



## COLUMNISTS

### Susan Polgar on Chess

Susan Polgar



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## A Major Boost for SPICE

I began my full time position at the Susan Polgar Institute for Chess Excellence (SPICE) at Texas Tech University on September 1, 2007. With the tremendous support from Texas Tech University, Vice Provost Dr. Jim Brink, Provost Dr. William Marcy, Chancellor Kent Hance and his office, office of President John Whitmore, Special Assistant to the President For Diversity Dr. Juan Munoz, Lubbock ISD, Region 17, Dr. Hal Karlsson, Dean Santos, Jerry Perez, Dr. Rich Rice, Peggy Flores, the Knight Raiders, Commissioner Ysidro Gutierrez, Lubbock Mayor David Miller, the Lubbock Convention and Visitors Bureau, and so many others, SPICE has achieved unprecedented success.

In such a short time, we were able to train a number of local teachers to teach chess, raise awareness of chess locally with tournaments such as the SPICE Cup Open and Lubbock Open, and major international event such as the SPICE Cup Invitational, etc. Last month, SPICE received a sizeable grant from the Lubbock Area Foundation to introduce chess in the schools.

Last week, Texas Tech University's SPICE announced a substantial pledge that will fund scholarships for recruiting chess talent and pay to install three public chess tables on campus. The idea is to bring chess recognition and chess fever to Texas Tech University. The gift, given by an anonymous donor, will provide \$320,000 for scholarships that can be used discretionally to attract chess players to Texas Tech University.

"The amazing attention SPICE has received from potential students from around the world is testimony to Grandmaster Polgar's reputation," said James E. Brink, associate vice provost of the Heritage Consortium for the Natural and Historic Southwest, who coordinates SPICE efforts.

"Outstanding chess players are most often outstanding students, and this scholarship support will greatly assist us in recruiting a world-class chess team."

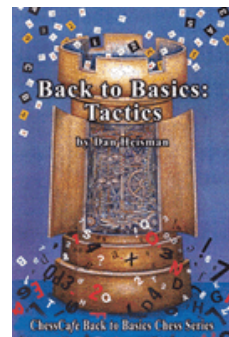
Additional funds were also provided to support the installation of three beautiful concrete double chess tables between Texas Tech's Student Union Building and Library in hopes that the public setting will create more exposure, enthusiasm, and excitement on campus for the game and attract more student players.

SPICE expects more substantial donations in the near future to support our goals; these are:

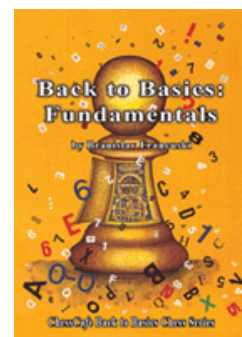
- To promote chess as vehicle for enriching the education of children
- To serve as a center for chess education and research in the nation
- To support and promote competitive chess at the college level.
- To recruit outstanding undergraduate and graduate students to TTU and TTUHSC
- To bring national and international recognition to TTU, TTUHSC and the city of Lubbock, Texas.

This is just a small example of success for chess if it is being promoted in the proper way. I have tried to no avail to explain this concept to my fellow USCF board members. It is unfortunate that the USCF still puts politics ahead of the best interest of the federation. I am still hoping that a majority of the board will soon realize that the USCF is heading toward a disastrous future unless a drastic reversal of direction is carried out

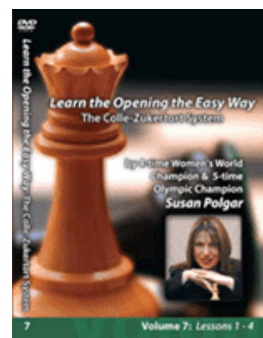
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immediately.

I am very passionate about what I do and I see a very bright future for chess, with or without the cooperation of the USCF. But how can we promote the game if the public does not know about our goals and mission? People often ask why am I so passionate about chess? It is an excellent question, and the answer is quite simple.

I grew up in an average-income family in Budapest, Hungary. Average in Budapest is equivalent to poverty level in most of the United States. But I had something money couldn't buy: the love and support of my parents. And my parents instilled in me the belief that I could do anything if I put my mind to it.

