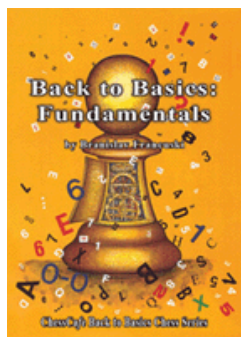




COLUMNISTS

Scholastic Chess

Steve Goldberg



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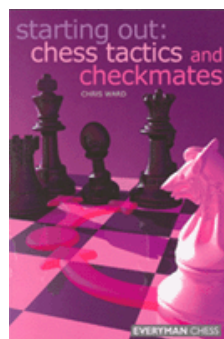
The Complete DGT Product Line

2008 Denker and World Juniors

The 2008 Denker Tournament of Champions ended in a three-way tie for first, and we include a nice game from one of the co-winners. Also, we have reports and games from both U.S. representatives, Tatev Abrahamyan and Tyler Hughes, at the 2008 World Junior Championships in Turkey.

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: Chess Tactics and Checkmates* (CD), by GM Chris Ward. 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 September 17, 2008. Send your answers to scholasticchess@chesscafe.com. Good luck!



Problem 1

White to move in this game from the 2008 U.S. Cadet Championship.



Problem 2

White to move – how did he proceed in this game from the 2008 Pan American Youth Festival?

Denker Tournament of Champions, August 2-5, Dallas

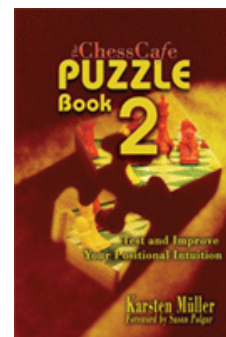
Forty-eight high school champions from around the country came to Dallas to compete for the annual Denker tournament title. The six-round event finished with a three-way tie for first place among Daniel Yeager, Julian Landaw and Scott Low. All three were declared co-champions, but Yeager had the highest tiebreak points of the group.

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



[Chess Mazes 2](#)

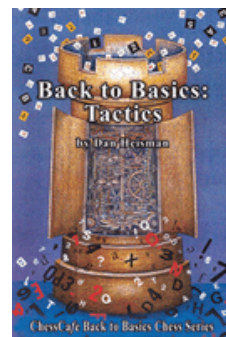
by Bruce Alberston



[ChessCafe](#)

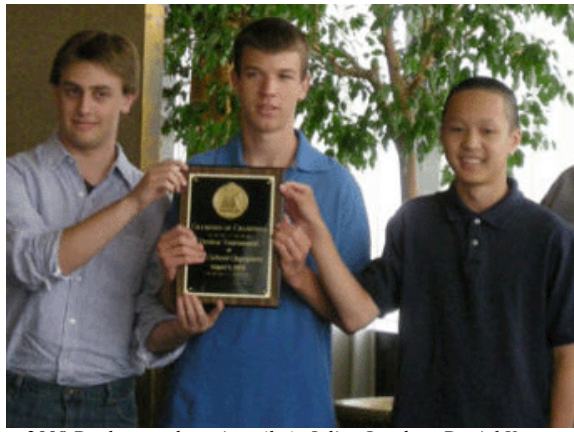
[Puzzle Book 2](#)

by Karsten Müller



[Back to Basics: Tactics](#)

by Dan Heisman



2008 Denker co-champions (l-r): Julian Landaw, Daniel Yeager and Scott Low. Photo: Chess Life Online

The game below, with notes from Fritz, features a crucial contest between Julian Landaw from California and Hawaii's Robert Lau, who finished a point behind the three co-winners.

Landaw, Julian - Lau, Robert

2008 Denker Tournament of Champions, Dallas, 05.08.2008

Sicilian Defense [B25]

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.d3 d6 6.f4 e6 7.Nf3 Nge7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Be3 b6 10.d4 Ba6 11.Rf2 Na5 12.g4 Nc4 13.Bc1 cxd4 14.Nxd4 e5 15.Nde2 exf4 16.Rxf4

Not 16.Bxf4 Nxb2 17.Qxd6 Rc8 Black is better; 16.Nxf4?! Rc8=.

16...Rc8 17.Nd4 Be5

The bishop is not easily driven from e5.

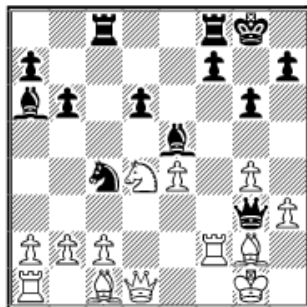
18.Rf2 Nc6 19.Nce2

19.Nxc6!? has some apparent merit 19...Rxc6 20.Nd5 Nxb2 21.Bxb2 Bxb2 22.Rb1 and Black is slightly better.

