



# MONTANA

## CHESS NEWS

Volume 25, Issue 1 — March, 2000

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GREATEST RATING GAIN  
OF 1999

(DRUM ROLL, PLEASE)

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## Members' Forum: *Promoting MCA events*

Missoula's Turkey Open has long been one of the state's most popular and prestigious tournaments. During the last 15 years, in fact, only the Montana Open has drawn more players. So when just two Montanans showed up to play at the last Turkey Open, it raised some eyebrows and set many concerned members to thinking. There are some differences of opinion about where we should go from here, but all seem to agree on one thing: The 1999 Turkey Open must serve as a wake-up call that gets us to reenergize the Montana tournament scene.

In some ways there has been considerable stability in MCA events, so we should be careful not to overreact. A quick look at the charts on page five will reveal that participation in the Montana Open — the surest measure of MCA health — has been remarkably consistent in recent years. The same goes for the Chinook Open in Great Falls, with its smallish but reliable turnout, and Helena's January Thaw, which, though still just a tournament toddler, appears to be on firm legs.

But in Bozeman and Billings, where tournament activity has all but ceased, and in Missoula, where there is an alarming decline in the numbers, action is needed. Several members have volunteered their thoughts on what led to the abysmal showing at the Turkey Open, as well as what we need to do to about it. Here is what they say:

**Sherwood Moore**

Sherwood was the director of this year's Turkey Open. He spells out three things that he believes contributed to the poor showing.

First, the Turkey did not enjoy Grand Prix status. When the Grand Prix system was changed to limit affiliates to one Grand Prix event per season, Sherwood was strongly opposed. He sees Grand Prix status as an important tool in promoting a tournament and would like to see any open event that can get enough participants (say 10 or more) be eligible for Grand Prix points.

Second, he suspects that the lack of cash prizes was a factor.

Third, he attributes some of the blame to competition with the Northwest Team Tourney held in Missoula just the week before.

**Les Brennan**

Les thinks that changing the path to the State Closed (and with it the Grand Prix system) could help by encouraging more out-of-town participation. His idea is to allow anyone to play in the Closed who satisfies two requirements: To have played in the State Open and to have played in at least one other MCA tournament 100 miles or more from home.

Les also expresses concern about how MCA events are advertised. "If MCA could put some bold notices in the newspapers and keep them there all the time, we might see a flow of responses." He even provides some sample wording for local announcements:

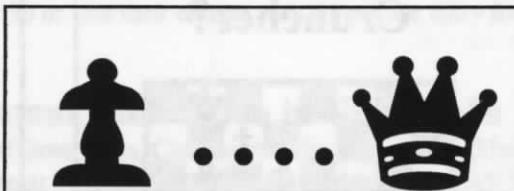
**DO YOU PLAY CHESS?**

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—continued on page 4

## Skovron and Nowak share first place in Helena's January Thaw —by Brian Bailey

Jim Skovron and Greg Nowak (a.k.a. the Octopus), tied for first place at the Second Annual Helena's January Thaw tournament held January 22-23 at the Lewis and Clark Library in Helena. Thirteen players from the Helena, Great Falls, Missoula, and Bozeman areas fought for the top prize, but in the end the two highest seeds held on to tie for first and win \$75 each.

Both Skovron and Nowak finished 3-0-2. When they played against each other in round three, the game ended in a draw, keeping the race close. Michael Long, who also played to draw against the feisty multi-tentacled cephalopod, finished with 3.5 points to earn clear third place.

The biggest upset prize of \$25 went to Nick Warner of Helena,

whose fifth round game versus Sherwood Moore ended in a draw in which Nick had four pawns in three clusters versus Sherwood's knight and bishop. Apparently each player had offered the other a draw and the other refused before a draw was finally agreed upon.

Mel Drake and the Helena Chess Club once again played hosts and provided free coffee and donuts at the playing site. The meeting room at the library is ideal for a small chess tournament such as this, and, as the library does not charge for the use of the room, it is a great deal! With leftover funds from the entry fees above and beyond the prize money and rating fees, a donation was made to the library.

Final note: This event saw the return to rated play of Robert McKean of Missoula, who said he had not played a rated game in ten years. Welcome back, Robert!

## Petrak wins Quickie Open in Great Falls

The Great Falls Chess Club sponsored its first Quickie Open, a casual, one-day tournament on Saturday, January 22. The threefold purpose of the tournament was to promote the club, to recruit new MCA members, and to enjoy some fun game-in-fifteen chess. It was a success on all three counts.

Dennis Petrak, recently back to the tournament scene, went an impressive 9-1 in this round robin event, defeating club favorites Jim Skovron and Doug Hansen on the way to the championship. Only Augusto Rodriguez, who tied for second at 8-2, was able to solve him.

Sharing second place with Augusto was newcomer Matt Severson, whose strong play caught several experienced players totally off guard.

Doug Hansen, the tournament organizer, registered four new MCA members for the event. His scheme was to charge a \$5 entry fee which was waived for anyone joining the MCA for the first time. "Getting a little coverage in the local paper also helped make it a success", Doug said.

### MCA Board Members (1999-2000)

Doug Hansen - President (761-4517)

Dan McCourt - Vice President (721-0254)

Ron Erickson - Western V.P. (549-4671)

Les Brennan - Eastern V.P. (748-2154)

Thad Suits - Secretary/Treasurer (453-6160)

Let them know about your ideas, complaints, suggestions, and praise.

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All submissions are welcome, including photos. Articles by E-mail or on a PC-formatted diskette are especially appreciated. Among the formats supported are ASCII text, Swis-Sys, Microsoft Works, Publisher, Lotus, or .PGN.

### Publishing schedule (five issues):

Issue 1 - Mar. 1; Issue 2 (Special for the Open) - May 10; Issue 3 - July 31; Issue 4 - Sept. 25; Issue 5 - Dec. 8. Deadline for most submissions is ten days before the publication date.

Did you find (or miss) a subtly sharp move in one of your games? If so, send it to the editor and ask

### What's the Cruncher?



Black to move and crunch.  
See back page for the answer.

### Grand Prix Race Leaders

Nowak, Greg	13.47
Skovron, Jim	13.47
Moore, Sherwood	11.40
Long, Michael	11.34
Suits, Thad	9.81
Bailey, Brian	9.22
Warner, Nick	9.14
Hansen, Doug	8.83
Rodriguez, Augusto	6.87

### Biggest Upset to Date

Sherwood Moore - 430 points

## MCA player profile: J. Michael Jensen

Most MCA players have met Mike Jensen over the board, and are familiar with his many accomplishments in Montana chess: Winner of the State Junior Championship in his very first tournament back in 1965; two-time State Champion; UCCC Champ 9 times; expert rating, and so on. Perhaps a few of us are also aware that Mike is a Montana native who has a knack for computer programming. These are all accomplishments of which Mike can be justly proud. But it is the duty of a Newsletter to print the whole truth, however disturbing that truth may be. The story must now be told: Mike Jensen is a virtuoso on the accordion.

Not only has Mike competed in (and won) accordion competitions, he gives accordion lessons too. But don't make too much fun of his accordion playing, because Mike also has a green belt in Tae Kwon Do.

An accordion playing, Tae Kwon Do practicing, computer programming chess expert. These are some of the surprises in store for those of us who have only known Mike's chess-playing side.

Mike was born and bred in Missoula, where he lives now. He attended Sentinel High School, becoming active in the chess club there, and then got a pre-med degree from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma.

After graduation he did a stint in the Air Force. When his hitch was up he returned to Montana and got his master's in biological sciences from the University of Montana, with a strong minor in computer science. His computer background is serving him well now; two years ago he was hired by CIS at the University of Montana as a programmer and analyst.

Chess has long held a fascination for Mike. He got his start in the game when he was six years old playing against a family friend. As a teenager he and his friends would gather in the back of Hansen's Ice Cream Parlor on Higgins Avenue in Missoula where on weekends they had some huge chess sets to play with. His first tournament, the 1965 State Open (at which he won the Junior Division), was one of the eight champi-



onships which Peter Lapikan won at least a share of. Lapikan's style must have left an impression on the younger champion because to this day Mike likes to play an opening which he has dubbed "the Lapikan System", involving a king-side fianchetto. Besides Lapikan, Mike includes among his chess influences Nimzovitch's *My System* and, more recently, Jeremy Silman's book on chess imbalances.

Someday Mike would like to crack into master level play. For that to happen, he acknowledges, he would need to have more time to focus on the game and the chance to travel to tournaments where more masters compete. "It would never happen in Montana", he said, "but I think a number of our players are capable of doing that."

Maybe so, Mike. But how many of us are capable of being both masters of chess and the accordion?

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Seirawan, Y (2495) - Jensen, M (1595)  
 Closed Sicilian [B25]  
 1979 Montana State Open

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Yasser Seirawan visited Montana in 1979 and played in the State Open. Mike submitted this game because of the instructional value it had for him. "It could be called the Mother of All Squeezes", he said. "Well maybe not that bad, but it does demonstrate nicely a rating difference of 900 points."

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7  
 5.d3 d6 6.f4 Nf6 7.Nf3 e6

Mike is the first to depart from book lines. This move locks in the light-squared bishop for a while, so the book move (ECO recommends 7...O-O here) is probably better.

