

CALCHESS JOURNAL

Winter 2012



Special Points of Interest:

- *The Man Who Brought Chess to the Bay Area*
- *What it takes to be a Youth World Champion*
- *Thanksgiving Class Championship Recap*

SHANKLAND WINS NORCAL INVITATIONAL

By John Donaldson



Grandmaster Shankland had a very successful year in 2011 (3rd place in the U.S. Championship and defeating Peter Leko in the World Cup for starters). 2012 looks like it will be more of the same, judging from his convincing victory in the Northern California International, held Janu-

ary 2-8 in Fremont at Ted Castro's Nor Cal House of Chess.

The 19-year-old from Orinda scored an undefeated 7 from 9, to not only take home the \$3,000 first prize, but also 15 Elo points, bringing his rating to 2580 FIDE.

Other top scorers were GMs Alejandro Ramirez and GM Josh Friedel, who shared second through fourth with IM Marc Arnold at 6.5/9. Among those on 6 were the top seeds GMs George Meier, Bartolmiej Maciejka and Yury Shulman.

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Upcoming Events

Regular (Open)

Spring Open; March 16-18

Hans Poschmann Memorial;
April 28-29

Scholastic

State Scholastic Championships; April 20-21

Regional Grade Level Championships; May 27

For Complete Tournament Listings, go to
norcalchess.org/tournaments.

2012 TIPS OFF HS CHESS LEAGUE SEASON



By Sydney Liu

There was sweat on his brow. There was mud on his uniform. The quarterback faded back and launched the ball. Forty yards for the game winning touchdown. State champions.

Down two. He stared into the face of his determined defender. He caught the ball. Shot the three pointer. No time left. Swish. State champions.

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CALCHESS JOURNAL**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

I would like to welcome our new California Chess Journal editor Aditya Kumar. He has written many articles for Chess Life Online and brings a great enthusiasm to the work involved in producing a magazine. If you would like to help contribute to the CCJ, please let him know and we can continue this effort!

I have just finished working the U.S. Amateur Team Championship West tournament at the Hyatt Regency in Santa Clara. This is the first time this event has been held in Northern California and it was a major success! If you missed this event, you passed up a great opportunity to socialize with other chess players. While many of us are playing more and more online chess, we are losing out on the chance to mingle. Being part of a team here, you were not only interested in the outcome of your game, but that of your team members. Pre-match strategy became a critical strategy in the contest. Some of the teams had played together several times; others had met for the first time at the beginning of the first round. By the end of the tournament everyone was enjoying new found friendships and regretted that the event was coming to a close.

I want to emphasize this event because chess can also be a social experience, something you cannot encounter as well online. Sometimes we take for granted how lucky we are to live in Northern California and all the opportunities we have to play in face-to-face tournaments, or local clubs. I would like to see more involvement in our local clubs and the communities. Take the time once a month to visit your local club, play in a tournament or teach someone new the game we all love. You may find a friendship that will last a lifetime and discover another enjoyable aspect of the game you are overlooking!

I look forward to seeing you out there!

Tom Langland
CalChess President

Winter 2011-2012

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The California Chess Journal is published periodically by CalChess, the Northern California affiliate of the United States Chess Federation. A CalChess membership costs \$5 for one year, and will include an email subscription to the CCJ plus discounted entry fees into participating CalChess tournaments. Subscriptions, membership information, and related correspondence should be addressed to CalChess Membership at 2046 Vivian Ct., Tracy, CA 95377-5395. The California Chess Journal accepts submissions pertaining to chess, especially chess in Northern California. Articles and photographs should be submitted in electronic form.

Editor Contact: adityavakumar@gmail.com

Sam Shankland wins Northern California Invitational

.....Continued from Page 1

Arun, who spent hundreds of hours organizing this event for the third year in a row on a purely volunteer basis, was assisted by Ted Castro, Payam Afkham-Ebrahimi, Gaurang Mehta and Tom Langland. The battle for first place was effectively decided in round 7.

Nimzo-Indian E20
Sam Shankland (2565
FIDE) - Georg Meier (2671
FIDE)



1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4
 4.Nf3 c5 5.g3 cxd4 6.Nxd4 Ne4
 7.Bd2!?

A search of any database will quickly show that 7.Qd3 is the most popular choice here, and 7.Qc2 has recently received a lot of tests, while the text is almost unknown. The fact that White is accepting double c-pawns without receiving compensation in the form of the bishop might be

the explanation for this.



7...Bxc3 8.Bxc3 Nxc3 9.bxc3
 a6
 9...Qa5 10.Qd2 was seen in
 Pruess-Kelly, 2011 USCL.
 White got a good position in
 that game, but 10.Qb3 might
 be even stronger.

10.Bg2 Qc7 11.Qa4 Nc6 12.c5!

This clamps down on Black's



position, and insures more
 open lines after the freeing
 moves ...d6 or ...b6. 12...0-0
 13.0-0 Ne7 14.Qa3!

This not only guards the c-
 pawn, but also threatens Nb5-
 d6.

14...Rd8?!

Maybe 14...Rb8 15.Rfd1 Re8,
 preparing ...b5 or ...b6, was
 better, but Black's position still
 looks a little suspicious.

15.Nb5! Axb5 15...Qe5 16.Qa5
 Rf8 17.Nc7 Rb8 18.Qb6 leaves
 Black paralyzed.

