

VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the
Virginia Chess Federation

2021 - #2

Over the Board tournaments gradually reappearing...

Zofchak Memorial
Colonial Open
Virginia Open



El Sacrificio de la Dama (František Malý)

VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

2021 - Issue #2

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US Amateur Team

by *Brian Tay*

THE US Amateur Team-East (USATE), one among four regional team events, had 329 teams (four more than the advertised limit) participating back in 2020. This year, converted like nearly all chess tournaments to an online event, there were 136 teams and 544 players competing ‘virtually’.

The USATE began back in 1971, so this year was the 50th anniversary event. Famous players who have played in this tournament in the past include Anatoly Karpov, Irina Krush, Hikaru Nakamura, and Josh Waitzkin (from the movie *Searching for Bobby Fischer*).

The traditional over-the-board event has long been held at the Hilton hotel complex in Parsippany, NJ. This year’s online version was hosted on the Internet Chess Club (ICC) server—chessclub.com. The format of the tournament was a 6-round team swiss, three rounds per day, with a time control of Game/60 + 10. Zoom was used to enforce fair play. You could view all four boards of your team at once on your screen.





Our team was appropriately named QUARANTEAM IN VA and our team members were, in board order, Brian Tay, Sam Schenk, Aasa Dommalapati & Ananya Ananth. For Ananya this was her first time playing in this tournament. I have been a team captain for three out of four years (2019-2021). My dad handled all the logistics and paperwork (ie, registration). Our team this year managed to win not just one, but two prizes: the state prize for the Top Virginia Team and the Top Mixed Doubles Team prize.

Everyone in our team had fun playing this year despite the virtual format being less exciting and lacking the event's usual carnival and party-like atmosphere. As a team captain, I enjoyed both playing and cheering on my team members. It was definitely an honor and privilege to be team captain again this year. Here are some comments from our team:

Ananya's father: *"I think it was very well organized, and while we all miss the over-the-board fun, participating online probably increased the number of registrations. I, for one, always wanted Ananya to participate, but could not get time off at this time of the year in the past years to drive to NJ."*

Aasa: *"This tournament online was very different than in person. I've played in the USATE since I was a little kid and the organizers always make it extremely fun and engaging with the Best Team Name and Best Team Costume prizes. It's always exciting to vote for the interesting costumes! They tried their best to replicate this online, but it wasn't the same since there was no cheering or yelling as the form of 'voting'. Overall, though, I definitely had a fun experience."*

Sam: *"I really enjoyed it and I didn't think that I was missing out on much of the experience even though it was online."*

Fedor Khrapatin - Brian Tay

USATE 2021

Sicilian

Notes by Brian Tay

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Nc6 6 Nxc6?! [This move allows black to equalize comfortably. 6 Bg5] 6...bxc6 7 Bd3 g6 8 O-O Bg7 9 f4 O-O 10 Qf3 Rb8 [Forcing him to waste a tempo on the b2 pawn*] 11 Rb1 Qa5 12 Be3 Ba6 13 Bxa6 Qxa6 14 Qh3? [This move doesn't threaten anything. Now I take over the initiative.] 14...Qc4 [Setting a

* - Brian's note as submitted read "Forcing **her** to waste a tempo", probably assuming the opponent's online handle "AlisaJenna23" indicated a female. However, the USCF crosstable for the tournament indicates the opponent as Fedor Khrapatin, a 40 year old male from New York. Maybe he has 2- and 3- ear old daughters Alisa & Jenna? —ed



trap. 14...Nh5! is even stronger.] 15 e5 Ne4 16 Nxe4 Qxe4 17 exd6 exd6
18 Bxa7 Ra8 19 Qd7? [19 Bf2 Rxa2 ♣] 19...Rxa7! 20 Qxd6 Rxa2 21
Rfd1 Rxb2 22 Rxb2 Bxb2 23 f5 Qxf5 24 Qxc6 Rc8 25 Qb6 Qxc2 26
Rf1 Qc5+ 27 Qxc5 Rxc5 28 Rb1 Bd4+ 29 Kf1 Rf5+ 30 Ke1 Rf2 0-1

Sam Schenk - Jason Yan

USATE 2021

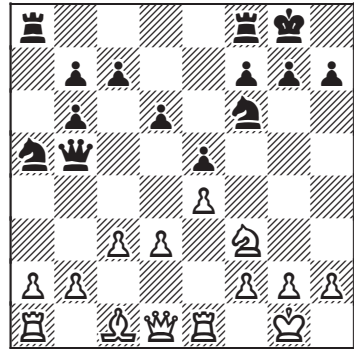
Vienna

Notes by Sam Schenk

1 e4 e5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Nf6 4 d3 Bc5 5 Na4 Bb6 [5...Be7] 6 Nxb6 axb6
7 Nf3 d6 8 c3 [8 a3 Be6] 8...Na5 9 Bb5+ Bd7 10 Bxd7+ Qxd7 11 O-O
O-O 12 Re1 [12 Bg5 Nh5 13 Nxe5 dxe5 14 Qxh5 Qxd3 15 Rfe1] 12...Qb5?

