



COLUMNISTS

Susan Polgar on Chess

Susan Polgar



CHESSTHEATRE

Play through and download the games from

[ChessCafe.com](#) in the [DGT Game Viewer](#).

[The Complete DGT Product Line](#)

A Historic American Event

Two major chess events just concluded in Moscow: the Tal Memorial and the Tal Memorial Blitz tournaments. GM Ivanchuk, in spite of approaching age 40, is having one of the best years of his long and illustrious career, and he further cemented his outstanding year by winning the Tal Memorial by a full point over Morozevich, Gelfand, Ponomarev, and Kramnik.

2008 Tal Memorial Final Standings

- Ivanchuk, Vassily (2781) 6
- Morozevich, Alexander (2788) 5
- Gelfand, Boris (2720) 5
- Ponomarev, Ruslan (2718) 5
- Kramnik, Vladimir (2788) 5
- Leko, Peter (2741) 4½
- Kamsky, Gata (2723) 4
- Alekseev, Evgeny (2708) 4
- Mamedyarov, Shakhriyar (2742) 3½
- Shirov, Alexei (2741) 3

Tal Memorial Blitz

This year the Tal Memorial Blitz was an 18-player double round robin that took place over two days. All players in the Tal Memorial received automatic invitations, and there were also qualifying spots through a very strong qualifying event, as well as special invitations.

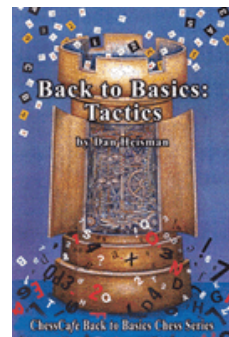
At the conclusion of the first day, former World Champion Kramnik took a clear ½-point lead over Ivanchuk and Carlsen. However, Ivanchuk surged in the second half to win this powerful blitz tournament by a full point over Kramnik. The young phenom Carlsen finished a distant third, 2½ points behind the winner.

Here are the final standings of the Tal Memorial Blitz:

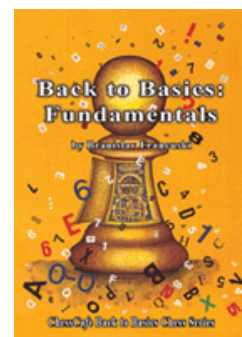
1. Ivanchuk, Vassily (2781) 23½
2. Kramnik, Vladimir (2788) 22½
3. Carlsen, Magnus (2775) 21.0
4. Svidler, Peter (2738) 20.0
5. Mamedyarov, Shakhriyar (2742) 20.0
6. Leko, Peter (2741) 18.0
7. Grischuk, Alexander (2728) 18.0
8. Karjakin, Sergey (2727) 18.0
9. Kamsky, Gata (2723) 17½
10. Gelfand, Boris (2720) 17½
11. Ponomarev, Ruslan (2718) 17.0
12. Grachev, Boris (2640) 14½
13. Alekseev, Evgeny (2708) 14.0
14. Karpov, Anatoly (2651) 14.0
15. Morozevich, Alexander (2788) 14.0
16. Movsesian, Sergei (2723) 12½
17. Eljanov, Pavel (2716) 12½
18. Tkachiev, Vladislav (2664) 11½

2008 Women's World Championship

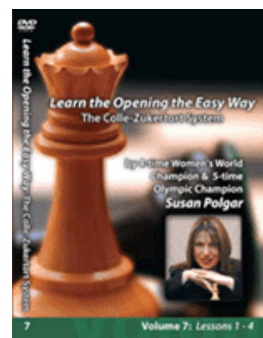
Check out these bestselling titles from [USCFSales.com](#):



[Back to Basics: Tactics](#)
by Dan Heisman



[Back to Basics: Fundamentals](#)
by Branislav Francuski



[Susan Polgar's Winning Chess DVDs](#)

The 2008 Women's World Championship began on August 29, 2008 in Nalchik, Russia. A record number of players dropped out because of the Russian – Georgian war. All of the Georgian players, including former Women's World Champion Maia Chiburdanidze, are boycotting the event. Other notable names who withdrew include the sixth seed GM-elect Marie Sebag of France, IM Irina Krush, Russian IM Ekaterina Korbut, and Dutch IM Tea Bosboom Lanchava, etc.



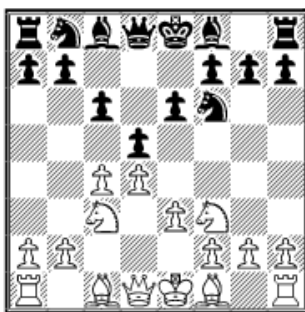
Antoaneta Stefanova

In my opinion, the top three favorite players to win the championship are GM Humpy Koneru of India, young Chinese Superstar GM-elect Yifan Hou, and former Women's World Champion Antoaneta Stefanova. Stefanova's rating has risen back to the mid 2500 range and she also won the strong Krasnoturinsk women's tournament, from which here is her first round win against the world's #2 ranked female player Koneru.

