

# *The CalChess Journal*



## *Fall 2025*



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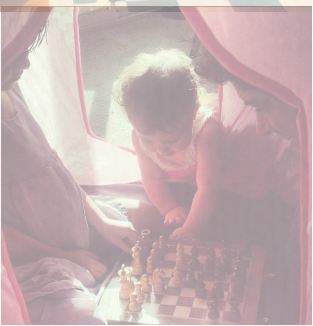


*Editor: Chris Torres & Writer*  
*Assistant Editor: Ikshit Gupta*



# Letter From the Editor

Chess is a timeless game that bridges generations and connects us across ages. For example, when I was about eight years old, my father introduced me to the game. Each Thanksgiving thereafter, I played chess with my grandfather at the same kitchen table he had played chess with my great-grandfather, continuing a cherished family tradition. Today, I enjoy teaching and playing with my own children and niblings, continuing the cycle. Truly, chess is the ultimate multigenerational game that unites us through shared strategy and memory.



As the editor of the CalChess Journal, I am committed to linking the past with the present. In my role as scholastic coordinator for CalChess, I embrace the future of the game. Whether we meet at a tournament or you read this magazine, my hope is that you feel connected to chess's rich history while confidently moving forward into its bright future in Northern California. Chess is more than a game—it's a timeless pursuit that binds us across generations.



# *In Memory of Daniel Naroditsky*

## *By Aamir Azhar*

**The most formative event of my scholastic chess career occurred at the 33rd annual CalChess State Championships, and Daniel Naroditsky was a part of it. Both of us were in sixth grade at the time, May 2008. Six rounds were spread over two days with a time control of ninety minutes. I won my first four games, and in the fifth round, I beat my longtime rival Kevin Zhu to go into the last round as the only player with a perfect score. At the time, it felt like all eleven years I had lived on this earth had been leading up to this. I was one match away from being the uncontested fourth to sixth grade champion for the entirety of California state.**

I know what you're thinking: I played Danya and lost. Well, half of that is correct. I did lose, but it was against my friend Yian Liou, and it was because I played so hard for a draw that I never attacked; instead, I dilly-dallied into a gradual loss. No, I never played Danya in that tournament, because he wasn't playing in my section, despite us being the same age. He was busy winning the ninth to twelfth grade section.



*Danya Naroditsky with his co-champion Steven Zierk (PC Michael Aigner)*



This memory is significant to me because it was the beginning of the end of my chess career. It encapsulated the three reasons I'd informally quit a few years later, none of which I could articulate until recently. One, I was so desperate for the validation of state titles that I was willing to compromise the one thing all chess champions share: the desire to win every game they play. (In essence, my motivations were wrong.) Two, my chess career was concentrated to the glamour and conviviality of the scholastic scene in California, which I'd soon become too old for. Lastly, I felt constantly overshadowed by prodigies like Yian Liou (a year my junior, but better), Tanuj Vasudeva (five years younger than me, and quickly approaching my level), and Danya Naroditsky (my age, competing against adults already, and roughly thrice my strength). In fact, while I was fighting my way into an elementary school title, this was Danya's second time winning high school. He had won it the previous year as a

fifth grader. And once he entered junior high, he wouldn't bother with states at all; instead, Yian Liou would inherit the high school section's title the next year—in sixth grade.

But at the time, I was still in it. I was rated in the top 100 nationally of my age group until I entered high school. Danya and I shared a coach, Michael Aigner, who I like to describe as the Phil Jackson of California scholastic chess coaches. I was too far out of Danya's league to compete against him, but I saw him at state and national chess tournaments, where he served as a constant reminder of what a world class chess player was like. It was an honor to be in close proximity to people of that caliber. It was deflating too.



*Me and the other winners of the 4th-6th grade section.  
(PC Michael Aigner)*



Because the scholastic chess world was stressful, filled with drama, and littered with competitive parents projecting onto their children. I couldn't handle it. Not many children could. We had the misfortune of being good enough to see chess from a birds' eye view, to be able to compare ourselves to the Danyas of the world who found—or forged—a path through all the disorder. Unsurprisingly, most of my peers chose to soft retire in high school instead of pursue a professional adult chess career, which was far more cutthroat and toxic, despite its marked absence of helicopter parents. Not Danya, though.

In 2010, as I left the chess world to focus on high school, he became the youngest published chess author with his first book, *Mastering Positional Chess*, then earned two IM norms. The next year, he secured the IM title and earned his first GM norm at the Benasque Open just six months later. 2012 saw the release of his second book—*Mastering Complex Endgames*—and 2013 saw



*Danya Naroditsky defeats Fabiano Caruana at the 2021 U.S. Championship.*

him win his final two GM norms. Danya was a chess grandmaster before he was a senior in high school.

The unbelievable part is this was only the beginning of his prestigious chess career. He coached the BayAreaChess Elite team while pursuing a degree in History at Stanford, then worked as Resident Grandmaster of the Charlotte Chess Center after graduation. He then began his formal streaming and coaching career, which was catapulted by the pandemic as well as his win against #2 ranked Fabiano Caruana at the 2021 U.S. Championship. By 2023, he had become the chess columnist for The New York Times and amassed more than 200,000 followers on YouTube and Twitch.



Danya's full resume would fill much more than two paragraphs, but his legacy encompasses much more than his competitive record, and even his streaming career. He understood, unlike most of us, that chess, more than its games and books and streaming, is made up of the people playing it. It's the way you shake your opponent's hand after an intense game. It's the vulnerability in watching someone react to their own blunder, in losing a winning endgame on time, in the eye contact you make when offering a draw. Chess is how players share their love—and hate—of the game through memes, analysis, and strongly worded tweets. Chess is universal. It is territory that is as firmly neutral as it is contested. And in an age where everyone is trying to stake the game as their own, Danya never did. His play was one of craft, not ego. He elevated not just the game with his presence, but the culture around it too. That's why people liked to watch him, because he made the game fun and accessible, and

taught with the same diligence that he played with. For the stunted chess kids like me, he was a beacon of what we all could be, as players, and as people too.

Chess, sometimes, can convince us that life is quantifiable. Each move is subject to analysis, each game condensed into one of three results; its certainty is part of its appeal. But we lost something immeasurable with Danya's passing. What's left is the example that he set.

Rest in peace, Danya. The chess world is better because of you.

## *The Naroditsky Memorial & Fellowship Endowment*

**[givebutter.com/naroditsky](https://givebutter.com/naroditsky)**

The "Daniel Naroditsky Foundation" is a memorial fund launched by the Charlotte Chess Center and the Naroditsky family to honor Grandmaster Daniel Naroditsky, who passed away in October 2025. The fund is working to create a \$4 million endowment to support two initiatives: an annual blitz and rapid chess tournament in Charlotte and a fellowship program for promising young chess players.



# 2025 US Amateur West Individual Championship

The annual U.S. Amateur West Individual Championship took place in mid September at the spacious Sonesta Silicon Valley Event Center In Milpitas. The tournament attracted 80 players and they were in turn broken up into three rating based sections: 1800+, 1400-1799, and under 1399. Chief TD Jordan Langland got every round started on time and did a masterful job of making sure that all the player's inquiries were answered promptly. After six rounds, it was Easwar Gnana Hari Sekar who won the Championship Section with 5 total points. In the 1400-1799 Section, Kaihan Liu secured first place with 5/6. Finally, in the under 1400 Section, Medhansh Rai won first prize with an impressive 5.5/6.

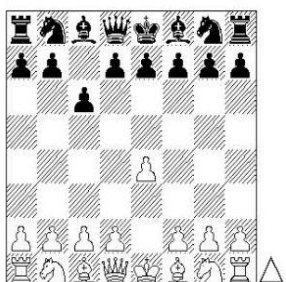
*See more photos at  
[dailychessmusings.com](http://dailychessmusings.com)*





**CARO-KANN**  
**Singh, Samar - Cheng, Aaron**  
 1:0, 9/21/ 25.

1. **e4 c6** Black chooses the Caro-Kann Defense. The opening named after Horatio Caro and Marcus Kann is a popular defense against 1. e4 in which black plans on contesting the center with 2... d5.



