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Chess

GIRI'S GRAND DESIGN

Anish Giri wins the 2025
FIDE Grand Swiss and
captures a place in the
Candidates Tournament

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Matthias Blübaum – Daniel King examines the play of the unexpected 2026 Candidate



A Grand Finish - Fabiano Caruana prevailed at the Grand Chess Tour Finals in Brazil



Genius or Madman? - Ben Graff looks back at the ever controversial Aron Nimzowitsch

Chess

Founding Editor: B.H. Wood, OBE. M.Sc †
Executive Editor: Malcolm Pein
Editors: Richard Palliser, Matt Read
Associate Editor: John Saunders
Advertising: Tao Bhokanandh

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60 Seconds with... Julen Arizmendi



Born: July 5th 1976, New Jersey.

Place of residence: La Bisbal del Penedès, Catalonia.

Occupation: Chess coach and player, although I am not playing as often as I used to.

Enjoyable? It sure is! I wanted to become a chess player very early on and I got the chance to do exactly that.

And home life? Nothing beats being home with my wife and kid.

But sometimes good to escape to: Seeing my friends.

Sports played or followed: I play pádel and sometimes I go bouldering with my wife.

A favourite novel? I am not the 'favourite' type, but I really enjoyed *Speaker for the Dead* by Orson Scott Card.

Piece of music? I enjoy rock and roll, soul and R&B from the 60s, 70s and 80s the most.

Film or TV series? *The Shawshank Redemption* and *Midnight in Paris* come to mind.

What's the best thing about playing chess? Every time you play a game you get a

chance to create something memorable.

And the worst? To play a good game and then just blunder it all away in one move.

Your best move? Probably 19 ♖c6! against Vadim Milov.

J.Arizmendi Martinez-V.Milov Biel 2001



19 ♖c6!! ♜xc3 20 ♙c1 ♜b6 21 ♙a1 ♜xc2 22 ♜xc2 ♜xc6 23 ♙d2 h5 24 ♙b4 a5 25 ♙xa5 0-0 26 ♙b4 e5 27 f5 ♙b7 28 f6 gxf6



29 ♜e2 ♜b6 30 ♙d1 f5 31 ♜xh5 ♜a8 32 g6 1-0

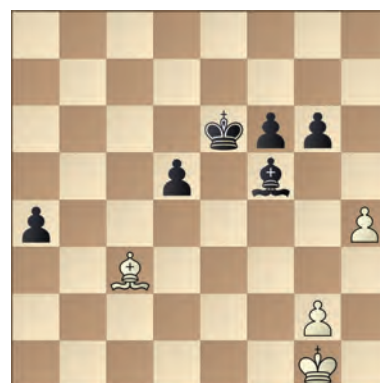
But less memorable than your worst move? I have played many terrible moves in my life, some of which I remember vividly, but the really good moves are definitely more memorable.

And a highly memorable opponent? That would be Karpov. I was fortunate enough to play two four-game exhibition matches against him in Valencia.

Favourite game of all time? Many great

games come to mind, but only one favourite move: Shirov's 47...♙h3!! against Topalov.

V.Topalov-A.Shirov Linares 1998



47...♙h3!! 48 gxf3 ♜f5 49 ♜f2 ♙e4 50 ♙xf6 d4 51 ♙e7 ♙d3 52 ♙c5 ♜c4 53 ♙e7 ♜b3 0-1

The best three chess books: It's tough to choose only three, but *Winning Chess Middlegames* (Ivan Sokolov), *Learn from the Legends* (Mihail Marin) and *The Seven Deadly Chess Sins* (Jonathan Rowson) helped me a lot.

Is FIDE doing a good job? Given how popular chess is now, I believe it is clearly lagging in terms of promoting the game.

Or your National Federation? They get things done, but I would not call it a good job. Fresh ideas are needed.

Any advice for either? It would be great if FIDE would stop tinkering with the rating system.

Can chess make one happy? It definitely can! This game never ceases to amaze me.

A tip for the club player: Enjoy the process of learning and be patient: more often than not new information takes time before it clicks in.



Ed. – For more from Julen you may enjoy his new book, Practical Chess Strategy, published by Quality Chess and available for £25.99 or £23.39 for Subscribers.

A Tricky Anti-French

PART TWO

Junior Tay continues to delve into the Anton Smirnov early queen sally

In Part One last month, we looked at how easy it is for Black to go wrong in the ♖f3 Exchange French and allow White to exploit the queen's placement to rustle up an early initiative.

Another way for Black to meet 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 ♖f3 is to play the typical French ...c5 break, though this might allow White time to gang up on the isolated d-pawn. In this follow-up article, we begin by examining such lines and how White can stir up trouble if Black continues inaccurately. Here's an apt example:

A.Smirnov-A.Huzman

Internet (blitz) 2020

French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 ♖f3 ♜b6 5 h3 ♙e7 6 ♙d3 0-0 7 ♜e2 c5 8 dxc5 ♜bd7

Black also got into trouble after 8...♙xc5 9 ♙g5 ♜bd7 10 ♜bc3 ♜e5 11 ♖g3 ♙e8 12 0-0-0 and the d5-pawn was problematic in Antipov-Wheeler, World Universities Championship (rapid) 2021.

9 0-0 ♙xc5 10 ♜bc3



10...h6

Preventing White from exerting more pressure on the d-pawn with ♙g5, but the extra tempo gives White more time to target it.

Better is 10...d4! 11 ♜b5 ♖d5! 12 ♜bxd4 ♖xf3 13 ♜xf3 ♜xd3 14 cxd3 ♙d8 15 d4 ♜d5 when Black's bishop-pair and well-placed pieces compensate for the pawn minus.

11 ♙d1 a6?! 12 ♙e3?!

After 12 ♙c4! Black can kiss the pawn goodbye.

12...♜xd3 13 ♙xd3 ♙e6 14 ♜f4 ♖c8

At best Black can complicate the issue



24-year-old Australian no.2 Anton Smirnov is currently rated 2586 and still playing 4 ♖f3.

with 14...♙f5 15 ♙d2 ♙e4 16 ♖e2, but he still cannot save the weak pawn.

15 ♙ad1

15 ♙d4 is even stronger, preparing a direct kingside assault, but the d-pawn proves too juicy to ignore.

