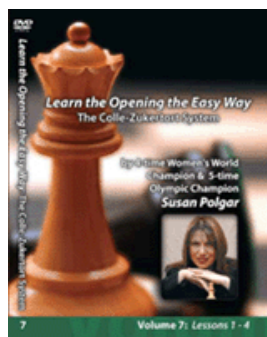




COLUMNISTS

Susan Polgar on Chess

Susan Polgar



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Farewell to Dresden

Everything must come to an end one day. In Dresden at the 38th Chess Olympiad, that day came on November 25, 2008.

The Olympiad began on November 11th with a spectacular Opening Ceremony at Dresden's Freiburger Stadium. It was an amazing show with a wide variety of music and dance performances, and much more. As an ambassador for this Olympiad, I had the honor of lighting the Olympiad torch during the ceremony. My other duties included producing the daily Olympiad Newspaper and hosting two daily Chess Talk Shows.

All the players in Dresden compete to fulfill a goal, whether it is to aim for a medal or just to improve on a previous Olympiad performance. However, a Chess Olympiad is much more than competition and hard work, it is a chance for participants from all over the world to meet old friends and make new ones.

Chess enthusiasts in the twenty-first century are very fortunate because they did not need to travel to Dresden to be in on the action. The entire Olympiad was broadcast on Chess TV and all games could be seen live via the Internet. For the first time in the history of chess Olympiads, anyone could witness the entire spectacle in the comfort of their home.

Aside from all the great players participating in Dresden, many celebrities came to support the event. Among them were former world champions Anatoly Karpov and Boris Spassky; World Boxing Champion Artur Abraham; super-model Carmen Kaas; and dignitaries such as the President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan; and the Prime Minister of Saxony, Stanislaw Tillich, among others.

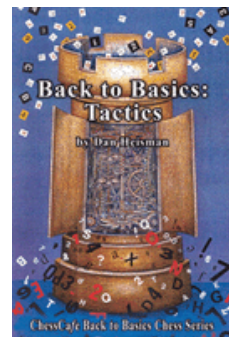
The Dresden Olympiad had a record number of teams participating from 144 nations. After eleven grueling rounds, two nations defied the odds to capture medals. Armenia deservedly won the Gold medal with 19 points after leading throughout most of the Olympiad. They only lost one match to Israel and tied against Ukraine, but defeated all others, including the top seed Russia. The Silver medal went to Israel with 18 points. The Bronze medal was won by the United States with 17 points, because of a better tiebreak against Ukraine. As a reward for their repeat Gold medal performance, the Armenian team was flown home on President Serzh Sargsyan's presidential plane!

In the Women's Olympiad, the Gold went to Georgia on tiebreak points after a great comeback, including three consecutive 4-0 matches. The Silver went to the Ukrainian team, and the seventh seed US team got the Bronze on tiebreak with 17 points.

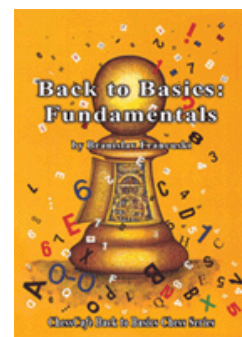
Congratulations to all the winners, especially the U.S. Bronze medalists! Farewell to Dresden and see you all again at the Khanty-Mansiysk Olympiad in 2010!

Click [here](#) to view a collection of interviews with Spassky, Karpov, Topalov, Khalifman, Dominguez, Danailov (Topalov's manager), Sutovsky (Kamsky's manager), Ilyumzhinov, etc. Click [here](#) to view over 2,000 pictures from the Dresden Olympiad.

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Emanuel Berg

Here are some select games:

Fabiano Caruana (Italy) – Emanuel Berg (Sweden)
Dresden Olympiad (7), November 20, 2008

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nd7 5.Nf3 Ngf6 6.Nxf6+ Nxf6 7.
Bd3 c5 8.dxc5 Bxc5 9.Qe2 0–0 10.0–0 b6 11.Bg5**

Threatening 12.Bxf6, followed by the double attack with 13.Qe4.

11...Bb7 12.Rad1

This time keeping Black busy with another threat: a discovery by 13.Bxh7 +.

