

NEW BRITAIN CHESS CLUB

"THE HEART OF CONNECTICUT CHESS"

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2019 NEWSLETTER

by Robert Cyr



White mates in 2.

Bharathakoti Harsha vs. Mohapatra Sidhant: New Delhi 2019

This chess puzzle was posted on www.wtharvey.com by Bill Harvey.

The solution is on page 44.

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INTRODUCTION

Seasons Greetings, family and friends of the New Britain Chess Club:

‘Tis the season to be jolly, deck the halls with boughs of holly . . . Well, you can see that I am in a festive mood as we round out the year in the Christmas spirit as I put the final touches on the 2019 NBCC newsletter.

This year marks the 15th anniversary of the publication of the annual newsletters. I am most proud of the work that I have done to make these annual reports the best that they can be. I am also grateful to FM Richard Bauer for his contributions to the newsletter with his best game of the year contest. Mr. Bauer always does a tremendous service with analyzing the games and issuing funds out of his own pocket to the prize winners.

So, without further ado, take some time out of your busy schedule and enjoy reading about the memories of the past twelve months. I know that you will be excited about reliving the past just as I do.

“Chess makes men wiser and clear-sighted.”
Vladimir Putin



THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

JANUARY

The first club meeting of 2019 was pushed to Wednesday, January 2, since New Year's Day fell on a Tuesday. That evening, twenty-eight players of all ages and skills representing all corners of the state competed in the 2018 Connecticut State Open Blitz Chess Championship. The competition was very strong, with many masters, experts, and high-ranked class players vying for the crown in the eight-round, 5; d/3 event. After nearly two-and-one-half hours of intense but spirited action, veteran member USCF National Master Ted McHugh earned a perfect 8-0 to win the coveted title of 2018 Connecticut State Blitz Chess Champion, marking Teddy's tenth title win or tie for first place in this tournament. The event had to be held in 2019 since there was insufficient time to promote the tournament because of the late bid by the newly formed Connecticut State Chess Association, with a new board of directors and officers. All prize winners were presented with glow-in-the-dark crystallized trophies with the club logo embroidered on them. Many thanks to Norman Burtness, NBCC president, for his excellent, efficient job as tournament director.

Whenever something new happens at the club, I am overjoyed to report on it. Well, the latest change is the time control for the annual club championship. For the first time in NBCC history, the club used an increment instead of a delay. The time control of the seven-round heritage event was $G/75 + 30$ seconds. That is cool.

Prior to the rounds of the club championship, which is the club's longest tournament, lectures were offered on a variety of topics. USCF NM Derek Meredith historically is the presenter from January through March. He engages his students and is so energetic in his delivery. He has an extensive knowledge base and is so thrilled to provide these sessions.

FEBRUARY

Every Presidents Day weekend since 2007, the club has fielded teams to the grandest team chess tournament in the history of this ancient game - the World/U.S. Amateur Team East Chess Championship (USATE). Amateur because the average team rating must be below 2200.

This year, we had three-and-one-half teams from the club. Connecticut's Finest (2197) combined Joe Bihlmeyer and Will Torres of the NBCC with USCF NM Alexander Ochiyev and USCF NM Ian Harris of the Chess Club of Fairfield County. They wound up playing for the overall title in the final round. The match hinged on who would win on board one. Unfortunately, USCF NM Ochiyev lost his game, but the team still took home the prize of Top Connecticut Team. The highest rated team from the club, Rybka Being Questioned by Mueller (2180), consisted of USCF NM Ted McHugh, FIDE Master Richard Bauer, USCF NM Derek Meredith, and Doug Fiske and received an honorable mention for the best team name. On the second club team, Prawn Sacrifice (1970), which won the best gimmick prize, we had Suhas Kodali, Mario Guevara-Rodriguez, Mike Pascetta, and Norman Burtness. This team ended up with 3.5 out of six match points and had to face top-25 teams in three of the rounds and narrowly missed a big upset when Suhas missed a draw against a 2400+ rated player when he captured the wrong pawn at the end of a five-hour match during a time scramble in round five. On the final NBCC team, we had newcomers Joseph Mansigian and Bill Campbell and veterans Bill Montross and Bob Cyr. Despite losing their first two matches, the NBCC Crusaders fought hard to win their next two matches to play in the grand ballroom. We were also graced with the presence of two spectators, FM Nelson Castaneda and USCF NM Harris Appelman, who made the two-and-one-half hour drive to cheer on our teams. The NBCC provided players from each of the teams representing the club with customized shirts to commemorate the event.

Directing a tournament with more than 300 teams is a daunting task. And we thank Mr. Doyle and his professional team for doing such an incredible job in putting this event together. This is the largest team chess tournament in the world and allows for a rare aspect in chess, namely camaraderie. Chess is such an individual endeavor, but this format allows players to socialize, support each other, and enjoy chess like no other. It is great for kids too, with hundreds of them participating. If you have not played in USATE before, consider it for next year. I hope to see you in Parsippany, New Jersey, next year for USATE's golden anniversary.

The club's first honoree tournament of 2019 was held for Laurent "Larry" Lafosse. Larry joined our community when our club was still holding meetings at the New Britain Quartette Club back in 2008, but he started playing chess as a youngster in France. When he arrived in the USA, Larry received Fred Reinfeld's book for Christmas, which he read and tried to emulate the sacrifices of the old masters. He remembers that his opponents got scared when he sacrificed his queen and bishop.

Larry took a decade hiatus from chess, and after his break, he attended George Koltanowski's lectures at the Mechanics Institute in San Francisco and actively returned to the chess scene. When he moved to Connecticut, he was so thrilled to join the NBCC family, where he made numerous friendships. He first saw tournament action at the club in the 2008 New Britain Summer Open Chess Championship. Larry has participated in 140 tournaments, either at the club or beyond, in just a span of a decade. An amateur player, Larry reached an all-time high rating of 1382 in 2013. But like many of our class players, Larry's performance far exceeds his rating. For many years, Larry spoke to me about volunteering for the club. Well, in 2016, he became a certified club tournament director. He has a solid command of the USCF rules. Today, with only a few years of experience under his belt, he is directing the club championship solo and has been training other members to utilize SwissSys. Talk about initiative! In 2018, he was voted to serve as NBCC secretary, a position that I know he will carry out his duties in a professional manner. On a lighter note, Mr. Lafosse, who really enjoys his new club responsibilities, is a very warm and welcoming person. He is a down-to-earth person who is highly respected throughout our growing community, and we eagerly look forward to having Laurent continue playing a supportive role in club management in the years to come. No entry fee was charged for Laurent's event; thus no prizes were awarded. USCF NM Derek Meredith won the tournament. Thanks to Suhas Kodali, our newest TD, for directing.

MARCH

On March 10, USCF NM Derek Meredith and USCF NM Mikhail Koganov played a two-game playoff to decide the inaugural Connecticut State Senior Open Chess Championship. After two exciting games seen live on DGT feed from the CCFC, the match remained tied with each player winning one game. The players were declared co-champions. USCF NM Koganov will be the Connecticut representative to the National Senior Tournament of Champions, and USCF NM Meredith will be the alternate. Congratulations to both of them. The main event was hosted by the NBCC on March 2.

Back at the club, we concluded the annual championship event. The tournament drew a high level of turnout, with forty-four players competing. After nearly two months of play, here were the winners: Congratulations to FM Richard Bauer, going 7-0 to win the 2019 NBCC Championship (his 9th championship win or tie for first place), and to one of our newest youths, Nakul Ramaswamy, who also went 7-0 and took home first place in the candidates section. This was Nakul's first major tournament win in NBCC history.

Keeping with tradition, the club champion usually hosts a simultaneous chess exhibition shortly after winning the tournament. This year, of course, it was FM Richard Bauer. Prior to the simul, Mr. Bauer reviewed his pivotal game with FM Nelson Castaneda in this past club championship event. Even though he was not able to take advantage in the opening and the middle game, Mr. Bauer got a favorable advantage in the endgame. Due to severe time pressure, Mr. Castaneda dropped a minor piece and lost the game. Nineteen players battled it out with Mr. Bauer in his simul, with Bill Campbell being the only person to defeat the master. Draws were earned by Nakul Ramaswamy and new member Michael Smith. Thanks to Mr. Bauer for his wonderful lecture and simul, combined which lasted five hours.

