



Women's Chess Month

Frank K. Berry 2007 US Women's Championship

The Frank K. Berry 2007 US Women's Championship took place in Stillwater, Oklahoma from July 16-20, 2007. The top seed Irina Krush took clear first place, half a point clear of Katerina Rohonyan and the defending U.S. Women's Champion Anna Zatonskih.

Final Standings:

1.	Krush, Irina	2470	7.0
2-3.	Rohonyan, Katerina	2316	6½
2-3.	Zatonskih, Anna	2462	6½
4.	Tuvshintugs, Batchimeg	2236	5½
5.	Battsetseg, Tsagaan	2241	5.0
6-7.	Baginskaite, Camilla	2328	4.0
6-7.	Melekhina, Alisa	2099	4.0
8.	Abrahamyan, Tatev	2237	3½
9.	Vicary, Elizabeth	2148	2½
10.	Airapetian, Chouchanik	2162	½

MonRoi International Women's Grand Prix

The first annual MonRoi International Women's Chess Grand Prix took place from July 21-28, 2007 in Montreal, Canada. The top seed GM Pia Cramling, a long time friend of mine, won the inaugural event.

Final Standings:

1.	Cramling, Pia	2533	5.0
2-3.	Houska, Jovanka	2401	4½
2-3.	Javakhishvili, Lela	2460	4½
4-5.	Arakhamia Grant, Ketevan	2418	4.0
4-5.	Rajlich, Iweta	2406	4.0
6-7.	Krush, Irina	2479	3.0
6-7.	Foisor, Cristina Adela	2372	3.0

COLUMNISTS

Susan Polgar on Chess

Susan Polgar



Breaking Through by Susan Polgar

8.	Roy, Myriam	1925	0
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North Urals Cup

The North Urals Cup is taking place in Krasnoturinsk, Russia from July 22-31, 2007. It is one of the strongest annual round robin women's events in the world.

Standings after 7 rounds:

1-2.	Lahno, Kateryna	2450	4½
1-2.	Zhu Chen	2522	4½
3-4.	Pogonina, Natalija	2429	4.0
3-4.	Zhao Xue	2500	4.0
5.	Stefanova, Antoaneta	2481	3½
6-9.	Hou Yifan	2523	3.0
6-9.	Muzychuk, Anna	2456	3.0
6-9.	Pahtz, Elisabeth	2457	3.0
6-9.	Ushenina, Anna	2502	3.0
10.	Galliamova, Alisa	2468	2½

American Success Abroad

In the recent Continental Championship that took place from July 10-20, 2007 in Cali, Colombia, Alexander Ivanov and Varuzhan Akobian tied for first and qualified for the World Cup. Here is a very nice game by GM Akobian.

V. Akobian (2570) – K. Spraggett (2585)

Continental Championship, Cali (5) July 14, 2007 [A80]

1.d4 f5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bg5 d5 4.Bxf6 exf6 5.e3 Be6 6.Qf3 Nc6 7.Bb5 Qd6 8.Nge2 0–0–0 9.a3 Kb8 10.Na4 Ne7 11.Nc5 Bc8 12.g3 h5 13.h4 g6 14.b4

White has a nice position because the black king is potentially in much greater danger than White's.

14...Bh6 15.c3 Ka8 16.a4 a6 17.Bd3 Rhe8 18.Kd2

This is an exception to the rule that the king is safest away from the middle of the board.

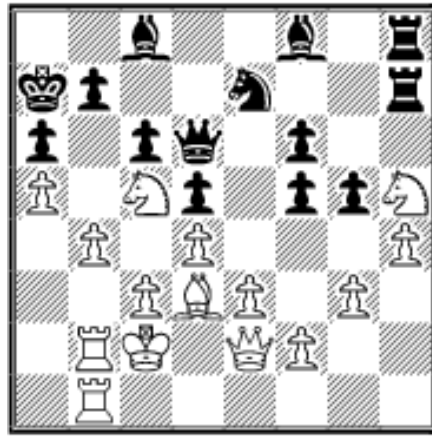
18...Ka7 19.a5 c6 20.Nf4

Sadly for Black, there are difficulties breaking through with g6-g5 without losing the h5-pawn.

20...Rh8 21.Kc2 Rdg8 22.Qe2 Re8 23.Rab1 Rh7 24.Rb2 g5

A desperate move.

25.Nxh5 Reh8 26.Rhb1 Bf8



The critical moment of the game!

27.b5! cxb5

Black gets checkmated quickly after 27...Rxh5 28. bxa6 bxa6 29.Rb7+ Bxb7 30.Rxb7+ Ka8 31.Bxf5.

28.Bxb5 axb5

If 28...Rxh5 29.Be8.

29.Rxb5 Ng8

Defending the b7-pawn. 29...Rxh5 30.Rxb7+ Bxb7 31.Rxb7+ Ka8 32.Rb6.