15...♖c6



Black counts on mitigating the d-pawn's loss by grabbing the c2-pawn, but it's not enough.

16 ♜cxd5 ♜xd5 17 ♜xd5 ♙xd5 18 ♖xd5 ♖xc2 19 ♖xb7 ♙f6 20 ♙d3d2 ♖f5 21 b3 a5 22 ♙d7

White has both activity and the extra pawn.

22...♙ab8 23 ♖d5 ♖c2 24 ♙d2 ♖b1+ 25 ♜h2 ♙bc8 26 ♙c5

Not falling for 26 ♖xa5?? ♙c3.

26...♙fe8 27 ♖xf7+ ♜h8 28 ♙d4! ♙f8 29 ♖d5 ♖g6 30 ♙xf6 ♖xf6 31 ♖d4



And the rest is just a GM consolidation win.

31...♖g6 32 ♙d6 ♖g5 33 h4 ♖h5 34 g3 ♙ce8 35 ♙d5 ♖f3 36 ♙d3 ♖f6 37 ♜g2 ♙e1 38 ♙e2 ♙a1 39 ♖e4 ♙c1 40 ♙e5 a4 41 bxa4 ♙d6 42 ♙e8 ♙xe8 43 ♖xe8+ ♜h7 44 ♖e4+ ♜h8 45 ♙b2 1-0

Just to clarify, I do not advocate Smirnov's choice of meeting 4...c5 with 5 dxc5 ♙xc5 6 ♙d3, since Black has an easy equaliser with 6...♜f6!. Instead, I prefer Blaskowski's tricky 5 ♙b5+!.

J.Blaskowski-M.Trachtmann

German League 2002

French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 ♖f3 c5 5 ♙b5+!?

White is going for swift development after 'wasting' a tempo with the early ♖f3.

Smirnov has been successful with 5 dxc5 ♙xc5 6 ♙d3 on a few occasions against GM opposition, but Black has too easy a game after 6...♜f6! 7 h3 0-0 8 ♜e2 ♜c6. Indeed, Black has a substantial developmental edge: for example, after 9 ♙f4 (Smirnov-Livaic, Internet (blitz) 2023), Black has 9...♜d4! (the pawn offer 9...♜e4!? is also not bad) 10 ♜xd4 ♙xd4 11 ♜c3 ♙e8+ 12 ♙e2 ♙f5 with a strong initiative.

5...♜c6

After 5...♙d7 6 ♙xd7+ ♖xd7 7 ♜e2 ♜c6 8 ♙e3 cxd4 9 ♜xd4 ♜f6 10 0-0 ♙d6 White has a slight edge as he will be able to bite on Black's IQP.

6 ♜e2 ♜f6 7 ♙g5



7...a5+?!

Too sharp.

Black reaches a playable middlegame after 7...e7 8 dxc5! g4 9 a3 e2 10 e2 d7! 11 e7 xe7 12 c3 d4! 13 d5 e5 14 f3 xc5 15 0-0 0-0, but it is too risky to play 7...cxd4 8 dxd4 e7+ 9 e3 b4+?! (9...d7 is safer) 10 c3 xb2 11 c1 xa1 12 0-0 and the rook is scant compensation for White's upcoming assault.

8 bc3 e4?

The German FM is spoiling for a fight, but this only retards his development and now White plays brilliantly to make him pay for it.

9 b4!

A pawn for a tempo, with White ahead in development, which is definitely worth its weight in gold.

9...xb4

After 9...cxb4 10 xc6+ bxc6 11 dxe4 dxe4 12 xe4+ d7 13 d5! Black's king is too exposed for him to save the game.

10 0-0!



Blaskowski continues in sacrificial vein and denies Black any respite. Even if Black grabs the g5-bishop, he will soon have to return the material.

10...xg5 11 xd5 d7 12 ab1 a5 13 xg5 e7 14 xg7 0-0-0

Finally, Black has got his king out of the danger zone, but White is already training his guns on the queenside.

15 d5! dg8 16 h6 e5 17 xd7+ dxd7 18 h3 d6 19 e4 c7 20 d2c3 a6 21 dxd6+ xxd6 22 e4 e7

22...xd5 walks into a fork after 23 f6. **23 fe1**

There's no rush. Black is unable to cope with White's tremendous activity.

23...b8



And now when White has everything in place...

24 xc5! xc5 25 xd7 1-0

There's no good way to meet the killer follow-up of e7.

The best lines to deal with the 4 f3 Exchange French happen to comprise non-standard moves – those that one will not play naturally, especially when they involve moving the same piece twice in the opening for a specific idea. One of Chessable's most prolific authors is FM Kamil Plichta. The idea he and I too advocate for Black is to transfer the queen's knight to g6 via e7 to contest the key kingside squares.

Argentine IM Jacques Blit is another leading exponent of the 4 f3 Exchange French. His Chess.com record with this line is a remarkable 78% score as White.

J.Blit-A.Chernobay

Internet (blitz) 2021

French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 f3 f6 5 h3 c6 6 c3 e7!

Plichta noted that this knight regrouping to g6 is "especially effective when White has committed the queen to f3". I also found this idea independently in my own analysis.

7 d3 g6 8 g5

Plichta noted that after 8 e2 e7, "We will castle next and solidify our position with ...c6" on his *Lifetime Repertoires: Plichta's French Defense* course.

8...e7 9 e2 0-0 10 0-0



10...h6?!

Objectively, there is nothing wrong with the move, even if it loses a pawn, but to find the exact way to gain compensation for it

requires the engine's evaluation.

The solid 10...c6 avoids the issue with the d5-pawn faced by Black in the game and we can conclude that Black has equal chances here.

11 xxf6 xxf6 12 xg6 fxg6 13 f4

This is the dilemma faced by Black. How does one continue after losing the d- or g-pawn?

13...c6?!

The Russian GM chooses to give away the doubled pawn and not allow White a 4 vs 3 pawn majority on the queenside, but it proved to be the wrong decision. Black does best to play 13...h7 14 xd5 e7 15 a3 c6 16 xc4 h4! 17 ae1 xf2+ 18 xf2 xf4+ 19 g1 e4 when he isn't worse.