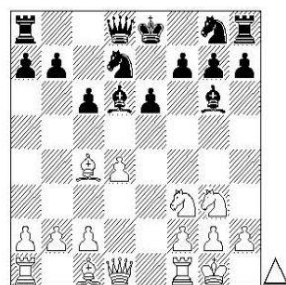
2. **d4 d5** 3. **Qc3 dxe4** 4. **Qxe4 Qf5** This is the Classical Variation of the Caro-Kann Defense. Sometimes called the Capablanca Variation, it is a solid defense for black.



5. **Qg3 Qg6** 6. **Qf3 Qd7** 7. **Qc4 e6** 8. **O-O** As is often the case with the Caro-Kann, White has an advantage in space and time. 8... **Qd6** 8... Ngf6 is the most popular move here.

[8... **Qg6** 9. **Rf1 Qe7** 10. **Qh4 Qd5**

11. **Qxg6 hxg6** 12. **c3 Qc7** 13. **Qf3 Q7f6** 14. **h3 O-O-O** 15. **Qe4 Qxe4** 16. **Rxe4 Qd6** 17. **Qd2 Rh5** 18. **Rae1 Rdh8** 19. **a3 Qb8** 20. **R4e2 Qf4** 21. **Qxf4 Qxf4** 22. **b4 g5** 23. **a4 Rh4** 24. **R4e4 R4h6** 25. **Qf1 Qh2** 26. **Qh1 Qd6** 27. **Qg1 Rf6** 28. **Qe2 Qh2** 29. **Qh1 Qd6** 30. **Qg1 Rg6** 31. **g3 Rgh6** 32. **Qg2 Rc8** 33. **a5 a6** 34. **Qe3 Rg6** 35. **Qe2 Qd7** 36. **Qe3 Rh8** 37. **Qe2 Rgh6** 38. **Qe3 Rg6** 39. **Qe2 Qd8** 40. **Qe3 Qf6** 41. **Qe2 Rgh6** 42. **Qe3 Qf5** 43. **Qe2 Qf6** 44. **Qe3 Qf5** 45. **Qe2 Qf6** 46. **Qe3 Rh5** 47. **Qe2 Qd8** 48. **Qe3 ...0-1**, Vokarev Sergey (RUS) 2443 - Riazantsev Alexander (RUS) 2666 , Sochi 10/ 5/2017 Ch Russia (blitz) (team)]



9. **Qe2** Rather than moving the same piece twice in the opening, white should consider playing Qe2 here. 9... **Qc7** This does activate the Queen, however, playing Ngf6 seems like the most natural developing move. 10. **g3** White hardens up his defenses against Black's Queen and Bishop battery. 10... **h5?! Launching the**







pawn is a very aggressive choice but Black's Knights are in no position to help with this attack. Better here would still be Ngf6.

[10... ♖gf6 11. ♕f4 O-O-O 12. ♖e1 e5 13. dxe5 ♜xe5 14. ♜xe5 ♕xe5 15. ♖c1 ♜he8 16. ♕b3 ♜e4 17. ♕xe5 ♖xe5 18. ♜f4 ♜d2 19. ♜xg6 ♖xe1 20. ♖xe1 ♜f3 21. ♖f1 ♜xe1 22. ♜e7 ♖xe7 23. ♖xe1 ♖f6 0-1, Stromboli Ettore (ITA) 2308 - Panarin Michail (RUS) 2562 , Internet 6/ 9/2020 It "Titled Tuesday";  
10... b5!? Is an interesting alternative.  
11. ♕b3 c5 12. dxc5 ♜xc5 13. ♜f4 ♕xf4 14. ♕xf4 ♖b7 15. ♖e2 ♜e7 16. ♜d4 a6 17. ♕d6 ♜e4 18. ♕xe7 ♖xe7 19. c3 O-O 20. ♕c2 Is a roughly equal position.]

11. ♕f4?! It's White's Knight that really wants to advance here.

[11. ♜f4!? ♕f5 12. ♜h4 ♜df6 13. ♜xf5]

11... ♕e4?! Black still really needs to activate his Knight with Ngf6.

[11... ♜gf6!? 12. c3 ♕f5 13. ♖e1 ♕g4 14. ♖d3 b5 15. ♕b3 a5 16. ♕xd6 ♖xd6 17. ♜f4 a4 18. ♕d1 O-O 19. ♖e3 ♜d5 20. ♜xd5 cxd5 21. a3 +0.15 Stockfish]



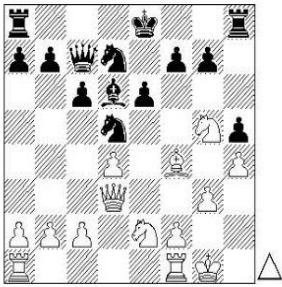
12. ♜g5 White's Knight advances to the quadrant of the opposition's King with a threat 12... ♕f5 13. h4 Halts Black's attack while supporting the Knight on g5. 13. Bxd6 is a strong alternative that would clear the way for the Knight on e2 to advance.

[13. ♕xd6!? ♖xd6 14. ♜f4 +0.89 Stockfish]

13... ♜gf6 Black's King's Knight finally enters the game. 14. ♕d3 White moves his light Bishop to where it can battle for a longer diagonal. 14... ♕xd3 15. ♖xd3 With this recapture, White has completed the Three Opening Goals: 1) Pawn in the center, 2) Castle, 3) Unify Rooks. 15... ♜d5? This is a costly mistake. 15... e5 would have kept things close to balanced.

[15... e5 16. dxe5 ♕xe5 17. ♕e3 O-O 18. ♜f4 ♕xb2 19. ♖ab1 ♕e5 20. ♜xh5 c5 21. ♖fd1 ♖ae8 22. ♖f5 g6 23. ♜xf6 ♜xf6 24. ♖f3 b6 25. a4]



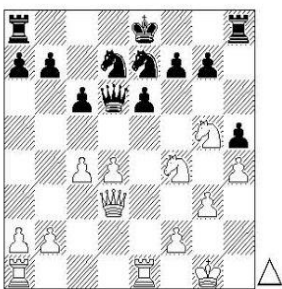


16. ♖xd6 White begins to punish Black's last mistake. 16... ♜xd6 17. c4 Kicking the Knight and keeping the initiative. 17... ♞e7 18. ♞f4 Knights are close range attackers and White's Knights obviously superior. 18... ♞f5?! A better way to improve a Knight would have been Nf6.

[18... ♞f6 19. ♜ae1 O-O 20. ♞fxe6! An important tactical shot. 20... ♜ae8 21. ♞xf8 ♜xf8]

19. ♜fe1 ♞e7 With so many pieces eyeing e6, Black adds another barrier. Castling seems like a more natural way to escape the danger but it is also not fool proof.

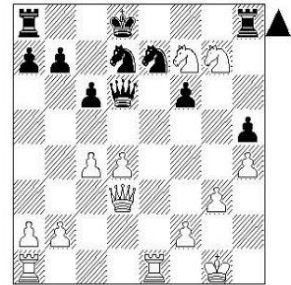
[19... O-O 20. d5 cxd5 21. cxd5 ♞f6 22. ♜ad1 e5 23. ♞xh5 ♞xh5 24. ♜xf5 White is still winning.]



20. ♞fxe6!! Extra barrier or not, this sacrifice destroys Black's chances. 20... f6 It is usually a bad sign when you feel the need to defend by playing f6. 21. ♞xg7 ♜d8

[21... ♜f8 22. ♜xe7 fxg5 23. ♜e6 Is also hopeless for Black.]

22. ♞f7 Fork!