APRIL

We continue the story of FM Richard Bauer, who, as of early April, has attained thirty wins or ties for first place in major club events for winning the 2019 NBCC Unrated Tournament.

Also keeping with tradition, the club hosted its 3rd annual Class Championship. Players were grouped into sections based on rating. Many players seemed to enjoy this format. Without further ado, the 2019 NBCC class winners were:

- Masters/Experts: FM Nelson Castaneda
- Class A: Mark Bourque
- Class B: Michael Smith
- Class C: Bob Cyr
- Class D and below: Yogi Jegadeeswaran

Our club ended the month of April with an honorary event for Bill Campbell. Bill learned the game from his father, played it until his teenage years, and then rediscovered the game as an adult in his 30s, when he thought that he was good at the game. But he was totally wrong! What ended up happening was that his friend Tom Pasim introduced Bill to one of his friends, Charles “Carol” Wojtywaik, who came over Tom’s house and beat both Tom and Bill really bad. Charles showed Bill how much he needed to improve his game, enough to the point where Bill became very serious about playing chess competitively. Carol introduced Bill to the club. So, in 2008, Bill joined our family. It was then, after seeing so many strong players, that Bill realized the NBCC was the place to improve his game. Bill is one of our more active and competitive members.

Two of his most memorable moments were when he defeated FM Nelson Castaneda in his simultaneous chess exhibition in 2017 and last month in FM Richard Bauer's simul, but mostly he is thrilled to meet and make new friends at the NBCC. He also experienced chess action on the grand scene at USATE this past year for the first time, and he was overjoyed with the event, seeing players from around the globe compete in this three-day chess vacation. Bill is a class C chess player who aspires to continue to climb the rankings, attaining class B or higher in his 40s and 50s. He is also a frequent patron of the Friday night informal chess club at Barnes and Noble in Farmington and is always up for a friendly game. Bill is a nice person who is warm and welcoming to all players. Bill favors faster time controls and no delay, so that was the format that he chose for his special event. A complete surprise was when he purchased two cakes for the winners of each section. That was the first time that food was awarded as prizes. Thanks, Bill! FM Nelson Castaneda, who now has forty wins or ties for first place in quick chess events at the club, won the open section. Four members tied for first place in the lower section: Carter Clayton, Dan Golda, Arijit Chakraborty, and Bob Wooster. This was an unrated tournament.

MAY

The club's first event in May was hosted at the club not on a Tuesday but on a Saturday with the annual Connecticut State Championship. There were two sections. In the championship (O1800) top section, high schooler Yoon-Young Kim took clear first place with a score of 3.5-.5. In the amateur section (U2000), middle schooler Nakul Ramaswamy also went undefeated but with a perfect score. Additional cash, book, and clock prizes were generously donated by Hanon Russell and DGT North America. Many thanks to Norman Burtness for directing this state-sanctioned tournament.

On Saturday, May 11, the club hosted a get-well tournament for member Gaetano Bompastore, who was recovering at a rehabilitation center in Agawam, Massachusetts, after his severe automobile accident that he was in on the way home from the 2018 New Britain Summer Open Chess Championship. Despite his limited mobility, his spirits remain high. And his chess game is better than ever! The winner of Gaetano's event was Suhas Kodali. The NBCC community wishes our friend Gaetano a speedy recovery.

We want to take a moment to sincerely thank rejoining member and former secretary, Carl Heineman, who graciously donated many chess sets to the club. The club intends to present these lovely sets as prizes for future tournaments. Thanks!

We also want to take a moment to recognize our veteran instructor, Joe Bihlmeyer, and our newest instructor, Will Torres, for educating our crew with their excellent lectures. Their sessions are both engaging and informative. Thanks!

All of May and the first week of June was devoted to honoring the two most significant contributors in the club, father-son Arkadijs and Andris Strazdins. The event is held each year to recognize these gentlemen for their many decades of loyal and devoted service to the NBCC. Without their steadfast leadership, the club would not be as strong and solid as it is today. FM Nelson Castaneda won the Strazdins Cup, adding to his impressive resume of wins in the club. Member Elizabeth Smith won her first major club tournament for winning the Andris Strazdins Stein section.

JUNE

Like in May, the first event held at the club in June was not on a Tuesday. It was on June 2, a Sunday, with the club's first holding of the Connecticut State Open Rapid (G/15) Chess Championship. Only ten players competed, but there were a few masters and experts who dominated the field. After five rounds of spirited play, FM Nelson Castaneda edged out one of our youngest members, Danny Pascetta, on tie-breaks. Their scores were 4-1. A special thanks to Norman Burtness for directing.

Historically in June, the club officers hold an annual business meeting for the membership. Here were some of the highlights from the meeting held on June 11.

- Tony Yablonski will be recognized later this year as the longest-standing member in NBCC history, with fifty-seven years of membership.
- Members John Twombly and Will Torres will have quick tournaments named in their honor.
- Training classes paid for by a donation to the club have been held virtually every week this past year. Members Suhas Kodali, Joe Bihlmeyer, Michael Smith, Kyle Triplett, Mario Guevara-Rodriguez, and USCF NM David Herscovici have completed the TD training class held by USCF NM Derek Meredith.
- New sets and customized boards are in the process of being purchased.
- Joseph Mansigian was given a lifetime membership for his service and dedication to the club. He will be presented with a plaque to commemorate the event.
- Club's financial health is good. Membership is close to ninety.

- Club Vice President Suhas Kodali passed out a survey to evaluate the training program.
- Club officers were elected unanimously. Elected was Norman Burtness, president; Suhas Kodali, vice president; Laurent Lafosse, treasurer; Mario Guevara-Rodriguez, secretary.
- Gert Hilhorst is stepping down from his role as club treasurer due to work commitments. The club thanks Gert for the tremendous job he did as treasurer. We are thankful to have Laurent Lafosse take over this role.
- A motion passed unanimously to keep the dues structure the same as last year: \$65 regular membership, \$50 scholastic membership, \$35 for 65+/hardship/2nd family member/out-of-state college student.

We want to thank Kyle Triplett for running his first club tournament, the NBCC Double Quads event.

JULY

The club started its second half of the year with now its 4th annual July Knockout and Swiss event. FM Nelson Castaneda put forth his maximum effort for his event. Afterall, he created it. He also organized and directed the event and annotated games that players submitted to him and those that were posted on lichess.org (a website where players can analyze and play games). The professor literally did it all! The rules for this tournament were quite simple. Players were initially grouped into one section (knockout bracket). After each round, the winner would advance in the knockout bracket. In the case of a draw, a two-game blitz match would have to be played to determine the winner of the match. If the draw persisted after the blitz match, then the person who played with black in the classical game would advance. Anyone eliminated or knocked-out would be placed into an open Swiss-style event. The final round in the knockout section featured two FMs, a first for this event, with FM Richard Bauer and FM Nelson Castaneda. Their game ended in a draw, so there had to be a blitz playoff. Since Nelson played as black against Richard in the original game, he only needed one win in the playoff to clinch the time. Nelson convincingly won the playoff and thus was crowned the 2019 NBCC Knockout Champion. In the Swiss section, we had a tie for first place between Jithu Sajeevan and Joe Bihlmeyer. Of historical note, this was Jithu's first tie for first place in a major (G/30 or longer) time-controlled club event. I imagine that some of the games from the event will be considered for nomination for the best game of the year contest.

It should be noted at this point in our story of 2019 that Laurent Lafosse decided not to be the next club treasurer due to increased work demands. USCF NM David Herscovici was appointed club treasurer to handle the transition of duties for this position.

The great philosophers say that variety is the spice of life. That saying could not be farther from the truth at the historic NBCC. On the final meeting in July, the club held a bughouse tournament. The main condition was that the average rating of the teams be less than 1800 rating points. Overall, it is a wild and entertaining evening, with players of all ages competing in this extraordinary event. And it is always nice to break away from traditional chess and have some crazy fun with bughouse chess once in a while. Michael Smith and Suhas Kodali went over the ground rules for this event. An amazing twenty-six players participated in this tournament, including five young women, the most to compete in any event held in NBCC history. Even though the club held a bughouse tournament in 2011, it was not official because there were no winners. Therefore, this bughouse event, we declared the team of Norman Burtness and Carter Clayton the first NBCC bughouse champions, who swept the competition and won the event with a perfect 6-0. Way to go! Everyone had a blast, indeed!