16.Qxa8 Qxc5 17.Bxb7 Nf5
 17...d5 18.a4! brings White's
 rook into the game, with
 strong effect.

18.Qa5! Rf8 19.Bf3 d5 20.e4!

This opens the d-file and acti-
 vates the bishop. The end is
 near.

20...dxe4 21.Bxe4 Nd6 22.Bg2
 e5 23.Qb4!

23...Qxb4 24.cxb4 Be6
 25.a4 bxa4
 26.Rxa4 e4
 27.Ra6 Nb5
 28.Bxe4 Nc3 29.Re1 1-0

*Originally published in the Mechan-
 ics Institute Newsletter, written by
 John Donaldson*

BAY AREA CHESS PUNKS PLACE AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



By Aditya Kumar

In November 2011, several young chess “punks” from the Bay Area traveled to Caldas Novas, Brazil to represent the United States in the World Youth Chess Championships.

Rising chess stars Tanuj Vasudeva, Kesav Vishwananda, Cameron Wheeler, and Alan Beilin competed in the extremely competitive tournament and fared quite well—the four boys scored 6, 5.5, 6, and 5.5 points out of their nine games, respectively

Vasudeva, Vishwananda, and Wheeler all played in the Under 10 Open section, while Beilin competed in the Boys Under 12 section.

I had a chance to interview these chess prodigies and their respective parents to inquire about their chess training, the role of a chess parent, and much more.



HOW LONG DO YOU SPEND ON CHESS PREPARATION?

Tanuj: I would say that I average about ninety minutes a day and about ten hours weekly.

Kesav: I try to spend 1 hour of studying on school days, but on weekends I find time to study a little more.

Cameron: This is my first year in middle school, and I'm currently playing on three different basketball teams, so lately, I haven't had much time to study

“The best way to overcome [obstacles] is to switch activities.”

WHAT TRAINING DO YOU FIND MOST USEFUL FOR YOUR GAMEPLAY?

Tanuj: For me, I think that tactics are one of the main things in chess. As they say, chess is 99% tactics! I also think that analyzing your games is a great practice to find out your flaws and improve on them.

Kesav: For me personally, I have found playing practice games the most useful tool for learning. Then I can learn all my mistakes from these games and use their corrections in tournaments.

Cameron: I find tactics most useful for my overall gameplay, but prior to the WYCC, I spent a lot of time working with Yury Shulman to solidify my opening repertoire.

Alan: I find that doing tactics and playing on ICC in addition to endgame studies and reviewing my openings are most useful to get myself sharp for the tournament play. I also believe that studying specific chess books can also be beneficial.

Left: Playing a game of bughouse before the round at the tournament.

BAY AREA CHESS PUNKS PLACE AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

HOW DO YOU OVERCOME OBSTACLES DURING TRAINING?

Tanuj: In my training I commonly face obstacles and I think the best way to overcome them is to switch activities. Let's say that you are getting tired of doing tactics because you have done it for more than an hour. Maybe, in that case you should try and maybe look at some Grandmaster games.

Kesav: I sometimes find it difficult to sit down and study for extended periods of time. I sometimes take breaks in the middle of my work, and it makes my work much more effective when I get back to work.

Cameron: I don't really have any obstacles, except sometimes I don't feel like studying. When that happens, I just take a break until I feel motivated again.

Alan: I try to use my time as efficiently as possible. Every weekday I try to get at least part of my homework done at school, and when I get home I finish the remaining homework and try to schedule my other major extracurricular activity (soccer) in such a way as to have sufficient time left for chess

WHAT WAS YOUR BEST GAME FROM THE TOURNAMENT?

Tanuj: I think my best game was my game against Nima Fendereski. This is a good example of how one weakness(b7) can tie a piece down and how to exploit it.

1.e4 c5 2.c3 Nf6 3.e5 Nd5 4.d4 cxd4 5.cxd4 Nc6 6.Nc3 Qa5 7.Qb3 e6 8.Nf3 d6 9.Bb5 Bd7 10.exd6 Bxd6 11.Bd2 Nxc3 12.bxc3 0-0 13.0-

0 a6?! 14.Bd3 Rab8 17.c5 Bc7 20.Ng5? 21.Ne4 f5?? 23.Bc4! Bd8 24.Bxe6+ Kf8 22.d6+ Be6 25.Ng3 Qg6 26.Rxe5 Bf6 27.Rxf5 Nc6 28.Bc3 a5 29.Nh5 a4 30.Bxf6! axb3?? 31.Be7# 1-0

Kesav: I think my game against Alexander Bravo Jaramillo from Ecuador in round 8 was my best game because I attacked in a nice style in a position that is considered to be "positional and quiet". The game was very sharp and the most interesting one of all the ones that I played.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.d4 d5 7.Bg5 Be7 8.Bd3 0-0 9.Qd2 c6 10.0-0-0 b5 11.h4 a5 12.Rdg1 a4 13.Bxf6 Bxf6 14.g4 b4 15.Nd1 Qa5 16.Kb1 Ba6 17.g5 Be7 18.h5 Bc4 19.g6 b3 20.gxh7+ Kh8 21.Qe3 bxa2+ 22.Ka1 Bf6 23.h6 g6 24.Ne5 Bxd3 25.Nxf7+ Kxh7 26.Qxd3 Rg8 27.Rxg6 Rxg6 28.Rg1 Bg5 29.Rxg5