22... ♜c7 23. ♞xd6 ♜xd6 24. ♞f5 ♞xf5 25. ♜xf5 ♜c7 26. c5 Black resigned a few moves later. [1:0]

12/6, Sat 9am

🏆 CalChess Super States: K-1 & K-6 Champ and other K-12 Sections (Day 1/2)

12/7, Sun Until 5:10pm

🏆 CalChess Super States: K-1 & K-6 Champ and other K-12 Sections (Day 2/2)

12/13, Sat 9 – 11:30am

🏛️ Kids' Signature Quads 3RR G/25 d5 (BAC @ Cupertino)

12/14, Sun 9 – 11:30am

🏛️ Kids' Signature Quads 3RR G/25 d5 (BAC @ San Jose)

Upcoming  
Tournaments



# *Richard Shorman Memorial 2025*

*Organized by The Berkeley Chess School on 8/28-10/3*

## *Who Was Richard Shorman?*

Richard Shorman (1938–2023) was a dedicated teacher and mentor to thousands of adults and children in the San Francisco East Bay for over 60 years. Many of his chess students went on to become state champions, experts and masters. In addition to being a legendary chess teacher, Mr. Shorman was a columnist, writer and the official photographer for CalChess. For more information about Richard Shorman, please read the CalChess Journal special edition release dedicated to his life and impact on the Northern California chess community.

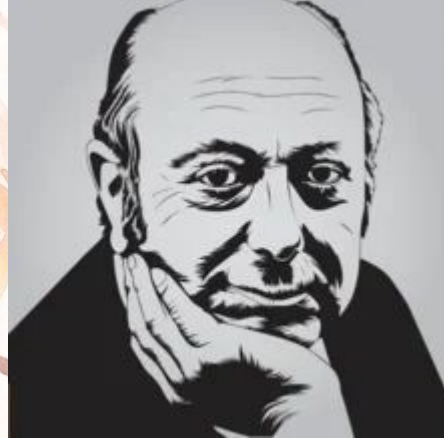


## *Richard Shorman Memorial 2025 Open Section Top Five*

Place	Player Name	Total Points
1	Theodore James Coyne	5.5
2	Alexander Paul Chin	4.5
3	Elliott Winslow	4.0
4	Max Virgil	4.0
5	Jonah Busch	4.0



# *2025 CalChess Denker/Barber /Rockefeller Qualifier*



## *What is the Denker/Barber /Rockefeller Chess Tournament?*

At the Denker, Barber and Rockefeller qualifiers, the best scholastic chess players from Northern California compete for the honor of representing CalChess at a special Closed National Championship against representatives from all the other states. The Denker Qualifier for high school aged chess players had sixteen competitors with Eric Yuhan Li placing first with an impressive score of 4 points in 5 rounds. Neil Bhaduri placed first out of thirteen with a perfect 5/5 in the Barber Qualifier for middle school aged players. The Rockefeller Qualifier for elementary students featured thirty-seven competitors but when all the dust settled, it was Liam Liu who came out in front with a score of 4.5/5. Congratulations to all the participants on a participating in our State's most prestigious closed scholastic chess competition.

The Denker, Barber, and Rockefeller tournaments are prestigious national scholastic chess championships held each year alongside the U.S. Open, bringing together the top K–12 players from every state. The Denker features high-school champions, the Barber hosts middle-school champions, and the Rockefeller showcases the strongest elementary players. These invitation-only events highlight the best young talent in the country, offering a competitive arena, national recognition, and opportunities for scholarships and future chess advancement.



# Walter Browne Memorial 2025

Organized by The Berkeley Chess School on 7/18-8/22

## Who Was Walter Browne?

Walter Browne was born in Sydney Australia on January 10, 1949. When he was just 3 years old, his family moved to the United States close to New York City. The New York chess scene was a good starting place for Walter and he went on to win the U.S. Junior Championship in 1966. By 1970, Browne was awarded Grandmaster title and in 1973 he moved to California. The longtime Berkeley resident would win the U.S. Championship a total of 6 times (1974, 1975, 1977, 1980, 1981 and 1983). In addition to his US Championship triumphs, GM Walter Browne represented the United States in the Chess Olympiads 6 times, won the National Open 11 times, the American Open 7 times, the World Open 3 times, and the U.S. Open Chess Championship twice. In 2003, GM Walter Browne was admitted to the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame and in 2012 he wrote a book on his chess career titled *"The Stress of*

*Chess ... and its Infinite Finesse"*. Walter Browne participated in the 50th Anniversary National Open Chess Championship in Las Vegas in June 2015 before passing away a short time later. A Californian who dedicated his life to chess, GM Walter Browne is arguably the most successful chess player to call the Golden State home.

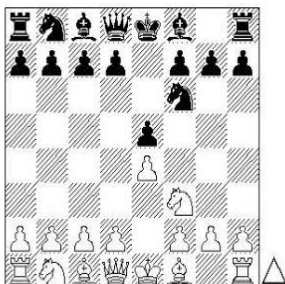
## Walter Browne Memorial 2025 Open Section Top 5

Place	Player Name	Points
1	Dmytro Dzhanhiov	5.5
2	Austin Edward Cambon	4.5
3	Elliott Winslow	4.0
4	Alexander Paul Chin	4.0
5	Zeno Kalonaris	4.0

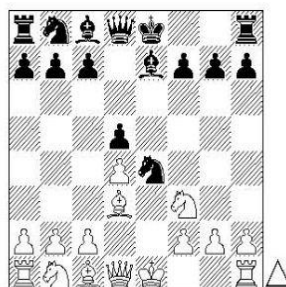
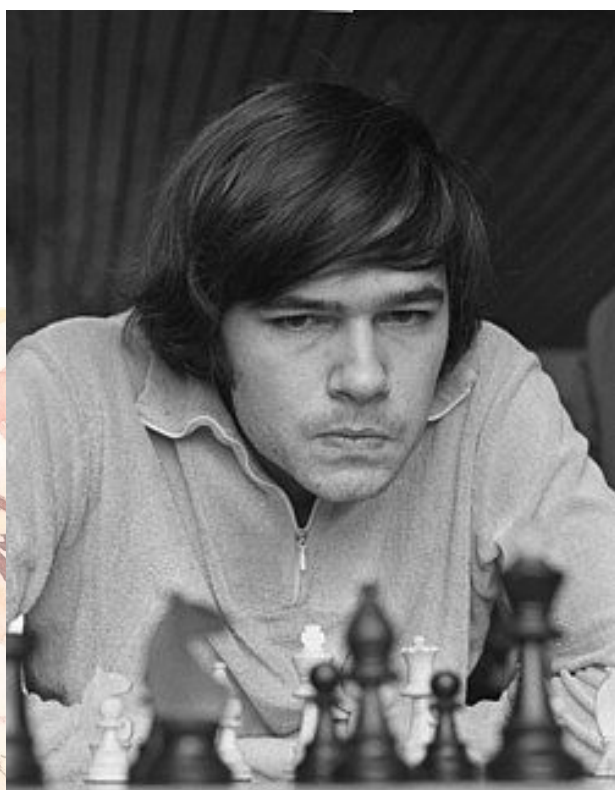


**PETROFF'S def.**  
**Browne, Walter - Murray, Peter**  
 8/30/1971.

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nf6 The Petroff Defence, first described by Lucena in 1479, remains a very reliable, if not fashionable, way for Black to meet White's King Pawn Opening.



3. Nxe5 d6 3...d6 as a response to Nxe5 was popularized by Alexander Petroff in the early 19th Century. For his innovative work on the subject, the Opening is now named after him. Alternatively, many writers refer to this as the Russian Game to honor the other Russian contributors to the modern treatment of 3... d6. 4. Nf3 Nxe4 5. d4 By letting the black knight stay on e4 for a while, White intends to win tempi for the development attacking him later with his pieces. 5... d5 The most logical and active continuation. Black tries to hold his center. 6. Bd3 Be7 The more symmetrical 6... Bd6 is also quite popular.



7. O-O White continues along the Main Line. 7... Nc6 ± This is a typical opening strategy when Black saves tempi by abstaining from castling and develops his minor pieces instead in order to influence the center. 8. Nc3 Black must also be prepared to meet 8. h3, c4, Re1 and c3.

