



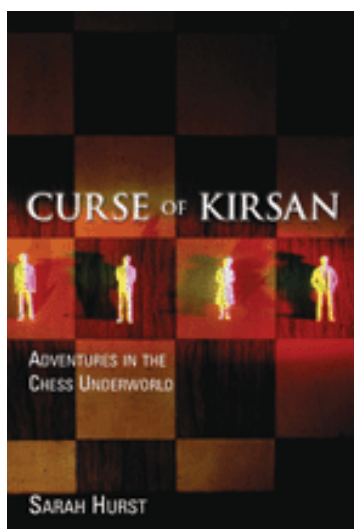
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Susan Polgar on Chess

Susan Polgar



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My Year-end Summary and My Wish for the New Year

First and foremost, I would like to wish all of you a wonderful holiday season and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. 2002 has been an up and down but interesting year for me and I have so much to look forward to in 2003.

After so many years of being away from chess, I am now once again very actively involved with the game in many capacities. I have accepted the position of chairperson of the U.S. Women's Chess Committee to make a difference for women's chess in America. I am very involved with scholastic chess issues. I have also started many different chess projects with my business partner and manager Paul Truong. We just finished our first book titled *Teach Yourself Chess in 24 Hours* (Pearson Education 2002). We are working on another half dozen more. We are also regular columnists for *Chess Life*, *ChessCafe.com*, *School Mates*, and *Chess Horizons*, etc. And by the way, I even managed to play a few games here and there.

In the world of chess, there were many exciting events, from Russia versus the World, the Bled Olympiad, Kramnik-Deep Fritz and the World Championship unification plan in Prague, to Kasparov - Karpov in Times Square, etc. With the help of hit movies like *Harry Potter* and *Lord of the Rings*, the game of chess is as popular as ever. After detailed research and through my own personal experience, I firmly believe that chess can help children develop mental disciplines, analytical skills, strategic thinking skills, and will help children excel in schools and in life.

Now is the time to bring chess to the next level for the general public and mainstream media. But in order to succeed, everyone needs to work together. I have been disappointed to see so many divisions among chess players, organizers, federations, etc. I realize that everyone is entitled to their own opinion. However, I urge everyone to settle their differences privately, not through open letters and derogatory e-mails.

Let's imagine there are CEOs from major corporations who are interested



in investing money in chess. Do you think they would still be interested after reading all the insults, personal attacks, and nonsense out there on the Internet? That is why very few players really make money in the game, especially with endorsements.

For the longest time, chess professionals have been complaining about small prize funds, terrible playing conditions and lack of respect. Does the world owe us? Does the general public owe us for our life-long sacrifice to achieve greatness in chess? I don't think so. If you want everything to be better, do your part to help.

When boys and girls approach us for autographs or ask to have their pictures taken with their chess heroes, often times, chess professionals just shun them, turning their backs on them. When this type of behavior exists, how can anyone expect chess to become a mainstream sport or game?

Let's not forget the dress code for chess players. Some players dress like they have been living in an alley for months. When they talk, so much hatred and bitterness come out of their mouths with each sentence. And many treat the press very poorly. Is this the image we want the world and the sponsors to see?

Politics, personal interests, egos, hatred, etc. are ruining something that can be potentially good for everyone. I remember a famous quote by former President Kennedy: "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country."

I ask all the chess professionals to do the same. Ask not what the chess world can do for you; ask what you can do to make this game better for future generations. And you will benefit from this also. I urge everyone to change their approach for the New Year. Let's all work together, in peace, harmony, with mutual respect. Chess is the game we all love, let make it better and not worst. Let's be ambassadors of the game and do something positive.

One other important point I would like to address regarding the time control. I understand that many people are fighting to maintain the traditional time control – 7-hour games – while others are fighting to shorten it. This is my take on it.

