nc6 21 Nf3 Rb8 22 Bb6 Rdc8 23 c5 Nb4 24 a3 Bc3 25 axb4 Bxd2 26 Rxd2 dxc5 27 bxc5 f6 28 Bc4 e6 29 Rd6 Rc6 30 e5 Rxd6 31 cxd6 fxe5 32 fxe5 Kf8 33 Ng5 Re8 34 Nxh7+ Kg7 35 Nf6 Rf8 36 Nxd7 1-0

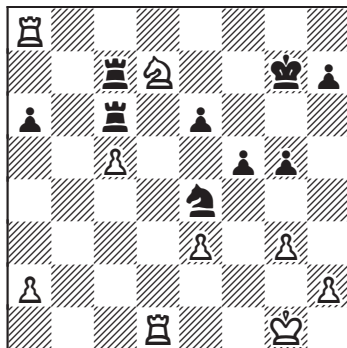
Of course there were additional prize winners. Their names can be found on the VCF website, www.vachess.org—well played and well earned! Special kudos to Naveen Balakrishnan for showing there is more than one chess player in that family, and to Fidel Guerrero made his long trip worthwhile by sharing the top Unrated.

The event was well organized by Mike Hoffpauir, and well directed by Chief TD Anand Dommalapati. It's a good sign when the event runs well and is made to look easy—a credit for our staff and for our players, thanks! And thanks to the good attendance, the VCF able to increase the prize fund at site from \$4000 to \$5100!

Aleksandr Ostrovskiy – Jack Barrow Sicilian

Notes by Jack Barrow

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Bd7 4 Bxd7+ Qxd7 5 O-O Nf6 6 e5 dxe5 7 Nxe5 Qc7 8 d4 e6 [trying to get the bishop out so I can castle kingside to get out of trouble] 9 Bf4 Qb6 10 Nd2 cxd4 11 Ndc4 Qc5 12 c3 dxc3 13 bxc3 Be7 14 Rb1 b5 15 Qf3 Qd5 [Returning the pawn so as to exchange queens and reduce White's chances of attack; if instead 15...Nd5? 16 Be3 with no way to prevent 17 Qxf7+ without substantial loss of material or destroying Black's chances of getting the king to safety.] 16 Rxb5 Qxf3 17 Nxf3 O-O [finally!] 18 Rb7 Nc6 19 Nce5 Nxe5 20 Nxe5 Bc5 21 c4 Ne4 [Pressure on f2 pawn and forces White's king rook to stay put for the time-being.] 22 g3 g5 23 Be3 Bxe3 24 fxe3 f5 25 Nd7 Rfc8 [The passed c-pawn is a potential threat; getting rid of it is of high priority.] 26 Rc1 Rc6 27 c5 a6 [relieving the queenside rook of its duty to guard the a-pawn so it can double up on the c-file] 28 Rd1 Rac8 29 Ra7 R8c7 [At this point, White had only roughly 3 minutes left on the clock.] 30 Ra8+ Kg7 (diagram)



Bye-bye c-pawn



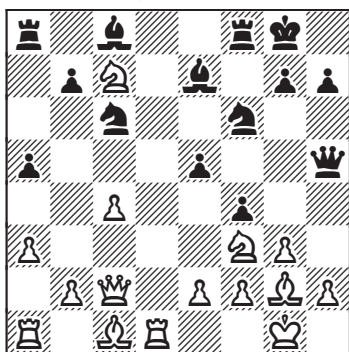
31 Nb8 Rxc5 32 Nxa6 Rc1 33 Nxc7 Rxd1+ 34 Kg2 Rd2+ 35 Kg1 Rd1+ 36 Kg2 Rd2+ 37 Kg1 [I debated whether to play for a possible win with 37...Kf6, but considering the late it hour and not wanting to risk screwing up, I decided to go for the perpetual.] 37... Rd1+ 38 Kg2 and I accepted White's draw offer. ½-½

Andy Huang - Simon Steel Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Nc6 6 Ndb5 d6 7 Bf4 e5 8 Bg5 a6 9 Na3 b5 10 Nd5 Qa5+ 11 Bd2 Qd8 12 c4 Nxe4 13 cxb5 Be6 14 Nc3 Nxc3 15 Bxc3 axb5 16 Bxb5 Qb6 17 Qe2 Rb8 18 Ba4 Bd7 19 O-O Be7 20 Nc4 Qa7 21 Bb3 O-O 22 Rfd1 Rfd8 23 Ne3 Bf8 24 Qf3 Be8 25 Rac1 Kh8 26 h3 Rbc8 27 Nd5 Ne7 28 Ne3 Ng6 29 g3 f6 30 Bb4 Bf7 31 Bxf7 Qxf7 32 Rxc8 Rxc8 33 b3 Qe6 34 h4 Rd8 35 Qc6 Ne7 36 Qc7 Rc8 37 Qxd6 Qg8 38 Qd7 1-0

Praveen Balakrishnan - Akshay Indusekar Dutch

1 d4 e6 2 c4 f5 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 g3 Be7 5 Bg2 O-O 6 O-O d6 7 Qc2 a5 8 Nc3 Nc6 9 Rd1 Qe8 10 a3 e5 11 dxe5 dxe5 12 Nb5 Qh5 13 Nxc7 f4



14 Nxa8 Bc5 15 Rd5 Bf5 16 Qb3 fxg3 17 hxg3 Bxf2+ 18 Kxf2 Ne4+ 19 Kg1 Qg4 20 Nxe5 Nxe5 21 Rxe5 Qxe2 22 c5+ Kh8 23 Qf3 Qe1+ 24 Qf1 1-0

Andrew Samuelson - Rohan Ahuja Bishop's

1 e4 e5 2 Bc4 Nf6 3 d3 c6 4 Nf3 d5 5 Bb3 Bb4+ 6 c3 Bd6 7 Nbd2 O-O 8 O-O Nbd7 9 Re1 Re8 10 Nf1 h6 11 Ng3 Nc5 12 Bc2 dxe4 13 dxe4 Be6 14 b4 Na6 15 Qe2 Qc7 16 Nh4 Bf8 17 Nhf5 Kh7 18 Qf3 Ng8 19 Nf1 g6 20 g4 f6 21 N1g3 Qf7 22 h4 Nc7 23 Ne3 Nb5 24 Bb2 Nd6 25 Kg2 a5 26 a3 Red8 27 Rh1 Nc4 28 Nxc4 Bxc4 29 Qe3 Qd7 30 Rad1 Qxg4 31 Qb6 Rd7 32 Rxd7+ Qxd7 33 Rd1 Qf7 34 bxa5 h5 35 Bc1 Be6 36 f4 Bh6 37 fxe5 fxe5 38 Bg5 Bxg5 39 hxg5 h4 40 Qc5 Qf4 41 Nf1 h3+ 42 Kg1 Rf8 43 Qe3 Qg4+ 44 Qg3 Rxf1+ 0-1