Also, 13...f5 14 xd5+ f7 and 13...f7 14 xd5 f5 are playable too, offering sufficient compensation for the pawn.

14 xg6 f7



Black has insufficient compensation for the pawn and went on to lose in 33 moves. White's best continuation here is...

15 d3 g5 16 e2 c5 17 d2 cxd4 18 cxd4 f5 19 e5

....with a large advantage as the bishop-pair is unable to influence the game while White's strong centralised knight helps to control matters.

IM John Watson is widely recognised as a leading French Defence authority with his *Play the French* books (which went into four editions), and his ChessPublishing work, so we should look at one of his recommendations.

J.Blaskowski-G.Dizdar

Austrian League 2009

French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 f3

Watson noted that this move "is rather eccentric, yet keeps an eye on d5 and has in mind castling queenside. Black seems to get equality with almost any natural move, including 4...c6 and 4...d6".

4...f6 5 h3 c5 6 b5+ d6 7 e2 b6! 8 bc3! (see diagram at top of next page)

This was not covered in Watson's work, but it puts the question to Black over how to defend the d5-pawn.

Instead, Watson looked at 8 d3?! c4 9 e3+ e6 10 a4 d6 with a nice lead in development for Black (*Play the French*, 4th Edition, 2012).



8...cxd4 9 dxd5 dxd5 10 Wxd5 b4+ 10...Sc5 11 Sc6+ bxc6 12 We4+ Se6 13 f4 0-0 14 dxe6 ffe8 15 0-0 xxe6 16 Wd3 is about equal.

11 c3 dxc3 12 0-0

Also, 12 We4+ Sc5 13 bxc3 Wxb5 14 cxb4 Sc5 15 a4 Wxb4+ 16 Wxb4 dxb4 17 Sa3 a5 gives equal chances, Fiacan-Hagara, Slovakian League 2022.

12...Se6 13 Sc6+ Wxc6

13...bxc6 14 We4 0-0 15 Se3 Wb5 16 dxc3 would be similar.

14 Wxc6+ bxc6 15 dxc3 0-0-0



Black's bishop-pair compensates for his slightly worse pawn structure and the game was later drawn.

The following Watson work (done together with German FM Joachim Winzer) utilises both the ...Se7 and ...Se4 manoeuvres with great effect.

M.Brueedigam-J.Winzer German League 2014 French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 Wf3 Sc6 5 c3 Scd6!? 6 Scd3

For the purpose of covering the theory, I've taken the liberty of switching the move order from 4 Scd3 and 6 Wf3 to 4 Wf3 then 6 Scd3, so we first cover the line with White declining the d5-pawn.

Perhaps though White should just accept the gambit pawn and return it pronto: 6 Wxd5 Sc6 7 Wc4 0-0 8 d3 Se8+ 9 Se2 We7 10 Se3 d3 11 Wd3 dxe3 12 fxe3 We3 13 Wxe3 fxe3 14 f2 Se7 15 d2 d3 16 f1 Se3+ 17 f1 with even play.

6...Sc6 7 h3



7...0-0

7...Se4! is another Chesspublishing.com recommendation and if White captures the knight, Black responds with 8 Sc4 We7 9 d2 f5, with the better game.

8 Se2 Se7

As I mentioned earlier, Plichta advocated this knight manoeuvre in his work. Winzer takes it one step further, combining both ...Se7 and ...Se4 to play for the initiative.

9 Sc5

After this natural move, Black seizes the initiative. Instead, 9 0-0! c6 10 Sc5 Se8 is fine, though a little passive for Black.

9...Se4! 10 Sc4 dxe4 11 Wxe4 Se8 12 d2 f6 13 Se3 d5

Black's bishop-pair and central pressure supply more than sufficient compensation for the pawn.

14 Wd3 Sh4



As Winzer noted, "The most difficult decision, because Black can no longer play ...Se3." In the game, after 15 Scf1 (Stockfish reckons that Black is better after 15 0-0 Wd7 16 d4 Wf7 17 Wc4 g5 18 Wxf7+ Scxf7 19 d3 Sc5 20 d1 h5, despite the pawn deficit) 15...c6 16 g3 (a chronic weakening of the light squares) 16...Sc5 17 Wc4+ Se6 18 Wd3 Sc5 Black's light-squared bishop was quick to exert its influence and he went on to win.

In conclusion, the Anton Smirnov Exchange variation is good as a one-off line against French exponents. Black has several methods which equalise, but the more critical ones are non-standard in nature and it is likely opponents will face problems meeting the line for the first time.



A little bird just told me

A round-up of what the top players and chess personalities have been saying on Twitter

Andriy Volokitin - @AndriyVolokitin

A tremendous victory for the Ukrainian men's national chess team and a silver medal for the women's team at the European Team Championship! Proud to bring my 11th medal for Team Ukraine over the years 2001 - 2025! Huge thanks to @uachessfed and @AKamyshin for their support!

European Chess Union - @ECUonline

Congratulations to Poland on winning the European Women's Team Chess Championship 2025! Poland scored a 2.5-1.5 victory in the last round against Azerbaijan to secure gold medal and the Winners' trophy with the final score of 16 match points! #etcc2025

Grand Chess Tour - @GrandChessTour

"So I think I'm gonna peak in three years, and that's when I'll become the World Champion," said Anish Giri two months ago during Croatia #grandchesstour event. Fast forward: he wins the Grand Swiss, qualifies for the Candidates... looks like the peak might be arriving ahead of schedule! Careful, Anish! Congratulations!

Anish Giri - @anishgiri

Nowadays I no longer care that much about the ratings, to be honest, but still nice to be back in the top 7! Grateful for all the support.

English Chess Tracker - @EngChessTrack

The European Senior Championship concluded today. A final day draw saw GM John Nunn finish 2nd in the Over 65. In the women's 50+, WFM Petra Fink-Nunn grabbed 3rd. In the Open 50+, FM Stephen Dishman ranked 15th. Some great results in there! #chess #englishchess

Norway Chess - @NorwayChess

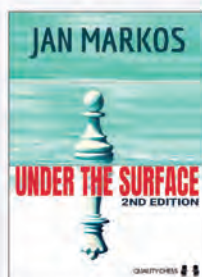
What if there were a World Chess Champion across all time controls? Fast Classic. Rapid. Blitz. That is what we imagined, and we are making it a reality. Introducing the Total Chess World Championship Tour, a new FIDE-recognised series that will crown the FIDE World Combined Champion.

