

# VIRGINIA CHESS

## Newsletter

The bimonthly publication of the  
Virginia Chess Federation

2025 - #1



*Photo by Valentino Burke*

Virginia hosts the  
**North American Youth Championships**



# VIRGINIA CHESS

## Newsletter

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## North American Youth Championships

A major FIDE event came to Virginia at the close of 2024. Capital Area Chess hosted the North American Youth Championships in Dulles, December 18-23. 368 players from the US, Canada & Mexico, ages 8 to 18, competed through 9 rounds across 12 sections. Full results can be found at <https://chess-results.com/tnr1084596.aspx?lan=1> (Hit the Tournament Details button to get access to all the different sections.)

For Virginia Chess readers, the headline will be that Ronen Wilson, of Ashburn, tied for 1<sup>st</sup> with Californian Bryan Xie in the U16 Open section and in the process earned an IM norm. Congratulations!

### Stephen Willy - Ronen Wilson Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Nd7 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 O-O a6 6 c4 g6 7 Nc3 Bg7 8 d3 O-O 9 Ne1 Ne5 10 f4 Nc6 11 Bxc6 bxc6 12 Nf3 Ne8 13 Qe1 Nc7 14 f5 gxf5 15 Qh4 e5 16 Bg5 f6 17 Bh6 f4 18 Kh1 Qd7 19 g3 [19 Bxg7] 19...Bxh6 20 Qxh6 Qh3 21 Nh4? [21 Qxh3 Bxh3 ♣] 21...fxg3 0-1

### Ronen Wilson - Prajit Manivannan Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 g6 5 c4 Nf6 6 Nc3 d6 7 Be2 Nxd4 8 Qxd4 Bg7 9 Be3 O-O 10 Qd2 a5 11 O-O a4 12 Rac1 Qa5 13 Rfd1 Be6 14 f3 Rfc8 15 Nb5 Qxd2 16 Rxd2 Nd7 17 f4 Nc5 18 Bf3 Ra5 19 Na3 Kf8 20 Kf1 Ke8 21 Ke2 Bd7 22 g3 Bc6 23 Bd4 Bh6 24 Bc3 Ra6 25 e5 dxe5 26 Bxe5 Nd7 27 Bc3 Bxf3+ 28 Kxf3 Rac6 29 Rcd1 Nb6

{diagram}

30 Ba5 e6 31 Bxb6 Rxb6 32 Nb5 Bf8 33 Rd7 Be7 34 b3 f5 35 h3 Rc5 36 g4 fxg4+ 37 hxg4 h5 38 gxh5 Rxh5 39 Rc7 axb3 40 axb3 Rc5 41 Rxc5 Bxc5 42 Rh1 Kf7 43 Rh7+ Kf6 44 Ke4 Bf2?





[44...Bf8] 45 Nc7 g5 46 Ne8+ Kg6 47 Rg7+ Kh5 48 Rxg5+ Kh6 49 Nf6 Bh4 50 Ng8+ Kh7 51 Nf6+ Kh6 52 Ng4+ Kh7 53 Rh5+ Kg6 54 Rxh4 Rxb3 55 Rh6+ Kf7 56 Rh7+ Kf8 57 Ke5 Rb6 58 Kf6 Kg8 59 Rg7+ Kf8 60 Rf7+ Kg8 61 Kg6 1-0

Vedant Talwalkar - Ronen Wilson

English

1 Nf3 d5 2 e3 Nf6 3 c4 e6 4 b3 Be7 5 Bb2 O-O 6 Nc3 dxc4 7 Bxc4 a6 8 Qb1 b5 9 Bd3 Bb7 10 Ne4 Nbd7 11 Nxf6+ Nxf6 12 e4 h6 13 O-O c5 14 Rd1 Qc7 15 e5 Nd5 16 Bh7+ Kh8 17 Be4 Rfd8 18 d3 Nf4 19 Bxb7 Qxb7 20 Qc2 Qd5 21 d4 c4 22 bxc4 bxc4 23 Bc1 Nd3 24 Be3 Nb4 25 Qc3 Qb5 26 Rdc1 Rac8 27 a4 Qd5 28 Ne1 a5 29 Qd2 Nc6 30 Bxh6 Qxd4 31 Nf3 Qxd2 32 Bxd2 Bb4 33 Bg5 Ne7 34 Rab1 Rd7 35 Bxe7 Rxe7 36 Rc2 Rd7 37 Kf1 Rd3 38 Ng5 Kg8 39 Rbc1 c3 40 Ne4 Rc4 41 Ke2 Rd5 42 Nxc3 Bxc3 43 Rxc3 Rxe5+ 44 Kf3 Rxa4 45 Rc8+ Kh7 46 R1c4 Ra3+ 47 Rc3 Rxc3+ 48 Rxc3 a4 49 Ra3 Ra5 50 Kf4 Kg6 51 f3 f5 52 g3 Kf6 53 Ke3 Ke5 54 Kd3 Kd5 55 g4 fxg4 56 fxg4 g5 57 Kc3 Ke4 58 Kb4 Ra8 59 Kc5 Kf4 60 Kc6 e5 61 Kb7 Ra5 62 Kb6 Ra8 63 Kb7 Rd8 64 Rxa4+ e4 65 Kc6 Kf3 66 Ra5 Kxg4 67 Re5 Kf4 68 Re7 e3 69 Kc5 g4 70 Kc4 Kf3 71 Kc3 e2 72 Rf7+ Kg2 73 Re7 Kf2 74 Rf7+ Ke1 75 Kc2 Rc8+ 76 Kb2 Rc5 77 Rf8 Kd2 78 Rd8+ Ke3 79 Re8+ Kf3 80 Rf8+ Ke4 81 Re8+ Re5 0-1