We need to have both time controls and we need to value the events with both time controls. I realize that "perfect chess" cannot be produced with the rapid or blitz time control as some would argue. You have no disagreement from me there. However, one must take the economics of chess into consideration. It is hard to ask the audience to be patient with a 7-8 hour game. They can go have lunch, take a short nap and there is no progress on the board. Because of this, chess is not so exciting for

television, which dramatically reduces the potential sponsorships.

However, in a blitz or rapid game, it creates excitement for the audience and the sponsors, which in turn put money in the players' pockets. So what is more important? Perfect chess or money to pay your rent?

The answer is why not both? In tennis, Pete Sampras and Boris Becker ruled the grass of Wimbledon and the heat rising hard court of Flushing Meadow while they were mere mortals on the grueling red hot clay of Roland Garros. On the other hand, players like Wilander, Bruguera, Kuerten, etc. at one time ruled the red clay of Roland Garros while succumbed to the fast green grass of Wimbledon.

Just because one is good in one type of time limit in chess, it does not mean that he/she is as good in other time controls. Why not recognize different types of champions? If you want to have one true absolute champion, let the players compete in the traditional time control, rapid and blitz all at once and may the best player win. If you want perfect chess, eventually, I believe you will see it in future computers.

In the present time, chess will have a difficult time competing with other more exciting games/sports unless changes are made. And rather than eliminating something, I propose a compromise, to promote both fast and slow time controls. This may just be the change that we need to bring chess to the next level. While we are at it, why not promote exhibition "blindfold blitz or rapid" chess (as in the Melody Amber tournaments) as well to attract additional potential sponsors. That sure creates a lot of additional excitement for the audience as well.

Thank you and Happy New Year to all!

The 19th World Junior Championship for Girls was held in Goa, the 25th State of India Republic from December 9th to December 20th. After 13 grueling nail biting rounds, the top 3 finishers remained virtually the same as a year earlier in Athens, Greece. The only difference is the tie-breaks order was reversed this time around.

Last year, Humpy Koneru of India beat out Xue Zhao of China to win the Gold while Nadezhda Kosintseva of Russia finished in a tie for 3rd place with half a point behind. This year, Xue Zhao got her revenge and got the Gold on tie-breaks over Humpy while Nadezhda Kosintseva once again finished half a point behind for the bronze, followed by the other Kosintseva (Tatiana) in clear 4th place.

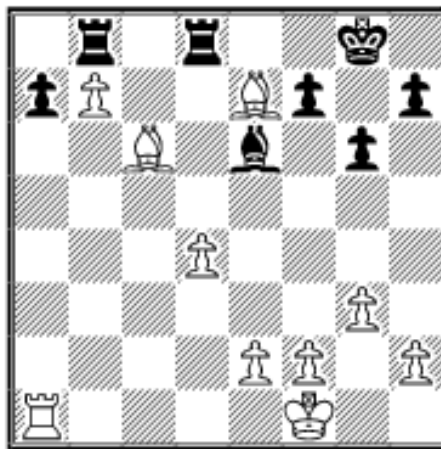
Xue Zhao's first place finish was well deserved since she was in the lead for most of the tournament, only to be caught up by young Indian Star Humpy Koneru in the last few rounds. Another remarkable point was Xue's rating was more than 100 points less than Humpy's. Even with Humpy right behind trying to catch her, Xue did not falter and remained strong and calm.

What impressed me about these young ladies was their maturity, fighting spirits, strong nerves, good understanding of positional chess, etc. Women's chess has really come a long way. I have no doubt that we will hear these names again in the near future. They are the next generation of Women's Chess.

Below are some good games from the recent World Junior Chess Championship in Goa.