(diagram)

13 b4! Qc6 [13...Nc6 14 a4 Qa6 15 b5]
14 bxa5 Qxc3 15 Bg5 Qxa5 16 Bxf6 gxf6
17 Nh4 Rae8 18 Nf5 Kh8 19 Re3 Rg8 20
Rh3 Rg5 21 Rh6 Reg8 22 g3 R8g6 23 h4
Rxh6 24 hxg5 Rg6 25 gxf6 Qb5 26 a4
Qe8 27 Qh5 Rxf6 28 Kg2 c6 29 Rh1 Qg8
30 Rh4 Qg6 31 Qf3 Qg8 32 Rg4 Qf8 33
Rg5 Rg6 34 Rh5 b5 35 axb5 cxb5 36 Nh4
Rg7 37 Qf6 Kg8 38 Nf5 Rg6 39 Ne7+ 1-0



Aasa decided to take Capablanca's advice to heart and annotated her one game that she did *not* win!

Aasa Dommalapati - Adewumi Tanitoluwa

USATE 2021

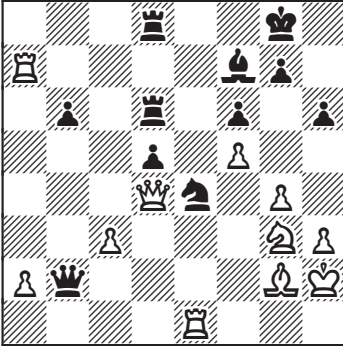
Reti

Notes by Aasa Dommalapati

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 g3 Nc6 4 Bg2 d5 5 exd5 exd5 6 d4 Nf6 7 O-O h6 8
Re1+ Be6 9 Nc3 Be7 10 h3 O-O 11 Be3 Qc8 12 dxc5 Rd8 [12...Bxh3 13
Nxd5] 13 Kh2 Ne4 14 Ne2 [14 Na4; I thought I was going to lose my c5
pawn sooner or later, so I decided not to protect it with my knight, but Black
doesn't really have any way to attack my c5 pawn.] 14...Nxc5 15 Nfd4 Bf6
16 Nxc6 Qxc6 17 Bd4 Bxd4 18 Qxd4 Bf5 19 Nf4 Be4 20 c3 Rd6 21 Rad1
Rad8 22 f3 Bf5 23 Nh5 f6 24 g4 [I saw 24 Re7! in the game, but decided
not to play it because I thought my rook would just be trapped after 24...
Ne6, but what I missed was 25 Qxa7, attacking Black's b7 pawn: 25...R6d7
26 Rxd7 Rxd7 27 Qe3] 24...Bg6 25 Ng3 b6 26 f4 Qb5 27 f5 Bf7 28 Rd2



[28 b3 to potentially prepare for c4 and also prevent his queen from taking it.] **28...Ne4** [He started to gradually equalize and his knight was really annoying, but what made it more annoying was that I couldn't capture it.] **29 Rde2** [29 Nxe4 dxe4 30 Qxd6 Rxd6 31 Rxd6 Qe5+ ed] **29...Nc5 30 Re7** [I started to lose my advantage here. Delaying Re7 was not the right idea and I should have played it far earlier in the game. 30 Bf1 preparing for Re7, a discovered attack 30...Qc6 31 Re7] **30...Qxb2 31 Rxa7 Ne4** (diagram)



32 Nxe4? [After this blunder, I was basically lost. I had a slight advantage for the majority of the game, but this one move decided the result. I was pretty annoyed with the knight during the game so I decided to trade it off but Black's pieces became much more active as a result of this trade. The files of the rooks opened and the diagonal of the bishop as well. 32 Re2 Qc1 (32...Qxc3? 33 Rxe4) 33 Re3 Nxg3 34 Kxg3 followed by Ree7] **32...dxe4 33 Qxe4 Rd2**