8.O-O 0-0 9.Kh1 h6 10.Be3 Qe7  
 11.Qd2 b6 12.Rae1 Bb7 13.f5 Kh7  
 14.h3 Ng8 15.g4 Nd4 16.Ne2 Nxf3  
 17.Bxf3

The editor may not be rated 2495, but it seems to him that Black is doing fine.



17...Bxb2

The time lost in repositioning the bishop is not worth the pawn. 17...Qh4 looks possible.

18.c3 Ba3 19.Qc2 c4 20.d4 d5 21.e5  
 exf5 22.gxf5 Qd7

More active is 22...Qh4 instead.

23.Bg4 Qc6 24.Nf4



24...Ne7

Not a lot better is 24...g5 25.f6+ Kh8  
 26.Ng6+ fxc6 27.Qxc6 Qc7 28.f7. Either way, the Big Squeeze is on.

25.f6 Ng8 26.Bh5 Nxf6 27.exf6 Qxf6  
 28.Nxc6 fxc6 29.Rxf6 Rxf6 30.Qa4  
 gxh5 31.Qd7+ Kh8 32.Qxb7 Rxf8  
 33.Qxd5 Bd6 34.Qxh5 Kh7 35.d5 Bg3  
 36.Rg1 Bf2 37.Bxf2 Rxf2 38.Qg6+ 1-0

# Members' Forum

—continued from page 1

## Brian Bailey

Brian advocates more variety in MCA events as a way of keeping players interested. He cites his experience playing in tournaments in Louisiana and Tennessee, where the usual Swiss system tournament was supplemented with occasional team tournaments, class tournaments, ladders, scholastic play, and city-vs.-city matches.

Brian thinks city matches (in the form of a "City League") could add an element of interest to the tournament system already in place. Here is how he describes it:

"All rated tournament games in a given year contested between two players from different Montana cities would count towards the 'series' between those two cities. At the end of the year (and updated with each newsletter), for each series, the city with the greater wins would get one point. The city with the most points in all inter-city matches would win the League Championship and could be named 'Montana Chess City of the Year'. This system would allow cities with unequal numbers of active players to compete on equal footing."

Brian also discusses the importance of scholastic chess, citing evidence that the earlier players become involved in chess the longer they are likely to stay involved. He believes that a State High School Championship would not be hard to organize and would, if properly promoted to the larger of the State's high schools, attract a lot of students who would become the next generation of MCA members. Such a tournament, if run in conjunction with an event like the Science Olympiad, could have an even greater draw.

## Greg Nowak

To Greg, the biggest enemy of tournament play is the new chess technology. "In my many talks with people, I've learned they're on the Internet and have chess computers. Many believe they're not good enough to play in club competition. The few that do visit lose and quit. Clubs in general are giving way to home entertainment."

Not that Greg is resigned to some inevitable obsolescence. The solution, he goes on to say, is for more of us to get involved. "Let's face it, there just aren't many of us left! Step forward and support your local club and chess in general! You can't think 'someone else will.' There's just not that many someone elses. Use it or lose it." Certainly Greg has done his share of chess promotion over the years. As a chess profes-

sional in Montana he has learned from experience just how much work it takes to keep our game in the public limelight.

## Doug Hansen

Doug proposes that if, as Sherwood Moore suggests, cash prizes are a draw for players, then money spent on trophies could be better spent on prize money.

He also would like to see an Internet tournament get started between Montana clubs or cities as a way of increasing competitive interest between the far-flung parts of our state.

## Thad Suits

In putting together this forum I have been pleased with the thoughtfulness and creativity of the ideas presented. (One succinct idea which I should not omit is Bill McBroom's call to action for every one of us: "Get your ass up and go!") Also, see Dan McCourt's essay on page 13 for yet another perspective.

Brian Bailey has some great ideas about adding spice to our tournaments. I think at the very least, the UCCC should consider changing the format of one of its traditional events — say, the Valentine Open. (The UCCC experimented with a more casual format this year which did not pay off, but I think something along the lines of a structured team tournament would be more appealing.)

I have nothing against changing the Grand Prix setup yet again, but I strongly doubt that changing it will have any appreciable effect on the level of participation in MCA events. Personally, Grand Prix points never even enter my mind when I decide to take time to play in a tournament, and I suspect that this is true for the vast majority of our players, most of whom have little chance of ever winning the title. Still, I guess it can't hurt to try another change.

It seems to me that Les puts his finger on the most crucial issue of all: *Getting the word out about the MCA and all its activities*. Publishing event details in the Newsletter is important, but it's not enough.

The years I have sent out cards announcing the Chinook Open, reminding players about it and inviting them personally to come and play, I have always gotten a better turnout. It means more work, so I don't always make the time for it, but it does pay off. When Doug Hansen included an ad about a promotional tournament in Great

Falls recently, we recruited four new members for the MCA and had 10 people show up to club for the first time in years.

I propose appointing a PR officer for each city where tournaments are held. The PR officers would be responsible for getting the word out about all upcoming tournaments in their area, using as many creative ways as possible. These could include such tactics as:

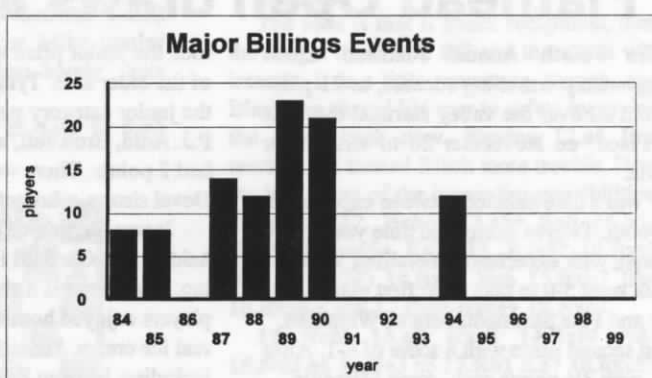
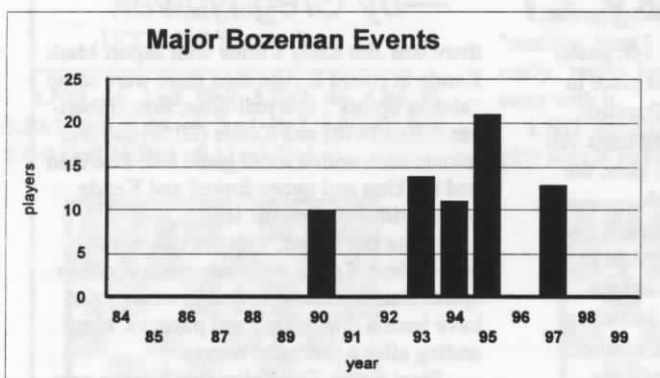
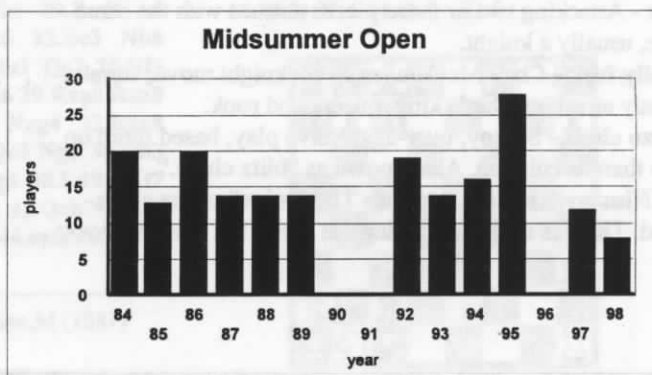
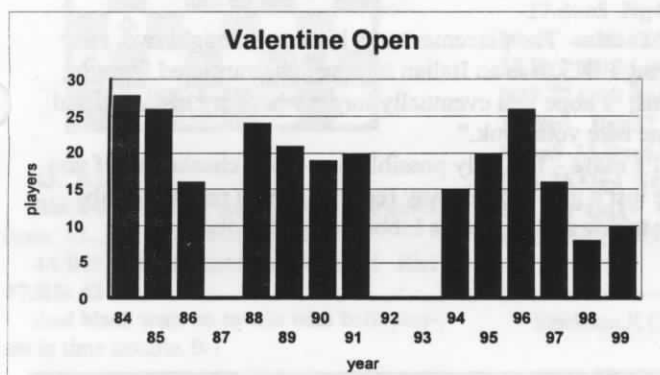
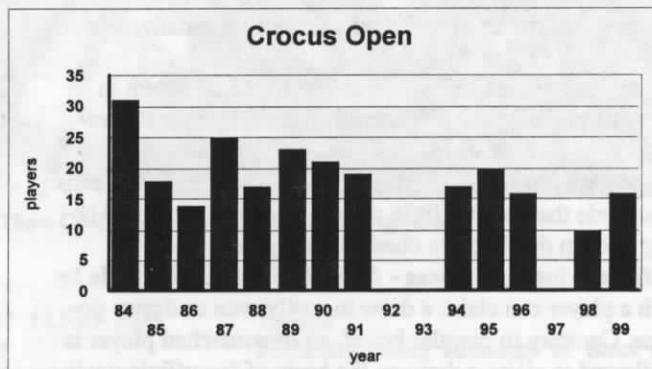
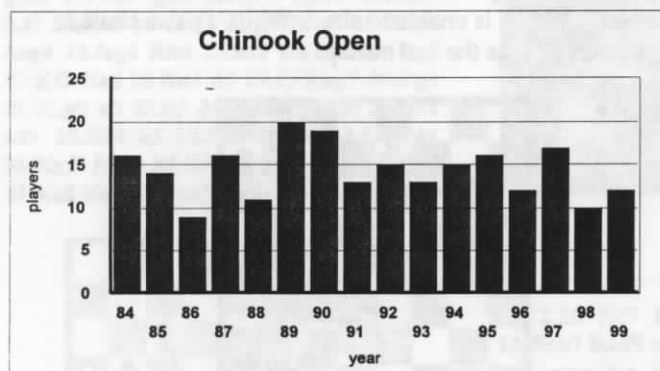
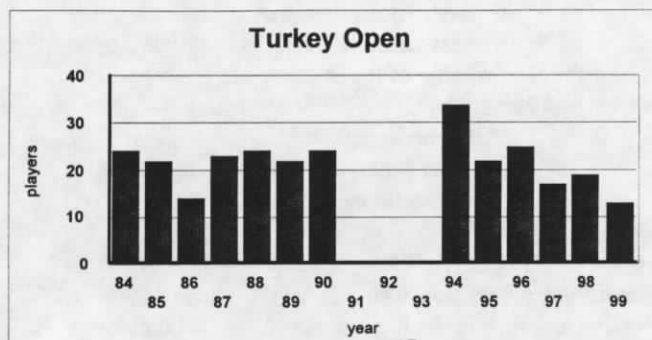
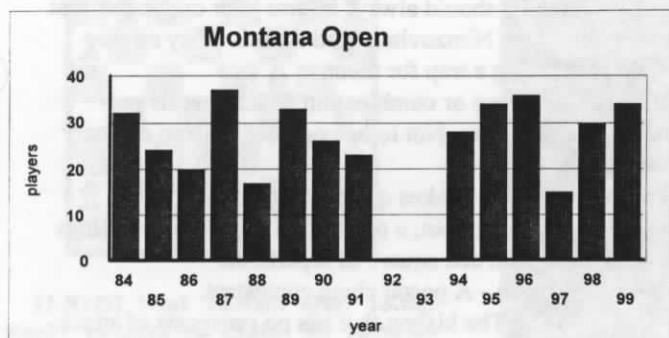
- Sending out reminders by mail to MCA members. (The Secretary could provide mailing labels at MCA expense.)
- Getting TV and press coverage.
- Making phone calls to players who are wavering about participating.
- Coordinating housing.
- Posting colorful, attractive flyers all around the town about the event.
- Seeking corporate sponsorship to increase the prize fund or provide treats.
- Coordinate promotion with other tournament organizers around the state. This kind of networking would provide two benefits: It would spread the word about tournaments and ensure that competition for dates is kept to a minimum.

