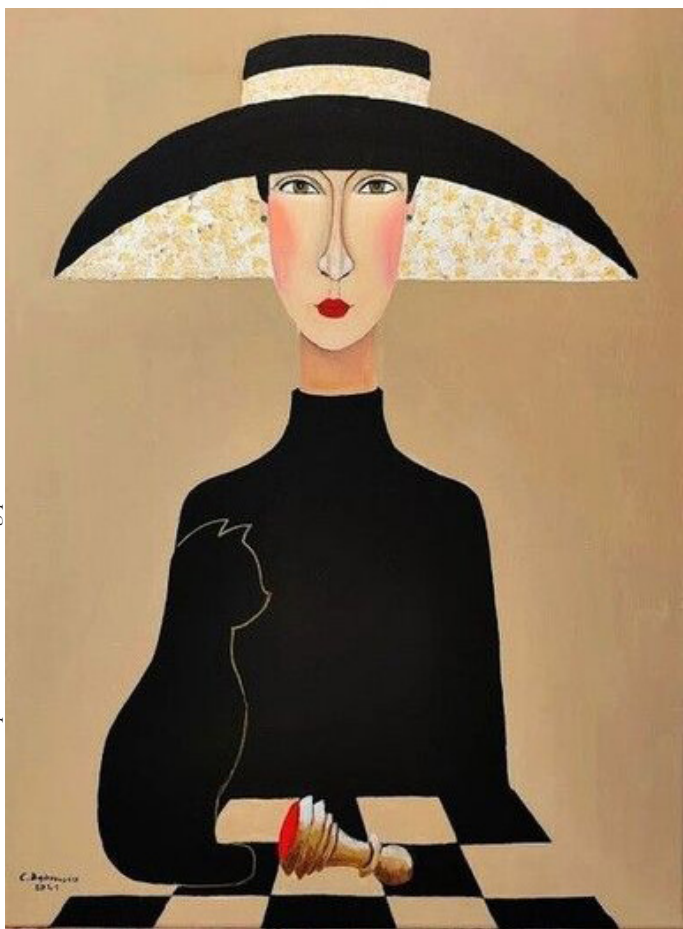


# VIRGINIA CHESS

Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the  
Virginia Chess Federation

2023 - #4



Cecilia Dibrovska — <http://delucosachorum.blogspot.com/2023/04/cecilia-dibrovska.html>

# VIRGINIA CHESS

## Newsletter

2023 - Issue #4

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## The Virginia Chess Federation (VCF)



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## Cherry Blossom Classic

The 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the event was the largest ever - 409 players including the Blitz & Scholastic side events. It also featured the strongest ever Open & U2300 sections. The 50 player Open included players from 14 federations, among them 8 GMs, 12 IMs and 3 WGMs/WIMs. The strength of the field qualified the event for the FIDE Circuit.

GMs Vasif Durarbayli & Mikhail Antipov each scored 6½-1½ to tie for 1<sup>st</sup> in the Open. Roman Rychkov's 7-2 tally was good for clear 1<sup>st</sup> in the U2300.

US Chess Executive Director Carol Meyer was on hand on the opening day and made ceremonial first moves on a couple of the top boards. Later she joined WGM Sabina Foisor in the Onsite live stream.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Cherry Blossom Classic will be back in Dulles, Virginia during next year's Memorial Day weekend (May 22-27)!

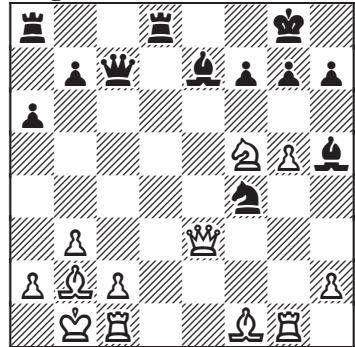
### Juraj Druska - Bernardo Roselli Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 b3 Nc6 4 Bb2 d6 5 d4 cxd4 6 Nxd4 Nf6 7 Nc3 Be7 8 Qd2 O-O 9 O-O-O a6 10 Kb1 Bd7 11 f3 Qc7 12 g4 Nxd4 13 Qxd4 Rfc8 14 g5 Nh5 15 f4 Bc6 16 Qd2 d5 17 exd5 exd5 18 Ne2 d4 19 Rg1 Bf3 20 Rc1 Rd8 21 Nxd4 Nxf4 22 Qe3 Bh5 23 Nf5 *(diagram)*

23...Bf8? [23...Bc5 24 Qc3 Ne6] 24 Be5 Qc5 25 Nh6+ [25 Qxf4! Qxg1 26 Nh6+ Kh8 27 Be2!]

25...gxh6 26 Qxf4 Bd6 27 Bxd6 Qxd6 28 gxh6+ Bg6 29 Qg5 Qd2 30 Bc4 Qxg5 31 Rxg5 Rd2 32 Rf1 Rf8 33 h4 Rh2 34 Rf4 Kh8 35 Bd3 Bxd3 36 cxd3 Re8 37 Rg1 b5 [Even doubling rooks on the 7th rank does not secure a draw for Black because White can run his king to f1: 37...Ree2 38 Rxf7 Rb2+ 39 Kc1 Rbc2+ 40 Kd1 Rcd2+ 41 Ke1 Rde2+ 42 Kf1 eventually Black has to defend the mate, 42...Re8, and then it's White's turn, 43 Rgg7!]

38 d4 Ree2 39 Rxf7 Rhf2 [Avoiding the fate of the previous note, but in the resulting ending he's down material with his king still dangerously restricted.] 40 Rxf2 Rxf2 41 Rc1 Kg8 42 h5 Rd2 43 Rc8+ Kf7 44 Rc7+ Kf6 45 Rxh7 Rxd4 46 Ra7 Rh4 47 Rxa6+ Ke5 48 Ra5 1-0



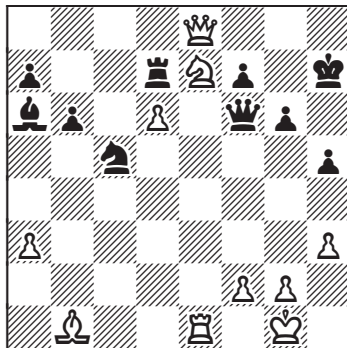
### Mikhail Antipov - Viktor Matviishin Semi Tarrasch

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 d5 4 Nc3 c5 5 cxd5 Nxd5 6 e4 Nxc3 7 bxc3 cxd4 8 cxd4 Bb4+ 9 Bd2 Bxd2+ 10 Qxd2 O-O 11 Bc4 Nd7 12 O-O b6 13 Rad1 Bb7 14 Rfe1 Rc8 15 Bb3 Qf6 16 Re3 Rfd8 17 Qe2 h6 18 h3 Qe7 19 a3 Rc7 20 d5 Nc5 21 Ba2 Ba6 22 Qd2 exd5 23 exd5 Qf6 24 Ne5 Re7 25 Nc6 Rxe3 26 Qxe3