30.Rb6 Qc7 31.Qb5 Bxc5 32.dxc5 f4 33.a6 Bf5+

Black is lost after 33...bxa6 34.Ra1.

34.Kc1 Bxb1 35.Rxb7+

35.axb7 Qxb7 36.Qxb1 was also good.

35...Qxb7 36.axb7 Rxb7 37.Qa5+ Kb8 38.Qd8+ Ka7 39.c6 Rb5 40.Qd7+ Kb6 41.c7 Ne7 42.Qxe7 Be4 43.exf4

White carefully avoids Black's trap. The rest, as they say, was a matter of technique. It would be a blunder to be greedy and grab the rook by 43.Qxf6+ Kxc7 44.Qxh8, as Black is saved via perpetual checks with 44...Rb1+ 45.Kd2 Rb2+.

43...Rb1+ 44.Kd2 Ra8 45.c8N+ Rxc8 46.Qxf6+ Kb5 47.Qg7 Ka6 48.fxg5 Rb2+ 49.Ke3 Rc2 50.Nf6 R8xc3+ 51.Kd4 Rc4+ 52.Ke5 Rxf2 53.Qg8 Rf5+ 54.Kd6 Kb5 55.Qb8+ Ka4 56.Qb2 Rc2 57.Qb6 Rc4 58.g4 Rf3 59.h5 Rb4 60.Qa6+ Kb3 61.h6 Bd3 62.Qa8 Rb6+ 63.Ke5 Rf1 64.h7 Re1+ 65.Kf4 Rb4+ 66.Kg3 Re3+ 67.Kf2 Rh3 68.Qxd5+ Ka4 69.Kg2 Rxh7 1-0

Here is a game from my sister in the World Championship Candidate's Match in Elista, Russia:

Judit Polgar – Evgeny Bareev

Elista m/5, 2007 [B11]

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3

A great choice by Judit to surprise her very well prepared opponent.

2...d5 3.Nf3

This variation used to be favored by Bobby Fischer.

3...Bg4

This is the main line, although I've always had a bit of reservation about the logic of voluntarily spending two moves to trade a bishop for a knight.

4.h3 Bxf3 5.Qxf3 e6 6.Be2

I guess Judit approached this game with the "let's just play chess" attitude to avoid opening complications.

6...Nd7 7.d3 g6 8.0-0 Bg7 9.Bf4 Qb6

Trying to point out the drawback of White's last move.

10.Nd1 Ngf6

Now, 10...Bxb2 would be a blunder, as it allows the pin by 11.Rb1.

11.a4

With the idea of a4-a5-a6.

11...a5 12.g4

A trademark "Judit move." She has won many remarkable games by playing g2-g4 in a variety of openings. However, in this particular case, I think the move's power is primarily psychological.

12...e5 13.Bd2 Nc5

Black keeps delaying castling to pound on White's e4-pawn.

14.g5 dxe4 15.dxe4



This is a critical moment. Black had to either accept the offered e4-pawn or play it safe. I think objectively it was better to brave 15...Nfxe4. Then, White's best bet is 16.Be3, when White certainly has some compensation. However, it is questionable as to whether it is sufficient. Of course, Judit was in a "must win" situation, so it is understandable that she was willing to take risks.

15...Nfd7

Now White gains the initiative, although Black is still OK.

16.Bc4 0–0 17.h4

Not only with obvious idea of h4-h5, but also clearing the h3-square for White's queen.

17...Ne6 18.Bxe6 fxe6 19.Qh3 Qd4 20.Nc3!

Playing it safe was not a good option, as after 20.Qe3, Black would win a pawn by 20...Rf4 21.Qxd4 Rg4+ 22.Kh2 exd4. Also 20.Qxe6+ Rf7 21.Bc3 Qxe4 would lead to Black's advantage.

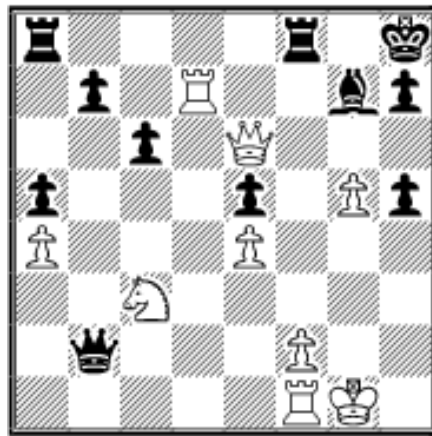
20...Qxd2 21.Rad1 Qxc2 22.Rxd7

Having a rook on the seventh rank is great. Now Black has to be really careful to avoid trouble.

22...Qxb2 23.h5 gxh5?

The losing mistake. The online spectators heavily criticized this move, but it is very unfair to pretend that such errors are obvious just because our silicon friends point them out in a split second. The correct defense is 23...Rf7, as after 24.Rxf7 Kxf7 25.Rb1 Qd2 26.Rxb7+ Kf8, Black barely survives.