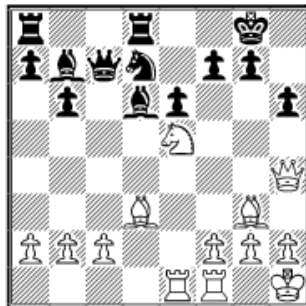
12...Qc7

Black does not seem to worry about allowing 13.Bxf6 gxf6. He hopes to quickly play Kh8 and Rg8 in order to use the open g-file to his advantage.

**13.Ne5 Rfd8 14.Kh1 Be7 15.Rde1 h6 16.Bh4 Nd5 17.Bg3 Bd6 18.Qe4
Nf6 19.Qh4**

So far the game seems quite balanced. However, Black commits a fatal error by allowing an impressive but hard to calculate combination.

19...Nd7?



Better would have been 19...Rac8.

20.Nxf7!

A very elegant and deep combination!

20...Kxf7

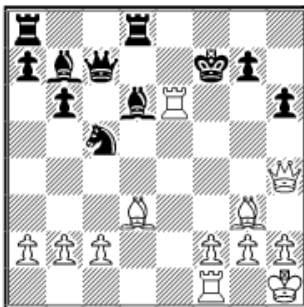
After 20...Bxg3, White can simply recapture by 21.fxg3 protecting the

knight on f7.

21.Rxe6!!

Fabiano obviously had to anticipate this second move of the combination before he made the first one. As you will see, some of the variations require calculation up to ten moves deep.

21...Nc5



Let's see what would have happened if Black accepted the second sacrifice: 21...Kxe6 22.Bc4+ Kf5 23.Qh5+ g5 24.Qf7+ Nf6 25.Be6+ Ke4 26.Qg6+ Kd4 27.Qd3+ Kc5 28.Qc4 checkmate. Or 22...Bd5 23.Qe4+ Kf6 24.Qd4+ Ne5 25.Bxd5 +/- . Black is also lost after 21...Nf6 22.Bc4; for example, 22...Nd5 23.Qh5+! Kxe6 24.Qg6+ Kd7 25.Qf5+ Ke8 26.Re1+ Ne7 27.Qg6+ Kd7 28.Qg4+ Ke8 29.Qxg7.

22.Rxd6!

White insists on giving up his rook.

22...Rxd6 23.Qf4+ Ke7

If 23...Kg8, then White continues first with an intermediate check by 24. Bc4+ Kh8 and only then 25.Qxd6 leaving White with two healthy extra pawns.

24.Re1+ Kd7

After 24...Ne6, another rook sacrifice would have led to the victory: 25. Rxe6+! Kxe6 26.Bc4+ Bd5 27.Qg4+ Kf6 28.Bxd5.

25.Bb5+ Bc6

If 25...Kc8 26.Re8+.

26.Qf5+ Ne6

26...Kd8 would allow a checkmate in two: 27.Qf8+ Kd7 28.Re7#.

27.Bxd6 Qxd6 28.Rxe6! 1-0

Black resigned as White has a decisive material advantage after 28...Qd1 + 29.Re1+ or 28...Qxe6 29.Bxc6+.

Emanuel Berg (Sweden) – Veselin Topalov (Bulgaria)
Dresden Olympiad (10), November 22, 2008

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Bd3 Bc5 6.Nb3 Ba7 7.Nc3 Nc6
8.Qg4 Nf6 9.Qg3

It would not be advisable for White to capture the pawn by 9.Qxg7, because after 9...Rg8 10.Qh6 Bxf2+!, Black would be doing great; of course, the bishop is untouchable: 11.Kxf2? Ng4+.

9...d6 10.0-0 Ne5 11.Be2

Again, it would be too dangerous to accept the pawn: 11.Qxg7 Rg8 12.Qh6 Nfg4 13.Qxh7 Kd7 with a strong attack along the g- and h-files.

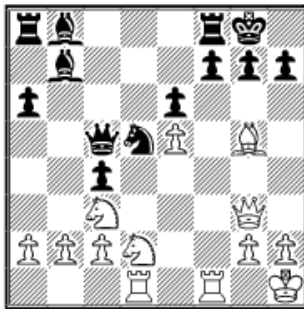
11...0-0 12.Bf4 Bb8

It seems that Black has a passive position, but this is not unusual in the Sicilian Defense.