Most of the suggestions in this members' forum will require the work of dedicated volunteers to implement. We can't tackle them all at once, but it seems to me that they are great ideas that only require the energy of a handful of members to become a reality. Please consider becoming a part of that handful. Volunteer. Or, if a Board member asks you for help, do your part to make the MCA a more vital force.

This brings me to two respects in which, if I understand his essay on page 13 correctly, I respectfully differ with Dan McCourt. First, I think there is a broad middle ground between apathy and zealotry. Being a PR person for chess, for instance, need not be an all-consuming passion to have a positive effect. (If it ever becomes one for me, somebody please remind me to get a life.)

Secondly, I think reaching out to new members is an essential part of supporting the chess scene. The alternative is stagnation, however active a group of core players we have. As a professional musician, I am always looking for ways to keep my audience coming back to hear me, and reaching out to new audience members at the same time. United in our desire to promote chess, we in the MCA can do the same.

## Trends in MCA event participation



The charts above show the turnout in various MCA annual events for the past 15 years. Figures for 1992-1993 were not published in many cases. For Bozeman and Billings, the main events in each year are shown since the event names and dates were not consistent. Note that the figure of 13 players in the 1999 Turkey Open includes the 11 out-of-state players who participated.



# Recent Games

Here are games from the Thaw. The first half dozen were annotated by the editor. Alex Dawson kindly consented to annotate the other January Thaw games.

Warner,N (1184) - Moore,S (1795)  
Queen's Indian [E00]  
January Thaw

Nick wins the tournament's best upset award with this upset draw over Sherwood.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.a3 b6 4.Nc3 Bb7 5.Bf4 d6 6.Nf3 Nbd7 7.Qc2 Be7 8.e4 Nh5 9.Be3 Nhf6 10.Bd3 e5 11.h3 c5 12.d5 a6 13.0-0 0-0 14.Rfb1

Nick's rook crosses the Rubicon. For the next ten moves the fight revolves around the queenside.

14...Qc7 15.Ne2 Rfc8 16.Ng3 g6 17.Ng5 h6 18.Nf3 Kg7 19.Qd2 Rh8 20.b4 Rab8 21.a4 Ba8 22.b5 Bb7 23.Nh4 a5



Normally closing the position like this might be the best plan, but there is a tactical shot developing that both players apparently overlook.

24.f4?

Stronger would have been 24.Bxh6+! Rxb6 25.Nhf5+ gxf5 26.Nxf5+.

24...exf4 25.Bxf4 Ne5 26.Bxh6+ Kg8 27.Ngf5?!



White was hoping for 27...gxN 28.Qg5+ with an attack, but declining the sac leaves

Black just fine. The reposition move 27...Ne8 is also good.

27...Nxd3 28.Qxd3 Nh5 29.Nxg6 fxd6 30.Nxe7+ Qxe7 31.Be3 Rf8 32.Rf1 Bc8 33.Rxf8+ Qxf8 34.Rf1 Qg7 35.Bd2 Qe7 36.Qf3 Rh7 37.Bg5!

A superb multi-purpose move. It develops the bishop, preparing to go after Black's vulnerable pawns, and it attacks the queen. Note also that if Black captures the bishop, 38.Qf8# is a pretty strong reply.

37...Qf7 38.Bd8 Qxf3 39.Rxf3 Rb7 40.g4 Ng7 41.Rf6 Ne8

Here the scoresheets become indecipherable. Too bad, because it looks like its turning into a tense endgame. (See Brian Bailey's account of the conclusion on page 2.)

Bailey,B (1561) - Skovron,J (1903)  
English [A22]  
January Thaw

The January Thaw had more than its share of short, violent and instructive games. This first one demonstrates the hazards of being a playing TD, as Brian was for the Thaw.

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.g3 d5 4.e3 Nc6 5.b3 Bf5 6.Bg2?



Some players add question marks or exclams to their scoresheets, but Brian takes it a step further. Next to this move he writes in the margin an honest and plain-spoken assessment of its worth: "EXTREMELY STUPID."

6...Nb4 7.d4 exd4 8.e4 dxe4 9.Nb5 c5 10.Bf4 Nd3+ 11.Kf1 Nxf4 12.gxf4 a6 0-1

Nowak,G (2158) - Skovron,J (1903)  
[A20]  
January Thaw

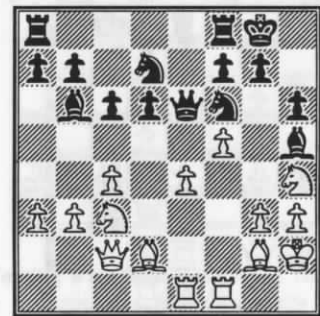
This was the third round game between the eventual co-champions of this year's January Thaw.

1.g3 e5 2.c4 Nf6 3.Bg2 c6 4.d4 Qc7  
A novelty. ECO gives 4...ed4 5.Qxd4 d5 as leading to equality. After the text move Jim gets a position he describes as "kinda ugly, but maybe OK."

5.Nc3 Bb4 6.dxe5 Qxe5 7.Bd2 0-0 8.Nf3 Qe7 9.0-0 d6 10.Qc2 Be6 11.a3 Ba5 12.b3 Nbd7 13.Nd4 Bg4 14.h3 Bh5

"Prompting this slight weakening was all I was after", Jim said. Maybe so, but this "weakening move" could easily have turned out to be the beginning of a pawn storm.

15.Nf5 Qe6 16.Rae1 Bc7 17.e4 Bg6 18.Nh4 Bb6 19.Kh2 Bh5 20.f4 h6 21.f5?



After the game Greg conceded this was a lemon. It is based on a misguided attempt to trap the bishop: 21...Qe7 22.g4? Nxg4! 23.hxN QxN+. He sees the miscalculation only after making his move, which leaves a gaping hole at e5.

21...Qe7 22.Nf3 Bxf3

Trapping the bishop had become a real threat.

23.Bxf3 Ne5 24.Bd1 Rad8 25.Re2 Qc7 26.Bf4 Rfe8 27.Na4 Rd7 28.g4 Rde7 29.b4 Kh7 30.Nb2 Kg8

Jim twiddles his thumbs, waiting for Greg to make the break. 30...Bd4 is less passive and probably better.

31.c5 dxc5 32.bxc5 Ba5 33.Nc4 Qd8 34.Nd6



When the Octopus gets a knight to the sixth rank, the end is usually not far off for his opponent. But Black has a trick up his sleeve that will complicate matters just enough to save his hide.

34...b6!

The editor knows from bitter experience that Jim likes nothing better than to sac the exchange.