Photo by Valentino Burke



Ronen Wilson - Leo Lin

Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Bg5 Nbd7 7 Bc4 Qb6 8 Bb3 e6 9 Be3 Nc5 10 f3 Qc7 11 g4 b5 12 g5 Nfd7 13 Qd2 Be7 14 a3 Rb8 15 Ba2 Ne5 16 b4 Ncd7 17 f4 Nc4 18 Bxc4 Qxc4 19 Nb3 Qc7 20 Bd4 O-O 21 f5 Re8 22 f6 Bf8 23 O-O-O Bb7 24 h4 Rbc8 25 Rh3 e5 26 Bf2 Re6 27 Rg1 Nb6 28 Bxb6 Qxb6 29 Rhg3 g6 30 h5 {diagram} 30...Rxc3 31 Qxc3 Bxe4 32 Qc8 d5 33 hxg6 Bxg6 34 Nc5 Rc6 35 Qxf8+ Kxf8 36 Nd7+ Ke8 37 Nxb6 Rxb6 38 Rc3 Kd7 39 Rc5 Rd6 40 c3 Ke6 41 Rf1 Kd7 42 Rf2 Be4 43 Kd2 Re6 44 Ke3 Re8 45 Rh2 Rg8 46 Rh5 Kd6 47 a4 bxa4 48 Ra5 Rc8 49 Rxa6+ Rc6 50 b5 Rxa6 51 bxa6 Kc7 52 Rh2 Kb6 53 Ra2 Kxa6 54 Rxa4+ Kb6 55 Rxe4 dxe4 56 Kxe4 Kc6 57 Kxe5 Kc5 58 c4 Kc6 59 Kd4 Kd6 60 c5+ Kc6 61 Kc4 Kc7 62 Kd5 Kd7 63 c6+ Kc7 64 Kc5 Kc8 65 Kd6 Kd8 66 c7+ Kc8 67 Kc6 h5 68 g6 1-0



Devansh Vellanki - Hardy Gu

Caro Kann

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 Bf5 5 Ng3 Bg6 6 h4 h6 7 Nf3 Nd7 8 h5 Bh7 9 Bd3 Bxd3 10 Qxd3 e6 11 Bd2 Ngf6 12 O-O-O Be7 13 c4 O-O 14 Ne4 Nxe4 15 Qxe4 Nf6 16 Qe2 b5 17 c5 Qd5 18 Kb1 Ne4 19 g4 Rab8 20 Bf4 Rb7 21 Rde1 Nf6 22 Rhg1 Nxg4 23 Ne5 Nxe5 24 Bxe5 Bf6 25 Qg4 Qd8? [25...Bg5 26 f4 f5 27 Qg3 Bf6] {diagram next page}

## Virginia Scholastic & College Chess Championships

March 8-9

Monticello High School, Charlottesville, Va

This event is open to players in grades Pre-K through College who are Virginia residents, or who attend school in Virginia. Blitz Tournament on Friday evening, March 7th. Get more information at the Virginia Chess Federation website.