34 Qb7 Rxc2+ 35 Qxc2 Rd2 36 Rg1 Bd5 37 Qxd2 Qxd2+ 38 Kg3 Qe3+ 39 Kh2 Qf2+ 40 Rg2 Qxc2 mate 0-1

Jed Sloan - Ananya Ananth

USATE 2021

Sicilian

Notes by Ananya Ananth

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Nd7 4 O-O a6 5 Bd3 Ngf6 6 c3 g6 7 Bc2 Bg7 8 d4 cxd4 9 cxd4 O-O 10 Nc3 b5 11 a3 Bb7 12 Re1 Rc8 13 Qe2 e5 [Striking in the center! This is a good moment, since if dxe5 then dxe5 and the d file is open.] **14 d5 Nc5** Not the most accurate move. 14...Nb6 would have been better, heading towards c4] **15 b4 Ncd7** [There was a small tactic winning a pawn: 15...Nxc4 16 Nxe4 Nxe4 17 Bxe4 f5 18 Bc2 e4] **16 Bb2 Nb6 17 Nd2 Bh6 18 Bd3 Nh5 19 Nb3 Nf4 20 Qf3 Nxd3** [20...f5! opening the f-file would have been very good, since that's where the queen is placed: 21 exf5 (or 21 Na5 Ba8 22 Nc6 Qh4) 21...Nbxd5 22 Nxd5 Bxd5] **21 Qxd3 Nc4 22 Bc1 Bxc1 23 Rexc1** [Here, again you should strike with ...f5 opening up the f-file] **23...Rc7 24 a4 Nb2 25 Qb1 Nxa4 26 Nxa4 bxa4 27 Rxa4 Rxc1+ 28 Qxc1** [Again! ...f5] **28...Qd7 29 Ra1 Rc8 30 Qd2 f5 31 f3 fxe4 32 fxe4 Qb5 33 Rf1 Qb6+ 34 Kh1 Rf8 35 Rxf8+ Kxf8 36 h3 Qb5 37 Na5 Bc8 38 Nc6 Qf1+ 39 Kh2 Qf4+ 40 Qxf4+ exf4 41 Kg1 Bd7 42 Nd4 Ke7 43 Kf2 Kf6 44 Kf3 g5 45 Nb3 Ba4! 46 Na5 Bd1+ 47 Kf2 Ke5 48 Nc4+ Kxe4 49 b5 axb5 50 Nxd6+ Kxd5 51 Nxb5 Ke5 52 Nc3 Bh5 53 Nb5 Bg6 54**



Continued, p 6



8th Cherry Blossom Classic

May 27-31, 2021

Washington Dulles Airport Marriott
45020 Aviation Drive, Dulles, VA 20166

Open Section GM/IM Norms possible (FIDE). 9-SS G/120;+30inc. U2300 – U1400; May 28-31 or 29-31, 7-SS (4-day: G/120;+30inc; 3-day: Rd1-2 G/45;+30, Rds3-7 G/120;+30inc). Prizes: Open (FIDE/Norms Possible): \$3000-1800-1200-800-500-300-200 U2400 \$400-200. Appearance fee for GM/IM/WGM/WIM titled players who register by 5/1 and play all 9 games with no byes (Contact Organizer for more details). Limited double shared accommodation available for 4-nights to the first 10 GMs/IMs who register/commit by Apr 23rd 2021. Min Rating USCF/FIDE 2200 except Foreign FIDE, else pay \$150 more. U2300 (FIDE): \$1600-1000-700-400-200. U2100 \$400-200. U2000 (FIDE): \$1100-700-400-200-100. U1800 \$200-100. Min Rating enforcement in U2300 Section (Min USCF/FIDE 1900) and U2000 Section (Min USCF/FIDE 1600). U1700: \$900-500-300-200. U1500 \$100. U1400: \$600-300-200-100. U1200: \$100. **Entry Fees: Open: Early Bird \$225 by 4/30, \$250 by 5/12, \$275 by 5/26, \$300 later and onsite. **GMs/Foreign IMs/WGMs Free,** No prize deduction if registering by 4/30, else \$150 deducted from prize. **US IMs/WGMs & Foreign FIDE Players \$125 less,** \$100 deducted from prize. **U2300 to U1400:** Early Bird \$140 by 4/30, \$155 by 5/12, \$170 by 5/27, \$185 later and onsite. Re-entry \$60, no re-entry in Open/U2300/U2000. **Rounds: Open 5-day** (Thu 7pm; Fri 12pm-7pm; Sat/Sun 11am-6pm, Mon 10am-4pm). **U2300 to U1400 4-day:** Reg. ends Fri 6 pm, Rds. Fri 7pm, Sat/Sun/Mon same as Open. 3-day: Reg. ends Sat 10am, Rds. 1-3 Sat 11am-2:30pm-6pm and Rds. 4-7 follows 4-day. **Byes:** limit 3 in Open, limit 2 in U2300 to U1400, must commit 1 hour before rd. 4, norm not possible in Open if taking bye. **HR:** \$104/night by May 13th. Reservations Call Washington Dulles Airport Marriott 703-471-9500, mention chess tournament. More tournament information/online registration: <http://www.cherryblossomchess.com>. Mail checks to: Capital Area Chess, 5116 Bebe Ct, Centreville, VA 20120. Email info only: Anand Dommalapati, cbc2021@capitalareachess.com. Boards and sets provided in ALL sections. Clocks supplied only in the Open, U2300 and U2000 sections.**