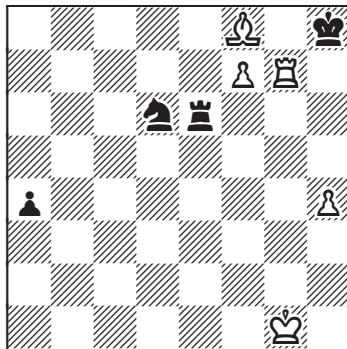
**Rd6?** [26...Ra8] **27 Qe8+ Kh7 28 Ne7 h5 29 Bb1+** [29 Qg8+ Kh6 30 Qh8+ Kg5] **29...g6 30 Re1 Rd7 31 d6** (diagram)

**31...Bb5?** [He must cut White's bishop, 31...Bd3] **32 a4** [He could straightaway go 32 Re5 ( $\Delta$  Rxh5+) because on 32...Bd3 there is 33 Rxc5! Bxb1 34 Rc7. So Black got another chance to play ...Bd3] **32...Bxa4?** **33 Re5! Bd1** [33...Qxe5 34 Qxf7+ and mate] **34 Rf5!** [34 g4! is good too!] **34...Rxe7** [34...gxf5 35 Bxf5+ at the very least White will win the queen, eg 35...Kg7 36 Qg8+ Kh6 37 Qh7+ Kg5 38 h4+ Kf4 39 Nd5+] **35 Qxe7 1-0**



### Vasif Durabayli - John Burke Ruy Lopez

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 O-O Bc5 6 c3 b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 d4 Bb6 9 Be3 O-O 10 h3 Bb7 11 Nbd2 exd4 12 cxd4 Na5 13 Bc2 Re8 14 Qb1 Nc4 15 Nxc4 bxc4 16 Nd2 h6 17 Nxc4 Bxe4 18 Bxe4 Rxe4 19 Qd3 Qe8 20 Nxb6 cxb6 21 d5 Qb5 22 Rfd1 Qxd3 23 Rxd3 Rb4 24 b3 Rc8 25 a3 Rb5 26 Rad1 Rc2 27 Bf4 Ne4 28 a4 Rb4 29 f3 Nc3 30 Bxd6 Rxb3 31 Be5 Nxd1 32 Rxb3 f6 33 Bd4 Rd2 34 Bxb6 Rxd5 35 Kf1 Rd2 36 a5 Nb2 37 Rc3 Kf7 38 Rc7+ Kg6 39 g4 h5 40 gxh5+ Kxh5 41 Rxc7 Nc4 42 Bc7 Ra2 43 Bd8 Nxa5 44 Bxf6 Nc4 45 Kg1 Re2 46 f4 Nd6 47 f5 Kh6 48 Rg6+ Kh7 49 Rg7+ Kh6 50 Rg5 a5 51 h4 a4 52 Bd4 Nb5 53 Bg7+ Kh7 54 f6 Nd6 55 Bf8 Re6 56 Rg7+ Kh8 57 f7 (diagram) 57...Nxf7 58 Rxf7 Re4 59 h5 Kg8 60 Rf5 Rh4 61 Kg2 Kh7 62 Rf7+ Kg8 63 Rf5 Kh7 64 Kg3 Rh1 65 Ra5 Rf1 66 Ra7+ 1-0



US Chess Executive Director  
Carol Meyer with Open section  
co-winner GM Mikhail Antipov.

Photo by Paul Swamey





## Vasif Durabayli - Juraj Druska French

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 Bxc3+ 6 bxc3 Nc6 7 Qg4 g6 8 Qf4 h6 9 dxc5 Qa5 10 Bd2 Qxc5 11 Nf3 Bd7 12 Nd4 Nx4 13 Qxd4 Qxd4 14 cxd4 Ne7 15 Rb1 b6 16 Ba6 Nc6 17 Bc3 O-O 18 Kd2 f6 19 exf6 Rxf6 20 f3 g5 21 Rbf1 Raf8 22 Be2 Kg7 23 h4 Be8 24 Rh3 gxh4 25 Rxh4 Rf4 26 Rxf4 Rxf4 27 Ke3 Rf8 28 Rc1 Bg6 29 Be1 Rc8 30 Ba6 Re8 31 c4 Nb8 32 Bb7 Re7 33 Ba8 dxc4 34 Rxc4 Nd7 35 Rc7 Rf7 36 Rxa7 Nf6 37 Ra6 Rc7 38 Rxb6 Rc2 39 g4 Ra2 40 Bb4 h5 41 gxh5 Nxh5 42 Rxe6 Ng3 43 Be4 1-0

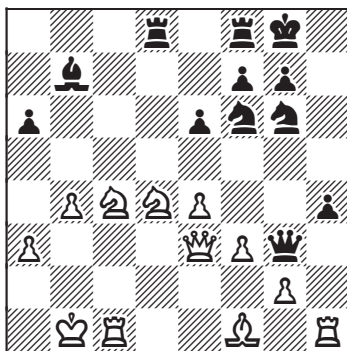


*Open section co-winner  
GM Vasif Durabayli.  
Photo by Paul Swamey*



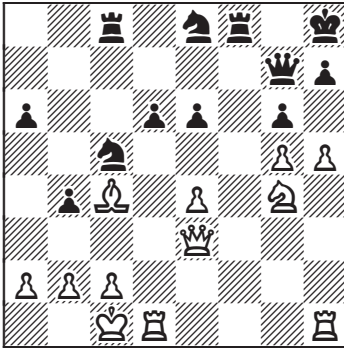
## Evan Park - Mikhail Antipov Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nx4 a6 5 c4 Nf6 6 Nc3 Qc7 7 a3 b6 8 Be3 Bb7 9 f3 Nc6 10 Be2 Ne5 11 Rc1 Ng6 12 Qd2 h5 13 b4 h4 14 Na4 Bd6 15 Nxb6 Rd8 16 c5 Bxh2 17 Nc4 Bg3+ 18 Kd1 O-O 19 Kc2 d5 20 cxd6 Bxd6 21 Kb1 Bf4 22 Qc3 Bxe3 23 Qxe3 Qg3 24 Bf1 (diagram) 24...Ng4 [24...Bxe4+!] 25 Qg1 N4e5 26 Na5 Ba8 27 Bxa6 Nf4 28 Ne2 Bxe4+ [opportunity knocks twice!] 29 fxe4 Qxa3 30 Qc5 Rb8 31 Qxe5 Qxb4+ 32 Kc2 Rfd8 33 Rcd1 Qa4+ 34 Kc3 Qa3+ 35 Kc2 Qa2+ 0-1



## Maxim Farberov - Sam Schenk Nimzowitsch

1 e4 Nc6 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 Nf6 4 Nc3 g6 5 h3 Bg7 6 Bg5 O-O 7 d5 Nb8 8 Qd2 c6 9 Bh6 Nbd7 10 Bxg7 Kxg7 11 O-O-O Qc7 12 Be2 Nc5 13 Qd4 Kg8 14 g4 cxd5 15