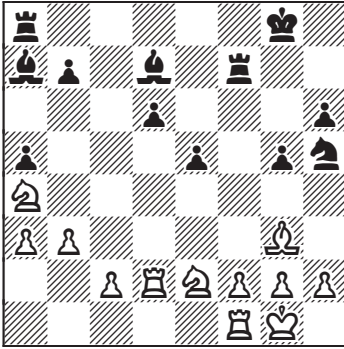
Abhinav Mundayat-Andrew Samuelson Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Nb3 Nc6 7 Be2 e6 8 O-O Be7 9 a4 b6 10 Be3 Bb7 11 f3 O-O 12 Qd2 Rc8 13 Rfd1 Qc7 14 Bf4 Rfd8 15 Qe1 Nb4 16 Rac1 e5 17 Bg3 d5 18 exd5 Nfxd5 19 Nxd5 Bxd5 20 c4 Be6 21 Rxd8+ Rxd8 22 Rc3 f6 23 Nd2 Qd7 24 Nb1 Qxa4 25 b3 Qa2 26 Bf2 Bf5 0-1

Andrew Samuelson-Praveen Balakrishnan Vienna

1 e4 e5 2 Bc4 Nf6 3 d3 Nc6 4 Nc3 Na5 5 Nge2 Bc5 6 O-O O-O 7 a3 Nxc4 8 dxc4 a5 9 Qd3 d6 10 Bg5 h6 11 Bh4 g5 12 Bg3 Nh5 13 Rad1 Be6 14 Na4 Ba7 15 c5 Qe8 16 b3 f5 17 exf5 Bxf5 18 Qd5+ Qf7 19 Qxf7+ Rxf7 20 Rd2 Bd7 21 cxd6 cxd6

(diagram next page)



22 Rxd6 Raf8 23 Bxe5 Bxf2+ 24 Kh1
 Re8 25 Bc3 Rxe2 26 Rxh6 Ng7 27 Rg6
 Rxc2 28 Bxa5 Bb6 29 Rxg7+ Kxg7 30
 Rxf7+ Kxf7 31 Bxb6 Rc1+ 32 Bg1 Bc6
 33 h4 g4 34 Nc5 Rc2 35 Nd3 Bxg2+
 36 Kh2 Bf3+ 37 Nf2 Kg6 38 Kg3 Kh5
 39 b4 b5 40 Kf4 Kxh4 41 Nd3 Rc4+ 42
 Ke3 Re4+ 43 Kd2 g3 44 Nc5 Re2+ 45
 Kd3 Re1 46 Bd4 Rd1+ 47 Kc3 Rxd4 48
 Kxd4 g2 0-1



6th Cherry Blossom Classic

Mat 25-28, 2018

Washington Dulles Airport Marriott
 45020 Aviation Dr, Dulles, Va 20166



In 5 sections. 7-SS in Open, U2200, U1900 and U1600 sections; 6-SS in U1300 (2-day only, Sat-Sun). Open & U2200 sections FIDE rated. \$\$12,500G in 5 sections: *Open*: \$2000-1000-500-300, U2350 \$400-200. Clear 1st/tiebreaker \$100 bonus. *U2200*: \$1300-700-400, U2050 \$300-150. *U1900*: \$1000-500-250, U1750 \$300-150 *U1600*: \$800-400-200, U1450 \$200-100. *U1300*: \$500-300-150, U1150 \$200-100. Unrated prize limits in all sections except Open. EF: Top 4 sections \$105 by May 8, \$110 by May 22, \$115 by May 24, \$125 after and onsite. U1300 Section \$15 less. Re-entry \$60 for all players, no re-entry in Open. GMs, IMs & WGMs free, deduct \$50 from prize winnings. Min rating in Open & U2200: 2000 for Open and 1750 for U2200, else pay \$50 more. Time Control: top 4 Sections: 4-day rd1 G/90+30; rds 2-7 40/90, SD/30 +30. 3-day rd1 G/45 +30, rds 2-3 G/90 +30, rds 4-7 40/90 SD/30 +30. U1300 G/90 d5. Schedule: 4-day reg ends Fri 7 pm, rds Fri 8pm, Sat/Sun 11-5:30, Mon 9:30-3:30. 3-day reg ends Sat 10am, rds Sat 11-2-7, rds 4-7 as in 4-day. U1300 rds Sat 11-3-7p, Sun 10-2-6. Up to two ½ pt byes available in all sections, must commit 1 hour before start of rd 4 (Sun 8:30am). Hotel: \$99/night if reserved by May 10th, 1-800-228-9290 or 703-471-6700, mention Cherry Blossom Chess Tournament. Boards and sets provided in ALL sections. Clocks supplied in the Open section. Online registration: www.cherryblossomchess.com Mail checks payable to Capital Area Chess to CHERRY BLOSSOM CLASSIC, Attn Capital Area Chess, PO Box 223582, Chantilly, VA 20171. Further info: email Anand Dommalapati, cbc2018@capitalareachess.com Four Side Events: Fri May 25th - 8pm Open Quick Rated. Sat May 26th - 10am 6th Cherry Blossom Classic Scholastic. 10pm Scholastic Blitz 5pm & Open(FIDE)/Amateur Blitz Tournament

100 Grand Prix points - a VCF Cup Event



Virginia State Scholastic Championship

The 2018 Virginia Scholastic & College Championships was held March 3-4 at William Fleming High School, in Roanoke. 382 players competed across 7 sections. Complete crosstables, with prizewinners noted, is available online at the VCF website, vachess.org.

Virginia state champion Praveen Balakrishnan is now also Virginia state high school champion! Going into the final round, he stood in clear first place with a perfect 5-0 score, but his teammate from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, Justin Paul, was right behind him at 4½.

Justin Paul - Praveen Balakrishnan Queen's Gambit Declined

Editor's note: These annotations incorporate comments by both players, perhaps gleaned from a spoken post mortem. I am not sure who wrote the unattributed notes.

