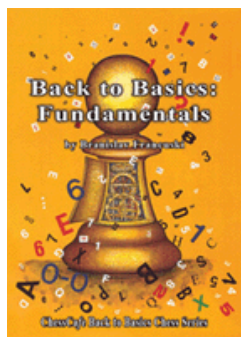




COLUMNISTS

Scholastic Chess

Steve Goldberg



CHESSTHEATRE

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Josh and Ray in May

With over 2,000 elementary school kids at the 2008 K-6 Nationals, some interesting games were bound to occur. Below we present one in which the triumphant side has tripled pawns!

The 2008 U.S. Championship also took place last month. Current Samford Fellow Josh Friedel didn't win, but nevertheless had to be happy with his results; ditto for his showing at the subsequent Chicago Open.

Ray Robson also played at the Chicago Open, and was kind enough to annotate one of his games for us.

Everyman Quiz of the Month

Each month Everyman Chess sponsors our Everyman Quiz of the Month, offering a free chess book to three respondents with correct answers. This month, winners of our quiz will receive *Starting Out: The Sicilian Dragon* (CD), by IM Andrew Martin. Please note – winners within the last three months are ineligible for this month's contest.



We will accept all contest answers for one week following the appearance of the column, then randomly select our three winners from this group. Please e-mail your responses to me by June 18, 2008. Send your answers to scholasticchess@chesscafe.com. Good luck!

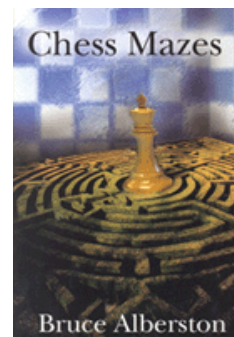
This month, questions are taken from our [May 2008](#) column.

- Who finished with a perfect 7-0 score at the 2008 High School Nationals?
 - Daniel Yeager
 - Warren Harper
 - Michael Thaler
- Alisa Melekhina earned an international master norm at which event?
 - U.S. Championship Qualifier
 - 2008 Foxwoods
 - 10th North American FIDE Invitational
- At the 2008 Junior High School Nationals, who won the 5th round game between Michael Lee and Darwin Yang?
 - Michael Lee
 - Darwin Yang
 - Neither – the game ended in a draw

2008 Elementary School Championship, May 9-11, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

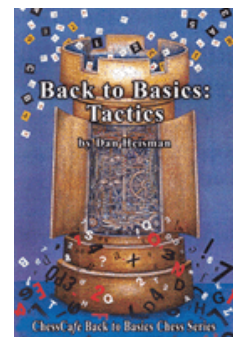
Over 2,000 youngsters came to Pittsburgh for the 2008 Elementary School "nationals," which featured a simultaneous exhibition by 2007 U.

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S. Champion GM Alex Shabalov, as well as a book signing by Josh Waitzkin. For more about Waitzkin, see our [July 2007](#) column and our [review](#) of his excellent book *The Art of Learning*.



Photo: MonRoi

In the K-6 main section, Aleksandr Ostrovskiy scored a double win, taking first place in both the blitz event and the regular tournament. In the main tournament, he yielded only a single draw to finish in clear first with 6½ points. A half-point back were Paul Taylor, Fernando Spada, Atulya Shetty and Alexis Paredes.



Elizabeth Vicary and I.S. 318 players.

Photo: MonRoi

In the K-6 team competition, Elizabeth Vicary's I.S. 318 squad took first place, a full point and a half ahead of David MacEnulty's Dalton School.

The game below was one of the more interesting I came across. White acquires doubled pawns on the b-file, and thirteen moves later, he has tripled pawns, but the lead pawn brings him the win:

Liao, Eric (1792) - Adelberg, David (1947)

2008 Elementary School Championship, Pittsburgh, PA (7), 11.05.2008 [B92]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be2 e5 7.Nb3 Be7 8.0-0 Be6 9.f4 Qc7 10.a4 Nbd7 11.Kh1 0-0 12.g4 Qc6 13.Bf3 Ne8 14.f5 Bxb3 15.cxb3 Nc7 16.Be3 b5 17.Rc1 Qb7 18.a5 b4 19.Na4 Rac8 20.g5 Rfe8 21.Bg4 Qxe4+ 22.Qf3 Qxf3+ 23.Rxf3 f6 24.g6 h6 25.Rff1 Nd5 26.Bg1 Nc7 27.Nb6 Nxb6 28.axb6



Tripled pawns!

28...Nb5 29.Rxc8 Rxc8 30.b7 Rb8 31.Bf3 Bd8 32.Rc1 Bc7 33.Rxc7 1-0



Black's flag may have fallen here. In a difficult position, he apparently had seven seconds left on his clock. After 33...Nxc7, White has the killer move 34. Ba7.

