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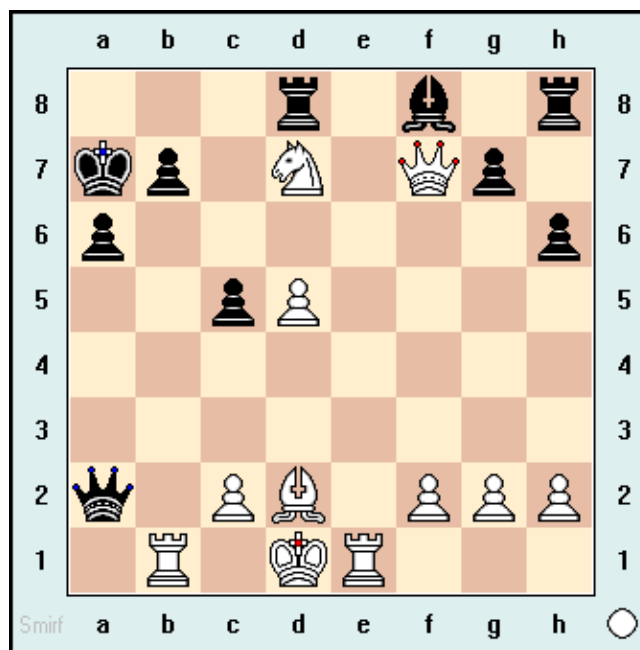
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2014 NEWSLETTER

by Robert Cyr

WHITE TO MOVE AND MATE IN FIVE



Maurice Ashley vs. Robert Kempinski: Bad Wessee 1997

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

The solution is on page 34.

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INTRODUCTION

Season's Greetings, fellow chess friends:

With so much happening in our busy lives today, it comes as no surprise that many of us are making plans once again to spend some quality time together with family and friends over the long holiday break. The time has also come when I, as club historian, will be sharing the highlights and memorable moments of another fabulous year at the famous New Britain Chess Club.

Since 2005, the NBCC has grown socially, financially, and structurally. As said often before, the club would not be where it is today if it were not for the efforts of the many unpaid volunteers, the support from the membership, and the generosity of the local chess community, all of whom have been instrumental in enriching the club into one of the finest chess organizations around.

My goal in writing these newsletters has been to capture the heart and soul and the very essence of our organization. And even though at times I have departed from this objective, I believe that my mission has generally been accomplished.

So, without any further introduction, please come along with me as we commence our journey down memory lane with the NBCC adventures in 2014. As always, I hope you enjoy my stories.



"Life, like chess, is about knowing to do the right move at the right time."

Kaleb Rivera

THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

JANUARY

When we last departed the NBCC memory train, we were saying goodbye to 2013 and getting ready to celebrate the arrival of the New Year. On January 7, the club kicked off its first highlight of 2014 with the 2013 Connecticut State Open Blitz Chess Championship. This event was scheduled for a meeting in late December, but it had to be postponed due to snow. Fortunately, with brighter skies prevailing on the seventh, the tournament went on without any disruptions caused by inclement weather. Twenty-three players, including almost a record-breaking six of the club's masters, participated in the annual tournament sanctioned by the Connecticut State Chess Association. Throughout the nine-round event, you could almost feel the temperature in the room steadily rise as the competition, especially in the later rounds and on the top boards, became increasingly difficult. After nearly three hours of intense and, at times, wild play, with a few upsets along the way, USCF National Master Dennis Prawira clinched first place by just one-half point to become the 2013 Connecticut state blitz chess champion. His only loss was against defending champion USCF NM Ted McHugh, and his only draw was to FIDE Master Nelson Castaneda. As you can imagine, the first club meeting of 2014 was full of exuberance. What a way to usher in the New Year at the NBCC! Thanks to the CSCA for selecting the NBCC to host this tournament once again.

FEBRUARY

Every Presidents Day weekend since 2007, some of our members have made the short two-and-one-half hour drive from Central Connecticut to the quaint town of Parsippany, New Jersey, to compete in the grandest team tournament in the history of chess - the World/U.S. Amateur Team East Chess Championship. Referred to by many as the holy grail of the game, USATE features everything for chess enthusiasts of all ages and rankings. At this year's gala, the main attraction was the appearance of former World Chess Champion Garry Kasparov, who was in the area to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the United States Chess Federation. Before the commencement of the fourth round, the grandmaster gave a brief lecture in the main ballroom, outlining the significant progress of chess in this county since 1939 and detailing his visions on the future of the game internationally as seeks to run for the office of FIDE president. It was an awe-inspiring five minutes and, indeed, an indelible moment in time.

For the fourth consecutive year, the NBCC fielded two teams at USATE. The first team called themselves the New Britain Trained Dogs. On the superstar team, we had USCF NM Ted McHugh, James Nitz, USCF NM Derek Meredith, and Doug Fiske. Despite their fourth-round loss, this team put forth their collective mental resources to the test. They finished strong. Because of their very good individual and team performances, the New Britain Trained Dogs won the Top Connecticut Team title, earning 4.5 match points. The NBCC has received this major award at USATE for the last eight years. Other Connecticut teams have come close to clinching this title, but the NBCC keeps proving itself as one of the strongest chess clubs in Connecticut. Of particular note, Doug defeated all of his opponents as he did in 2013. He now has soared into uncharted territory for being the only member to have attained perfect scores for two consecutive years at USATE. Now that is impressive! Congratulations to the entire team for a job well done! However, I must admit that their initial team name, Gary - We Can Use a Board 3 Player, would have been a much better choice!

Trapped in the Christie Bind - No Files Open and Limited Mobility was the name of the second team from our club. On this team, we had the same players as in 2013 and 2012: Mike Pascetta (who was on board one this year!), Danny Pascetta (who is one smart young man!), Bob Cyr (who is not to be confused with Bob Kozlowski!), and all the way from Morristown, New Jersey, Mike's cousin, Anthony Danese. Unlike in the prior two years, we managed to play in the grand ballroom for three rounds instead of two. We did have some setbacks, though, during the tournament because we usually had to play up. Competing against opponents who were one or two rating classes above us was challenging, but we were up to the task. After six rounds, our team earned three match points as we did in the previous two years. Anthony, unfortunately, was unable to play in round six, so our team needed to find a board four player quick. Just when it seemed hopeless, Old Eagle Eye Bob recognized Jun Tang, our board four player who substituted for Anthony last year in rounds five and six, and asked him if he could play on our team in the final round. Without any hesitation, he graciously accepted our offer and ended up winning again as he did in 2013! Talk about déjà vu!

Overall, our NBCC teams had a blast at USATE 2014. If you have yet to play in this incredible event, you ought to put this on your bucket list! It is a tournament like none other in the wonderful world of chess.

MARCH

On the first unofficial day of spring, the NBCC proudly hosted the 2014 Planet Earth Chess Championship at the Taste of India restaurant in West Hartford. The club has now received the rights to hold this prominent event for four consecutive years. This year, twenty-nine humans engaged in battle in the four-round Swiss-system tournament. The action on the sixty-four square boards was relatively quiet in the first round. After round one, many of the players relaxed and enjoyed the delicious, authentic buffet lunch. Play resumed shortly after. The afternoon rounds, though, got heated and produced quite an audience from outside chess fans and even from some of the restaurant staff, all of whom were intently watching the galactic battles coming down to the wire - ultimately to determine who would be crowned the 2014 Planet Earth chess champion. Shortly after 6:00 p.m., that question was answered. We now have a new chess champion of Planet Earth - veteran member FM Richard Bauer. His score was 3.5. In the reserve section, Bob Cyr took the first-place title on tie-breaks over member Allan Vega. Before moving on to the next highlight, the club would like to thank its former vice president, Doug Fiske, for directing the tournament and member Jerry Aiyathurai for drafting the flier. In addition, the club sends its appreciation to the management of the Taste of India for providing the nice venue and extends its gratitude to USCF NM Derek Meredith, who coordinated every aspect of the tournament, including selecting the stunning Planet Earth trophies.

Throughout most of January and during all of February and March, the club held its single-most heritage tournament of the year - the annual NBCC Championship, a tournament traditionally open to members only. The format of this tournament has undergone varied, numerous changes in recent years, but the only modification to this year's championship compared to last year was the reduction of the number of mini-match playoffs from two to one after eight rounds of regular play. Consequently, the tournament directors decided that the colors in the final round should be forced in order to avoid a player from facing the same opponent twice with the same color. In the final round, John and James Nitz were vying for first place in their respective sections. In this mini-match of historic significance, John had to play James Wilkin in the candidates section while James Nitz was paired against defending champion FM Nelson Castaneda in the championship section. After nearly three months of extreme and exhausting competition, with two weeks of delays because of incessant stormy winter weather, finally, on March 25, the top two seeds in each section faced off. By the end of that evening, James Nitz defeated Nelson (by just one-half point), and James Wilkin, who prevented a Nitz family sweep, won his game against John.

