

Antics



Bishop Chess Piece, 12th century, English Walrus ivory
Gift of J. P. Morgan, 1917 – Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Alabama Chess Federation

Spring 2005

Alabama Scholastic Championship Weekend May 7-8

Dear Alabama Chess Players,

Greetings!

Serving as your ACF President during the last four months has been most interesting. As your ACF President, I have traveled to Birmingham to play a simultaneous against Shades Crest Elementary (A most excellent school). I have been to Montgomery once and once to Huntsville. While at Huntsville I witnessed a great tournament – The Bishop's Bash – and was privileged to meet Pam, who played hostess. I have had the pleasure to see and observe several other clubs in the Birmingham area, and I have been interviewed twice by the Birmingham News and I am now in the process of scheduling time to be on one of the local early morning television shows and on a couple of radio shows to publicize our upcoming Alabama State Scholastic Championship Weekend of May 7-8 at Samford University, Birmingham. During the last four months my focus has been fixed on this event and I expect this to be a great event. I encourage you to publicize this event in your community and in your schools.

I have also been learning a great deal about scholastic chess. Scholastic Chess is a huge undertaking made possible by dedicated volunteers, parents, and Teachers at every grade level. I was amazed at the number of volunteers that participated in the recent Bishop's Bash in Huntsville. I have witnessed many chess events and I have never seen such a smooth event as the Bishop's Bash. Huntsville has a tremendous program. I encourage other local chess programs to learn from one another.

The primary purpose for this note is to spread far and wide the information for both upcoming events: The Individual and Team Championship to be held on May 7 (Individual) and May 8 (Team). More information can be found about the Scholastic Championship Weekend at www.alabamachess.com. This is now the official ACF website managed by our most able web master – Ken Goodman.

We are contacting several Businesses in the Birmingham Area to serve as Sponsors for this year's event. This will have little impact on the team and individual entry fees for this year; however, it sets the stage for next year's events. My desire is for this event to eventually have a very low, not to say nominal, entry fee.

Although this Antics edition is two weeks early, it is late relative to the Scholastic Championship. Therefore the entry deadline will be extended to advanced entry's postmarked no later than 29 April.

In the past Home-schooled students have been excluded from the team event. This year Home-schooled students may participate in the team event, provided advanced permission is obtained. The general principle to be applied will be connectivity. Simply put, a connection must be made linking each team member together.

I am looking forward to meeting many of you at this year's Scholastic Championship Weekend. We are also seeking volunteers to assist in this year's event. As always, feel free to call on me at any time.

Good Luck

Jerry McGowin

Current ACF president

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May all of your battles be great chess battles!

Antics

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My Experience at the 2005 Queen of Hearts

By Scott Varagona

The Queen of Hearts tournament is long-standing tradition in Alabama chess, and this was my second year as a part of it. It was also my *second* second place finish: I again got 4 points out of 5 to come in 2nd place, just like last year. All in all, I felt like I played really well, but it is Rick Price's simply fantastic performance that really deserves our applause. He won four games and ceded only one draw (against me) to finish with 4.5/5 and clear first. I extend my congratulations to Rick for a job very well done.

Although in the end I couldn't quite match Rick's impressive score, at least I did have the joy of playing two very interesting games. The first, against Tom Lawry, has rekindled my interest in the French Defense.

Lawry (1800) – Varagona (2062)
33rd Queen of Hearts, Round 1
February 12, 2005

- | | | |
|----|----|----|
| 1. | e4 | c6 |
| 2. | d4 | d5 |
| 3. | f3 | |



What? Didn't I say the *French* Defense? Well, there's a transposition in the works here. Of course, though there are a few pitfalls, Black is supposed to have a

relatively clear path to equality in 3. ...dxe4 4. fxe4 e5. However, being that I hadn't looked at that variation in so long, I decided to duck it in favor of—

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| 3. | | ...e6 |
| 4. | Nc3 | Nf6 |
| 5. | e5 | Nfd7 |
| 6. | f4 | c5 |



...and here we are in a Steinitz French, delayed by one move.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 7. | Nf3 | Nc6 |
| 8. | Be3 | Qb6 |
| 9. | Qd2 | |

MCO gives 9. Na4 Qa5+ 10. c3, which branches into two variations—the wild 10. ...cxd4 11. b4! Nxb4 12. cxb4 Bxb4+ 13. Bd2 Bxd2 14. Nxd2 b6, which appears to favor White, or the more sedate 10. ...c4 11. b4 Qc7 12. Be2 Be7, with a small plus to White. Lawry's 9. Qd2 aims for queenside castling, which, though not objectively bad, does entail some risk.

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| 9. | | ...a6 |
|----|--|-------|

Controlling the b5 square and making b7-b5 possible some time down the road.

10. O-O-O Qa5



Now that the White king has committed itself to the queenside, my queen needs to get out of the way of my b-pawn. I envisioned a position where, if allowed, I'll play c5-c4 and then b7-b5-b4, with a queenside attack. But 10. ...c4? can't be played immediately on account of 11. Bxc4! dxc4 12. d5, regaining the piece and countering in the center. So, first Black must play 10. ...Qa5, but that gives White a chance to trade on c5 and acquire the d4-square for his pieces. In time, White can start up his own pawn roller on the kingside.

11. h4?

It seems natural enough, but this is a mistake. The remainder of the game is a graphic illustration of why. Correct, and necessary, is 11. dxc5!, with a dynamically even game. But now, Black acquires a ferocious initiative.

11. ...b5!

It is now too late to play 12. dxc5, because 12. ...b4 followed by 13. ...Qxa2 puts White's king in serious trouble.

12. Kb1 b4

13. Ne2 c4
14. c3?



As it turns out, this makes life easy for Black. Fritz gives the paradoxical 14. b3!? c3, which forces Black into the obvious but time-consuming plan of Qa5-b6 and a6-a5-a4xb3; White can use all those tempi to prepare a defense. Still, Black would of course keep the initiative.

14. ...b3?

An instructive moment. I certainly didn't realize it at the time, but objectively this move is a mistake. I knew that White might try to close the queenside with 15. a3, but I thought 15. ...Bxa3 16. bxa3 b2!? would cause big problems for him, being that Ra8-b8-b3 is on the way. Fritz brought me back to reality with the simple 17. Kxb2! Rb8+ 18. Ka2 Rb3 19. Qc1 Na7 20. Nd2, when White can defend and win. On the other hand, 16. ...Qxa3 17. Qb2 Qe7 18. Bc1 Na7 19. Qa3 Nb5 20. Qa4! stops the Black pawns while taking advantage of the new dark-square holes (after Kb1-a1, Nf3-d2-b1-a3). In some variations, Fritz even suggests White ignore Black's queenside pawns and play h4-h5.

Thus, Black would have to refrain from sacrificing the bishop for the moment and instead build up the pressure with ...Nc6-a7-b5, when he may be able to sacrifice under somewhat more favorable

circumstances. Even then, Black's advantage appears quite minor.

Therefore, instead of 14. ...b3? Black should maintain the tension: Fritz gives 14. ...Rb8!, after which c3 comes under immediate fire. I guess this also a matter of principle: One should *open* lines where one is attacking, rather than (with 14. ...b3?) close them!