AUGUST

The club started the month of August with its fortieth honorary member tournament, this one for John Twombly. John has been a member of our club for more than a decade, a regular and active tournament player who prefers the longer time-controlled events. But John's involvement with chess spans many years earlier, well before he joined our family. His father taught him the game at the very young age of ten. He remembers playing in his middle school chess club at Granby Memorial, his first USCF tournament at that time. He has been steadily playing in about four USCF tournaments per year now for the past two decades. He has also been climbing the rating ladder as well, having competed with many strong players at the club and in local and regional tournaments. His most memorable tournament victory, by far, was clinching the 2013 Planet Earth Reserve Chess Championship, a victory that he is most proud of indeed. Like prior members who the club has paid tribute to, John heard about our club through friends and our presence on the internet. John is very glad to have made many friendships throughout our community and to have learned new playing styles. John is a pleasant person who has a positive attitude and a mild-mannered disposition. But do not let his friendliness fool you as he plays like a tiger on the chess board!

All levity aside, we are fortunate to have nice people like John as part of the NBCC, and we hope that he will continue his membership in our organization in the years to come. We thank you John for supporting the club and for the kindness that you have shown to your friends in our ever-growing chess community. In spite of the fact that John prefers the long-time controlled events, he chose a 10 0 rated blitz time control for his tournament, which attracted thirty-one players. In the open section, our newest master and member, Dmitry Leykekman, took clear first place, smashing the competition. And one of our youngest and brightest scholastic members, Carter Clayton, took home the gold with a score of 5-1 in the U1600 section. It should also be noted for the record that this tournament was Mario Guevara-Rodriguez's first experience as an assistant director and Michael Smith's first experience as a chief tournament director. Way to go, guys!

Can you believe this? Another new member and master, Yelfry Torres, went 8-0 in the XXII NBCC Rated Blitz Tournament, shattering the competition, defeating our resident masters and class players. Amazing!

On a seasonably warm and pleasant day on the last Sunday of the month, fifty chess enthusiasts gathered at the beautiful Wickham Park in Manchester to compete in our club's annual Summer Open. It takes a lot of volunteerism to ensure the success of this heritage event. The following people deserve recognition for making the 54th Summer Open one for the record books. First, we sincerely thank our tournament directors, Suhas Kodali and Doug Fiske, for their outstanding work that they did to direct this event so seamlessly. Second, we thank our food and beverage crew, Chef Mario Guevara-Rodriguez and Gert Hilhorst for making sure the participants had plenty to eat and drink. We also thank Rob Roy, who sent out many advertisements about this event via his *Connecticut Chess* magazine blasts. We also want to thank Suhas for ordering the lovely trophies and for bringing in the club sets and boards. Of historical note, Kyle Triplett, one of our newest members and president of the Central Connecticut State University Chess Club, took home clear first place in the Under 1619 section, making this his first major win in a club tournament. Overall, it was a delightful day of food, family, and fun, and we look forward to seeing you next year!

USCF NM David Herscovici got his first real tournament directing training for running the 2019 NBCC Quick Chess Championship.

The club reached its highest membership mark with 101 members for the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Wow!

SEPTEMBER

The club began its new fiscal year with another “odds” tournament. The rules for this fun event have never changed since its first one held in September 2010. Basically, higher-rated players give time odds to their lower-ranked opponents to equalize the playing field. For every 100-point difference in rating between the players, the lower-rated players receive one extra minute, and the higher-rated players give up a minute, up to a maximum of 400 rating points, where the lower-ranked players receive nine minutes, and the higher-ranked players receive one minute. If the ratings are within one-hundred points between the players, there is no time adjustment (5-5). These blitz-rated events, of course, are not rated by the United States Chess Federation. After the dust settled in this exciting tournament, there was a four-way tie for first place: Shaina Mezheritzsky, Phiron Hin, FM Nelson Castaneda, and Arijit Chakraborty. At age eleven, Shaina became the second-youngest player in club history to tie for first place in any club event.

Our final major club tournament of the year has historically been one of the club’s most popular events, the annual Oktoberfest Open Chess Championship. This year’s event broke an all-time attendance record, with close to fifty players of all ages and levels competing in the six-week tournament, normally a five-week tournament. We had an extra week in our schedule, thus the reason to hold one more week for Oktoberfest. The idea for Oktoberfest was created by former club president Joseph Mansigian to celebrate the club long German’s heritage.

OCTOBER

The winners of the Oktoberfest Open were Suhas Kodali and Joseph Bihlmeyer, both becoming the first experts (not masters) winners of this event since James Nitz won the tournament in 2008. The winner of the U1800 section was one of the youngest members, Punyavrat Upadhyay, with his amazing performance, sweeping the competition and going 6-0. This was Punyavrat’s first win in a major club tournament. Congratulations!

As part of tradition with the Oktoberfest event, the club hosts a party the weekend after the final round. This year, we went back to J. Timothy’s Taverne in Plainville, with fifteen friends of the NBCC family in attendance. The club recognized the officers, the lecturers, the historian, and the website administrator with a free meal on the club for their service. That was very nice of the club. Everyone had a wonderful time regaling stories about the club and our historic past. Cheers to the NBCC!

The week after Oktoberfest, the club held an informal Fischer Random (or Chess 960) event. Suhas Kodali and Michael Smith reviewed some Fischer Random games and reviewed the rules of the unique game created by former World Chess Champion Bobby Fischer, especially the rules pertaining to castling. FM Nelson Castaneda went a perfect 8-0 in this tournament. Congratulations, Professor! Overall, it was a fun evening once again at the historic NBCC.

On October 29, the club held its final honorary member event of 2019 for our friend, Will Torres. Unlike some of the predecessors who the club has honored, Will self-taught himself chess by reading books at his local library, including *Alekhine's Greatest Games* and *Kasparov's My Predecessors*. Will joined our family around 2008, one of the last members who we are honoring who still remembers playing at the New Britain Quartette Club. He joined the NBCC because the Waterbury Chess Club posed little competition at the time. His rating gradually climbed over the years to reach a personal goal of expert. Having attained expert status at age twenty-eight, he could easily attain master level in his 30s. He has played a total of eight-four chess events all over the state. He won the 2014 CCFC Team Chess Championship, playing board 2. During that same year, he won the NBCC VI Rated Blitz Chess Tournament, tied for third place with USCF NM Derek Meredith at the state championships, and earned third place in the Summer Open. Two-thousand-and-fourteen was a banner year for Will! Then, in 2015, he surprised everyone when he defeated six prior champions and came with “will” power to take it all at the 2015 Connecticut State Blitz Chess Championship. Will has a bubbly, energetic, and positive attitude and is liked by everyone in our tight community. His only regrets have not been being able to contribute more to the club and being more active in our organization. We look forward to his return very soon! Winning the Will Torres Quick Chess Tournament was Joseph Bihlmeyer. Winning the U1700 section was Kyle Triplett.

NOVEMBER

For the past several years, the club has hosted an annual double quads event in November to memorialize a prominent chess player in our community who has been instrumental in promoting and advancing chess. This year, we share our memories about the late USCF NM David Lees. Mr. Lees was the key advocate and supporter of revitalizing the Western Massachusetts Chess Association (WMCA). Much of Mr. Lees’ life can be chronicled in his highly popular memoirs, *The Chess Games of David Lees*.

Mr. Lees called Springfield, MA, home, and he belonged to his hometown club since 1959. He was introduced to the game of chess at the age of eight and played chess at summer camps, where he had the grand opportunity to play with players of his own age. He entered the Air Force in the 1960s and won the 1965 Texas State Chess Championship and the 1965 U.S. Armed Forces Chess Championship in Washington, D.C. For his victory in the 1965 Armed Forces event, Mr. Lees received some chess playing equipment and a book inscribed: To the Chess Champion of the Armed Forces - with congratulations and best wishes from President Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965. How cool was that! Mr. Lees suffered a heart attack in his thirties, but he was still determined to be an active and serious player and be heavily involved in chess politics throughout New England. The late Arkadijs Strazdins and David became best of friends over the decades, and Mr. Lees was invited annually to the NBCC to host a simultaneous chess exhibition usually in September to kick off the NBCC's fiscal year in style. WMCA would not exist without Master Lees; WMCA was David's bloodline. WMCA became a non-profit entity in the 1990s with the help of Mr. Lees. To end my story about this larger-than-life man, who possessed such energy, passion, and a deep devotion to WMCA, the legendary Dr. Platz once said of Mr. Lees, "so, you are the Dr. Platz of Springfield!" May you rest-in-peace, Mr. Lees, and thank you for everything that you have done to enrich this game for players of all skills. Some of the material used in this biography was taken from an article in *Chess Horizons* by Lee Enderlin.