35.Nxe8 Rxe8 36.g5

This fails to a tactical shot immediately, but the following alternatives also have their share of problems for White. 36.cxb6 axb6 37.Bxe5 Rxe5 38.Rf3 (38.Qxc6 Rc5! 39.Qa4 Qd3! with great penetration.) 38...Qe8 39.Kg2 and White, though still cramped, may have enough time to get disentangled.

36...hgx5 37.Bxg5 Nfg4+! 38.hxg4



Here, with just two minutes remaining to time control, Greg offers a draw which Jim accepts. Even though White will still be ahead in material after 38...QxB, his pieces are badly coordinated, and Black may even have an edge in the position. At the very least, Black can force a draw: 38...Qxg5 39.Rg2 Qh6+ 40.Kg1 Qe3+ 41.Kh2 [41.Rff2? Nd3] 41...Qh6+ ½-½

Skovron,J (1903) - Hansen,D (1663)  
[B06]  
January Thaw

Although far from the cleanest game these two have played against each other, this short and violent one is instructive.

1.d4 g6 2.e4 Bg7 3.Be3 c5 4.c3 Qb6 5.Qc2



Shifting the queen like this gives up a pawn, even if not right away.

5...cxd4 6.cxd4 Nc6 7.Nf3 Nxd4 8.Nxd4 Bxd4 9.Bxd4 Qxd4 10.Nc3 Qb4 11.a3 Qa5 12.b4 Qc7 13.Rc1 Rb8?!

This move and the next suggest that Doug is worried about non-threats. 13...Nf6, then castling makes more sense.

14.Bb5 Kd8?! 15.0-0 e6?! 16.Qd3 a6? 17.Ba4?

17.Ne2! would either win the queen for a rook or deflect the queen from defending d7. In the second case White would have RxB+, followed by Qxd7, winning in a hurry.

17...b5? 18.Nxb5! axb5 19.Rxc7 Kxc7 20.Qc3+ 1-0

Barnes,A (unr.) - Furdell,B (1280)  
Sicilian [B32]  
January Thaw

Aldin Barnes, playing in his first tournament, puts up a good fight for a while. He drops a piece in the middle game, though, and plays on longer than he needs to, hoping for a miracle.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nb5 d6 6.N1c3 a6 7.Na3 Nf6 8.Be2 Be7 9.Be3 0-0 10.0-0 Be6 11.Nd5?

Now was probably the time for the more aggressive 11.f4.

11...Nxe4 12.Bb6 Qd7 13.Nxe7+ Qxe7 14.Bd3 Nf6 15.Bc4 d5 16.Be2 Nd7 17.Be3 d4 18.Bc1 b5 19.Bg4 b4 20.Bxe6 Qxe6



21.Nc4?

It looks funny to play 21.Nb1, with the entire queenside back where it started, but that's better than dropping a piece.

21...Qxc4 22.Qg4 Nf6 23.Qg5 Qe6 24.h3 g6 25.c3 dxc3 26.bxc3 bxc3 27.a3 Nd4 28.Re1 Qf5 29.Qxf5 Nxf5 30.Rxe5 Rfe8 31.Rc5 Nd4 32.Rc4 Ne2+ 33.Kh2 Rac8 34.Rxc8 Rxc8 35.g3 Ne4 36.Kg2 Nc5 37.Ra2 Nxc1 38.Rc2 Na4 39.Rxc1 Rd8 40.Kf3 Rd2 41.Ke3 Ra2 42.f3 Rxa3 43.Kd4 f5 44.Kc4 Nb2+ 45.Kd4 Na4 46.Kc4 c2 47.Kb4 Rxf3 48.Kxa4 Rxc3 49.Rxc2 Rxb3

And Aldin eventually resigned. Hang in there, Aldin, and better luck next time! 0-1



Brian Bailey, plotting a diabolical move

Furdell,B (1280) - Bailey,B (1561)  
English [A20]  
January Thaw

Here's the last of our short and violent games. How violent was it? The scoresheet arrived at the editor's desk torn into two halves.

1.c4 e5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Nc3 Be6 6.e4

This creates a hole at d3 which Black capitalizes on immediately.

6...Nb4 7.Bf1 N8c6 8.d3 Nd4 9.Be2 Nbc2+ 0-1

Note: Comments for the remaining games from the January Thaw are by State Champion Alex Dawson. He begins with an in-depth look at a short game.

Moore, S. (1795) - Drake, M. (1312)  
Queen Pawn Game [D02]  
January Thaw

For a short game (15 moves), there's a lot to learn here.

1.Nf3

White maintains a certain flexibility with this move and he is able to transpose to a number of openings, but it is still easier to meet than 1.e4 or 1.d4!. (I've given d4 an exclamation mark here, because the polls are in, and it is deserving of one. In a survey compiled last year by *New In Chess* of games by strong players playing in strong tournaments, 1.d4 has roughly a two percent edge over 1.e4, the counter-attacking Sicilian Defense being the primary reason for this deficit. While in the Q-pawn opening, Black's thematic counter-"grab" in the center is the Dutch, which is not so highly regarded



due to Black's weakened K-side. Though 1.d4 wins the old debate, keep in mind that while a broadax MAY be superior to a mace and chain, the weapon for you is the one best suited to YOUR strengths and to YOUR abilities.

1...d5!

This move, or 1...Nf6 or 1...c5 (with an invitation for a Sicilian), are Black's three strongest replies.

2.d4

More "normal" is 2.c4 with a Reti, or maybe the Barcza system 2.g3. Perhaps Sherwood plans to avoid the regular lines of the Queen's Gambit and play the popular London System with 3.Bf4.

2...Nc6?!

Better is 2...c5 or 2...Nf6. Now Black will have a difficult time. The only way to get any scope for his rooks in the middlegame is to now force open the center with ...e5 by preparing it first with 3...f6, or by 3...e5 4.dxe5 f6 5.exf6 Nxf6, a reversed Blackmar-Diemer Gambit which is not enough compensation for the pawn.

3.e3

Better is 3.Bf4! Black should still be able to equalize with ...Bg4 and ...Bd6, but if he falls into any other plan, it'll be an uphill battle.

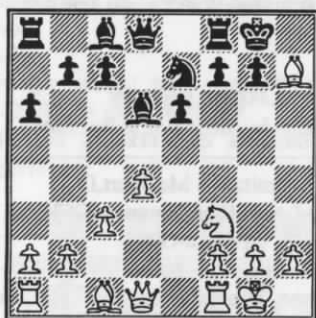
3...a6 4.c3

Sherwood intends to play the Colle System of a delayed e4. This will have even more effect here as Black hasn't played ...c5 and so will be "sitting on his hands" when the center opens up.

4...Nf6 5.Bd3 e6 6.Nbd2 Bd6 7.0-0 0-0 8.e4

Here we go. 8.Re1 first is also good.

8...Nxe4 9.Nxe4 dxe4 10.Bxe4 Ne7 11.Bxh7+!?



It's the old Classical Sacrifice. It's not quite accurate here, but a seasoned chess-player knows when the rules can be broken.

11...Kxh7 12.Ng5+ Kg6

If ...Kg8, then 13.Qh5 Re8 14.Qh7+! Kf8 15.Qh8+ Ng8 16.Nh7+ Ke7 17.Bg5+ Nf6 18.Qxg7 and Black is lost.

13.Qg4

In Vucovic's great book, Art of Attack, he

devotes a whole chapter to the Classical Sac, and informs the reader that the two most common moves at this point are Qg4 and h4.

13...Rh8?

I believe Black could hold the fort with 13...f5! 14.Qe2 Nd5, etc.

14.Nxe6+ Kh7

14...Kf6 also leads to a quick mate after 15.Bg5+.

15.Qxg7# 1-0

McBroom,W (1599) - Amundson,H (1286)

Ruy Lopez (Old Steinitz Defense) [C62]

January Thaw

It has been said that if the Red Baron was ever able to get behind and above an enemy plane, it was certain death for his adversary. Against Bill's unrelenting fire, Hal can only achieve honor in the realization that experience demands a high price, ...sometimes too high a price.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 d6 4.0-0 Bd7 5.c3 a6 6.Ba4 b5?!

This just helps White's Bishop redeploy to a better diagonal. Better is 6...Nf6.

7.Bb3! Qe7

Not...Nf6 as 8.Ng5 wins material.

8.Re1 Na5

Black twists and turns, but it's no use.

9.Bc2 g6 10.d4 Bg7 11.Bg5 Bf6 12.Be3 c6?!

More consistent with the Ruy would have been 12...c5.

13.Nbd2!

It's hard to beat an opponent that is always developing his pieces.

13...d5?

Black's losing altitude fast now. Prudent was 13...exd4.

14.exd5 cxd5 15.dxe5 Bxe5?

Hal's finally in the crosshairs, and a cold, black glove takes a firm hold on the trigger.

16.Nxe5

Kak-kak-kak-kak-kak...

16...Qxe5 17.Bd4

Kak-kak-kak...

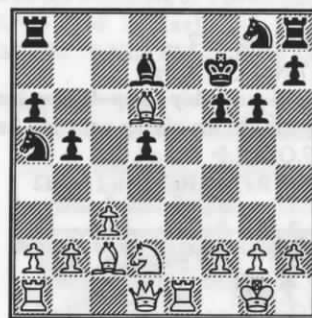
17...f6 18.Bxe5?!