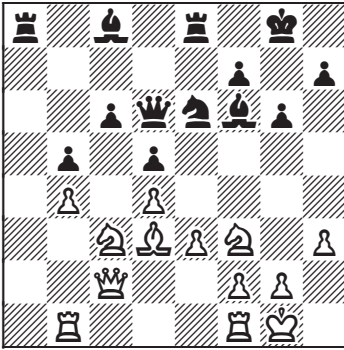
Praveen: I had finished my Round 5 game relatively late and had only roughly 25 minutes of rest time before the final round. I grabbed a quick lunch, took a photo with the school team (as we had already won the championship with a round to spare) and checked the pairings. I was playing one of my good friends and schoolmate, National Master Justin Paul. I knew that since I was half a point ahead and had strong tiebreaks, I only needed a draw to win the championship, so I wasn't planning on taking too many risks and decided to use a solid approach instead.

Justin: In round 6, I was paired against IM Praveen Balakrishnan, who is from the same school as me. We have played many times and know each other pretty well both on and off the chess board. Being half a point behind Praveen, I knew that I would have to play for a win if I wanted any shot at the title, and since I had the White pieces I felt that there was a realistic chance of this happening.

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 d5 [Praveen: I decided to play a risk-free opening, the Queen's Gambit Declined. I have been playing this line for years, so I felt quite safe in this territory.]
4 cxd5 exd5 5 Nc3 c6 6 Qc2 Be7 7 Bf4 O-O 8 e3 Re8 9 Bd3 Nbd7 10 O-O Nf8 11 h3 Ne6 [All of these moves are standard. Black maneuvers his knight to e6 with the idea of playing g6-Ng7-Bf5 and trading off the light-squared bishops.]
12 Be5 g6 13 Bxf6?! [13 Rab1 is the most popular move in this position, with the idea of playing b4 and forming a minority attack. Play may continue 13... Ng7 14 b4 a6 15 a4 Bf5 16 b5 Bxd3 17 Qxd3 axb5 18 axb5 Nf5 = Praveen: I felt that this move was not needed at all. White's dark squared bishop is much more valuable than the Black knight. Justin: 13 Rfb1 was probably the better shot, but I was just trying to make an interesting imbalance.]
13...Bxf6 14 b4 Qd6 [Praveen: If I continue with the plan of 14...Ng7 and Bf5, I was worried White may play 15 b5! and I cannot answer ...c5]
15 Rab1 [Praveen: 15 b5 c5! was the idea behind 14...Qd6, ripping open the center. I found this line to be favorable for Black, although it might just be equal.]



16 dxc5 Nxc5 17 Rad1 Rd8] 15...a5 16 a3 [Justin: In hindsight, 16 b5 may have been a better alternative, but I did not want to allow 16...c5 17 dxc5 Nxc5 when Black at the very least has an equal position that is easy to play.] 16...axb4 17 axb4 b5!?



Justin: Originally I thought b5 was a terrible move because of the knight maneuver via d2 and b3, but it isn't so easy. Turns out, it was probably the best move in that position.

Praveen: 17...b5 was definitely not the first move that came into my head. It seems to be extremely weakening since White can try to bring his knight to a5 or c5. In fact, I had already gotten into a similar structure before and I had prematurely played the move ...b5 to prevent White from playing b5 himself and had gotten into a worse position. But this time, I made an exception. Since White gave away his dark square bishop, I realized that the kingside, particularly the b8-h2 diagonal, had been severely weakened. I felt that if White ever does manage to bring his knight to c5 or a5, by that time, I would have been able to bring my bishop around to c7 and play Ng5.

18 Nd2 Bd8 19 Rfc1 Bc7 20 g3 [Justin: My original plan behind 18 Nd2 was to be

able to meet ...Bc7 with f4. Unfortunately, I realized a little too late that 20 f4 is met very well with 20...Nxd4 21 exd4 Qxf4 with what looks like an unstoppable attack.] 20... Ng5 [Praveen: I thought that the past few moves have gone very well for me. My pieces all seem to be in their ideal squares, and there are looming threats of piece sacrifices, one of them being ...Rxe3] 21 Nxb5!?

[This is in fact the only move to keep White in the game. White needs to rustle up some activity on the queenside since his kingside is very close to falling apart. 21 h4? loses to 21...Nh3+ 22 Kg2 Nxf2] 21...Nxb5+? [Praveen: I played this rather quickly, failing to spot the difference between this move and 21...Qf6! which, in fact, would have won the game on the spot. Then White could not play the same idea of Kg2 and Nf3 to defend the f2-pawn, and without that resource his position is helpless. If 22 Bf1 Black can simply play 22...Bxg3 23 fxg3 cxb5 -+ and White's kingside is in ruins. If instead 22 Nxc7 Nxh3+ 23 Kh1 (23 Kg2 Qxf2+ 24 Kh1 Qxg3 -+) 23...Nxf2+ 24 Kg1 Rxe3 -+; finally, if 22 Kg2 I don't have to play ...Nxh3 and transpose to the game, but can play 22...Bxh3+ -+]

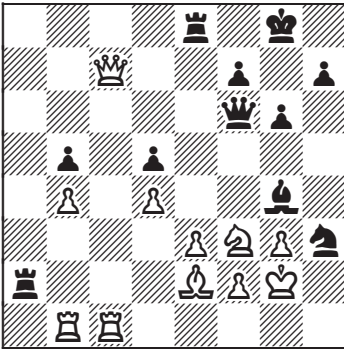
22 Kg2 Qf6 23 Nf3 [23 Nxc7 is not a free bishop since 23...Qxf2+ 24 Kh1 Qxg3 would just be losing for White as both Nf2 and Qxc7 are threatened. However, Black's misstep with 21...Nxh3+ allows White to defend f2 with ease.] 23...cxb5 24 Qxc7 Bg4 25 Be2 (Praveen: During the game, I thought that White's position was on the verge of collapse. All of his past few moves were forced, and even now, with possibilities of Ra2 or moving a rook to c8, it looked

able to meet ...Bc7 with f4. Unfortunately, I realized a little too late that 20 f4 is met very well with 20...Nxd4 21 exd4 Qxf4 with what looks like an unstoppable attack.] 20... Ng5 [Praveen: I thought that the past few moves have gone very well for me. My pieces all seem to be in their ideal squares, and there are looming threats of piece sacrifices, one of them being ...Rxe3] 21 Nxb5!?





very bad for White. What then happened was unexplainable on my behalf. I used up a large portion of my time trying to find a win or a move that would at least guarantee me some advantage; however, I was unable to find a sufficient idea here. After my clock went down to below 10 minutes compared to the 50+ minutes on his clock, under the tension I decided to play the most obvious move and offer a draw.] 25...Ra2



Justin: At this point, Praveen left me with a tough decision by offering a draw. I didn't really believe this was better for me, but if Praveen was not careful, the knight on h3 could realistically get pushed or even taken. Also, despite not being overly confident about my position, I noticed that Praveen's time was starting to get low and that blunders will be made later on. I refused the draw and played on, knowing that the state championship title was on the line.