On November 26, the NBCC hosted a new activity designed to use the vast chess knowledge of the club to help our up-and-coming scholastic players. Adults who were willing were paired up with a scholastic player and taught them a favorite opening of theirs. In a series of five-minute games, the adult showed a number of lines and strategies of an opening they know best. Following the teaching time, students played in a G/10; d5 tournament (no entry fee) where tested their newfound skills. The games were not be rated, so the student could practice the openings without worrying about their rating. Adults had the G/10; d5 2-game match with a competitor of their choice (or nearest rated). Overall, this new and interesting event was a success.

DECEMBER

The club commenced its final month of the year with another rated blitz chess tournament. This event was held one week before the annual Connecticut State Open Blitz Chess Championship. The annual state blitz chess event was won by FM Nelson Castaneda, and it was his first state blitz chess title since 2000. Congratulations, professor!

The other highlight of the month was the annual Christmas party. Originally scheduled for December 17, the festive gathering had to be rescheduled to Monday, December 23, due to a fierce ice storm. Hall's Market in West Hartford catered the party once again. On the menu, we had meat and vegetarian lasagna, salad, rolls, and apple cider. Member John Nitz once again brought his nacho cheese dip platter, which was devoured quickly! A bullet chess tournament was held that night as well, and FM Nelson Castaneda ended up winning the event with a score of 27/30.



NBCC MEMBERS' MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Our members earned the following major achievements in the USCF in 2019.

NBCC MEMBERS RANKING IN THE TOP 100 LISTS IN THE USCF AS OF THE DECEMBER (ANNUAL) RATING SUPPLEMENT

Please note that only ratings of USCF members who have been active within the last year were used in compiling the Top 100 listings.

NBCC MEMBER	USCF TOP PLAYER LIST	USCF RANKING	USCF RATING
FM Nelson Castaneda	Age 50 or Older	46 th	2342
	Quick Age 50 or Older	23 rd	2243
	Blitz Overall	98 th	2325
	Blitz Age 50 or Older	13 th	2325
USCF NM Edward McHugh	Age 50 or Older	47 th	2326
FM Richard Bauer	Age 50 or Older	88 th	2236
	Blitz Age 50 or Older	21 st tie	2214
USCF NM Derek Meredith	Blitz Age 50 or Older	58 th	2082
Mario Guevara-Rodriguez	Blitz Age 50 or Older	77 th	2032
USCF NM David Herscovici	Blitz Age 50 or Older	94 th tie	2000
Dennis Himes	Blitz Age 65 or Older	70 th tie	1700
Joseph Mansigian	Blitz Age 65 or Older	80 th	1650
Elizabeth Smith	Women Age 50 or Older	39 th	1449

NBCC MEMBER MAKES GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS

I feel proud to share good news that my son, Nakul Ramaswamy, has won the "GUINNESS WORLD RECORD TITLE" for the fastest time to arrange a chess set. He did it in 31.55 seconds on 1st August 2019. He broke the earlier record of 32.42 seconds. Nakul also took clear first place in the middle school section of the CSCA K-12 Championships.

CHES TRIVIA

Since 2008, I have included a general chess trivia section as part of the annual newsletters. I just enjoy posing these questions for your enjoyment. This year, the questions are simply a potpourri to test your knowledge of general chess facts. I hope that you will take this challenge. The answers can be found on page 44.

1. Who coined the chess term “hypermodern,” referring to a style of play that flourished in the 1920s?
 - a) Richard Reti
 - b) Aron Nimzovich
 - c) Savielly Tartakover
 - d) Gyula Breyer
2. In 1930, what country banned blindfold chess exhibitions because they were considered a health hazard on the brain?
 - a) USSR
 - b) China
 - c) France
 - d) Brazil
3. What actor wanted to be high school chess team, but the team said that he was too small?
 - a) Will Smith
 - b) Woody Allen
 - c) Arnold Schwarzenegger
 - d) Danny DeVito
4. According to the current USCF rules of chess, which of the following basic swiss system pairing rules generally has the least priority?
 - a) Equalizing colors
 - b) Upper half vs. lower half
 - c) Equal scores
 - d) Alternating colors

NBCC PICTURE GALLERY

The following photos were taken by Doug Fiske, Suhas Kodali, and Bob Cyr.

2018 CT STATE OPEN BLITZ CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP



BACK ROW: Masters Ted McHugh and Richard Bauer
FRONT ROW: Joseph Mansigian and Immad Sadiq

PRAWN SACRAFICE – BEST GIMMICK PRIZE AT USATE 2019!



Mario Guevara-Rodriguez, Norman Burtness, Mike Pascetta, and Suhas Kodali

2019 NBCC CHAMPIONS ALONG WITH CHIEF TD LAFOSSE AND NBCC OFFICERS



Suhas Kodali, Laurent Lafosse, Arijit Chakraborty, Nakul Ramaswamy, Norman Burtness, Richard Bauer, and Nelson Castaneda

RICHARD BAUER HOSTS SIMUL 2019



Richard Bauer ponders his next move against Jozef Madej
Left of Bauer: Dennis Himes and Norman Aldrich
Right of Bauer: Roger Bessette and Lucas Kollen

2019 CT STATE CHAMPIONSHIP



Yoon-Young Kim vs. Nelson Castaneda



Richard Bauer vs. Max Lu

FINAL ROUND OF JULY 2019 KNOCKOUT TOURNAMENT



Knockout finalists: Richard Bauer and Nelson Castaneda

2019 NEW BRITAIN SUMMER OPEN



Joe Bihlmeyer and Mario Guevara-Rodriguez



Mark Bourque and Derek Meredith



Suhas Kodali, TD, with NB Summer Open winners, Mark Bourque and Joe Hricko

FRIENDS AND FAMILY CELEBRATE OKTOBERFEST AT J. TIMOTHY'S TAVERNE



DAVID LESS MEMORIAL



Mike Smith and David Herscovici



Elizabeth Smith and Norman Aldrich

NBCC BEST GAME OF 2019

Game of the Year

Punvayrat Upadhyay vs Lisa Smith

2019 NBCC David Lees Memorial

Annotator "FM Rick Bauer"

Ruy Lopez: Marshall Attack, Modern Variation" ECO "C89"

Link "<https://lichess.org/study/OvBGx3ke/bshO1b6C>"

This game follows theory for an impressive distance for a game between two up and coming class players.

1. e4

White is one of the young stars of the club, Punvayrat Upadhyay, who has been coming to the club for about three years.

1... e5

New Britain has resisted modern opening trends and tended toward open classical openings. This is a good thing for the development of our younger players. Black is Lisa Smith. While older than her opponent, she is just as new to rated chess. Her boundless enthusiasm and adventurous style set her apart.

2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5!

The Ruy Lopez or Spanish Game. White keeps the pressure up on Black's center. This slow positional game has earned the nickname of "Spanish Torture" for the unrelenting positional pressure Black must endure. Does White now threaten e5 after an exchange on c6?

3... a6!?

Before Morphy, Black would often re-enforce e5 with 4...d6 or 4...Nge7, but there is no real threat.

3... Nf6!? The Berlin Wall has become Black's most solid option here.

4. Ba4

4. Bxc6 The Exchange Variation. 4... dxc6! 5. O-O (5. Nxe5?! Qd4! =+ Black wins back the pawn with the two bishops in an open position.) 5... Bd6 (5... Qd6 6. Na3) 6. d4 (6. d3 Ne7 7. Nbd2 O-O 8. Nc4 Ng6 =) 6... exd4 7. Qxd4 f6 =

4... Nf6

Black must choose between counter-play and strong point (e5). For Lisa, this isn't even a real choice. (4... d6 5. c3 Bd7 6. d4 g6 7. O-O Bg7 8. Re1 Nge7 9. d5 Nb8 10. c4 gives White a space edge and offers the trade of his White bishop.