When I was four years old I came across an old chess set. My father taught me how the pieces moved, and I soon won the Budapest Girl's Under 11 Championship with a perfect score of 10-0. With my parents support, and with dedication, chess quickly became my favorite activity and I began to discover the beauty of the game.

I quickly learned that chess transcends age, race, gender, religion and socio-economic status. Chess offers so many benefits. According to various researchers, students who regularly take chess classes improve their general test scores by 17.3 percent, compared to only 4.6 percent improvement for children participating in other enrichment activities. Chess is especially helpful in math, science and reading. And in some thirty nations across the globe – including Brazil, China, Venezuela, Italy, Israel, Russia and Greece – chess is incorporated into the country's scholastic curriculum.

In fact, chess can help children improve in critical and logical thinking, focus and concentration, creativity, problem solving, planning ahead, self-esteem, self-confidence, verbal aptitude, cognitive development, memory, decision-making, responsibility, sportsmanship, advancement in spatial and numerical and administrative-directional abilities, cultural awareness and so much more. Former U.S. Secretary of Education Terrell Bell encouraged knowledge of chess as a way to develop a preschooler's intellect and academic readiness.

I have two young children (seven and nine years old) attending school in Lubbock, Texas, and I see how chess has helped them. I have also met tens and thousands of children across the country and around the world who share wonderful stories about the many benefits of chess study. It is critically important to help our children do better in school and to give them a head start in life.

### **First Annual Lubbock Open Chess Championship**

The first Lubbock Open Chess Championship was held Saturday, April 26, 2008, at Monterey High School in Lubbock, Texas. A record 109 players took part, with some players coming from as far away as Amarillo, Odessa, and Midland. But the player who traveled the farthest was Oxford University philosophy professor John Hawthorne. Of the 109 players, about eighty were either new USCF members or they renewed their memberships after a long hiatus.

Lubbock County Commissioner Ysidro Gutierrez was among the participants, and Mayor David Miller attended the opening ceremony to greet and welcome the players. The event also received excellent coverage from the local TV networks and radio stations.

Special thanks to all volunteers and sponsors for supporting this event. Local businesses such as the Texas Technology Store (located on the TTU campus), and One Guy from Italy, Chick-fil-A and Sugar Brown's coffee house provided wonderful door prizes.

Below is the list of the top three individual and team standings in each category:

### **Lubbock Open Top 3 individual standings**

#### Grades K-2

- 1. Sam Lander Capocyan, 4.0
- 2-4. Sean Radle, 3.0
- Danny McCarty, 3.0
- Leeam Polgar, 3.0

#### Grades 3-5

- 1. Tom Polgar, 4.0
- 2-4. Eirik Haraldsson, 3.0
- Eva Haraldsdottir, 3.0
- Jordan Arland-Jackson, 3.0

#### Grades 6-8

- 1-2. Andres Rodriguez, 4.0
- Anthony Arcos, 4.0
- 3-10. Quinton Smith, 3.0
- Zane Winders, 3.0
- Jonathan Tran, 3.0
- Zachary Winders, 3.0
- Jelani Hurtault, 3.0
- Jonathan Martinez, 3.0
- Lisa Brooks, 3.0
- David Jauregui, 3.0

#### Grades 9-12

- 1. Fikret Anarat, 4.0
- 2-4. Andrew Dominguez, 3.0
- Justin Martin, 3.0
- Paul M. Truong, 3.0

#### Open Section

- 1-2. Stephen Chase, 3½
- Gary Simms, 3½
- 3-8. Chase Watters, 3.0
- Tim Winders, 3.0
- Matt Lofton, 3.0
- Mike Orndorff, 3.0
- Richard Buckalew, 3.0
- Konstantin Parkhomenko, 3.0

### **Top 3 school team standings**

#### Grades K-2

- First place: Ramirez Charter School consisting of Leeam Polgar, Danny McCarty, Robert Trevino, Mateo Marchan and Brendain Valerio.
- Second place: Rise Academy consisting of Keianna Whitfield, Elijah Skief and Daphene Paulhill.
- Third place: Colonial Heights Elementary School consisting of Arlie Millican and Derek Foreman.

#### Grades 3-5

- First place: Ramirez Charter School consisting of Tom Polgar, Adrain Valerio and Nathaniel Hernandez.