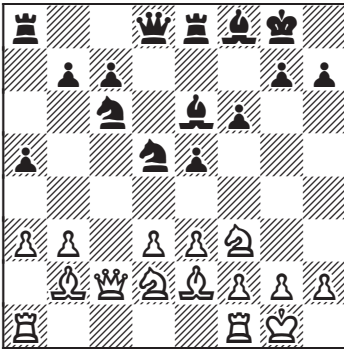
exd5 a6 16 g5 Ne8 17 Nh2 e5 18 dxe6 fxe6 19 Ng4 Qg7 20 Qe3 b5 21 h4 Bb7 22 f3 b4 23 Ne4 Bxe4 24 fxe4 Rc8 25 Bc4 Kh8 26 h5 (diagram) 26...gxh5 27 Rxh5 Na4 28 b3 Qb2+ 29 Kd2 Ng7? [29...Rc7] 30 Rh6 Qc3+ 31 Qxc3 Nxc3 32 Nf6 Rxf6 33 gxf6 Ne8 34 Bxe6 Rb8 35 Bf5 Rb7 36 Rdh1 Kg8 37 Rg1+ Kf8 38 Rxh7 Rxh7 39 Bxh7 Nxf6 40 Bf5 a5 41 Kd3 d5 42 e5 Nh5 43 Rg5 Nf4+ 44 Kd4 Nxa2 45 e6 a4 46 bxa4 b3 47 cxb3 Nb4 48 Ke5 Ne2 49 Kd6 Nf4 50 Kd7 1-0

### Macon Shibut - Andrew Shiman Nimzowitsch/Larsen

*Notes by Macon Shibut*

Classic games that resemble the position in front of you can be of immeasurable value in seeking ideas or navigating complications. As a kid in the late 1970s, I was very taken with a game Bobby Fischer played against Ulf Andersson:

1 b3 e5 2 Bb2 Nc6 3 c4 Nf6 4 e3 Be7 5 a3 O-O 6 Qc2 Re8 7 d3 Bf8 8 Nf3 a5 9 Be2 d5 10 cxd5 Nxd5 11 Nbd2 f6 12 O-O Be6



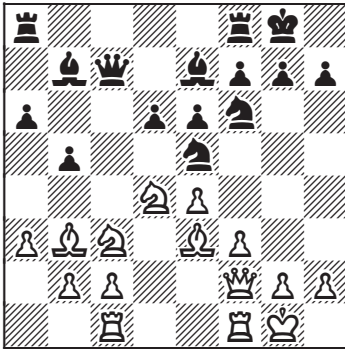
13 Kh1 Qd7 14 Rg1 Rad8 15 Ne4 Qf7 16 g4 g6 17 Rg3 Bg7 18 Rag1 Nb6 19 Nc5 Bc8 20 Nh4 Nd7 21 Ne4 Nf8 22 Nf5 Be6 23 Nc5 Ne7 24 Nxg7 Kxg7 25 g5 Nf5 26 Rf3 b6 27 gxf6+ Kh8 28 Nxe6 Rxe6 29 d4 exd4 30 Bc4 d3 31 Bxd3 Rxd3 32 Qxd3 Rd6 33 Qc4 Ne6 34 Be5 Rds 35 h4 Nd6 36 Qg4 Nf8 37 h5 Ne8

38 e4 Rd2 39 Rh3 Kg8 40 hxg6 Nxg6 41 f4 Kf8 42 Qg5 Nd6 43 Bxd6+ 1-0

Of course Fischer was big news around then and chess players were obsessing over everything he did. But this striking plan Kh1, Rg1, g4 etc, from a compact, seemingly defensive position—no piece beyond the third rank!—made quite an impression in its own right, and not only on me. It turned out that Fischer had played the same plan previously with opposite colors! That predecessor game had not caused such a stir when was played; Fischer's opponent responded weakly and collapsed before the attack could flower. But still...1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bc4 e6 7 Bb3 b5 8 a3 Be7 9 Be3 O-O 10 O-O Bb7 11 f3 Nbd7 12 Qd2 Ne5 13 Qf2 Qc7 14 Rac1 (diagram, next page)

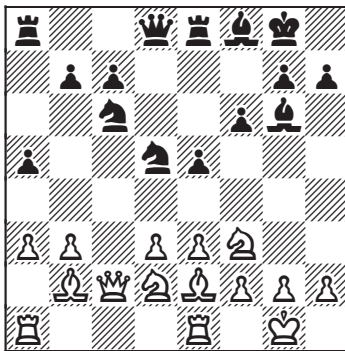






14...Kh8 15 Nce2 Rg8 16 Kh1 g5 17 h3 Rg6 18 Ng3 Rg8 19 Nxe6 fxe6 20 Bxe6 Nxe4 21 Nxe4 Rxe6 Soruco-Fischer, Havana Olympiad 1966.

Just a week or so before the Cherry Blossom Classic I saw a recent game between Magnus Carlsen and Nordibek Abdusattorov. Carlsen expressly followed Fischer's lead. 1 b3 e5 2 Bb2 Nc6 3 e3 Nf6 4 Nf3 Bd6 5 c4 O-O 6 d3 Re8 7 a3 a5 8 Be2 Bf8 9 O-O d5 10 cxd5 Nxd5 11 Nbd2 f6 12 Qc2 Bf5 13 Rfe1 Bg6



14 g4 Qd7 15 Kh1 Rad8 16 Ne4 Kh8 17 Rad1 Bf7 18 Rg1 Nb6 19 Rg3 a4 20 bxa4 Na5 21 Rdg1 Bd5 22 g5 f5 23 Nc3 Bc6 24 e4 Nxa4 25 Nxa4 Bxa4 26 Qc3 Nc6 27 g6 Nd4 28 Ng5 Nxe2 29 Nf7+ Qxf7 30 gxf7 Nxc3 31 fxe8 Q Bxe8 32 Bxc3 Bg6 33 efx5

Bxf5 34 Bxe5 Bxd3 35 Rxc7 1-0. For some fantastic possibilities that didn't appear on the board, I recommend the annotations in *New In Chess* magazine issue 2023/#1.

Thus I was 'prepared' for this, my second round game at the Cherry Blossom. 1 b3 e5 2 Bb2 Nc6 3 e3 Nf6 4 Nf3 Bd6 5 c4 O-O 6 Be2 Re8 7 a3 a5 8 d3 Bf8 9 Nbd2 d5 10 cxd5 Nxd5 11 O-O f6 12 Qc2 Be6 [12...Bf5 would follow the Carlsen-Abdusattorov path. Instead we've transposed to the position from Fischer-Andersson (first diagram above). I didn't realize that we'd reached the exact position. Otherwise I would have just copied Fischer's 13 Kh1! But I knew the positions were at least very similar, so my rough memory of the Fischer and Carlsen games informed my play.] 13 Ne4 Bf7 [I expected 13... Qd7 and intended to reply with what I hoped would appear as a 'mysterious' 14 Kh1. I had also been pondering between Rg1 or h3 as the way to prepare g4. By withdrawing his bishop, my opponent presented me an opportunity to play g4 with no preparation needed. It was all I could do to sit on my hands and think at least a bit. 14 g4 is the kind of move that arouses suspicion if you slap it out too quickly.] 14 g4 Qd7 15 Kh1 Be6 16 h3 [16 Rg1 ignites some fireworks to no particular gain: 16...fxg4 17 Qc4 Be6 18 Qxd5 Qxd5 19 Nxf6+ Kh8 20 Nxd5 Bxd5] 16...h5 [Very sharp. At the board I was more focused on 16...f5, eg 17 gxf5 (I also examined 17 Neg5 fxg4 18 Nxe5) 17...Bxf5 18 Rg1 Bxe4 19 dxe4 Qxh3+ 20 Nh2 Nf6 21 Rg3 Qd7 22 Ng4. I'd have been more skeptical had not the