Rook takes is more deadly, but why shoot the pilot when you can rupture his fuel tank?

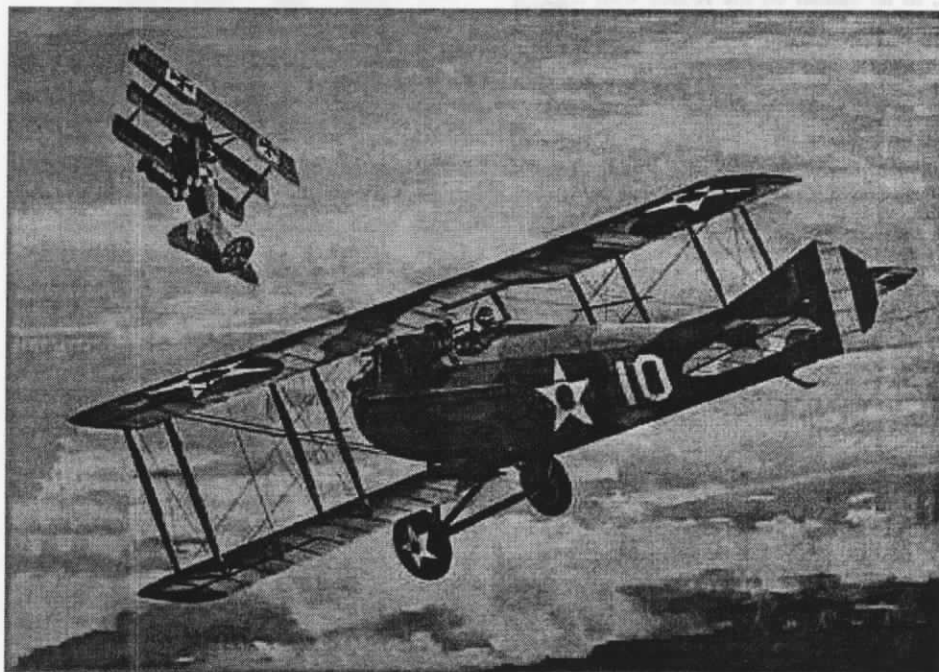
18...Kf7

With smoke billowing out from the fuselage, Hal banks his SE-5 to the right trying to find a clearing.

19.Bd6



Wearing a sombre face, White comes in close to salute his fellow comrade of the skies, and to confirm the kill as the old plane bursts apart in the trees. And now, as a hundred times before, a slow victory roll and it's back to catch up to the squadron. This will make for another fine story to tell Heinz and Willie after supper tonight, standing by the fire, toasting life AND death with a large snifter of peppermint schnapps. 1-0



Long,M (1702) - Nowak,G (2158)  
Sicilian (O'Kelly) [B28]  
January Thaw

Note: Comments in italics are analysis by Michael Long.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6!? 3.d4

White usually exploits Black's last move with 3.c4, the Maroczy Bind.

3...cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5

MCO-14 suggests 4...Nf6 5.Nc3 e5! and Black has good play.

5.Nf3

This move feels flat, but on 5.Nf5 I don't have a clue what surprises the Octopus could come up with.

5...h6 6.a3

Don't fall for Nxe5?

6...Nf6 7.Nc3 Qc7 8.Bd3

8.Nd5 will probably keep White from having to part with his bishop pair, and here if ...Nxd5 9.Qxd5!

8...d6 9.h3 Be7 10.Be3 Be6 11.Qd2



It may be a little early to place the queen. Black's QN should be allowed to commit to d7 or c6 first. Simply castling short here is best, as an assault on the K-side with ...g5 would not be recommended due to his King's position and White's pressure on the d-file/center.

11...Nbd7 12.Rc1!?

Better is 12.0-0.

12...Rc8 13.0-0 Nb6 14.Rfd1 Nc4 15.Bxc4 Qxc4! 16.Qd3 0-0 17.Qxc4 Rxc4

Black has the two bishops and the c-file, but this is offset by the backward d-pawn. The position is even.

18.Nd5 Bxd5?!

Greg should have more respect for his "men of the cloth". They will serve His Majesty well in the endgame and do a better job of protecting him from the gates of Hell than the strongest and the bravest of knights. 18...Nxd5 19.exd5 Bf5 gives Black an easier game.

19.exd5 Nd7 20.Nd2 Rc7 21.c4 Rfc8 22.b3 f5! 23.g3 g5! 24.f4! gxf4 25.gxf4 e4

A passer.

26.Bd4 Nc5

I for sure don't want the knight to drop in at d3.

27.Bxc5 dxc5!?

Black gets rid of his backward pawn, but now White has a dynamite pawn at d5.

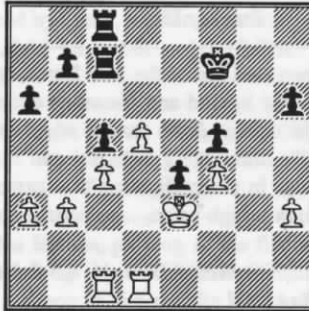
28.Kf2! Bf6 29.Ke2 Kf7 30.Nf1 Bd4?!

It's safe to grab the a-pawn with ...Bb2.

31.Ne3 Bxe3

Better than 31...Bb2 32.Rc2 Bxa3 33.Nxf5, when the black king has no good square to go to.

32.Kxe3



It's a draw here, unless one player can open the Q-side.

32...Rd7 33.Rg1 Rd6 34.a4

Michael seems content with a draw.

34...Rg8 35.Rxg8 Kxg8 36.Rg1+ Kf7 37.Rg3 b5

Greg's still looking for a fight.

38.axb5 axb5 39.Kd2 b4! 40.Kc2 Ra6 41.Kb2

Not today, amigo.

41...Rg6 42.Rxg6 Kxg6 43.Kc2 1/2-1/2

Skovron,J (1903) - Long,M (1702)  
French Defense (Tarrasch) [C09]  
January Thaw

The French have always been famous for their big guns. Skovron decides the best course of action is to "defuse" the situation and rely heavily on cavalry attacks, infantry advances and fortification. Of course Long has a say in matters also.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.Ng3 Nc6 5.exd5 exd5 6.dxc5 Bxc5 7.Nb3 Bb6 8.Qe2+

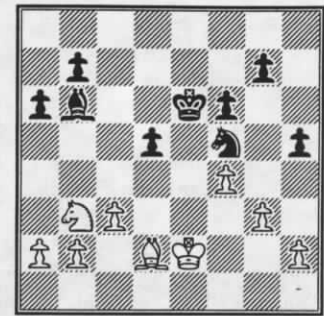
Stronger is 8.Bd3, but Jim likes to play endgames.

8...Qe7 9.Qxe7+

Again, stronger is 9.Bg5, but Jim REALLY likes endgames.

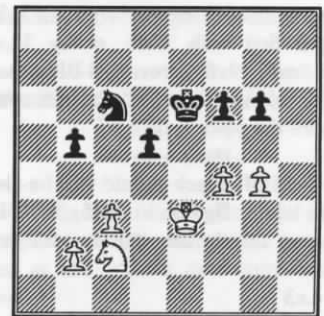
9...Ngxe7 10.c3! 0-0 11.Bd3 Bf5 12.Bxf5 Nxf5 13.0-0 Rfe8 14.Bd2 Ne5 15.Nxe5 Rxe5 16.Rae1 Rae8 17.Rxe5 Rxe5 18.Re1 Rxe1+ 19.Bxe1 f6 20.Kf1 Kf7 21.Ke2 Ke6 22.Bd2 h5 23.g3 a6 24.f4?

The last ten moves by each side have been flawless, but this should drop a pawn to 24...Bg1.



24...Kd6?! 25.Na1 Ke6 26.Nc2 Kd6 Still a pawn on the K-side.

27.Kf3 Ke6 28.h3 g6 29.g4 hxg4+ 30.hxg4 Ne7 31.Be3 Bxe3 32.Kxe3 Nc6 33.a4 b5 34.axb5 axb5



35.b4?

Computer program Fritz bestows a win for White with 35.Nd4, trading knights, and advancing the g-pawn to force zugzwang.

35...Kd6 36.Nd4

Since White has expended his extra tempo, the trade now gives Black a draw. Worth trying was 36.Na3.

36...Nxd4 37.Kxd4 g5 38.f5 Kc6

And a firm handshake is all that's left to do here. 1/2-1/2

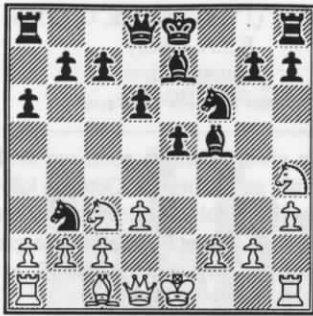
## Other games

(Comments by the editor unless noted.)