Praveen: Maybe 25...Ra3 right away was better, with the difference being that White's rook is on the inferior c1 square compared to being on c2 in the game.

26 Rc2 Ra3 27 Qc6 Re6 28 Qxd5 [Justin: I felt that if I kept on taking pawns and Praveen didn't have a clear win, then my material advantage would be able to decide the game.] 28...Bf5?

Both players had seen 28...Nxf2! but rejected it on account of 29 Rf1. However, then Black has a strong resource 29...Bh3+ 30 Kxf2 Rxe3! and surprisingly, despite being a knight up, White has no efficient way of stopping all the threats and sacrifices:

31 Rc6 can be met by 31...Rxe2+! 32 Kxe2 Bxf1+ 33 Kxf1 Qxf3+ 34 Qxf3 Rxf3+ and Black has a winning rook ending;

31 Bd1 Bxf1 32 Kxf1 Rxf3+ 33 Bxf3 Rxf3+ 34 Kg2 Rd3 once again, Black has a clear advantage.

29 Rbc1

[Justin: 29 Rc8+ Kg7 30 Rbc1 Be4 31 Qc5 would be better, and it turns out the computer spits out 0.00 after 31...Re7. Although I completely didn't see this line over the board, I wouldn't have gone for it even if I had as I had already declined a draw offer wanting to play for a win.]

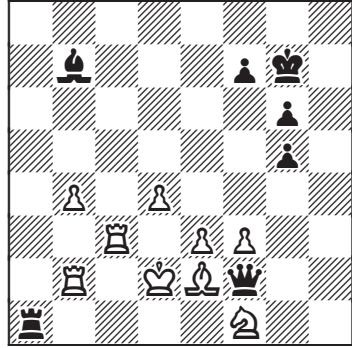
29...Be4 30 Qxb5 [Praveen: At this point, I started getting really nervous. I am down two pawns and it's still not clear how I am going to crack through on the kingside. Although the engine confidently gives 0.00 in this position, there is clearly much more firepower in store, and with my clock now ticking down below 5 minutes I felt like I was in real danger of losing.] 30...Ng5 31 Qb8+ Kg7 32 Qf4 [With this move White defends against all the kingside threats. It seems as if White just has to consolidate his position and he will simply be up 2 pawns. But Black had a small surprise in store.] 32...h6!





to go home and think that maybe I could have won the tournament if I had played on.] **38 Ke1 Qh1+ 39 Nf1** [Justin: *At this point I am objectively busted; however, practically speaking, with little time on Black's clock, 39 Bf1 would probably offer better chances. I thought Nf1 offered some chances of playing Ng3 if I could escape with my king to d2, but Praveen pretty easily stopped that idea.*] **39...hxg5?!** [39...h5 was more precise, creating a passed pawn on the h-file which is difficult for White to stop.] **40 Kd2?** [Praveen: *40 b5 was the move I expected, and the move I was unsure what to do against. I probably would have gone 40...Qg1 41 b6 Bb7 42 Rcb1 g4 and although there is no clear win, I was confident that I wouldn't lose this position since the b-pawn is effectively blockaded.*] **40...Qg2** [Now the white king is forced to retreat to e1 to support the f-pawn.] **41 Ke1** [41 Ng3 Qxf2 42 Nxe4

Qxe3+ is an important nuance that wins for Black.] **41...Qg1 42 f3 Bb7 43 Kd2 Qf2** [White's position started to slowly fall apart here. He was not able to hang onto all his material.] **44 Rc3 Ra1**



With the time running out, neither player kept score from this point. However, Black is clearly winning (... Bxf3 is threatened) and indeed he went on to win the game. **0-1**



Virginia Senior Open

June 1-3, 2018

Lincolnia Senior Center

4710 N Chambliss St, Alexandria, Va 22312

5SS, G/120, d5. \$\$1000G: \$300-200-150, U2000 \$125, U1800 \$125, U1600 \$100.

Trophies to top age 60-69 and top age 70+. Reg Fri 6:00-6:50pm, Sat 9:00-9:50am.

Rds 7, 10-2:30, 10-2:30. One irrevocable ½ pt allowed, must declare before rd

2. EF: \$50 advance entry at ACC club, by mail or on-line by May 28, otherwise

\$60. Virginia residents must have current VCF membership (\$10). Mail check

payable to "Virginia Chess Federation" to: VA Senior Open, PO Box 151122,

Alexandria, VA 22315. On-line <http://www.vachess.org> Saturday Evening Blitz:

G3 +2; 5-rd double swiss, reg ends 7:20pm, rd 1: 7:30pm, EF \$15, prizes b/o

entries, 80% returned as prizes. Hotel: Comfort Inn Landmark, 6254 Duke St.,

Alexandria, VA 22312, (703) 642-3422 Info only: chrisney2@gmail.com W. NS



John Campbell 1927 - 2018

by Macon Shibut

AS a young player first stepping into the world of organized chess, certain persons who I saw at tournaments drew my attention because they seemed obviously more *connected* in organized chess in some intangible way—not just players but part of the very fabric of this wonderful world of ‘real’ chess that I was just discovering. These individuals attended at all the big tournaments; they held offices in the VCF and local chess clubs; and everyone seemed to know them. John Campbell, distinctive in his tweed jacket and hat, was one of those guys.

John moved to Virginia from Texas in 1959. Within a few years he indeed became president of the Arlington Chess Club (ACC). In a 1995 article about the club’s history, John described himself as its “most persistent” president. In fact, he persisted for something like 40 years. He also piloted the Senior Chess Club at Arlington’s Madison Center.

One tradition of John’s tenure at the ACC could be experienced a little past 8 pm at the club’s regular Friday night meetings. As rated ladder and league games began, the social hubbub would ebb to tournament hall semi-silence. Five minutes or so *after clocks had been started*, a familiar voice would interrupt play. Seemingly oblivious to the bemused irritation of players awakened from their chess comas, John would spend a few minutes touting upcoming events and acknowledging achievements by club members at recent competitions. Finally, in conclusion, “Okay, start your clocks...”