15. Nc1?

Lawry refrained from 15. a3! because he didn't like the look of my a- and b-pawns marching down toward his king after 15. ...Bxa3, but as we've seen, that would actually be the best course for White. Now Black gets to open the queenside after all, and my attack is back on track. A close call!

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|-----|------|----------|
| 15. | | ...bxa2+ |
| 16. | Nxa2 | Rb8 |
| 17. | Qc2 | Nb6 |
| 18. | Bc1 | Na4 |
| 19. | Ka1 | Bd7 |
| 20. | g4 | |



Qb6!

I agonized over this move. Certainly, Black would like to play ...Nc6-a5-b3+, but the question is where to move the queen in the meantime—b5, or b6? I analyzed 20. ...Qb5 21. Nd2 Na5 22. b4!?, a line which confused me at the time. With so many

pieces huddled together on the queenside, it was perhaps difficult to calculate, but now I see that 22. ...cxb3 e.p. 23. Bxb5 bxc2 24. Bxd7+ Kxd7 25. Re1 Nb3+ 26. Nxb3 Rxb3 simply wins for Black. So does 21. Rh2 Na5 22. b4? cxb3 e.p. 23. Bxb5 bxc2 24. Bxd7+ Kxd7 25. Rxc2 Nb3+ with mate in two. If, instead of trying to play b2-b4, White hunkers down defensively after 20. ...Qb5 21. Rh2 Na5 22. Nd2, Black continues a crushing attack with 22. ...Qb6! followed by ...Nb3+ and, if Kb1, then ...Ba3! is deadly. So perhaps White should try the none-too-obvious 22. Re1!, with the idea of Re1-e2 to protect the b2-pawn. But this is passive defense and there is no guarantee it will be sufficient in the end.

In short, 20. ...Qb5! would at the very least have maintained Black's advantage. On the other hand, my 20. ...Qb6! could have led to the same sort of position with an extra tempo for Black, but it also has the added bonus of tempting White into winning three pieces for the queen.

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|-----|-------|------|
| 21. | Qxa4 | Nb4 |
| 22. | Qxd7+ | Kxd7 |
| 23. | Nxb4 | Bxb4 |
| 24. | cxb4 | Qxb4 |



Of course, if they're well coordinated, three minor pieces can be more than a match for a queen; in this case, though, they're not coordinated, and White's vulnerable king position and weak b-pawn prove to be the

decisive factors. ...Qa4+ and ...Qxd1 is the immediate threat.

25. Rd2

Things have turned out to be surprisingly uncomfortable for White. 25. Be2? c3! wins easily, for example.

25. ...c3
 26. Rf2 Rhc8
 27. Bd3 cxb2+
 28. Bxb2 Qb3!
 29. Rd2 Rb4
 White resigned (0-1).

Indeed, after 30. Kb1 Ra4 31. Bc2 Qa2+ 32. Kc1 Rb4! Black wins a piece and the attack keeps rolling. By the way, an alternative, but still ultimately losing, defense would have been 29. Bb1 Rb4 30. Ba2 Ra4 31. Bc1 Rc2 32. Rxc2 Qxc2 33. Bb2 Qb3!.

By no means a flawless struggle, but instructive nonetheless!

Of all my games at the 33rd Queen of Hearts, the most interesting (and nerve-racking) was my fourth round joust with Gerald Larson. In fact, it is one of the most complicated games I've ever played. I had a feeling beforehand that this game, like our previous ones, would be a tense fight: A newly-crowned state champion and a former state champion square off!

Varagona (2062) – Larson,G (2109)
 33rd Queen of Hearts, Round 4
 February 13, 2005

1. d4 f5
 2. Nf3 Nf6
 3. g3 g6
 4. Bg2 Bg7
 5. O-O O-O
 6. c3



Here I might mention that I made this game more difficult for myself than it had to be because I showed up to play almost twenty minutes late! In my *mind* the round was going to start at 9:30, but in *fact*...

Fortunately, my 6. c3 helped make up for lost time on the clock. By making Qd1-b3+ and Nf3-g5 possible, this variation is, as GM Seirawan aptly put it, an attempt to “cross Black’s Leningrad by roping him back into a Stonewall”—a setup I hoped wouldn’t be to Larson’s taste. After a long think, Larson decided to stop Nf3-g5 once and for all, but at the cost of a whole opening tempo.

6. ...h6?!
 7. Nbd2 Kh7
 8. Re1!



Menacing e2-e4, with advantage to White. Thus, Black must play 8. ...d5, abandoning the traditional Leningrad aspirations of d7-d6 and e7-e5.

8. ...d5
 9. c4 c6
 10. Qc2 Ne4
 11. b3 Be6
 12. Bb2 Nd7



So my opening dreams have come true: We have a quiet, fairly closed position where Black has a hole on e5, a bad light-square bishop and a slightly weakened kingside. The frustrating thing was, despite all of that, Black's position still isn't all that bad! Stonewall setups are notoriously solid. And here, Black has the added bonus that his light-bishop is more active than normal (because e7-e6 wasn't played), and his dark-bishop, being on g7 rather than e7, has some influence on the center.

White has a nagging positional edge—control of e5, space advantage, superior pawn structure—but... What to do? I figured, after due preparations, White may eventually go for f2-f3 and e2-e4. On the other hand, penetrating to the seventh rank (Qc2-c7) started to seem like a good idea. Larson prevents the latter possibility.

13. **Rac1 Rc8!**
 14. **Red1?!**

A step in the wrong direction!
 If White wants to play f2-f3 someday, the f3-knight will have to move. In particular, it would be nice if the knight could travel to d3, for there it would be ideally placed to

follow f2-f3 with Nd3-f2, thereby supporting e2-e4. So, Nf3-e1-d3-f2 is the plan. But the e1-rook is in the way; I have to move it first. And why not move it towards the center?

Had I appreciated the danger my f2-pawn was in, I'd have played 14. Rf1! or (better late than never) 15. Rf1!.

14. ...Ndf6!
 15. Ne1? Nxd2?



An absolute shock. I couldn't believe Gerald turned down the chance to play 15. ...Ng4, hitting the f2-pawn and inducing complications after 16. Nd3 dxc4. But the funny thing is, despite my fear of it, 15. ...Ng4 isn't Black's best move. Fritz discovered a far more powerful resource, the striking 15. ...dxc4!. Watch what could happen:

- 16. bxc4? Nxf2!! 17. Kxf2 Ng4+ 18. Kg1 Bxd4+ 19. e3 Nxe3, with a crushing advantage;
- 16. Nxc4 Ng4 17. Nd3 Bxd4!?, Black pick-pockets a pawn;
- 16. Nxe4 fxe4 17. bxc4 b5! gives Black a positional advantage.

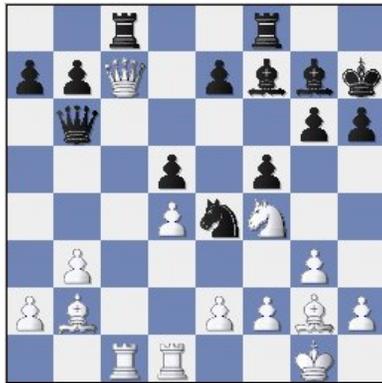
I should have been more careful to prevent this sort of mess! A rook on f1 sure would have helped. Either way, I count myself lucky that Gerald didn't play 15. ...dxc4!.