Fischer and Carlsen connection bolstered my confidence about my position entering these complications.] **17 gxh5 Bxh3 18 Rg1 Bg4 19 Rg3 f5 20 Neg5** [This was a hard decision. **20 Rxg4 fxg4 21 Nfg5**; and also simply **20 Qc4!**? beckoned.] **20...f4 21 Rxg4 Qxg4 22 Rg1 Qd7** [22...Qxh5+ was bad because of **23 Nh2 Qg6 24 Qc4** win the knight. After the text move I got to execute a classic Sicilian style breakthrough, recalling yet another game I studied years ago, Rauzer-Botvinnik, USSR Ch 1933] **23 e4! Nb6** [Covering c4 stops my queen

giving check there, but at the cost of removing his knight from the kingside. If **23...Nf6** the continuation could have been **24 Qc4+ Kh8 25 Nf7+ Kg8** (or **25... Kh7 26 N3g5+ Kg8 27 Bg4! Nxg4 28 Nh6+ Kh8 29 Qg8mate**) **26 N7xe5+ Qe6 27 Nxc6** winning] **24 d4!** [Insisting on a check from c4 and moreover threatening d5 when the adjacent a1-h8 diagonal also collapses] **24...Nxd4 25 Bxd4 exd4 26 Bc4+ Nxc4 27 Qxc4+ Kh8 28 Nf7+ Kg8** [28...Kh7 29 N3g5+ Kg8 30 Nh6+ Kh8 31 Qg8mate] **29 Nh6+ Kh7 30 Qg8+ 1-0**

## 2023 Virginia Closed Chess Championship

Sept 2-4, 2023

Hilton Garden Inn Innsbrook  
4050 Cox Road, Glen Allen, Va



*Championship & Amateur sections open to Virginia residents, students at Virginia colleges & universities, and military stationed in Virginia. Novice section open to all.* \$5,000 b/90 paid players, 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> G in all three sections. *Championship* (minimum USCF rating 1500, no unrated) \$900-650-450, top X, A each \$200. *Amateur* (under 1800): \$600-400-300, top C, D each \$150. Unrated winnings limited to \$250. *Novice* (under 1200) \$400-300-200, top Unrated \$100, trophies to top/2<sup>nd</sup> U-1000, U-800 & U600. Unrated place winnings limited to \$250. Long Schedule (Championship & Amateur Sections) Time Control 30/90, SD/1, d5. Rds 1-7, 11-5, 10-3:30. Short Schedule (Championship & Amateur Sections) 2 rds on Saturday evening at 5pm and 8pm, then merge with the Long Schedule for Sunday morning; Time Control for the Saturday games G/60, d5. Novice Schedule Saturday-Sunday only, rd 10-1-5, 11-3:30. Time control Game/60, delay 5. Up to two ½ pt byes allowed (Novice 1 allowed), must declare during registration or at least 60 minutes before the start of rds 1 & 2. Limit 1 bye on day 3. Withdrawals ineligible for prizes. Hotel: Hilton Garden Inn Innsbrook, 4050 Cox Road, Glen Allen, Va, (804) 521-2901, \$114/king or \$124/double queen, plus taxes. Request "Virginia Closed Chess Rate" by Friday, August 18. *Enter* online: [www.vachess.org](http://www.vachess.org); or mail check payable to VCF, include Name, Address, Email, Phone Number, USCF ID, Section & bye requests if any. Mail by Saturday Aug 26 to Mike Hoffpauir, ATTN: VA Closed, 405 Hounds Chase, Yorktown, VA 23693. On site registration Friday, Sept 1, Saturday, Sept 3, 8 am-noon. Long Schedule entries received after noon may have to wait until rd 2 to play. Short Schedule players can register from 1:30 pm to 4 pm on Saturday afternoon. *Info* [www.vachess.org](http://www.vachess.org) or contact Mike Hoffpauir at [mhoffpauir@aol.com](mailto:mhoffpauir@aol.com) or text 757-846-4805.

Blitz Tournament Friday Night

VCF ANNUAL MEETING AT 9 AM ON SATURDAY, SEPT 2





## Corrosive Tolerance Part II: The Malandraged Reframed

by Aleksey Bashtavenko

*“New York greets you harder, more energetically. It has the impact of a Norwegian fjord with its towering ice-white cubes. Manhattan welcomes you masculinely, heroically; it represents the broad, open human will of America, a single expression of concentrated power. But Rio de Janeiro does not rise up to meet you; it reaches out with soft, feminine arms, it receives you with a wide, tender embrace, it draws you in, it submits to your gaze with a certain sensuality.”* —Stefan Zweig

**I**N DECEMBER 2022 I played a chess tournament that took place concurrent with the soccer World Cup. At the time I was taking lessons with IM Luis Rodi. I rented a car to drive to Rio de Janeiro and he took a bus to Sao Jose Dos Campos, a halfway point between Rio and the state of Parana.

The moment I picked up Luis, he needed no invitation to dive right into his favorite topic outside of chess: the history of the World Cup, starting with Uruguay’s triumphs in the early 30s. After the 1930s, Luis’ account took a darker turn into conspiracy theory about the Argentine mafia allegedly rigging the competitions. According to Luis, there was some shady deal between Julio Grondona, the president of the Argentine football federation, and the FIFA committee during the 2014 World Cup in Brazil. He believed that Argentina had favorable match pairings in the group stage, thanks to this alleged manipulation. However, they ultimately lost the final, which left Luis puzzled.

Of course I asked for evidence to support his claims, but what I got seemed a mix of speculation and theories. Luis even suggested that Colombia, with an Argentine coach, purposely injured Brazilian star players to benefit Argentina’s team. It was an intriguing, albeit far-fetched, conversation that lasted for hours.

We stopped at a Graal, a Brazilian pitstop on the highway. This particular Graal had Bavarian-style architecture and served German food. Luis, always ready with a new conspiracy theory, started in on how Adolf Hitler must have been Jewish, explaining his name change. I clarified that it was actually Hitler’s father who changed the family name. There’s no evidence to suggest he was Jewish either. Luis shifted back to his favorite topic—bashing Argentina. Ironic, since he had learned chess in Argentina and lived there for over three decades.

Fortified by our Bavarian-style breakfast, we continued our journey. However, we got stuck in rush hour traffic for a few hours, giving us a chance to observe the *favelas* (slums) along the road. Waiting amidst the *favelas* lining both sides of the road from Nova Iguacu to Rio prompts one to reflect on the differences between the living standards here and the *villas miserias* we had seen in Argentina. I mentioned to Luis that Bolsonaro’s policies allowed the police to shoot bandits on sight, effectively acting as a death penalty for highway robbery.



Eventually, we reached Rio and faced the choice of prolonging our journey by another hour or taking a shortcut through the heart of the city. This “Linha Amarela” route is notorious for its abject *favelas* and a high incidence of armed robbery at any time of day. But after more than 24 hours of traveling, sitting in traffic for an additional four hours didn’t seem appealing. We decided to take our chances and finally arrived safely at our tournament hotel.