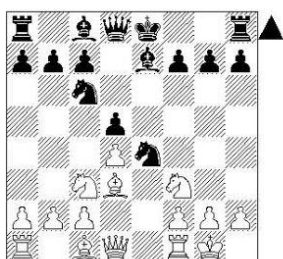
[8. h3 O-O 9. a3 Bf5 10. Re1 Bf6 11. c3 Bb6 12. Bc2 Ne7 13. c4 c6 14. c5 Bc7 15. g4 Be6 16. g5 Bxh3 17. gxf6 gxf6 18. Bxe4 dxe4 19. Bxe4 Nd5 20. Bh4 Bb7 21. Nc3 Bh8 22. Nxd5 Bg8 23. Bh2 Bg2 24. Bh1 cxd5 25. Bxf6 Bg7 26. Bh6 Bg2 27. Bh1 Bg8 28. Ng5 Be4 29. Re3 Bg4 30. Bg3 Bh5 31. Bxg7 Bxg7 32. Nxe4 1-0, Baramidze David (GER) 2543 - Koltthoff Sigmund (GER) 2186, Bad Zwischenahn 2003 Cup Nord-West;  
 8. c4 Be6 9. cxd5 Bxd5 10. Nc3 Nxc3 11. bxc3 O-O 12. Bf4 Bd6 13. Bxd6 Bxd6 14. Ng5 f5 15. c4 Bxg2 16. Bxg2 Bg6 17. f4 h6 18. d5 Nd8 19. h4 hxg5 20. hxg5 Nf7 21. Bf3 Nh6 22. Bg3 Nf7 23. c5 Bb8 24. Bc4 b5 25. Bb3 a5 26. Bae1 Bfe8 27. Be6 Bxe6 28. dxe6 Bf8 29. exf7 a4 30. Bd1



♖xd1 31. ♙xd1 ♖c6 32. ♙f3 ♖xc5 33.  
 g6 ♖d6 34. ♖g5 ♖d2 35. ♙h3 ♖d3  
 36. ♖h5 ♙e7 37. ♖h4 ♙d7 38. ♙g3  
 ♖d6 39. ♖h8 ♖xg6 40. ♙f2 ♖xf7 41.  
 a3 ♖e7 42. ♙g3 ♖e1 43. ♙g2 ♖d2  
 44. ♙g3 ♖e1 1/2-1/2, Loewenthal

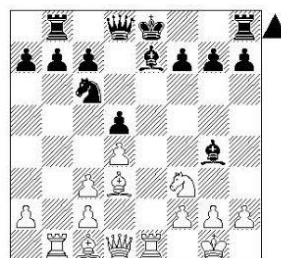
Johann J (HUN) - Morphy Paul 2680 ,  
 London 1858 ;  
 8. ♖e1 ♙g4 9. c3 f5 10. ♘bd2 O-O 11.  
 ♖b3 ♘a5 12. ♖b5 c6 13. ♖a4 ♙d6  
 14. ♙e2 ♖c7 15. ♘e5 ♙xe2 16. ♖xe2  
 b5 17. ♖c2 c5 18. ♘f1 cxd4 19. cxd4  
 ♖xc2 20. ♖xc2 ♘c4 21. ♘d3 ♖ac8  
 22. f3 ♘f6 23. ♙g5 h6 24. ♙xf6 ♖xf6  
 25. ♖ac1 ♖e8 26. b3 ♘b6 27. ♙f2  
 1/2-1/2, Svidler Peter (RUS) 2684 -  
 Kramnik Vladimir (RUS) 2760 , Linares  
 1999 It (cat.20) ;

8. c3 ♙g4 9. ♖b3 ♖d6 10. ♘bd2  
 ♘xd2 11. ♘xd2 O-O-O 12. ♖c2 ♙b8  
 13. b4 ♖de8 14. ♘b3 ♖f6 15. ♖e1  
 1/2-1/2, Liang Jinrong (CHN) 2425 -  
 Xie Jianjun (CHN) 2415 , Beijing 1996  
 Cup Lee ]



8... ♘xc3 Forcing White to accept a weak  
 pawn structure. 9. bxc3 Even doubled

pawns offer some advantages. Here, the  
 advantage to having a pawn on c3 means  
 that d4 is supported and b4 is off limits to  
 Black's pieces. 9... ♙g4 Black activates a  
 Bishop with a pin. 10. ♖b1 Another  
 advantage to the doubled pawns is having  
 a semi-open file to place the Rook into.  
 10... ♖b8 The best move even though  
 Black's Rook is now on a pawn defending  
 duty. 11. ♖e1 Now White moves his other  
 Rook into an open file where it pins Black's  
 Bishop.



11... O-O This unpins the Bishop and now  
 both Kings are castled. 12. ♙f4 White  
 Bishop develops to where it strengthens  
 White's control of the e5 center square.  
 12... ♖d7?! Black's first inaccuracy.  
 Better was Bd6 which offers a trade of  
 Bishops.

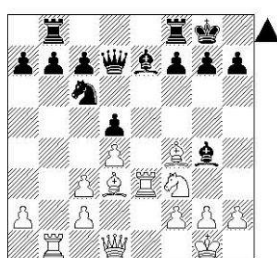
[12... ♙d6!? 13. ♙xd6 ♖xd6 14. ♖e3  
 Here White only has a small edge from  
 his superiorly placed Rooks.]

13. ♖e3 White advances a Rook so a  
 battery can be formed in the open file.

## *Have a Story to Share?*

If you have a story or game that  
 you would like to share in the  
 next CalChess journal, please  
 email it to  
**DailyChessMusings@gmail.com**  
 and it may be selected as a  
 feature.

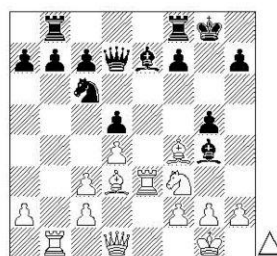




**13... g5?!** Black's play is too bold here. Better is 13... Rfe8 as seen in Anand - Leko or the relatively unexplored 13... d6.

[13... ♖fe8 14. ♕e2 ♗f8 15. ♖e1 ♖xe3 16. ♕xe3 ♗f5 17. ♗xc7 ♕xc7 18. ♗xf5 g6 19. ♗d3 ♘a5 20. ♕e5 ♕d8 21. ♕f4 ♗d6 22. ♕d2 ♖c8 23. h4 ♕c7 24. ♕g5 ♕d8 25. ♕h6 ♗f8 26. ♕d2 ♕c7 27. ♖e5 ♖d8 28. ♕e1 ♘c6 29. ♖e8 ♖xe8 30. ♕xe8 ♕e7 31. ♕c8 ♗g7 32. g3 ♘d8 33. ♗g2 ♘e6 34. ♘e5 ♕c7 35. ♕e8 ♕e7 36. ♕b5 f6 37. ♘g4 f5 38. ♘e3 f4 39. ♘d5 ♕f7 40. ♗e4 fxg3 41. fxg3 ♗d6 42. ♕d3 b6 43. a4 ♕d7 44. ♕b5 ♕f7 45. ♗f3 g5 46. ♕c6 ♗b8 47. ♗g4 ♘d8 48. ♕d7 ♕xd7 49. ♗xd7 gxh4 50. gxh4 ♗d6 51. ♗b5 ♘f7 52. ♗f3 ♘h6 53. ♗d7 ...1/2-1/2, Anand Viswanathan (IND) 2770 - Leko Peter (HUN) 2739 , Leon 2001 It "Advanced Chess";  
13... ♘a5 14. ♘e5 ♗xd1 15. ♘d7 1-0, Mekhitarian Krikor Sevag (BRA) 2550 - Ribeiro Orlando Alves, Fortaleza 6/3/2010 It (open);  
13... ♗d6!? 14. ♗xd6 cxd6 15. h3 ♗h5 16. g4 ♗g6 17. ♘h4 ♖fe8 18. ♖xe8

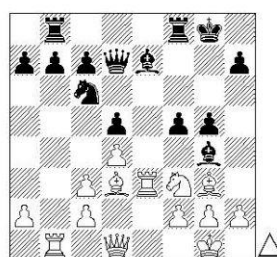
♕xe8 19. ♘xg6 fxg6 20. ♖b5 ♕f7  
Where White has a small advantage but Black has a defendable position.]



