



## The Importance of Proper Training

The United States produced one U.S. born World Champion in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Of course, that champion is Bobby Fischer. Moreover, the United States, a nation with 280 million people, has produced very few grandmasters in the last two decades. As of April 1, 2006, the U. S. only has 59 living grandmasters. This is especially shocking considering the incredible growth of scholastic chess in the country.

It is an embarrassment for a country this size to produce so few world-class players. There are a number of reasons for this, but the biggest problem is the lack of a uniform training system. In fact, there is no official system at all, and the USCF has done nothing to solve this problem.

Many of our kids are being taught incorrectly because parents often don't know any better and coaches want immediate results. Disregarding a solid, basic chess foundation may work when competing against other very inexperienced children, but it is not sound. As these players grow a little older, they start to fail miserably, through no fault of their own. They simply were misguided; many then get discourage and quit. This becomes a scholastic chess mill with no long term success.

I truly hope there is a remedy to this problem and that we can institute a uniform chess training system, but I have my reservations. Our chess politicians are more interested in red tape and bureaucratic politics, than in fixing the glaring problems that have existed for decades. In August 2005, Anatoly Karpov and his organization offered a ready-made chess curriculum to the USCF, but the politicians allowed the matter to be reviewed by a committee headed by people from the Kasparov organization. If this was not a direct conflict of interest, then it was certainly in bad taste. Well, the Karpov plan was shelved, while, seven months later, the Kasparov Chess Foundation is now introducing its own curriculum.

Instead of respecting and embracing the free assistance from a legendary world champion, our politicians managed to insult people who truly wanted to do good things for chess. To be honest, I do not know which curriculum would be better, but the decisions need to be based on the merit of the proposals and in the best interest of U.S chess. I respect the chess knowledge of both Karpov and Kasparov, but too many corrupt deals were made behind closed doors for various outrageous reasons.

### COLUMNISTS

## *Susan Polgar on Chess*

Susan Polgar



## *Breaking Through* by Susan Polgar

It's likely that both curriculums were very good. So why not make them both available and let the parents, teachers and coaches decide which is best for them. It may just come down to personal preference and there is nothing wrong with that. Why pit one organization against another? In the meantime, organized chess is floundering, which is why I decided to do something about it.



Training in Brownsville

Last weekend, I went to Brownsville, Texas to train more than 60 teachers and coaches. Brownsville has one of the most successful scholastic chess programs in the country, but the teachers and coaches realize that they can still use additional help. The educators understand how important chess is for their students and they want to incorporate chess into other daily school subjects. I presented my own curriculum based on a combination of the best of what the Russian Schools of Chess have to offer, the exclusive Polgar method, and my 30+ years of experience in chess, including the feedback that I have received from countless students, parents and coaches across the country during the past four years.



## Training in Brownsville

Some of my students, including my own son, have jumped 1,000 rating points in approximately one year. My program will take students from absolute beginner level to becoming informed chess players within the first school year. Additional training courses are designed to take the students to a much higher level, keep them in chess longer, and provide benefits that extend beyond chess. I am also working with computer experts to create a very unique free scholastic chess database, so chess information will be readily available for anyone who wants it.



35 board Austin simul

This weekend, I visited Austin, Texas to promote chess to the local community, and especially for young players. This project was initiated by Gary Gaiffe (former President of the Texas Chess Association) and many local devoted volunteers. I gave a total of 3 simultaneous exhibitions (102 games – 95 wins, 1 loss and 6 draws) against some of the best players from Austin.





Visiting the State Capitol

I also spoke to countless enthusiasts about the many benefits of chess, and their hospitality was fantastic. Also, nearly 200 players participated in the fourth annual City Championship. Pictures of the entire weekend of chess activities can be seen [here](#) and [here](#). Please feel free to check them out.



Literally millions of bats!

Even with such a busy weekend, I managed to visit some incredible sites in Austin, such as the State Capitol Building, the Bat Sanctuary, and Mount Bonnell, etc. That is also one of the great things about chess, I get to visit some of the most beautiful places in the world.