A conveniently located nearby restaurant offered a traditional Brazilian meat buffet accompanied by a variety of vegetables and draft beer. The attentive waiters warned against using our phones at the outdoor tables while eating. Rio has a widespread homelessness and prompts concern for one’s personal safety. However, one notable difference I observed compared to New York was that homeless people in Rio do not exhibit signs of mental illness. During my visit to New York in 2019, I encountered several mentally unstable individuals, which made me more cautious in that city. The homeless in Rio, though dealing with substance abuse issues and resorting to pickpocketing or even armed robbery, did not display the same level of restlessness or aggression I had witnessed in New York.

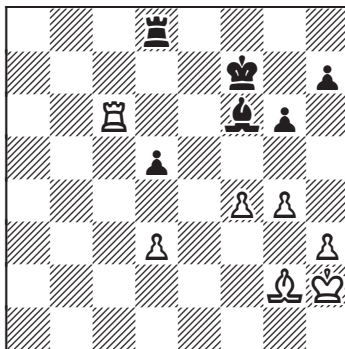
The chess tournament took place just a few blocks from the renowned Copacabana Beach, which has earned a reputation as one of the world’s more dangerous beaches. I took precautions such as leaving my iPhone at home and carrying an old android phone instead. Additionally, I used a special “*jeitinho*” wallet—a term referring to resourcefulness in Brazilian culture—filled with nearly worthless currency from Paraguay, Serbia, and Argentina. For added measure, I even included some monopoly money and expired credit cards.

### Alexandre Campos - Aleksey Bashtavenko Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 g6 4 g3 Bg7 5 Bg2 Nc6 6 O-O Nge7 7 Nc3 O-O 8 d3 d5 9 exd5 exd5 10 Bf4 a6 [Too slow. It would have been more accurate to play 10...Bf5. If White were to respond with 11 Nb5 threatening Nc7, the straightforward 11...Bxb2 would have been a good answer.] 11 Na4 b5 12 cxb5 axb5 13 Nxc5 Bxb2

14 Rb1 Bg7 15 Rxb5 Rxa2 16 Qb1 Ra1 17 Qb3 Rxf1+ 18 Kxf1 Bg4 19 Be3 Qa8 20 h3 Be6 21 Kg1 Nf5 22 Nxe6 fxe6 23 Bc5 Nfd4 24 Nxd4 Nxd4 25 Qb4 Qa1+ [The alternative 25...Nxb5 would have been better. Play may have continued 26 Bxf8 Qxf8 27 Qxb5] 26 Kh2 Ne2 27 Qb1 Qxb1 28 Rxb1 Rc8 29 Be3 Bd4 30 Re1 Bxe3 31 Rxe2 Bd4 32 Rxe6 Rd8 33 f4 Kf7 34 Rc6 Bf6 35 g4 (diagram)

35...d4 [Here, I thought my position should be drawable as I was only down a pawn in an opposite





color bishop endgame. My goal was to trade rooks, even at the expense of sacrificing another pawn, as it is often possible for the defending side to hold a draw in an opposite-colored bishop endgame two pawns down. In retrospect I realize that the text move was ill-conceived. I should have tried to activate my bishop with 35...Bh4 and play may have continued 36 g5 Kg7 37 Rc7+ Kh8 38 Bf3 h6 39 gxf6 Rd6. Having disjointed White's pawn structure, Black blocks the h-pawn and the drawing chances would have been considerable.] **36 Kg3 Re8 37 Be4 Rd8** [The error of my 35th move has become clear. Now White enjoys a considerable advantage despite the bishops of opposite colors. His bishop is much more active than Black's, he is set to force a passed pawn, and he is able to target Black's weak and overextended d-pawn.] **38 h4 Be7 39 g5 Bd6 40 Kg4 Ke7 41 Ra6 Rd7 42 f5 Kf7 43 Bd5+ Ke8 44 Bc6 gxf5+ 45 Kxf5 1-0** Having achieved a superior position. White continued to increase his advantage, which culminated in a tactical blow.

Before the next round, Luis took the initiative to research my opponent's games on Chess Results and discovered that he often played the Grunfeld. However, as Luis rightly pointed out, this didn't necessarily mean he would stick to that strategy for our upcoming game. We continued our conversation in the hotel lobby while waiting for an Uber, but being in Brazil, it came as no surprise when our ride was canceled six times in a row. Undeterred, we hailed a cab and requested to be taken to the safest shopping mall in Rio. Within ten to fifteen minutes, we arrived at "Shopping LeBlon," a prestigious mall located in one of the city's most upscale neighborhoods. Supposedly this area was relatively safe due to the strong control of the "Red Command" leaving little room for rival criminal organizations. Naturally, in a place like this, expecting much assistance from the police seemed unrealistic.

Upon reaching the highest floor of the mall, Luis excitedly invited me to a local bookstore where he quickly located a shelf filled with communist literature featuring works by Lenin, Trotsky, Ernesto Guevara, and Rosa Luxemburg. I politely declined his invitation to explore such works further, explaining that I was feeling a bit queasy that day and even the slightest provocation could trigger a bout of nausea.

From the highest floor we could see the Ganabra Bay, but Luis had little time for admiring the scenery. He had to prepare for facing a grandmaster as Black. According to a mutual acquaintance, this grandmaster had read Luis' book on the Queen's Gambit Declined, so Luis set about feverishly looking up his opponent's every game from the recent past. I wasn't in the position to help him prepare, so I moved to the bar next door. An hour later, Luis found me there and quipped about whether I had filled up my tank just enough to be able to finally study chess.

I asked him to elaborate on the comments he made about my opponent earlier that day, and he assured me that Douglas Jenidarchiche had no talent whatsoever; but he was like a religious convert who spent every waking moment studying chess and played in a tournament at every opportunity. Hence, there was no telling what opening he was going to play. While we knew that he was an aficionado of the Grunfeld and we prepared against that favorite opening, Luis allowed that he could easily have prepared a new opening for this tournament.

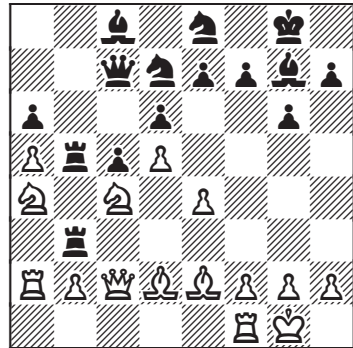


I arrived at the board early, but my opponent showed up a good 15 minutes late. He was sporting a classical Texan-style cowboy hat and boots like Clint Eastwood in some wild west movie. He offered a classical example of what eminent Brazilian social scientist Roberto Scwarz called “ideas out of context”. Many of the “Americanisms” in this country are far too out of place to make any sense here—which is partly why Bolsonaro’s attempts to emulate the political maneuvers of Donald Trump did not produce the results that he was hoping for. It wasn’t possible for him to form a political campaign around refusing to wear protective masks.