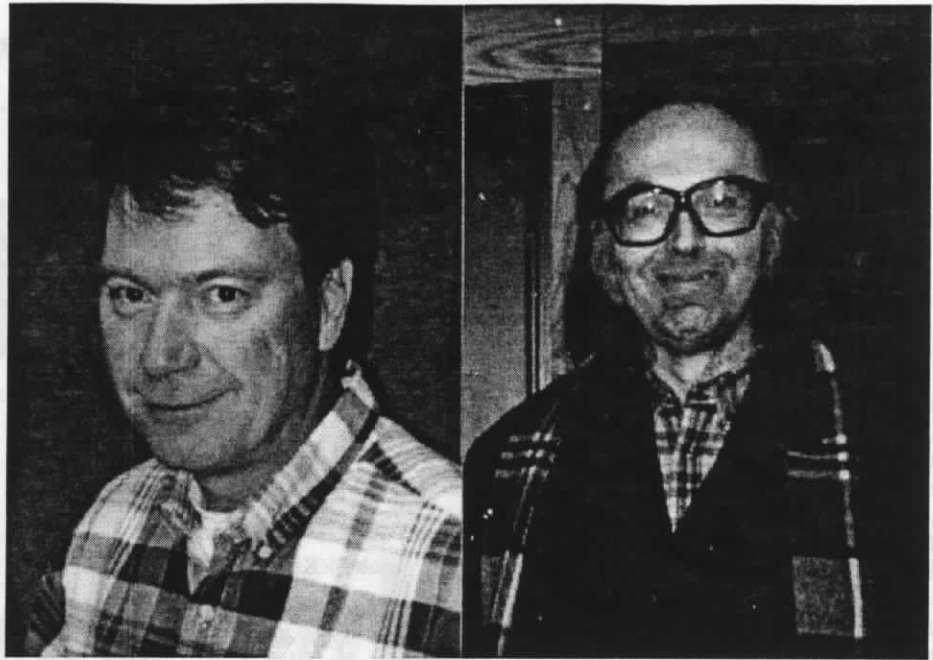
Schmitz,K - McCourt,D  
Ruy-Lopez (Schliemann) [C63]  
Freeze-Out

This game, submitted by Dan McCourt, was the only game played in what turned out to be an unsuccessful experimental format for the Freezeout. Considering the Freezeout almost didn't happen at all this year, I guess you'd have to say that one game was better than none. And on the bright side, it did bring another player to the MCA fold in the person of Karl Schmitz. Welcome, Karl!

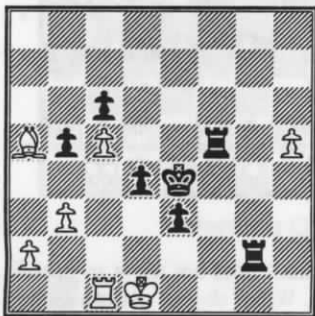
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 f5 4.d3 d6 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.h3 a6 7.Ba4 Be7 8.exf5 Bxf5 9.Bb3 Na5 10.Nh4 Nxb3



11.Nxf5? Nxa1 12.Nxe7 Qxe7 13.Bg5 Nxc2+ 14.Qxc2 c6 15.Ne4 h6 16.Nxf6+ gxf6 17.Bh4 Qe6 18.Qc4 Qxc4 19.dxc4 Kf7 20.Ke2 b5 21.f3 Rhg8 22.g3 h5 23.g4 hxg4 24.fxg4 Rh8 25.Bf2 Rh7 26.h4 Rg8 27.Kf3 Ke6 28.Rd1 d5 29.c5 Rhg7 30.Rg1 f5 31.g5 a5 32.b3 d4 33.Rd1 Kd5 34.Rc1 e4+ 35.Kf4 e3 36.Be1 Re8 37.h5 Re4+ 38.Kxf5 Re5+ 39.Kf4 Rgxf5 40.Kf3 Ref5+ 41.Ke2 Ke4 42.Bxa5 Rg2+ 43.Kd1



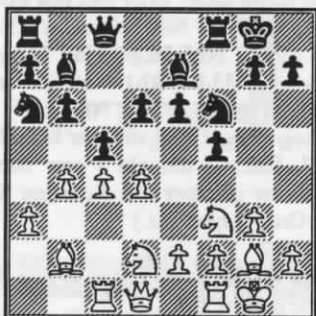
January Thaw Co-Champs Jim Skovron and Greg Nowak



43...Rxb5  
Black is in control but he misses the quick mate: 43...Rf1+ 44.Be1 Rd2#.  
44.Be1 d3 45.Rc4+ Kd5 46.a3 Rh1 47.Rf4 d2  
And black went on to win with both players in time trouble. 0-1

Erickson,R (1678) - McCourt,D (1629)  
Reti [A04]  
UCCC 2nd Winter Open

1.Nf3 b6 2.g3 Bb7 3.Bg2 d6 4.b4 f5 5.Bb2 Nf6 6.d4 e6 7.c4 Be7 8.Nbd2 0-0 9.0-0 Qc8 10.Rc1 c5 11.a3 Na6



12.b5 Nc7 13.Qc2 Qd7 14.Ne5 dxe5 15.Bxb7 Rad8 16.Bc6 Qc8?  
Better for Black is 16...Qd6 17.dxe5 Qxd2 18.exf6 Qxc2 19.Rxc2 gxf6.  
17.dxe5 Ng4 18.h3 Nh6 19.Rcd1 a6 20.a4 axb5 21.axb5 Na6 22.Bc3 Nb8 23.Bg2 f4 24.g4 Nf7 25.Ra1 Qc7 26.Nf3 Nd7 27.Qb2 Ra8 28.h4 Nh6 29.Rxa8 Rxa8 30.Ng5 Bxg5? 31.hxg5 Nxg4 32.Bxa8 Ndx5 33.Bxe5 Nxe5 34.Qc3 Ng6 35.Qh3 Qe5 36.Qg4 Ne7 37.Rd1 g6 38.Rd8+ Kf7 39.Qh4 Qa1+ 40.Kg2 e5 41.Qxb7+ Ke6 42.Bd5+ Kf5 43.Qxe7 f3+ 44.exf3 1-0

Erickson,R (1678) - Jensen,M (1881)  
[A04]  
UCCC 2nd Winter Open

Castling queenside is sometimes called "castling long." In this game Mike castles really, really long -- and just barely gets away with it.  
1.Nf3 d6 2.b4 e5 3.e4 f5 4.d3 f4 5.g3 g5!? 6.gxf4 gxf4



7.Nxe5!  
Forcefully taking advantage of Black's exposed king and lack of development.  
7...dxe5 8.Qh5+ Kd7 9.Qxe5 Nf6 10.Bh3+ Kc6 11.Qc3+ Kb6



### 12.Bxc8

The idea is that if Black recaptures, then the knight on f6 will fall and the attack will intensify. It is a little premature, though, and Black can thread his way to safety by giving the piece back now. Playing 12.a4 first would have caused Black more trouble. Here are just a few of the interesting possibilities: 12.a4 a5 (12...Bxb3? 13.a5+ Ka6 14.b5+ Kxb5) 13.bxa5+ Ka7 (13...Rxa5? 14.Bxc8 Nc6 15.Qb2+) 14.Bxc8 Na6 15.Bxb7 Bb4 16.Bxa8 Kxa8 17.Bxf4 Bxc3+ 18.Nxc3.

12...Nc6! 13.a3 Rxc8 14.Bxf4 Nd4 15.Nd2 a6 16.Be3 c5 17.Rb1 Ka7 18.bxc5?

This releases some of the tension, giving Black more freedom. 18.Rg1 or 18.Qb2 might be better tries.

18...Bxc5 19.Qb2



19...Qd7

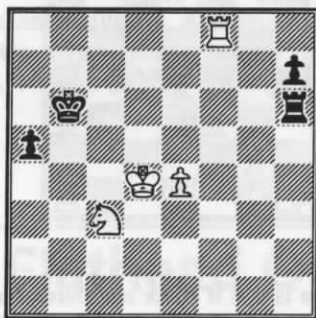
Obvious enough, in that 20.Qxb7# was threatened, but Black had a sharper alternative: 19...Nxc2+ 20.Ke2 (20.Qxc2? Bxe3) 20...Qe7 21.Bxc5+ Rxc5.

20.c3 Nb5 21.Bxc5+ Rxc5 22.c4 Nd4? [Black could take advantage of White's uncastled state as follows: 22...Qxd3! 23.Qxf6 (23.cxb5 Rc2!) 23...Rxc4! 24.Nxc4 Qxb1.

23.Qb6+ Ka8 24.Qxc5 Nc2+ 25.Kd1 Qxd3 26.Qb6 Rb8 27.Qb3?

27.Rb3! wins the knight.

27...Qxb3 28.Rxb3 Nd4 29.Rd3 Nc6 30.f4 Na5 31.Ke2 Rf8 32.h3 Nc6 33.Rg1 Nh5 34.f5? Nf4+ 35.Ke3 Nxd3 36.Kxd3 Rd8+ 37.Ke3 Ne5 38.Rg7 Rd3+ 39.Kf4 Nc6 40.Nf3 Rxa3 41.f6 Nd8 42.Rg8 Rd3 43.f7 Ka7 44.f8Q Ne6+ 45.Ke5 Nxf8 46.Rxf8 a5 47.Nd4 Rxh3 48.Nb5+ Kb6 49.Kd4 Rh6 50.Nc3 Kc6 51.c5 b6 52.cxb6 Kxb6



The players agreed to a draw, although White's extra piece, better king position, and more active rook should be enough to carry the day for him. ½-½

A couple of more games from the Thaw round out this edition's Games Section.