5. O-O!

White's turn to sac a pawn. This allows White to defend e4 without playing Nc3 or d3, with an eye toward c3, d4. (5. d3 The Slow Ruy gives Black time to fianchetto her KB... 5... d6 6. c3 g6

5... b5!?

5... Nxe4 The Open Ruy Lopez allows Black to grab an early pawn, but not to keep it. 6. d4 b5 7. Bb3 exd4?! too greedy! 8. Re1 d5 9. Nc3! Be6 10. Nxe4 dxe4 11. Rxe4 Be7 12. Bxe6 fxe6 13. Nxd4 Qd5 14. Qg4 \$16 Jens, Jelmer - Akhayan, Ruben, 1-0, BEL-chT 0607, 2007, <https://lichess.org/OzajtMVA>) 7... d5 8. dxe5 Be6 9. Nbd2 leaves Black with some troubles coordinating his forces and finding safety for the king.

5... Be7 giving White one more chance to give up the two bishops 6. Re1 b5 7. Bb3 is a more common move order.

6. Bb3 Be7

Black transposes back into the main line, which is probably best. Black does have two alternatives afforded by her move order though: (6... Bb7 7. d3) (6... Bc5 7. c3)

7. Re1

7. d4 d6 8. dxe5 (8. c3 O-O 9. h3) 8... Nxe5 9. Nxe5 dxe5 10. Qxd8+ Bxd8 +=

7. Qe2 O-O 8. c3 d5 9. exd5 (9. d3) Nxd5 10. Nxe5 Nxe5 11. Qxe5 Bb7 12. d4 Qd7 13. Qg3 Bd6 14. Qh4 Rae8.

7... O-O

7... d6 (Threatening ...Na5) 8. c3 (8. d4?! is the move 7...d6 is designed to stop. 8... Nxd4 9. Nxd4 exd4 10. c3 dxc3 11. Nxc3 O-O =+) 8... O-O 9. h3 is the most common way to reach a Closed Ruy Lopez.

8. c3

It can be argued that every move played in this game so far has been the best one available. The strong reputation of the Marshall Attack causes many to avoid the Marshall with (8. h3 Bb7) (8. a4 Matulovic)

8... d5!?



The Marshall Attack is one of the rare opening gambits that passes muster on the highest level of chess. It is named after Frank Marshall, one of the greatest American champions who combined an aggressive style with sound ideas.

This opening is a great fit for Lisa Smith's repertoire, who has developed her attacking skills far in advance of the rest of her game.

9. exd5

"The best way to refute a gambit is to accept it." Fischer (9. d3?! dxe4 10. dxe4 Qxd1 11. Bxd1 Bb7 (11... h6) 12. Nbd2 Nd7 13. Bc2 Rfd8 14. Nf1 Nc5 15. Ne3 Nd3 16. Rd1 Nxc1 17. Raxc1 Kf8 Yudasin, Leonid - Tseshkovsky, Vitaly, 1/2-1/2, URS Army-ch, 1989, <https://lichess.org/hd1gejqF>)

9. d4 dxe4 10. Nxe5 Nxe5 11. dxe5 Qxd1 12. Bxd1 Nd7 13. Bc2 (13. Rxe4 Nc5 14. Rd4 Ne6 15. Rd2 Bg5 16. Rc2 Bxc1 17. Rxc1 Nf4 18. Bf3 Rb8 (18... Bf5)) 13... Bb7 14. Nd2 Nxe5 15. Nxe4
 Stellwagen, Daniel - Beliavsky, Alexander G, 1/2-1/2, SLO-NED m, 2004,
<https://lichess.org/3vYVBgk5>)

9... Nxd5 10. Nxe5 Nxe5

(10... Bb7?! 11. d4)

11. Rxe5

White has gained a pawn but has no pieces on the kingside and an undeveloped queenside. White the objective evaluation has not changed; it is now White who will be facing positional pressure in the early middle game.



11... c6!

In the early days of this gambit, Black retreated the Nd4 back to f6, but the dominating outpost on d5 is key to gaining compensation. Frank Marshall waited 8 years to spring this opening surprise on Capablanca. He wanted to maximize the pieces that could surround the White king, playing the trickier 11... Nf6!? 12. Re1 Bd6 13. h3 Ng4! 14. Qf3! (14. h3? Qh4 15. Re4 Qh2+ 16. Kf1 Qh1+ 17. Ke2 Qxg2 18. d3 Bxg4+ 19. Rxc4 Qxc4+ -) 14... Qh4! 15. d4! (15. h3? Bh2+ 16. Kf1 Bxg4 17. Qe4 Bf4 -) 15... Nxf2! 16. Re2 (16. Bd2) (16. Qxf2 Bh2+ (16... Bg3?? 17. Qxf7+ Rxf7 18. Re8#) 17. Kf1 Bg3 18. Qd2 Bxh3) 16... Bg4 17. h3? Bg3 18. Rxf2 Qh2+ 19. Kf1 Qh1+ 20. Ke2 Bxf2 21. Bd2! and White won ... 21... Bh4 22. Qh3 Rae8+ 23. Kd3 Qf1+ 24. Kc2 Bf2 25. Qf3 Qg1 26. Bd5 c5 27. dxc5 Bxc5 28. b4! Bd6 29. a4 a5 30. axb5 axb4 31. Ra6 bxc3 32. Nxc3 Bb4 33. b6 Bxc3 34. Bxc3 Re3 35. Bxf7+ 1-0 Capablanca-Marshall NY 1918.

12. Bxd5?!

The exchange of the B for the dominating Nd5 is not necessarily bad, but is better done later, preserving options. 12. d4 Bd6 13. Re1 Qh4 14. g3 Qh3 is the main line of the Marshall. Black gets nice play on the kingside, the e and f files. 15. Be3! With all but one of his pawns on dark squares, White is happy to allow Nxe3, which is never played. 15... Bg4 (15... Nxe3? 16. Rxe3 c5 17. Bd5 Bg4 18. Bf3 Bxf3 19. Qxf3 Rad8 \$16) 16. Qd3 Rae8 17. Nd2 White is slightly better according to Stockfish, but amongst humans, Black's compensation is worth more than a half pawn.

12... cxd5

(12... Bd6?? 13. Bxc6)

13. d4

Black's two bishops are worth about half the pawn. She must play actively to get more. 13... Bd6! 14. Re1. The d5 pawn is not vulnerable. (14. Rxd5?? Bxh2+) (14. Re3! is a bit tougher, providing a point to the early exchange on d5.)

14... Qh4 15. g3

This weakens a lot of white squares around the king, but 15. h3? Bxh3! 16. gxh3 Qxh3 and the white must sacrifice with 17. Re5! to protect the king. Not 17. f4 Rae8 18. Na3 Qg3+ 19. Kf1 Bxf4 20. Nc2 Qh3+ 21. Kg1 Bh2

15... Qh3

Black's compensation comes in the very weak white squares that have been created.

16. Qf3

The white queen rushes to aid of its king.

16... Bg4!?



The sacrifice of a second pawn is critical to maintaining the initiative in this line. Bologan states "Even if (s)he has forgotten all the nuances of the following lines, Black almost has a moral obligation to sacrifice a second pawn since practice doesn't tend to reward those with the heart of a mouse...16...Bg4 ... is not as good as (16....Bf5) but nevertheless possesses the trademark of a warrior" (16... Bf5! is even better according to Bologan. 17. Qxd5 (17. Qg2 Qh5 18. Qxd5 Rfe8 (18... Rae8 19. Bd2 (19. Be3)) (18... Rad8 19. Nd2 Bxg3 20. Qg2 Bc7 21. Nf1)) 17... Rae8 18. Bd2 17. Qg2? +=6 While this is recommended in the 16...Bf5 line it is practically losing here! Why? (17. Qxd5! Rad8 18. Qg2 Qh5 19. Nd2 Rfe8 gives Black enough compensation for two pawns! Both master games were drawn. 20. Re3 = As scary as this looks for White, it is better than the game.

17... Qh5!

Black is now better. She can now keep queens on and defend the d pawn. White is hard pressed to guard f3 and block the e-file.