16. **Qxd2 Ne4**
 17. **Qc2 Qb6**
 18. **Nd3! Rcd8?**

It's understandable that Black wants to put more pressure on d4, but the rook on c8 was meant to prevent my queen's invasion to the seventh rank. 18. Rfd8 is indicated.

This new turn of events gives White a new opportunity. Now, instead of the f2-f3 and e2-e4 plan, I can just clarify the pawn structure and go for a simple advantage based on superior piece play.

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| 19. | Nf4 | Bf7 |
| 20. | cxd5 | cxd5 |
| 21. | Qc7! | Rc8 |



Interesting. Black declines to enter an inferior ending but accepts the loss of a pawn. I had focused on (and hoped for) the line 21. ...Qa6 22. Qxe7 Qxa2 23. Qa3! Qxa3 24. Bxa3 Rfe8 25. Rc7, which of course favors White. Quite sensibly, Larson prefers to retain some counterplay in a middlegame.

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| 22. | Qxe7 | Bf6 |
| 23. | Qa3 | |

This is where the calculation starts to get murky, so I'll be relying heavily on Fritz from here on out. It didn't even cross my mind at the time, but the computer favors keeping the queen active: After 23. Qd7! the lines are very complicated, but they all do seem to favor White.

Still, the move I chose also lets White keep his advantage. Although time pressure is now creeping up on me, I stay afloat by playing natural moves.

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| 23. | | ...Rfe8 |
| 24. | e3 | g5 |
| 25. | Nd3 | Bh5 |
| 26. | Re1 | Nd2 |



27. Bxd5!?

Well *this* opens a can of worms. I guess I really am a materialist! Seeing light-square weaknesses but no immediate, concrete threats after 27. ...Nf3+ 28. Bxf3 Bxf3, I decided to scarf up the material, confident that *two* extra pawns would make the win all the easier. Perhaps with more time on my clock I'd have come to appreciate the dangers on f3 and found the defensive 27. Ne5! or Fritz's counterattacking 27. Qa4!.

While the move I played is not a blunder, it introduces much risk into the position! With just a few minutes left on my clock, this is not the sort of situation I wanted.

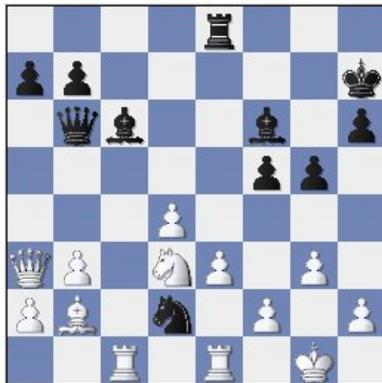
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|-----|------|---------|
| 27. | | ...Bf3! |
| 28. | Bf7? | |

A panicky knee-jerk reaction that could've thrown away my advantage. This is one of those cases where such seemingly "natural" moves just don't fit the bill. For, after

28. ...Be4! 29. Red1 (29. Bxe8? Nf3+ 30. Kg2 Nxe1+ etc.) ...Rxc1 30. Bxc1 Nf3+ 30. Kf1 Nxe2+ 32. Kg1 Nf3+ 33. Kf1 Be7 34. Qa4 the position is dead even according to Fritz. Thus, White should have chosen a cooler defense like 28. Qa4! or 28. Qb4!.

Luckily for me, instead of 28. ...Be4!, Gerald lets me keep my edge with:

28. ...Bc6?
29. Bxe8! Rxe8



30. Red1?!

Making the time control, but missing the superior 30. Qc5!. True, 30. Qc5 lets Black win back the Exchange, but as it turns out, due to all the light square weaknesses, White is going to have to return the Exchange anyway.

30. ...Nf3+
31. Kf1 Nxe2+
32. Ke2?!

Again, the lines are very complicated, but according to Fritz an improvement is 32. Ke1. However, over the past several moves I'd come to loathe Black's knight and I was determined not to let it check me on f3 again! Besides, surely returning the Exchange would help clarify the position and I'd still be a pawn up.

As we'll see, things actually turn out to be far from clear!

32. ...Bf3+
33. Kd2 Bxd1
34. Kxd1 Ng4



So, despite all my quibbling, White has retained an advantage after all. Now I can finish things off pretty cleanly with Fritz's clever 35. Qa4! soon followed by a quick king march to b1. Alas, the move I actually chose keeps Black's hopes alive.

35. Qc5?! Qe6!

Now the planned king march (36. Kc2? Rc8!) is out of the question. White must be a bit more careful: Fritz gives 36. Rc2 Qe4 37. Rd2 b6 38. Qc4, when White is still on top but the storm still has not passed.

36. d5?

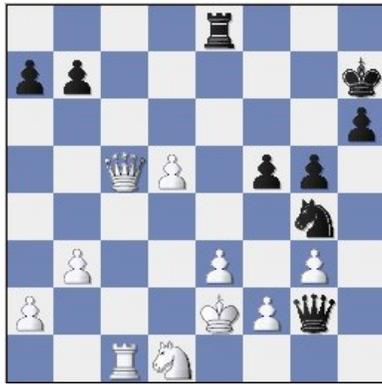
A move I simply couldn't resist, but which throws away my advantage. When one is (tactically) on the defensive, it is so enticing to counter threats with threatening moves of one's own. But *here*—with my king still in the center—I ought to batten down the hatches rather than open things up!

36. ...Qe4?

The move I had expected. I had calculated things out as far as I could and predicted I would be able to hold my e3-f2-g3

structure together with the help of my king and knight, thereby keeping my extra pawn and winning chances. However, the stunning swipe from a different direction—36. ...Qa6!! (Fritz)—allows Black to equalize! Here's a sample line: 37. Qc4 (37. Kc2?! Nxf2! is bothersome) ...Qxc4 38. Rxc4 Bxb2 39. Nxb2 Nxf2+ 40. Ke2 Ne4 41. Rc7+ Kg6 42. Kf3 Nd2+ 43. Ke2 Ne4, or 42. Rxb7 Nc3+ 43. Kf2 Nxd5, with what looks to be a balanced ending.

37. Ke2 Bxb2
 38. Nxb2 Qg2
 39. Nd1!



The only move, and a good one. With the pawn chain (somewhat) secure, I can go back to entertaining thoughts of winning—but how? Black's pieces are as menacing as ever, and although the computer never wavers in its slight preference for White's position, every path to victory seems fraught with danger. From Black's perspective, I think the best *practical* chance (especially given our desperate time shortage—we each had only a handful of minutes left) would have been 39. ...f4!?, when my planned 40. gxf4 gxf4 41. Qc7+ Kg8! 42. Qxf4 Rf8! would have plunged us into yet further scary complications. When I was calculating ahead here and foresaw this position, my intended follow-up was 43. Qg3??, which would have backfired nastily after 43. ...Rxf2+!. Thus, instead, I would

have been forced to find the tough 43. Qd6! (Fritz).

But—lucky for me—none of that came to pass.

39. ...Rxe3+??