### Aleksey Bashtavenko - Douglas Jenidarchiche King’s Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nf3 O-O 6 Be2 c5 7 d5 b5 [The variation is reminiscent of the Benko gambit] 8 cxb5 a6 9 b6 Nbd7 10 b7 Bxb7 [I pushed my pawn to b7 because that square seems suboptimal for Black’s bishop.] 11 O-O Qc7 12 Nd2 Rfb8 13 a4 Bc8 14 a5 [in order to deprive the Black knight of the square on b6] 14...Rb4 15 Nc4 Rab8 [Now my knights are well-positioned.] 16 Qc2 Ne8 [It would have been more ambitious for White to play 16 f4 instead of 16 Qc2 but I opted to develop my pieces before launching a kingside assault. Furthermore, 16 Qc2 protected my pawn on e4. In any case, Black’s response seems overly passive. It would have been better for him to seek counterplay with a more active move such as 16...Ne5 White would have exchanged on e5 but exchanges are generally beneficial for a player who lacks space in the middlegame, especially here where White’s knight on c4 was active and highly centralized, while Black’s knight lacked its maneuvering square b6.] 17 Na4 [Now my game appears to be coming to fruition. I control the critical b6 with both knights and the a5 pawn, making it difficult for Black to do anything with his b file.] 17...R8b5 [This exacerbates an already dreadfully passive position. It would have been better to play the overdue 17...Ne5 to try to undermine White’s grip on b6] 18 Bd2 Rb3 [As I continued to develop my pieces in the most natural way possible, my opponent played the only move that didn’t lose material.] 19 Ra2

The day before the game, I went on a stroll across Copacabana with Luis. We walked all across the boardwalk of Ipanema. It was scorching hot, and I couldn’t help but want to drop everything and jump in the ocean. However, Luis insisted on regaling me with his findings about Benko Gambit theory. He was particularly adamant that a 1989 game between Jeremy Silman and Larry Christensen had virtually no instructive value. Indeed, he thought it demonstrated the yankee glibness Luis sees as the most deplorable example of “salvage capitalismo”.





Carrying on with his invective against American chess and capitalism, he sneered at Americans reading vapid books along the lines of “How to become a millionaire in one year” when they can’t write a coherent sentence in any language. In Luis’ view, Americans are all about showmanship, style over substance, and playing flashy openings with no appreciation of Steinitz and his theory that serves as the basis of positional chess.

In particular Luis urged me to note how Steinitz advised targeting the opponent’s weakest pawn and defending our own. He urged me to stop acting like a yank and forget about Silman’s “Nescape Frappe” variation pompously displayed in that game against Christensen. I should learn instead the main line. And so it happened that I spent a whole afternoon studying the “King walk line” with Luis at a cafe in Ipanema. One takeaway from that session was that if my rook can get out of the line of fire on a1 by stepping to a2, Black has difficulties targeting my main weakness b2. Thus, my last last move!

*{By the “king walk line” Aleksey refers to the sequence 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 bxa6 Bxa6 6 Nc3 d6 7 e4 Bxf1 8 Kxf1, widely offered as the ‘main line’ of the Benko Gambit. The 1989 Silman–Christiansen game he mentions featured the so-called Nescape Frappe Variation: 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 Nc3 axb5 6 e4 b4 7 Nb5 d6 8 Bf4 g5 9 Bxg5 Nxe4 10 Bf4 Qa5 11 Bc4 Bg7 12 Qe2 b3+ 13 Kf1 f5 14 f3 O-O 15 fxe4 fxe4 16 g3 Qxa2 17 Rxa2 bxa2 18 Bxa2 Rxa2 19 Nc7 Bf5 20 Ne6 Rxb2 21 Nxf8 Rxe2 22 Nxe2 Kxf8 23 Kf2 Na6 24 Bd2 Nc7 25 Nf4 Be5 26 Ba5 Bxf4 27 Bxc7 Bg5 28 h3 Ke8 29 g4 Bc8 30 Kg3 Bd2 31 Rb1 e3 32 Kf3 Kd7 33 Bb8 Ba6 34 h4 e2 35 Kf2 Bd3 36 Ra1 Kc8 37 Ba7 Kb7 0-1 —ed}*

**19...Rb8 20 Ncb6** [My preparation with Luis totally paid off. I have a death grip on b6 and Black must drop the exchange.] **20...R3xb6 21 axb6 Nxb6 22 Ba5 Qa7** [Black breaks the pin but a catastrophic loss of material is still inevitable.] **23 Nxb6 Rxb6 24 Bxb6 Qxb6 25 Qa4** [In keeping with Luis’ guidance regarding the teachings of Steinitz, I pressured my





opponent's weakest pawn while continuing to defend my own.] **25...Kf8 26 Bxa6 Qxa6 27 Qxa6 Bxa6 28 Rxa6 Bd4 29 Ra8 f5 30 exf5 gxf5** [At this point, my opponent offered me a draw and was displeased when I didn't take kindly to his offer.] **31 Rb1 Kf7 32 Rc8 Nf6 33 b4 cxb4 34 Rxb4 Bc5 35 Rf4 Kg6 36 Rf3 Nxd5 37 Rg8+ Kf7 38 Rg5 e6 39 Rfg3 Bd4 40 Rb3 Kf6 41 Rg8 Kf7 42 Rc8 Be5 43 Rb7+ Kg6 44 Rg8+ Kh6 45 Re8 Nf4 46 g3 Ne2+ 47 Kg2 Nd4 48 Rg8 f4 49 gxf4 Bxf4 50 Re7 e5 1-0** Instead of resigning, Douglas Jenidarchice walked away in silent protest, allowing his clock to run out.

A block away from my hotel, I stumbled upon a charming Spanish restaurant named Chiringuito, which translates to "beach bar." It offered all the classic Spanish delights like *pulpo de gallega*, anchovies, a variety of Spanish *tapas*, and of course Estrella Galicia on tap. On the third day of our tournament, an exciting double header of the World Cup quarterfinals awaited. First Brazil was set to face Croatia at noon, followed by Argentina, the nation's fiercest rival, playing against another mutual rival, the Netherlands.

We arrived at the Chiringuito around 11:30, full of anticipation, only to be surprised when they turned away numerous eager customers, stating that they would open at 1pm. How quintessentially Spanish of them! It seemed rather unconventional for a beach bar to close its doors on such an important sporting day, one the country had been eagerly awaiting for over four years. Undeterred, we ventured across the street to a typical Brazilian establishment offering sandwiches, meat and rice dishes, and other delicious Brazilian cuisine. By 11:45 the café was completely packed. Before the match began, spectators lined up outside, eagerly waiting to join the excitement.

Unfortunately, the wild enthusiasm that filled the air quickly waned. By halftime, a significant portion of the spectators had dozed off in front of the TV. As the first 90 minutes concluded, more than half of the customers had fallen asleep. And despite Brazil initially taking the lead in extra time, Croatia equalized and ultimately won the match through penalty kicks.

Soon after, Kaiser, our tournament organizer, announced that the next round would be postponed by an hour. Originally scheduled for 6, it was moved to 7, presumably to allow the chess players to fully indulge in rooting against Argentina. However, again things didn't go as planned. The match between Argentina and the Netherlands commenced at 4 and concluded just after 7, resulting in the Dutch team's elimination in yet another shootout.

Luis contemplated putting on a Dutch jersey, but decided against it as he had many Argentine associates competing in this event. He shifted focus to another one of his favorite past-times: bashing my upcoming opponent. As he saw it, this woman had no real skill that was worth talking about, and she only thinks that she is a serious chess player because she coaches a team for little girls in Santa Catarina. We reviewed several of her games and decided to prepare against the Old Indian. One of the main themes in our preparation was to delay the d5 push, play b4 and aim for the c5 break. Unfortunately, my opponent threw me off by fianchettoing her bishop and transitioning into an unusual line in the King's Indian Defense.