Humpy Koneru (2622) – Antoaneta Stefanova (2550)

5th North Urals Cup, Krasnoturinsk (1), 27.07.2008 [D45]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.e3



5...a6

The move a7-a6, with idea of a quick b7-b5, became extremely popular in the past decade, even more so on move four.

6.b3

White can choose to ignore Black's attempt to play b7-b5 or to do something about it by playing 6.a4 or 6.c5 (with

idea of capturing en passant after 6...b5). Other common tries are 6.Bd3 or 6.Qc2.

6...Bb4

6...b5 7.Bd3 Nbd7 8.0-0 Be7 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.e4 looks slightly better for White.

7.Bd2

7.Bb2 would lose a pawn after Black uses the pin by 7...Qa5 8.Qc2 Ne4 9.Rc1 Qxa2.

7...Nbd7 8.Bd3 0-0 9.0-0

At this point Black needs to do something about the unprotected bishop on b4. The natural 9...Re8? would fall into a well known trap and lose a

pawn: 10.Nxd5 Bxd2 (or 10...Nxd5 11.cxd5 Bxd2 12.dxc6) 11.Nxf6+ because of the intermediate moves in both variations.

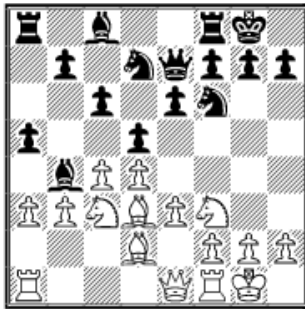
9...Qe7

The game A. Moiseenko – M. Gurevich, Tromso, 2007 saw 9...Bd6 10.e4 dxc4 11.bxc4 e5 12.c5 Bc7 13.Na4 exd4 14.h3 Re8 15.Re1 h6 16.Rb1 Rb8 17.Qc1 Nf8 18.Rb4 N6d7 with equal chances.

10.Qe1 a5

After 10...Re8, White could play similarly to the previous note to reach an attractive position: 11.Nxd5 Nxd5 12.cxd5 Bxd2 13.Qxd2 exd5 14.b4 with a “minority attack.”

11.a3!



11...Bd6

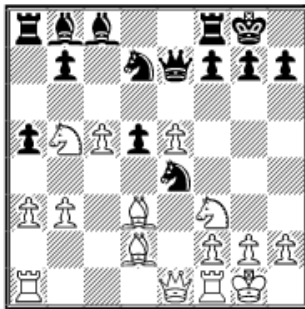
This is an attempt to improve on 11... Bxa3, when White won quickly with an interesting exchange sacrifice after 12.e4 Bb2 13.e5 Ne8 14.Bxh7+ Kh8 (14... Kxh7 15.Qb1+) 15.Bc2 Bxa1 16.Qxa1 Kg8 17.Re1 f5 18.Bg5 Qf7 19.Bd8! A spectacular move! Despite the fact that Black is up in material, White completely dominates the position and

Black has difficulty finding sensible moves. 19...Qg6 20.Ne2 Qh6 21.Bg5 Qh8 What a sad place for a queen. (21...Qg6 22.Nf4 Qf7 23.Bd8, followed by Ng5) 22.Nf4 Nc7 23.Nh4 Rf7 24.Nhg6 Qh7 25.Re3 Nf8 26. Nxf8 1–0, D. Navara – S. Erenburg, Bindlach, 2006.

12.c5 Bc7 13.e4

White plays logically and ambitiously.

13...e5 14.exd5 cxd5 15.Nb5 Bb8 16.dxe5 Ne4



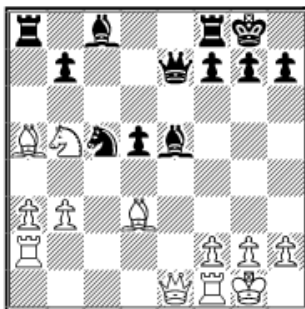
After 16...Nxe5, White would get a pleasant advantage by 17.Nxe5 Qxe5 (17...Bxe5? 18.f4 Qxc5+ 19.Be3) 18. Qxe5 Bxe5 19.Rae1, because of Black's weak isolated pawn.

17.Bxa5?!

Going after the “wrong” pawn. White could have gotten a clearly superior position after 17.Bxe4 dxe4 18.Qxe4

Nxc5 19.Qc2 Bxe5 20.Rfe1 f6 21.Rac1.