1-0



BAY AREA CHESS PUNKS PLACE AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Alan: I think my best game from the World Youth Chess Championships was in round 8 against Denis Makhnyov from Kazakhstan. I selected it because I created the conditions for him to be in a cramped position, and then I found a nice combination which was ultimately winning his queen for a rook. This game illustrated that sometimes it is possible to win the game quite early by outplaying somebody early in the middle game without producing a direct attack on the opponent's king.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.Be2 o-o 8.o-o Nc6 9.Nb3 Bd7 10.f4 Rc8 11.Qd2 a6 12.a4 Re8 13.a5 Be6 14.Bb6 Qd7 15.h3 h5 16.Rad1Nb8 17.Bf3 Nc6 18.e5! Dxe5 19.Qf2 Bxb3 20.Rxd7 Nxd7 21.Bxc6 Rxc6 22.cxb3 Nxb6 23.axb6 exf4 24.Qxf4 f5 25.Rd1 Rxb6 26.Qc7 Rb4 27.Qc5 a5 28.Qxa5 Rf4 29.Rd8 Bd4+ 30.Kh2 Rxd8 31.Qxd8+ Kf7 32.Ne2 Resigns 1-0



Cameron: I think my best game of the WYCC was my round 5 victory against Tommy O He from Dallas, TX. Prior to last year's WYCC in Greece, we had 3 draws at various national championships. In Greece, we played a game in which I won a piece out of the opening, but blundered badly and lost the game. This year in Brazil, I finally came away with a win.

"It is possible to win the game quite early by outplaying somebody early in the middle game without producing a direct attack"



Above: The team smiles for a group photo.

The team performed admirably, with other notable players and scores: Sarah Chiang, fourth place in Girls U14 with 7 points; Jeffrey Xiong, fifth place in U12 with 7 points; Tianming Xi, 8th place in U10 with 7 points; Mariya Oreshko, 6th place in Girls U12 with 6.5 points; Albert Lu, 12th place in U10 with 6.5 points; and Varun Krishnan and Kevin Wang, 14th and 15th places respectively in U14 with 6.5 points. Agata Bykovtsev also earned 6.5 points and finished 8th in Girls Under 12.

Sarah Chiang, fourth place in Girls U14 with 7 points; Jeffrey Xiong, fifth place in U12 with 7 points; Tianming Xi, 8th place in U10 with 7 points; Mariya Oreshko, 6th place in Girls U12 with 6.5 points; Albert Lu, 12th place in U10 with 6.5 points; and Varun Krishnan and Kevin Wang, 14th and 15th places respectively in U14 with 6.5 points. Agata Bykovtsev also earned 6.5 points and finished 8th in Girls Under 12.

BAY AREA CHESS PUNKS PLACE AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

WHAT SHOULD BE THE MAIN GOAL OF A CHESS PARENT?

Tarun (father of Tanuj): To keep the children motivated and provide them with opportunities.

Ally (mother of Kesav): My main goal is to keep motivating Kesav in chess by showing opportunities and do what ever we could do, and keeping Kesav emotionally balanced with the result of the game.



Rob (father of Cameron): This is an interesting question and one I've debated internally myself. There seem to be as many different goals as there are chess parents. For my wife, Kerrie, and I, our goal has always been for Cameron to find something that he enjoys and excels at. We've viewed ourselves as "enablers" to Cameron's chess and always looked to be pulled along rather than pushing Cameron towards chess.

That isn't to say we haven't done some pushing. As Cameron improved and started to have more impressive results, his goals started to become more lofty as well. In order to help achieve those goals, there have been periods of time when he has needed our help to stay motivated. The main goal for us though, has been for Cameron to learn that

through hard work and perseverance, he can achieve great things.

Harry (father of Alan): I feel that the main goal of chess parents is to try to develop and sustain their child's love for the game of chess. It is not an easy task since the recent technological revolution has contributed to making chess a much more solitary pursuit than it has been in the past. This task requires a great deal of patience and understanding of your child's needs as well as uncommon dedication and unwavering support for your child's efforts once his/her desire to immerse oneself in chess manifests fully.

SHOULD PARENTS ENCOURAGE COMPETITIVE PLAYING OR PLAYING FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME?

Tarun: A mix of both. Unfortunately chess cannot be played at the high level just for competitive play. To succeed in chess love of the game is warranted.

Ally: Being competitive is not everything; if you do anything without love, you cannot get far. They should be encouraged for both, there is a competition in life every stage, and I believe chess competition will teach them how to handle success and failure. Success is easy to take, they also learn failure is a chance to learn and get better. That way they can enjoy chess in both ways.

BAY AREA CHESS PUNKS PLACE AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rob: I think this really depends on the personality of the child. For some, the competition is what they love. For others, focusing on the competition can destroy their love of the game. If you look at most of the top-level kids, in addition to a clever mind, you will find a fiercely competitive soul.

That being said, I think most of the Bay Area chess parents spend too much time focusing on results. Often times placing the achievement of results above other aspects such as sportsmanship, decency, and the pursuit of knowledge. One of Cameron's first chess coaches warned me that scholastic chess is "toxic". At the time I didn't understand what he meant, as Cameron had had such an enjoyable time in scholastic chess. As a coach and founder of a school program, I've witnessed some events in the past couple of years that have opened my eyes. I found that the large and successful scholastic programs that I had hoped to emulate were more focused on collecting trophies than on fair play and teaching the children strong values.