Carl Portman - @Carl_Portman

Prison chess champs live. Romania B struggling horribly to win with rook and king v king. These endings must be practiced! It's not all about sexy openings. Now England got a draw with the 50 move rule. WOW.



NEW FROM QUALITY CHESS



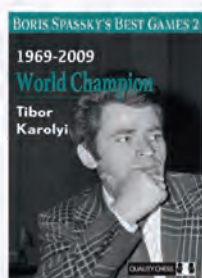
Under the Surface – 2nd edition by Julen Arizmendi

This new edition adds four new chapters along with various improvements to the original content. Jan Markos shows how a grandmaster perceives chess, presenting his concepts as vivid, memorable metaphors such as Magnetic Skin, Karpov's Billiard Balls, and many others, which will come as revelations to even titled players. 352 pages €29.99 (hc) €34.99 (hc) €25.99 (eBook)



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Even after his famous defeat at the hands of Bobby Fischer in Reykjavik 1972, Boris Spassky remained among the strongest players in the world, and his masterpieces continued to delight chess lovers for decades to come. 408 pages €29.99 (hc) €34.99 (hc) €25.99 (eBook)



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Wouldn't it be nice if we had a set of rules that always directed us towards the best move in any chess position? *Practical Chess Strategy* will teach you to break down any position into its underlying elements and apply core concepts that will guide you towards the best move and plan. 424 pages €29.99 (hc) €34.99 (hc) €25.99 (eBook)



NEW FROM POPULAR CHESS



Exploiting a Space Advantage by Cyrus Lakdawala

In *Exploiting a Space Advantage*, Cyrus Lakdawala explains how to squeeze your opponents into submission, when a space advantage leads to attack, why we should be careful not to overextend, and more concepts that can help understand the concept of space. 248 pages €23.95 (pb) €29.95 (hc) €20.95 (eBook)



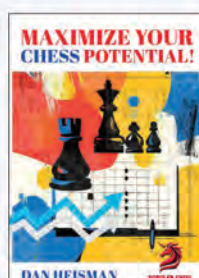
Exploiting the Bishop Pair by Cyrus Lakdawala

All chess players have heard about the power of the bishop pair – but many have no real idea of when or why they are superior, and what to do with the advantage. Questions like these are answered in *Exploiting the Bishop Pair* by Cyrus Lakdawala. 224 pages €23.95 (pb) €29.95 (hc) €20.95 (eBook)



Exploiting Weaknesses by Cyrus Lakdawala

Exploiting weaknesses is an integral part of building a Winning Chess Strategy. Hence, Cyrus Lakdawala tackles this multifaceted term, making it approachable for anyone wishing to learn how to identify and exploit the weaknesses in their opponent's camp. 296 pages €23.95 (pb) €29.95 (hc) €20.95 (eBook)



Maximize Your Chess Potential by Dan Heisman

The advice in this book represents ways to highlight and address the most common problems experienced by chess enthusiasts of all levels. Heisman also suggests ways to mitigate or even avoid these problems entirely and, by doing so, improve their chess play and learn to study more effectively. 368 pages €23.95 (pb) €29.95 (hc) €19.95 (eBook)

New Arrivals

Autumn - Winter 2025



NEW!

SPY'S MATE

Brad Buchanan

Historical chess-espionage thriller set in the late Cold War Soviet Union, it follows Armenian chess prodigy Yasha Basmajian as he navigates intrigue, manipulation, and ideological clashes en route to top-tier international competition. Described as a compelling crossover for fans of The Queen's Gambit, mixing tactical drama, Cold War politics, and espionage.

ISBN 9789083488233 - HB



Forthcoming

ALPHABETCHESS V3

Vishnu Warrior

Offers a fun and simple way for kids to learn chess while remembering the key rules. It's imaginative and packed with engaging tips! Each letter of the alphabet is paired with a key chess term, such as A for Attraction, B for Bishop, and C for Checkmate, brought to life through colorful illustrations and whimsical stories. This isn't just a book about chess—it's a book about discovery, designed to captivate children's imaginations while teaching them the basics of both the alphabet and chess.

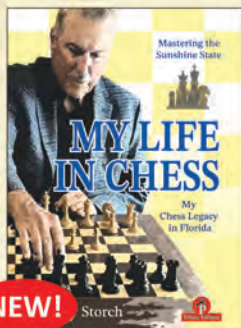
MY LIFE IN CHESS -

MASTERING THE SUNSHINE STATE

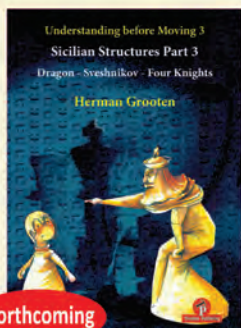
Larry Storch

More than just moves and variations, this book is a story of ambition, rivalry, resilience, and passion for the game. I believe you will find these games and the stories behind them every bit as thrilling and inspiring as I do. Along the way, I present some of my most memorable games—many shaped by deep opening preparation—offering readers unique insights into the drama and artistry of competition on the sixty-four squares.

ISBN 9789493435094 - HB



NEW!



Forthcoming

UNDERSTANDING BEFORE MOVING 3 - PART 3: SICILIAN STRUCTURES - DRAGON - SVESHNIKOV - FOUR KNIGHTS

Herman Grooten

You are holding before you the much-awaited final volume of my trilogy about Open Sicilians. I conclude the collection with a close look at the Dragon, Accelerated Dragon, Sveshnikov, Kalashnikov, and Four Knights variations. Each of these openings already has a vast body of literature devoted to it. While some theoretical detail is unavoidable, my goal—just as in the earlier volumes—is not to overwhelm you with analysis. Instead, I aim to highlight the broader ideas, typical plans, and the dynamic relationship between structure and strategy that define these variations.