**14. ♗g3** Also possible was 14. Be5.

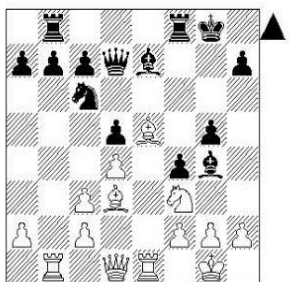
[14. ♗e5 f6 15. ♗g3 f5 Reaches the same position as in the game.]

**14... f5** Black trades off King safety for the threat to win material.



**15. ♗e5** Takes away Black's opportunity for a Fork and places the Bishop to where it now controls the newly created weak squares adjacent to Black's King. **15... f4** Even without a fork, this move grabs the initiative and forces White Rook to retreat.  
**16. ♖e1** Re2 doesn't work because it interferes with the Queen's defense of the f3 Knight.



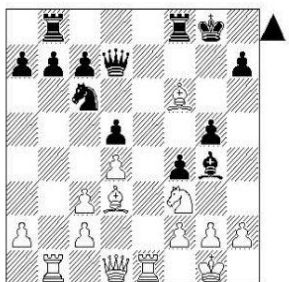


16...  $\text{Bf6?}$ ! Black attempts to muzzle White dangerous dark Bishop. However, this is an inaccuracy that will cost Black some material. Better was placing a Rook into the open file with 16...  $\text{Rfe8}$ .

[16...  $\text{Rfe8?}$  17.  $\text{h3}$   $\text{Bh5}$  18.  $\text{c4}$   $\text{Bd6}$  19.  $\text{cxd5}$   $\text{Nxe5}$  20.  $\text{dxe5}$   $\text{Bxf3}$  21.  $\text{Wxf3}$   $\text{Rxe5}$  22.  $\text{Rxe5}$   $\text{Bxe5}$  23.  $\text{Re1}$   $\text{Bg7}$  24.  $\text{Bg4}$   $\text{Ch8}$  25.  $\text{Wh5}$   $\text{Bf6}$  26.  $\text{Re6}$   $\text{Rf8}$  Offers Black the best chance at survival.;

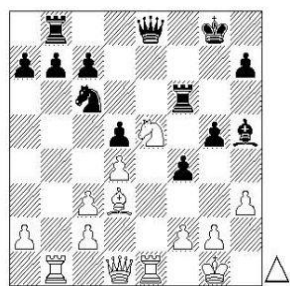
16...  $\text{Bf5?}$ ! 17.  $\text{Bxf5}$   $\text{Rxf5}$  18.  $\text{c4}$   $\text{b6}$  19.  $\text{cxd5}$   $\text{Wxd5}$  20.  $\text{c4}$   $\text{Wxc4}$  21.  $\text{d5}$   $\text{Rd8}$  22.  $\text{Rc1}$   $\text{Wxd5}$  23.  $\text{Wxd5}$   $\text{Rxd5}$  24.  $\text{Rxc6}$  Leaves White with a winning endgame.]

17.  $\text{Bxf6}$  White begins a long combination to capitalize on Black's inaccuracy.

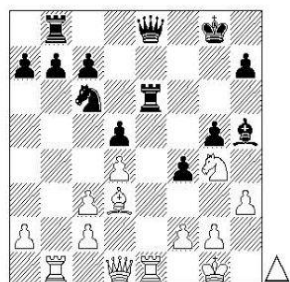


17...  $\text{Bxf6}$  18.  $\text{h3}$   $\text{Bh5}$  19.  $\text{Ne5}$ ! White is

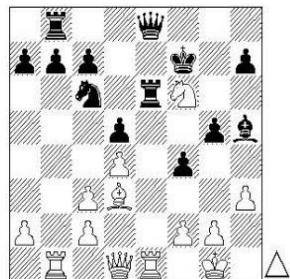
threatening to win a Rook immediately after trading Queens. 19...  $\text{We8}$



20.  $\text{Ng4}$ ! A beautiful discovered attack and White is now guaranteed to win material. 20...  $\text{Re6}$  Black finds the best response.

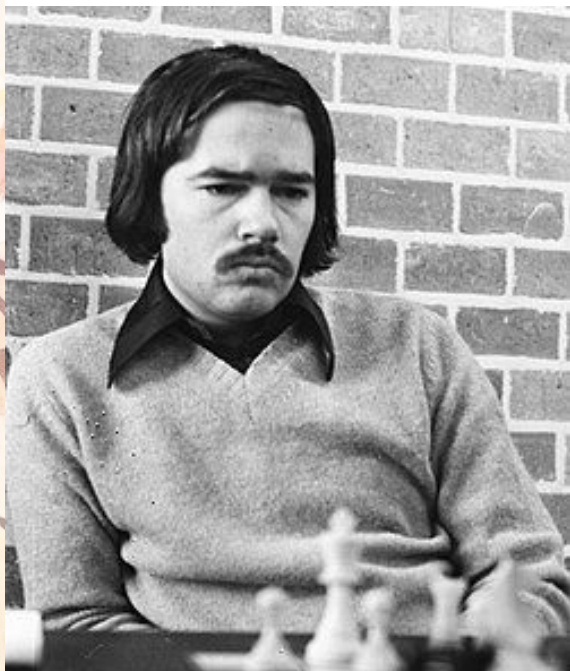
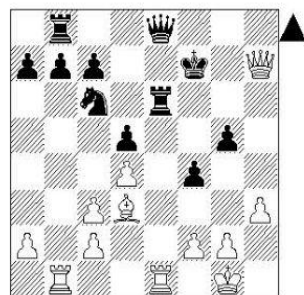


21.  $\text{Nf6}$ ! But its not good enough. 21...  $\text{Ch7}$



22.  $\text{Wxh5}$ ! Walter Browne's tactics here are uncanny. 22...  $\text{Chxf6}$  23.  $\text{Wh6}$   $\text{Chf7}$  24.  $\text{Wxh7}$  Black has seen enough of Walter

Browne's tactical precision and resigns.





# 2025 CalChess State Championship

By Ikshit Gupta

The 2025 CalChess State Championship was held by the Bay Area Chess Chess Club from August 29 to September 1. The location of this event was the Santa Clara Convention Center right besides California's Great America amusement park.



*Image of the Santa Clara Convention Center*

This tournament featured multiple events including the U1000 Championship and U1000 blitz for players below 1000 rating as well as the Open Championship and Open Blitz for players over the rating of 1000. This also had other events like the Kid Quads and Chess4Less.

The tournament featured over 400 participants with 231 participants in the Open Championship, 134 participants in U1000 Championship, 19 players in the Kid Chess4Less and 32 players in the Kid Quads.

## U1000



*Image of the U1000 Championship*

The U1000 was divided into multiple sections - Section 1 (800 - 999), Section 2 (600 - 799), Section 3 (400 - 599) and Section 4 (U400). It was a 5 round event with the time control of G/25;d5. All the rounds occurred on one day: August 30.