A lot of players probably attributed this ‘policy’ to the inattention of an old man. However, it was all completely intentional on John’s part. He knew that announcements would be largely unheard if he tried to give them over the pre-game din; breaking in after the games had begun got people’s attention! At John’s memorial service on March 12, attended by several long-time ACC members, I could not help smiling at the fantasy that someone might interrupt the eulogy a few minutes in with “*Excuse me, may I have your attention for a few quick announcements...*”

The first time I played John was in the final round of the 1975 Virginia “Closed” State Championship. I was just a kid, which was more noteworthy then. Nowadays junior players often comprise at least half the tournament field, but in 1975 tournament chess was very much an adult sphere. It was not unusual for me to be the only junior player at big state events. At the Virginia Open earlier that same year I had won the Top Junior trophy simply because I was the only qualifying player in the Open section.



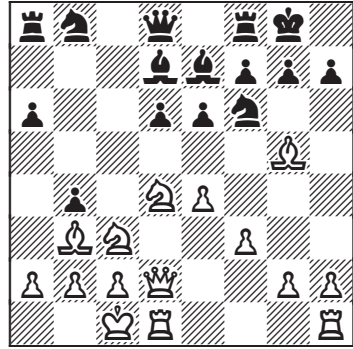
John Campbell – Macon Shibus
1975 Virginia Closed
Sicilian

I felt intimidated going into this game. Besides a child's natural deference to adults, amplified by John's evident standing in the chess community as described above, he was one of the higher rated players I had faced to that point. Moreover, he was from *Northern* Virginia. Growing up in Richmond, I had the sense that the DC metro area was a hotbed of chess where everyone must be a strong player. So it will be understood that I played the game with extreme vigilance. **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bg5 e6 7 Bc4** [A questionable mix of systems. However, I knew 6 Bc4 and 6 Bg5 were two of White's most aggressive options against the Najdorf and my thoughts at the time were, *Oh my, he's coming at me with them both!*] **7...Be7 8 Bb3** [At that time I could not understand spending a tempo like this when there are developing moves still available, but I also knew that strong players indeed played this way.] **8...b5 9 f3 O-O** [A more nuanced defender would not commit the king so soon. I feared knights would begin sacrificing themselves on d5, e6 or f5 at any second so I hurried to get castled.] **10 Qd2 Bd7** [Again, caution—the more obvious Bb7 would invite 10... Bb7 11 Bxe6] **11 O-O-O b4**

(diagram, next column)

12 Bxf6?

I calculated over and over to try and find what I was overlooking. *After I take his knight I will be threatening to take his queen with check, so he will have no time*



to prevent me from recapturing on f6 too. Count again... doesn't that win me a piece? Is he planning maybe Qg5 threatening mate? No, that's nothing, I still just take his bishop.

12...bxc3 13 bxc3 Bxf6 14 Ne2 Be7 15 g4 Nc6 16 h4 Na5 17 g5 Nxb3+ 18 cxb3 a5 19 h5 Bxg5 [I steeled myself to overcome an exaggerated fear of the open g-file.] **20 f4 Be7 21 Rdg1 h6 22 Rh3 Kh8 23 Rhg3 Rg8 24 Nd4 e5 25 Qg2 exf4** [There was no reason not to take the knight. 25...exd4 26 Rxc7 threatens nothing further. But ever since move 19 I had fretted over the g-line, so I prioritized controlling g5 to anchor my bishop there.] **26 Rxc7 Bg5 27 Rxc8+ Qxc8 28 Kb2 a4 29 b4 a3+ 30 Kc2 Be6 31 Kb1 Qc8 32 Qc2 Qc4 33 e5 dxe5 34 Nf3 f6 35 Rd1 Rc8 36 Rd6 Bg4 37 Nxc5** [Threatening mate!] **37...Qf1+**

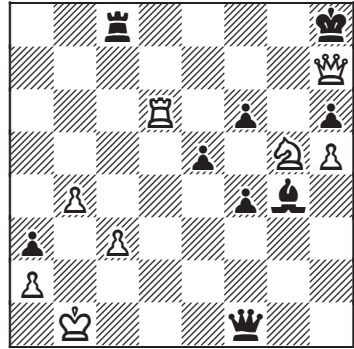
What happened at this point will ring true to anyone who knew John, and is the whole point of showing this admittedly not very good game. I played my last move with great relief. I saw that the queens had



to come off. I would be able to capture his knight and remain a piece ahead. Mr Campbell (I could not have imagined addressing him as “John” at that time) thought for a minute. Suddenly, with a sweeping arm motion, he picked up his queen and sent her crashing down onto h7! (*diagram*)

I almost had a heart attack.

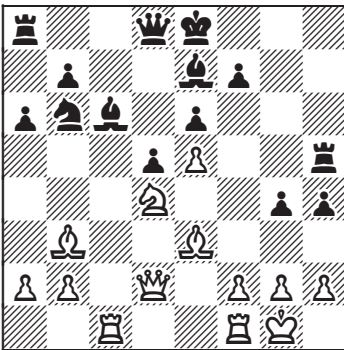
What just happened?! I was about to blubber some protest about an illegal move. Before I could get any words out, I looked up to see the twinkle in the eye of my smiling opponent. 0-1



In 1980, again at the state championship tournament, John beat me and in the process won a special “Best Game” prize. As I recall, Ed Kitces served as judge for selecting the award-winner and he annotated the game in *VIRGINIA CHESS*. Unfortunately, that issue is missing from my archives. It would probably be dated “Oct-Dec 1980”—does any reader have it?

John Campbell – Macon Shibus 1980 Virginia Closed Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 c3 Nf6 4 e5 Nd5
5 d4 cxd4 6 Bc4 Nb6 7 Bb3 dxc3 [7...
d5 is safer] 8 Nxc3 e6 9 O-O d5 10
Bf4 Be7 11 Rc1 a6 12 Ne2 Bd7 13
Ng3 h5 [forestalling Nh5 and initiating
a kingside demonstration of my own]
14 Qd2 h4 15 Ne2 Rh5 16 Ned4 g5
17 Nxc6 Bxc6 18 Be3 g4 19 Nd4



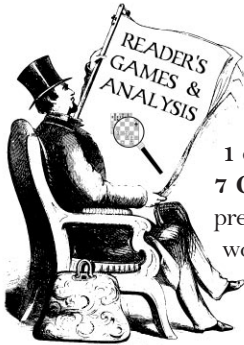
I recall that I did not exactly trust all this, but e5 is *en pris* and I was probably optimistic. First, however, c6 is attacked. If 19...Bb5 20 Rfe1 Rxe5 there could follow 21 Nxb5 axb5 22 Qd4 hitting both rook and knight. The forced exchange sacrifice 22...Rxe3 23 fxe3 might yet be Black's best course from the diagram, but having played like a materialist thus far I suppose I found that unappealing.