WGM Zhao, Xue (2367) – Dronavalli, Harika (2248) World Junior Chess Championship, Goa (Round 13)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.g3 Bg7 6.Bg2 Nxc3 7.bxc3 0–0 8.Ba3 Nd7 9.Nf3 c5 10.0–0 cxd4 11.Nxd4 Nb6 12.Qb3 Bf6 13.Bb4 Qc7 14.a4 Bd7 15.a5 Nc4 16.a6 (A very good sacrifice for positional advantage. This shows her tremendous self-confidence in a must win game for the title) **16...Nd2 17.Qd5 Nxf1 18.axb7 Rab8 19.Kxf1 Bxd4 20.cxd4 Be6 21.Qc6 Qxc6 22.Bxc6 Rfd8 23.Bxe7** (White is clearly better. The problem now is how to convert it into a win in an opposite-color bishop endgame)

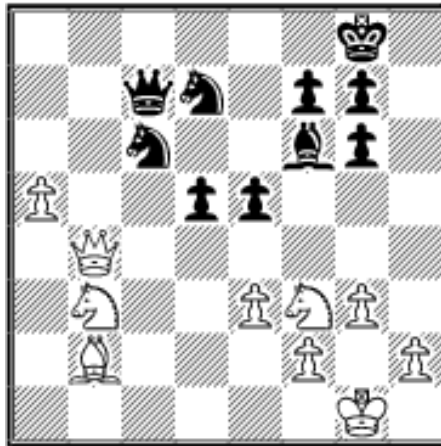


23...Bd5 24.Bxd8 Bxc6 25.Bf6 Rxb7 26.f3 Kf8 27.g4 Ke8 28.g5 Kd7 29.Kf2 Bb5 30.h4 a6 31.h5 Rc7 32.e3 Rc2+ 33.Kg3 Kc7 34.h6 (A brilliant mature plan from the young Xue to eventually march her King to the g7-square) **34...Kd7 35.Kf4 Rc8 36.d5 Rc2 37.Ra3 Rc7 38.Bd4 Be2 39.e4 Rc8 40.Ke5 Ke7 41.f4 Bb5 42.Rc3 Rxc3 43.Bxc3 Bd3 44.Bb4+ Ke8 45.Kf6 Bxe4 46.Kg7 f5 47.gxf6 Bxd5 48.f7+** (very nice move to seal the win) **48...Bxf7 49.Kxh7 1-0**

GM Koneru, Humpy (2484) - Milliet, Sophie (2164) World Junior Chess Championship, Goa (Round 13)

1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 Nf6 3.e3 c6 4.c4 a6 5.b3 Bg4 6.Nbd2 e6 7.Bd3 Nbd7

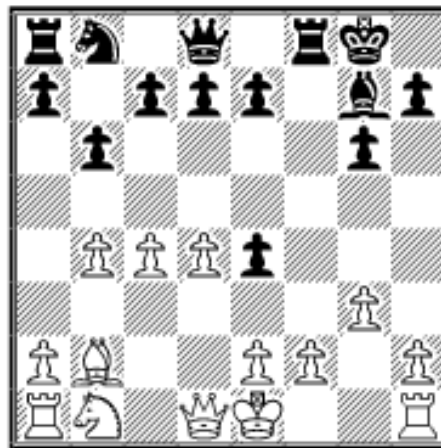
8.Bb2 Bd6 9.0-0 0-0 10.Qc2 Qb8 11.a4 a5 12.Bc3 Bh5 13.Rfb1 Qc7 14.c5 Be7 15.b4 axb4 16.Rxb4 b6 17.cxb6 Nxb6 18.Rbb1 (Even though White is better, it did not seem that White has gotten so much out of opening. However, Humpy proved that she is patient enough to maximize her advantage) 18...Nbd7 19.Ra2 Bg6 20.Bxg6 hxg6 21.Rab2 Rfb8 22.Rxb8+ Rxb8 23.a5 c5 24.Rxb8+ Nxb8 25.dxc5 Qxc5 (White is better but it is not easy to finish off this game) 26.Nb3 Qc7 27.Qb2 Nc6 28.Nfd4 Na7 29.Nd2 Nd7 30.g3 Bf6 (Black should still be able to hold this game. But Humpy calmly tried to exploit her chances) 31.Qb4 Be5 32.Bb2 Bf6 33.N2b3 e5 34.Nf3 Nc6? (34...Qc8 is probably better. It is hard to see how White could make progress) 35.Qb5 Qd6 36.a6 d4? (Creating additional unnecessary weakness)