13.Rad1 Qe7 14.Be3 b5

A very timely move to support the c4-square, which will become important after White's response.

15.f4 Nc4 16.Bxc4 bxc4 17.Nd2 Bb7 18.e5 dxe5 19.fxe5 Nd5 20.Bg5 Qc5+ 21.Kh1



21...f5!

This is a very important defensive move. It is possible because of the pin on White's e5-pawn.

22.Nde4?!

This is an interesting, but over ambitious move.

22...fxe4 23.Nxe4 Rxf1+ 24.Rxf1 Qc7 25.Qg4?

This looks tempting, but White's attack is unsound and it shortly runs out of steam. 25.Nd6 might have been better.

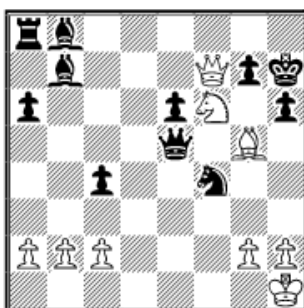
25...Qxe5 26.Qh5 h6

26...Bc7 loses to 27.Qf7+ Kh8 28.Qf8+!.

27.Qf7+ Kh7 28.Rf4

Also, after 28.Bf4 Qxe4 29.Qxb7 Ra7 30.Qxb8 Rf7, White's position would be hopeless.

28...Nxf4 29.Nf6+



White gave up most of his pieces for the attack.

29...Qxf6!

This queen sacrifice simplifies the position to a winning endgame for Black.

30.Bxf6 Bxg2+ 31.Kg1 Ba7+ 0–1

Yifan Hou (China) – Maia Chiburdanidze (Georgia)

Dresden Olympiad (10), November 23, 2008

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4

Besides the Advanced variation, the Panov is considered one of the most ambitious approach against the Caro-Kann.

4...Nf6 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nf3 Bb4 7.cxd5 Nxd5

In such positions, White has compensation for the isolated pawn on d4 with active play in the center and on the kingside.

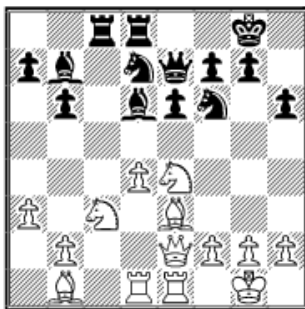
8.Qc2 Nc6 9.Bd3 h6 10.0–0 Nf6 11.Be3 0–0 12.Rac1 Bd6

Threatening Nc6-b4.

13.Qe2 b6 14.Rfd1 Bb7 15.Bb1 Qe7 16.a3 Rfd8 17.Nd2 Nb8

This is an interesting idea to reposition the knight to d7.

18.Nde4 Nbd7 19.Re1 Rac8 20.Rcd1?



This is an unusual mistake by the young and talented Chinese star. Maia immediately takes advantage to win a pawn.

20...Nxe4 21.Nxe4 Bxh2+! 22.Kxh2 Bxe4 23.Bxe4 Qh4+ 24.Kg1 Qxe4

Now Black is ahead a pawn in addition to having a target in White's d4-pawn. The rest is a matter of technique.

25.Qa6 Qa8 26.Bf4 Nf8 27.Bg3 Rd7 28.Qd3 Qd5 29.Re2 Ng6 30.Red2 Rcd8 31.Qc3 Ne7 32.Bf4 Nf5 33.f3 Qb7 34.g4 Ne7 35.Bg3 Rd5 36.Bh4 Rc8 37.Qe3 Ng6 38.Bg3 Qd7 39.Kg2 Rd8 40.Be1 h5!

After a series of maneuvering moves, Black finally makes progress.

41.gxh5 Rxh5 42.Bg3 Rd5 43.Be1 Ne7 44.Bf2 e5!

Using the pin on the d-file.

45.Qe4 Nf5 46.Bh4 f6 47.Bf2 exd4 48.Rd3 Re8 49.Qf4 Re2 50.Kf1 Rxb2 51.Qb8+ Kf7 52.Rc1 Ne7 53.Qg3 Qb5 54.Rcd1 Rb1 0–1

Paul Truong assisted Susan Polgar in the preparation of this column.
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