

# Shankland Wins Northern California International

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GMs Sam Shankland vs. Josh Friedel

After grabbing the lead in round six of the 2011 Northern California International, GM Sam Shankland stayed a step ahead of the field to finish the tournament in clear first place. He won against GM Georg Meier of Germany in round seven.

## Northern California International, Fremont 2012

**White:** Shankland, Sam

**Black:** Meier, Georg

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3 c5 5.g3 cxd4  
6.Nxd4 Ne4 7.Bd2 Bxc3 8.Bxc3 Nxc3 9.bxc3 a6  
10.Bg2 Qc7 11.Qa4 Nc6 12.c5 O-O 13.O-O Ne7  
14.Qa3 Rd8 15.Nb5 axb5 16.Qxa8 Qxc5 17.Bxb7 Nf5  
18.Qa5 Rf8 19.Bf3 d5 20.e4 dxe4 21.Bxe4 Nd6 22.Bg2 e5  
23.Qb4 Qxb4 24.cxb4 Be6 25.a4 bxa4 26.Rxa4 e4  
27.Ra6 Nb5 28.Bxe4 Nc3 29.Re1 1-0

He then drew against IM Marc Arnold and GM Josh Friedel in rounds eight and nine, who were trying to win in order to pass Shankland in the standings.

Going into the last two rounds there were several players with excellent norm chances, and Faik Aleskerov earned his final IM norm. Many others came close to meeting the requirements. IM Marc Arnold and IM Greg Shahade needed a win in the last round with the black pieces to secure a GM norm but were only able to draw their respective opponents.

Marc Arnold's victories included a win over GM Axel Bachmann.

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**White:** Bachmann, Axel

**Black:** Arnold, Marc

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 d6 3.f4 e6 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.g3 Nf6 6.Bg2 Be7 7.O-O O-O 8.d3 Rb8 9.a4 a6 10.h3 d5  
11.e5 Nd7 12.d4 f6 13.exf6 Bxf6 14.Ne2 cxd4 15.Nexd4 Nc5 16.Kh2 Bd7 17.b3 Ne4 18.Bb2 Qc7  
19.Nxc6 Bxb2 20.Nxb8 Nxc3 21.Re1 Qxb8 22.Kxc3 Qxf4+ 23.Kf2 Bd4+ 24.Kf1 e5 25.c3 Qg3  
26.cxd4 Bxh3 27.Ra2 e4 28.Rc2 exf3 29.Bxh3 Qxh3+ 30.Kf2 Qh4+ 31.Ke3 Re8+ 32.Kd3 Qxe1  
33.Qxf3 Qe6 34.Rc5 Qe4+ 35.Qxe4 dxe4+ 36.Ke3 Re7 37.Rf5 Rf7 38.Rc5 Re7 39.Rf5 g6  
40.Rf1 Rf7 41.Rc1 Kf8 42.Kxe4 Ke8 43.Rc8+ Kd7 44.Rh8 Kd6 45.d5 Re7+ 46.Kd4 Rg7  
47.Rd8+ Kc7 48.Rh8 g5 49.Ke5 Re7+ 50.Kf6 Kd6 51.Kxg5 Kxd5 52.Rc8 Re3 53.Rc7 Rxb3  
54.a5 Rb5 55.Kh6 Kd6 0-1



IM Marc Arnold



FM Kayden Troff

Meanwhile FM Kayden Troff had a high performance rating which was good enough for an IM norm but did not play enough foreign players. Here is a win of his over IM Bryan Smith.

**Northern California International, Fremont 2012**

**White:** Troff, Kayden

**Black:** Smith, Bryan

1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nf3 e6 4.g3 Be7 5.Bg2 O-O 6.O-O d6 7.b3 Ne4 8.Bb2 Bf6 9.Nbd2 Nc6 10.Ne1 d5 11.e3 Bd7 12.Nd3 g5 13.Nf3 Be8 14.Nfe5 Nxe5 15.dxe5 Be7 16.Qc2 dxc4 17.bxc4 Bc6 18.Bd4 g4 19.Nf4 Qd7 20.Rfd1 Ba4 21.Qe2 Bxd1 22.Rxd1 Ng5 23.c5 Rad8 24.Qc4 c6 25.Rb1 Kf7 26.Qb3 Nf3+ 27.Bxf3 gxf3 28.Qd1 Bxc5 29.Qxf3 Bxd4 30.exd4 Rfe8 31.Nh5 Re7 32.Nf6 Qc7 33.Qh5+ Kf8 34.Qh6+ Kf7 35.Qxh7+ Kf8 36.Qg8# 1-0

Although the notion of “how hard it is to achieve norms in the U.S.”, has some truth to it, the 2011 Berkeley International (also organized by Arun Sharma) produced several GM and IM norms.

As mentioned in the midway report, the Northern California International had all the makings of a top-quality tournament. Pairings were sent out very soon after all the games were completed and every round started directly on time. The event also had a unique schedule compared to most U.S. tournaments in which most of the days only had one game. The players definitely appreciated the extra rest time. In addition to an opening ceremony there was also a closing ceremony, where players were awarded their prizes and Solomon Ge gave another inspiring performance on the piano. Dr. George Hsieh (president of NPU) and Mayor Jose Esteves also gave brief speeches and were each presented with a framed chess board which was signed by the players.

The tournament was organized by Arun Sharma and Ted Castro, and held at the Nor Cal House of Chess at Northwestern Polytechnic University.

**Final Standings**

1st – GM Sam Shankland—7/9

2nd-3rd – GM Alejandro Ramirez, GM Josh Friedel – 6.5/9

U2500 – IM Marc Arnold 6.5/9

U2300 – WGM Tatev Abrahamyan, NM Yian Liou, FM Kayden Troff – 5.5/9

*See full final standings on the official website.*