37.exd4 exd4 38.Qb7 Qd5??
(Losing instantly by allowing...)
39.a7 1-0

WGM Zhao, Xue (2367) - WGM Kosintseva, Tatiana (2427) World Junior Chess Championship, Goa (Round 7)

1.d4 f5 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nf3 g6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.b4 Ne4 7.Bb2 b6 8.Nfd2 Bb7 9.Nxe4 Bxe4 10.Bxe4 fxe4



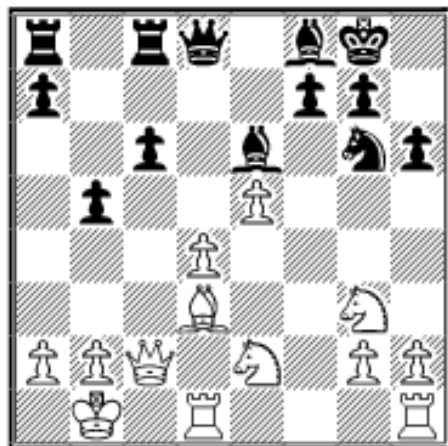
11.Qb3 Nc6 12.e3 e6 13.0-0 Qg5 14.Nd2 Nxd4 (A cute series of exchanges for Black but it really brought nothing) 15.Bxd4 Bxd4 16.Nxe4 Qf5 17.Rad1 Bg7 18.Nc3 Bxc3 19.Qxc3 d6 (The position is even. It seems that the game would lead to a quiet draw) 20.c5 (Xue is trying to push the issue, going for the win against the much higher rated Kosintseva) 20...bxc5 21.bxc5 d5 22.Rb1 Rab8 23.Rb3 c6 24.Qa5 Rxb3 25.axb3 Qf7 26.Qa6 Qc7 27.Ra1 Rf7 (It seems that Black can easily draw this game at this point) 28.h4 e5 29.e4 d4



30.Qc4 Qd7 31.Kg2 Kg7 32.f3 Rf8
33.Qa6 Rf7 34.b4 h6 35.b5 (Once again, Xue is pushing the issue, trying to win) 35...cxb5 36.c6 Qd6 37.Qxb5 Qf6 38.Ra3 Rc7 39.Qd5 h5? (39...Kh7 and Black should be able to hold on for a draw) 40.Rb3 Qxc6? (40...Kh6 is a much better try) 41.Qxe5+ (Now White is completely winning. The Black King is too vulnerable) 41...Kh7 42.Rb8 (A nice finish by the tournament winner) 42...Qc2+ 43.Kh3 Rg7 44.Qe8 Kh6 45.Qh8+ Rh7 46.Qf8+ Rg7 47.Rb7 1-0

WIM Tsai, Cindy (2204) - Trujillo Delgado, Defnae (2036) World Junior Chess Championship, Goa (Round 4)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bg5 c6 6.Qc2 Nbd7 7.e3 Bd6 8.Bd3 Nf8 9.Nge2 Ng6 10.Ng3 h6 11.Bxf6 Qxf6 12.0-0-0 0-0 13.Kb1 b5 14.f3 (14. e4 immediately is more ambitious) 14...Be6 15.Nce2 (Once again 15. e4 is OK) 15...Rfc8 16.e4 dxe4 17.fxe4 Qd8? (The best defense for Black is 17...Bxg3, even though White is still better) 18.e5 Bf8



19.Bxg6 fxe6 20.Qxg6 Bf7 21.Qf5 g6 22.Qg4 g5 23.h4 Qa5 24.Nc1 Bg6+ 25.Ka1 Ba3 26.Qe6+

1-0 A very nice game by the young American.

Paul Truong assisted Susan Polgar in the preparation of this column. Susan Polgar is available for chess instruction. For more information, visit the Polgar Chess Center, 97-09 64th Road, Rego Park, NY 11374 (Tel: 718-897-4600) or email: PolgarChessInc@aol.com



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