Side Events: U1100 (2 separate 1-day events - Sat and Sun): Each day prizes-\$200-100-50; Trophies to Top 5; Top U800, U600, Unrated. 4-SS G/45;d5. **EF:** \$40 by 5/12, \$55 by 5/28, \$70 later and onsite. **Rounds.** 11am-1pm-3pm-5pm. Limit 1 bye in last 2 rounds. U1100 limit 1 bye. **May 30th Sat Night Open Rapid 4-SS G/15;d10.**

Grand Prix, Enhanced Grand Prix, Junior Grand Prix

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 ● NOTE: COVID-19 EXECUTIVE ORDER BY VIRGINIA
 ● GOVERNOR COULD IMPACT THE #OF PARTICIPANTS
 ● ALLOWED TO PLAY. PLAYERS MUST UNDERSTAND THERE
 ● MIGHT BE A POSSIBILITY OF CANCELLATION IF THERE
 ● ARE INCREASED COVID RESTRICTIONS
 ●



USATE, *continued*

Nc3 h5 55 Kf3 Kd4 56 Nb5+ Kc5 57 Nc3 Kd4 58 Nb5+ Ke5 59 Nc3 Kf5 60 Nd5 g4+ 61 hxg4+ hxg4+ 62 Kf2 g3+ 63 Kg1 Ke4 64 Nf6+ Ke3 65 Nd5+ Ke4 66 Nf6+ Kf5 67 Nd5 Kg5 68 Nc3 Kg4 69 Nd5 Be4 70 Nf6+ Kf5 71



Nd7 Bc6 72 Nc5 Ke5 73 Nd3+ Ke4 74 Nc5+ Ke3 75 Ne6 Bd5 76 Ng5 Ke2 77 Nh3 Ke3 78 Ng5 Bb7 79 Ne6 Bc8 80 Ng5 Bg4 81 Nf7 Ke2 82 Ne5 Bf5 83 Nf3 Be4 84 Nd4+ Ke3 85 Ne6 Bf5 86 Ng5 Bg4 87 Nf7 f3 88 gxf3 Bxf3 89 Ne5 Be4 90 Nc4+ Ke2 91 Nd6 Bd5 92 Nf5 g2 1/2-1/2

Prizes!



Just as we go to press, Evan Park, of Pennsylvania, has won the **2021 Virginia Open** with a score of 4½ out of 5. The tournament was played 'live', over-the-board, in Dulles, April 9-11. Complete report next issue!

Zofchak Memorial

by Cheryl Havens

The 28th annual edition of the Zofchak Memorial was held November 21-22, 2020 shortly after the Governor changed the COVID limit for meeting attendees to 25. Mike Hoffpauir and I were able to work with the venue (Sleep Inn Lake Wright, in Norfolk) to get the use of three rooms, in order to keep the occupancy of any one room down to 25 or less.

The tournament attracted 52 entrees total - 19 in Championship section, and 33 in Under 1600.

Francisco Colorado & Paul Choate tied for 1st place with 4 points each in the Championship section. Isaac Chiu, Larry Larkins, & Tyson Brady tied for 3rd with 3½ apiece. Benjamin Tyrrell earned the Top U1800 prize with 2½ points.



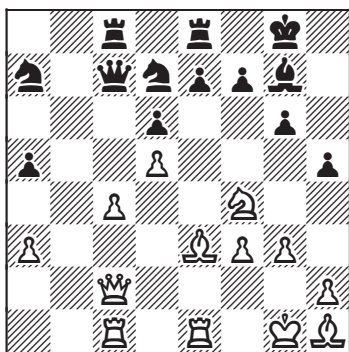
Lee Bennett captured 1st place in the U1600 section with a perfect 5-0 score. Robert Getty & Ritvika Palani tied for 2nd with 4 points each. Jackson Twilley was Top Class E. Aneesh Desai earned Top Class D. Nina Herrera, Delilah Emerson-Coyle & Siddhant Yamben shared the Top U1000/Unrated prize.