17...Nxe5 18.Nxe5 Bxe5 19.Ra2 Nxc5



Now that much of the tension in the position is gone, Black solved all her problems while maintaining an active position.

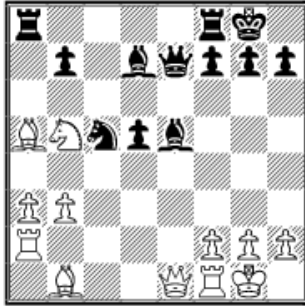
20.Bb1

This is another mistake. 20.Bb4 was necessary. The combination starting with 20...Bxh2+ 21.Kxh2 Qh4+ 22.Kg1 Nxd3 favors White after 23.Qe7 Qxe7 24.Bxe7

Re8 25.Nc7 Rxe7 26.Nxa8, because the knight will escape from the

corner either on b6 or via c7.

20...Bd7



If 20...Nxb3?, Black would lose material after 21.Bb4.

21.Nc7

White already has a difficult position; for example, 21.a4 Rfe8 22.Bb4? (or 22.Qb4 Nxb3) 22...Bxh2+ 23.Kxh2 Qh4+. The text move allows a cute “petite combination.”

21...Rxa5! 22.Qxa5 Qd6 23.f4

If the knight tries to escape by 23.Nb5, Black checkmate quickly after 23...Bxh2+ 24.Kh1 Qh6.

23...Qxc7

The rest is a matter of technique.

24.Qd2 Bf6 25.Qc2 g6 26.b4 Bd4+ 27.Kh1 Bf5

With the last two intermediate bishop checks, Black successfully avoided the exchange of queens. Not that trading queens would have been a tragedy of course.

28.Qd2 Bxb1 29.Rxb1 Ne6 30.f5

The best practical hope. After 30.Rf1, Black could continue with 30...Qc4 31.Qe2 Be3.

30...gxf5 31.Rc2 Qd6 32.Re1

Threatening to capture on e6.

32...Bg7 33.Qd3 f4 34.Rec1 Qd7 35.b5 Nd4 36.Rb2 Re8 37.Rb4 Qe6 38.Rf1 Ne2 39.b6 d4 40.Qb5 Qe3 41.Rb3 Nc3 42.Qd7 Qe2 43.Rg1 d3 44.Rb2 Qe3 45.Rf1 Ne2 46.Rb3 Re6 0-1

Other strong contenders for the Women’s World Championship crown are Swedish GM Pia Cramling, Chinese GM-elect Xue Zhao, and top rated Russian IM Tatiana Kosintseva. It will be interesting to see how the dynamic of eleven players dropping out will affect the outcome of this event.

2008 SPICE Cup

The 2nd Annual SPICE Cup will take place from September 19-28 at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas. It is a Category 15 ten-player round robin tournament. This will be the highest rated ten-person International round robin tournament in U.S. history. The participants are listed below:

- GM Onischuk, Alexander (2670)
- GM Pentala, Harikrishna (2724)
- GM Kritz, Leonid (2610)
- GM Akobian, Varuzhan (2610)
- GM Kaidanov, Gregory (2605)
- GM Becerra, Julio (2598)
- GM Mikhalevski, Victor (2592)
- GM Miton, Kamil (2580)
- GM Stefansson, Hannes (2566)

- GM Perelshteyn, Eugene (2555)

In addition to the SPICE Cup Invitational, there are a number of other wonderful chess tournaments for all levels and ages that will take place at Texas Tech University.

- Sept. 19-28 (except Sept. 23, which is a rest day): [SPICE Cup International](#).
- Sept. 20: [SPICE Cup Scholastic Open](#) (Grade K-12).
- Sept. 27-28: [SPICE Cup Open Grand Prix](#); Two sections: Grand Prix and Amateurs (for players rated under 1000).
- Sept. 27-28: [Texas State Women's Open Championship](#); Open Tournament for women across the U.S. and worldwide.

Details for all of these tournaments are also available on the [SPICE website](#). Live updates will be offered on my [blog](#).

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 or email: SusanPolgar@aol.com.

 [TOP OF PAGE](#)

 [HOME](#)

 [COLUMNS](#)

 [LINKS](#)

 [ARCHIVES](#)

 [ABOUT THE CHESS CAFE](#)

[\[ChessCafe Home Page\]](#) [\[Book Review\]](#) [\[Columnists\]](#)
[\[Endgame Study\]](#) [\[The Skittles Room\]](#) [\[Archives\]](#)
[\[Links\]](#) [\[Online Bookstore\]](#) [\[About ChessCafe.com\]](#) [\[Contact Us\]](#)

© 2008 CyberCafes, LLC. All Rights Reserved.
"ChessCafe.com®" is a registered trademark of Russell Enterprises, Inc.