18. Re3?

Logical, but flawed. White must walk a tightrope here: (18. Bf4! Bh3 19. g4 Rfe8 20. Na3 Qh4 21. Qg3 Qxg3+ 22. hxg3 Bxa3 (22... Bxf4 23. gxf4 Bxg4 +=) 23. bxa3 Bxg4 +=)

Also losing is 18. Nd2? Rae8 19. Rf1 Be2 20. Re1 Bd3 21. Rxe8 Rxe8 22. Nf3 Qxf3 23. Qxf3! Re1+ 24. Kg2 Bf1+ 25. Kh1 Bh3#

18... Rae8! 19. f3

White has no choice. 9. Nd2 Rxe3 20. fxe3 Re8 21. Qf2 Re6 -5. Now he wins a piece but loses the game.



19... Rxe3!

Much flashier than (19... Bh3 20. Qf2 f5)

20. fxg4?

20. Bxe3 Bxf3 +- is better, but still winning for Black.

20... Re1+!

20... Qxg4 21. Bxe3 +- was White's hope.

21. Kf2 Qxg4 22. Kxe1

White still wins the rook and winds up a piece to the good, but Black now penetrates with a mating attack (QRBxQ) before White can get any of his queenside pieces into play. This is critical, since Black is running out of pieces to sacrifice!

22... Re8+



23. Kd2

(23. Kf1 Qd1+ 24. Kf2 Re2+ 25. Kf3 Re1+ 26. Kf2 Qe2#) (23. Kf2 Re2+)

23... Bf4+!

This bishop check was hard to foresee, but critical to the successful conclusion of the attack. 24. Kc2 (24. Kd3? Qd1+ 25. Bd2 Blocking with the N or Q makes no difference. 25... Re3#)

24... Re2+ Winning! The rest is easy.

25. Qxe2 Qxe2+ 26. Nd2 Bd6 27. Kb3??

27. a4 b4 28. h3 (28. Kb3 Qd1+ 29. Ka2 bxc3 30. bxc3 Qc2+) 28... Qg2 prolongs the game. Black could then clean out White's kingside and advance her h-pawn. White could have played much longer, but the result is hardly in doubt. (-9)



BLACK TO PLAY

27... Qd1#! 0-1

Black wins by checkmate. A very clean game by Black. She spotted every possible tactic and took maximum advantage of every mistake White made.

NBCC VS. NELSON CASTANEDA

During the spring and summer months, several members challenged FM Nelson Castaneda to a match. The game, which is published on lichess.org, is shown below. The game was annotated by FM Richard Bauer.

NBCC vs. Castaneda 2019

Site "<https://lichess.org/study/iEvuTTqR/YBgVPwQU>"
UTC Date "2019.07.06"

ECO "B12" Opening "Caro-Kann Defense: Advance Variation, Tal Variation"

Most comments are by FM Rick Bauer (Connman) based on analysis by Stockfish.

This is the first team game concept to be tried by the club online. It was successful in enhancing the club's profile on LiChess.org.

Suhas Kodali (NewBritainChessClub) coordinated the moves for the club, which were always strong but not always timely (We got flagged a lot).

The friendly nature of the game allowed it to continue despite White's early coordination difficulties.

It is important to note that use of database and books were allowed but computer engine was not. While the game is very short it, it is action packed and original, having left book very quickly.

1. e4

Recognizing the preponderance of 1 e4 players in the club, this move wasn't even worth arguing!

1... c6 2. d4

If e, then d!

2... d5

The Caro-Kann is a slight surprise, though it did appear to be the Defense du jour for our multi-talented champion.

3. e5!?

The Advance Variation. I remember the club voting on this approach, which was considered inaccurate by my early chess books. Now, it is the hardest challenge to the super solid Caro since Black cannot relieve pressure with early exchanges.

3. exd5 cxd5 was chosen in a game between Kyle, one of the key members of the White team, and Nelson (Black). It goes on to show how dangerous Nelson can be in the early middle game:
 4. Bd3 Nc6 5. Nf3 Bg4 = 6. Nbd2 e6 (6... Nxd4?? 7. Nxd4! Bxd1 8. Bb5+ +-) 7. h3 Bh5 8. Nb3 Bd6 9. O-O Nf6 10. Bg5 O-O 11. Re1 a5 12. a4 Rc8 13. c3 Re8 14. Qd2? Bxf3 15. gxf3 e5 16. Kh1 Qd7 17. Bf1 Qf5 18. Bg2 e4 19. Bxf6 exf3! 20. Bf1 Qxf6 21. Qd3 Qf4 0-1 Triplett-Castaneda NBCC 2019.

3...Bf5

3... c5!? is speculative/interesting. Black's two c-pawn moves would be justified by White's two e-pawn moves. White can grab the c-pawn, but Black will get reasonable compensation.

4.h4!?

NewBritainChessClub on 4. Nf3: "Lost to 4.h4 by a vote of 6-4."

This was the last move that I remember being put up for a vote. I voted for 4 Nf3 based partially its success in Castaneda-Bauer.

After this a core group formed: David Herscovici and Michael Smith did the heavy lifting. Suhas Kodali, Rick Bauer and Kyle Triplett stayed involved. Future moves were made by consensus of the "focused" group.

Alternatives: 4. Nf3 e6 5. Be2 is the safest and most successful line. 4. Nc3 e6 5. g4 Bg6 6. Nge2 is the most tactical, aggressive line, but Black gains sufficient counterplay with either 6...c5 or 6...f6. 4. Bd3 Bxd3 5.Qxd3 e6 The Bishop Exchange was popular early in the history of this line, but the ability to exchange off the "bad bishop" in a closed pawn structure seems to favor Black. This contributed to the poor reputation of the advance way back when.

4... Qb6!?

The third most popular move here, behind two h-pawn moves. . 4... e6 is played against most other moves but is completely refuted here: 5 g4! Be4 6 f3 Bg6 7 h5 +- 4...h6 5 g4! forces Black to retreat the B to d7 or face a blistering attack after 5...Bh7 6 e6! fxe6 7 Bd3!

This game proves to be a good advertisement for 4...h5, as the only move that doesn't cede space. A sample line is 5. c4 e6 6. Nc3 Ne7 7. Nge2 dxc4 8. Ng3 Bg6 9. Bg5 Qb6 10. Bxc4 Nepomniachtchi, Ian - Maletin, Pavel, 1-0, RUS-ch rapid, 2011, <https://lichess.org/41nz5kjt>.

5. h5!?

The Mighty h-pawn Variation! Black has found squares for his Bf5 and Qb6. White insists on only pushing pawns. David Herscovici championed this line based on GM Shaw's book: Playing 1.e4: Caro-Kann, 1...e5 & Minor Lines (Grandmaster Guide). The point is to grab space on the kingside without the more weakening g4.

Another interesting try here would be 5. a4, attacking with both rook pawns while the king stays in the center.

5... c5?!