Lee Bennett - Ritvika Palani

English

Notes by Lee Bennett

1 c4 c5 2 g3 d6 3 Bg2 Nf6 4 Nc3 g6 5 e3 Bg7 6 Nge2 O-O 7 O-O Qc7 [I think she did this to move the bishop off of c8] 8 Nb5 Qd8 9 d4 a6 10 Nbc3 cxd4 11 exd4 Nc6 12 Rb1? [Wanted to push the b-pawn, but...] 12...Bf5 13 Ra1 Qd7 14 Re1 Bh3 15 Bh1 Bg4 16 f3 [closed in my own bishop on h1] 16...Bh3 17 Nf4 Rfe8 18 Be3 h5 19 a3 a5 20 Nb5 Na7 21 Nxf3 Nxb5 22 Nf4 Na7 23 d5 b5 24 Qc2 [This is probably a bad move, but I wanted



to guard the c-pawn while trying to figure how to break open the kingside with Nxg6] 24...Rac8 25 b3 bxc4 26 bxc4 Qc7 27 Rac1 Nd7 (diagram)

28 Nxg6 [With the knight moving away from the Black king's protection, I figured it's now or never for the knight sac. I could not see all the way through to a clear win, but I could envision a perpetual check if the attack should fail.

Essentially, I was playing for two possible outcomes—win or draw.] 28...fxg6 29 Qxg6 Ne5 30 Qxh5 Nd3 [didn't see that fork at all] 31 Bh6 Nxe1 32 Bxg7 e5 [makes the perpetual check idea somewhat less clear] 33 Qh8+ Kf7 34 Qh7 Rg8 35 Bxe5+ Kf8 [I could have thought long and hard on how to complete the attack, but seeing a queen trade followed my a bishop forking Black's king and rook, plus Black's hanging knight while White is left with a lot of passed pawns, I took the easy way out.] 36 Qxc7 [36 Qh6+ Ke8 37 Qe6+ Qe7 38 Qxg8+ Kd7 39 Qg4+ Kc7 40 Rxe1 dxe5 41 f4] 36...Nxf3+ 37 Bxf3 Rxc7 38 Bxd6+ Re7 39 Rb1 1-0



Colonial Open

The 2nd Colonial Open was played over-the-board at the Dulles Airport Marriott April 2-4. A total of 138 players competed across four sections.

In the 36-player Open section, Justin Paul finished in clear 1st place with a score of 4½-½. Hersh Singh, Nathaniel Moor & David Zhurbinsky each scored 4-1 to tie for 2nd-4th. IM Prasanna Rao, Justin Lee & state champion Daniel Miller were each a further half point back.

In the Under 2100 section, Mark Hyland likewise achieved clear 1st with a 4½ score. Sam Schenk, Barzin Badiee & Andrew Feng were half a point less. Emmitt Parks won the under 1800 prize.

The Under 1700 group saw a 4-way tie for 1st between Charles Compton, Ameya Haldankar, Aleks, Fetlyaev & Stephen Scala, each 4-1. Cameron Duff, Aris Brunovskis, Dan Bolkhovitinov, Mehmet Gokus & Joseph Pakaluk split the Top U1500 five ways.

Finally, Thomas Randolph scored 5½ points to win the 6-round Under 1300 section. Jagadeeshwa Sridhar & Murad Mammadov followed at 5-1. The Under 1100 prize was shared by Sai Vijay Sista & Aaron Zhou, while Gregory Clor was the top Unrated.

Anand Dommalapati organized and directed, assisted by Robert Getty.

Justin Paul - Daniel Miller

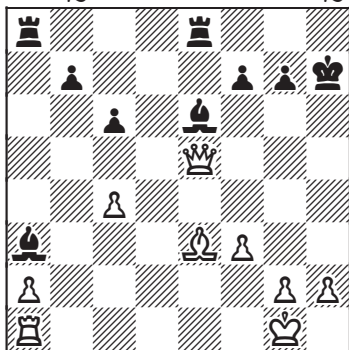
Petroff

Notes by Justin Paul

1 e4 [Going into this final round, Daniel and I were tied for first with 3½ out of 4. With the tournament situation, I didn't intend to take unnecessary risks...] **1...e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nxe5 d6 4 Nf3 Nxe4 5 Nc3 Nxc3 6 dxc3 Nd7 7 Be3 Be7 8 Qd2 Ne5** [I was out of book here. After looking at the database, I know 9 0-0-0 is the main line and a better try for an advantage than what I played.] **9 Nxe5 dxe5 10 Bd3 Be6 11 Qe2** [This position is very simplified, and is no doubt fine for Black, but there's at least potential for White to play on either flank.] **11...Qd5 12 f3 0-0 13 0-0 c6** [If 13...Qd7 14 Rfd1 Bd6 15 Be4. I thought 13...c6 was quite committal. It's probably the right plan, with ...Qe7 to follow, but,



