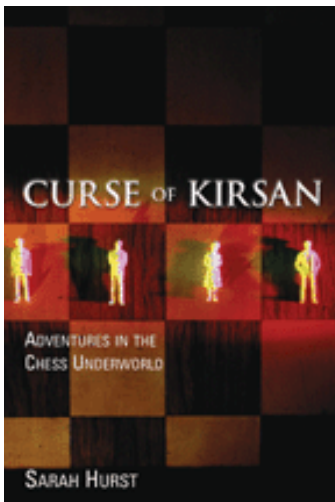




COLUMNISTS

Susan Polgar on Chess

Susan Polgar



Curse of Kirsan
by Sarah Hurst

Exciting New Additions to the Annual Polgar Girl's Event

In August 2004, the inaugural Susan Polgar National Invitational for Girls began with a bang. Thirty four state representatives took part in this historic event. This tournament created new opportunities for many young female chess players across the country and I received countless e-mails and letters from young girls, parents, and coaches from across the country supporting this initiative.

More states will now hold exclusive all-girl qualifying events to select their representatives for a spot in Phoenix, Arizona from August 6-11, 2005. Plus, more chess scholarships will be available for girls, which is wonderful news. Without it, these players may have lacked the motivation to continue in chess.

With the success of the 2004 Susan Polgar inaugural event and the incredible success of the 2004 US Women' Olympiad Team, the momentum is with us and we must take advantage of this opportunity to boost women's chess in America. Therefore, the following events have been added to the 2005 tournament to encourage more involvement and participation from young girls:

- **Susan Polgar National Invitational Blitz Championship for Girls**
- **Susan Polgar National Invitational Puzzle Solving Contest for Girls**
- **Susan Polgar National Invitational Chess Training Program for Girls**
(to help girls improve their chess and life skills)

These events are open to all participants and alumni of the Susan Polgar National Invitational for Girls. It will give all the girls a chance to reunite annually to play chess, improve their game, and maintain the wonderful friendships that they have made. In addition, the Polgar Committee will award three automatic qualifying spots to the top finishing girls of the Elementary (K-6), Junior High (K-9) and the High School (K-12) Championship sections at the 2005 Supernationals Chess Championship.

Rules and Conditions for the Annual Susan Polgar National Invitational for Girls (January 2005)

1. The tournament will be played during the U.S. Open Championship each year. Starting time of each round will be at 11:00 A.M. The time control will be 90

minutes per game with 30 seconds increment added on per move. Registration will be required at pre-tournament registration.

2. Each state will be allowed one representative. Alternates may be substituted as the official representative no later than June 1. (If there are an odd number of entrants in the tournament, the Chairperson of the Polgar Committee may allow the host state to enter an additional qualified player.) The Chairperson of the Polgar Committee may allow exceptions for cause from the entry deadline of May 25. Should the state affiliate fail to respond to the notice for this tournament, the Chairperson of the Polgar Committee and/or USCF may determine in its sole discretion the candidate from that state. Alternates may be substituted as the official representative no later than June 1.

3. All players must be under the age of 19 as of September 1 of the year in which the tournament is held, and have been enrolled, during the previous spring, in a school located in the state they represent. Students who are home schooled on a full time basis prior to June 1 of the year in which the tournament is held and under the age of 19 as of September 1 of the year in which the tournament is held, are eligible to represent the state in which they reside. Proof of eligibility will be the responsibility of the players and the state official certifying the representative and alternate.

4. All players must be under the age of 19 on September 1 of the year in which the tournament is held, and have been enrolled, in a school (up to 12th grade) located in the state they represent. Home schooled students who are under the age of 19 on September 1 of the year in which the tournament is held and who have never attended college on a full time basis prior to June 1 of the year in which the tournament is held, are eligible to represent the state in which they reside. Proof of eligibility will be the responsibility of the players and of the state official certifying the representative and alternate.

5. Players will be required to play in and complete all six rounds of the tournament. Failure to do so, without permission of the Tournament Director, will result in a forfeiture of expense monies.

6. Player will be required to furnish the Tournament Director with a legible and complete score sheet.

7. Players will be required to furnish the Tournament Director an emergency phone number of a parent/guardian.

8. Players are responsible for their own travel and hotel expenses.

9. Players who complete the tournament will receive \$100 in travel stipend, which is provided by the Susan Polgar Foundation.

10. The prize fund, sponsored by the Susan Polgar Foundation, will be \$1,250 divided into four scholarship prizes: 1st \$500, 2nd \$300, 3rd \$250, 4th \$200. These prizes will be paid to the players directly by the Susan Polgar Foundation,

but only upon receipt of proof of enrollment in a college, trade or technical school.