A surprise, and also a tremendous relief: The sacrifice is unsound. Given the jarring time pressure and the razor-sharp position, I guess it was only a matter of time before one of us lost the thread.

40. Nxe3 Qxf2+
 41. Kd3 Ne5+
 42. Kc3

Black resigned (1-0).

One of the most stressful games I've ever played!

* * *

As always, thanks to Caesar Lawrence for his organizing & directing efforts, and to all the dedicated players who participated. Hope to see you next year!

Queen of Hearts
By Caesar Lawrence

33rd Queen of Hearts, 2005 - Open Section							
Pair Num	Player Name USCF ID / Rtg (Pre->Post)	Total Pts	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
1	Richard G Price AL 10247551 / R: 2085 ->2104	4.5	W 8	W 7	D 2	W 4	W 6
2	Scott Varagona AL 12744446 / R: 2062 ->2076	4	W 13	W 3	D 1	W 6	D 4
3	Joseph Scott Helton AL 12501963 / R: 1819 ->1853	3.5	W 15	L 2	W 8	D 10	W 9
4	Ray Downs AL 10239401 / R: 1967 ->1968	3	W 9	W 14	D 7	L 1	D 2
5	Colin Potts GA 12485327 / R: 1800 ->1809	3	L 6	L 9	W 14	W 12	W 10
6	Gerald A Larson AL 10422159 / R: 2109 ->2097	2.5	W 5	W 10	H	L 2	L 1
7	Kenneth W Goodman AL 12435248 / R: 1828 ->1831	2.5	W 12	L 1	D 4	D 11	D 8
8	Mark Peach FL 10487552 / R: 1818 ->1811	2.5	L 1	W 12	L 3	B	D 7
9	William R Savoie AL 12531616 / R: 1783 ->1790	2.5	L 4	W 5	D 11	W 13	L 3
10	Giles D'souza AL 12749963 / R: 1775 ->1772	2	W 11	L 6	H	D 3	L 5
11	Rhodes Peele AL 10206294 / R: 1715 ->1700	2	L 10	B	D 9	D 7	L 12
12	Aluda Saliashvili AL 12864523 / R: 1688 ->1675	2	L 7	L 8	B	L 5	W 11
13	Thomas H Lawry AL 12381820 / R: 1800 ->1800	1.5	L 2	W 15	H	L 9	U
14	Bryan Tillis AL 12893033 / R: 1623 ->1611	1	B	L 4	L 5	U	U
15	Tim Bond AL 10239974 / R: 1919 ->1893	0	L 3	L 13	U	U	U

Congratulations Richard Price

33rd Queen of Hearts, 2005 - Reserve Section

Pair Num	Player Name USCF ID / Rtg (Pre->Post)	Total Pts	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
1	William D Worley AL 10238986 / R: 1644 ->1651	4	W 5	W 10	H	W 7	D 4
2	Keenan Olson AL 12834524 / R: 1513 ->1511	3.5	W 11	W 13	L 7	D 3	W 6
3	Mohamed Abdel-Ghany AL 10205948 / R: 1480 ->1510	3.5	W 6	D 4	H	D 2	W 7
4	Joshua T Mc Clellan AL 12857773 / R: 1477 ->1494	3.5	W 12	D 3	D 11	W 5	D 1
5	Jeffrey E Babine AL 12871986 / R: 1328 ->1332	3	L 1	W 12	W 13	L 4	W 10
6	Randall D Tew AL 12808659 / R: 1183 ->1223	3	L 3	B	W 10	W 8	L 2
7	Pikria Saliashvili AL 12864522 / R: 1491 ->1483	2.5	D 8	W 9	W 2	L 1	L 3
8	Nathaniel P Hutchinson AL 12549039 / R: 1368 ->1341	2.5	D 7	L 11	W 12	L 6	W 13
9	Ethan A Balch AL 12622233 / R: 1321 ->1254	2	L 13	L 7	B	L 10	W 12
10	Geoffrey Love GA 12910622 / R: 959 ->992	2	B	L 1	L 6	W 9	L 5
11	Jerome Howell AL 12517121 / R: 1331 ->1350	1.5	L 2	W 8	D 4	U	U
12	Riley E Lane GA 12135170 / R: 1156 ->1127	1	L 4	L 5	L 8	W 13	L 9
13	A V White AL 12895219 / R: 1003 ->1011	1	W 9	L 2	L 5	L 12	L 8

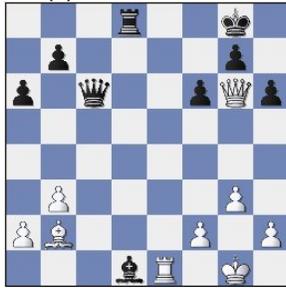
Congratulations William Worley

Spot the Blunder

By Giles D'Souza

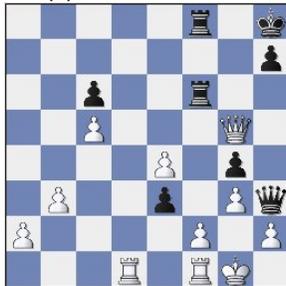
Each of the positions below has three candidate moves. Your job is to spot which move (or moves if you think there is more than one) is a blunder. The other moves are either winning, or else they don't win or lose immediately. Solutions are on the next page.

(1) White to move



a) Re7 b)Bc3 c) Qf5

(3) White to move



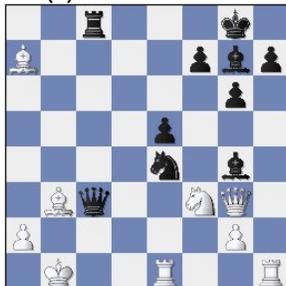
a) Rd7 b)Qxe3 c) Rd8

(5) Black to move



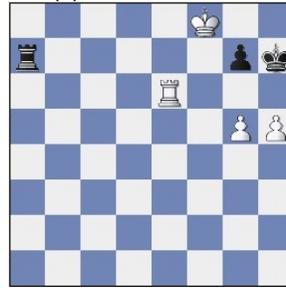
a) Qb6 b)d6 c) Bd6

(7) White to move



a) Bxf7+ b)Rxe4 c) Qxg4

(2) Black to move



a) Ra5 b)Ra8+ c) Rb7

(4) Black to move



a) Nxe5 b) Re7 c) Bxh6

(6) White to move



a) Nd7 b)Rc4 c) f3

(8) Black to move



a) Rd2 b)Rb2 c) Re4

Position 1: Seitz – Rellstab, Bad Pyrmont, 1933. The blunder is a) Re7 and was played in the game. After 1. Re7, there follows 1...Qh1+ 2. Kxh1 Bf3+ 3. Kg1 3. Rd1 followed by mate. The move b) Bc3 leads to perpetual check: 1.Bc3 Qxc3 2.Re8+ Rxe8 3.Qxe8+ Kh7 4.Qe4+ f5 5.Qxf5+ Kh8 (if 5...kf8 then 6.Qd5+ and 7.Qxd1) 6.Qf8+ Kh7 7.Qf5+; and the move c) Qf5 leaves Black's advantage intact, but there is no immediate win: 1.Qf5 b6 2.Ba3 Be2 3.Bc1 Re8 4.Be3 Bf3 and Black has an advantage.