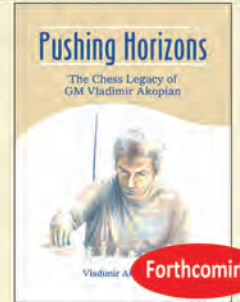
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Vladimir Akopian

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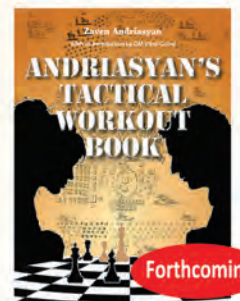
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Overseas News

CROATIA – The top seed, 54-year-old French GM Jean-Marc Degraeve, triumphed in the over-50 category at the European Senior Championships in Rabac (September 27 – October 5), being the only player to finish on 7/9, which left him two points ahead of the top Brits, FM Stephen Dishman and Martin Burrows. There was a separate women's over-50 contest, won on tiebreak by Swiss WIM Gundula Heinatz, with the bronze medal going to WFM Petra Fink-Nunn on 6/9.

Petra's husband was the top seed in the over-65 championship, but was held to a surprise first-round draw. Nunn then hit his stride and ground down Gerard Welling in the penultimate round for his fifth win, which left him half a point clear on 6½/8.

J.Nunn-R.Medancic

European Over-65 Ch., Rabac 2025
Philidor Defence

1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♟f6 3 ♟c3 ♟bd7 4 g4!? h6 5 ♟f3 e5 6 ♟g1 c6 7 a4 Ruling out ...b5, but the engines prefer 7 ♟e3 b5 8 a3, which feels more consistent with the early g2-g4.
7...♟a5?!?

This doesn't help Black. More to the point would be 7...exd4! 8 ♟xd4 ♟c5 when White might yet regret having advanced on both flanks.
8 ♟d2 exd4

8...♟b6?! 9 a5! is even worse for Black, in view of 9...♟xb2? 10 ♟a2 ♟b4 11 ♟b1.

9 ♟xd4 ♟b6 10 ♟b3 a5

Ruling out a4-a5, but in any case White enjoys a very pleasant advantage, as with Nunn's next move or even 11 ♟e2!?

11 ♟e3 ♟c7 12 ♟e2 ♟e7?!?

Too routine and 12...d5! was Black's last real chance to complicate the struggle.

13 ♟d2 b6?! 14 ♟d4!

Back again, since a rather significant outpost beckons on f5 and 14...g6 15 ♟xh6 would just cost Black a pawn.

14...♟b7 15 ♟f5 ♟f8 16 0-0-0



Kasparov's famous comment that a knight on f5 is usually worth a pawn doesn't just apply to positions with a black king on g8. Here the knight is an absolute Trojan and Black's position about to implode on d6.

16...♟c5 17 ♟f4 0-0-0 18 ♟xd6+ ♟xd6 19 ♟xd6 ♟xd6

Desperation in view of 19...♟d7 20 ♟e3. Already Black might well have resigned.

20 ♟xd6 ♟xd6 21 ♟xd6 ♟cx4 22 ♟xe4 ♟xe4 23 ♟d3 ♟c5 24 ♟e3 ♟e6 25 ♟c4 1-0

A tense final round saw Nunn wheel out 6 ♟g5 against Lubomir Ftacnik's Najdorf, but in a rather murky, if still theoretical position accept a draw after 17 moves. Unfortunately Zurab Sturua would outplay Rainer Knaak to catch Nunn on 7/9, with the result that the Englishman had to settle for silver on tiebreak behind the 66-year-old Georgian.

Z.Sturua-R.Knaak

European Over-65 Ch., Rabac 2025
French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 ♟f3 ♟d6 5 c4 ♟f6 6 c5!? ♟e7 7 ♟d3 b6!

A good reaction to White's Gunderam style approach, fighting for space.

8 cxb6 axb6 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♟c3 ♟c6

Slightly inaccurate and Black should prefer either 10...c5!? or 10...♟g4, after which 11 h3 ♟h5 12 ♟e1 ♟e8 13 ♟g5 c6 14 ♟e3 h6 15 ♟h4 ♟bd7 ensured relatively comfortable equality in A.Muzychuk-B.Socko, Gibraltar 2008.

11 h3!

Ruling out ...♟g4, hence the five-time East German GM's decision now to look to the queenside for counterplay.

11...♟b4 12 ♟b1 ♟b7 13 ♟e1 c5 14 a3 ♟e8!? 15 ♟f4 ♟d6?



Underestimating the potential danger

arising from the loose knight on b4 and White's aggressively placed pieces. Instead, the sensible 15...♟a6 16 ♟c2 would have restricted White to an edge.

16 ♟xd6

A good move, but 16 ♟xh7+!! would have been even better. Then 16...♟xh7 (16...♟xh7 17 ♟xe8+ ♟xe8 18 ♟xd6 overloads to win a clear pawn and more) 17 ♟g5+ ♟g8 18 ♟xe8+ ♟xe8? (even 18...♟xe8 19 ♟xd6 is again very good for White) 19 ♟h5 is an unusual but effective take on the Greek Gift. Black can try to defend with 19...♟f6, but after 20 ♟h7+ ♟f8 21 ♟e1 g6 22 ♟h4! (threatening ♟h7+; 22 ♟e6!? fxe6 23 ♟xb7 also wins) 22...♟g8 (or 22...♟g7 23 ♟e6+! fxe6 24 ♟h6 when the extra queen will quickly prove much stronger than the three pieces) 23 ♟xe8+! ♟xe8 24 ♟h7+ ♟f8 25 ♟xd6+ it's all over.

16...♟xe1+?

Missing a small but significant detail. Black is also worse after 16...♟xd6 17 axb4 ♟xa1, but at least 18 bxc5 (or 18 ♟xh7+ ♟xh7 19 ♟d3+ ♟g8 20 ♟xa1 c4) 18...♟xb1! 19 cxd6 ♟xd1 20 ♟xd1 ♟d8 would leave him with some chances to hold the ending.

17 ♟xe1 ♟xd6 18 axb4 ♟xa1 19 bxc5! ♟xc5

Unfortunately for Black, now 19...♟xb1 20 cxd6 ♟xe1+ 21 ♟xe1 ♟f8 22 ♟a4! ♟d7 23 ♟d3 just leaves White doing very well, including after 23...♟c6 24 ♟c3 ♟f6 25 ♟e5.
20 ♟xh7+! ♟xh7 21 ♟xa1 ♟e4 22 ♟a7



22...♟h6?