19...Bg5? 20 Nxc6 bxc6 21 Rxc6 Nd7 [Hoping the ‘solid’ French pawn chain f7-e6-d5 would stymie White’s initiative and shift attention back to my e5 target. In fact, 22 Ba4 with the threat Rd6 would have put me in a critical situation at once.] 22 Qc3 Bxe3? [The reprieve White’s last



move offered lay in first inserting 22... h3 23 g3 so as to have the resource ... Nf3+ available in some lines after 23... Bxe3 24 fxe3 Nxe5] **23 fxe3 Nxe5 24 Rc7** [Here, for instance—24 Ba4 would have been very strong. After 24...Kf8 25 Rxe6 we can see it would have been nice to have Nf3+available. Well, strictly

speaking it is still available but 25... Nf3+ 26 gxf3 fxe6 27 fxg4+ recovers the rook, winning.] **24...h3?** [24...Qd6 might still hold the position together] **25 Qc5!** [Winning outright as there is no good provision against Ba4] **25... Qg5** [likewise 25...Nd7 26 Ba4] **26 Ba4+ Kd8 27 Qd6+ 1-0**

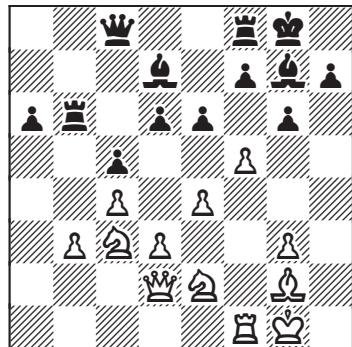


Aleksey Bashtavenko - Ghezai Menelik
ACC Ladder 2018
English

Notes by Aleksey Bashtavenko

1 c4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 e4 g6 4 g3 Bg7 5 Bg2 d6 6 Nge2 Bg4 7 O-O [7 f3 is also playable, forcing the bishop to retreat and preserving the option of playing f4 at an opportune time. White would then continue development with d3, Rb1 and 0-0] **7...Nf6 8 d3 O-O 9 h3 Bd7** [9...Bxe2 was also playable: 10 Qxe2 Nd7 (increasing his control over d4, which is a critical central square) 11 Bg5. White may contest the d4 square by placing his

bishop on e3 instead of g5, yet even in that case Black is free to play ...Nd4 and in the event of an exchange, entrench his bishop there. Then White may attempt to oust the bishop by playing Qd2 and Ne2, but this costs two critical tempi. Black may react with ...e5, as he will no longer need to be concerned about White's knight landing on d5. Alternatively, Black may opt for ...e6, protecting his weak square on d5 with an entirely comfortable position.] **10 Be3 Qc8 11 Kh2 Ne5 12 f4?** [12 b3 would have been adequate, as it protects c4 and allows White to play d4 next. In the event of an exchange, Bxd4 contests the crucial fianchetto diagonal, after which White may seek to build up pressure on the half-open d-file with Qd2, and Rad1. Alternatively, White could consolidate his space advantage with f4, and try to play g4 and launch a kingside attack. The text was a colossal blunder costing White the exchange and a pawn.] **12...Neg4+ 13 hxg4 Nxg4+ 14 Kg1 Nxe3 15 Qd2 Nxf1 16 Rxf1 e6** [To keep White's knight out of d5. In all essential respects, Black has a winning position.] **17 b3 a6 18 a4 Rb8 19 a5 b6 20 axb6 Rxb6** [Black's plan to consolidate his advantage is to open the b-file and exchange the heavy pieces there. White's attempt to stymie that merely saddled him with a backward pawn, further extending Black's advantage.] (*diagram*)





21 f5!? [A desperate roll of the dice. White is looking for the last bit of counter-play he could muster up. The plan is to play f6 and search for mate. Black's main objective should be to prevent f6, which he could do with 21...Qd8] **21...Rxb3?** [Instead Black proceeded with his b-file invasion without a care in the world.] **22 f6 Bh8?!** [Black underestimates the looming danger of White's initiative. Thanks to his heavy material advantage, he could have afforded to sacrifice the bishop for the f6 pawn, thwarting White's attack and allowing Black to continue mounting the pressure on the queenside.] **23 g4?** [To reinforce the f6 pawn, but a mistake because g5 will block the c1-h6 diagonal, forcing White to take an extra tempo to arrive on h6 with his queen. Immediate 23 e5 was accurate. If Black opts for 23...dxe5 24 Qh6 Black is forced to surrender the bishop for the pawn with Ne4 soon to follow, posing a mating threat with Ng5 and Qxh7. If Black fails to sacrifice his bishop promptly,

Ne4 could force him to surrender the queen to prevent mate.] **23...Qd8 24 g5 Qc7 25 Qf4 e5 26 Qh4** [In case of 26 Nd5 Bc6! defending from the mate threat on e7 and threatening to eliminate the crucial attacker.] **26...Be6** [26...h5 (Δ 27 gxh6 Kh7) would not work because of 27 Nd5 followed by breaking through on the h-file with B-f3xh5. Black played the correct defense, controlling the vital d5 square.] **27 Qh6 Qa5?** [Turning the winning position into a forced mate. Black's pieces could still have regrouped with ...Rfb8 and ...Qd8. This maneuver would have allowed him to break the stranglehold on g7 by sacrificing the bishop for two pawns, preserving a substantial advantage. In the ensuing position, White's king would be the more vulnerable.] **28 Kf2!** [Now mate is unstoppable!] **28...Bg4 29 Rh1 Bh5 30 Bf3** [More forcing 30 Rxh5 gxh5 31 Bh3 and Bf5] **30...Qd8 31 Nd5** [White overprotects f6] **31...Rxd3 32 Bxh5 Rxd5 33 Bxg6 fxg6 34 Qxh7 mate 1-0**

Reflections Reflections

by Mark Warriner



Looking Back on an Amateur Chess "Career"

UNRATED AGONY

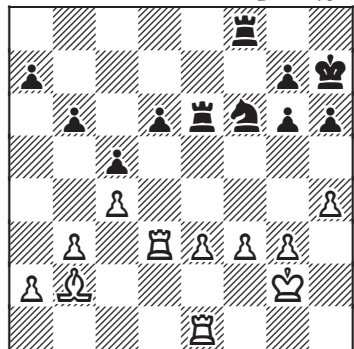
THERE'S one phenomenon in chess that I don't understand. Just how exactly is it that you, at least a decent club player, play someone who is unrated and they draw or even beat you? Shouldn't that be nearly impossible? Well, it happened to me *twice* for crying out loud! Once when I was just starting out I drew an unrated player, and then, incredibly, 20 years later and after I'd won a state correspondence championship no less, I actually lost to one. I guess the painful truth is that I'm just not that good.