- Second place: Roscoe Wilson consisting of Eva Haraldsdottir and Jack Brehmer.
- Third place: New Life Academy consisting of Jordan Arland-Jackson.

#### Grades 6-8

- First place: Alderson consisting of Andres Rodriguez, Anthony Arcos, Quinton Smith, Jonathan Martinez and David Jauregui.
- Second place: Rise Academy consisting of Jazavian Palmer, Isaiah Gonzales and Brittini Garcia.
- Third place: O.L. Slaton consisting of Lisa Brooks, Aaron Lambert and AJ Beltran.

#### Grades 9-12

- First place: Frenship High School consisting of Justin Martin, Kristian Chen, and Timothy Downs.
- Second place: Premier High School consisting of Mark Cantu, Jacob Regalado, and Harley Grimes.
- Third place: Monterey High School consisting of Paul Truong, and Callie Farris.

One hundred pictures from the tournament can be viewed [here](#).

### **Baku Grand Prix**

The first FIDE Grand Prix has just concluded. GM Grischuk led the tournament throughout most of the event; however, a loss in one of the later rounds proved costly. Conversely, GM Carlsen made a spectacular surge towards the end of the tournament, including a final round victory over GM Bacrot with the black pieces, to capture a share of first place along with GMs Wang Yue and Gashimov.



*Wang Yue*

Yue and Gashimov were the only two players who did not lose a single game. GM Kamsky started well and was one of the early leaders, but he floundered in the middle of the event and ended up in ninth place with a – 1 score. I am sure Topalov is watching Kamsky's performance with great interest.

Here are the final standings:

- 1 Gashimov, Vugar 8
- 2 Wang, Yue 8
- 3 Carlsen, Magnus 8
- 4 Mamedyarov, Shakhriyar 7½
- 5 Grischuk, Alexander 7½
- 6 Adams, Michael 6½

- 7 Svidler, Peter 6½
- 8 Radjabov, Teimour 6
- 9 Kamsky, Gata 6
- 10 Karjakin, Sergey 6
- 11 Cheparinov, Ivan 5½
- 12 Navara, David 5½
- 13 Bacrot, Etienne 5
- 14 Inarkiev, Ernesto 5

### European Individual Chess Championship

GMs Tiviakov and Lahno won clear first in the 2008 European Individual Chess Championships (Overall and Women's Section).

Here are the final (overall) standings:

- 1 Tiviakov, Sergei 8½
- 2 Volkov, Sergey 8.0
- 3 Tregubov, Pavel 8.0
- 4 Movsesian, Sergei 8.0
- 5 L'Ami, Erwin 8.0
- 6 Vachier-Lagrave, Maxime 8.0
- 7 Grachev, Boris 8.0
- 8 Baklan, Vladimir 8.0
- 9 Kryvoruchko, Yuriy 8.0
- 10 Nyback, Tomi 8.0

Here are the final (women's) standings:

- 1 Lahno, Kateryna 8½
- 2 Ushenina, Anna 8.0
- 3 Zhukova, Natalia 8.0
- 4 Cmilyte, Viktorija 8.0
- 5 Mkrtchian, Lilit 8.0
- 6 Skripchenko, Almira 8.0
- 7 Dembo, Yelena 8.0



*Kateryna Lahno*

Below is an impressive win by Kateryna Lahno, the 2008 EICC Women's Champion:

***K. Lahno (2479) – K. Nemcova (2344)***  
Plovdiv, Bulgaria (4), 04.24.2008 [C63]

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 f5**

The Schliemann/Jaenisch Gambit has regained its popularity in recent years thanks to top GMs Radjabov and Zvjaginsev.

#### 4.Nc3

In the recent game Topalov – Radjabov, Morelia/Linares 2008, White got a small advantage after 4.d3 fxe4 5.dxe4 Nf6 6.0-0 Bc5 7.Qd3 d6 8.Qc4 Qe7 9.Nc3 Bd7 10.Nd5 Nxd5 11.exd5 Nd4 12.Bxd7+ Qxd7 13.Nxd4 Bxd4 14.a4 a6 15.Be3 Bxe3 16.fxe3 0-0-0 17.Rf2 Rdf8 18.Raf1 Rxf2 19.Rxf2, but Black should be able to hold this queen and rook endgame.