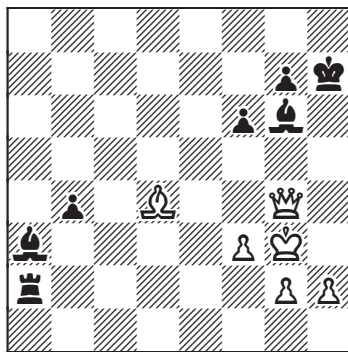
that said, it still seems like White should get a slight initiative by pushing the queenside pawns.] **14 b4 a5** [After 14...Qd8 15 Qf2 b6 either 16 a4 immediately or after Rd1. However, the computer suggests Black can get good compensation for a pawn by 15...f5 16 Rfd1 Qc7 17 Bxa7 e4, because White's queenside pawn structure is a bit vulnerable. For example... 18 Bb6 Qc8 19 Bf1 exf3 20 Qxf3 Ra3] **15 Rfd1 axb4** [15...e4 16 Bxe4



Qh5 17 a3 is probably not enough for the pawn, so Black is more or less obliged to sacrifice the queen.] **16 Bxh7+ Kxh7 17 Rxd5 Bxd5 18 cxb4 Bxb4 19 c4 Be6 20 Qb2 Ba3 21 Qxe5 Rfe8** (diagram)

I spent a long time trying to come up with the right plan. Somewhere in the think, I missed the ...b5 shot, which makes the position much harder to win. The right move was 22 c5; even though it gives his bishop the d5 outpost, it also 'traps' the a3 bishop and makes b7 an easier target. But contemplating variations such as 22...Bd5 23 Qc3 Re7 24 Bd4 f6 25 h4, it wasn't obvious to me that White can break through on the kingside so simply with Kf2. h5-h6 with the rook being able to swing to h1 as needed. The key in this position is the Black bishop on a3. Without an anchor, Black's rook is tied to its defense and can't easily join the fight with ...Rae8 or ...Ra4-c4.

22 Qc3 Kg8 23 Bd4 f6 24 Qc2 [prophylaxis against ...Ra4 putting pressure on c4 as well as threatening ...Bxf6 at some point; unfortunately I underestimated his next move.] **24... b5 25 cxb5** [25 c5 Ra4] **25...cxb5 26 Re1 Bf7 27 Rxe8+ Rxe8 28 Qd3 b4 29 Qc2** [My original intention was 29 Bc5 but I didn't like 29...Re1+ 30 Kf2 Ra1 and Black is in time for Rxa2+ and Rb2 to defend his pawns, at the very least] **29... Re1+ 30 Kf2 Rc1 31 Qd2 Bg6 32 Kg3 Rc2 33 Qf4 Rxa2 34 Qg4 Kh7** (diagram)



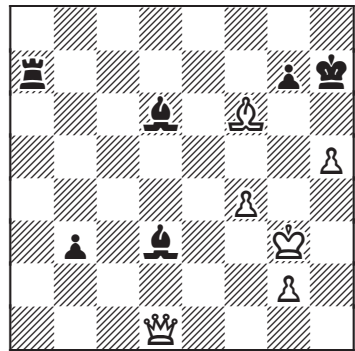


This is a critical moment in the game because I can force a repetition here with Qh3-c8. This position is really scary with the advanced b-pawn and really needs a lot of calculation, as seen in the computer's study-like take down of Black's position exploiting the pin on the a3 bishop: 35 Qh3+ Kg8 36 Qc8+ Kh7 37 Qd7 Kg8 38 Qd5+ Bf7 39 Qd8+ Kh7 40 Qc7 Kg8 41 Qb8+ Kh7 42 Qb7 Kg8 43 Bc5 Rb2 44 Qe7 Ba2 45 Qe8+ Kh7 46 Bf8. With low time, I couldn't make any of these tactics work in the game and went for the more obvious attacking idea.

35 h4 b3 36 h5 Bd3 [After the game, we agreed 36...Bc2 is a more tenacious defense. That said, it's not obvious without a lot of analysis that blocking the rook's scope on the 7th rank is worth the stability of the bishop/b3 pawn construction. There was also 36...Bf7 37 Qd7 Kg8 (37...b2 38 Bxb2) 38 h6 b2 (38...gxh6 39 Qd8+ Bf8 40 Bc5) 39 Bxb2 Bxb2 40 h7+ Kxh7 41 Qxf7 Ra5 42 Kh3—I'm not sure if this is a fortress (no obvious anchor squares yet), but it's very close.] **37 Bxf6 Bd6+** [On 37...Bf8 38 Qc8 b2 (there are a lot of moves to calculate after 38...Bd6+ 39 f4, but it works out for White because there is a double attack with the queen and Black's pieces aren't defended—squares e6 and d7 are especially relevant) 39 Qxf8 gxf6 40 Qf7+ Kh8 41 Qxf6+ White can check the king until he gets on the d-file to pick up the bishop.] **38 f4 Ra7** [if 38...Bf8 39 Qf3 Bc2 40 Qb7] **39 Qd1**