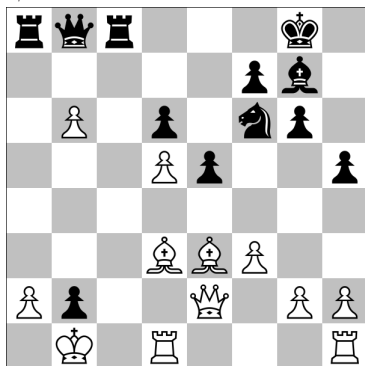


26 Qxg7+! Bxg7 27 Rxg7+ Kh8 28 Rxf7+ Kg8 29 Rxb7 Qg5 30 Rg7+! Qxg7 31 Bxg7 Kxg7 32 Rxe6 Rf4 33 Rxc6 Rxd4 34 Rg6+ Kh7 35 Ra6 Kg7 36 b3 Rd5 37 b4 Rxh5 38 c6 Re5 39 c7 Re8 40 Rxa7 Kg6 41 a4 h5 42 axb5 h4 43 b6 h3 44 Ra3 1-0

Sharath Radhakrishnan - Joshua Xia

Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Be3 e5 7 Nb3 Be6 8 Qd2 Nbd7 9 f3 h5 10 Nd5 Bxd5 11 exd5 g6 12 O-O-O Bg7 13 Kb1 Qc7 14 c4 O-O 15 Bd3 a5 16 Qc2 a4 17 Nd2 Rfc8 18 Ne4 Qb8 19 Nxf6+ Nxf6 20 Qe2 b5!? 21 cxb5 a3 22 b6 axb2? [22...Nxd5 23 Be4 Nxb6 24 Bxb6 Qxb6 25 Bxa8 Rxa8 26 b3 Bh6 ∞]



{diagram}

23 Ba6! Rc3 24 b7 Rxa6 25 Qxa6 Rxe3 [25...Rc7] 26 Qa8 Nd7 27 Rc1! bxc1Q+ 28 Rxc1 Kh7 29 Rc8 Re1+ 30 Kc2 Qxa8 31 bxa8Q Re2+ 32 Kd1 Rxg2 33 Qa7 Nf6 34 Qxf7 h4 35 Rd8 h3 36 Rxd6 Nh5 37 Re6 Nf4 38 Re7 Nh5 39 Rxe5 Kh6 40 Rxh5+ gxh5 41 Qe6+ Kg5 42 Qxh3 Rxa2 43 Qg3+ Kh6 44 Qf4+ Kg6 45 Qe4+ Kh6 46 Qe6+ Kh7 47 Qf5+ Kh6 48 d6 Ra1+ 49 Kc2 Ra2+ 50 Kb3 Rb2+ 51 Kc4 1-0

Joseph Leung - Will Moorhouse

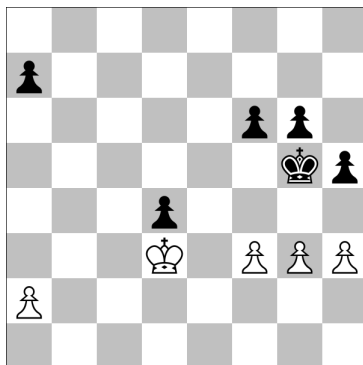
Sicilian

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Bd3 Nc6 6 Nxc6 bxc6 7 O-O d5 8 Nd2 Bd6 9 Re1 Qc7 10 h3 O-O 11 b3 Bh2+ 12 Kf1 Be5 13 Rb1 Rd8 14 Qe2 Nd7 15 Nf3 Bc3 16 Bg5 f6 17 Bd2 Bxd2



18 Qxd2 e5 19 Qc3 Qd6 20 b4 Nb6 21 Qc5 Qxc5 22 bxc5 Na4  
 23 exd5 cxd5 24 Be2? [stepping away from the fork ...e4, but in fact  
 Black did not have to give up the pawn. 24 c6! and if 24...e4 25 c7!  
 eg 25...Rd7 26 Rb8 ] Nxc5 25 Rb5 Na4 26 c4 Nc3 27 Rc5 Nxe2  
 28 Kxe2 Ba6 29 Nd2 Rac8 30 Ra5 Rd6 31 Kd3 Bxc4+ 32 Nxc4  
 dxc4+ 33 Kc3 Rd3+ 34 Kc2 Rc7 35 Re3 Rcd7 36 Rxd3 cxd3+  
 37 Kd2 Kf7 38 f3 h5 39 Ra3 Ke6 40  
 Ra6+ Kf5 41 Ra4 Kg5 42 Rb4 g6 43  
 g3 Rd4 44 Rxd4 exd4 45 Kxd3

45...h4! 46 f4+ Kf5 47 gxh4 Kxf4 48  
 Kxd4 Kg3 49 h5 gxh5 50 Ke4 Kxh3 51  
 Kf3 h4 52 a3 f5 53 a4 a5 54 Kf2 Kg4  
 55 Kg2 f4 56 Kh2 Kf3 57 Kh3 Ke2 58  
 Kh2 f3 59 Kh3 f2 60 Kh2 h3 61 Kxh3  
 f1Q+ 62 Kh2 Qf3 63 Kg1 Qg4+ 0-1