Sturua's powerful play has netted a pawn and he now picks up a second thanks to some more precise calculation. Instead, 22...cxd4 23 ♟xd4 ♟h6 24 ♟e2 would have left Black suffering significantly, but White still with much work to do.

23 ♟xe4! dxe4 24 ♟xb7 ♟c1+ 25 ♟h2 ♟f4+ 26 ♟h1! exf3 27 ♟xf3 ♟xd4 28 ♟xf7 c4

A slightly strange choice, although after 28...♟xb2 29 ♟f5+ ♟g8 30 ♟xc5 the extra

pawns should eventually suffice for victory.

29 f4 ♖d3 30 ♖h5+ ♕g8 31 ♖h2 ♖f8 32 ♖e5 ♕g8 33 h4! 1-0

Knaak had seen enough. After 33...♖f7 (or 33...♖d8 34 ♖e6+ ♖h7 35 ♖xc4 ♖xh4+ 36 ♖g1 ♖e1+ 37 ♖f1 ♖d2 38 ♖f2 when the passed b-pawn should prove decisive) 34 h5 ♖c2 35 ♖d5+ ♖f8 36 ♖d6+! ♖g8 37 ♖e6+ ♖f8 38 h6 gxh6 39 ♖xh6+ White's kingside threats will, sooner or later, found Black to abandon the defence of c4.

FRANCE – Corsica continues to remain quite a hotbed of chess, with Glenn Flear in action at Corsica Chess Club's second IM norm all-play-all. The veteran Leicester-born GM had one very instructive endgame (see this month's *Find the Winning Moves*) and would lead for much of the tournament, but ultimately have to settle for a share of second on 5½/9, half a point behind the young French WIM Manon Schippke.

GERMANY – The final weekend of September saw play get underway in the German Bundesliga. After supporting Düsseldorf to win the league, Wadim Rosenstein has largely withdrawn his support, leaving the champions with a significantly weaker squad. Expect perennial winners Baden-Baden and Viernheim to most likely fight out the title. They each began with two wins, while Luke McShane drew both his games for Werder Bremen.

HUNGARY – The SixDays Budapest Three Years saw five norm all-play-alls held in the Hungarian capital between September 18th and 23rd. The IM 'C' tournament saw a notable result as 19-year-old FM Frankie Badacsonyi, elder brother of Stanley, tied for first with veteran Belarusian GM Andrei Kovalev on 6½/9. Badacsonyi had the better tiebreak, but unfortunately was also half a point short of an IM norm. This was a fine swindle:

M.Ratsma-F.Badacsonyi Budapest 2025



34...♖g5!

Tempting White's next.

35 ♖e5?!

35 c5+ ♖d7 (or 35...♖d5 36 ♖e5+ ♖xe5 37 dxe5+ ♖xe5 38 ♖b7!) 36 ♖b3 was perhaps the simplest way to convert White's large material advantage.

35...♖xe5 36 dxe5+ ♖xe5!

White should now centralise his king and win, but the Dutch FM would prove unable to resist the temptation and preferred to win the knight on b8, missing...

37 ♖d8? f3! 38 ♖xb8? ♖c1+!

...this crucial intermezzo, in place of 38...f2? 39 ♖b1. With the black bishop in the way on c1 (or f4), the f-pawn will queen.

39 ♖b4 f2 40 h6 ♖xh6 41 ♖h8 f1 ♖42 ♖xh6 ♖f8+ 0-1

ITALY – Indian IM Utsab Chatterjee topscored with 8/9 at the Arco Open (October 4-12), where an unbeaten Keith Arkell finished third on tiebreak, a point behind and half a point ahead of Angus Dunnington.

RUSSIA – 22-year-old Arseniy Nesterov won his first national title as he triumphed at the 78th Russian Championship in Moscow (October 1-12). Nesterov scored 6½/11 and remained unbeaten, as did the three players who shared second, half a point behind: Daniil Dubov, Andrey Esipenko and Vadim Zvjaginsev.

There was also a Women's Championship, won by 16-year-old WGM Anna Shukhman, whose 7/9 left her a half-point ahead of Leya Garifullina and Daria Charochkina.

SPAIN – The talk beforehand was all about Faustino Oro at the Legends and Prodigies tournament in Madrid (September 17-25), and the 11-year-old Argentinian didn't disappoint. Oro's games were largely quite wild, often with chances for his opponents, but he still raced to 5½/6 before finishing on a whopping 7½/9, a point and a half more than was required to score the third youngest-ever GM norm. Oro's TPR was 2759, as he finished some one and a half points ahead of Alan Pichot and Julian Granda Zuniga. Now rated over 2500, Oro turned 12 on October 14th and has five months to score two more norms and so break Abhimanyu Mishra's record as the world's youngest-ever GM.

Lu Miaoyi-F.Oro Madrid 2025 *Four Knights Game*

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖f6 3 ♖c3 ♖c6 4 ♖b5 ♖d6 5 d3 0-0 6 0-0 h6 7 ♖a4 ♖e8 8 ♖e3 ♖g4?

Far too ambitious in this modern line of the Four Knights. Instead, 8...a6!? is proposed by *Stockfish*, while 8...♖f8 9 ♖d5 a6 10 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 11 c3 gave White a small edge in Merry-Okhai, Southend 2017.

9 h3! ♖f6

Retreating tail between legs, but 9...♖xe3 10 fxe3 also leaves White clearly better when the striking line 10...♖e7? (10...♖a5! is relatively best) 11 ♖g5! hxg5 12 ♖b3 already leaves the bishop on d6 badly misplaced and Black in huge trouble.

10 g4!? ♖b4 11 g5!

The 15-year-old Chinese IM and WGM is quick to seize the initiative.



11...hxg5 12 ♖xg5 ♖e7?!

12...♖d4!? 13 f4 ♖c5 would be a more challenging defence, intending to give up the exchange for some compensation after 14 ♖h1 c6 15 fxe5 ♖xe5 16 ♖f4 d6.

13 f4 exf4 14 ♖xf4 ♖g6



15 ♖f3?

Returning a significant portion of White's advantage. After the obvious 15 ♖b3! the engines can see nothing better than the desperate 15...♖e6!? (likely best met in any case by 16 e5!), since 15...d5 16 ♖xd5! ♖xd5 17 ♖h5! gives White a winning attack.