“Most of the Bay Area chess parents spend too much time focusing on results.”

Harry: Chess parents should try to figure out the origin of their child's interest in chess. If they feel that their child enjoys the competitive aspect of the game, they should definitively provide a significant competitive exposure in order to stimulate their child's interest further and reward his/her drive to succeed. On the other hand, if a child is very interested in the game of chess but is not very

concerned with its ultimate outcome, it might be better to scale back the competitive pursuit and simply concentrate on enjoying the game itself.

WHAT IS AN APPROPRIATE AGE FOR KIDS TO START PLAYING COMPETITIVELY?

Tarun: Any age is good to start playing. However 5-7 years is very beneficial.

Ally: As soon as they ask, “I want learn more about the game”! Kids these days are starting at the age of four! As they say “learn to play and play to learn”, you can learn much deeper game when you compete at high level. As long as parents and coaches are on their side to encourage instead of pressuring, they can start competitive level any time.

Rob: Again, I think it really depends on the personality of the child. I've seen five year old kids who can handle themselves at a chess tournament and twelve year old kids who can't. Being able to handle the ups and downs of competitive chess (or any competitive event) requires a certain level of maturity. This is an area where parents can make a big difference. Kids pick up so much from their parent's actions. Often times how parents handle losses affects how kids handle them as well. In my school program, I often have parents approaching me and asking if their kid is "good enough to play tournaments". My answer is always, if they create the right environment for the kid to enjoy themselves, regardless of the results.

BAY AREA CHESS PUNKS PLACE AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Harry: With the advent of the Internet and the subsequent proliferation of a great variety of chess-related websites, the kids nowadays are starting to play chess competitively at the ripe age of 4. Personally, I think that it is a good idea to start playing chess quite early since it is very difficult to combine serious tournament chess play in the US with rigorous academic studies past the age of 14. Therefore, the kids in the US have a comparatively short window of opportunity to try to achieve some meaningful milestones for competitive tournament chess. An early start would significantly improve their chances of acquiring much-coveted international titles without jeopardizing their academic performance.



Special thanks to Tanuj, Kesav, Cameron, Alan and their parents. Calchess wishes them good luck in their future pursuits!

GEORGE KOLTANOWSKI: THE MAN WHO REVOLUTIONIZED BAY AREA CHESS

By Kerry Lawless

Chess flourished during the Great Depression, but when World War II started the entire country was galvanized to defeat the Axis. Chess interest went into hibernation: or would have, if not for a small group of masters like Kolty. Of course, everyone knows that he set the world's blindfold record in September of 1937. What they may not know, is that after he received a U.S. visa in 1940, he spent the next 7 years crisscrossing the country promoting chess with exhibitions and lectures. Post war Northern California was a chess desert. Most of the chess clubs had dissolved before or during the war.

The only two that were left, the Mechanics' Institute Chess Room and the Sacramento Chess Club, stood in isolation. It wasn't until 1947 when he settled down in Santa Rosa, California, that the Northern California chess clubs and chess league started reforming again. It wasn't a coincidence; he jumpstarted dozens of chess clubs, city by city, via lectures, and simultaneous and blindfold exhibitions...he was a fantastic showman.

His first column, in 1947, was for the Santa Rosa Press Democrat. A year later he started writing a column for the San Francisco Chronicle. In November, 1947 he launched his first magazine called appropriately 'California Chess News'. It ran through 1949, after which it changed its name to 'Chess Digest'. 'Chess Digest' folded on December of 1950.

CONTD.—GEORGE KOLTANOWSKI: THE MAN WHO REVOLUTIONIZED

After he moved to San Francisco in 1949, he continued to promote chess at the individual, club and city level. He was a professional and did accept money for his services, but, when he saw a need, didn't hesitate to perform or teach for free.

In 1952, George pioneered idea of a chess magazine coupled with an organization, on the local level. Thus, Chess Friends of Northern California was born (there was also a short lived Chess Friends of Southern California as well).



Kolty giving chess lesson in San Jose, 1950

It was quickly follow by the magazine, 'Chess in Action', which lasted until 1970. Because CFNC was fairly insular and had its own rating system, it quickly faded when Bobby

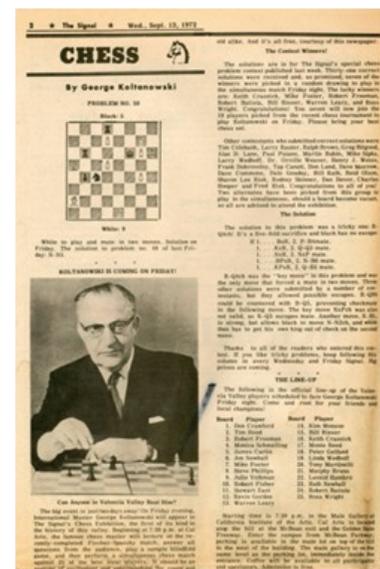
Fischer started his run toward the World Championship.

"He jumpstarted dozens of chess clubs, city by city, via lectures, and simultaneous and blindfold exhibitions...he was a fantastic showman."



Dean of American Chess and Honorary Grandmaster!

One of George's California Chess Publications



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George giving a lecture in Los Angeles on May 26, 1985.

IM MILOS PAVLOVIC GOES UNDEFEATED AT NEW YEAR OPEN

By Salman Azhar

Bay Area Chess welcomed 2012 by hosting 2012 New Year Open at the Santa Clara Hyatt. About a hundred players chose chess over other alternatives to celebrate the New Year. Even though there were fewer than expected (paid) entries, Bay Area Chess paid out the entire prize fund of \$6,000.