The winners were (names placed from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> (left to right):

- Section 1 - MICHAEL KVASOV (4.5/5), DIVIT KUMAR (4.5/5), ANANYA ACHARYA (4/5), NIVAAN DAMANIYA (4/5), NEVAAN VIKRAM JADHAV (3.5/5)
- Section 2 - VARENIA AADITYA KANAKATTE (4.5/5), ANDREA RAO (4.5/5), ETHAN BU (4.5/5), BRYAN YICHANG SUN (3.5/5), VARIN AGRAWAL (3.5/5)



- Section 3 - AURAN RAZAVI (4/5), ARNAV MISHRA (4/5), AADITHYA RAMANATHAN (4/5), CHRISTOPHER LARSEN (3.5/5), ARJUN SARAVANA KUMAR (3/5)
- Section 4 - LOGAN LIU (5/6), ASHRITH TATIPARTHI (4.5/6), SIVA S GOPARAJU (4/6), KRISHNA GOSAVI (4/6), BREANA LIANG (4/6)

The U1000 blitz was a 8 round tournament also played on August 30 with the time control of G/3;d2. The winners were:

- MICHAEL KVASOV (7/8), TIMURLANE ALEXANDER BUSYGIN (6/8), RAAGA GURUSWAMI (5/8), CAMBRIA GHILARDUCCI (5/8), SAINIKA BASU (5/8)

The prizes for all participants in the U1000 events were BAC (Bay Area Chess) coins. Each win was 12 coins, draw was 6 coins and loss was 0 coins (double of what they offer at their local tournaments). Players could either save up and accumulate more coins later on or use them to earn chess clocks or trophies. Top schools and clubs were also awarded with trophies.

## Open

The Open championship was divided into 3 sections - M/X (2000+), A/B (1600 - 1999), C/D/E (1000 - 1599). This championship offered 2 day, 3 day, 4 day. There were 7 rounds. All the rounds for the 3 day and 4 day had a time control of G/90;+30. However, in the 2 day section, the first 4 rounds were G/55;d5 and rounds 5 to 7 were the normal G/90;+30.



*Image of the Open Championship*

The winners were (names placed from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> (left to right):

- M/X - PRANAV SATHISH (5/7), DMYTRO DZHANHIROV (5/7), PRANAV SAIRAM (5/7), LUKE WIDJAJA (5/7), JULIAN LIN (5/7)



- A/B - ALBERT ZIATDINOV (6/7), JATHIN SHETTIGAR NAGABHUSHAN (5.5/7), KRISTIAN CLEMENS (5.5/7), MR. RUDY GOCE TIA JR. (5.5/7), ANUJ PATEL (5.5/7)
- C/D/E - AVINESH NADAN (6/7), HARSHIT GHOSH (6/7), ASH BOWEN LIANG (6/7), PRANIT NITIN PANDHARE (5.5/7), BRUCE ZHONG (5.5/7)

The Open blitz was a 10 round tournament also played on September 1 with the time control of G/3;d2. There were 3 sections - 1800+, 1400 - 1799, 1000-1399.The winners were:

- 1800+ - DMYTRO DZHANHIROV (7.5/10), DIPRO CHAKRABORTY (7.5/10), VLADIMIR MEZENTSEV (6.5/10), ADVAY BANSAL (6.5/10), LIAM LIU (5.5/10)
- 1400 - 1799 - TIMOTHY ZHU (7/10), SARVAGNYA BRAHMANAPALLY (7/10), LIAM DOLAN (6.5/10), VINOD SHANBHAG (6.5/10), TOBY TRAN (6/10)
- 1000-1399 - LEO ZHANG (8/10), KAIYAN NAGESWARAN (7.5/10), GRANT JIA XU (7/10), RONAV MANDAL (7/10), JOHANN RAJ (6/10)

Section	Rated	Eligibility	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
MX 2000+	FIDE & USCF	All	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$500	\$200	\$200
		u2200	\$1,000	\$500	\$200	\$200	\$200
AB 1600-1999	FIDE & USCF	All	\$1,500	\$700	\$300	\$200	\$200
		u1800	\$1,000	\$500	\$200	\$200	\$200
CDEu 1000-1599	FIDE & USCF	All	\$1,200	\$600	\$300	\$200	\$200
		u1400	\$1,000	\$500	\$200	\$200	
		u1200	\$800	\$400	\$200	\$200	

This image shows all the prizes for the Open section. The total prizes of this tournament add up to the large sum of \$17,000.

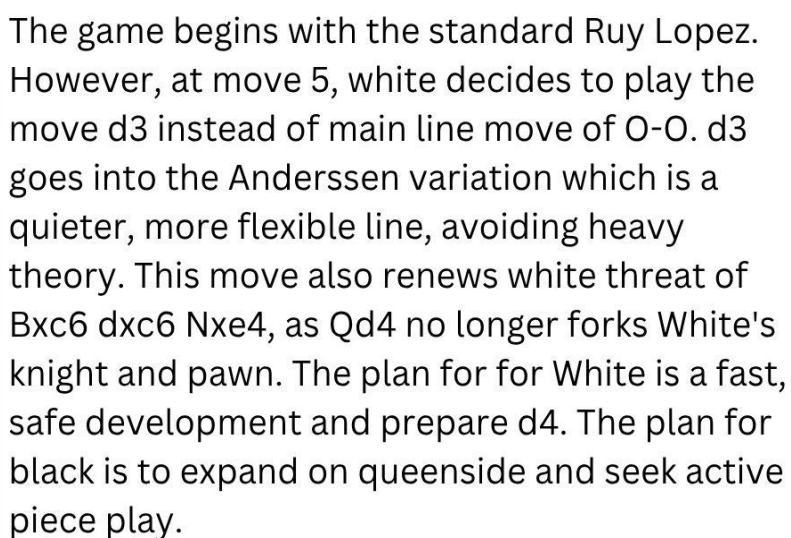
This image shows all the prizes for the Blitz section. The total prizes of this tournament added up to \$1000

Section	Rated	Eligibility	1st	2nd
MXA 1800+	USCF	All	\$150	\$50
		u2000	\$100	\$50
BC 1400-1799	USCF	All	\$150	\$50
		u1600	\$100	\$50
DE 1000-1399	USCF	All	\$100	\$50
		u1200	\$100	\$50

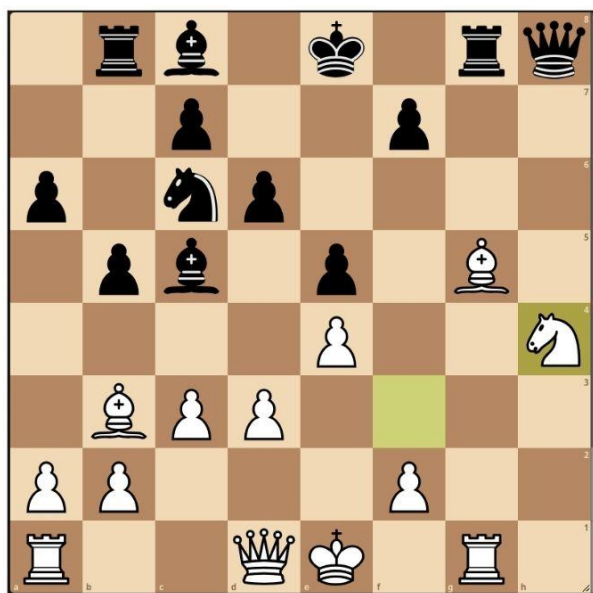




Game PGN - 1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 a6 4. Ba4 Nf6 5. d3 b5 6. Bb3 Bc5 7. Nc3 h6 8. Nd5 Rb8 9. c3 d6 10. Nxf6+ Qxf6 11. Rg1 g5 12. g4 Rg8 13. h4 gxh4 14. g5 hxg5 15. Bxg5 Qh8 16. Nxh4 Qxh4 17. Bxf7+ Kf8 18. Qf3 Qxf2+ 19. Qxf2 Bxf2+ 20. Kxf2 Kxf7 21. Ke3 b4 22. Raf1+ Ke8 23. d4 Na5 24. d5 Nc4+ 25. Ke2 Nxb2 26. Rf6 bxc3 27. Rgf1 a5 28. Ke3 Nd3 29. Rf7 Nf4 30. Re7+ Kf8 31. Bf6 Rg3+ 32. Kf2 Rb2+ 33. Kxg3 Rg2+ 34. Kf3 Bg4+ 35. Ke3 Re2#