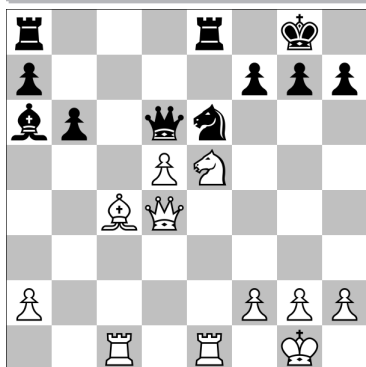


### Matthew Diao, Guo - Ryan Sun Semi Tarrasch

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 d5 Nc5 14 Rfe1 exd5 15 exd5 Qd6 16 Qd4 Ba6  
 17 Ne5 Rfe8 18 Rac1 Ne6 {diagram next page}



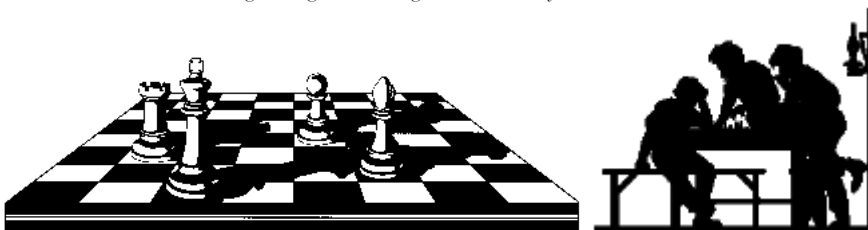
Photo by Valentino Burke



19 Nxf7 Nxd4 20 Nxd6 Rxe1+ 21  
Rxe1 Bxc4 22 Nxc4 Rc8 23 Ne3 Kf7  
24 Kf1 Nc2 25 Re2 Nxe3+ 26 fxe3  
Rc1+ 27 Kf2 Ke7 28 e4 Kd6 29 Ke3  
Ke5 30 Kd3 b5 31 Rc2 Rd1+ 32 Rd2  
Rc1 33 Rf2 Rd1+ 34 Kc2 Re1 35 Rd2  
Kd6 36 Kd3 Rc1 37 Rc2 Rd1+ 38 Ke2  
Ra1 39 Kf3 Rf1+ 40 Ke3 Re1+ 41  
Kd3 Rd1+ 42 Ke2 Ra1 43 Rc6+ Ke5  
44 Ra6 Rg1 45 Kf2 Ra1 46 Rxa7 Kxe4  
47 d6 Rd1 48 Re7+ Kf5 49 Rxg7 Rxd6 50 Rxh7 Rd2+ 51 Kg3 Rxa2  
52 Rh5+ Kg6 53 Rxb5 Ra3+ 54 Kh4 Ra2 55 Kh3 Ra3+ 56 g3 Ra2  
57 g4 Ra8 58 Kh4 Ra6 59 Rb4 Ra8 60 Rb6+ Kg7 61 g5 Rh8+ 62  
Kg3 Ra8 63 Kg4 Ra7 64 h4 Rc7 65 Kh5 Ra7 66 Rb5 Ra4 67 Rb7+  
Kf8 68 g6 Kg8 69 Kg5 Ra5+ 70 Kh6 Ra8 71 h5 Rc8 72 Rb5 Ra8  
73 Kg5 Rc8 74 h6 Ra8 75 h7+ Kg7 76 Rb7+ Kh8 77 Kh6 1-0



*The Organizing & Directing Team. Photo by Valentino Burke*





## Virginia Open

New Jersey master Ansh Shah and expert Sam Hamilton tied for 1<sup>st</sup> at the 2025 Virginia Open, held January 3-5 in Dulles. A quintet followed half a point behind: North Carolinian Emmanuel Carter, Delaware's Kevin Wang, New Jersey's Roman Rychkov and Virginians Matthew Diao & Sam Schenk. Other prizewinners in the Open section included Yang Yu (top Under 2000), Rowan Foley & Kanav Shah (shared top U1800), and Max Yu (Upset).

The Amateur (Under 1800) section saw a clear winner as Ameya Rajeev swept through 5-0. Unrated(!) Sibin Shifflett finished clear 2<sup>nd</sup> place with 4½ points, garnering a provisional rating of 2129. Warren Allen, Daksh Dudipala & Darsh Murarka all followed at 4-1. Other class prize winners in the section included John Siu, Danny Lin, Eeshan Desai, Robert Getty, Vedh Jupally & Nirav Sukkal.

Top honors in the Under 1200 section were split between Atharv Bapuram & Reyansh Dixit. They each scored 4½-½. Evan Mitchell, Forrest Dunlap, Adarsh Lakshmanan, Muchen Liang & Jorge Shimabukuro all followed with 4 points apiece. Justin Evans, Gautam Murthy, Nicholas Mitchell, Ved Mamilla, Rahil Menta & Varun Chaturvedi also claimed class or upset prizes.