Long, M (1702) - Moore, S (1795)

French [C02]

January Thaw

Notes by Michael Long

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6 6.a3 cxd4



Bob McKean, back in action

[ECO gives 6...c4 as preferable. -- Editor]  
7.cxd4 Nge7 8.Bd3 Bd7 9.Bc2 Nf5  
10.Bxf5 exf5 11.Nc3 Be6 12.0-0 Be7  
13.Rb1 Rc8 14.b4?



This move is fine after Ne2. Now it is a lemon because it allows 14...Nxd4 15.NxN RxN.

14...0-0 15.Ne2 Na5

Sherwood eyes the knight outpost at c4. If 16.bxN QxR.

16.Bg5!

A strong tactical stroke that refutes Black's ambitions by attacking the bishop and connecting queen and rook at the same time.. Now if 16...Nc4 17.BxB.

16...Bxg5 17.bxa5 Qxa5 18.Nxg5 Qa6 19.Nf4 Rc4 20.Qh5

The Kamikaze is launched.

20...h6 21.Ngxe6 fxe6 22.Qg6 Rxd4 23.Qxe6+ Rf7 24.Qxa6 bxa6 25.g3 Re7 26.Rfe1 g5 27.Nh5 Ra4?

Black cannot afford to chase pawns with a rook that is needed on the front line.

28.Rbd1 d4 29.e6 Kh7 30.Nf6+ Kg6 31.Nd5 Re8 32.Re5 Kg7 33.e7 Rxa3

Black puts up longer resistance with 33...Kf7 34.Rxf5+ Ke6 35.Nc7+ Kxf5 36.Nxe8 Ke6 37.Re1+ Kf7 38.Nd6+.

34.Rxd4 Ra1+ 35.Kg2 a5 36.Nc7 1-0

McKean, B. (1749) - Nowak, G. (2158)

K.I.A. [A05]

January Thaw

Notes by Alex Dawson

McKean gives Nowak a good run for his money in this game, but the Octopus knows how to stay "in the black". Get it? ...octopus, ink, black... oh, just play through the game already. Hey, you guys write this stuff!

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2 c5

Greg looks to be steering the game towards a Panno or Yugoslav variation of the King's Indian.

4.d3 Nc6 5.Nbd2

Bob seems more interested in a King's Indian Attack.

5...Bg7 6.0-0 0-0 7.e4 Ne8



8.Rb1!?

Since Black does not show an interest in the center, White should play to control it with 8.c3 and advance the d-pawn.

8...Nc7 9.a4 d6 10.b3 a6 11.Bb2 b5 12.Bxg7 Kxg7 13.Re1 e5! 14.Rf1 Bd7 15.Nh4 Nd4 16.c3 Nde6 17.Qe2?!

Better is 17.a5 or 17.axb5 to avoid losing a pawn at a4. Any penetration along the b-file is an illusion.

17...Rb8

Confident he'll win anyway, Greg declines the offer.

18.Qe3 Qg5 19.Nhf3?

White should trade queens with an even game.

19...Qxe3 20.fxex3 bxa4

Now with a change of heart, he takes it.

21.bxa4 Bxa4

And Black is winning here.

22.Rxb8 Rxb8 23.d4 cxd4 24.cxd4 exd4 25.exd4 Rb4 26.d5 Nd4 27.Rf2 Nxf3+ 28.Bxf3 f6 29.Nf1 Nb5 30.g4! Nd4 31.Bg2 Bb5 32.Ng3 a5 33.h4 Rb1+ 34.Kh2 a4 35.g5 fxg5 36.hxg5 a3 37.Rd2 Nf3+!!

Very nicely played, and stronger than the obvious 37...Rb2. (I thought I saw some spectators throw quarters and dimes on the board after Greg played this.)

38.Bxf3 Rb2

And there will be a new queen to rule the realm. White resigns. 0-1

# *Selling Toothbrushes: An essay by Dan McCourt*

Chess players are like about everybody else in the country. We are busier than we were last year. Maybe the nation's currency isn't troubled too much by inflation, but our time sure is. A "day off" just doesn't go as far as it used to. "Hey buddy! Can you spare 10 minutes?" It's pretty much the same for the adults playing in soccer and softball and all the other activities. Get plenty of subs so you can get through the season without having to forfeit games due to "no shows".

One of the reasons those activities keep going is that there are some hard core devotees who give inordinate amounts of time to the business of promotion and management of the enterprise. I don't want to be one of those people, and I don't expect any of my chess comrades to do it either. Here in the far flung reaches of the Big Sky Country, it would be on the order of a religious calling to successfully promote chess.

Selling chess is like selling toothbrushes or computers. It's going to take a lot of approaches to find a willing consumer. A consumer who is willing to put up \$40 in membership fees, get a new chess set 'cause we don't use those novelty sets. And last, but not least, this consumer will have to endure losing a lot of games. And he will keep losing until he puts in more money (and time) hitting the books. It's not like soccer or bowling. It's more like boxing. You win draw or lose by yourself. Nothing like a couple weekends spent playing chess and you've got 2 wins out of 10 games. Tentative egos need not apply.

Chess in the schools is a laudable idea and my hat is definitely off to those who are doing that line. However, it has not produced a generation of chess hounds and it is not likely to. At least not without the efforts of the aforementioned evangelicals of chess. We are not like the cub scouts, the little league, or the YMCA or the the Odyssey of the Mind. Those groups can count moms and dads to pitch in and coach. Each generation has its volunteers and things keep on rolling. Chess?? Not a chance! Oregon Trail, Sim City, Lords of the Realm. Computer games have a lot more attraction for kids. They're more fun. Same with fishing, hunting, soccer, basketball. I don't see much profit in pushing chess in the schools.

We are the ones playing chess. Let's keep the tournaments geared to the stuff we like. The age of handing out trophies is probably over. The same people win 'em and they're tired of pretending to be interested. I'm not in favor of big prizes funds either. I just want a weekend of chess. I'll pay the 20-30 dollar

entry on occasion, but I'm not much interested in subsidizing the top players. We all have the same expenses. The directors are the ones who should get the biggest reward. They're the ones that make it all happen.

I suppose it is necessary to have some regulations if we are to have a Grand Prix system. Some formula based on number of players and average rating seems good to me. Maybe the real weight should be on number of players more so than the strength of the average rating. In twenty years of chess in Montana, I seldom have finished in the money, but I have directed a lot of tournaments. One of the reasons I am a director is so that we can have tournaments without burdening the same person each time. Another reason is that it is way of repaying those people who kept the chess scene going when I was too busy to be involved.

My biggest disappointment with Montana chess has been the change in the Grand Prix system that allowed for only one Grand Prix tourney per city. Missoula used to have 5 tournaments attended by 20-30 players. Suddenly, we had to choose which would be be the "special" one. So a guy could direct two 25 player tournaments and know that neither would have any Grand Prix meaning but a 10-player tourney in another town would. If they even had a tournament.

Getting past that disappointment was made easier by the passing of the "laughter rule" which expanded the number of players in the State Closed -- apparently to get more people involved. First we slap down the places that have the most participation -- then we come up with an unwieldy format that makes for a lot more work for the organizer in order to get "more participation". It was tough enough getting six people together for the the title. Now it's 10! Win a couple games at the Open or finish 4th in a Grand Prix tourney and you'll likely qualify by default. Works for me. Anyway, Here's what I think:

- Grand Prix points for all tourneys of 6 or more players. Return to the 5-round RR format for the State Closed.
- Keep entry fees low.
- Lobby USCF for a return to cheap space in advertising tournaments. We used to get people from Canada, Idaho, Wyoming, Milwaukee, and New York.
- Forget hoping newcomers will show up to revive the chess scene. If current MCA members can't support the tournaments, then they won't be saved by the next generation.

## Got something you want to add?

What steps the MCA needs to take to make its tournaments more exciting and satisfying is an important topic, and one in which all members should be involved.

Please write, call, email, or telepath your own comments to the editor, 2015 4th Ave. N., Great Falls, MT, 59401.