## Aleksey Bashtavenko - Regina Ribeiro King's Indian

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 d6 3 Nf3 g6 4 Nc3 Bg7 5 e4 O-O 6 Be2 c6 7 O-O e5 8 d5 cxd5 9 cxd5 a6 10 a4 Nh5 [I played 10 a4 with the intention of pushing a5 to prevent ...b5, which could have diminished my play on the queenside. Black's last move headed her knight toward f4...] 11 g3 [...and I decided to keep it out.. However, this was not the best approach. 11 Nd2 Δ Nc4, aiming to occupy the weak b6 square with my knight could have been reminiscent of the plan I implemented against Jenidarchiche the day before. If then 11...Nf4 12 Nc4 f5 13 a5 Black would be in a difficult position. It is unclear how she prevents White's knight from arriving on b6, nor is it clear how her kingside attack will continue.] 11...Bg4 12 Ne1 Bxe2 13 Qxe2 Nd7 14 Nd3 Rc8 15 a5 Qe8 16 Be3 f5 17 f3 f4 18 Bf2 fxg3 19 hxg3 g5 20 g4 [A colossal blunder. It weakened my pawn structure and conceded f4. 20 Nd1 would have been better with the aim of putting it on e3 and preparing to contest the c-file. Play could have continued 20...Qf7 21 Be1 g4 22 fxg4] 20...Nf4 21 Qd2 h5 22 Ne2 hxg4 23 Nexf4 exf4 24 fxg4 Nf6 25 Rae1 Nhg4 [Now the position is decidedly advantageous for Black.] 26 Bb6 Qh5 27 e5 Bxe5 28 Nxe5 Nxe5 29 Rxe5 dxe5 30 d6 Qg4+ 31 Kh1 Rf7 32 Qd3 0-1

As Luis and I stood in the room where former president Getulio Vargas slept, it was as if we had stepped back in time. The preservation of his bed and the presence of an old-fashioned dial phone on the nightstand created an atmosphere that made it feel like Vargas had just left the room. Curiosity got the better of me, and I couldn't help but ask Luis why he had chosen to meet at this particular place. Luis began to explain the significance of President Vargas and the reason for his decision.

Getulio Vargas had taken his own life after his corruption was exposed. This overshadowed his support for the allied forces during World War II. For reasons that leave me flummoxed, suicide was a pervasive theme in our discussion of Brazilian history that day. Luis was content with me playing whatever opening I chose—last night's defeat showed him that I only knew one variation in the entire King's Indian complex, and offering me further guidance was a waste of his time. I researched my next opponent and noticed that he played the Milner Barry gambit of the Advance variation of the French Defense. I thought this gambit had a refutation as follows: 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 Nc6 5 Nf3 Qb6 6 Bd3 Bd7 7 O-O cxd4 8 cxd4 Nxd4 9 Nxd4 Qxd4 10 Nc3 a6—White struggles to claim any kind of advantage, as I'd learned studying the line in Watson's *Play the French*.

Prior to the round I situated myself at a coffee shop. I pulled out my laptop while admiring the ocean, and the waiter advised me that I would better move inside; otherwise, it's only a matter of time before my computer gets stolen. Inside the cafe I ran into a friend who asked me how I was doing. I had to bite my tongue so as not to blurt out: "How do you think I am doing? I've been listening to Luis all afternoon!"



### Eduardo Lopes – Aleksey Bashtavenko French

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 Nc6 5 Nf3 Qb6 6 Bd3 cxd4 7 O-O Bd7 8 Re1 [deviating from the line I studied] 8...Nge7 9 a3 Ng6 [I didn't like this move but I wasn't sure how to develop my pieces.] 10 h4 Nge7 11 b4 dxc3 [Capturing on c3 wasn't a good idea as it opened a square for White's knight. However, I had trouble coming up with a good plan. My position was cramped and I wanted d4 for my knight.] 12 Nxc3 a6 13 h5 h6 14 Rb1 Nd4 15 Nxd4 Qxd4 [I got my d4, but White is ahead in development and my queen had no good square. This illustrates why I would rather play the White side of the French than the Black.] 16 Bb2 Qa7 17 Rc1 Nc6 18 Qg4 [Now I don't know how I could develop or castle.] 18...Ne7 19 Qg3 Nf5 20 Bxf5 d4 21 Ne4 exf5 22 e6 Bxe6 23 Nd6+ Bxd6 24 Qxd6 Rd8 25 Rxe6+ fxe6 26 Qxe6+ Kf8 27 Rc7 1-0 Black's position is in total disarray and his king has nowhere to take refuge.

Towards the end of the event, I had the opportunity to meet GM Ulf Anderson at the same Chiringuito. Ulf had no idea that I spoke English. Luis insisted that I interview him, but I found it nearly impossible to get a word in edgewise with Luis monopolizing all the conversation.

To top it all off, Luis was bitterly disappointed to discover that Ulf also rooted for Argentina to win the World Cup. The tournament came to a dissatisfying end as I drew with an underrated scholastic player. I certainly came away with a different perspective on Rio de Janeiro. As I checked out of the hotel, I noticed a military police van parked right in front. A typical "Brazilian malandro" was being detained. For the life of me I could not see why he had to be guarded by four soldiers with machine guns. The hotel receptionist urged us to leave as quickly as possible; in a matter of hours the Rio traffic could well be the least of our concerns.



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## Virginia Senior Open

Out-of-staters invaded and took three of the top four prizes at the 2023 Virginia Senior Open, including clear 1<sup>st</sup> place, which went to Nigerian IM Oladapo Adu with 4½ points out of 5. DC's Sal Rosaario & Pennsylvania's Karl Dehmelt were half a point behind the leader. Virginia's own Robert Fischer also joined them at 4-1 and thereby became the state Senior champion. He thereby qualified to represent Virginia at the 2023 John T Irwin National Senior Tournament of Champions that will be held in conjunction with the US Open in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Other prizewinners included John Gray, Justin Picken, Rodney Fett & Timothy Paper in a 4-way tie for top Under 1800; and Edward Cadogan as top Under 1400. The tournament, played June 3-4 at the Dulles Marriott, attracted 40 entries.

### Justin Pickens - Robert Fischer Tarrasch

*Notes by Robert Fischer*

Becoming the Virginia Senior Champion was very special to me. I played in my first USCF rated tournament 50 years ago when my mother found an article in the paper about an upcoming event for 6<sup>th</sup> graders. I won my first three games and then lost in the last round. That started a lifetime passion for chess.