19...Nxd4 =/+ 20.Nxd4 Qh4 21.h3?

Better is 21.Bh1.

21...Qg3+



22.Rf3??

White lost his nerve, which is understandable when you consider his position. 22.Nf3 Nxb2 23.Qe1+.

22...Qh4

Better is 22...Qh2+ and Black has prevailed 23.Kf2 d5 24.exd5 Nd6+.

23.b3 Na5 24.Be3 Nc6

24...Bb7!? is an interesting idea. 25.Qd3 h5 with Black slightly better.

25.c3= Qe7 26.Qd2 Rfe8 27.Bg5

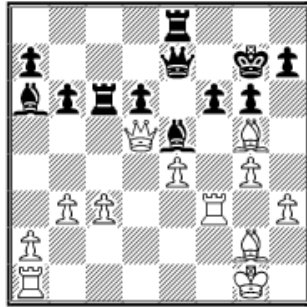
Better is 27.g5 and White is slightly better.

27...f6??

Throwing away the advantage. Better: 27...Nxd4 would keep Black in the game 28.Bxe7 Nxf3+ 29.Bxf3 Bxc3 30.Qxd6 Bxa1=.

28.Nxc6+- Rxc6 29.Qd5+ Kg7

29...Qe6 30.Qxc6 fxc5+/-.



30.Bxf6+!

Demolition of pawn structure. 30. Qxc6?! fxc5 31.Qa4 Bc8+/-.

30...Bxf6

30...Qxf6+ 31.Rxf6.

31.Qxc6 Rc8?

31...Bb7 32.Qb5 Bxe4+-.

32.Qa4 Be2 33.Re3

Better is 33.Rxf6 and the result of the game is clear: White will win. 33... Kxf6 34.Qd4+ Qe5 35.Qf2+ Ke6 36.Qxe2 Rxc3 37.Rf1 Qc5+ 38.Rf2+-.

33...Bxc3 34.Rb1

34.Rxe2 is much weaker 34...Bxa1 35.Re1 Be5 Black is slightly better.

34...b5 35.Qa6 Bd4 36.Qxc8 Bxe3+ 37.Kh1 Qh4?? 38.Qc3+ 1-0

38.Qc3+ Kg8 39.Qxe3 Bxg4 40.Qf4+-.

World Junior Championships, August 3-15, Gaziantep, Turkey

This was the third World Junior Girls Championship for American Tatev Abrahamyan, but “It was a completely different experience,” she said, “mainly because the previous two that I played in were held in my hometown [Yerevan, Armenia]. This year’s wasn’t the greatest experience ever. I didn’t like the city we were staying in, it was way too hot and the playing hall was nothing special. The hotel was pretty nice, except the air conditioner in my room wasn’t working. After a few days I got sick, so did a lot of people actually. I think it was food related, so generally I wasn’t happy about the environment I was in.”

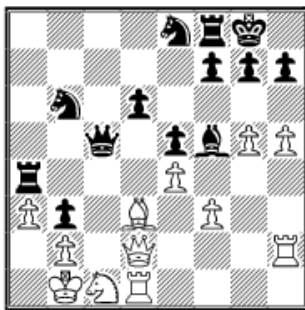


WFM Tatev Abrahamyan
Photo: Monroi.com

Even so, Tatev said, “I started off the tournament really well, but I had a very bad finish. I am not sure if it is because I got tired as my coach suggested. I think maybe I started to become too stressed out about the tournament because I was in the lead at one point and I really wanted to

keep that lead so instead of playing like I did at the beginning, I was just trying to keep up.”

She pointed to her fifth round game against India’s Dronavalli Harika (who ended up winning the championship) as a turning point. After Harika played 24...Bxf5, a draw was agreed to in the following position:



“She offered me a draw after she took my knight on f5,” Tatev recalled, “and I think I should have just played on. I could have either taken back or taken the pawn on b3. But since I had a bad score against her, and in Batumi 2006 when we both had 4/4 she again offered me a draw in an unclear position and I declined and lost the game, I figured I would just take the draw, keep my half a point lead and take it from there. I think

it would have been better if I just played on because it is not like me to make quick draws and even if I lost I think I would have recovered better.”