The tournament attracted a total of 151 players. Mike Hoffpauir directed on behalf of the VCF, assisted by Julie Wells & Gregory Vaserstein.



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All ages and skill levels welcome!  
My rating is 2133 USCF  
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[CoachMatt.AwardSpace.us](http://CoachMatt.AwardSpace.us)



## Personal & General



*From the Editor*

The close of year 2024 brought sad news. Via the Arlington Chess Club (ACC) newsletter, we have learned of the passing of three long-time Virginia chess stalwarts.

### DAN FUSON

DC Chess League (DCCL) player and ACC member Dan Fuson, passed away in early November. He last visited the chess club in September for the opening round of the DC Chess League. Two of Dan's fellow ACC members shared recollections:

Four-time state champion Geoff McKenna: *"Dan was an active player, TD, and DC Chess League team captain for decades. My earliest memory of him is of our meeting over the board in 1974 (he won). In addition to chess, Dan had a deep and encyclopedic knowledge of American history and politics, and was a kind and agreeable human being. He will be missed."*

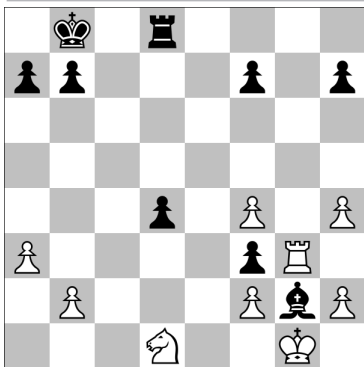
Captain of DCCL's Morphy's Mojos Bill Simmons: *"The coolest and most important thing about [the team's September match] was that Dan Fuson, the long-ago founder of the team, was in attendance! Dan was looking good and caught the first couple hours of the action....We hadn't seen him at a match for over 10 years, if not longer. In the old days Dan used to captain several teams in different divisions all by phone, and several of us got our start in the league on one or more of them."*

### DAVID HULVEY

David Hulvey died on August 4 at the age of 71. He loved books, chess, and cats. He began playing chess as a youngster after his dad introduced him to the game, and went on to play thousands of rated games in hundreds of tournaments across the country. Along the way he scored wins over Grandmasters and International Masters. In the following example of his play, Dave took down a three-time Virginia state champion.

### Rusty Potter - David Hulvey 1999 Northern Virginia Open Torre

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Bg5 c5 4 Bxf6 gxf6 5 c3 cxd4 6 cxd4 Qb6 7 Qd2 e5! 8 Nc3 [8 dxe5 fxe5 9 Nxe5? Bb4 10 Nc3 d4] 8...Bb4 9 e3 e4 10 Nh4 Be6 11 Be2 Nc6 12 O-O f5 13 a3? Be7 14 g3 Bxh4 15 gxh4 f4! 16 exf4 Nxd4 17 Rad1 Bh3! 18 Kh1 [18 Qxd4? Rg8+ 19 Kh1 Bg2+ 20 Kg1 Bf3+] 18...Rg8! 19 Rg1 Rxg1+ 20 Rxg1 O-O-O 21 Na4 Qf6 22 Bd1 Nf3 23 Bxf3 exf3 24 Rg3 Bg2+ 25 Kg1 Qe6 26 Qd1 Qe2 27

**Qc1+ [27 Qxe2 fxe2 28 Re3 Bf3! ΔRg8]**  
**27...Kb8 28 Nc3 Qd3 29 Qd1 Qxd1+**  
**30 Nxd1 d4! {diagram}**

**31 Rxc2 Re8! 32 Rg8 [32 Kf1 Re1+**  
**33 Kxe1 fxg2] Rxc8+ 33 Kf1 Re8 34**  
**b3 Re2 35 h5 f5 36 h4 h6 37 b4 b5**  
**0-1**

## WILLIAM CARROLL

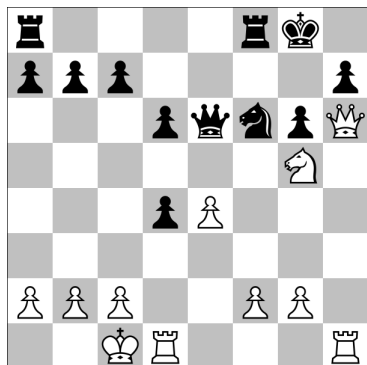
William “Bill” Carroll of Fairfax passed away on December 27. Bill was a passionate and accomplished chess player. His den displays trophies and plaques from several tournaments. His most recent triumphs included top senior at the Virginia Closed and top over-70 at the Virginia Open. He played on several league teams, including 20+ years as an active member of DCCL’s Morphy’s Mojoes.