IM Milos Pavlovic and IM Emory Tate faced each other in the fourth round after winning their first three games. Coming from a two-day schedule and a 200 rating points below IM Pavlovic was the favorite to win. However, IM Tate played a strong game and had winning chances before the fatigue of the fourth game of the day caught up with him. IM Pavlovic won the game and coasted to two more wins to finish 6-0 and earn the top prize of \$1,000. IM Tate came in sec-

ond and earned \$500. NM Dana Mackenzie and George Mandrusov tied with 4 points for 3rd place (\$200) and first under 2300 (\$200). Joshua Cao, Hunter Klotz-Burwell, Michael Wang, Rayan Taghizadeh, Richard Yi, and Michael Da Cruz tied with 3.5 points for 1st place under 2100 (\$200) and 2nd place u2100 (\$100).

NM Michael Splane, Nicholas Karas, and Cameron Wheeler tied with 3.4 points for 2nd place under 2300 (\$100).

The Reserve section for players rated 1500-1999 was evenly contested. Pranav Srihari, Andrew Mueckenberger, and Ganesh Murugappan tied with 4.5 points for 1st place (\$700), 2nd place (\$300), and Top under 1800 (\$400). Greg Sarafin, Jack Li, Alekhya Nandula, and Barry Curto tied with 4.0 points for 2nd Place u1800 (\$200), 1st Place u1600 (\$200), 2nd Place u1600 (\$100).

Ryan Delaney dominated the under 1500 section and won clear 1st place (\$700) with 5.5 points.

Kevin Lin, Evan Fredericksen, and Rishith Susarla tied with 5 points for 2nd Place (\$300) and 3rd place (\$100).

5-year old Chinguun Bayaraa, Garrick Su, and Kelvin Jiang tied with 4 points for 1st Place u1300 (\$300) and 2nd Place u1300 (\$200).

5-year old Agnes William, Aditya Behal, Justin Hong, and Chess Dad Ofer Mendelevitch tied for 1st Place u1100 (\$100). Mendelevitch is reportedly working on his next book, "How to Beat Your Son at Chess."

Senior TD Salman Azhar organized the event while Associate National TD Tom Langland served as the Chief TD.

Long weekends in Northern California are known for great chess tournaments. President's Day Weekend is U. S. Amateur Team West at Santa Clara Hyatt Regency, Memorial Day Weekend is Best of the West Class Championship at Santa Clara Marriott, July 4 weekend is booked in Sacramento, Cal-Chess State Championship is scheduled on Labor Day weekend in San Francisco, and Thanksgiving Festival is back at Santa Clara Hyatt Regency. All this accounts for more boards in more places.



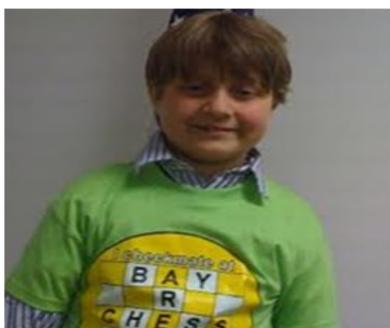
ZILBERSTEIN LEADS CLASS CHAMPIONSHIP

Dmitry Zilberstein led the field with a 5/6 score at the Annual California Class Championship from November 25th to the 27th. More than \$9000 was included and given out for the tournament's prize fund. The tournament, split into sections based on class (with Master and Expert merged), was conducted by staff lead by Salman Azhar, John McCumiskey, Tom Langland, and Richard Keopkcke.

A notable battle took place in the opening between prolific juniors Hunter Burwell and NM Samuel Sevian. Following are annotations of the game by Burwell.:

Burwell, Hunter - Sevian, Samuel

Thanksgiving Class Championship 2011, 27.11.2011



1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.d3 d6 This is the Canal Variation, although Black usually plays Nf6 here, although there is nothing wrong with the move

d6. 5.o-o Nf6 Usually Nc3 is played, although castling is ok. 6.Bg5? h6 Here White needed to play Nc3 instead of Bg4, because after the Bg5 h6 it is not possible to get the move Nc3 in without playing Bxf6 because if Bh4 g5 and Black has the initiative. 7.Bh4? g5 forcing the bishop back and releasing the pin. Now after Bg3 if Black plays a move like Bg4, White's bishop on c4 does not look very good and White is al-



ready forced to play defensively. 8.Bg3 h5! Black offers a free pawn, but achieves worthwhile compensation with the possibility of h4 and Bg4 subsequently 9.Nxg5 accepts the token, but opens the g3 bishop and queen to threats

[9.h4 Is also an option; after 9...Nh7 (9...g4 obviously falls to the powerful

10.Ng5 establishing the knight in the strong g5 square, preparing threats on f7) 10.c3 with the aim of d4, cutting off the black-squared bishop's g1-a7 diagonal that pressures the king. 10...g4 11.Nfd2 white retains a solid position with possibilities of pushing d3-d4 in the future] 9...h4 One of black's options; the threats of Nxf7 and hxg3 leave the position unclear. If 9...Bg4, 10.Nxf7 h4 11. Qc1 a more or less equal position [9...Bg4 10.Nxf7 h4