#### 4...fxe4 5.Nxe4 Nf6

This is the newest fashion. After 5...d5, White is better in the old main line after 6.Nxe5 dxe4 7.Nxc6 Qg5 8.Qe2 Nf6 9.f4 Qxf4 10.d4.

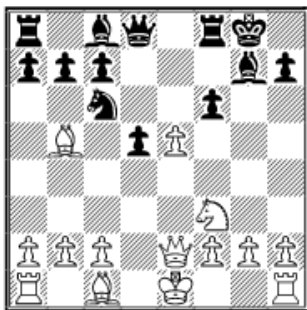
#### 6.Qe2 d5 7.Nxf6+

Forcing Black to recapture with the g-pawn in order to protect the pawn on e5.

#### 7...gxf6 8.d4

It is important for White to play energetically and to undermine Black's strong pawn center.

#### 8...Bg7 9.dxe5 0-0



After 9...fxe5 10.Nxe5 0-0, Black did not get enough compensation for the sacrificed pawns after 11.Bxc6 bxc6 12.Nxc6 Qd7 13.Ne7+ Kh8 14.0-0 Bb7 15.Bg5 in Mikhhalchishin – Annageldyev, Uzhgorod 1988.

#### 10.Bxc6

In the game J. Polgar – Radjabov, Wijk aan Zee, 2008, Black solved all his opening problems after 10.e6 Ne5 11.0-0 Bxe6 12.Nd4 Bg4 13.f3 Bc8 14.f4 c6 and the game ended in a draw after: 15.fxe5 fxe5 16.Rxf8+ Qxf8 17.Bd3 e4 18.Bxe4 Bxd4+ 19.Be3 Bxe3+ 20.Qxe3 dxe4 21.Qg5+ Qg7 22.Qd8+ Qf8 23.Qg5+ Qg7 ½-½

#### 10...bxc6 11.e6

Upon 11.exf6 Qxf6 12.0-0 Bg4, Black wins the pawn back by pinning White's knight and will have an excellent position.

#### 11...Re8

Black will win the pawn back, but White hopes for an advantage based on the difference in the pawn structure.

#### 12.0-0 c5

Black wants to make sure that White will not block the advance of the c-pawn on c5. In Shirov – Radjabov, Odessa, 2007, after 12...Rxe6 13.Be3 Re8 14.Qd3 Bg4, White had the option to gain the advantage by 15.Bc5.

#### 13.Bf4

White often tries to play aggressively by 13.Qb5, but, after 13...Bf8, it is unclear if the white queen is well positioned on the queenside.

#### 13...Rb8 14.b3

Another reasonable option was 14.c3.

#### 14...Rb6 15.Qd2

With the idea of a double attack on Black's a7- and c5-pawns by Qd2-a5.

#### 15...Bf8

Defending against the above threat by protecting the c5-pawn. If 15... Rbx6 16.Qa5.

#### 16.Rad1 Bxe6

Now Black's rook looks useless on b6.

#### 17.Rfe1

White is playing logical, common sense chess by centralizing all her pieces.

#### 17...c6



#### 18.Bh6

It is a good idea to try to trade dark-squared bishops.

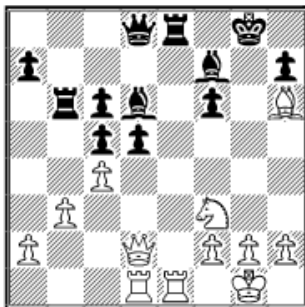
#### 18...Bd6

Black's only hope for counterplay to keep the bishop-pair.

#### 19.c4!

Another strong move!

#### 19...Bf7



Removing the potential exchange sacrifice Rxe6. This is where Black lost the thread of the game, although White had a nice advantage in any case.

#### 20.Nh4

Immediately takes advantage of Black's last move, which weakened the f5-square.

#### 20...Rxe1+

20...Qd7 would not stop the white knight entering on f5, as after 21.Rxe8 +, Black would be forced to recapture with the queen, because the bishop is busy guarding the d5-pawn. Or 20...Be6 21.cxd5 cxd5 22.Rxe6! Rxe6 23.Qxd5 Qe8 24.Nf5 is also very good for White.

#### 21.Rxe1 Qd7 22.Qc3

Black's position is hopeless now.