2008 U.S. Championship, May 13-21, Tulsa, Oklahoma

In an anticlimactic but understandable finish, GM Yury Shulman captured the 2008 U.S. Championship with a short draw with IM Josh Friedel. Both players were pleased to earn the half-point, since this was sufficient for Shulman to claim sole possession of the title, and it also provided Friedel with his third and final grandmaster norm.



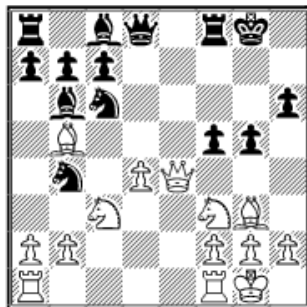
*GM-elect Josh Friedel
Photo: U.S. Chess School*

Friedel's fourth round game pitted him against GM Boris Gulko. Black's kingside pawns are pushed forward, leaving his king vulnerable, and Josh accepts the invitation to visit.

Friedel, J (2484) - Gulko, B (2559)

Frank K. Berry ch-USA Tulsa USA (4), 16.05.2008 [C65]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Bc5 4.0-0 Nf6 5.c3 0-0 6.d4 Bb6 7.Bg5 h6 8. Bh4 d6 9.Qd3 exd4 10.cxd4 g5 11.Bg3 d5 12.exd5 Nxd5 13.Nc3 Ndb4 14.Qe4 f5



The black king may be feeling a bit drafty.

15.Qe2 f4 16.Qc4+ Kg7 17.d5 fxg3 18. hxg3 Nc2 19.dxc6 Nxa1

Black is up a full rook, but White doesn't stop to pick up the knight at a1.

20.Rd1 Qf6 21.Ne4 Be6 22.Rd7+



Now we've got both queens hanging, plus the rook at d7, the pawn at b7, a precarious knight at a1, and an f2-pawn feeling a little heat.

22...Rf7 23.Nxf6 Bxc4 24.Nh5+ Kf8 25. cxb7 Rb8 26.Ne5 Bxf2+ 27.Kh2 Re7 28.Bxc4 1-0

On the women's side, IM Anna Zatonskih won a controversial

“Armageddon” game over IM Irina Krush to take the title of 2008 U.S. Women’s Champion. In this wild no-time-increment blitz game, arms and pieces were flying all over the board, and the winning strategy appeared to be simply making moves and hitting the clock faster than your opponent. With all of the intense debate that has ensued, we hope that a better playoff system is developed for future U.S. championships.

Sam Shankland, from California, was one of two high school students competing in the 2008 U.S. Championship – the other was Daniel Ludwig from Florida. In addition, Texas high school student Courtney Jamison played in the concurrent 2008 U.S. Women’s Championship.



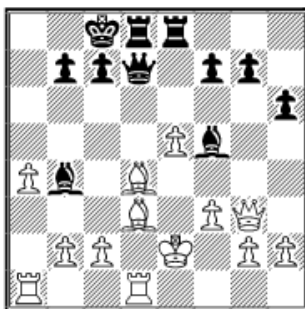
*Fierce competitors Sam Shankland (L) and Dean Ippolito
Photo: Betsy Dynako, Chess Life Online*

In the game below, Shankland and IM Dean Ippolito engage in a wild Petroff game in which Shankland emerges as the one with the greater firepower.

Shankland,S (2296) - Ippolito,D (2425)

Frank K. Berry ch-USA Tulsa USA (4), 16.05.2008 [C43]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.d4 Nxe4 4.dxe5 d5 5.Nbd2 Nxd2 6.Qxd2 h6 7.Qf4 Be6 8.Nd4 Qd7 9.Bd3 Nc6 10.Be3 Nxd4 11.Bxd4 Be7 12.Qg3 0-0-0 13.Bxa7 d4 14.a4 Bb4+ 15.Ke2 Bg4+ 16.f3 Bf5 17.Rhd1 Rhe8 18.Bxd4



There’s a lot of action going on, on the d- and e-files!

18...Bxd3+ 19.Rxd3 Qc6 20.c3 Bc5 21.Rad1 Be7 22.b3 f6 23.Kf1 Qe6 24.exf6 gxf6 25.Qh3 f5

Fritz likes 25...Qxh3 much better, although it still grades White as winning.

26.Re1 Qxb3 27.Qxf5+ Kb8 28.Qb5 Qc2 29.Rde3 Rg8 30.R3e2 Qg6 31.Rb2 Bb4 32.Qxb4 Qd3+ 33.Kg1 Qxf3 34.Rf1 Qd5 35.Rfb1 1-0

2008 Chicago Open, May 23-26, Chicago

As noted above, current Samford Fellow IM Josh Friedel just earned his third and final grandmaster norm at the 2008 U.S. Championship. The one remaining requirement for him was to raise his FIDE rating to 2500. All indications are that he accomplished this with a strong 5/7 result (including victories against new U.S. champion GM Yury Shulman and previous U.S. Champion GM Hikaru Nakamura) at the recent Chicago Open, held just days after the U.S. Championship.