[The most accurate move 39 Qe6 is hard to find on low time, but the point is now Black had a computer-like defense with 39...Bxf4+! making a fortress! 40 Kxf4 Bc2 41 Qd4 Rf7 42 g4 Rxf6+ 43 Ke3 Rd6 44 Qc5 Rd5! (a very important resource because White is threatening g5-g6 and Black needs to stop it, eg 44...Ra6? 45 g5) 45 Qb6 Rd6] **39...Be4**

40 Qd4! [Taking the bishop is winning as well, but forking all the pieces is better!] **40...gxf6 41 Qxa7+ Kg8 1-0**





Rajesh Shanmugasundaram - Andrew Samuelson
 2020 National Congress
 English

Notes by Andrew Samuelson



This game was played in round 5 of the 2020 National Chess Congress, which

was a 9-round online (ICC) tournament. **1**

c4 c5 2 Nc3 b6 3 Nf3 Bb7 4 g3 Nf6 5 Bg2 e6

[I was aiming for a Hedgehog-like setup. I had already lost one game in a different line of the English as Black in this tournament.]

6 O-O Be7 7 d3 [White avoids the Hedgehog by not playing d4 and tries to play on the queenside instead.] **7...d6**

8 a3 O-O 9 b4 Nbd7 10 bxc5 Nxc5 11 a4

a6 [So I achieved the type of setup I wanted, but with my c-pawn traded for White's b-pawn instead of the d-pawn. This left b6 as a bit of a weakness, but my d6-pawn was more solid than usual.]

12 Rb1 Qc7 13 Ba3 Rac8 14 Bxc5 [I was a bit surprised by this, as it cedes the bishop pair and eliminates the b6 weakness. I didn't think White would be able to make much profitable use of the open b-file since I can oppose rooks.] **14...bxc5 15 Qb3 Rb8 16 Qc2**

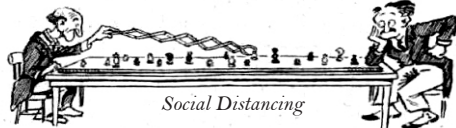
Bc6 17 Rxb8 Rxb8 18 Rb1 Rb4 19 Nd2 Be8 [I wanted to avoid trading bishops since I have the bishop pair. I figured I could always reactivate the bishop later once the position opens up. Besides, from e8 it still attacks the a4-pawn, while White's bishop on g2 doesn't have much to do on the long diagonal.] **20 Bf3 h5** [I was aiming to open up the kingside a bit. Also, this way I avoid any back-rank issues.] **21 h3 h4 22 g4 Nd7 23 Na2** [Forcing the exchange of the remaining rooks while the a4-pawn is safe.] **23...Rb8 24 Rxb8**

Qxb8 25 Qb1 Qxb1+ 26 Nxb1 [We reached an endgame where I have two bishops and a knight against two knights and a bishop. This seemed like it should give me some advantage, but making progress is not easy as White does not have many weaknesses.] **26...Ne5 27**

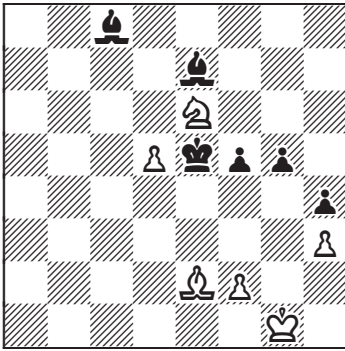
Bb7 Bxa4 [This pawn trade should probably help the side with