Even though John did not win his crucial game, it is important to recognize the Nitzs for becoming the first members of the same family to place first or second in their separate sections in a major tournament organized by the club. Their incredible triumph is unprecedented in NBCC history, and it is highly probable that this will never happen in our club again. However, I should refrain from engaging in any prognostication as the club historian! Before leaving this story, I should also mention that James is currently the second youngest member, behind FM Danny Rozovsky, to have won the coveted NBCC Championship.

In recent years, the NBCC has networked with other chess organizations in Connecticut. The collaborative projects that our club has undertaken with these other establishments have considerably advanced chess in the state. Such a joint venture took place on the last Saturday in March when the NBCC co-sponsored the 2014 Connecticut State Closed Chess Championship (the first time the club was voted to co-host this event!) with the Newtown Chess Club. The NCC is one of the largest chess clubs in Western Connecticut and is located at the CH Booth Library. Glenn Budzinski, a local chess expert who has been involved in the state chess arena for decades, founded the NCC six years ago. We thank Glenn for accommodating the NBCC to host this state-sanctioned tournament at the NCC's beautiful site. Our club, although, would not be co-sponsoring this tournament if it were not for the steadfast efforts of our club's president, USCF NM Derek Meredith. At the 2013 CSCA Board of Directors meeting, Derek presented his interesting ideas on restructuring the format of the event (i.e. making it closed to the top 16 Connecticut residents who showed up by 9:50 on the day of the tournament) and having the NBCC host it. After some discussion about the details, the directors unanimously ratified Derek's motion, and the rest is history. Norman Burtness was at the helm as chief tournament director. Norman was responsible for the collection of the entry fees, making the pairings, awarding the prizes, and rating the tournament, as well as dealing with any player concerns. He did an excellent and professional job in executing all of his duties. Thirty-five players competed in the two-section, four-round championship. At the end of eight hours of very spirited play, one player from each section emerged victorious. It gives me great pleasure to report to you that Gary Shure is the 2014 Connecticut chess champion. FM Kapil Chandran earned second place on tie-breaks over William Torres and Derek. In the candidates section, Jonathan Aiyathurai, one of the club's talented scholastic players, took first place on tie-breaks over Art Nagel. Both section winners received cash and trophies, and Jonathan will be automatically seeded, and playing free of entry, in next year's championship section. As a whole, the tournament was a major success for Connecticut chess. There is no doubt that this will be the club's most significant highlight of the year.

APRIL

The club's first highlight of the second quarter of 2014 occurred on April 1, commonly known as April Fools' Day. The executive staff took advantage of the harmless humor that some people play on their friends and family on this day and intentionally scheduled GM Gata Kamksy for a simultaneous chess exhibition at the club for the evening, eagerly expecting that some members would believe they would have the opportunity to see the iconic GM in action. According to my sources, about ten members, including me, were victims of their light-hearted joke. No friends, even though Kamsky was invited, he declined to come! Instead, the tournament directors organized a NBCC April Fool's Tournament, the first in club history. The turnout was not surprisingly low because I believe that some of our members were probably dissuaded from playing in this event because of its name. This did not stop determined members like veteran member Marcus Komons, however, who dominated the competition and clinched first place. This is no joke!

The club held a quick chess tournament on April 8 and 15 in honor of veteran member John Nitz. This now marks the twentieth tributary tournament the club has held for our members based on their membership longevity. John's history with the NBCC began in 1998. John, like Anthony Diaz and Dennis Himes, whose honorary tournaments were held recently, also brought his son, James, to the club at a very early age. Both have been regular members ever since. Beyond the club, John has been instrumental in developing scholastic chess programs in his hometown of Southington. He has worn multiple hats as a tournament director, coach, and mentor to students enrolled in the chess program at Southington High School. His efforts in enriching this program have had a tremendous influence on scholastic chess in Connecticut. The chess community thanks him for his involvement in encouraging our youth to play this historic mind game. Even though John's busy work schedule prevents him from competing in every club event, he does participate in most of the club's major tournaments. Two cool historical facts about John are that he has won the most club raffles and, on at the annual NBCC Christmas Parties, he always brings his wife's famous, to-die-for nacho cheese dip platter. John is an all-round awesome guy. Oh, did I mention that he is a strong class A player, getting close to 1900! You can always guarantee a battle whenever you face John at the chess board. John, unfortunately, was unable to compete in the first week of his tournament because he was sick with the flu. However, James was able to play both weeks and earned first place in his father's tournament. Because there was a decent turnout, the TDs were able to group players into two sections. Blazing the competition with a perfect score in the reserve section was one of our talented scholastic members, Alexander Ruth.

Before we move on to the NBCC memorable moments of May, I am briefly stopping along our holiday road to recognize Alexander Ruth for winning the club's eighth "Odds" event. Now, despite the favorable time odds given to lower-rated players in these tournaments, our masters (FM Richard Bauer, FM Nelson Castaneda, and USCF NM Dennis Prawira) have managed to win first place in at least one of these tournaments. No chess players at class level have won a "NBCC Odds" event, until the evening of April 22, that is. On this night, young and inspiring Alex commanded the competition and, even though he won some games because of his significant time advantage, proved that he was capable of playing to the strength of an expert. He most deservedly earned first place. I have high aspirations for Alex, who, no doubt, will be shattering many club records as he continues to make unprecedented climbs in rankings. Incidentally, he started 2014 as a class E player and could easily attain class A level by the end of the year.

MAY

On the second Saturday in May, three NBCC-affiliated teams made the one-hour trip to play in the Fairfield County Spring Team Chess Championship, the first event of its kind held by the organizers of the Fairfield County Chess Club. This was a historic day for the NBCC and especially for James Nitz. With regard to the club, the team of FM Nelson Castaneda, Alan Price, Will Torres, and Ariel Martinez (from Massachusetts), who called themselves The Price is Right, took first place in the four-round competition. Before reaching the top, though, this team had to face the New Britain Trained Dogs in the final round. On that team, we had James, USCF NM Derek Meredith, Doug Fiske, and Bob Cyr (the USCF NM Ted McHugh upgrade!). How cool was this - a NBCC vs. NBCC face-off at the CCFC, with the top two chess games broadcasted live on the internet! And although the Dogs did not win their match against Team Price, James' upset over Nelson gave him enough rating points to reach 2200 and earn the distinguished title of USCF NM. Everyone was so overjoyed for James.

To celebrate his monumental achievement, James' parents hosted a blockbuster party for him at their house on May 18. I heard it was one spectacular day, with delicious barbeque and outdoor activities. Thanks to the Nitz family for inviting the NBCC family to their house to recognize James' major milestone. Before concluding this story, I do want to mention the German Pride team, led by FM Richard Bauer, with powerhouse teammates Joe Bihlmeyer, Norman Burtness, and Matt Faille, who had a respectable performance. Once again, the NBCC made an impressive presence. We hope that the CCFC will host more of these fun tournaments.

JUNE

One of the wonderful things about our organization is that even when members leave the weekly action for months or for longer durations, they will often rejoin the NBCC family. Recently, USCF NM Dennis Prawira and Allan Vega, who both took leave of absences from the club for a few years because of work and family commitments, won their respective sections in the Arkadijs Strazdins Cup. But I have to imagine that Dennis and Allan must have spent some of their time preparing for their big comeback!

On June 17, the NBCC held its annual business meeting. At this session, as in past years, the president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary each presented their individual reports to the membership. As noted by the president and the treasurer, the club continues to be financially strong. In the last year, the club generated healthy profits from the t-shirt sales and from the Planet Earth and the New Britain Summer Open Chess Championships and the Connecticut State Closed Chess Championship. In addition, membership has slightly climbed from the 2012-2013 year, further increasing the club's general fund. The historian also made a presentation that evening, specifically mentioning members who have made outstanding progress in their rating in the last year and discussing plans for the NBCC Best Game of the Year contest. The old and news business portion of the meeting was relatively short. The only major topic brought forth was nominating someone to volunteer as the NBCC Clockman, who would be in charge of the repair and maintenance of our inventory of chess clocks. Eagerly accepting this responsibility was Matt Faille. The election of officers went very smoothly. The only change in leadership was the ratification of the club's new secretary, Luis Delgado. Luis, who just rejoined the club, has been very involved with advancing scholastic chess in the Hartford Public School System for decades.