11.Qc1] 10.Nxf7 Leaves a complex position behind; the knight's fork on both the queen and rook coupled with the foreboding pawn on the h-file backed by a rook and a bishop on the g1-a7 diagonal. 10...hxg3 [10...Qe7 11.Nxh8 hxg3 12.Bf7+ Kd8 13.hxg3 Qf8 (13...Bg4 14.Qd2)] 11.Nxd8 Bg4

12.Qd2 Nd4 is needed in order to secure the positional balance of the board. Nd4 is a very strong move because if the White queen does not protect the e2 square, then Black can play Ne2+ followed by Rxh2++, and by playing 12...Nd4 Black is also threatening Nf3+, where White must play gxf3, and after Black plays

CONTD.—ZILBERSTEIN

Bxf3, he is threatening gxh2++, and if the White h-pawn takes the g-pawn, Black will play Rh1++. [12...gxf2+ simply gives away the position after 13.



Hunter Burwell, annotator

Rxf2 Nxd8 14.Na3] 13.h3 Ne2+ 14.Qxe2 forced; Kh1 leads to Rxh3, gxh3 and Bf3 checkmate 14...Bxe2 15.Ne6 Bb6 16.Nc3 Bxf1 17.Kxf1 gxf2 18.Na4 leaves the position roughly equal 0-1

Tournament Results**Master/Expert**

IM Zilbersterin—1st

IM Tate , IM DeGuzman—2nd

A: Yuan Wang—1st

Kevin M, Praveen N—2nd

B: Alexander Fegghi—1st

Anthony Zhou —2nd

C: Alekhya Nandula —1st

Jennifer Li and Calvin T—2nd

D/E: Srinath Goli— 1st

Justin Shen—2nd

CONTD.—2012 TIPS OFF THE HIGH SCHOOL

Seconds left on the clock. He stared hard at position before him. His eyes were intense as he delivered the winning blow. Checkmate. State champions.

Whereas basketball and football, among other popular sports, draw large crowds and excitement at the high school level, since the beginning of January, a group of talented chess players have quietly been competing in an online league for the right to call themselves the high school state champions. After a successful 2011 season where Irvington High School, from Fremont, won the Varsity championship and Monta Vista, from Cupertino, captured the Junior Varsity title, the 2012 season has started with new faces, new schools, and new features!

With Campolindo, American, Irvington, Dougherty Valley, Saratoga, Monte Vista, and Monta Vista returning from last year, we welcome two new schools: Lynbrook from San Jose and the reigning CalChess State Champions, Mission San Jose from Fremont. The competition features 3 former CalChess State champion schools and 7 former individual state champions in the high school, middle school, elementary school, and primary school sections, making for a

talented field of prodigious chess players.

However, not all the players are top ranked juniors. The league offers a challenge for players with a wide variety of skills, as participants have had USCF ratings from unrated beginners to over 2200 masters. Because each team generally features players of different playing levels, weaker players get an opportunity to improve by working with stronger teammates and playing weekly games against players of different strengths. Coupled with the fact that the online league matches generally last for less than an hour, players get a great opportunity to play without taking much time out of their busy high school schedule.

American team captain and league publicist, Ojas Chinchwadkar states, *“The league is something we all look forward to every week. School isn't the easiest, and the league provides us with a way to get together and make the best of it: community, passion, and chess improvement.”*

Aside from new schools and several new rules, the league has changed from last year in other ways as well. Thanks to the new statisticians, Kyle Chan and Benjamin Tong, the league has introduced a new rating system to make team ordering fairer.

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Head programmer Kevin Peng modified the Raptor interface to create the new league interface, which helps make many of the harder to learn commands on the Free Internet Chess Server (the website we use for league play) simple and easy to use.



Yian Liou, the highest rated league player, from Monte Vista

After three exciting rounds of chess, Dougherty Valley and Monte Vista stand in first place in the Varsity section, each with 3 wins and no losses. Dougherty Valley has already defeated the 2011 Champion team, Irvington, the CalChess State Champs, Mission San Jose, as well as Saratoga. Monte Vista,

on the other hand, has beaten two 2011 Semifinalists, American and Campolindo, and one of the new schools, Lynbrook.

Jerry Chen, captain of Monte Vista, said, "A large part of our success, at least the way I see it, comes from our team's dedication towards playing as well as we can." In the Junior Varsity section, Campolindo, Mission San Jose, and Monta Vista share a tie for first, with 1 win and 1 draw. "Our top 3 junior varsity players all regularly play face to face against other schools so they have experience," said Harsha Nukala, captain of reigning Junior Varsity Champion Monta Vista, when asked about Monta Vista's success in the junior varsity section. There are still several rounds to go, so expect more tough battles in both sections as the teams compete for the state title!

Here is a game played in Monte Vista's convincing 4-1 win over Campolindo in Round 3, putting them in a tie for first place. Yian, the league's highest rated player, and I played an interesting game that we annotated afterwards (Note: The letters in black are the moves of the game. Moves in other colors are side line analysis and writing in blue are comments from Yian and me)

Liou, Yian - Liu, Sydney

1-0, 1/29/2012.