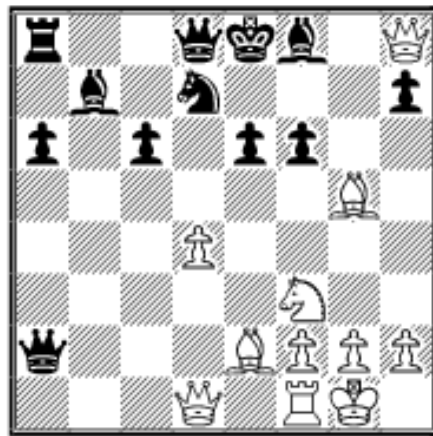


Mount Bonnell

Below are some of the excellent positions to study, all of which came from my simuls in Austin this weekend:

***Susan Polgar - Michael Feinstein (2300)***

Austin simul, 04-28-2006



After just fifteen moves, we have reached a highly unusual position with four queens on the board! As you can imagine, a position like this is very sharp and the issue of king safety takes on increased importance. Here, White has a winning advantage precisely because the black king is more vulnerable than its counterpart.

I continued with **16.Ne5!** ignoring the attack on my bishop. The main purpose of the move is to open the d1-h5 diagonal for

the white bishop or queen.

**16...Qe7** If Black captures with 16...fxg5, my plan was to continue 17.Bc4 (clearing the diagonal for the queen) 17...Qa3 18.Qh5+ Ke7 19.Q5xh7+ with an easy win. After 16...Nxe5, the correct answer is 17.Bh5+ (better than 17.Bxf6 Ng6!) 17...Nf7 18.Bxf7+ Kxf7 19.Qh5+ Ke7 20.Q8xh7+ Kd6 and White checkmates quickly after: 21.Bf4+ e5 22.Bxe5+! fxe5 23.Qxe5.

**17.Bc4 Qa5** Black's position is also hopeless after 17...Qaa3 18.Qh5+ Kd8 19.Nxd7 Kxd7 20.Bxf6.

**18.Qh5+ Kd8 19.Bxf6!** Much better than 19.Nxd7 Kxd7.

**19...Nxf6** Also after 19...Qxf6 20.Qxf6+ Nxf6, Black has the same problem as in the game: a discovery with 21.Nf7+ Ke7 22.Qxa5.

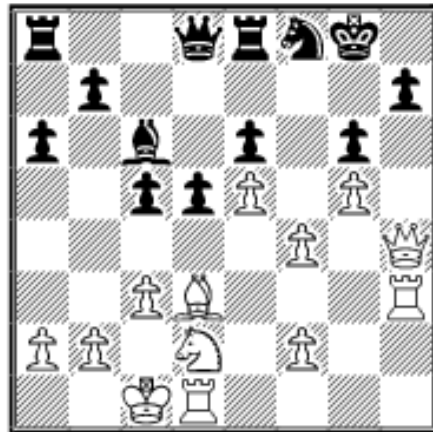
**20.Nf7+** A discovered check winning Black's queen. The rest is easy.

**20...Kd7 21.Qxa5 Qxf7 22.Qb6 Rb8 23.Re1 Bd6 24.Qxb8! Bxb8 25.Qxb7+ 1-0**



### Susan Polgar – Simul Participant

Austin simul, 04-28-2006



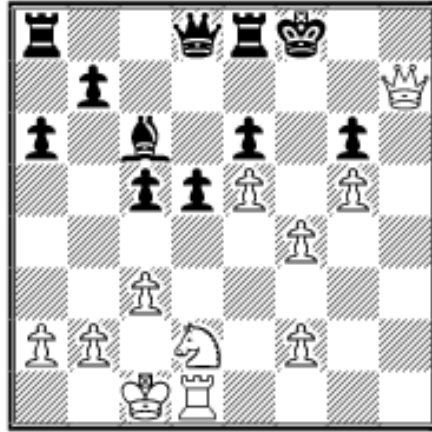
In this position, White is clearly better, but how should White continue the attack? After 1.Rdh1, Black holds the position with 1...Re7. And it would take four moves to get the knight to f6: Nf1-e3-g4-f6, when maybe Black can create some counterplay on the queenside. So I was searching for something more immediate ... when I noticed the following combination:

**1.Bxg6!** This sacrifice leads to a forced win.

**1...hxg6** 1...Nxc6 also loses quickly after 2.Qxh7+ Kf8 3.Qxg6.

**2.Qh8+ Kf7 3.Rh7+!** Another sacrifice! Although 3.Rdh1 also reaches the desired result: 3...Re7 4.Rh7+ Ke8 and now the pretty 5.Qxf8+! Kxf8 6.Rh8+ Kf7 7.R1h7 checkmate or 5...Kd7 6.Rxe7+ Qxe7 7.Qxa8 and White is up a rook.