Allen Mo was the acting club secretary for the meeting, taking the place of Dan Golda, who was unable to attend. As NBCC President USCF NM Derek Meredith stated in his address to the membership, the club has flourished into its "golden age" and attributes its attaining such status to its supportive membership base and extended family and its general lack of problems. Lastly, before the meeting adjourned, one of our members made a motion to make all of the officers exempt from paying annual club dues effective immediately. There was no discussion on this motion, and it was unanimously approved.

JULY

Historically, the tournaments held by the club during the months of July and August have been more casual, thereby giving players a break from the serious competition and providing greater flexibility for the officers and tournament directors in their creation of unique events for the membership.

The club commenced its summer schedule with one such interesting event, a rated blitz chess tournament. Now the seventh in this series, these tournaments have attracted many players of all levels and ages. As with most of the longer tournaments in the club in recent years, there have been slight modifications to the format of blitz chess events as well. The major change to this wildly popular tournament held on July 1 was adjusting the time control from the club standard G/5, 3 to G/1, 9. For those of us, like me, who enjoy the intense mental stimulation of blitz chess, this change was electrifying. You could almost feel the energy rippling throughout the room that evening! Regrettably, though, the USCF was unable to rate this tournament because it did not meet the time criteria of a blitz chess event (the overall time had to be between three to ten minutes plus the time delay had to be at least three seconds). Nonetheless, that did not dampen the spirits of the participants, and, overall, it was an excellent evening to begin the third quarter of 2014 at the NBCC.

Another activity organized by the officials that has recently sparked interest among the membership is the rivals challenge. On July 15, in the second event in this series, each participant was matched with his nearest-rated opponent. Twenty-two members showed up for this tournament, which was a respectable turnout for a summer evening at the club.

The competition a few days earlier was much different, however, as friends and family of the club gathered at Beachland Park in West Hartford on a pleasantly warm morning to kick off the NBCC's annual Sports/Outing Day hosted annually almost every year since 2005 by USCF NM Derek Meredith. The day began, as has been tradition, with sporting activities. For approximately one hour, two of the father-son teams, the Hilhorts, the Pascettas, and the Merediths alternated between offense and defense on the soccer field. Then, about 11:30 a.m., when the adults were getting exhausted, Bob Cyr boldly arrived to display his awesome athletic abilities on the field. All levity aside, I did manage to successfully block Gert Hilhorst from scoring a few goals, but I proved absolutely no match for the young lad, Eric, and you can just forget about trying to steal the ball away from wickedly superfast Danny Pascetta and Nick Meredith.

They blew me away like dust in the wind. By noon, I was so overheated and then was so elated to see Joe Bihlmeyer, so I let him take my place against the young soccer talents. Before long, however, our mini-teams disbanded as we had the pleasure of competing against an outside team. Its organizer, a gentleman from Amsterdam, and his fellow young teammates played a very lively match with us. It was a real close game. In the end, the NBCC emerged victorious, just like the Germans were over the Argentinians in the World Cup finals on that same day. After the physical portion of the day, the crew went over to Derek's house for lunch. His wife and gracious hostess, Amy, grilled hot dogs and prepared delicious side dishes for the hungry men. By late afternoon, as the heat of the day waned, the guys relaxed by playing chess on Derek's giant chess board, engaged in friendly discussion, and eagerly watched the World Cup finals. The day was perfect. As I have said countless times before, Derek has enriched the social fabric of our organization so much that the club's network would not be as strong today if it were not for his efforts in this regard.

USCF NM James Nitz was the next member in seniority in the club after his father, John, to have a tournament held by the club in his honor. Twenty-eight members came out to play in James' tributary tournament. Often known better as "Kramnitz" for having for a similar playing style like GM Vladimir Kramnik, James has been involved with the club and with scholastic chess clubs within the Southington School system since the late 1990s. "Kramnitz" has a very impressive chess resume. By far, his greatest achievement was becoming a USCF NM in May of this year. Looking back on the entire history of the club, James ranks as one of the youngest members to have attained the NM title (the others who easily come to mind are FM Danny Rozovsky and Senior Master Mike Casella). The competition in the six-round Swiss-system "Kramnitz Quick Chess Tournament" held on July 15 ranged from beginners to masters. After an evening of lively games (and some upsets), newcomer USCF NM Yoon-Young Kim clinched first place in the one-section event. Now that he has finished his academic studies and has entered the professional workforce, we hope that "Kramnitz" can play more regularly at the club. It is always a pleasure to play against Master Nitz. He has a vast knowledge of the game, is highly respected by everyone in the club, and is a gentleman and a scholar.

AUGUST

One of my favorite club events is the team challenges. Starting on July 29, each six-player team competed with the other teams in the three-week tournament, the third in its series held at the club. The highest-rated players were delegated as team captains and went behind closed doors to strategically choose their fellow teammates. Playing in such an event tends to bring out the team spirit among the competitors. On every night of the competition, Team Captains USCF NM Dennis Prawira, Will Torres, USCF NM Derek Meredith, and USCF NM Alexander Polak were enthusiastically inspiring their fellow compadres, cheering them on toward ultimate victory. It was a delight that Alexander, a student who was traveling from the Netherlands with plans of attending the University of Vermont in Montpelier in the fall, visited our club and could play in this tournament. Incidentally, Alexander has moved ahead of Juan Obregon (a resident of Mexico City) for being the person to travel the farthest to play in a NBCC tournament. You might recall that last year, Derek's team won the intra-club team tournament. Well, folks, history repeated itself on August 12 as Derek and his five team players finished on top with 2.5 out of three match points. Now, will history repeat itself next year? That is the question.

On the beautiful, gorgeous, and somewhat unseasonably cool last Sunday in August, forty people of the NBCC's family played in our organization's largest social event of the year - the annual New Britain Summer Open Chess Championship. Wickham Park in Manchester was the venue for this year's blockbuster tournament, its third year as the Summer Open site. Thanks to USCF NM Derek Meredith, the club was fortunate to secure the grand Williams Pavilion, which affords a breathtaking and lovely view of the park grounds. It is my pleasure to report to the Connecticut chess community that overall, in spite of the lower than anticipated turnout, NBCC's open-air event of 2014 was rather successful. Having served in some volunteer capacity with this event for many years, I can unequivocally state that the tremendous amount of work performed by the tournament directors, the chefs, and the organizers behind the scenes and at the event is immensely essential in ensuring that this event runs efficiently as possible.

Our list of all-star volunteers at this year's Summer Open begins with the crew of master chefs Kevin Zimmerman, Marie Juergens, and Mitch Daniels. These extraordinary culinary artists, as always, did a professional job. The typical summertime cuisine of burgers, hot dogs, salads, baked beans, soda, chips, and the kicked-up strawberry shortcake was simply delicious. I imagine that after enjoying such a big lunch, some players perhaps found it very difficult to return to the chess arena! Doug Fiske was the event's chief tournament director this year, giving Norman Burtness a most deserved break. Assisting Doug was Bob Cyr, who helped with on-site registrations, preset all of the club clocks, performed a full inventory of the chess sets (I am still wondering how three bishops and one knight ended up in one box!), and performed ancillary administrative duties. Our dedicated and trustworthy treasurer, Andy Strazdins, also contributed to the tournament by ordering and picking up the trophies, one of the many unpaid jobs that he had done for the club in the last four decades. The amazing thing about this tournament is that it attracts players from all across the state and beyond. This year, we had a family travel from eastern New York, which is easily a two-hour drive to Manchester. However, making the longest commute (a seven-hour flight!) and then becoming the first non-American resident to win the Summer Open was USCF NM Alexander Polak. That was two club records earned by the same person at the same event! Wow, that is historic! One of our members who recently joined the club, John Sentilles, formerly of Alabama, also made history that day for winning the Under 1814 section, marking this the first time he has won a major NBCC tournament. Hundreds of people over the decades have partaken in Connecticut's biggest chess outing. If you have yet to play in this tournament, I encourage you to come on down and join the NBCC family for food and fun next year, when we will pop open the campaign in celebration of the Summer Open's golden anniversary. The planning for this super party is already underway.