11. The winner of the tournament will be crowned the Susan Polgar National Invitational Champion. In case of ties, co-champions will be recognized. However, a short time control play-off will determine the winner of the champion's plaque / trophy.

12. The University of Texas at Dallas agrees to award a full four-year academic scholarship to the highest finishing player who has not graduated from high school by August. In the case of ties for these scholarships, tie-breaks used will be 1. Modified Median. 2. Solkoff 3. Cumulative and 4. Cumulative of Opposition, in that order.

13. It is the goal of the Polgar Committee to have all 50 states (2 for California and 2 for Texas), the District of Columbia, and the Territories of the United States represented. Consequently, we strongly encourage each state affiliate and the District of Columbia to hold a scholastic championship tournament to determine its girls' champion. Failing this, rating criteria may be acceptable.

14. A scholastic girls' champion or the highest rated girls' scholastic player in a state that has no state affiliate of the USCF should contact the Chairman of the Polgar Committee who is currently: FM Paul Truong c/o Polgar Chess Center 103-10 Queens Boulevard (Suite 1C) Forest Hills, NY 11375 – Tel: (212) 748-9587 – E-mail: PaulTruong@aol.com

15. The Chairman of the Polgar Committee and its members may elect to award 2 or more wild cards each year for the Susan Polgar National Invitational for Girls based on very special circumstances and in its sole discretion.

16. Extra events:

- Susan Polgar National Invitational Blitz Championship for Girls
- Susan Polgar National Invitational Puzzle Solving Contest for Girls
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These events are opened to all participants and alumni of the Susan Polgar National Invitational for Girls.

Contact:

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E-mail: PaulTruong@aol.com

GM Susan Polgar
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E-mail: SusanPolgar@aol.com

The 2005 US Championships – The Beginning of the New Guard

The 2005 US Championships have just concluded and it was one of the most exciting championships in recent times. Both the Open and Women's section winners were decided in the last round. At one point, both champions Nakamura and Goletiani were in losing positions, but somehow they came through to force a play-off against GM Alex Stripunsky and WFM Tatev Abrahamyan.

In the play-off, both Nakamura and Goletiani won in decisive fashion to become first time champions. I am very happy for Rusa. Just two short years ago, she was about to quit chess. She hardly played at that time and most of her chess activities consisted of teaching for a living. Her career would have just ended without any future prospect.

Because of the US Women's Olympiad Program that was created by Frank Niro, Paul Truong and I, her interest in chess was vigorously renewed. Even though she did not make the final 2004 US Women's Olympiad team, she did win the Ladies Continental by a convincing margin and qualified for the US Championship at the 2003 US Open in Los Angeles. Rusa's progress was enough to win her the most prestigious Samford Scholarship (the first woman to do so) and now she just captured her first US Women's Championship. It could not have happened to a nicer person.

Hikaru followed his sensational win at the US Championship by trouncing the other child prodigy GM Sergey Karjakin of the Ukraine in a match by the score of 4½-1½. In my opinion, Hikaru is the most talented American player since Bobby Fischer. With the strong support of his step Dad Sunil, his mother Carol and his brother Asuka, I think Hikaru will go a long way. However, I do think that he will soon need assistance with his chess if he wants to be the best in the world. He has the drive, determination and talent to do it. With the right combination, the sky is the limit for this talented young man.

The other story of the US Championship was the recent comeback of my friend GM Gata Kamsky who was at one time a World Championship challenger and the third highest rated player in the world. Even though he was very rusty, Gata still showed that he was a tough opponent by completing the US Championship without a loss. I hope that with proper training, Gata can reclaim his place as one of the most elite players in the world.

The Passing of an Old Guard – An American legend

I am saddened by the recent passing of grandmaster Arnold Denker, an American legend, a true gentleman, and a noted chess philanthropist for his support of the US Chess Trust among others.



Polgar, Denker, Karpov and Gayatri

Arnold Denker was born in New York in 1914. At onetime, he was a boxer. When he took up chess seriously, he faced one of the strongest groups of chess players the U.S. has ever produced which included Reshevsky, Fine, Horowitz, Dake, and Kashdan, etc. This group of American players made the U.S. the top nation in the early Olympiads. Arnold established himself in that elite group by winning the 1944 U.S. Championship with one of the most impressive performances in US history: 14 wins, 0 losses and 3 draws. He then defended his title successfully against Herman Steiner of Los Angeles in an “East vs. West” challenge match.



Denker Tournament of High School Champions

One of the things that GM Denker will always be remembered for is the Denker Tournament of High School Champions, which he created and sponsored. This event has given countless young high school chess champions across the country opportunities to compete on a national level and a chance to earn chess scholarships. His passing is a great loss for US chess but his legacy will forever remain. He will always be in our hearts and I offer my condolences to his family.