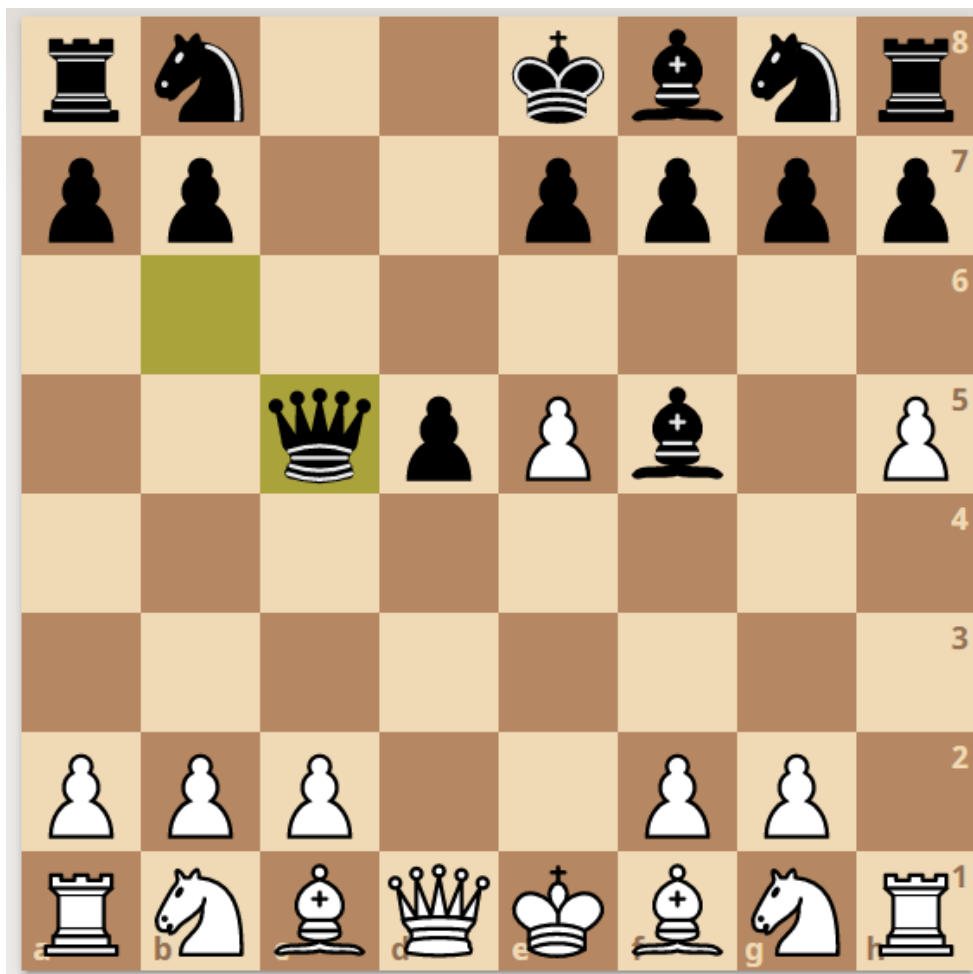
Black chooses a line that has scored well (67%! for Black) but based on only 3 games. The big (non-master) database has more games and much more success for White.

5... e6? once again drops the bishop to 6. g4! +/-.

5... h6 6. g4! Bd7 (6... Bh7 This is how Stockfish would defend with Black! 7. e6! fxe6 8. Bd3 Nf6 9. Bxh7 Rxh7 10. Qd3 Nbd7 (10... c5 +=) 11. Qg6+ Kd8 12. Nf3 +/- and Black's kingside forces were in disarray leading to a quick loss in Grandelius-Tari 2013 1-0 27.) 7. Nc3 e6 8. Na4 Qa5+ 9. c3 c5 10. Nxc5 Bxc5 11. dxc5 Qxc5 12. Be3 Qc7 13. f4 +/- from Saric-Ruck 2014 1/2 38, is the type of kingside grip that White is playing for.

5... Na6 Suhas contributed this fantasy line: 6. a4 Nh6 7. a5 Qc7 8. Bf4 e6 9. Bxa6 bxa6 10. Bxh6 gxh6 11. g4 s2004k1993 on 11. g4: This is such a beautiful bishop trap. I like the symmetry: a5, h5, Bxa6, Bxh6.

6. dxc5 Qxc5



Look at this position! It is visually very strong for Black with two pieces developed against none. But neither piece has yet found a secure square.

7. Nc3!

White finally develops a piece and produces a strong Novelty (in the Master database).

This novelty was suggested by Shaw, and we were relying on it when we went into this line. Previously White had played 7.c3 Black has won 2.5 of 3 games but Stockfish still rates White and his space advantage to be better. For example: 7... e6 8. Be3 Qc7 9. Nd2 h6 10. g4 Bh7 11. f4 7. Be3!? is another good try... 7... Qxc2 8. Qxc2 Bxc2 9. Nc3 Nc6 (9... e6 10. Nb5 Na6 11. Rc1 Ba4 12. Rh4 Bxb5 13. Bxb5+ Kd8 14. Nf3 and white has more than enough for the pawn.) 10. Rc1 d4 11. Nb5 is complicated but favorable to white

7... Nc6!?

Nelson finds an interesting pawn sacrifice, taking the game into completely new territory! From here on out, GM Shaw is no longer a part of the NBCC team, and both sides must play without the help of computers or opening texts. But Black is already in real trouble.

White was better prepared for a defense of the d-pawn: 7... e6 8. Be3 and Black's king, queen and Bf5 are all unstable. 7... d4 was played in all three moves on the Big Database (LiChess). 8. Nb5 Qxe5+ (8... a6 9. Nxd4 Qxe5+ 10. Be3 +=) 9. Qe2 (9. Be2?? d3! -+) 9... Qc5 was the last database game (chesster1985 - ald2, 1-0, -, lichess.org/qhPnpGpo) The White team looked deeply into this position and came up with 10. Bf4 d3 11. Qe5 d2+ 12. Kxd2 Qxc2+ (12... Qxe5! 13. Bxe5 Nc6! (13... Na6 14. Re1) 14. Nc7+ Kd7 15. Nxa8 Nxe5 =) 13. Ke1 e6 14. Nc7+ Kd8 15. Rd1+ (15. Bb5! +-) 15... Nd7 16. Qb5 Qe4+ 17. Be2 Nf6 18. Nxa8 (18. Be5) 18... Qxf4 19. Nf3 (19. g3 Qe4 (19... Bb4+ 20. Kf1 Qe4 21. Bf3 a6 22. Qb6+ Ke7 23. Bxe4 Nxb6 24. Bxf5 Rxa8 25. Bd3 += "At least White shouldn't lose." Michael Smith (on_the_kingside) concluded. This impressively long and complicated line, typical of some of the long analysis our key people turned out. Stockfish cuts through all of this with 10. b4! d3 (Qxb4+ 11. c3) 11. bxc5 dxe2 12. Bxe2 Na6 13. Nd4 +-.

8. Qxd5!

8. Nxd5? O-O-O

8... e6!

8... Qxd5 9. Nxd5 O-O-O (9... Rc8 10. Ne3 Bd7 11. Nf3 Nh6 12. Bc4 e6 13. c3) 10. Ne3 Bd7 11. Nf3 +1.8!)

9. Qb3!

Returning the pawn with check! When I saw this position for White, after missing five moves, I was not impressed! Black seems to have an edge in development and a solid position. But I missed some major tactical trumps: pressure on b7 and the Bf5.

(9. Qxc5 Bxc5 10. Bf4 (10. Nf3 Bxc2 11. Bd2) 10... O-O-O was evaluated as =+ by the White team. Stockfish has it +=, but it was clearly the type of game Black was hoping for.

9... Qxe5+ 10. Be3!

10. Be2!? Stockfish likes this move as well, but we were looking to castle queenside. 10... Bb4 (10... Rd8 11. Qxb7 Nd4 12. Qxa7 Bb4 13. Qa4+ Rd7 14. Bd2) 11. Kf1) (10. Nge2 O-O-O 11. Bf4 Qa5 =+)

10... O-O-O?

I remember discussing our intention to castle queenside next with Nelson, who quickly decided to "beat us to the punch." The king looks safe enough, but looks are deceiving. (10... Bb4! 11. Nf3 Qa5 (11... Bxc3+ 12. bxc3 Qa5 13. Rd1 +/-) 12. O-O-O Bxc3 13. Rh4!? +/- Wow, I don't know that we would have the guts to leave the bishop on c3 in this position (13. bxc3 Nf6 +=))

11. Nf3

11. Rh4!? may be just as strong but was hardly considered.)

11... Qa5



12. Rh4!! +/-

David Herscovici (hersco) on 12. Rh4: This is Suhas' original MASSIVE Rook Lift
Derek Meredith had just done a lecture on rook lifts near the time of this move. This one is completely winning, but I insisted that the team consider the more routine developing move... 12. Bb5 Be4! +/- which is not nearly as good. Kyle Triplett insisted on Rh4 and after a ton of analysis, convinced everyone, even me, to go with that.)

12... Bb4 13. a3!

White is happy to shatter his queenside in order to open the b-file. Then both rooks and the queen can join the attack. Hersco: "We looked at Rc4 here, but eventually the appeal of the open b-file convinced us to go with this move. Mike in particular supported this move."

13... Bxc3+ 14. bxc3

White threatens to trap the Bf5 with Rh4-a4 and g4.

14... Nf6

14... Qc7 15. Rc4 Nf6 16. Bxa7 +/-.

15. Rb1

Threatening mate. White team is now very happy with its uncastled king. 15. Ra4 Qc7 16. Bb5 Be4 17. Bxc6 Bxc6 18. Rxa7 is also very strong.

15... Rd7?