SEPTEMBER

Another member who has been instrumental in building the club's social network in the last decade is Kevin Zimmerman. On the last Saturday of summer, NBCC Chef "Z" and his fiancée Marie Juergens warmly welcomed their friends and family to their home for the 7th annual Zimmerman Games Day.

The day of fun began promptly at noon with lunch that was prepared by our host and hostess. The menu was kicked up Emeril Lagasse style, and the guests were surely in for a treat. Items on the huge menu included baked chicken, pulled pork, burgers, homemade baked macaroni and cheese (to die for!), rice and beans, coleslaw, corn relish, and potato salad. If that was not enough, you can just imagine the items on the dessert table. Our guests either bought or made the desserts, which included chocolate cream pie, a variety of cookies, apple bread pudding, and more. Refreshments included beer, soda, juice, apple cider, and water. After the feast, “Z” held the annual Zimmerman Games Day Chess Tournament. Bob Cyr and David Hall were the tournament directors. David is one of the club’s newest members from the Greater Springfield area. Prior to 2014, USCF NM Derek Meredith was the only person to win two of these tournaments. At about 4:00 p.m. that day, FM Nelson Castaneda clinched first place. So, currently, Nelson and Derek are tied at two wins each. Throughout the refreshingly cool afternoon, “Z” and Marie randomly pulled names out of a hat and awarded the winners with cool door prizes such as gift certificates to restaurants. For the non-chess players, there were plenty of other recreational activities to do, such as pool, ping-pong, frisbee, and board and card games. The main attraction came late in the afternoon, however, as the popular “drum circle” entertained the crowd with soothing songs of West Africa, putting everyone in a most relaxing mood and state of mind. Dan Golda, “Z”, and I eagerly joined the two drummers, and we blazed the stage with our soulful sounds and rhythmic tunes. Hey, we have ambitions to audition for the tenth season of America’s Got Talent! In any event, the music capped the day’s festivities. The annual Zimmerman Games Day tradition continues to bring the NBCC and its extended family of families closer together. Events such as these are just one reason the NBCC is very special.

OCTOBER

A number of highlights occurred at the 2014 Oktoberfest Open Chess Championship. Immediately after FM Nelson Castaneda won the event, based on tie-breaks, I researched the club archives and came across an interesting fact. I found out that this has been the first year since 2008 where a different member clinched first place in each of the club’s major annual tournaments. Taking a step back in time, you might recall that USCF NM James Nitz won the Club Championship, FM Richard Bauer won the Planet Earth Chess Championship, USCF NM Dennis Prawira won the Arkadijs Strazdins Cup, and USCF NM Alexander Polak won the New Britain Summer Open. The probability of this occurrence can easily be directly attributed to the increased strength of our club.

Speaking of strength, ten masters and experts participated in this year's Oktoberfest Open, which was one of highest-attending club tournaments by players rated over 2000 in recent memory. Before moving on, I want to take this opportunity to recognize and congratulate Swastik Chaki, one of our newcomers to the club, who won clear first in the Under 1700 section, his first major NBCC tournament victory.

Continuing with the tradition that started with the 1st Oktoberfest Open, some of our members and their families attended the NBCC's annual Oktoberfest dinner party on the weekend after the final round of this popular tournament. Because of scheduling conflicts, however, the 2014 festive social gathering, which has been typically held on a Friday or Saturday evening, took place on Sunday, October 26, at the Corner Pug (not Pub!) in the Elwood section of West Hartford. And although fewer people attended this year's dinner, wonderful times were had by all. We owe, as always, a special thanks to the marvelous Andy Strazdins for spicing up the evening with tunes and melodies that he played on his harmonica.

NOVEMBER

Besides the quick chess tournaments that have been held in honor of our current veteran members, it was decided early on in the Meredith administration to organize annual double quads memorial events to pay tribute to former members or chess players who have been influential in promoting the game in our community. In November of this year, the club held a memorial event for Paul Glidewell. As recounted by USCF NM Derek Meredith and others, Paul's greatest contribution to the game in our area, and for which he will best be remembered, was his management of a chess studio on Sissian Avenue in Hartford during the 1970s, a decade when chess significantly flourished in this country because of the Fischer boom. Enthusiasts from all across Connecticut, some traveling many miles, visited Paul's chess emporium to purchase books, magazines, and other items from his huge collection. While there, his patrons sometimes played Paul a few games of chess. Many of his customers were members of the NBCC and the former Hartford Chess Club, both of which Paul was a member. Paul was generally a serious chess competitor, reaching class A in his career. However, on a lighter note, when playing casual chess with his friends, there were instances when he would utter the comical witticism, "Used to know but don't know now," when he could not decide what move to play. Overall, Mr. Glidewell developed a strong reputation in the chess community as a passionate promoter and advocate of the game. His passing, no doubt, was a major loss for Connecticut chess.

On November 15, the NBCC made history again in 2014 at the CCFC. One of our club's three teams, Not in the Face, led by USCF NM James Nitz, with teammates Matt Faille, Gert Hilhorst, and Bob McDaniel, won the Fairfield County Fall Team Chess Championship on tie-breaks over a team from the CCFC. A blitz chess playoff between Captains USCF NM Nitz and USCF NM Ian Harris, which James won, decided which team would claim victory. Individually, the players on the Not in the Face team performed very well on their way to clinching first place. Matt, specifically, went from class A level to expert, making him the third member to accomplish this in 2014. As with any team chess event, the competition can get fierce at times, and you could feel the synergy among the players at this event, especially when things got intense in the later rounds. In despite of the fact that the other two NBCC-affiliated teams were not able to share in the victory, I do want to make mention of their participation. The other two teams were: New Britain Trained Dogs (USCF NM Derek Meredith, Doug Fiske, Joe Hricko, and Bob Cyr) and Best by Test (Alan Price, Joe Bihlmeyer, Tom Hartmayer, and Norman Burtness). The NBCC looks forward to more of these exciting CCFC events in 2015.

Bob McDaniel was the next veteran member to have a tournament held in his honor by the club. Bob has been a member for approximately fifteen years. He joined the club around 1990, took a ten-year hiatus just before the turn of the century in order to start a family, and rejoined the club in 2009. Bob often enjoys reminiscing about his early days at the club, especially when had the pleasure of playing against legends Arkadijs Strazdins and USCF NM James Bolton. One of his proudest memories in the club was earning a draw against Mr. Strazdins in the final round of the 1994 NBCC Championship, which gave him enough points to clinch the title as champion and ultimately gave him enough rating points to attain the level of expert. Speaking of experts, Bob has become one of the club's resident authorities on the French Defense, which he consistently plays as Black. His vast knowledge of this opening and his ardent support of it are two reasons you ought to take your game seriously if you dare play 1. e4 against him! Thirty-four members competed in Bob's event, almost a record turnout for a NBCC quick chess event. The Rick Lee honorary tournament also had thirty-four players, incidentally. Many high-ranked members showed up for Bob's tournament, and the field included many masters and experts. And, after five rounds of complex games in both sections, USCF NM Derek Meredith won the event. John Sentilles was the winner of the reserve section.

DECEMBER

The NBCC kicked off the final month of 2014 with its first-ever rated thematic event. In every round of this G/10, 1 event, White and Black each were required to play the first move of the Sicilian Defense (1. e4 c5), one of the most popular openings in chess. Due to its many complex variations, this defense is probably one of the most studied and analyzed. Many colorful games were produced out of this opening that evening, and, in spite of the challenging games, USCF NM Dennis Prawira emerged victorious and finished 6-0 in the tournament.

Thirty players from all corners of the state competed in the 2014 Connecticut State Open Blitz Chess Championship hosted by the NBCC on December 16, one of the strongest CSCA-sanctioned blitz chess tournaments in Connecticut history. This year, five prior champions (FM Nelson Castaneda, FM Richard Bauer, USCF NM Ted McHugh, USCF NM Harris Appelman, and USCF NM Kerry Leahy) and defending champion USCF NM Dennis Prawira participated. It was a delight to see the alumni all striving for the title. It was also nice to see USCF NM James Nitz, one of the masters of the younger generation, in attendance that evening. Like the other masters, James was eager to clinch victory. In his quest to win the coveted title, James defeated all of the prior champions in rounds three through seven, an unprecedented achievement in this event's nearly forty-year history. James' incredible winning streak sadly ended when he lost to Dennis in round eight. After nine rounds and three hours of intense but generally spirited play, Ted won the tournament with 8/9, with Nelson and James at a close second place with 7/9. Ted has won this event the most (nine times!), and, for winning this tournament, he will receive free entry into the 2015 Connecticut State Chess Championship.