Position 2: Manik – Gallagher, Mitropa Cup, 2003. The blunder is a) Ra5 and was played in the game. After 1...Ra5 a pretty mate follows 2.Rh6+ gxh6 3.g6+ Kh8 4.g7+ Kh7 5.h8=Q#. Both b) Ra8+ c) Rb7 lead to a draw

Position 3: Urban – Krasenkow, Warsaw, 2001. The blunder is a) Rd7 and was played in the game. After 1. Rd7, there is mate in five. 1...exf2+ 2.Rxf2 Qxh2!+ [2...Qg2+! also leads to mate.] 3.Kxh2 Rxf2+ 4.Kg1 Rf1+ 5.Kg2 R8f2#. The move b)Qxe3 draws: 1.Qxe3! After this, black can't avoid perpetual check. 1...Rh6 2.Qd4+ Kg8 3.Qc4+ Kh8= (if 3...Rf7?! 4.Rd8+ Kg7 5.Qd4+ Rff6 6.Rd1 Qxh2+ 7.Kf1 Qh1+ 8.Ke2 Qf3+ 9.Kd2 Rh2 10.Kc1 Rxf2 11.e5 Re6 12.Qd7+ Qf7 13.Qxf7+ And White is now winning). The move c) Rd8 also draws: 1.Rd8 exf2+ 2.Rxf2 Rxf2 3.Qe5+ Kg8 4.Qg5+ Kh8 and White has a perpetual check.

Position 4. Gross – Borgo, Budapest, 1999. The blunder is b) Re7 and was played in the game. After 1...Re7 Black gets mated as follows: 2.Bg7+ Bxg7 3.Rxh7+ Kxh7 4.Qxg6+ Kg8 5.Qh7#. The move a) Nxe5 keeps hope alive: 1...Nxe5! The Knight protects g6. 2.Qxb7 (If 2.Qf4 then Nxd3 3.cxd3 with a complicated position-White has an attack for a pawn) 2...Bxh6 3.Rxh6 Re7 4.Qb3 c4 5.Qa4 cxd3 6.Qd4 Qc7 7.cxd3 with slight advantage for White (If 7.Re1 dxc2 8.Rxe5 c1=Q+ 9.Re1+ e5 and Black is winning). The move c) Bxh6 loses slowly: 1...Bxh6 2.Rxh6 Nf8 3.Qxb7 Re7 4Qc6 Kg7 and

White is winning but still needs to play good moves to realize the win.

Position 5: Areshchenko – Savon, Nikolaev, 2001. The blunder is b) d6, and was played in the game. After 1...d6, White has 2.Bf6! gxf6 3.f4 Rfe8 4.Qh6 e5 5.Rf3 exf4 6.Rh3 and mate on h8 is unavoidable. The move a) Qb6 loses the exchange but the win still has to be realized. The move c) Bd6 keeps White's advantage to a minimum. There is now no mate and the variation that worked after 1...d6 doesn't work now because Black's bishop can now protect his King: 1...Bd6 2.Bf6 gxf6 3.f4 Rfe8 4.Qh6 Bf8 and since there is no mate, it is Black who is winning. So White will not sacrifice the Bishop and will simply maintain the small advantage.

Position 6: Gallagher – Gerber, Leukerbad, 2002. Both moves b) Rc4 and c) f3 are blunders because they throw away a win and lead to a draw. In the game White played b) Rc4 and the game went 1...Qa5 2.Nc6 Qh5 3.Qxh5 Nxh5 leading to a draw. The move c) f3 hardly looks like a winning attempt. The winning move is a) Nd7. The analysis to demonstrate the win is fairly copious, and perhaps explains why the move was not played. After 1.Nd7 there are two main variations: Var1: 1..Qxd7 2.Bxf6 and then either var11) 3...gxf6 4.Bxh7+ Kh8 5.Qh5 Rg8 6.Bf5+ Kg7 7.Rg4+ Kf8 8.Rxg8+ Kxg8 9.Qh7+ Kf8 10.Rxe6 Qxe6 11.Bxe6 fxe6 12.Qxb7; var12) 3...Be7 4.Bxh7+ Kxh7 (4...Kh8 5.Qh5 Qd1 6.Rxd1 Bf3 7.g4 Bxg4 8.Rxg4 Bxf6 9.Bb1+ Kg8 10.Qh7#) 5.Qh5+ Kg8 6.Rh4; var13) 3...g6 4.Rh4 Be7 5.Bxg6 Qxd1 (5...fxg6 6.Qxd7) 6.Bxh7#; Var2: 1...Nxd7 2.Bxh7+ Kxh7 3.Qh5+ Kg8 4.Bxg7 and then either var21) 4...Kxg7 5.Rg4+ Kf6 6.Qg5#; var22) 4...f6 5.Rg4 Bxh2+ 6.Kh1 Bxg2+ 7.Kxg2 Qc6+ 8.f3 Qxf3+ 9.Kxf3 Ne5+ 10.Rxe5 fxe5+ 11.Bxf8+ Kxf8 12.Qh7 e4+ 13.Kg2; var23) 4...f5 5.Qg6 Rf7 6.Bh6+ Kh8 7.Rh4 Rh7 8.Bg7+ Kg8 9.Rxh7.

Position 7: Gallagher – Ward, Torquay, 2002. The position is a variation of the game that ended in a draw. (Instead of the variation with Nxe4 Black played Qc3+ and a draw was agreed. After the game the players thought that Nxe4 still led to a draw, but gave White a chance to go wrong.) The blunder is c) Qxg4. It leads to a swift mate as follows: 1.Qxg4 Nd2+ 2.Nxd2 Qd3+ 3.Kb2 e4+ 4.Ka3 Qa6+ 5.Ba4 (5.Kb4 Bc3#) 6...Qd6+ 7.Kb3 Rc3+ 8.Kb2 Qa3+ 9.Kb1 Rc1+ 10.Rxc1 Qb2# . The moves a) Bxf7 and b) Rxe4 lead to draws. After 1.Rxe4! Qd3+ 2.Kb2 Qc3+ =; and after 1.Bxf7+ Kxf7 2.Rxe4 Qc2+ 3.Ka1 Qc3+ =

Position 8: Tukmakov – Karpov, Leningrad Interzonal, 1973. Both moves b)Rb2 and c) Re4 are blunders and lead to drawn positions. The winning move is a) Rd2 as it preserves the winning position and avoids the traps of the other two moves. Thus move b) Rb2 leads to a draw as follows: 1...Rb2 2.Qg6+ fxc6 3.Bg8+ with perpetual check (If 2...Qxg6 then 3.fxc6+ fxc6 4. 3.Bg8+ with the same perpetual check. If 3...Kxg6 then 4.Bxf7+ Rxf7 37.Rxb2 and the position is equal) Move c) Re4 also leads to a similar draw. Here are the moves: 1...Re4 2.Qg6+ Qxg6 3.fxc6+ fxc6 4.Bg8+ as above. If 2...fxg6 then 35.Bg8+ as above. If 3...Kxg6 then 36.Bc2 with an equal position. In the game Black played the winning move and White immediately resigned.

Positions 1-7 are from Gallagher's "*365 Ways to Checkmate*," from Gambit Publications, while position 8 is from Amatzia Avni's "*Danger in Chess: How to Avoid making Blunders*," published by Dover books.