Trying to be more aggressive in the next game, Tatev attempted to pull out a full point in the endgame while down a pawn and ended up losing. Then in her next contest, she said, “I did the complete opposite: I offered a draw to my opponent in a position where I could have played on because I thought the endgame is a draw even though I had an extra pawn. After that we had the day off and I thought I would be able to play better since I felt that I got some rest, but I ended up blundering” and lost her round eight game.

“I thought I recovered somewhat when I won the next game but apparently I was wrong since I lost the next game. At that point I started to realize that I was tired, because I was miscalculating a lot and everything pretty much went downhill.”

Nevertheless, Tatev finished in the upper portion of the final standings. With sixty-seven participants, she scored 7½/13, good for fifteenth place. Her pre-tournament FIDE rating was 2277.

Her favorite game was her fourth round encounter with Joanna Majdan from Poland. “My opponent, who usually plays e4, started off with d4 and played the Bf4 line. Not remembering the line very well and not predicting what she could have prepared against me, I played d5 transposing into a Grünfeld line, which I think neither one of us knew. She was still pretty collected and played by theory, but I’m still happy with my decision to deviate from my main opening and play something that was unexpected for her too.”

Here is that game, in which Tatev seemed to hold an edge throughout. She finally won the exchange and the game:

Majdan, J (2323) - Abrahmian, T (2277)

WCh-Junior Girls Gaziantep TUR (4), 05.08.2008

Grünfeld Defense [D93]

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 0-0 5.Bf4 d5 6.Qb3 c6 7.e3 Qa5 8.Nd2 Ne4 9.Ndxe4 dxe4 10.h4 e5 11.dxe5 Bxe5 12.Bxe5 Qxe5 13.0-0-0 Na6 14.Rd4 Nc5 15.Qd1 f5 16.g3 a5 17.Kb1 a4 18.h5 a3 19.hxg6 hxg6 20.Rd8 Ne6 21.Qd6 Qxd6 22.Rxd6 axb2 23.Be2 Kg7 24.Bd1 Ng5 25.Ne2 Nf7 26.Rd2 Ne5 27.Bb3 Be6 28.Nf4 Bf7 29.Rxb2 Rh8 30.Rxh8 Rxh8 31.c5 g5 32.Bxf7 gxf4 33.Be6 Kf6 34.gxf4 Nd3 35.Bd7 Nxb2 36.Kxb2 Rd8 0-1



Coach Armen Ambartsoumian (l) with Tyler Hughes

Reigning U.S. Junior Champion Tyler Hughes was the other U.S. representative at the World Juniors this year. He describes his experience:

“During my two-week stay, I was struck by the many differences between living in Turkey and living in the United States. It was the first international tournament I have played in, and I enjoyed it immensely.

“One thing that I immediately noticed upon my arrival was the traffic. A busy Denver street is very calm compared to what I experienced and observed in Gaziantep. I felt that both the drivers and pedestrians acted recklessly. There was honking constantly, used both as a warning and a reprimand. It seemed to me that traffic laws were routinely broken: I saw many red lights ignored, and abrupt lane changes without warning. I also cannot recall seeing any stop signs. I have read that Turkey has the most traffic accidents of any country, and given what I saw this is understandable. We witnessed an accident one evening while walking back to our hotel. Turkish pedestrians are also much more daring than us, fearlessly weaving in between cars and in front of oncoming buses.

“I was one of the lowest rated players in the tournament. That was a new experience for me, and I enjoyed not feeling the pressure I usually feel of hoping to win the whole thing. I had never played in a tournament as this before, and I learned a great deal.

“The sound of people speaking many different languages was new to me. This was an international tournament with players and coaches from all around the world, so I not only heard a large amount of Turkish but also of Hindi, Russian, Armenian, Icelandic etc. The sound of conversation in the dining hall felt like a potpourri of disparate cultures and tongues. I was pleased to discover that many people that I met knew at least a little English. Apparently English is part of the curriculum for many schools globally.

“The strong competition I faced exposed some of my weaknesses as a tournament player. For this tournament the time control was 90 minutes for the first 40 moves, with another 30 minutes added after move 40. Against weaker players I tend to take lots of time in the early part of the game, leaving little for the later phases of battle. I think I count on the fact that most players weaker than me will often crumble if I gain a good position. The problem I had in Turkey was that my opponents would not collapse, instead they would offer strong resistance and I would not have time to find the best moves. This caused me to collapse in several games. In the end I finished with 6/13, gaining 27 FIDE points. I feel I could have performed better with improved time management, but overall Turkey was a wonderful experience.”