The final club highlight of 2014 was the 10th annual Christmas party. NBCC's own Chef Kevin Zimmerman and Marie Juergens catered this year's party, and they totally "kicked up the food to notches unknown to mankind." "Z" and Marie treated our members and guests to a very upscale and classy dinner, the grandest meal in NBCC history. On the menu, there was penne pomodoro with chicken parmesan, pasta with garlic sauce Florentine and mushrooms, classic garden salad, oven-warmed bread, holiday cupcakes, soda, water, and hot apple cider. Thanks also to John Nitz, Dan Golda, and Andy Strazdins for their contributions to the party. After dinner, many of the people played in the annual NBCC Bullet Chess Championship, a tradition started in 2011. This year, USCF NM James Nitz won the tournament by 2.5 points over three-year reigning champion FM Nelson Castaneda. In conclusion, it was truly one of the most memorable social gatherings in our organization's history and a wonderful way to finish 2014 at the club.

NBCC MEMBERS' MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

The following major achievements were earned by our members at non-club tournaments and in the USCF in 2014.

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 RATING	USCF RANKING
FM Nelson Castaneda	Age 50 or Older	2357	49 th
	Quick Age 50 or Older	2288	49 th
	Blitz Overall	2389	69 th
	Blitz Age 50 or Older	2389	11 th
USCF NM Dennis Prawira	Blitz Overall	2361	78 th tie
USCF NM Derek Meredith	Blitz Age 50 or Older	2188	46 th
USCF NM Yoon-Young Kim	Age 13	2229	7 th
	Quick Under Age 21/16	2152	49 th tie/12 th
	Blitz Under Age 16	1920	89 th tie
Danny Pascetta	Age 15	2036	46 th
	Quick Under Age 16	1944	87 th
Joe Hricko	Blitz Age 50 or Older	2096	63 rd
Jonathan Aiyathurai	Age 15	1889	90 th
Joseph Mansigian	Blitz Age 65 or Older	1660	54 th

NBCC MEMBERS ATTAINING THE LEVEL OF USCF MASTER OR EXPERT

Five members attained master or expert level in 2014, more than in any other year in club history.

James Nitz – Master (June 2014) – Yoon-Young Kim (October 2014)
Joe Bihlmeyer – Expert (May 2014) – Will Torres (May 2014)
Matt Faille (December 2014)

At the age of thirteen, Young-Young Kim became the youngest master in club history. You might recall that FM Danny Rozovsky earned his master certificate at the age of fourteen.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT NBCC MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS

On October 23, the biggest moment in USCF NM Derek Meredith's long and thriving chess career occurred when he was awarded a whopping \$20,000 check (note: the most money ever won by a member in any chess event!) for earning second place in the Under 2200 section of the 1st Millionaire Open Chess Tournament. On the Saturday after arriving home on his victory flight from Las Vegas, Derek treated his training team and other members to a royal dinner and post-tournament analysis at his home. A few weeks later at the club, members celebrated Derek's achievement with a cake in the shape of a chess board that Gert Hilhorst and the crew of the Simsbury Public Library Chess Club baked.

In 2014, Alexander Ruth broke the record, previously held by Max Krall, for the member with the fastest established rating point gain in one year. Alex began the year with a rating of 1122 and ended the year with a rating of 1659, an incredible 537-point increase!



"Chess is a terrific way for kids to build self-image and self-esteem."

Saudin Robovic

CHES TRIVIA

The chess trivia has been one of my most favorite parts of the annual club newsletters to write. Two-thousand-and-eight was the first year when trivia was included as part of my reports, and the questions posed in these one-page sections each year have been devoted to a different topic relating to the game.

Because my readers enjoy my trivia, and also to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the NBCC newsletters, I have decided this year to include two pages of trivia, a total of ten potpourri questions of the over one-hundred that I have created over the years about the history of this fascinating game.

You are indeed a chess historian if you can answer at least five of these questions correctly. Do not fret, though, if you are unable to earn a grade of at least fifty percent. These questions cover a wide array of chess topics. Best of luck, my friends! The answers are on page 34.

1. What grandmaster was consulted on the construction of IBM's chess computer Deep Blue?
 - a) Patrick Wolff
 - b) Joel Benjamin
 - c) Larry Evans
 - d) Boris Gulko
2. According to Grandmaster David Bronstein, "When you play the Ruy Lopez, it is like . . ." doing what?
 - a) Hunting deer
 - b) Milking a cow
 - c) Flaying fish
 - d) Shearing sheep
3. In 1996, chess clubs were banned from some high schools in the capital of what U.S. state?
 - a) Hawaii
 - b) Minnesota
 - c) Utah
 - d) Mississippi
4. Who coined the chess term "hypermodern," referring to a style of play that flourished in the 1920s?
 - a) Aron Nimozovitch
 - b) Richard Reti
 - c) Savielly Tartakover
 - d) Gyula Breyer

5. Former World Chess Champion Bobby Fischer attended the same high school with which of the following legendary musical artists?
- a) Dolly Parton
 - b) Barry Manilow
 - c) Neil Diamond
 - d) Linda Rondstadt
6. What was the profession of British chess player Henry Bird?
- a) Electrical engineer
 - b) Concert pianist
 - c) Accountant
 - d) Insurance salesman
7. Where did blind musician Ray Charles learn to play chess?
- a) Bar
 - b) Hospital
 - c) Church
 - d) Prison
8. In what year did Thomas Wilson invent the first mechanical chess clock?
- A: 1862
 - B: 1874
 - C: 1883
 - D: 1900
9. Which of the following statements is not true about chess player Joseph Henry Blackburne?
- a) Threw Steinitz out of a window after losing a match to him
 - b) Arrested as a spy for sending chess moves via mail
 - c) Declared that drinking whisky improved one's chess
 - d) Said he challenged God to chess and beat him with pawn odds
10. Because of his tendency to sacrifice pieces or give mate on that square, what name did Grandmaster Alexander Tolush earn?
- a) g7-specialist
 - b) b7-specialist
 - c) b2-specialist
 - d) g2-specialist

NBCC PICTURE GALLERY

The following photos were taken by Luis Delgado and Glenn Budzinski.

BATTLES OF THE BRAINS AT THE 2014 NEW BRITAIN SUMMER OPEN



George Himes and Will Torres (back row)
Kevin Berry and Eric Hilhorst (front row)



Matt Faille and Alexander Polak



Derek Meredith and Dennis Himes



Nelson Castaneda and Will Torres (back row)
Tom Hartmayer and Gert Hilhorst (front row)

CASUAL CHESS COMPETITION AT THE 2014 ZIMMERMAN GAMES DAY



David Hall and Dan Golda (back row)
John Twombly and Andres Montiel (front row)



Nelson Castaneda and Gaetano Bompastore (back row)
Bill Campbell and Bob McDaniel (front row)

TOP CHESS PLAYERS CONTEMPLATING THEIR NEXT MOVES AT THE 2014 CT STATE OPEN



THIRD ROW BACK: Alex Fikiet vs. Danny Pascetta SECOND ROW BACK: Kapil Chandran vs. Hanon Russell
FIRST ROW: Rahul Malayappan vs. Gary Shure

MORE PRICELESS KODAK MOMENTS OF THE NBCC FAMILY



NBCC Legends
Mike Pascetta, Gert Hilhorst, and Derek Meredith



NBCC Chef Crew
Mitch Daniels, Marie Juergens, and Kevin Zimmerman

THE RELOCATION OF THE CLUB - AGAIN

Throughout its eighty-year plus history, the NBCC has relocated very few times. Amazingly, all of the places the club has held its meetings since its founding have been within New Britain. The longest duration the club has been at any one venue was from 1975 until 2010 at the New Britain Quartette Club. In March 2010, after thirty-five years at the Quartette Club, the NBCC moved, for various reasons that were addressed in previous newsletters, to Mike's Hall on South Street in New Britain, also known as the New Britain Assyrian Club. The NBCC was very fortunate to secure this beautiful site and hold meetings there for over four-and-a-half years. Regrettably, though, in the summer of 2014, around the time of the annual club business meeting, the proprietor informed the officers that our rent would be doubled effective September 1. Because of this huge financial burden, the club had no choice, obviously, but to relocate once again.