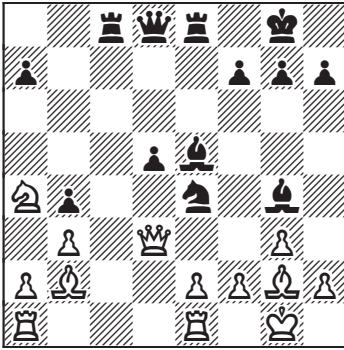
I have had what many would consider a successful chess career for a nonprofessional player. At 15 I was on the national top 50 list of players under 16. I won two consecutive Kentucky state high school championships in 1978 and 1979. I tied for first in the All-Army championship in 1984 and captained the Army team to victory against the Navy and Air Force, finishing a half point behind irreplaceable Emory Tate in the individual championship. I earned the National Master and Life Master titles and finished 2<sup>nd</sup> behind GM Dmitry Gurevich in the 2021 United States Senior Open. I have won a bunch of local tournaments and several Under 2100 prizes. But I have to say that winning the Virginia State Senior Championship is very special, perhaps surpassed only by becoming a national master.

One of the things that makes the senior tournament special is that many of the participants have been playing tournament chess for forty or more years *and they are still playing*. They are a testament that chess can bring joy for one's entire lifetime. Senior players are an inspiration to all players. Here is my fourth round game. **1 c4 e6 2 Nc3 d5 3 d4 Be7 4 Nf3 Nf6 5 g3 O-O 6 b3 c5 7 cxd5 exd5 8 Bg2 Nc6 9 O-O Re8 10 Bb2 Be6 11 Rc1 Rc8 12 Na4 cxd4 13 Nxd4 Bg4 14 Re1 Bb4 15 Bc3 Ba3 16 Ra1 Nxd4 17 Qxd4 b5 18**





Bb2 Bd6 19 Nc3 Be5 20 Qd2 b4 21 Na4  
Ne4 22 Qd3? [22 Bxe4 dxe4 23 Rad1 ♞]



22...Nxf2! 23 Qxd5 [23 Kxf2 Qf6+  
24 Kg1 Bxb2 25 Nxb2 Qxb2 26 Bxd5  
Bxe2 27 Qf5 Qd4+ 28 Kh1 Rc7 ♞] 23...  
Bxb2 24 Nxb2? [24 Qxd8 Rcx8 25  
Nxb2] 24...Qb6 25 Nc4 Nh3+ 26  
Kh1 Qg1+ 0-1 An oldie but goodie!  
(27 Rxg1 Nf2mate)

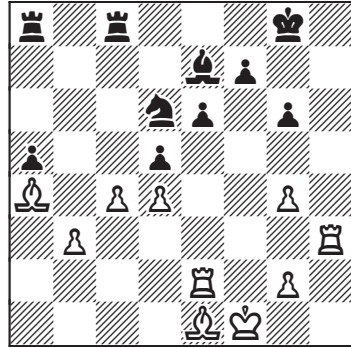
### Larry Larkins - Daniel Miller Modern

1 d4 g6 2 e4 Bg7 3 Bc4 c6 4 Nc3 d5  
5 exd5 b5 6 Bb3 b4 7 Nce2 cxd5 8 a3  
bxa3 9 Rxa3 Nf6 10 Nf3 O-O 11 O-O  
Nc6 12 Ne5 Qb6 13 Nxc6 Qxc6 14 Nf4



Virginia Senior Champion Bobby Fischer

Bf5 15 Re1 e6 16 f3 Rfc8 17 c3 h5 18  
Nd3 Bxd3 19 Qxd3 a5 20 Ba4 Qc4 21  
Qd1 Rcb8 22 Ra1 Qc8 23 Re2 Rb6 24  
Qe1 Qb8 25 b3 Qc7 26 Bd2 Rbb8 27  
Qg3 Qxg3 28 hxg3 Ne8 29 Rd1 Rc8 30  
Kf1 Nd6 31 Be1 Nf5 32 Rd3 Bf8 33 g4  
hxg4 34 fxg4 Nd6 35 Rh3 Be7 36 c4



36...Bf6 [36...dxc4 37 d5 produces  
complications based on the undefended  
Be7] 37 c5 Ne4 38 Rd3 Kf8 39 Ree3  
Ke7 40 Rh3 Ng5 41 Bg3 Ne4 42 Bf4  
g5 43 Bh2 Rh8 44 Ke2 Rxh3 45 gxh3  
½-½ White has a passed pawn and the  
bishop pair but it would be hard to  
make progress considering the monster  
knight and the the h3 weakness.

### Daniel Miller - Olapado Adu Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 c3 d5 3 exd5 Qxd5 4 d4 Nf6 5  
Nf3 e6 6 Be2 Be7 7 O-O O-O 8 c4 Qd8  
9 dxc5 Bxc5 10 Nc3 b6 11 Qc2 Bb7 12  
a3 a5 13 Bg5 Nbd7 14 Rfd1 Qb8 15 Bh4  
Bd6 16 Bg3 Bxg3 17 hxg3 Nc5 18 Rd4  
a4 19 Rad1 h6 20 Ne1 Bc6 21 Bf3 Bxf3  
22 Nxf3 Re8 23 Nb5 e5 24 Rd6 Nfe4  
25 R6d5 Nf6 26 Rd6 Nfe4 27 R6d5 ½-½





## *From the Editor...*

**T**HIS ISSUE presented a problem, but I guess a good sort of problem. I had too much material to fit into the available pages. I offer my thanks to Mike Callaham for faithfully providing articles for publication, but also my apologies because the latest installment of his Vocation Corner as well as another piece Mike submitted must be deferred to next issue. Also next issue we'll hopefully continue Rusty Potter's opening repertoire feature, which began in VIRGINIA CHESS #2023/3.



Despite being flush this time, there are questions regarding the long term direction of VIRGINIA CHESS, so I will take this opportunity to raise them.

Once upon a time, I suppose before the Internet took over our lives, VIRGINIA CHESS and the Tournament Life section of CHESS LIFE were essential for spreading the word about upcoming tournaments. But it has been literally years since any tournament organizer sent me an announcement formatted for VIRGINIA CHESS publicizing their upcoming event. Instead I receive daily emails about tournaments near and far, including some so distant the sender must know the odds of my attending are close to nil. Up to now I've culled these emails, plus the tournament clearinghouse page on the USCF website, for events I thought might interest Virginia readers. Then I'd work up my own announcements of them for VIRGINIA CHESS. This is tedious work and I'm not sure it matters. With the Virginia Closed announcement on page 6 of this issue I think I'm shutting the book on all that. Advertising space for tournaments in VIRGINIA CHESS is free, I'll publish tailored submissions that I receive, but otherwise we'll give the space to Mike Callaham and others who make the effort to prepare material and send it.

All that and more goes for after-the-event articles. I used to get lots of reports complete with news, photos and games. Organizers considered an article in the newsletter the natural cherry on top of a successful tournament. I believe people who win prizes or play a good game like to see their achievement in print. A tournament report inclines them to remember an event fondly and start looking forward to playing it again next year. Nowadays, if a tournament doesn't completely disappear once it's over, I might receive a dump of games from liChess. I cobble together impersonal tournament reports from online crosstables.

As a result, the content of VIRGINIA CHESS has gradually changed from being mostly news, games, and analytic articles to being mostly long-form one-off features such as Aleksey Bashtavenko's articles (nearly half of this issue). I don't want this to sound like editorial grumbling: I enjoy editing VIRGINIA CHESS and will happily continue at the VCF's pleasure. But I've come to feel we need to rethink what sort of newsletter people want and are willing to support. God willing, I'll be at the VCF Business Meeting to give my Editor's Report on September 2 and we can continue this discussion then.

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