Chess is more like boxing than football or baseball in that there is no accumulated scoring of points or runs, and it is only the final result that matters. Thus a boxer can run circles around his opponent round after round, but only leave his guard down for a second and be knocked out by a massive punch. Similarly, a chess player can

have a winning advantage for most of the game, and then overlook the opponent's threat and get mated on the move.

Coaches commonly advise their students to always check if the move they want to play is a blunder. This is easier said than done. It's really a question of remembering that a move could be a blunder and to check whether that is so or not. But most moves we make are not blunders and the idea of checking for a blunder on every move seems to be so much wasted energy. Thus, our sense of danger diminishes rapidly and we forget to follow the coach's advice. Different players have different ways of following that advice.

Alexander Kotov, in one of his books, said that he suffered from a tendency to blunder (see page 7 of the School Mates section of the April, 2005, Chess Life for one such example). He tried many ways of trying to overcome this tendency, until one day he came upon "Mr. Blunderbus." Kotov said that it wasn't he who was blundering, but "Mr. Blunderbus."

Who was this "Mr. Blunderbus?" He was an imaginary character that Kotov invented. In his imagination Kotov saw him as an enormously fat chess player and a bit of a cross between a buffoon and a clown. After analyzing his position and deciding what move to play, Kotov would mentally leave his board and call upon "Mr. Blunderbus" to play the game. Then he would imagine the sort of moves the clown would play and refute them. Finally he would imagine that "Mr. Blunderbus" had played the move he had decided upon, and see if there was any immediate refutation or diabolical combinations. Kotov says that this helped him enormously, and practically eliminated his proneness to blunder. Thus, the imaginary clown was a device that enabled Kotov not to forget that there is always danger lurking on the chessboard, and to check whether the moves he wanted to play were blunders or not.

Report from Mobile

By Tim Yahr

Education authorities take chess in Baldwin County very seriously. The Superintendent of the Baldwin County School System allows high school and middle school chess players to miss an entire day of classes in order to play in their county chess team championship¹.

Bayside Academy continued its dominance of the local chess scene by running the table at the Baldwin County Chess Championships on Wednesday, March 23. Bayside's A-Team finished the tournament undefeated to claim the county crown. Bayside's B-Team also finished the tournament undefeated with Spanish Fort Middle School claiming the middle school crown. Jay Smith is the 2005 individual champion, finishing the tournament 5-0. Combining Jay's perfect performance at Wednesday's tournament with his 6-0 record from the area tournament result makes him 11-0 on the year.

The Bayside chess team, lead by their coach Eric Nager, has enjoyed much success in recent years. Bayside Academy won state chess championships in 2002 and 2004 and will be looking for their third in four years when they compete for the 2005 title on May 7. Incidentally, Bayside won a national title in the K12 under 1200 section at the Super Nationals III, which were held from April 8-10 in Nashville, TN.

The tournament was hosted by Bayside Academy, last year's county champion. Sixty kids from six schools competed in a round robin tournament which began at 8:35. The middle school and high school teams played each other because there were only three high school teams and two middle school teams entered. Also, to prevent any team from having a bye and to make the tournament more fun for those involved, extra

players from around the county filled in to compete for individual trophies.

One of the players who "filled in" was Michael Tran, a second grader from Fairhope Elementary School. Michael learned chess from his family and has honed his skills at school playing against people like 3rd grade teacher Wilson McDuff and also by playing at the Fairhope Chess Club (the Fairhope Chess Club meets Thursdays from 7pm-9pm at St. James Episcopal Church). Michael generated a lot of interest as he defeated opponent after opponent despite the fact that most of the players in the tournament were 9th grade and above.

A Team

- 1st Bayside Academy (BAY)
- 2nd Daphne High School (DAP)
- 3rd Fairhope High School (FHP)
- 4th Spanish Fort Middle School (SFM)
- 5th Christ the King Middle School (CTK)

B Team

- 1st Bayside Acamemy
- 2nd Daphne High School
- 3rd Spanish Fort Middle School
- 4th Christ the King Middle School

Middle School Division

- 1st Spanish Fort
- 2nd Christ the King

Individual Position Results

A-1 Position

- 1st Jay Smith BAY (5-0)
- 2nd Landon Sykora DAP (4-1)

A-2 Position

- 1st Stephen Smith BAY (5-0)
- 2nd Russ Beverly FHP (3-2)
- 2nd Mark Parrish DAP (3-2)

¹ Some Information for this article was graciously provided by Jack Mallory and Eric Nager.

A-3 Position

1st David Gardner BAY (5-0)
2nd Justin Rabon BAY (2.5-2.5)
2nd Daniel Beebe SFM (2.5-2.5)

Most Valuable Middle School Player In The League
Kevin Nelson of Christ the King Middle School

A-4 Position

1st Joey Nickerson BAY (4.5-0.5)
2nd Mathew Fox DAP (4-1)

Middle School Champions
Clark Middle School

A-5 Position

1st J. B. Galle BAY (5-0)
2nd Rico Moorer BAY (3-2)
2nd Arie Vandewaa DAP (3-2)
2nd Dwayne Lee FHP (3-2)

Coach Of The Year
Kevin Spriggs

B-1 Position

1st Sean Sessel BAY (4-1)
1st Chris Nager BAY (4-1)
1st Moritz Hoequist DAP (4-1)

B-2 Position

1st Michael Tran (5-0)
Fairhope Elementary
2nd Sam Davis BAY (4-1)

B-3 Position

1st Jordan Houlsen DAP (5-0)
2nd David Mackey BAY (4-1)

B-4 Position

1st Tim Norman BAY (4-1)
1st Nicholas Norman BAY (4-1)

B-5 Position

1st Justin Bankston DAP (5-0)
2nd Erik Gentry SFM (3-2)
2nd Megan Sessel BAY (3-2)
2nd John Wnek BAY (3-2)

All Stars Team

Jay Smith of Bayside Academy
Seth Herter of Fairhope High School
Landon Sykora of Daphne High
David Coats of UMS-Wright

Most Valuable Player In The League
Jay Smith of Bayside Academy

Bishop's Bash IV

By Roger McIntyre

This event took place on March 5, at Hampton Cove.