24.Qxe6+ Kh8



White to move and win! How?

25.Rxg7!

This is a very pretty sacrifice, which is not so simple to see all the way through. After 25.Qe7 Rg8, Black is fine.

25...Kxg7 26.Qh6+ Kg8

If 26...Kf7 27.Rb1 Qxc3 28.Rxb7+ Ke8 29.Qe6+ and checkmate on the next move.

27.g6 hxg6 28.Qxg6+ Kh8 29.Kh1!!

The timing of this move was very important. If 29.Qxh5+ Kg7 first, and only then 30.Kh1?? Black could pin with 30...Rh8. Now Black is helpless against the attack from the white queen and rook.

29...Rf4 30.Qxh5+ Kg8 31.Rg1+ Kf8 32.Qh8+ Kf7

If 32...Ke7 33.Qxe5+.

33.Qg7+ 1–0

Q&A with Paul Truong – Questions by various USCF members

Q: How does it feel to win this very difficult election?

A: Nothing changed for me on a personal level. It is not about me winning a seat. It is about helping the USCF. I still do the same things everyday. Now I just have a chance to help the USCF much more. My #1 motivation has always been about U.S. chess. I love chess and I am absolutely confident that we can do much more for this federation. We need to improve instead of procrastinate.

I used to share my chess promotional ideas with some USCF board members. People said it would never work. They said that chess is not marketable. Fine! I am not a confrontational person. So rather than going back and forth with useless arguments, I implemented my promotional ideas through the SPF instead of the USCF.

Chess can be big if it is promoted properly. There is no reason why the USCF cannot expand its membership and revenues. I believe this board will be motivated to do it.

Q: Did you believe that your team can win the four seats?

A: I am not sure what you mean by team. Susan and I felt that the most qualified candidates that can help the USCF are Misha Korenman, Jim Berry and Randy Bauer. It does not mean that other candidates are not qualified. It just means that we believe that they can help the USCF the most at the moment. It may be different two years from now with different priorities. That was why we recommended them to the USCF members.

I wish that Misha had been elected too. But unfortunately there were only four spots. I have no doubt that Misha will work closely with this board. He is a great person and loves chess tremendously.

We had a clear strategy and our goals and mission were very straightforward. We constantly promoted our platform rather than relying on personal attacks. We pointed out the problems with the organization as a whole and we offered our solutions. When others relentlessly attacked and insulted us, we refused to get into the mud-slinging war. It does not do any good for chess to keep attacking each other. There are enough things to do to improve this federation.

Q: Someone said that you and Susan spent less than \$50 for this election. Is this true?

A: Yes, it is true. Once again, this is what I have been saying all along. It is the same thing as chess marketing, PR and promotion. We do not have to spend tons of money to get good results. I learned throughout my life experience to make things work with what I have.

The USCF forgot or neglected the grassroots long ago. We did not. We met thousands of people in the past few years. People believe in Susan's vision. And people campaigned hard on our behalf. They want to see positive changes and she offered the greatest prospect for this to happen.

It is also about the Internet. With today's technology, there is no reason why we cannot update chess news very rapidly. If the two of us can do this, the USCF as an organization should be able to do many times more. I think we were very efficient using this technology to get our message out instead of using the print media. But we did not email people, as spamming people would have reversed the effect.

Q: Would you want any position for yourself on this board?

A: No. I want nothing for myself, not in this term. I am a behind-the-scenes guy and there is much work to be done. I don't need or want any glory. I am happy when I can make magic happen. Still, I think all members of this board will play major roles in reforming the USCF.

Bill Goichberg has an incredible amount of experience. So does Randy Hough. I have known both of them for more than twenty-five years. Joel Channing is a great guy and he has many wonderful ideas. Jim Berry is fantastic and one of the biggest chess lovers I know. So is his twin brother Frank. I consider both of them friends. I have great respect for Randy Bauer, especially when it comes to finances and budgeting. Susan, of course, is a chess

magnet. She has the special ability to energize and excite the members.

I think the USCF would benefit greatly with Susan as President. Imagine the kind of publicity the USCF can get with her as the face and voice of this federation. She ran her company for more than ten years. She also has plenty of experience in the non-profit field from being on the board of the SPF and Point Hope. She can do it all.

I think Randy Bauer is the most obvious choice as VP of Finance. He is very successful in this area. I think Bill or Joel could be the critical pieces to help move the USCF along as VP. Jim Berry or Randy Hough would be great as the USCF Secretary. I just want to be a part of the team and help with marketing, PR and promotion.

Q: What are some of your immediate goals for the USCF?

A: Reduce frivolous spending and increase revenues. We have to be fiscally responsible. I see a lot of waste that can be reduced and there are areas we need to spend more on. But we will go nowhere unless we can generate more revenue.

We need more positive, effective and inexpensive chess promotion. We need to work on increasing our membership. We need to build the right image for chess, etc. I intend to discuss all of these areas with my colleagues next week.

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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