The process of searching for a new home for the club began slowly. Up until the end of August, there were only two leads, the Quartette Club and the Taste of India restaurant. In early September, however, a major development in our relocation quest came to the attention of the officers from FM Nelson Castaneda and his wife, Nancy. In early September, they saw a sign for hall rentals outside of the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection on Stanley Street in New Britain. The officers took swift action, and, on September 9, they organized an open-house meeting for the membership at the church, which is located in the northeast section of the city. At this special session, the members had an opportunity to get a general impression of the facility. At 9:00, after an informal quick chess event, a meeting was called to order to discuss the pros and cons of the site, as well as the other places previously visited. President USCF NM Derek Meredith and Vice President Norman Burtness commenced the meeting by outlining the reasons the club was "forced" to move and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of the three locations. After brief discussions and debate about all of the sites, the officers called for a referendum. By an overwhelming plurality (29-1), the membership approved that the new NBCC home, effective immediately, would be at the Armenian Church of the Holy Resurrection, where the pictures below, courtesy of FM Richard Bauer, were taken.

Later that evening, another vote was taken regarding changing the start time for all club activities from 7:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and opening the club doors at 6:30 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m. This motion passed by only a slight majority (18-12).



LEFT PHOTO
Harris Appelman
and Ted McHugh

RIGHT PHOTO
James Nitz vs.
Nelson Castaneda

NBCC BEST GAMES OF 2014

NBCC Judge, FM Richard Bauer, analyzed thirteen games that were submitted for the 2014 NBCC Best Game contest. All of these games were evaluated on a number of criteria, not just players' difference in rating. In addition to the best game prize, this year Rick offered awards for best opening, best combination, and best endgame.

There was a tie for the 2014 NBCC best game. Rick named FM Nelson Castaneda and USCF NM James Kramnitz as co-winners "to honor their recent struggles for dominance of the club and fascinating play: Nitz with a strategic domination and Castaneda with a tactical flourish."

Rick presented all of the best game prizes at the NBCC Christmas party. The club extends its gratitude to Richard once again for being the judge of this contest and for the generosity he exemplified by giving the winners prizes with his own funds!

BEST GAME (TIE) – STRATEGIC

[Event "2014 NBCC Championship"]
[Date "2014.03.25"]
[Round "9"]
[White "James Nitz"]
[Black "FM Nelson Castaneda"]
[Result "1-0"]
[Annotator "FM Richard Bauer"]
[Game in 100 minutes with a 5-second delay]

1. e4 c5 2. c4 Nc6 3. Nc3 g6 4. Nge2 Bg7 5. g3 e6 6. Bg2 Nge7 7. O-O O-O
8. d3 a6 9. Be3 Nd4 10. Rb1!?

A well-known dynamically equal position has been reached. White has a slight advantage in space on the wings, compensated by the slight weakness on d4. Rather than focus his attention on the kingside only, White finds a way to expand on both sides of the board.}

10... Nec6 11. a3 Rb8 12. b4 {SEE DIAGRAM}

12... cxb4

{(This natural move actually allows White to eventually undermine the critical d4 square. Better but more complicated would be d6 ...
12... d6 13. b5 axb5 14. Nxb5 (14. cxb5 Ne7)
14... Nxb5 15. Rxb5 Ra8)}

13. axb4 b5 14. Qd2!?

{Indirectly guarding b4 while advancing White's ambitions across the board.}



AFTER 12. b4

14... d6 15. f4 Bd7 16. Rfc1 Qe7 17. Nxd4 Nxd4

(17... Bxd4 18. Bxd4 Nxd4 19. Qe3 e5 20. Nd5 Qd8 21. c5)

18. Qf2 {SEE DIAGRAM}

18... Nc6

(18... e5 19. Nd5 Qd8 20. c5 dxc5 21. fxe5 Bxe5 22. bxc5 Nc6 23. d4)

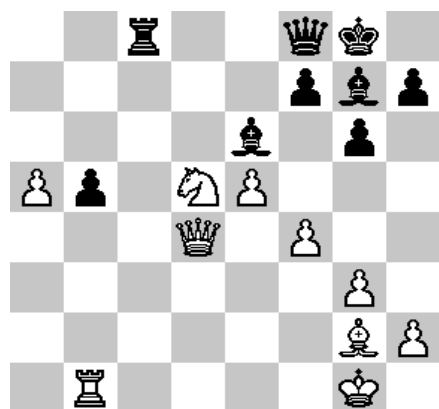
19. c5 Rfd8 20. d4 a5 21. bxa5 dxc5 22. d5 Nd4

(22... Nxa5 23. Bxc5 Qe8 24. Bb6)

23. e5 exd5 24. Nxd5 Qf8 25. Bxd4 cxd4 26. Qxd4 Be6 27. Rc5 Rdc8

(27... b4)

28. Rxc8 Rxc8 {SEE DIAGRAM}



AFTER 28... Rxc8

White is only up a pawn for the two bishops, but his beautifully placed pieces on the open board make it a winning advantage. In particular, the a-pawn is unstoppable.}

29. a6 Rc4 30. Qb6 Rc2 31. Nc7 Bf5 32. Rd1

(32. a7 {Could have been played right away since the threat of queening makes Rb1 immune.} 32... Rxg2+ 33. Kxg2 Be4+)

32... Qc8

(32... Qa3 33. a7)

33. a7 Rxg2+ 34. Kxg2 Be4+ 35. Kg1 Bf8 36. Rc1 b4 37. Qe3 Bb7 38. Qb6

{White lost his way in a presumed time scramble and may have allowed a repetition, but Black failed to recognize it.}

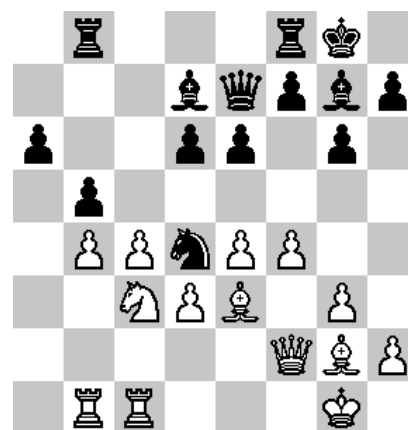
38... Be4 39. Re1 Ba8 40. Rc1 Be4 41. e6

{Breaking out of the pattern with a killing move that forces a winning queen swap.}

41... Bd5 42. e7! Bxe7 43. Qb8 swaps off Black's queen and makes a new one for White.

(41... fxe6 42. Qe3 Bb7 43. Qxe6+ Qxe6 44. Nxe6 b3 45. Rc7 Bd5 46. Rc8)

1-0



AFTER 18. Qf2

BEST GAME (TIE) / TACTICAL

[Event "2014 Oktoberfest Open Chess Championship"]

[Date "2014.10.14"]

[Round "4"]

[White "FM Nelson Castaneda"]

[Black "USCF NM James Nitz"]

[Result "1-0"]

[Annotator "FM Richard Bauer"]

[Game in 100 minutes with a 5-second delay]

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 d6 4. O-O Nf6 5. Re1 Be7 6. h3 O-O 7. c3 h6 8. d4 exd4 9. cxd4 a6

(9... d5 10. e5 Ne4 11. Nc3)

10. Ba4 Nd7 11. Nc3 Nb6 12. Bc2 f5!? {SEE DIAGRAM}

(12... Re8 {is safe but passive.})

13. Bf4 Bf8 14. Rc1 Bd7)

13. exf5!?

{Giving up some development in order to open lines and create weaknesses on the white squares.}

(13. e5 dxe5 14. Bb3+ Kh7 15. dxe5 Qxd1

16. Rxd1 {gives White fewer opportunities.})

13... Bxf5 14. d5 Nb4 15. Bxf5 Rxf5 16. Nd4 Re5

{The only move!} (16... Rf7 17. Ne6 Qd7 18. a3)

17. Ne6 Qd7 {SEE DIAGRAM}

{Now what? The d5 pawn is threatened along with its support of the Ne6.}

18. Bxh6!!

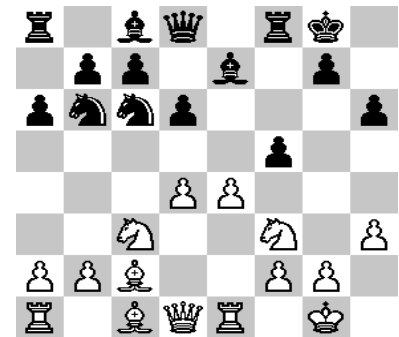
{The lazy Bc1 enters the game with a huge impact, vaporizing the Black kingside. Suddenly, Black can no longer control his critical g7 square. Giving Black just one tempo would have allowed him to consolidate with ... Bf6.}