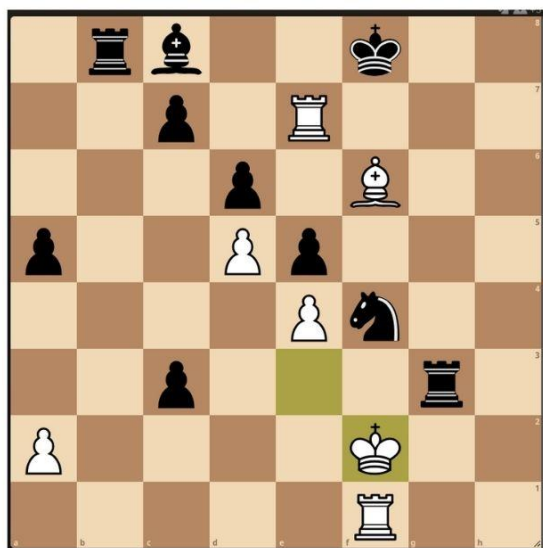
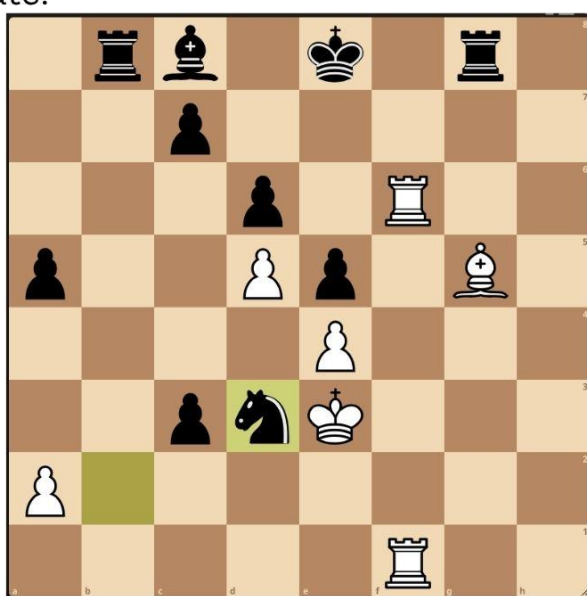






At move 16, White played Nxh4, recapturing the pawn to equalize material. However, this move is a blunder because after 16...Qxh4, White has no good continuation. If White tries 17.Bxh4 Rxc1 18.Ke2 Rxd1 19.Rxd1, Black simply wins an entire piece and emerges with a decisive advantage. In the game, White attempted the tricky line 17.Bxf7+, hoping for Kxf7 18.Qf3+ to pick up the black queen, but Black calmly replies with 17...Kf8, sidestepping the tactic and maintaining the extra material. After 17...Kf8, if White captures the rook with Bxg8, Black delivers Qxf2#, resulting in immediate checkmate.

28...Nd3 is a decisive tactical move. The knight controls key central squares and prevents Kxd3 because of Ba6, which would fork the king and rook. It also supports Black's rooks along g3 and b2, preparing the forced mating sequence. White's rooks are poorly coordinated, the bishop cannot block effectively, and the king has very limited mobility. Black now threatens ...Rg3+, ...Rb2+, and ...Re2#, leaving White completely lost.



After 32.Kf2, White's king is fully exposed in the center, and Black's pieces are perfectly coordinated for a mating net. The rook on g3 cuts off the g-file, the rook on b2 threatens lateral checks, and the bishop on g4 controls key escape squares. White's rooks and bishop cannot defend effectively, and all checks are forced. Black's next moves (...Rg2+, ...Bg4+, ...Re2#) lead to unavoidable mate.



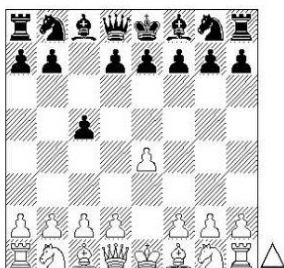


# Tom Dorsch Memorial 2025

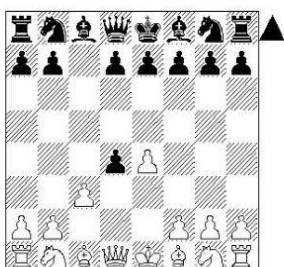
Organized by The Berkeley Chess School on 5/30-7/11

SICILIAN def.  
Dorsch, Thomas - Vest, Elvis C.  
1:0, 4/26/1996.

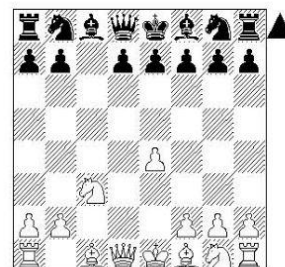
1. **e4 c5** The Sicilian Defense received its name from an ancient Italian manuscript that referred to it as "il gioco Siciliano" which translates to the Sicilian Game.



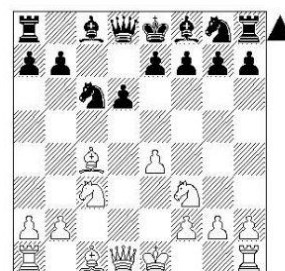
2. **d4 cxd4** 3. **c3** This is the Smith-Morra Gambit in which White sacrifices a pawn to develop quickly while creating attacking chances.



3... **dx c3** Black accepts the gambit. 4. **Qxc3** For the toll of one pawn, White has an additional developed piece and a pawn in the center.



4... **Qc6** 5. **Qf3** Comparing White's pawn in the center and two developed pieces to Black's lack of a center pawn and single developed piece, we see the advantages gained from the gambited pawn. 5... **d6** 6. **Qc4** With this developing move, White takes an even greater advantage in time.



6... **e6** 7. **O-O** Thus far, play has followed the classical main line of the Smith-Morra Gambit Accepted. 7... **Qe7** 8. **Qe2** White's Queen develops to the same file as her adversary's King. This, along with the coming Rd1, is known as the Scheveningen Setup. 8... **Qd7** This develops a piece and helps to solidify Black's position. 8... **Nf6** is another good option.

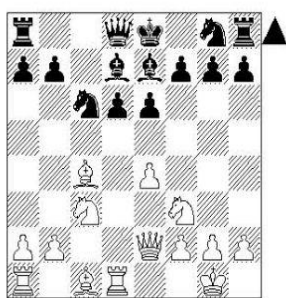
[8... **Qf6** 9. **Rd1** e5 10. **h3** O-O 11. **Qg5** **Qe6** 12. **Rac1** a6 13. **Qxf6** **Qxf6**





14. ♖d5 ♙xd5 15. ♙xd5 ♜d7 16. ♜c4 ♜ac8 17. ♜b3 ♜c7 18. ♜c3 ♜fc8 19. ♜cd3 ♜e7 20. ♜a3 ♜f8 21. g4 ♙e7 22. ♙g2 ♖d8 23. ♜b3 ♜c5 24. a4 ♜e8 25. ♖g1 ♜a5 26. ♜f3 ♜xa4 27. ♜dd3 ♜a5 28. ♖e2 ♜b5 29. ♜d1 ♜xb2 30. ♖g3 ♖e6 31. ♖h5 ♜cc2 32. ♜f5 g6 33. ♙xe6 gxf5 34. ♜f3 fxe6 35. gxf5 ♙h8 36. f6 ♜g6 37. ♜g3 ♜xf2 38. ♙h1 ♜xe4 39. ♙g1 ♜g2 0-1, Pogosian Georgy (RUS) 2091 - Vitiugov Nikita (RUS) 2747 , Smolensk 1997 Cup Russia (open)]

9. ♜d1 And now the Rook is moved to the same file as Black's Queen.

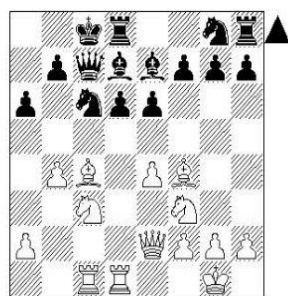


9... ♜c7? Here, it is very important for Black to control the b5 square by playing 9... a6.