17	Lindner, A.J.	511	3
18	Moran, Daniel	589	3
19	Johnson, Logan	619	3
20	Lock, Austin	726	3

Individual Results

Open Section Award Winners

Place	Name	Rating	Score
1	McMeen, Bryan	1475	5
2	Weiner, Alex	1141	3.5
3	Terry, Evan	1159	3.5

Jr. High Section Award Winners

Place	Name	Rating	Score
1	Chen, Alex	1073	4.5
2	Price, Temple	1074	4
3	Brown, Ryan	1110	4
4	Runa, Sabiha	1032	4
5	Sola, Karthik	1165	3.5
	Senn, Blake		3.5
6	Nathan	1062	
7	Sola, Kalyaan	873	3.5
8	Richert, Lee	851	3
9	Julian, Kyle	1278	3
10	Ly, Eric	1013	3
11	Zoller, Zakary	1003	3

Elementary Section Award Winners

Place	Name	Rating	Score
1	Terry, Ruth	1110	5
2	Dergunov, Dennis	997	4.5
3	Zoller, Blake	887	4
4	Clement, Joshua	545	4
5	Hirao, Satoshi	nnnn	4
6	Nanda, Siddharth	1005	4
	McCormick,		4
7	Austin	873	
8	Cortina, Gustavo	671	3.5
9	Crichton, Will	753	3.5
10	Ramsey, Dean	750	3.5
	Vardaman,		3.5
11	Nathan	931	
12	Horton, Tyler	nnnn	3.5
13	Chappell, Robert	828	3
	Newcomb,		3
14	Danielle	679	
15	Vechinski, Ashley	580	3
16	Zeng, Tony	nnnn	3

Primary Section Award Winners

Place	Name	Rating	Score
1	Deldar, Kayvon	960	5
2	Nanda, Asutosh	769	4.5
3	Lubna, Maliha	815	4
4	Dewberry, Forest	612	4
5	Li, Charles	484	4
6	Satish, Arjun	nnnn	4
7	Patterson, Gentry	nnnn	4
8	Horton, Joshua	nnnn	4
9	Weber, John	749	3.5
10	Senn, Cole	533	3.5
	Dummer,		3.5
11	Jonathan	567	
	Rossmann,		3.5
12	Ramsey	nnnn	
13	Daugherty, Daniel	395	3.5
14	Seitz, Thomas	766	3.5
15	Hastings, Joseph	747	3
16	Suwarow, Ross	nnnn	3
	Rotenberger,		3
17	Theo	400	
18	Daiber, Blake	nnnn	3
19	Reuter, Mark	748	3
20	Ly, Austin	574	3

Team Results

Open Section Team Trophy Winners

Place	Team/Players	Scores	Rating
	Grissom	5	
1	Bryan McMeen	5	1475

Jr. High Section Team Trophy Winners

Place	Team/Players	Scores	Rating
	Discovery	13	
	Karthik Sola	3.5	1165
	Kalyaan Sola	3.5	873
	Lee Richert	3	851
1	Matthew Stewart	3	838
	Cheaha	8.5	
	Ryan Brown	4	1110
	Gavilan Brown	2.5	1095
	Jeremy Crews	1	100
2	Trent Johnson	1	nnnn
	Randolf	7.5	
	Eric Ly	3	1013
	Trey Manning	2	792
	Zach Haught	1.5	nnnn
3	Harrison Cash	1	654

Elementary Section Team Trophy Winners

Place	Team/Players	Scores	Rating
	Hampton Cove	14.5	
	Blake Zoller	4	887
	Austin McCormick	4	873
	Dean Ramsey	3.5	750
	A.J. Lindner	3	511
	Logan Johnson	3	619
	Austin Lock	3	726
	Wilson Berkowitz	3	593
	Liam Joffe	3	nnnn
1	Joshua Yarbrough	3	344
	Central	13	
	Will Crichton	3.5	753
	Gustavo Cortina	3.5	671
	Tony Zeng	3	nnnn
2	Daniel Moran	3	589
	Blossomwood	10.5	
3	Nathan Vardaman	3.5	931
	Christopher Roberts	2.5	480
	Joshua Hardiman	2.5	589

	William Best	2	186
	SMIC	10.5	
4	Ruth Terry	5	1110
	Tyler Horton	3.5	nnnn
	Austin Funk	2	505
	Monte Sano	6.5	
	Robert Chappell	3	828
	Andrew Staup	2	589
5	Chase Grimes	1.5	549

Primary Section Team Trophy Winners

Place	Team/Players	Scores	Rating
	Jones Valley	16	
	Kayvon Deldar	5	960
	Maliha Lubna	4	815
	Forest Dewberry	4	612
	Blake Daiber	3	nnnn
1	Mohammad Alim	3	796
	Hampton Cove	13	
	Daniel Daugherty	3.5	395
	Thomas Seitz	3.5	766
	Theo Rotenberger	3	400
	Ryan Cunningham	3	750
	Alex Allen	3	nnnn
	Drew Ramsey	3	608
	Luke Damian	3	573
	Clayton Brown	3	586
	John Harper	3	501
2	Chip Johnson	3	nnnn
	Blossomwood	11.5	
	Gentry Patterson	4	nnnn
	Ross Suwarow	3	nnnn
	Scott Bozeman	2.5	409
	Harshal Patel	2	nnnn
3	John Benson Rich	2	332
	Advent	11	
	Cole Senn	3.5	533
	Ramsey		
	Rossmann	3.5	nnnn
	Aaron Ragsdale	2	nnnn
	Lew Price	2	291
4	Hill Balliet	2	601
	Horizon	10.5	
	John Weber	3.5	749
	Mark Reuter	3	748
	Austin Troup	2	647
5	Brandon Morris	2	100

Self-Testing and Self-Training

By Giles D'Souza

"*Chess Exam and Training Guide*," by Igor Khmel'nitsky, is a book that aims to test the level of your chess as well as diagnose the areas where you need to improve. In my opinion, it succeeds remarkably well. Obviously, the stronger you are, the less you will need this book, but anyone whose rating is between 1200 and 2400 will benefit from it. Coaches and trainers will also find this book to be of interest.

Igor Khmel'nitsky is from the Ukraine, where he earned his International Master title in 1990. He came to the USA in 1991, and currently lives in Pennsylvania, where he works as a senior actuarial consultant for Aetna Insurance Company. Igor has participated thrice in the US Chess Championship, and his current chess rating is 2517.

Igor spends more of his spare time coaching other chess players than playing chess. As a coach, Igor has often felt that the time in typical coaching sessions, of an hour or two, is insufficient to get a good read on the player's chess abilities. Often, several sessions are required. Therefore, he devised a test to help him to quickly and efficiently ascertain the player's current strengths and weaknesses so he could devise a personalized training program. This book is the result of such efforts.

The book consists of a test, a diagnosis based on the test, advice on improving in twelve areas of chess and some training tips.

The test consists of ten sub-tests of ten questions each, or 100 questions in all. Each of the positions in the test is geared to several areas or categories of chess, like the opening, middlegame and so on. The scoring of the test thus gives an overall score and a score in each of the twelve areas, so you know where your strengths and weaknesses as a player lie. The

test scores are translated into rating points, and here you have a chance to check how reliable the test is. My December rating was 1838 and my April rating was 1799. I did the test in March and scored a rating of 1810.

The advice on improving one's chess is given for each of the twelve areas. A recommended list of learning goals is given, followed by a list of books to be read. This latter is typically sorted by Novice, Class C and B, Class A and Expert, and Master and above. This is one of the most interesting parts of the book, but definitely the most diverse in quality, containing weaknesses and strengths. Some of the advice seems to be outstanding, while other advice may sound like meaningless clichés.