18... Rxe1+

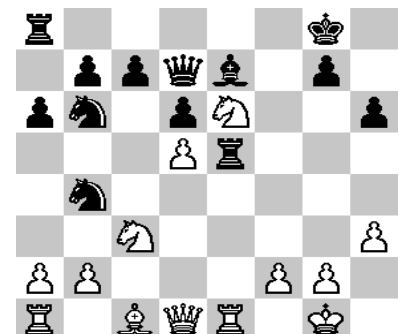
(18... N4xd5 19. Rxe5 dxe5 20. Nxg7) (18... gxh6 19. Rxe5 dxe5 20. Qg4+ Bg5 21. Qxb4)

19. Qxe1 Nc2 20. Qe4 Nxa1 21. Bxg7

(21. Qg6?? Bf6 {-+})



After 12... f5



After 17... Qd7

21... c5

{Trying to stop Bd4.} (21... Qe8 22. Bd4 Qf7 23. Nxc7)

22. Bd4

{Anyway!} 22... Qe8 {The only way to stop mate now would be to give up the queen for Ne6.}

23. Qg4+

{with mate on g7, so...}

1-0

BEST OPENING / COMBINATION (TIE)

[Event "2014 Oktoberfest Open Chess Championship"]

[Date "2014.10.21"]

[Round "5"]

[White "Suhaz Kodali"]

[Black "Mark Bourque"]

[Result "0-1"]

[Annotator "FM Richard Bauer"]

[Game in 100 minutes with a 5-second delay]

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bb5 Bc5 4. c3 f5 5. d4 fxe4

{The main line, but} (5... exd4 {is safer and probably better.})

6. Bxc6 dxc6 7. Nxe5 Bd6 8. Qh5+ {SEE DIAGRAM}

8... g6 9. Nxg6

{This obvious move is actually a mistake.
White maintains the advantage
by retreating...} (9. Qe2)

9... Nf6 10. Qh4 Rg8

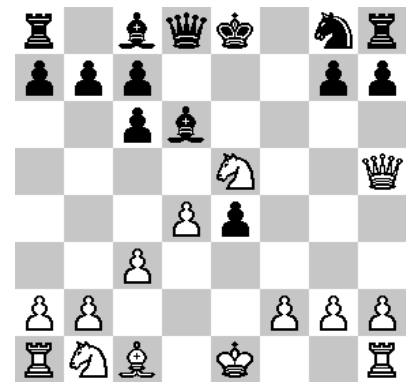
{Breaking the pin and targeting g2.}

11. Ne5 Bxe5 12. dxe5 Qd3

{More precise is...} (12... Bg4 13. Nd2 Qd3 14. f3 exf3 15. gxf3 Qe3+
16. Kd1 Bxf3+)

13. Qxf6

(13. exf6 Bg4 14. f3 exf3 15. Qf2 fxg2 16. Qxg2 Qd1+ 17. Kf2 Qe2+ 18. Kg1
Qe1+ 19. Qf1 Bh3+ 20. Bg5 Rxc5#) (13. h3)



After 8. Qh5+

13... Bg4 14. f3 Rf8

(14... exf3)

15. Qxf8+ Kxf8 16. Bh6+

{Bad development! The Bc1 will be missed.}

(16. fxg4 Kg8 17. c4 Re8 18. Nc3 Rxe5)

16... Kg8 17. fxg4 e3

{White is totally paralyzed with the knight on b1 needed to guard d2.}

18. Bg5

{Stops Rd8, but Black finds a longer path to the d-file, and White can do nothing to stop it!} (18. Rf1 Rd8)

18... Rf8 19. Bf6 Rf7 20. Bh4 Rd7 21. Na3 Qd2+ 22. Kf1 Rf7+ 23. Kg1 Rf2

{Mate in two.}

0-1

BEST ENDGAME

[Event "Paul Glidewell Double Quads"]

[Date "2014.11.04"]

[White "Danny Pascetta"]

[Black "USCF NM Dennis Prawira"]

[Result "0-1"]

[Annotator "FM Richard Bauer"]

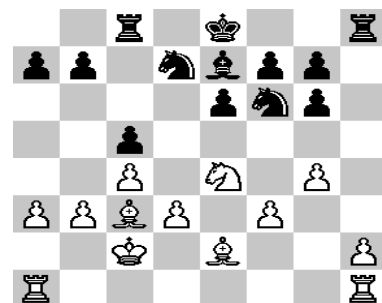
[Game in 45 minutes with a 5-second delay]

1. e4 c5 2. b3 d5 3. exd5 Qxd5 4. Nc3 Qe5+ 5. Qe2

(5. Be2)

5... Qxe2+ 6. Bxe2 Nc6 7. Nf3 Bf5 8. d3 Nf6 9. Be3 e6 10. Nh4 Bg4 11. f3 Bh5 12. g4 Bg6 13. Nxg6 hxg6 14. Ne4 Nb4 15. Kd1 Rc8 16. a3 Nbd5 17. Bd2 Be7 18. c4 Nb6 19. Bc3 Nbd7 20. Kc2 {SEE DIAGRAM}

White has two bishops for a weak h-pawn, rough equality. From this point on, Black does a masterful job of neutralizing White's advantages while exploiting his own. He starts by trading a pair of bishops.}



After 20. Kc2

20... Nxe4 21. dxe4 Bf6 22. Rad1 Bxc3 23. Kxc3 Rh3 24. Rdf1 Ne5 25. Kc2 Nc6

{Black could have secured the knight on e5 by ...g6-g5, but he has a better square in mind for the knight and a better piece in mind for e5.}

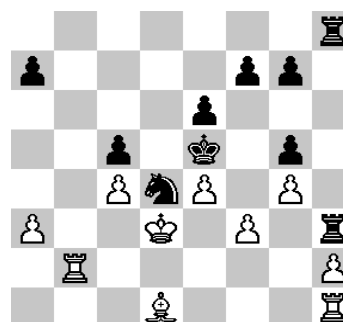
26. Bd1 Nd4+ 27. Kc3 Ke7 28. Rf2 g5 29. Kd2 Kd6 30. Ke3 Ke5 31. Rg2 Rch8 32. b4

{White finds counter-play on the queenside.}

32... b6 33. bxc5 bxc5 34. Rb2 {SEE DIAGRAM}

34... R8h4

{Black's pawns look more vulnerable to a rook invasion than White's, but looks are deceiving!}



After 34. Rb2

35. Rb7 Rxc4 36. Rxf7 Rxe4+ 37. Kd2 Reh4

{Every attacking thrust comes with tempo, keeping White's counter-play at bay.}

38. Rxc7 Rxc2+

{Black has played a brilliant endgame to this point, but this move could have blown the win. Much cleaner is...} (38... Nxf3+ 39. Bxf3 Rxf3 40. Rxc5+ Kd4)

39. Rxc2 Rxc2+ 40. Kd3 Rh1 41. Kd2 Kf4 42. Rf7+ Kg3 43. Rg7 Rh2+ 44. Kd3 Kf4

(44... Rh5 45. f4 Rh1)

45. Rxa7 Rh3 46. Rf7+ Nf5 47. a4

{The losing move. It is imperative to break the pin in order to hold the g-pawn, which will be faster than the a-pawn.} (47. Kd2 Rh2+ 48. Kd3 Ra2 49. Ra7 Nd4 50. Rf7+)

47... g4 48. a5 gxf3 49. Bxf3

(49. Rf8 e5 50. a6) (49. a6 f2+ 50. Ke2 Kg3 51. Rf8 Kg2)

49... Rxf3+ 50. Kd2 Ra3 51. Ra7 e5 52. a6 e4 53. Rc7 e3+ 54. Kd1 Kf3 55. a7 e2+ 56. Kd2 Ra2+ 57. Kc3

0-1

BOB CYR'S COMMENTARY

Can you believe that 2014 is over? I guess time does fly when you are having fun. And a whirl of fun is surely what the club had this past year. To commemorate the tenth anniversary of the NBCC newsletters, I am devoting this year's commentary to the big news that made club headlines in the last decade.

Ten years ago, I assumed the enormous role of club historian from the greatest contributor and the most venerated member ever to grace the halls of the NBCC, Mr. Arkadijs Strazdins. It was because of this gentleman's tireless, sheer devotion to the club in this capacity that I was inspired to continue his meticulous work and tradition for the club as its archivist. In addition to preserving and updating the club records, I, around that time, began writing about the club highlights during the year. These stories were the genesis of the annual NBCC newsletters.