# Tournament Tables

**Helena's January Thaw (1/22,23/00)**

#	Name	Rtng	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Tot
1	JIM SKOVRON	1903	W5	D3	D2	W7	W4	4.0
2	GREGORY W NOWAK	2158	W4	W11	D1	D3	W7	4.0
3	MICHAEL J LONG	1702	W8	D1	W6	D2	D5	3.5
4	WILLIAM MCBROOM	1599	L2	W13	W9	W8	L1	3.0
5	BRIAN W BAILEY	1561	L1	W10	D11	W9	D3	3.0
6	SHERWOOD MOORE	1795	W9	L7	L3	W10	D8	2.5
7	DOUGLAS J. HANSEN	1663	W12	W6	H---	L1	L2	2.5
8	NICK D WARNER	1184	L3	B---	W12	L4	D6	2.5
9	MELVIN P DRAKE	1312	L6	W12	L4	L5	B---	2.0
10	WILLIAM J FURDELL	1280	L11	L5	B---	L6	W12	2.0
11	ROBERT McKEAN	1749	W10	L2	D5	U---	U---	1.5
12	ALDIN BARNES	unr.	L7	L9	L8	B---	L10	1.0
13	HAL S AMUNDSON	1286	H---	L4	U---	U---	U---	0.5

Tiebreaks included

**Great Falls Quickie Open (1/29/00)**

#	Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Tot
1	Kirk Lundby*	—	D	L	L	L	L	L	D	D	L	L	1.5
2	Jackie Oleis*	D	—	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	L	0.5
3	Matt Severson	W	W	—	W	L	W	W	W	W	W	L	8.0
4	Larry Elford	W	W	L	—	W	W	W	W	L	L	L	6.0
5	Jim Skovron	W	W	W	W	—	W	W	W	D	L	L	7.5
6	Augusto Rodriguez	W	W	L	W	L	—	W	W	W	W	W	8.0
7	Louis Gutenberg	W	W	L	L	L	L	—	W	L	L	L	3.0
8	Ron McCannel*	D	W	L	L	L	L	L	—	W	L	L	2.5
9	Edgar	D	W	L	W	W	L	W	L	—	L	L	4.5
10	Doug Hansen	W	W	L	W	W	L	W	W	W	—	L	2.0
11	Dennis Petrak	W	W	W	W	W	L	W	W	W	W	—	9.0

\* indicates new member

GREATEST RATING GAIN  
OF 1999

SHERWOOD MOORE

90 POINTS

Honorable mentions in the rating gain department go to Johnny Legan, whose provisional rating shot up 199 points, and to Augusto Rodriguez-Aponte, who gained 49 provisional points. Other established players with strong gains included David Duke and Brian Bailey, each with a 44 point rise last year.

**UCCC 2nd Winter Open (1/00)**

#	Name	Rtng	1	2	3	4	Tot
1	Jensen	1881	—	D	W	U	1.5
2	Erickson	1678	D	—	W	♣	1.5
3	McCourt	1629	W8	D1	—	D2	1.0
4	McBroom	1599	U	W*	L	—	1.0

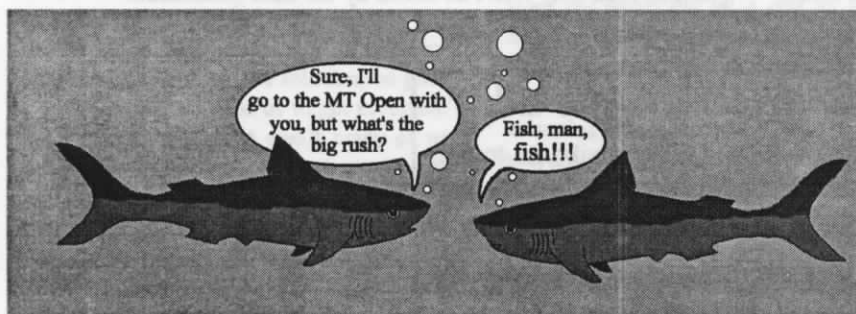
\* Game played against houseman, Tom Hesse

## The Polgar Corner

The following position is taken from the encyclopedia *Chess* by László Polgár. How quickly can you find this mate in two?



White to move and mate in 2.  
The answer is on the back page.



## Upcoming Events

Membership in USCF and MCA (or other state affiliate) required for all events unless otherwise noted.

### March 11-12 — No-Fees Change of Pace Bookworm

**Format:** Semi-organized and casual, based on player preferences. Morning rounds pot-luck pairing, (rated, game/90), followed by something different (bughouse, blitz, skittles, more rated games — you name it.) **Site:** Meeting room of Finnegan's Restaurant, 700 East Broadway, Missoula. **EF:** Free entry. **Prizes:** To be determined. **Rnds:** 9:30 both days for rated game/90, 12:30 for change of pace activities. **Contact:** Dan McCourt, 608 West Central, Missoula, MT 59801. Tel. 406-721-0254, Email: ddmc@bigsky.net.

### March 25 — Black Dog Cafe Championship

**Format:** 3 quads (or 2 quads and a Swiss), 3 rounds, Game/60. **Site:** 149 W. Broadway, Missoula. **EF:** \$10 before 3/18, \$12 before 3/25, \$15 at site. U/17 is \$3 less. **Prizes:** \$15 and \$7 to 1st and 2nd in each quad. **Registration:** 10:30-10:50. **Rnds:** 11, 1:15, 3:30. **Contact:** Greg Nowak, 125 West Main, Missoula, MT 59807. **Other:** Rated and unrated quads. MCA membership encouraged but not required.

### April 15-16 — Crocus Open (Missoula's Grand Prix event!)

**Format:** 4 rnd Swiss, Game/2 hrs. **Site:** Univ. of MT, Rankin Hall, Room 203, Missoula. **EF:** \$15 if rec'd by 4/13, \$20 after that. **Prizes:** 1st-\$75, 2nd-\$50, LT1600-\$30, LT1400-\$25. **Registration:** 9-9:30. **Rnds:** 10,3/9,2. **Contact:** William H. McBroom, 2321 Raymond Ave., Missoula, MT 59802. Tel. 406-728-4654. No phone entries.

### April 29 — Pizza Open

**Format:** One day event, format to be determined at site, either round robin or Swiss. Game/15, some games may be rated. *Free pizza courtesy of Pizza Hut at lunch break.* **Site:** Univ. of Great Falls, Classroom Bldg., Room 203. (Use the parking lot on 23rd St. S.) **EF:** \$5. Free to anyone joining MCA at \$9 adult rate. **Prizes:** A hearty handclasp to the winner. **Registration:** 9:15-9:45. **Rnds:** Round 1 begins at 10. Tournament should be over mid to late afternoon. **Contact:** Thad Suits 2015 4th Ave. N., Great Falls, MT, 59401. Tel. 453-6160. **Other:** This is a promotional event. USCF membership not required. MCA membership will be strongly encouraged but not required.

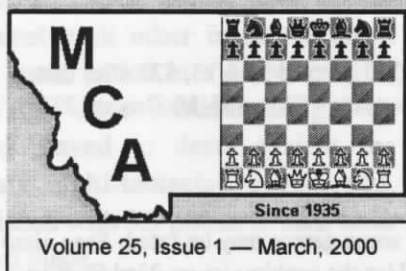
### April 29 — Fifth Greater Northwest Team Tourney

**Format:** 7 teams, 4 per team, G/30, round robin (unrated). **Site:** Pressbox Casino, 835 E. Broadway, Missoula (Nice site — quiet and well-lit). **EF:** \$32 per team if rec'd by 4/7, \$40 until 4/22, when team entries close. Individual entries \$8 by 4/15, \$10 by 4/22, \$12 by 4/28, \$14 at door. Players under age 17 \$2 less. MCA membership encouraged, not required. **Prizes:** Winning team shares top team pot equally. 1st place - \$15 each, 2nd - \$5 each. Best board prizes: \$5. **Registration:** Team entries should be submitted by 4/17. Individuals may enter and be in the player-pool for team assignments. **Registration times:** 11:00-11:30 a.m. **Rounds:** 11:45, 1:15, 2:35, 3:50, 5:05, ASAP (if needed). **Entries to:** Greg Nowak, Hellgate Station, PO Box 8572, Missoula, MT 59807. **Other:** Limited to 28 players. Individuals must be present by 11:30 or lose their entries. Add \$1 to your entry fee to enter a raffle. Winner gets a free MCA membership or renewal.

### June 3-4 — The 2000 Montana State Open in Great Falls

**Format:** 5 round Swiss, G/2. **Site:** Univ. of Great Falls, Classroom Bldg., Room 203. (Use the parking lot on 23rd St. S.) **EF:** \$20 by May 20, \$25 at site. Juniors half price. **Prizes:** Trophies galore. **Registration:** 8:00-8:45. **Rnds:** 9, 2, 7 / 9:30, 2:30. **Annual Business Meeting:** Sunday at 8:30 a.m. All resident MCA members urged to attend and get involved. **Contact:** Thad Suits, 2015 4th Ave. N. Great Falls, MT 59401. Tel. (406) 453-6160. **Other:** Limited housing available. Call in advance if you need a roof. Special thanks to the University of Great Falls for sponsoring the tournament space. **Save these dates in your calendar and make plans to attend!**

Thad Suits  
2015 4th Ave N.  
Great Falls, MT 59401



## 20 and 10 years ago in MCN

*March, 1980*

“There is good chess news from Missoula these days where **Tony Mattina** and others have regenerated the Missoula Chess Club after several years without regular meetings. They are drawing 10 to 20 players to weekly gatherings on the Univ. of Montana campus.”

Twenty-five players came to Butte to compete in the Fourth Copper Kings Open, directed by **Andy Shuck** of Whitehall.

*March, 1990*

The first annual MCA Maximum Rating Gain award went to new member **Thad Suits**, of Great Falls, who gained 160 points to end the year with a 1927 rating. (He has hardly gained a point since.)

### Answer to “What’s the Cruncher?”

*Offshoot from Doulas-Suits, 1999 Chinook Open.*  
Black has the shot 1...Nxf4! White is forced to capture in light of the threatened 2...Qc2+, followed by a quick mate. After the capture, though, the White king gets caught in a mating net: 2.gxN Qg1+ 3.Kf3 Rf1+ 4.Ke4 Qg2+ 5.Kd3 Rd1+ 6.Nd2 RxN+ 7.Kc4 Qd5+ 8.Kb5 Rxb2+ 9.Ka6 Rxa2+ 10.Kb5 Ra5#.

**Answer to “The Polgar Corner”** - 1.Nd5+