



SKITTLES ROOM

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Alexander Wins ChessCafe.com 5th Anniversary Quiz

by Hanon W. Russell

Northern Ireland's Alasdair Alexander easily outdistanced a field of over 40 entrants from 12 countries to win the ChessCafe.com 5th Anniversary Quiz. Alexander missed only three questions to score 88%, 9 points ahead of Holland's Joeri Piet. Third place was taken by Dmitry Gorodin from Germany (72), while American Tony Clayton finished fourth (68). Michel Lejardin (Canada); Fernando Hernandez (Mexico); Jim Uselton (U.S.); Dimitris Skyrianoglou (Greece); Ramesh Ramakrishnan (Malaysia); and Arunas Simonaitis (U.S.) rounded out the rest of the top ten finishers.

For his effort, the winner will receive a *Gambit Analog Chess Clock*. Copies of *The Pirc Alert!* by Chernin and Albur; *The Chess Games of Adolf Anderssen*; and *Tal-Botvinnik 1960* by Tal will go to the second through fourth prize winners respectively. In addition, each of the first ten finishers will receive a four-month subscription to GM Alex Baburin's daily chess e-zine, *Chess Today*, as well as a copy of the electronic book *Secret Matches: The Unpublished Games of Mikhail Botvinnik*, with selected games annotated and theoretical section by Jan Timman.

The pattern for submitting entries in the quiz was similar to that of the year-end holiday quizzes: a trickle at the beginning, a flood the last couple of days. Thank you to everyone who entered and for the many kind words and wishes. We do appreciate it.

When informed about his victory, Alasdair sent us the following:

I am surprised to have done so well in the quiz as I was sure that there would be a few maximum scores. As usual, the quiz had a lot of questions that weren't quite as easy as they seemed at first glance. It is a tribute to the efficiency of the ChessCafe Archives that I was able to find most of the answers in a comparatively short space of research time.

*Congratulations to **ChessCafe.com** on its 5th Anniversary. Before I became aware of its existence (probably in its first 6 months), I had a minimal knowledge of the history of the game (naming the world champions was about the limit of it) but I have become hooked and am now doing a little amateur research into the life and games of a fellow native of Northern Ireland, Alexander McDonnell. I've really enjoyed reading the articles, which are all of a very high calibre written by people who have a genuine love of the game. The other offerings*



including the Bulletin Board, ChessCafe Reader and Gallery show that you are willing to take risks (which almost always pay off) and that you don't rest on your laurels. Thank you to all involved.

ChessCafe.com 5th Anniversary Quiz The Answers

1. Who was the first regular **ChessCafe.com** columnist?

Answer: Tim Harding, whose first column appeared in June 1996. This was a fairly easy start to the quiz.

2. Identify the following quote: "...the void was better left empty for the time being."

Answer: Taylor Kingston, in his review of *Alekhine's Anguish* by Charles Yaffe. A more difficult question, but still able to be found with a little work. This was the first of three questions missed by the first-place finisher.

3. Which **ChessCafe.com** columnist was described as "...a man of mystery and intrigue."?

Answer: This is how former **ChessCafe.com** columnist Chris DePasquale described himself in the introduction to his first column.



4. The games of which world champion were featured weekly at **ChessCafe.com**?

Answer: Mikhail Botvinnik. By the way, for a postscript to this matter, see the letters department of the current issue of *New In Chess*.

5. When the publication of these games (Q.4) was ceased, what replaced them?

Answer: The weekly Endgame Study, which has become one of the most popular features at **ChessCafe.com**.

6. True or False: The Skittles Room has only published articles in English.

Answer: False. An article from the German magazine *Kaissiber* about Emil Diemer was featured in its original German.



7. Who was the first American to write a monthly column at **ChessCafe.com**?

Answer: Former *Chess Life* editor Burt Hochberg, whose *Perspectives* column began in November 1997.

8. Several columnists accept questions from readers. British GM Nigel Short sent in one. What question did he ask?

Answer: The question was: "Can you suggest a good opening for me to play next time I play against Kasparov? Or Anand or Kramnik, for that matter?" It appeared in Gary Lane's second column in March 1999. We thought this might

pose considerable difficulties for contestants, but a surprising number got it right.

9. What was the first thread at The Bulletin Board about?

Answer: The thread - also one of the longest - was named “Computer Supremacy: The Demise of the Game” and was fueled by the Kasparaov-Deep Blue II match going on at the time. Again, many people were able to come up with the correct answer. This was more difficult than question 8, since the threads from the Bulletin Board are no longer maintained online.

10. Name the **ChessCafe.com** columnist who featured women’s chess in her column.



Answer: Susan Lalic

11. Name the **ChessCafe.com** columnist who featured computer play in his column.

Answer: Danny Kopec

12. The **ChessCafe.com** has reviewed more than just books on its Book Review page. However, there has never been a review about:

- a. a book about problems
- b. a chessplaying computer
- c. a chess set
- d. a movie featuring chess

Answer: A movie featuring chess has never been reviewed on the **ChessCafe.com** Book Review page. Alexander stumbled here also. He gave both c. and d. as the answer.

13. True or False: The “Checkpoint” column originally had a different title.

Answer: False. It has always been known as *Checkpoint*. It did however have a different author. Currently written by Danish FM Carsten Hansen, it was initially written by Irish GM Alex Baburin.



Historical Archives

14. The following quote - “...a book worth reading and worth having” - was made by whom and about which book?

Answer: Larry Tapper, in his review of *Uncompromising Chess* by Alex Belyavksy. This difficult question was the third and final one missed by the winner.

15. Who was the third **ChessCafe.com** regular monthly columnist?

Answer: Edward Winter.

16. Which book finished second in the competition for the first **ChessCafe.com** Book of The Year Award?

Answer: *Soviet Chess* by Andrew Soltis. This question tripped up about two-thirds of the entrants.

17. Which **ChessCafe.com** columnist coined the rule: “Call yourself Gurevich” ?

Answer: Richard Forster in his April 2000 *Late Knight* column (Rule 11).



18. Which was the first column available in ChessCafe Reader format ?

Answer: The March 2001 *Opening Lanes* column by Gary Lane. By the way, we now offer almost three dozen *free* columns and articles in CCR format.

19. What are the moves of The Five Pawns Attack?

Answer: The moves 1 d4 Nf6 2 c6 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 f4 0-0 6 Be2 Na6 7 g4 were dubbed the “Five Pawns Attack” in the February 2001 *Opening Lanes* column.

20. True or false: Occasionally, the same events or games are treated in separate **ChessCafe.com** columns by different columnists.

Answer: True. Only a couple of people missed this one.

21. Who is this?

Answer: Antonio Bottacchi. You had to do some research in the Gallery Archives to answer this correctly. And no, it is not the young Capablanca or the beardless Taylor Kingston.



22. Among the current **ChessCafe.com** columnists, how many are international masters?

Answer: Four: Gary Lane, Mark Dvoretsky, Richard Forster and Tim Harding. The twist was Tim Harding, who is a correspondence IM.



23. There have been four **ChessCafe.com** Holiday Quizzes. What was the highest winning percentage achieved?

Answer: 88% by Steve Wrinn in the second (1998) quiz. Another answer easy to find.

24. In 1999, one of the great events of the past was featured by several **ChessCafe.com** columnists. Which event?

Answer: The New York 1924 tournament, on the occasion of its 75th

anniversary.

25. True or False: **ChessCafe.com** once had a classified advertising section.

Answer: True.



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