15... Qc7! is better but still losing. 16. Ra4! ie. Kb8 17. Rxa7! Nxa7 18. Bf4!

16. Bb5!

The pin, she wins! Exchanging the B for the Nc6 removes the last minor piece defending the Black king. 16... Qc7 (16... Bxc2 17. Qxc2 Nd5) (16... Be4 17. Rxe4 Nxe4 18. Bxc6) 17. Bxc6

1-0

Black resigned here, in view of... 17... bxc6 (17... Qxc6 18. Rc4) 18. Rb4



Major material (R or Q for R) will be lost. 18...Kd8 19 Rb8+. This game was victory for precise tactical attacking chess over general positional rules. White flaunted both development and pawn structure in pursuit of the Black king.

AN INSPIRATIONAL CT CHESS PROGRAM

BY COACH DAN STARBUCK PELLETIER

“DIG, Inc. was founded in 2013 by Dan Starbuck Pelletier in Connecticut. DIG stands for Determination, Integrity, Growth. DIG (www.TeamDIGUSA.com) initially focused on individual and small group soccer and chess practices in Wilton and Weston, training over 1,000 different players since 2013.

In December 2015, a DIG coach and I were having dinner together in South Norwalk, Connecticut. We decided that it was time to give back on a regular basis. DIG then went on to launch ‘DIG Lesson for Lesson’ on January 1, 2016. The ‘DIG Lesson for Lesson’ mission statement is: For every DIG lesson paid for, a kid in economic need can attend a DIG lesson for free. Since that night in the restaurant, DIG has hosted over fifty free soccer lessons in Bridgeport, CT, over forty free chess lessons in Bridgeport, CT, over 150 free chess lessons in Hartford, CT, and nine free chess lessons in Framingham, MA. The total attendance at these free lessons has surpassed 5,000.

We have written some stories of chess players successes in my biography on our website: <https://www.teamdigusa.com/coach-dig-chess-soccer-dan-pelletier/>.

USCF NM Derek Meredith has done tons for these kids in Hartford by driving them, sponsoring them, and teaching them. Same with Kevin Zimmerman. Rob Roy has sponsored them and provided food for them. When these kids go to tournaments, they go with nothing. It is very expensive to get them registration, food, and transportation, but I have great people with us to help. Clean and Green Laundromat in Glastonbury gave \$500 for three of them to go to the Boston Chess Congress Tournament, where one of them won the U1250 division, winning \$372. Other people helped sponsor that too. I could list another ten people who have given time or money to help these kids, and that is just Hartford.

I am really focused on Bridgeport now, and we are growing fast. I just got two of our chess players in elementary school who are from Nigeria and received full scholarships to Easton Country Day School, which I think is \$21,000 a year. We are taking some of the Bridgeport kids to tournaments like the Hartford kids and will have success.

An anonymous donor gave a large amount of money to help this program. The money has been used for registration, food, transportation, and equipment for these kids. It is not just the really good players. We have also just given something to do to kids who have nothing to do. We had one kid who had the most messed up living situation. His father is in prison and his mother was going to prison for trying to run over her new boyfriend. He called me when it was going on, and my chess coaches and I stepped in and helped him. My sister even sent over \$200 for him to buy food because he does not get the money from the government that his mom is supposed to give him. We had another teenager become homeless a little while ago in Hartford, and he stayed with a couple of our chess coaches with his girlfriend until he got back on his feet.

As you can tell, the stories can go on and on. The moral of the story is that chess is connecting people who have resources and experience to young people who really could use some help. It gives them a common ground even though their cultures and upbringing are completely different.”



The DIG Family Photo at the Downtown Bridgeport Public Library

BOB CYR'S COMMENTARY

Well, our trip down memory lane has come to an end. I hope that you enjoyed reading about the fun and exciting times that happened in our club throughout the last twelve months. We certainly had many fond memories that occurred in 2019 that we live on in the years to come.

Some of the most memorable highlights included:

- Prawn sacrifice team won best team name at USATE
- FM Richard Bauer won his first club championship since tying with FM Nelson Castaneda in 2007
- FM Nelson Castaneda won the Strazdins Cup and July Knockout events
- The adult/scholastic team opening lessons were a success
- Joseph Bihlmeyer and Suhas Kodali tied for first place in Oktoberfest

We are also happy to report that our friend Gaetano Bompastore is doing much better as he continues to regain his strength and mobility in his legs after being in a severe automobile accident coming home from the Summer Open 2018. He attended the Summer Open 2019, and his spirits remain high and upbeat. We wish him the best of health as he continues to recover.

Martin Garcia is also making progress after suffering a debilitating stroke last year. His speech is much clearer, and his spirits are high. We wish him the best of health as he continues to recuperate.

Friends, it is time to sign off and say adios! Cheers to such a warm and welcoming family. On behalf of the club officers, merry Christmas. May your new year be blessed with health, happiness, and peace.

President:
Vice President:
Treasurer:
Secretary:
Webmaster:
Historian:

Norman Burtness
Suhas Kodali
David Herscovici
Mario Guevara-Rodriguez
Gert Hilhorst
Bob Cyr



Bob Cyr

SPECIAL ADDITION!
NBCC HISTORY TRIVIA
2015 - 2019

To commemorate the last five years of newsletters, bringing us up to fifteen annual reports in total, I decided to create this set of chess trivia questions to test your knowledge of club news over the last five years. I just love NBCC trivia, so I hope that you will take this challenge. The answers can be found on page 44.

- 1) In what year did the NBCC see the highest attendance for its annual Oktoberfest Open Chess Championship?
 - a) 2016
 - b) 2017
 - c) 2018
 - d) 2019

- 2) As of September 1, 2019, how many years has Norman Burtness served as NBCC president?
 - a) 1
 - b) 2
 - c) 3
 - d) 4

- 3) Who won the 2016 Planet Earth Chess Championship?
 - a) Richard Bauer
 - b) Nelson Castaneda
 - c) Derek Meredith
 - d) Dennis Prawira

- 4) What prize did Gert Hilhorst award to the winner of his own tournament?
 - a) A bottle of beer
 - b) A bottle of wine
 - c) A bottle of whisky
 - d) A bottle of scotch

- 5) The dues for NBCC regular members increased from \$50 in 2015 to what amount in 2019?
- a) \$55
 - b) \$60
 - c) \$65
 - d) \$70
- 6) In what year was the first Andris Strazdins Stein held at the NBCC?
- a) 2015
 - b) 2016
 - c) 2017
 - d) 2018
- 7) What major event was held with the first use of an increment time control instead of a delay at the NBCC?
- a) 2019 Championship
 - b) 2019 Class Championship
 - c) 2019 Summer Open
 - d) 2019 Knockout and Swiss event
- 8) How many teams did the NBCC field at the annual World Amateur Team Chess Championship in 2018 and 2019, respectively?
- a) 3, 4
 - b) 3.5, 4
 - c) 4, 3.5
 - d) 4, 3
- 9) How many members did the NBCC have for its second-highest membership total in history for its fiscal year ended August 31, 2017?
- a) 100
 - b) 102
 - c) 104
 - d) 106
- 10) Whose memorial tournament was not held between 2015 and 2019?
- a) Paul Glidewell
 - b) Tom Hartmayer
 - c) Nick Stevens
 - d) Julius Fuster

SOLUTION AND ANSWERS TO CHESS PUZZLE AND TRIVIA

CHESS PUZZLE (from cover page)

1. Qg1+ Kf6
2. Qg5#

CHESS TRIVIA (from page 16)

1. c
2. a
3. b
4. a

SPECIAL ADDITION! CHESS TRIVIA: 2015 – 2019: (from pages 42 and 43)

1. d {We had close to fifty players competing in Oktoberfest Open 2019.}
2. c {Norman Burtness was elected club president in September 2016.}
3. a {FM Richard Bauer won the 2016 Planet Earth event.}
4. a {Actually, it was four bottles of German beer!}
5. c {The current dues for regular members are \$65.}
6. b {The first Andris Strazdins Stein was held in 2016.}
7. a {The 2019 NBCC Championship was the first major tournament to use an increment instead of a time delay.}
8. c {We fielded four teams in 2018; we fielded 3.5 teams in 2019.}
9. c {We reached 104 members for the fiscal year ended August 31, 2017.}
10. a {The Paul Glidewell event was held prior to 2015.}