## Ed Pabalan – Bill Carroll

## 2005 Virginia State Championship Closed

## Torre

**1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 g6 3 Bg5 Ne4 4 Bf4 Bg7 5 e3 O-O 6 Nbd2 Nxd2**  
**7 Qxd2 d6 8 e4 Nd7 9 Bh6 e5 10 h4 exd4 11 Bxc7 Kxc7 12 h5**  
**Qe7 13 O-O-O Nf6 14 hxg6 fxg6 15**  
**Qh6+ Kg8 16 Bc4+ Be6 17 Bxe6+**  
**Qxe6 18 Ng5 {diagram}**



**18...Qxa2 19 Nxh7 Qa1+ 20 Kd2**  
**Nxe4+ 21 Ke1 Qa5+ 22 c3 Qf5 23**  
**Qh4 Qxf2+ 24 Qxf2 Nxf2 25 Nxf8**  
**Rxf8 26 Ke2 Nxh1 27 Rxh1 dxc3 28**  
**bxc3 a5 29 Rb1 b6 30 Kd3 Rf2 31**  
**Rg1 Kf7 32 Kc4 c6 0-1**



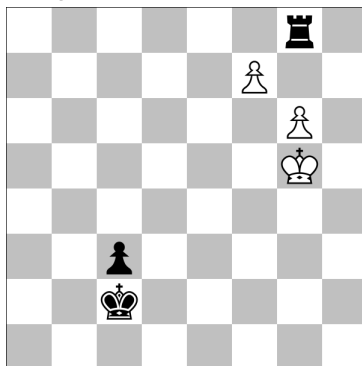


## An Instructive Ending

by Macon Shibut

The conclusion of Petrosian-Fischer, Portoroz 1958 is well known if only for its inclusion (#3) in Fischer's *My 60 Memorable Games*. The position hinges on a most important tidbit of endgame knowledge.

Fischer wrote: "I offered a draw, not realizing it was bad etiquette. It was Petrosian's place to extend the offer after 67...Rxg6+ 68 Kxg6 Kb1 69 f8Q c2 with a book draw."

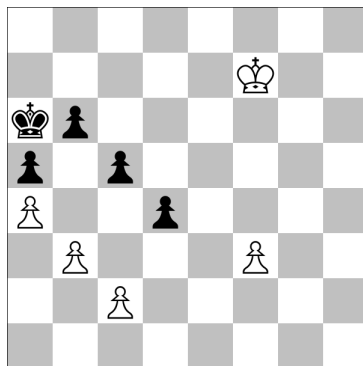


*Black to Play*

Indeed, drawing with a rook's or bishop's pawn on the 7<sup>th</sup> rank against a queen is among the first ending "theory" that players learn. The point is that after 70 Qb4+ Ka1 71 Qc3+ Kb1 72 Qb3+ Ka1! White can only stalemate by 73 Qxc2. Otherwise threat of promotion denies White's king any chance to approach.

But the trick doesn't always work. If her king is already close enough to give support, the queen sometimes prevails. The question of "close enough" involves a variety of tactical possibilities.

I gleaned the interesting position in the next diagram from John Nunn's *Tactical Chess Endings*. Which side is trying to win? Even this basic question requires some thought. Our eye is drawn to White's outside passed pawn and advanced king. On the queenside, White's pawns complicate Black's effort to make a passed pawn.



*Black to Play*

So White will promote the f-pawn and we shall see whether or not Black can stir up enough on the queenside to maybe draw, right? Wrong! *Black has the advantage* because this endgame is essentially a race and Black's pawn mass as a whole is farther advanced than White's f-pawn. Not only is White's pawn still on the third rank, he will have to spend a tempo somewhere getting his king out of its way.

Just count: White needs six moves to make a queen—king somewhere, plus f4-5-6-7-8. Black needs only five moves for ...b5, ...c4, ...d3-2-1 and on top of that it is his turn to move. So Black enjoys a significant head start.



However, there is going to be a fog of captures and checks on the queenside. That precludes any neat, arithmetic demonstration of Black's advantage. But at least we've distilled the issue to where Black's first move has become pretty clear.

**1...b5 2 axb5+** But what now? Black has a chance to go very wrong, or to be very clever, or to find something in-between.