**3...Nxc6 4.Qxh7+ Kf8**



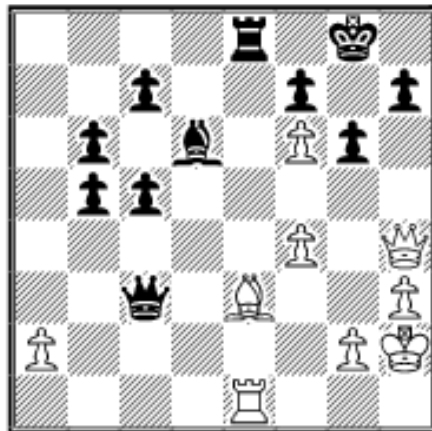
And now a quite move, bringing more ammunition to the attack:

**5.Rh1** On 5...Re7, White checkmates in two by 6.Qh8+ Kf7 7.Rh7# or if 5...Qd7, then 6.Qh8+ Ke7 7.Qf6#. The immediate 5.Qh8+ Kf7 makes no progress.

On any other move like **5...Qa5** the answer is **6.Rh6** (and Black resigned), because after 6...Qxa2 7.Rxg6 Qa1+ 8.Nb1, Black is helpless against checkmate with Rg6-g8.

### Susan Polgar – Simul Participant

Austin simul, 04-30-2006



My opponent just captured a pawn with Qb2xc3, which was a mistake. At first I looked at 29.Qh6 Bf8 and now: 30.Bxc5!! I was very impressed by the beautiful variations after 30...Bxh6 31.Rxe8+ Bf8 32.Rxf8 checkmate, 30...Qxe1 31.Bxf8 Rxf8 32.Qg7#, 30...Qxc5 31.Rxe8. Black's best defense after 30.Bxc5 is 30...Ra8, when after 31.Bxf8 Qxf6 32.Be7 White has a big advantage, but the game is not quite over yet. Luckily, I checked one last time if the combination was sound, when I noticed

29...Qxf6 (oops!) and my crucial f6-pawn is history and Black is winning!

My next idea was 29.Bd4, but I soon realized that that would fail to 29...Qxe1 30.Qh6 Bf8. That is when I found the correct move:

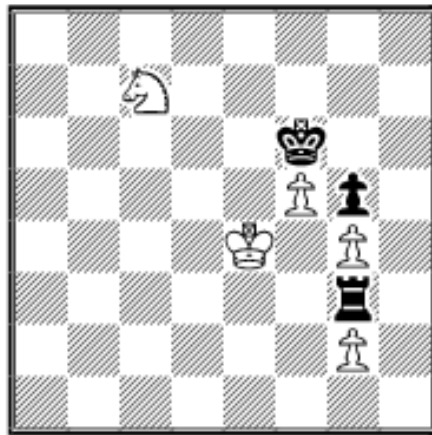
**29.Bd2! Qxd2?** Black's best try was 29...Rxe1 30.Bxc3. **30.Rxe8+ 1-0** As 30...Bf8 31.Qh6 Qd6 32.Qg7 checkmates.





### Susan Polgar - Simul Participant

Austin simul, 4-30-2006



In this position, Black seems to have the upper-hand. The white king cannot defend the g4- and g2-pawns. However, White has a clever way of trapping the black rook **1.Nd5+ Kf7 2.Ne3 Kf6 3.Kd4!!** (3.Kd3?? Ke5 4.Ke2 Ke4 and White is lost). Now, Black is in zugzwang and the king is forced to retreat, say, **3...Kf7**. White would then follow-up with **4. Kd3 Kf6 5. Ke2 Ke5 6. Kf2** trapping the rook **1-0**

The ability to find the winning moves in all of the above examples (even after only a few seconds in a big simul) comes from my chess training. That is why I am very passionate about the importance of proper training. This country can only produce homegrown top-level grandmasters and another world champion if we give the kids a strong foundation at an early age.

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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](mailto:PolgarChessInc@aol.com)

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