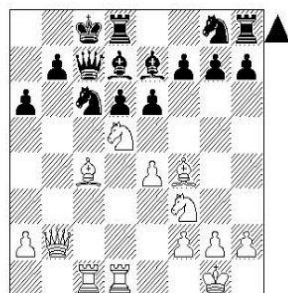
[♞9... a6 10. ♙f4 e5 11. ♙e3 ♖f6 12. ♖d5 ♖xd5 13. ♙xd5 O-O 14. a3 ♜c8 15. ♜ac1 ♜e8 16. ♜d3 ♙e6 17. b4 h6 18. ♖d2 ♙xd5 19. ♜xd5 -0.07 Stockfish]

10. ♙f4 White has completed the Three Opening Goals: 1. Pawn in the Center, 2. Castle, and 3. Unify Rooks. 10... O-O-O Black is behind in time and has only now

completed one of the Three Opening Goals. 11. ♜ac1 White has now "touched all" of his pieces. 11... a6 Taking control of the b5 square is a good idea which came to Black's mind two moves too late. 12. b4 With the players castled on opposite sides, White launches his pawn storm before Black has even finished developing pieces.



12... ♖xb4 Black takes the pawn before it reaches b5. 13. ♜b2 But White improves his Queen while gaining a tempo against the Knight. 13... ♖c6 14. ♖d5! White's Knight now enters the Quadrant of Black's King.



14... exd5 Black, of course, is obligated to capture the dangerous Knight. 15. exd5 But now the Knight on c6 is threatened on and if it moves there is a Rook, Queen to





*Tom Dorsch Memorial*  
*2025*

1	Dmytro Dzhanhiov	6.0
2	Max Virgil	4.0
3	Roger M. Poehlmann	3.5
4	Roger Christopher Smith	3.5
5	Hovik Manvelyan	3.5

## A black and white photograph showing a man in a dark suit and tie presenting a large trophy to a young boy. The boy is wearing a light-colored jacket and is smiling. The trophy is a large, ornate cup with a plaque at the base that reads "CAMPBELL'S CHALLENGE CUP". The background is dark and out of focus.

25



# CalChess Rapid Championship

Twenty-one chess players who prefer faster time controls showed up on September 21 to test their skills at the 2025 CalChess Rapid Championship, run by Bay Area Chess. Faster time controls make managing the tournament more difficult but Organizer James Bethany and Chief Tournament Director Jordan Langland were definitely up for the challenge. In fact the only difficulties I witnessed were on the chessboards where fantastically complex games were played with less time on the clock. After five rounds, it was Dylan Tang who took first place in the Championship Section with a powerful 4.5 points. Vedant Verma and Michael Grigorev tied for first place in the 1400-1799 Section with 4/5. At the bottom boards, it was Mihir Chandra who took first place in the 1000-1399 Section by going undefeated with a final score of 4.5/5.



The Berkeley Chess School is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that offers chess instruction, regional chess tournaments (including an all-girls tournament), winter, spring and summer chess camps, a Friday night chess program in Berkeley, San Ramon, Walnut Creek and Mountain House that includes a class and a USCF rated tournament, as well as advanced classes and master classes during the week. We also offer chess in the classroom in Title One schools, and have an international chess exchange program.





# 2025 CalChess State Open Blitz

The most thrilling State Championship of the year has to be the blitz event. The 2025 CalChess State Open Blitz Championship took place in Santa Clara on the first day of September. In the Under 1400 Section, Leo Zhang bested the field with an excellent score of 8/10. In the 1400-1799 Section Timothy Zhu and Sarvagnya Brahmanapally shared first place with a score of 7/10. The 2025 CalChess State Champions for blitz are Dmytro Dzhanhirov and Dirpo Chakraborty who tied for first place in the top section by scoring 7.5/10. Hats off to Salman Azhar, Jordan Langland and Tom Langland and the Bay Area Chess team for running such a thrilling chess event.



We welcome everyone into the BAC Family to come as they are. We **thank all of you for the love and support** through the years. It's because of you we constantly strive to get better, and renew our offerings to remain the best chess organization in the US. See how you can get involved; volunteering or supporting BAC has never been easier!

Sincerely,

Your Friends at Bay Area Chess

<https://www.bayareachess.com/>





# *Volunteer Spotlight*

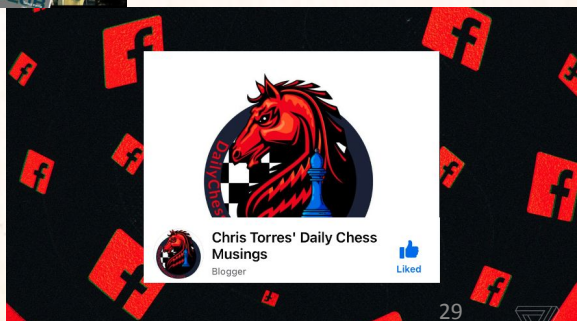
## *Lathrop Library Chess Club*

### *By Rosaleia Torres*

At first, volunteering at the library was just a good way to help my community. I didn't realize that it would end up helping me, too. Almost every first and third Saturday, I get to go and play chess with my family and a bunch of fellow chess players. It has given me a fun activity to do with my younger cousins and has allowed me to help many bright kids. I thought that we might not end up with a large crowd, since the chess club does not require members to sign up, but I was quickly proven wrong. Over the past year, we have had many familiar faces continuously drop in to play a fun practice game or to pick up where I left off in their last lesson. All the hours of talking to other chess players, whether they are better at chess than I am or came to learn the basics, has given me practice at lifelong skills. Not only has my chess improved, but so has my confidence and my ability to articulate complex explanations to people of varying chess levels. I hope that even after I go off to college next year that I will be able to stop by at the library to continue to have a good time while sharing my enjoyment of chess with the people in my community.









# About CalChess

## Our Officers

THE VOLUNTEERS THAT MAKE  
CALCHESS WORK

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Langland  
[tom@calchess.org](mailto:tom@calchess.org)



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[bindiya@calchess.org](mailto:bindiya@calchess.org)



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Stephen  
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[stephen@calchess.org](mailto:stephen@calchess.org)



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Kumar  
[ramesh@calchess.org](mailto:ramesh@calchess.org)



#### Board

##### Member-at-Large

Chris  
Torres  
[chris@calchess.org](mailto:chris@calchess.org)



#### Board

##### Member-at-Large

Open  
Position

#### Board

##### Member-at-Large

James  
Bethany  
[james@calchess.org](mailto:james@calchess.org)



### SPECIAL APPOINTEES

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Richard  
Koepcke  
[richard@calchess.org](mailto:richard@calchess.org)



#### Tournament Clearinghouse

Tom  
Langland



[clearinghouse@calchess.org](mailto:clearinghouse@calchess.org)

#### Womens and Girls Chess Coordinator

Elizabeth Shaughnessy  
[elizabeth@calchess.org](mailto:elizabeth@calchess.org)



#### Club List Coordinator

Not filled

#### College Chess Coordinator

Not filled

#### State Scholastic Coordinator

Chris Torres  
[chris@calchess.org](mailto:chris@calchess.org)



#### Scholastic Representative

Adrian Kondakov  
[adrian@calchess.org](mailto:adrian@calchess.org)



#### Scholastic Representative

Ikshit Gupta  
[ikshit@calchess.org](mailto:ikshit@calchess.org)



#### Scholastic Representative

Ikshit Gupta

## Contact Us

SEND US A MESSAGE OR ASK US A  
QUESTION

#### Talk to us!

Please let us know any questions you have  
about chess in Northern California, or if you  
have any suggestions, feedback or news  
stories to share.

## Become A Member

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS AND  
HOW TO JOIN CALCHESS

### Benefits of Membership

Membership in the official USCF state  
affiliate for Northern California  
Discounts at many Northern  
California chess tournaments. (Play  
in one or two tournaments and  
membership pays for itself.)  
Help fund bringing chess sets and  
educational material into local  
schools

Sponsor Northern California youth  
representation at National Events  
Sustain the continuation of the  
California Chess Journal (to be e-  
mailed to all members)



*Thanks  
for  
reading...*



*See you again  
for the next  
edition*