A myriad of changes have occurred in the last decade that have noticeably transformed, enriched, and benefitted our club in so many areas. Rather than expound on every change, I have listed an executive summary of what I believe were the NBCC's major milestones from 2005 to 2014.

Schedule of Activities

Many ideas for new tournaments were created by the administration since 2005, and all of these events below became part of the NBCC's schedule of activities:

- Arkadijs Strazdins Cup, Oktoberfest Open, Planet Earth Chess Championship, Quick Chess Championship, Bullet Championship, rated blitz chess, "odds blitz chess," thematic events, team matches, honorary membership events, memorial tournaments, and rivals challenges.

In the last ten years, several formatting modifications have also been made to the club's major tournaments, especially the Club Championship. In addition, the sectioning of most of the club's tournaments began almost ten years ago.

Social Events

The growth of the NBCC's social network was perhaps the single-most important area of development in our club since 2005. In the last decade, the club and its members have hosted these social functions for the NBCC family:

- New Britain Summer Open picnic, Oktoberfest Dinner and Christmas Parties, Zimmerman Games Day, USCF NM Derek Meredith's Sporting Day, and social gatherings at the homes of many of our members.

There have been other moments in the last decade that also have been vital to the improvement of the club, such as the purchase of computerized pairing software, the increase in the number of tournament directing staff, the rise in membership to near record highs, and the collaboration with local and state chess organizations.

My friends, in the annals of the NBCC, it appears that we have traveled light years from where our club was just ten years ago. Never before has the club accomplished so much on so many levels in a relatively short duration. The leadership of Mr. Arkadijs Strazdins and those who served before and with him paved a solid foundation and framework on which those who served during the Mansigian, Pascetta, and Meredith administrations have built upon. The collective efforts of those who have served the club and those who serve presently have made the NBCC one of the best-managed chess clubs in America.

Throughout NBCC history, our successes have made our organization shine. Yet the challenges we have faced and dealt with have made our organization even stronger and richer. It has been an amazing honor and a privilege to serve in the treasured role of club historian and to be able to write all of these incredible stories. When I look back at a decade of memories, I know the club's brightest days are not just behind us. Our organization thrives in the present and will continue to prosper in the future. This is due to the heart, soul, and spirit of the management, the membership, and the chess community. This, my friends, has been the greatest story in NBCC history, a story that has been years in the making.

The officers wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

President:	Derek Meredith
Vice President:	Norman Burtness
Treasurer:	Major Andris Strazdins
Secretary:	Luis Delgado
Webmaster:	Brian Kosnoff



The membership currently stands at sixty. If you are not a member, I hope you will join or rejoin the club. I wish you and your family peace, health, and happiness in 2015. Bless you all.

Bob Cyr

SPECIAL ADDITION!

NBCC HISTORY TRIVIA

A DECADE OF MEMORIES: 2005 - 2014

The last decade has been one of the most shining periods in our club's history. There have been more memorable moments between 2005 and 2014 that have aided in the progression of the NBCC into many new and exciting directions than in any other period in our club's history. As always, whenever an opportunity rose to report on such advancements in the club, whether it was a membership achievement, a social event, a new tournament, etc., I was eager to get the scoop.

In celebration of the tenth anniversary of the NBCC newsletters, I devoted a special edition to club trivia in this year's newsletter. The ten questions below were solely written about and devoted to club highlights occurring in the last decade.

So, how sharp is your memory on the subject of NBCC history? Do you have what it takes to be an assistant NBCC historian? It is test time. Good luck! You will find the answers on page 34.

1. Who became the first member to win his own tournament organized by the NBCC?
 - a) Derek Meredith
 - b) James Nitz
 - c) Ted McHugh
 - d) Richard Bauer
2. How many NBCC secretaries have served the club in the last decade?
 - a) 3
 - b) 5
 - c) 7
 - d) 9
3. Which of the following NBCC milestones occurred in 2010?
 - a) Purchased pairing software
 - b) First veteran member honorary tournament
 - c) Sponsored record six teams at USATE
 - d) First Bullet Chess Tournament
4. Which of the following members became NBCC tournament directors in the same year?
 - a) Doug Fiske and Al Pinto
 - b) Bob Cyr and Marcus Komons
 - c) Randy Shane and Emily Pond
 - d) Dennis Himes and Mike Pascetta

5. Which of the following is not true about the New Britain Summer Open Chess Championship?
 - a) First barbeque lunch offered to players started in 2008
 - b) Held at four different venues in last decade
 - c) Seventy-eight players was record turnout in 2009
 - d) 2006 was first open-air tournament held since 1992

6. Which of these motions was ratified at the 2011 NBCC business meeting?
 - a) Eliminating Club Qualifying Tournament
 - b) Charging non-members higher tournament entry fees
 - c) Reducing time control in lower sections of major events
 - d) Creation of lower dues for hardship cases

7. Which of these events occurred most recently in NBCC history?
 - a) First Planet Earth Chess Championship
 - b) First State Blitz Chess Championship held by NBCC not at club
 - c) First match with Chess Club of Fairfield County
 - d) First Midnight On Main Street Blitz Chess Tournament

8. At which of the following venues did the NBCC host the most events in the last decade?
 - a) Hawk's Landing Country Club
 - b) Taste of India restaurant
 - c) Rockledge Country Club
 - d) Wickham Park

9. Of the following four membership honors, which occurred third in NBCC history?
 - a) Danny Rozovsky became club's youngest master
 - b) Nitzs became first members of the same family to tie for first place in major club event
 - c) Dennis Prawira achieved highest provisional rating in club history
 - d) Samantha Aiyathurai earned club's biggest upset

10. Which of these members has won or tied for first place, even if non-cash prizes were awarded, in the most major NBCC tournaments or sections of major NBCC tournaments since 2005?
 - a) Mark Bourque
 - b) Bob McDaniel
 - c) Brian Kosnoff
 - d) Jozef Madej

BONUS QUESTION

What is the sum of the number of inter- and intra-club matches the club has held in the last decade?

SOLUTION AND ANSWERS TO CHESS PUZZLE AND TRIVIA

CHESS PUZZLE (FROM COVER PAGE)

1. Rxb7+ Kxb7
2. Nxc5+ Kb6
3. Qb7+ Kxc5
4. Qc6+ Kd4
5. Bc3#

CHESS TRIVIA (FROM PAGES 19 - 20)

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. b | 2. b | 3. c | 4. c | 5. d |
| 6. c | 7. b | 8. c | 9. d | 10. a |

NBCC HISTORY TRIVIA: 2005 – 2014 (FROM PAGES 32 - 33)

1. c (Ted McHugh won first place in his own honorary tournament in April 2013.)
2. b (Carl Heineman, Marcus Komons, Brian Kosnoff, Dan Golda, and Luis Delgado were the club secretaries from 2005 to 2014.)
3. b (The first honorary membership tournament held by the club was for Bill Dworski, which occurred in October 2010.)
4. d (Dennis Himes and Mike Pascetta became club tournament directors in 2010.)
5. a (A barbeque lunch was first offered to players at the 2007 NB Summer Open.)
6. c (Incidentally, the first event where a shorter time control in the lower section was used was Oktoberfest Open 2011.)
7. d (The first Midnight on Main Street in Middletown Chess Tournament directed by the club took place on December 31, 2011.)
8. b (Four tournaments have been held at the Taste of India restaurant in the last decade - three honorary events (for Bill Dworski, Andy Strazdins, and Bob Milardo) plus the 2014 Planet Earth tournament. In the last decade, three events each were held at the Hawk's Landing Country Club and Wickham Park, with the Rockledge Country Club being host to two club events in the same duration).
9. a (Danny Rozovsky attained the title of USCF NM in June 2010. The achievements earned by Dennis Prawira and the Nitzs occurred in 2007 and 2006, respectively. Samantha earned her achievement in August 2010.)
10. d (Jozef Madej has won or tied for first place, even if non-cash prizes were awarded, in four major club tournaments or sections of major club tournaments in the last decade. Brian Kosnoff has accomplished this three times in the last decade, and both Mark Bourque and Bob McDaniel have accomplished this twice in the last decade.)

BONUS QUESTION: 7 (I will admit that this question was very challenging, as if the others were not!)

In the last decade, the club has held three intra-club matches (the Generations Team events in 2011, 2013, and 2014). In addition, the club has participated in four inter-club matches in the last ten years - the match with the Springfield Chess Club in 2005, the match with the Fairfield County and the match with the UConn Chess Club, both in 2011, and the match with the Waterbury Chess Club (its first one with the NBCC) in 2012.