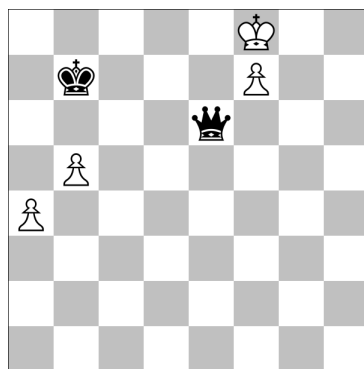
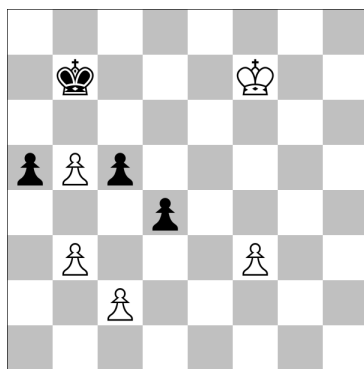
*Very Wrong:* 2...Kxb5? The move of choice for most beginners, who will not pass up a chance to take something. But after 3 Ke6! Black is already embarrassed. If 3...a4 4 bxa4+ Kxa4 5 Kd5 stops his pawns cold. So instead 3...c4, but then 4 bxc4+ Kxc4 5 f4 a4 6 f5 a3 7 f6 a2 8 f7 a1Q 9 f8Q draws directly, provided White answer 9...Qe1+ with 10 Kd7! Note how circumstances forced Black to diverge from the direct plan suggested earlier. Instead of promoting the advanced d-pawn, he wound up having to queen his a-pawn, which did not have such a head start over White's pawn.

*Very Clever:* 2...Kb7! Only a pretty strong player will even consider this, but it's excellent.

Now 3 Ke6 doesn't work for White as before because 3...a4! 4 bxa4 is not check. Black continues 4...c4 and his pawns simply outrun the king.

White can put up a better defense by 3 Ke7! He cannot catch the pawns but the king is better off on the seventh rank for a reason that becomes clear shortly. 3...a4 4 bxa4 c4 5 f4 d3 6 cxd3 cxd3 7 f5 d2 8 f6 d1Q 9 f7. If White's king were at e6, 9...Qd8 would now win directly. As things are, Black must work a bit more. 9...Qe2+ 10 Kd7 Qf3 11 Ke7 Qe4+ 12 Kd7 Qf5+ 13 Ke7 Qe5+ 14 Kd7 Qf6 15 Ke8 Qe6+ 16 Kf8

Just for fun, let's pretend White's queenside pawns are gone from this next diagram. Just mentally remove them and ask yourself if Black could win. Is his king "close enough"? Not if he goes 16...Kc7? for then White's trick works: 17 Kg7 Qe7 18 Kg8 Qg5+ 19 Kh7 Qf6 20 Kg8 Qg6+ 21 Kh8! and there is nothing better than 21...Qxf7 stalemate. However, Black's king is in fact close enough provided he finds the finesse 16...Qg6! 17 Ke7 Qg7 18 Ke8 and only now 18...Kc7! 19 Ke7 (19 f8Q Qd7mate) 19...Qe5+ 20 Kf8 Qg5! 21 Ke8 Qd8mate.





As things actually stand, the queenside are still on the board and they do not help White's cause as they nix stalemate motifs. Black wins most simply by 16... Kc7 17 b6+ (if 17 Kg7 Qg4+ 18 Kf6 Qf4+ 19 Kg7 (19 Kg6 Kd7) Qg5+ 20 Kh7 Qf6 21 Kg8 Qg6+ 22 Kf8 Kd7 followed by Ke6 and Qxf7) 17...Kxb6 18 a5+ Kc6 (of course not 18...Kxa5? 19 Kg7=) 19 a6 Kd7 20 a7 Qd5 21 Kg7 Qg2+ 22 Kf8 (or 22 Kh7 Ke7) 22...Qa8+ 23 Kg7 Ke7. As Fischer once said, the Queen is boss!

The move Grigoriev actually played was neither very wrong nor very clever, but something both qualitatively and geometrically...

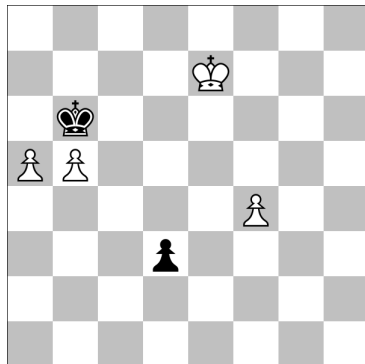
### *In Between* : 2...Kb6

Unfortunately for our lesson, Zubarev stumbled immediately with 3 Ke6? and the game finish was not so interesting: 3...a4 4 bxa4 c4 5 f4 d3 6 cxd3 cxd3 7 f5 d2 8 f6 d1Q 9 f7 (if 9 Ke7, trying to correct the mistake, then 9...Qe2+ 10 Kd7 Qf3 11 Ke7 Qe4+ 12 Kd7 Qf5+ 13 Ke7 Qe5+ wins) 9...Qd8 10 Kf5 Qd6! 0-1

From the preceding analysis we understand that White should have tried **3 Ke7!** and then we continue **3... a4 4 bxa4 c4 5 f4 d3 6 cxd3 cxd3**

Now 7 f5 loses as we've seen before: 7... d2 8 f6 d1Q 9 f7 Qe2+ 10 Kd7 Qf3 11 Ke7 Qe4+ 12 Kd7 Qf5+ 13 Ke7 Qe5+ 14 Kd7 Qf6 15 a5+ (or 15 Ke8 Qe6+ 16 Kf8 Kc7) 15...Kxb5 16 Ke8 Qe6+ 17 Kf8 Kc6 18 a6 Kd7 19 a7 Qd5 20 Kg7 Qg2+ 21 Kf8 Qa8+ 22 Kg7 Ke7. But White has a better defense.