#### 22...Qd8

If 22...Be5, White wins by 23.Rxe5! fxe5 24.Qg3+ Bg6 25.Nxg6 hxg6 26.Qxg6+ Kh8 27.Bg5 Qg7 28.Bf6. Other tries such as 22...d4 23.Qf3 or 22... Be7 23.Qg3+ would not help either.

#### 23.Qf3

Threatening Qg4+.

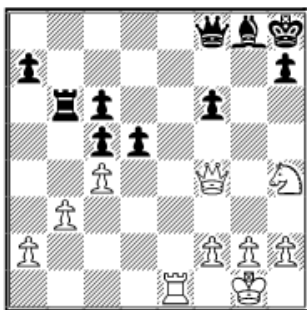
**23...Kh8 24.Qg4**

24.Bg5 fxg5 25.Qxf7 Rb8 26.Nf5 was also strong.

**24...Bf8**

24...Qg8 is answered by 25.Qd7.

**25.Bxf8 Qxf8 26.Qf4 Bg8**



**27.Re8!**

A nice deflection combination!

**27...Qf7**

The game ends immediately after 27...  
Qxe8 28.Qxf6#.

**28.Qd6 Rb7 29.Nf5**

Threatening 30.Rxg8+!.

**29...Qg6 30.Qe6 Rf7 31.Rxg8+! Qxg8 32.Nh6 Qg6 33.Qc8+ 1-0**



*Joel Benjamin is inducted into the U.S. Hall of Fame*

### **New Hall of Fame Inductees**

GMs Joel Benjamin, Larry Christiansen, and Nick DeFirmian, were recently inducted into the U.S. Chess Hall of Fame. This is a well deserved recognition for all three players. Also, chess legend Siegbert Tarrasch was inducted into the [World Chess Hall of Fame](#).

### **U.S. Senior Open and Chess Collectors International**

A unique event took place this past weekend in Boca Raton, Florida. It was a combination of the 2008 U.S. Senior Open and the Chess Collectors International Convention. The winner of the U.S. Senior Open is IM Larry Kaufman. He defeated IM Igor Foygel in the final round to finish 5-0 and earned a spot in the upcoming Frank K. Berry Championship and World Senior Championship.

### **Final Standings**

- 1. IM Larry Kaufman 5
- 2. IM Albert Kapengut 4½
- 3-8. IM Igor Foygel, Bill Kramer, IM Joseph Bradford, Leonid Balmazi, GM Dmitry Gurevich and FM John Curdo

Here is the full [crosstable](#).

The tournament finished on Friday and on Saturday, a number of the players and members of [Chess Collectors International](#) (CCI) took a special bus trip to the World Chess Hall of Fame in Miami. They were given a special tour of the Hall of Fame, the Sydney Samole Chess Museum, and attended the Hall of Fame induction.



The Chess Museum and Hall of Fame is one of my favorite places to visit. I was also asked to give a special simul with proceeds going to the museum. Special thanks to Mr. Shane Samole, President of Excalibur Electronics and Mr. Al Lawrence for putting together this glorious event for the players and members of CCI.

The CCI convention is a unique event. It was started in 1984 by Dr. George Dean. Dr. Dean is a chess player and chess set collector, a passion that is shared with his wonderful wife Vivian. He is a medical doctor by trade, and served as a family practitioner with the U.S. Navy and in private practice in Michigan. He was recognized as Family Physician of the year by the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Dr. Dean has one of the largest collections of chess sets in the world. It includes the Faberge chess set, which is considered the most valuable set in the world. He is currently president emeritus of CCI.



I had the chance to meet many amazing people such as Dr. Dean and his wife Vivian, Dr. Thomas Thomsen (current President of CCI), Floyd and Bernice Sarisohn, and many other wonderful people. I have always loved beautiful and unique sets and my family owns a fair collection. After having spent two days with these passionate collectors, both my husband and I joined CCI and we hope to attend many future conventions.

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Paul Truong assisted Susan Polgar in the preparation of this column. Susan Polgar is the director of the Susan Polgar Institute for Chess Excellence (SPICE) at Texas Tech University. For more information, visit [www.spice.ttu.edu](http://www.spice.ttu.edu) or email: [SusanPolgar@aol.com](mailto:SusanPolgar@aol.com).

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