1. Nf3 c5 2. g3 Nc6 3. Bg2 g6 4. O-O Bg7 5. c4 Nf6 6. Nc3 O-O 7. d4 cxd4 8. Nxd4 Nxd4 9. Qxd4 d6 10. Qd3 Bf5 Yian: a6 is main move, but bf5 is perfectly playable. 11. e4 Sydney: After 11. e4, the game becomes similar to a Maroczy Bind type of position in the Sicilian Defense, where the pawn structure with a pawn on c4 and a pawn on e4 constricts black's



position. 11... Be6 12. b3 Qa5 13. Bd2 Sydney: The most popular move here is 13...Qh5, getting some play on the kingside. However, my pieces were more deployed to attack on queenside and I (wrongly) assumed that Nd5 wouldn't be a problem. Note that Rfc8, a common move in the Maroczy Bind doesn't work well here because the bishop on g2 eyes the pawn on b7 and may later take, forking the 2 rooks. 13... a6

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Sydney: Thinking about future b5

[13... Qh5 Yian: This is the most common 14. f3 Yian: but after this move i'm not sure what's the main point of qh5. Black's plan in this position is to go a6-b5, and the queen swing doesn't help that at all, it may even hinder it]

14. Rab1 Yian: Planning a future b4 Sydney: Gets the rook off the a1 h8 diagonal that my bishop controls. Wasn't worried too much about b4 because the move weakens the c4 pawn

[14. Nd5 Qd8 15. Bc3 Sydney: This line seems to give white a slightly better position and better play, trading off the powerful g7 bishop and getting more space.



14... Rac8 Yian: Rfc8 is probably more logical, as the a8 rook may be useful on the a file and the f8 rook isn't doing anything

at this point. Sydney: In most Moraczy positions, Rfc8 is the move because it connects the rook so that after Nd5 Qd8, the rooks are connected. However, the subtle difference is that the bishop is on g2 here, so I chose this rook to put on c8 because I was uneasy having rooks on a8 and c8 with a bishop on g2 eyeing b7, for example 14...Rfc8 15. e5 Qxe5 16. Bxb7 is interesting. 15. Nd5 Qd8 16. Ne3 Yian: If 16. Nf4 Bd7, black's equal here, because his threat of b5 isn't the easiest to stop, and he can regroup his pieces by Bc6 and Nd7 16... Nd7 Sydney: c5 or e5 are the best squares for my knight. Furthermore, my play is to play b5 soon so if the c-file opens up, I may be able to clog up the file by playing Nc5 17. Rfc1 Rb8 Sydney: Idea of playing b5 soon 18. a4 Sydney: I feel like this was a critical point for my position. I needed a clear plan. I could play a5 and try and play solid by repositioning my pieces, or I could try and attack the queenside pawns with a move like b5. I felt like b5 would be the more aggressive approach and would keep the game on my side of the board, the queenside.



18... b5?! Yian: The most dynamic continuation, but i believe that a5 is better objectively.

[18... a5 19. f4 (19. Nd5 Nc5 20. Qe3 Yian: with a slightly better position for white, but black is fine by all means.) 19... Nc5 20. Qc2 Bd7 (20... Bd4 Yian: Black is certainly equal if not has the more pleasant position) 21. Rd1 Bc6 Sydney: In our post mortem Yian pointed out this position, which looks fine for black. I would have a strong knight on c5 and pressure on b3 and e4, but I'm not



sure what my plan for the future would be.

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19. cxb5 axb5 20. axb5 Yian: An objective mistake. White should've kept the tension and not take

[20. Qc2]

20... Qb6

[20... Ne5! 21. Qe2 Bd7 Sydney: This would be a better way to continue than what I played in the game. This gives me the pawn back with great activity and play on the b-file against the b3 pawn. Yian: And black is equal here, and has the more pleasant practical position.]

21. Bf1 Sydney: 21.Nd5 Bxd5 22.exd5 Ne5 23.Qe2 Qxb5 24.Qxb5 Rxb5 25. Rc7 seems to lead to a comfortable position for white 21... Nc5 22. Qc2 Qb7 23. f3 Rfc8 24. Qd1 Yian: White's trying to consolidate his position with his extra pawn with the previous moves



24... Bd7? Sydney: This allows Nd5 with the eventual threat of

kicking my knight with b4. 25. Nd5 Be8 Kf8 would have been better 26. Be3 Yian: 26. Bg5 might be even better, forcing some concessions. After 27...Bf8 28. b6, black is practically strangled.

[26. Bg5 Bf8 27. b6



26... e6 27. Nf4 Yian: 27. b4! is virtually winning in all lines, as all endings end badly for black.

[27. b4 Nxe4 28. fxe4 exd5 29. Qxd5 Qxd5 (29... Rxc1 30. Rxc1 Qxd5 31. exd5 Yian: And black cannot take the pawn because of: 31... Bxb5 32. Bxb5 Rxb5 33. Rc8 Bf8 34. Bh6) 30. exd5 Bd7 31. b6 Sydney: And here white is crushing. The b-pawn is a monster and Black has no counterplay.



27... Bxb5 28. Qxd6 Bxf1 29. Rxc5 Rxc5 30. Qxc5 Yian: black may be a pawn down but white's extra pawn is weak, black has the bishop pair, and white's king is a little exposed. This should be equal and a objective draw. 30... Bb5 31. b4 Rc8 32. Qb6 Qxb6 Sydney:

I thought that immediately trading queens and playing with the bishop pair would offer great drawing chances in the endgame.

[32... Qd7 Yian: And Black is extremely active, and maybe has the more pleasant position as white's king makes him rather nervous]

33. Bxb6 Be5 34. Ng2 Bd6 35. Ne3 Rb8 Sydney: A mistake. This allows Bc5. Trading that bishop lowers my drawing chances significantly.