During the US Open in 2003 in Los Angeles, GM Denker was kind enough to sit down with Paul and me for an interview. I will publish that full interview in next month’s column.

GM Susan Polgar - IM Ildiko Madl (Hungary)

36th Chess Olympiad, October 27, 2004

This was a very tough game psychologically. I originally did not want to play against the team from my native Hungary and against my former Olympiad teammate. Before the game I was up all night trying to make the decision “to play or not to play.” In the end I had to make this personal sacrifice for the sake of America.

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 c6

In the years when we used to be on the “same Gold Medal team” with Ildiko, she used to strictly play the Benoni. However, in recent years she switched to the Slav.

4.e3 Bg4

This was a small surprise. In some previous games, Madl played 4...Bf5 or 4...e6.

5.h3 Bh5 6.Qb3

More common is 6.Nc3 without Qb3.

6...Qc7

The other typical choice is 6...Qb6.

7.Nc3 e6 8.g4

This maneuver forcibly achieves the trade of the white knight for the black bishop.

8...Bg6 9.Ne5 Nbd7 10.Nxg6 hxg6

Now Black threatens to win a pawn with 11...Nxg4.

11.g5 Nh5 12.cxd5 exd5 13.Be2 Be7 14.h4 0–0–0 15.Bd2 Kb8

A wise move getting away from any future danger on the c-file.

16.0–0–0 f6 17.gxf6

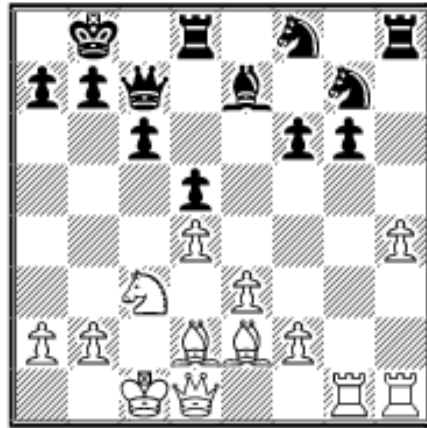
Perhaps 17.Rdg1 was even better, continuing to exploit the fact that the knight on h5 is out of play.

17...gxf6 18.Rdg1 Nf8

If 18...Rdg8, I planned 19.e4! and Black cannot play 19...dxe4? because White

wins a piece with 20.Bxh5.

19.Qd1 Ng7?!



Better was 19...f5 20.Bxh5 Rxh5 21.Rxg6 Rxh4.

20.Bd3 f5 21.h5!

Using the fact the knight on g7 is unprotected.

21...Bf6?

This is already a serious mistake. Black had to take on h5. 21...Rxh5 22.Rxh5 Nxb5

23.Bxf5 gxf5 24.Qxh5 with only a tiny advantage for White.

22.hxg6 Rxh1 23.Rxh1 Nxb5

In the next few moves, White will noticeably improve the position of each piece!

24.Rh6 Qf7

The only move that protects everything.

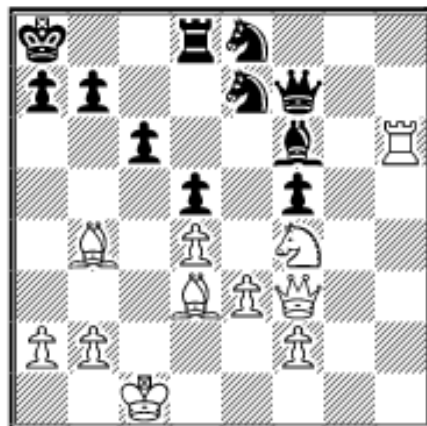
25.Qf3 Ne7 26.Ne2!

Bringing the knight into action!

26...Ka8

Getting away from any potential checks along the b8-h2 diagonal.

27.Nf4 Ne8 28.Bb4!



Now finally all the white pieces are actively working in great cooperation!

28...Bg7?!

Better would have been 28...Ng7.

29.Qh5!

After the trade of queens, Black's position falls apart.

29...Qxh5 30.Rxh5 Rd7 31.Rh7 b6 32.Nh5

The bishop is trapped.

32...c5

If 32...Bf8 33.Rf7.

33.Bb5 Rc7 34.Bxe8 cxb4+ 35.Kd1 and Black resigned. If 35...Bf8 36.Rh8.

IM Almira Skripchenko (France) - GM Susan Polgar

36th Chess Olympiad 2004, October 28, 2004

This game was played in the next-to last round. Therefore, it had very special importance. My goal was to play safely and strike hard at the first opportunity.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.Nc3

During my preparation for this game I noticed that Almira likes to avoid the main line Open Sicilian, and instead employs various side lines.