At the same event, youngster Ray Robson had what is for him a so-so tournament, finishing a point behind winners Akobian, Petrosian and Nakamura, with his 4½/7 score. His father Gary said, “Ray and I also

thought that he had an ‘average’ event.” Nevertheless, they were both pleased when Ray won a share of the Under 2500 prize.



IM Ray Robson

Photo: ChessBase

I was particularly impressed with his final round game against IM Mehmed Pasalic, who earned his third international master norm at the recent 11th North American FIDE Invitational. In this game, Ray just seems to gradually take squares away from his strong opponent. He annotates this encounter for our readers:

Pasalic, Mehmed (2400) - Robson, Ray (2430)

Chicago Open (7), 28.05.2008 [B51]

1.e4

My opponent in this game is Mehmed Pasalic, who recently got his third IM norm. I had played him in an earlier event where he played 1.d4.

1...c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+ Nd7

For the past three years or so I have only played Bd7.

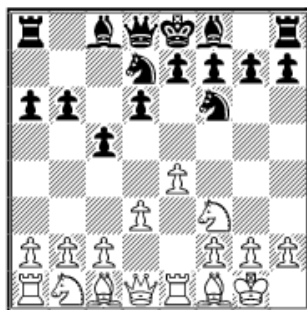
4.0-0

4.d4 is more popular.

4...Ngf6 5.Re1 a6 6.Bf1 b6

This is the main move, but during the game I didn't know this.

7.d3



My opponent chooses a rare set-up. Black should be equal now, but not better. Usually White plays 7.d4 or 7.c4 reaching a hedgehog-like position: 7... Bb7 8.Nc3 e6 9.d4 cxd4 10.Nxd4 Be7.

7...Bb7 8.Nbd2 g6 9.b3 Bg7 10.Bb2 0-0 11.c3

My opponent is preparing to play d4.

11...e5

I am trying to stop d4.

12.a3

12.d4 cxd4 13.cxd4 exd4 14.Nxd4 Re8 15.f3 d5 and Black is fine here.

12...Qc7

I am preparing to play d5. 12...d5 13.exd5 Nxd5 14.c4 Nf4 15.g3 Ne6 16. Nxe5 although this is okay for Black too.

13.Rc1

13.b4 first was probably better because it is more useful than Rc1. 13.d4 d5!? is a funny position, where Black is fine.

13...Rae8

13...d5 immediately was possible. If I wanted to move a rook, I should have played 13...Rfe8, because I soon move my rook again.

14.b4 d5 15.g3

An interesting moment. I was looking at different captures, but my opponent simply maintains the tension.

15...Rd8

This is why 13...Rae8 was inaccurate.

16.Qe2

The queen would have been more active on b3.

16...Rfe8 17.Bg2

17.h4!? My opponent thought that this was better, so that he could play Ng5 at some point.

17...Bh6 18.Rcd1

18.exd5 Nxd5 19.c4 N5f6 20.Nxe5 Bxg2 21.Kxg2 Bxd2 22.Qxd2 Nxe5.

18...dxe4 19.dxe4 Nb8 20.Nh4

White makes moving the d2-knight possible, but the knight on h4 is out of play.

20...b5 21.Nb3?



This move lets me play c4 with tempo, therefore securing the d3-square as a possible outpost for my pieces. 21.c4 is probably critical, stopping me from playing c4. 21...cxb4 22.axb4 Nc6 23. cxb5 Nxb4 and would have been a better option for White.

21...c4 22.Nc5 Bc8 23.Bc1

Perhaps this isn't best, as now it is hard to stop Black from taking over the d-file.

23...Bxc1 24.Rxc1 Nbd7 25.Nxd7 Rxd7 26.Rcd1 Rd8 27.Rxd7 Qxd7 28.Nf3 Qd6 29.Qe3 Bb7 30.Qa7?



My opponent was in serious time trouble and didn't play well. Maybe 30.Qg5 was the best chance.



30...Rd7 31.Bh3 Re7 32.Qc5? Qxc5 33.
bxc5 Nxe4 34.Re3 f6 35.c6 Bxc6 36.
Bc8 Nc5 0-1

As this column goes to press, Ray's
father informs me that Ray has finally
received official notification from FIDE

that he was awarded the international master title. Our [January 2008](#) and
[April 2008](#) columns recount Ray's path to the title.

Congratulations to Josh Friedel on his soon-to-be-recognized GM title,
and to Ray Robson for his newly minted IM crown.

Answers to Last Month's Quiz

1. Where did Ray Robson earn his "fourth" IM norm?

- a) Dallas, Texas
- b) Reykjavik, Iceland
- c) Chicago, Illinois

Answer: b

2. Where does national master Jonathan Hilton live?

- a) Indiana
- b) Ohio
- c) New York

Answer: b

3. Which tournament did Murrow H.S. coach Eliot Weiss describe as "the
most exciting finish of any of our tournaments, ever!"?

- a) New York State Scholastic Championship
- b) SuperNationals
- c) National High School Championship

Answer: a

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