Tyler’s favorite game was his fourth round encounter with an opponent

rated 180 points higher:

Vishnu,P (2341) - Hughes,T (2161)

2008 World Junior Championship, Turkey (4), 05.08.2008 Sicilian
Defense [B42]

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Bd3 Bc5 6.Nb3 Be7 7.Be3 d6 8.
N1d2 Nf6 9.f4 Nbd7 10.Qf3 Qc7 11.g4 h6 12.0-0-0 b5 13.h4 h5 14.
gxf5 Nxf5 15.Kb1 Bb7 16.Rhg1 Rc8 17.Qf2 e5 18.fxe5 dxe5 19.Rdf1
Ndf6 20.Rg5 g6 21.Bb6 Qd6 22.Bc5 Rxc5 23.Nxc5 Qxc5 24.Qxc5 Bxc5
25.a4 Bd6 26.axb5 axb5 27.Re1 Bc6 28.c4 Nf4 29.Bf1 Ne6 30.cxb5
Rxf4 31.Rg3 Nxe4 32.Nxe4 Bxe4+ 33.Bd3 Bxd3+ 34.Rxd3 Ke7 35.
Red1 Nd4 36.b6 Rh8 37.Re1 Kd7 38.Rf1 Ke6 39.Re1 Bc5 40.b7 Rb8
41.Rde3 Bd6 42.Rd3 Kd5 43.Rf1 Rxb7 0-1**

On a sad note, Tyler noted that “The war between Georgia and Russia happened during the tournament; one of my opponents was from a Georgian city that was bombed. He said he didn’t know where his family was, or where he would go after the tournament.”

Another IM-Elect

Sevan Muradian’s North American FIDE Invitational tournaments have provided to U.S. players what was sorely lacking for many years – a reasonably accessible way to obtain FIDE title norms.



*FM Marc Arnold
Photo: Monroi.com*

The fourteenth edition of this event came to a close this past August 30, with FM Marc Arnold capturing sole first place, as well as his third and final International Master norm. Technically, Marc is not an IM-elect just yet – his rating needs to rise a few more points, to the 2400 level, but this is expected to happen soon.

Moreover, all three of Marc’s IM norms came at NA FIDE Invitational events, illustrating the effect these tournaments are having on the American chess scene. IM-elect Mehmed Pasalic similarly obtained all of his IM norms at Muradian’s events.

Grand New St. Louis Chess Club

Amid a number of special events, the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of St. Louis officially opened for business on July 17, 2008. Local masters, politicians, media personnel and chess aficionados of all stripes appeared overwhelmed by the magnificent new 6,000 square foot facility, spread over three floors in a busy city neighborhood.



Stone tables with inlaid chess boards line the sidewalk outside the club, while wall-mounted plasma screens grace the inside walls. A large lecture hall is situated on the lower level, as is a full kitchen and a growing library of chess books and DVDs. The main floor contains a reception area and club offices, while the upper floor is home to a combined playing area and large boardroom. A week after the grand opening, an equally impressive and well-attended ribbon-cutting ceremony took place.

Numerous lectures, simuls and tournaments have already occurred and the St. Louis Chess Club is quickly making a name for itself on the local and national chess scene. In a remarkable turn of events, the United States Chess Federation has announced that the 2009 U.S. Championship will take place at the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of St. Louis, in May 2009.



The St. Louis club exists largely due to the generosity of Rex Sinquefield, businessman and supporter of a variety of educational initiatives. Sinquefield has spared no expense in the creation of this beautiful chess club, which will surely be a fitting setting for the top players in the country when they gather in St. Louis next May.

More information about this remarkable new club, including a schedule of events, is available at their [website](#).

Answers to Last Month's Quiz

The following questions were taken from our July 2008 [column](#).

1. Which of the following is not a characteristic of a Lucena position (with White having K+R+P against Black's K+R)?

- a) White has a pawn on the seventh rank, but not a rook pawn.
- b) The white king is directly in front of his pawn, on the eighth rank.

c) The black king is directly in front of the pawn, on his first rank.

Answer: c

2. Regarding a standard Lucena position (with White having the K+R+P), which of the following statements is correct?

a) White wins.

b) Black wins.

c) The game is drawn with correct play.

Answer: a

3. National master Dan Heisman reported rarely encountering the Lucena position in his own games, yet he does teach it to his students. Which of the following was his reasoning?

a) It's unlikely for a player to improve beyond a Class B rating otherwise.

b) Teaching logical patterns, and how and why they work, helps students learn to find good moves.

c) A player should not rely on "hope chess."

Answer: b

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