**7 a5+!**



Playing this immediately makes a big difference. White may get rid of his pawns under favorable circumstances. Alternately, saving a tempo by not pushing the f-pawn may mean the a-pawn can race Black's d-pawn on better terms.

Now nearly every legal move for Black demands consideration!

i) 7...Kxb5 8 a6 Kxa6 (no choice) 9 f5 d2 10 f6 d1Q 11 f7 draws—the Black king is not close enough.

ii) 7...Kxa5 8 f5! d2 9 f6 d1Q 10 f7 Qe2+ 11 Kd7 Qf3 12 Ke7 Qe4+ 13 Kd7 Qf5+ 14 Ke7 Qe5+ 15 Kd7 Qf6 16 Ke8 Qe6+ 17 Kf8. Now the only useful moves are 17...Kxb5 and 17...Kb6 (17...Kb4 18 b6 Kc5 19 b7 is not useful) but either one allows White to reach the stalemate harbor by 18 Kg7 Qe7 19 Kg8 Qg5+ 20 Kh7 Qf6 21 Kg8 Qg6+ 22 Kh8! etc.

iii) 7...Kc5 8 b6 Kc6 9 a6! d2 (9...Kxb6 10 a7! draw) 10 a7 Kb7 11 f5 d1Q 12 f6 Qe1+! (if 12...Qe2+ 13 Kf8!—no more checks! White will play f7 next and soon mark ½-½ on the pairing sheet) 13 Kf8 Qb4+ 14 Ke8 Qb5+ 15 Kf8 Qc5+ 16 Ke8



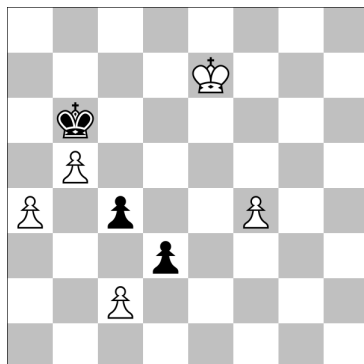
Qe5+ 17 Kf7 Black can make no more progress. The b-pawn is forever immune.

iv) 7...Kc7 8 b6+ Kb8 9 a6 d2 10 a7+ Δ f5-6, similar to the previous variation.

v) 7...Ka7! looks ridiculous but in fact this move is the most challenging for White. 8 b6+ Ka6 9 b7! Ka7 (9...Kxb7 10 a6+ Ka8!? 11 f5 d2 12 f6 d1Q 13 f7 would only clarify the draw more quickly) 10 f5 (but not 10 b8Q+? which you will find loses if you check the variations) 10...d2 11 f6 d1Q 12 f7 Qe2+ 13 Kd7 Qf3 14 Ke7 Qe4+ 15 Kd7 Qf5+ 16 Ke7 Qe5+ 17 Kd7 Qf6 18 Ke8 Qe6+ 19 Kf8 Kxb7 20 a6+ Kc7 21 a7 Black can't quite win.

But labelling 2...Kb6 "in between" seems unacceptable. Either the move wins (albeit maybe not the simplest way) or it muffs the win that could have been had by 2...Kb7. Which is it? If our analysis has persuaded you that 2...Kb6 deserves a "?"—check the variations one more time! I passed over one additional resource that puts everything in a different light. Can you spot where?

Go back to the position after 5...d3



I let 6 cxd3 cxd3 go by without comment, but now you should be able to see how **6...c3!** frustrates all White's plans. Leaving the d-pawn on the board eliminates many stalemate possibilities! And indeed, the win for Black is secure:

7 f5 c2 8 f6 c1Q 9 f7 Qc5+ 10 Ke8 Qe5+ 11 Kd7 Qf6 12 Ke8 Qe6+ 13 Kf8 Kc7 14 b6+ Kxb6 15 a5+ Kc7 16 a6 Kd7 17 a7 Qd5 18 Kg7 Qg2+ 19 Kf8 Qa8+ 20 Kg7 Ke7 21 d4 Qf8+ 22 Kg6 Qxf7+ 23 Kg5 Qd5+ etc.



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