15...c6! 16 ♖ae1?! d5 17 e5?

Oro has managed to coordinate and now even takes over. Instead, the calm 17 ♖d2! would have retained a rough balance.

17...♖h7!

A well-calculated retreat, luring White into...

18 ♖xf7? ♖h4!



...this neat trap. All of a sudden it's Black, not White, with a huge attack.

19 ♖g3 ♖c5+ 20 ♖f2 ♖f8?

Playing to win in style, but better was 20...♖xh3! 21 ♖xc5 ♖g5 22 ♖xg5 ♖xg5+ 23 ♖h2 ♖xf1 24 ♖xf1 ♖xe5 or even 20...♖xf2+!

21 ♖xf2 ♕xh3 22 ♖xh4 ♘h4 23 ♜f2 ♜f8,
with a large advantage in either case.
21 ♙xc5 ♜g5



22 ♜g2?

Falling in with Black's plans. Instead, 22 ♜xg5! ♜xf3 23 ♜xf3 ♜g3+ 24 ♜h1 ♜f4 25 ♜f2! would have been a calm if only move when the engines can see no more than a draw for Black after 25...♜xh3 26 ♜ff1 ♙g4 (or 26...♜f4 27 ♜f2) 27 ♜h2.

22...♜xh3+ 23 ♜h1 ♜xf7 24 ♙b3

In view of 24 ♜xf7 ♜hf4+ 25 ♜h2 ♜xe1+, the attack's now a killer. 24...♜f2+ 25 ♙g1 ♜f4 26 ♙xf2 ♜h3+! 27 ♜h1 ♜xf2+ 28 ♙g1 ♙h3 29 ♜g6 ♙xf1 0-1

There was also a fairly strong open in the north of Spain, the XL Open Basque Country Sestao, won by the Venezuelan-born Spanish GM Eduardo Iturrizaga Bonelli with 7½/9. Harry Grieve remained unbeaten and landed up in a share of tenth of 6½/9, with Sohum Lohia finishing on 5½/9 after a final-round defeat at the hands of American GM Kirk Ghazarian.

SWEDEN – There was a tense last round at the 5th Hotel Stockholm North GM



Eduardo Iturrizaga Bonelli prevailed at Sestao, which lies between Bilbao and the north Spanish coast.

(September 22–26). Jonah Willow began with two draws, then won four in a row before reaching 6/8. That left him needing a win in the final round, but he would lose to 16-year-old Indian IM A. R. Ilamparthi, who thereby won the tournament with 6½/9, half a point in front of the Nottingham IM. Sohum Lohia and Tarun Kanyamarala were also in action, both finishing on '–2'.

USA – Settled for now in its new, single-edition format with a 5-0 time control, Magnus Carlsen won the Titled Tuesday Blitz on September 9th with 10/11, a result which unsurprisingly proved popular on Take Take's official coverage. Carlsen would do even better a week later, racking up a mighty 10½/11.

A last-round win against Carlsen then enabled Hikaru Nakamura to win with 10/11 on September 23rd before, in the absence of Carlsen, Hans Niemann would finish half a

point ahead of Nakamura as he won with 10/11 on September 30th. Nakamura and Carlsen were then well beaten on October 7th, or at least down on a mere '+5', when Alireza Firouzja edged out Ian Nepomniachtchi and Jan-Krzysztof Duda on tiebreak after they had all finished on 9½/11.

The Saint Louis Chess Club hosted a rematch of the 1995 world chess championship when they tempted Garry Kasparov to take on Vishy Anand in Clutch Chess: The Legends, a Chess960 match (October 8–10). The 15th world champion won the final two games in this rapid and blitz contest, but by the the FIDE Vice-President was down 4-0, with six draws, as the legendary 13th world champion ran out a worthy winner, 13-11 on the incremental, Clutch scoring system. Kasparov quipped that perhaps "ghosts of past" weighed heavily on Anand, who has never had a great score against him.



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This Month's New Releases



Hübner Year by Year: Volume I (1959-1979)

Tibor Karolyi & Hans Renette,
534 pages, Elk and Ruby

RRP £41.95* **SUBSCRIBERS £37.75***

Robert Hübner was undoubtedly one of the most enigmatic characters in the history of chess. He did not like to talk or write about his own games, rarely showed any expression on his face (the cover picture of this book is, I think, the only one in which I have ever seen him smile – although he was only 14 at the time), and despite being a game or two away from a shot at a title match with Anatoly Karpov in 1981, he conceded his tense Candidates' final match with Viktor Korchnoi, even though he was in control at the start and still having chances when he quit.

In his introduction, Tibor Karolyi asks – and answers – his own question: "Who was Hübner and what did he accomplish? He was the greatest German player after Lasker, and occupied this position for decades. A stunning achievement given the strength of German chess. Many grandmasters are rightly proud to have qualified for just one cycle of the World Championship Candidates, yet Hübner participated in four. Robert played every single great player of his time and defeated many of them."

Karolyi and Renette, fresh from completing their monumental, four-volume work *Korchnoi Year by Year* (all volumes published by Elk and Ruby and highly recommended without reservation) have taken up the challenge of shining a light – for the first time – on the life and career of this most mysterious chess character. Inevitably, this has brought a new appreciation of Hübner's play to the forefront.

"Investigating Hübner's play brought me some surprises. In particular, I had not foreseen certain qualities like his extreme resilience in endgames. He is probably the only player to have survived a very difficult endgame against Fischer, and he held clearly lost endgames against not only Kasparov, but also Karpov."

Incidentally, the book was close to completion before the subject died, earlier this year, although contact to and from the authors was very limited: "I knew that the German grandmaster, who was alive until this project was almost complete, was a sensitive person, so I wrote him an email informing him about the book. As he did not disapprove of the idea (he didn't answer my email, but was clearly much sicker than we thought), I agreed to undertake my share of the project.

Fortunately, he had previously provided Hans with some information by email during our Korchnoi project."

There are 159 games (some are fragments), covering the years from 1959 to 1979. Already, so early on in his life (he was born in 1948), "One can see in Hübner's games in 1961 that he was not an amateur player. He played the openings purposefully and he rarely chose the wrong plan." The narrative and games follow his progress from his earliest junior days up to the times when he competed successfully in Interzonal tournaments and Candidates' matches.