Mark Warriner – Bob Hunt
1985 Central VA Swiss
English

To put this game into perspective, I'd been playing rated chess for a little over a year at the time. I was still searching for my style. (Still am today...) I figured, *he's unrated, how hard could this be?* An easy point and on to the next round. Sure. **1 c4 b6** ["Oh great, now what do I do?"] Outside this amateur's small experience at the time. **2 Nf3** [Playable, but makes me cringe today.] **2...Bb7 3 g3** [Ugh. Much to my surprise however, no less than Aronian and Ivanchuk have essayed this and won, against strong players, so what do I know? Maybe I was smarter then and I'm getting dumber.] **3...Nf6 4 Bg2 e5 5 O-O d6** [Most common choice, but 5...e4 scores slightly better.] **6 Nc3 Nbd7 7 d4 exd4 8 Qxd4** [8 Nxd4 was to be preferred.] **8...Be7** [8...g6 9 b3 Bg7 10 Bb2 O-O 11 Rac1 Re8 12 Rfe1 Ne5 13 Nxe5 Bxg2 14 Nxf7 Kxf7 15 Kxg2 Kg8 16 Nd5 Nh5 17 Qd2 Bxb2 18 Qxb2 c6 19 Ne3 Qg5 20 Qd4 Re6 21 h4 Qe7 22 Ng4 h6 23 Qd2 g5 24 hxg5 hxg5 25 Qd3 Kg7 26 Rh1 Rh8 27 Rce1 Re4 28 f3 Re6 29 e4 d5 30 cxd5 cxd5 31 exd5 Rxe1 32 Qc3+ Kf7 33 Rxe1 Qd6 34 Ne5+ Kg8 35 Qc8+ 1-0 Goric-Muharemovic, 2002] **9 b3 O-O 10 Bb2 Rb8** [My opponent eschews the alternatives 10...Re8; 10...Nc5; 10...Ne8] **11 Nd5** [White had a number of pleasant alternatives such as 11 Rad1. My move wasn't one of them. I remember thinking for a long time, trying to find a plan and just flailing about. Amateurs lack the 'database' of plans or 'catalog' of positions. This move wouldn't even occur to me these days. Muddled thinking back then.] **11...Re8** [simple and nice] **12 Rac1** [Wow. Just makes the mess worse. Where did I think that rook was going? 12 Rfe1; 12 Nd2] **12...c5 13 Qc3 Bf8 14 Nxf6+** [So not necessary—14 Nf4; 14 Qd3] **14...Nxf6 15 e3 Qc7** [Offering White perhaps a glimmer of hope. 15...d5; 15...Qe7] **16 Rfd1** [Meh. Putting something on the d-file or eyeballing the juicy f5 square look better. 16 Rcd1; 16 Qd3] **16...h6** [Either 16...Ne4 or Qe7 were better.] **17 Nh4** [Black tempted fate allowing an exchange of his juicy White-squared bishop, and potentially giving the White knight access to f5] **17...Bxg2 18 Nxb2 Qe7** [18...Qc6; 18...Nd7] **19 Qd3** [Apparently, this is the first culprit. Our metal friends say 19 f3 solidified White's position, eg 19...Nd7 20 e4 Ne5 21 Rf1] **19...Rbd8 20 Nf4 Ng4** [White's in the driver's seat after 20...g5 21 Qf5 Bg7 22 Bxf6 Qxf6 23 Qxf6 Bxf6 24 Nd5 but it's not over yet.] **21 Nd5 Qg5** [21...Qd7] **22 h4** [22 f3] **22...Qg6 23 Qxg6 fxg6 24 Kg2 Kh7?** [Now White has a nearly decisive advantage. 24...Be7 25 f3 Bf6 26 Nxf6+ Nxf6] **25 Rd3 Be7** [25...Kg8] **26 Nxe7?** [The first clear lemon. 26 Rcd1 seems obvious now, but it didn't then for some reason.] **26...Rxe7 27 Rcd1** [27 Rc2 would have preserved at least some small plus.] **27...Re6** [Keeps White in the hunt. 27...Rf8] **28 Re1 Rf8 29 f3 Nf6** [29...Ne5]

(diagram)





30 Bxf6? [Wouldn't have dreamed of this exchange these days. Woof. 30 Red1] **30... gxf6 31 Red1 Rd8 32 f4?** [32 g4 is better, though shouldn't significantly affect the outcome at this point.] **32...f5** [It's just Drawsville now. White let slip the opportunities to press and it's over. Some further flailing ensues, but it's simple futility.] **33 Kf3 h5 34 Rd5 Kg7 35 Re5 dxe5 36 Rxd8 e4+ 37 Ke2 Re7 38 Kd2 Kf6 39 Kc2 Ke6 40 Rg8 Kf6 41 Rd8 Ke6 42 Kc3 Rd7 43 Rxd7 Kxd7 44 b4 Kc6 45 Kb3 cxb4 46 Kxb4 a5+ 47 Kb3 b5 48 a3 Kc5 49 cxb5 ½-½**