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36. Ba5 Be5 37. Ng4 Bc3 38. Kg2 Rc8? Yian: May not seem that bad but exchanging rooks is good for white. If black keeps rooks on board it's a draw because he's too active and white's king is still exposed.

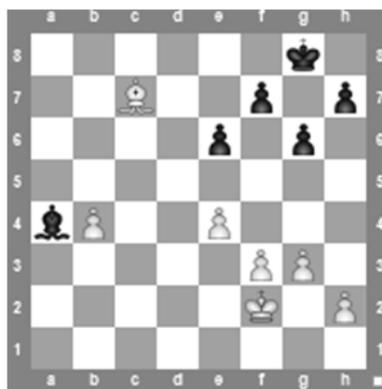
39. Rc1 Rc4 40. Ne3 Rc6 41. Nd1 Bd4 42. Rxc6 Bxc6 43. Bc7 Ba4 44. Nf2



44... Bxf2??! Sydney: Opposite colored bishops against an outside passer.....I thought it was a draw, but it's clear now that it isn't as easy I thought it was. The outside passer proves to be a great weakness and the bishop is strong enough to blockade it without the help of my king

45. Kxf2 Yian: Lets look at this position here. It's a draw objectively speaking, but it isn't the easiest.

Blacks main problem is his pawns and the fact that white's king can penetrate easily to the back of black's can't along with the b-pawn

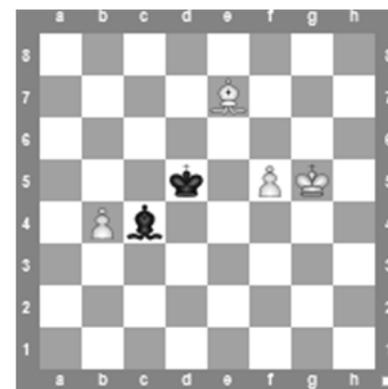


45... Kf8 46. Ke3 Ke8 47. Kd4 Kd7 48. Be5 Kc6 49. f4

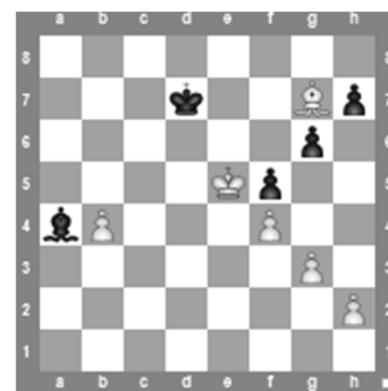
[49. Bf6 Might've been a better move to prevent f5. afterwards might follow. 49...

Kb5 50. Be7 f5 51. exf5 exf5 52. Ke5 Kc4 53. Kf6 Bc6 54. f4 Bf3 55. Kg7 h5 56. Kxg6 Bg4

Yian: with a similar fortress to the game. However, black doesn't hold. First, white wants to put his king to h4, enable to go h3 and kick the bishop out of g4, then his plan is to go g4, exchanging the pawns so black will have a very difficult time stopping them. He can also go kg5 too 57. Kg5 Kb5 58. Kh4 Be2 59. h3 Bf1 60. g4 hxg4 61. hxg4 fxg4 62. Kxg4 Kc6 63. f5 Bc4 64. Kg5 Kd5



49... f5 50. exf5 exf5 51. Bg7 Yian: now plan is simple. get king to g7, and bishop to protect the b-pawn. black might already be lost 51... Kd7 52.



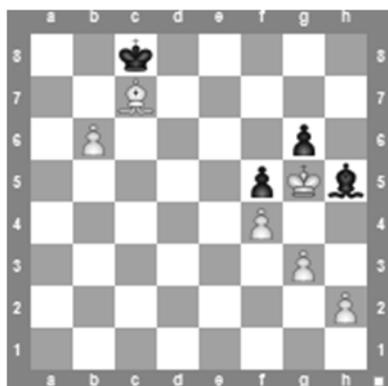
Ke5 52... Ke7 53. Bf6 Kd7 54. Bg5 Ke8 55. Kf6 Kf8 56. Bh6 Kg8 Yian: Now i go to the other side to push my b-pawn.

Using the principle of two weakness. Your opponent may be able to defend one weakness, but 2 on opposite sides of the board the defence is pushed to the limit.

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57. Ke7 Bb5 58. Kd6 Kf7 59. Kc5 Bf1 60. b5 Ke7 61. Kc6 Kd8 62. b6 Bg2 63. Kd6 Bf3 64. Bg5
 Yian: Now i've moved my pawn up, my king goes back to the kingside to get pawns and my bishop protects my b-pawn 64... Kc8 65. Ke6 Kb7 66. Bd8 h6 67. Kf6 Bh5 68. Kg7 Kc8 69. Bc7 Kb7 70. Kxh6 Kc8 71. Kg5
 Yian: with the threat of h3 and g4, black resigned as there's no way to hold on to the g6 pawn and prevent white from pushing pawns. [1-0]

Follow all the action including results, standings, schedules, and more on <http://ncachessleague.weebly.com/>



Author's Note: Because we're a non-profit league, all of our workers are volunteers. Thank you so much to everybody who has helped us out and we are always looking for new helpers!

Please send an email to cam-pochessclub@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteering or donating to the league! Finally, if you know of any schools who would be interested in joining, send in an email!