3...Nc6 4.Bb5

White still had the option of transposing to the Open Sicilian with 4.d4.

4...Nge7

Avoiding the possibility of doubling the pawns on the c-file after Bxc6.

5.0-0 a6 6.Bxc6 Nxc6 7.d4 cxd4 8.Nxd4

Black gained the advantage of the bishop pair, but has temporary difficulties in completing development.

8...d6

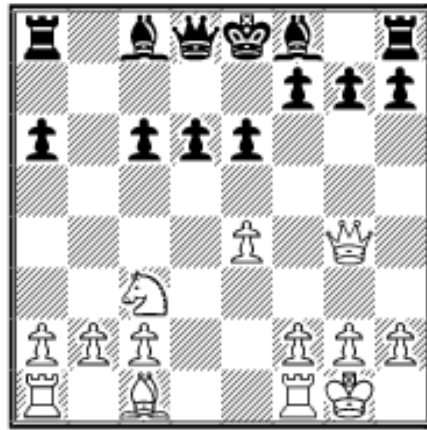
After 8...Be7 9.Nxc6 bxc6 10.e5 0-0 11.Ne4, White is slightly better.

9.Nxc6

More popular is 9.Re1.

9...bxc6 10.Qg4

Tying down the bishop on f8 since it has to defend the g7-pawn.



10...Qf6

The best response, freeing the bishop on f8.

11.f4 Be7 12.Be3

In a game between Vassily Smyslov - Sofia Polgar (Vienna 1993), White tried 12.e5 but Black had no problems after 12...dxe5 13.Ne4 Qg6.

12...Rb8 13.Qd1

A strange retreat! She is preparing Bd4. I would prefer 13.Rab1.

13...0-0

I also considered the exchange sacrifice with 13...Rxb2 14.Bd4 Qg6 15.Nd5 and now either 15...exd5 16.Bxb2 dxe4 or 15...cxd5 16.Bxb2 dxe4.

14.Rf3 e5

Preventing Bd4. Now 14...Rxb2 is not so good anymore because after 15.Bd4 Qh6? 16.Rh3 Qxf4 (or 16...Qg6 17.Rg3) 17.Ne2 gains material for White. Black can improve somewhat with 15...e5. But White is fine after 16.fxe5 Qh6 17.Nd5! cxd5 18.Bxb2 dxe4 19.Rg3.

15.fxe5

After 15.f5 Rxb2 16.Rg3 (threatening to trap the queen with 17.Bg5) 16...d5 rescues the queen.

15...Qxe5 16.Bd4 Qe6 17.Rg3 f6

Also 17...Bf6 gives Black a comfortable position.

18.Qh5?

This is over ambitious and it is the beginning of an unsound attack.

18...Rxb2 19.Rh3 h6 20.Rg3

White creates a pin and threatening Qxh6.

20...Rf7!

Preparing a trap! I fully expect her to play 21.Qxh6.

21.Qxh6 c5! 22.Bf2

If 22.Be3 Qe5 23.Bf4 (or 23.Ne2 Qxg3) 23...Qxc3!

22...Rxc2 23.Nd5?

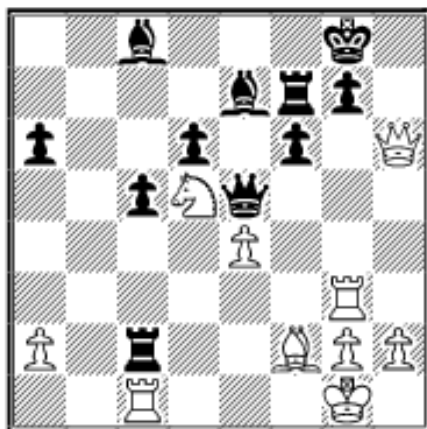
This loses right away. Somewhat better would have been 23.Rc1.

23...Qe5!

Forking the two rooks!

24.Rc1

If the rook moved to another square, White has 24...Qxg3!



24...Rxf2!

This was the move I planned when I played my twentieth move! This was a much better than 24...Qxg3 25.Bxg3 Rxc2+ 26.Kxc2 gxh6.

25.Rcc3

After 25.Kxf2 Qxg3+! and Black is a piece ahead.

25...Qd4

Threatening discovered check with 26...Rf3+.

26.Rce3 Rxa2 27.h3

Avoiding checkmate on the back rank.

27...Qd1+ 28.Kh2 Ra1 29.Rg6 Qg1+ 30.Kg3 Ra2 and White resigned.

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, 103-10 Queens Boulevard, Forest Hills, NY 11375 (Tel: 718-897-4600) or email: PolgarChessInc@aol.com



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