Mark Warriner – Carl Barth
2006 Charlottesville Open
Sicilian

Unlike the first example, I played this game as a seasoned veteran of tournament chess. In fact, this was the second-to-last rated OTB game I played prior to my 'retirement'. You might even say it's the reason I stopped—that and trying to earn a decent living. After winning a state correspondence championship and studying for 20 years, it's pretty discouraging if one can't put together a performance better than this. Okay, time to excise some demons... **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Qc7** [This doesn't score so well, but players like Larsen, Ljubojevic, Dreev, Kozul and Harikrishna have tried it. I wasn't familiar with it so I was on my own already.] **4 O-O Nf6 5 Re1 d6** [5...e6 was my opponent's last chance to follow the greats. His choice only manages to score half a point out of 10 games in my copy of ChessBase. And somehow I turned this into a loss. The pain still reverberates today. Let's trudge on.] **6 c3 a6 7 Ba4** [I manage to 'find' the only continuation resulting in a win for Black in said database.] **7...b5 8 Bc2 Bg4 9 d3** [9 h3 Bh5 10 d3 e6 11 Nbd2 Be7 12 Nf1 d5 13 exd5 Nxd5 14 Ng3 Bg6 15 Bd2 O-O 16 d4 Bxc2 17 Qxc2 cxd4 18 cxd4 Rac8 19 Rac1 Qb6 20 Qe4 Nf6 21 Qd3 Rfd8 22 Be3 Nb4 23 Qb1 Nbd5 24 Rxc8 Rxc8 25 Rc1 Qb8 26 Rxc8+ Qxc8 27 Ng5 Qc4 28 Nh5 h6 29 Nxf6+ Nxf6 30 Nf3 Nd5 31 Ne5 Qe2 32 Qc1 Nxe3 33 fxe3 Bg5 34 Ng4 h5 35 Nf2 Bxe3 36 Qf1 Qxb2 0-1 36 Libiszewski-Cursoux, 2012] **9...g6** [9...e6 Deak-Wirth, 2010 (½, 32 moves)] **10 Nbd2** [10 Be3; 10 h3] **10...Bg7 11 h3 Bd7 12 Nf1 O-O 13 Bg5 h6 14 Bd2** [Up to this point my opponent has played a surprisingly good series of moves, especially for an unrated. Many of my choices have been okay, but second or third best. Here my opponent finally makes a less than best move. Finally!] **14...d5?** [14...e5] **15 e5 Ne8** [15...Nh7] **16 Qe2** [16 d4 was clear and best. I look at the game now and it seems so obvious. I remember distinctly being rattled as to how on earth he was finding such good moves. I remember to this day walking around to his side of the board and wondering what I was missing. Just completely lost my focus, plain and simple.] **16...Bf5** [Another mistake, which I failed to capitalize upon, being out of sorts at this point. In poker it's called "on tilt." Boy, was I ever.] **17 Ng3** [17 Ne3; 17 a4] **17...Qd7?** [The gifts keep coming and I keep stumbling. Just awful.] **18 a4?** [18 Nxf5 Qxf5 19 Rac1±] **18...Nc7 19 Bf4?** [19 Be3] **19...Ne6** [I realize now



it's hard to tell which player was unrated. After years of effort and accomplishment. Humbling.] **20 Bd2** [20 Bc1] **20...Nc7 21 Bf4** [Repeating the mistake, not sure of what to do and having wasted a lot of time on the clock.] **21...d4 22 Nxf5 Qxf5 23 Bg3** [23 Bd2] **23...Nd5 24 c4 Ndb4** [24...Nf4] **25 axb5?** [A huge mistake that leads to the goose egg. 25 cxb5 Nxc2 26 Qxc2 Nb4 27 Qc4] **25...Nxc2 26 Qxc2 Nb4 27 Qb3 Qxd3** [The point. Now White is on his heels.] **28 Qxd3 Nxd3 29 Red1 Nxb2 30 Rdb1** [All the best White could do given the mistake.] **30...Nxc4** [A ray of hope to save the half point—30...axb5 would have made White pay the highest price.] **31 bxa6** [31 b6] **31...Rfb8** [could have cost Black the game] **32 Rc1?** [A horrible mistake in *zeitnot*. Still, no excuse. I even looked at the correct 32 Rxb8+ but rejected it. Ouch. Just... ouch.] **32...Rb4 33 a7** [Giving up, but realizing I had to try something. It just wasn't this. 33 Ne1; 33 Bf4] **33...e6?** [33...d3] **34 Ne1 Nd2 35 Rxc5** [35 Nd3] **35...Nb3** [35...Rb7] **36 Rc8+?** [36 Rb1] **36...Rxc8 37 a8Q Rxa8 38 Rxa8+ Kh7 39 Ra7** [39 f4 is slightly better, but it really doesn't matter. Unfortunately for me, my opponent's technique, though a bit sloppy, was equal to the task.] **39...Kg8 40 Ra8+ Bf8 41 Kf1 Kg7 42 Ke2 Nc1+** [42...g5] **43 Kd2** [43 Kd1] **43...Rc4 44 Nc2?** [44 Rb8] **44...d3** [44...Nb3+] **45 Kxc1 Rxc2+ 46 Kd1 Bb4 47 Rd8 Rc3** [47...Rd2+] **48 Bf4 Rb3 49 Kc1 Ba3+ 50 Kd2 Rb2+ 51 Kxd3 Rxf2 52 Be3 Rxc2 53 Ra8 Be7 54 Re8 Bh4 55 Bc5 Rg3+ 56 Ke4 Rxh3 57 Bf8+ Kh7 58 Be7 Bxe7 59 Rxe7 Kg7 0-1**

SO what to say? I'll quote Bill the Cat from the old *Bloom County* by Berkeley Breathed: "*Ack, Thpppt!*" I let really bad nerves spoil my effort. One simply cannot allow runaway thoughts during a game. I got completely rattled and after that I couldn't get my train of thought under control and it led to a snowball effect of bad play.

After examining the situation, I'm still not totally sure I understand what happens in this phenomenon any better than when I set out to explore my experiences in it. The one nugget that perhaps I can offer is that being a relatively new player yourself makes you much closer to that unrated than you are to, say, a master or grandmaster. Perhaps that is obvious, but it certainly didn't seem so at the time and seems even just a bit incredible now. The other nugget is that I needed have buried my head in one of those volumes gathering dust on my bookshelves, such as Edmar Mednis' *HOW TO PLAY GOOD OPENING MOVES* (ISBN 0-679-14109-X, David McKay, 1982). Gosh knows I didn't come up with many of those on my own. In all seriousness, Dr John Nunn's excellent treatise *SECRETS OF PRACTICAL CHESS* (ISBN 978-1-904600-70-1, Gambit, 2007) offers a lot of good solutions, eg, Decision Making, building an opening repertoire, the Middlegame, etc. It's well worth taking the time to read these volumes to prevent losing to an unrated player because it's just, well, agony.



Virginia Chess
1370 S Braden Crescent
Norfolk VA 23502

Non-profit Org.
US Postage PAID
Orange VA
Permit No. 97

In This Issue:

Tournaments	
2018 Virginia Open.....	1
Virginia Scholastic Championship.....	5
Features	
John Campbell.....	10
Readers' Games (Bashtavenko).....	13
Warriner Reflections.....	14
Odds & Ends	
Upcoming Events.....	4, 9
VCF Info.....	<i>inside front cover</i>