For example, take the advice given in the section on the area titled middlegame. Recommendation number 1 is "Learn standard *Middlegame* principles," giving the impression that there is some standard list of principles that one needs to memorize and all will be well. Other recommendations emphasize how the middlegame is related to the opening, the endgame, tactics and strategy. Students are also advised to collect and study classic middlegame positions. Finally, the student is encouraged to play both sides of various middlegame positions against a computer. Novices are encouraged to read Chernev's "*Logical Chess Move by Move*," and Nunn's "*Understanding Chess Move by Move*." Class C and B players are advised to read Nimzovich's "*My System*" and Emm's "*Simple Chess*." Class A and Expert players, who have read "*My System*" are advised to read Bronstein's book on the Zurich Interzonal of 1953, "*The Chess Struggle in Practice*," and Yermolinsky's "*The Road to Chess Improvement*." Masters and above are advised to read Dvoretsky's "*Positional Play*" and his "*Attack and Defense*." Here, I'm not sure if Nunn's

"*Understanding Chess Move by Move.*" qualifies as a Novice book. Some books on the middlegame by Fine and Euwe have been left out. Stean's "*Simple Chess*," a modern classic, very appropriate for novice players and available in Dover editions in algebraic notation, is also a glaring omission.

The book's main strength is the division of a chess game into twelve areas of skill and knowledge, each of which can be improved upon and perfected. These areas are Endgame, Middlegame, Opening, Calculation, Standard Positions, Strategy, Tactics, Threat, Attack, Counterattack and Defense. The author makes abundantly clear that these categories are simply pedagogical fictions, created to help with study and improvement. They are not mutually exclusive and are highly interrelated, some more than others. In fact, by concentrating on improving one area, the student will be improving other areas as well.

At first I was bewildered by some of the categories. For me, and I'm sure for most players, chess is simply opening, middlegame, endgame, tactics and strategy. Also, the differences between some of the twelve categories were not always readily apparent. For instance what is the difference between calculation and tactics? To his credit the author defines each area of chess and gives you his intuitive ideas about what the category means. For instance, tactics are referred to as combinations, or forcing sequences of moves, based on recognizable tactical motifs or themes, whereas calculation is referred to as seeing sequences of moves or variations in order to evaluate the resulting positions. In tactics the learning objective is to learn to recognize the motifs and themes so as to find a combination, whereas in calculation the learning objective is to know how to adapt to opponents potential threats and to decide whether to play a move on principle or whether to play a move after calculating variations.

Another interesting aspect of the book is that after solving each problem (or position) in a sub-test, the reader gets immediate feedback. Thus, each problem is on one side of the page and the solution is on the other side. There are always two parts to each problem, first a multiple choice question on evaluating the position, and then a multiple choice question focusing on particular moves. The reader is instructed to set up the position on the board and treat it as if it were an actual position in a tournament game; so no moving pieces, consulting books, or playing against computers. There is a time limit of 20 minutes for any position.

The author concludes with some general chess tips on improvement. They are all well thought out and deserve careful consideration. Two of them, however, made me sit up and think. One strongly advised against speed chess (less than 5 minutes per game), and the other said to follow the 80-20 rule. Now most of you have probably heard of the 80-20 rule in other contexts; generally it refers to group behavior and says that 80 percent of a group's output is provided by 20 percent of the group members. In this case, it refers to the time spent on playing and study. The author says that novice players should spend 80 percent of their time playing, whereas those at much higher levels should spend 80 percent studying. So if you feel you've hit a plateau, now you know the reason why.

Editor's Notes

By Giles D'Souza

This issue is being brought to you two weeks ahead of schedule in order to catch the Alabama Scholastic Championship weekend of May 7 and 8 at Samford University in Birmingham. Hopefully, I'll see you there either as player or spectator, volunteer or scholastic chess well wisher.

Also, I would like to welcome our scholastic players to this and future issues of Antics. Let me know what you would like to see in Antics, and I will try to accommodate you. If you have games or other interesting chess experiences that you would like to share with our Antics readers, then pass it on to me.

My email address is gdsouza@cba.ua.edu. Please email your articles to me as word, text or rtf file attachments. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is July 9.

Heartfelt thanks to Scott Varagona and Tim Yahr for sending in their articles for this issue.

Enjoy!

What's Your Verdict?

The "What's Your Verdict?" puzzle from the last issue will be held over from the last issue. So there is still time to enter your solutions by June 30, 2005. A drawing will be held from among the best entries, and the winner will receive the book, "*How Good is Your Chess*," by Larry Evans.

Antics On-Line

Please note that Antics is now available on-line in pdf format at <http://www.chessantics.com/>. So if you've misplaced your copy, and want to do the "What's Your Verdict?" puzzle from the last issue, you can now go online.

Cover

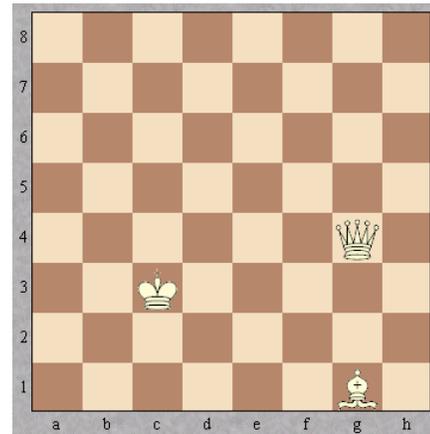
The cover shows a Bishop Chess Piece, from the 12th century in England. Made from Walrus ivory, its dimensions are $3 \frac{7}{8} \times 2 \frac{3}{8}$ inches, and was a gift of J. P. Morgan to the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1917. The following is from the Museum's catalog:

'This twelfth-century ivory chess piece is carved in the form of an enthroned bishop who wears a miter, holds

a crozier, and makes a gesture of blessing with two raised fingers. Two attendants crouch beside him, rendered on a much smaller scale to suggest lower status. The kneeling figure on his right, wearing a monastic haircut called a tonsure, gestures to an open book. The figure on the opposite side rests on his staff, head in hand.

The game of chess was probably brought to England by the Vikings, although it first appeared in India in the sixth century and was known in Europe as early as the tenth century. Chess was quite popular in medieval England, particularly among royalty, such as kings Henry I (r. 1100–1135), Henry II (r. 1154–89), and John (r. 1199–1216). The Museum's chess piece is similar to another set of medieval figurines known as the Lewis Chessmen, now in the British Museum. These are also made from walrus ivory, and they date to the mid-twelfth century, but they are carved in a more abstract style.'

Scholastic Puzzle Corner



This puzzle is only open to scholastic players. In this chess position, you must indicate on which square you will place the Black King so the following statements are true. If Black's King were on

- ___ square, then it would be stalemate.
- ___ square, then it would be mate.
- ___ square, then it would be mate if White played ____.

Email or post your solutions to me by June 30. A drawing will be held from among the best entries, and the winner will receive the book, "*How to Beat Your Dad at Chess*," by Murray Chandler.

Events to Note

April 29 – May 1

Gulf Coast Open – Biloxi, MS

May 7

Alabama Scholastic Team Championship

May 8

Alabama Individual Scholastic Championship

Both events at Samford University, Birmingham, AL

For directions to Samford University, see http://www.samford.edu/map_bham.html

May 18-22

HB Global Chess Challenge, Minneapolis, MN

See <http://www.hbfoundation.org/index.shtml>

June 4

Mid-South Summer Chess Festival, Southaven, MS

See <http://members.aol.com/desotochess/events/2005fest.html>

Check the ACF website for more information: <http://www.alabamachess.com>

ACF/Antics

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May, 2005

To