more knights—generally speaking, a narrower battlefield benefits knights against bishops—but I thought (probably correctly) that my pawn would be weaker if I moved it to a5] **28 Bxa6 Bc6 29 Nac3 g5** [I could have improved on the game by playing 29...Ng6 30 e3 Ne5 winning the d-pawn due the fork on f3] **30 Bb5 Bb7** [Keeping the bishop pair again; they were the main reason I thought I was better.] **31 Nd2 Ng6** [Aiming to go to f4 when the h3-pawn may be weak. However, this is less effective than earlier.] **32 e3 Kg7 33 Ba4 Ne5 34 Bc2 Nc6 35 Bd1 Nb4** [I was trying to tie White's bishop to the defense of the d3-pawn. However, it is difficult to stop White from playing d4.] **36 Be2 f5** [Now I was trying to open the position for my bishops, and possibly create a passed pawn or at least a pawn majority on the kingside.] **37 d4 cxd4 38 exd4 Kf6 39 Kf1 Bc6 40 Bf3 Be8** [Once again, I avoid a bishop exchange. I figured my bishop could get back into the game via g6 or f7 after trading pawns.] **41 gxf5 exf5 42 Nd5+** [This allows White to trade a pair of knights and move into a more typical ♠♠ vs ♜♞ ending.] **42... Nxd5 43 Bxd5 Bd8 44 Nb3** [44 f4 g4 45 hxg4 fxg4 46 Ne4+ Ke7 47 f5 should be equal, but it's a bit more unbalanced than the game.] **44...Ba4 45 c5 dxc5 46 Nxc5 Bb5+** **47 Kg2 Ba5 48 Bf3 Bc3 49 d5 Ke5 50 Ne6** [Here I have a kingside pawn majority and the bishop pair. However, I wasn't really expecting to win as it seems I will need to exchange one of the bishops to win the d-pawn. Even worse, it will probably be my light squared bishop that goes, which is the one I need to control the queening square if I get left with the h-pawn. The best I thought I could hope for was dark squared bishop and three pawns against knight and two pawns, which I expected should be drawn. However, I can keep trying to improve my position, eg, by threatening to play ...g4 or by trying to run White out of useful moves.] **50...Bd2 51 Ng7 Bd7 52 Ne6 Bc8 53 Kg1 Bb7 54 Ng7 Bb4 55 Ne6 Bd2 56 Ng7 Bc8 57 Ne6 Bb4** [exploiting the looseness of White's pieces to reposition the bishop] **58 Be2** [58 Nxc5 Kf4 loses a piece] **58...Be7**



Social Distancing






59 f4+ [This surprised me, although the computer seems to like it. Apparently White can draw by holding a fortress. Maybe my opponent wanted to force the issue, but at least now I have an extra pawn and something to play for. 59 Bf3 Bxe6 60 dxe6 Kxe6 was a simple draw due to the opposite colored bishops and wrong bishop for the h-pawn. Even if White had a dark squared bishop, I doubt I'd have any real winning

chances.] 59...gxf4 60 Bf3 Bd6 61 Kg2 Ba6 62 Ng5 Be7 63 Ne6 Bd3 [Bringing the bishop to e4 puts White in a bind since he doesn't want to take on e4 and undouble my f-pawns.] 64 Nc7 Be4 [Now I'll win the d-pawn and be two pawns up. The rest revolves around my attempts to run White out of moves and force him to fix my pawn structure by taking on e4] 65 Nb5 Kxd5 [I need to use zugzwang tricks to force my king into e3. This is easier said than done. It took a long time to find the right way.] 66 Nc3+ Kd4 67 Nd1 [Opposite colored bishops aren't enough to save White after taking on e4. For example, 67 Nxe4 fxe4 68 Bd1 Ke3 69 Kf1 f3 70 Ke1 Kf4 and the pawns are too far advanced, even if the h-pawns somehow disappeared from board.] 67...Bb4 68 Kf2 Kd3 69 Nb2+ Kc3 70 Nd1+ Kd2 71 Nb2 Bc5+ 72 Kg2 Bd4 73 Nc4+ Kd3 74 Nd6 Bc5 75 Nb7 Bb4 76 Kf2 Be7 77 Na5 Bc5+ 78 Kg2 [Now ...Ke3 can be met by Nc4+ and my king must retreat.] 78...Bb6 79 Nc6 Ke3 80 Ne5 Bd4 81 Nc4+ Kd3 82 Nd6 [Around here I realized there was some danger of a three-fold repetition and I needed to find a way to make progress soon. My opponent also offered a draw somewhere in the next few moves. Given that this was an online game, he may have been trying to claim a repetition.] 82...Bb6 83 Nf7 Ke3 84 Ne5 Bc7 85 Nc4+ Kd3 86 Nb2+ Kc3 87 Nd1+ Kd2 88 Nb2 Bb8 89 Kf2 Ba7+ 90 Kg2 Bd4 91 Nc4+ Kd3 92 Nd6 [White missed his one chance to claim a draw by repetition (see moves 74 and 82)] 92...Bc5 93 Nb7 Bb4 94 Kf2 Kd2 [Finally! Now White can't avoid ...Ke3 when he can't play a knight check or guard the bishop.] 95 Bg2 [White allows a more mundane win than 95 Kg2 Ke3 winning the bishop or forcing 96 Bxe4 fxe4 followed by queening one of the pawns.] 95...Bxg2 96 Kxg2 Ke2 97 Nd8 f3+ 98 Kh2 f2 99 Nf7 f1Q 0-1

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In This Issue:

Tournaments	
Amateur Team.....	1
Zofchak Memorial.....	6
Virginia Open breaking news.....	6
Colonial Open.....	8
Features	
Readers' Games (Samualson).....	11
Odds & Ends	
Upcoming Events.....	5
VCF Info.....	<i>inside front cover</i>