The aforementioned 'save' against a rampant Bobby Fischer took place in the first round of a very famous event. Fischer's road to the ultimate title started with a smashing success at this event. He still hadn't sorted out his anti-Caro-Kann repertoire (this game started with a King's Indian Attack approach, which failed to bring him an advantage), but Fischer finally found a way into an advantageous endgame with his beloved light-squared bishop looking good against Black's defensive knight.

R.Fischer-R.Hübner Palma de Mallorca Interzonal 1970



White has just played 31 ♖d6-a6, eyeing up the stray pawn on a7. Despite being under pressure, Hübner had the presence of mind to set a little trap.

31...♜f7! 32 ♜xa7?

"White could press after 32 ♜f3 or ♜g2." However, Fischer, a lifelong pawn snatcher, lacked the patience to recalibrate and to play against the weaknesses for longer.

32...♞e4!

"Hübner wins the bishop. Fischer may have missed this move."

Fischer was fortunate to be able hold on after this shocking turn of events (½-½, 44).

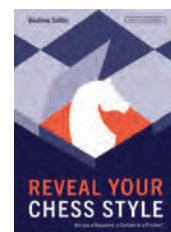
Having qualified from the Interzonal, Hübner was on the trail of the ultimate title, but his approach to the next stage was certainly strange. Most players would 'talk up' their chances when qualifying for a Candidates' event, but not so Hübner. Paired with Tigran Petrosian, he said: "My chances in the match with Petrosian are absolutely nil [...] I had no hopeful illusions about qualifying for the semi-finals in matches with professionals. Now that I have been drawn against Petrosian, I have no hope at all."

In fact, the match was equal after six draws from the first six games, but a defeat in game seven led to Hübner resigning the match prematurely, partly due to his sensitivity to noise (Petrosian simply turned off his hearing aid to avoid distractions).

The vast majority of the games in this book will be new to readers and nowhere else can be found so much information on Hübner himself. Therefore, even for chess historians, the content found here will be very fresh indeed. Hübner's chess career was far from over in 1979, of course, and it will be very interesting to see what material has been unearthed for the next volume.

Sean Marsh

* A hardback version of *Hübner Year by Year* is also available for £53.95 or £48.55 for Subscribers..



Reveal Your Chess Style

Andrew Soltis, 230 pages
Batsford

RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

We are used to seeing Batsford produce a seemingly never-ending conveyor belt of generic books written by Andrew Soltis. They all have their merits, but one is often left with a feeling of déjà vu regarding the contents.

Reveal Your Chess Style offers something different as it tries to enable the reader to discover their personal chess style. As the blurb puts it: "Every chess player has a naturally individual style of playing, based on

the moves they like to play. Some people choose the kind of moves world champion Magnus Carlsen regularly uses, while others prefer a strategy favoured by the legendary Bobby Fischer. And some even find themselves emulating the way a chess computer works. But very few players are aware of how these moves fit together to create a consistent, personal chess style."

Following a short discussion on style, the book then presents the reader with 100 positions, each one accompanied by a short introduction and a series of candidate moves. We have all seen multi-choice quiz books before, of course, but this one does not have points for the best move. Instead, each answer will help the reader to understand more about their natural playing style.

Here is one for you to try, with Black to play.

A.Nimzowitsch-J.Capablanca New York 1927



"Another point of diverging views arises when you have a piece on a distant outpost. What will you do when an opponent wants to trade it? Getting the knight to d3 was an achievement for Black. White's last move was ♖e1. Your choices are: (a) ...♗e5; (b) ...♗xe1; (c) ...♗xc1; (d) ...♙g6.

Apparently, those who chose (a) "have Botvinnik instincts"; option (b) is what Capablanca played in the game ("the initiative and the better centralized pieces mattered more" to him); (c) would be the choice of "a bishop-loving Fischer-fan" and (d) "maintaining occupation of d3 with 18...♙g6, like a bone in White's throat, is Carlsen/Keres-like." Incidentally, Capablanca won the game (0-1, 40).

The test positions are split into several characters, such as attack, defense and material imbalance. A final short chapter sums up the book and offers two ways in which to proceed after putting oneself to the test. If, for example, one's choices match Anatoly Karpov's style most of the time, then it would be a good idea to study his games in greater detail to exploit the natural affinity. On the other hand, a lack of matches with an attacking player will highlight one's lack of skill and experience in that department, thus signposting the way to areas of further study, to broaden one's style.

This book offers something new and fun

based on the multi-choice format. What a boon it is to choose an answer and instead of being shot down in flames for being incorrect, be inspired that one's style matches that of Bobby Fischer, Garry Kasparov, Magnus Carlsen or a whole range of other chess stars. No more giving up after a couple of failures; everyone's a winner!

Sean Marsh



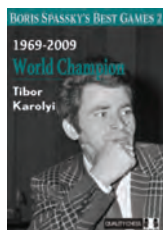
1.e4 the Lazy Way

Victor Bologan, PC/MAC booklet or download; running time: 3 hours, 15 minutes
RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

The legendary coach Vyacheslav Chebanenko might have passed away in 1997, but he continues to exercise a profound influence on the play and output of one of his most famous pupils, Victor Bologan (b.1971). The leading Moldovan GM has played most of the variations presented on this ChessBase DVD throughout his career, with a couple more recent additions to the Bologan repertoire. All follow the Chebanenko approach: don't memorise, but understand! The King's Indian Attack is the order of the day against the French, Sicilian and even 1...e5, with a related system advocated against the Caro-Kann, 2 ♖f3 d5 3 d3.

While in Hamburg, Bologan also recorded a companion repertoire, 1...d6 *Universal* (running time: 3 hours, 45 minutes; RRP £34.95; Subscribers £31.45), with the emphasis once again on understanding certain key pawn structures, while retaining a healthy degree of flexibility. The repertoire is based on transposing into the Philidor against 1 e4, while after 1 d4 d6, Black is advised to meet 2 c4 with 2...e5 and 2 ♖f3 with 2...♗f6 3 c4 g6 4 ♗c3 ♗f5.

Note too that both new Bologan products may be purchased together from Chess & Bridge for the special price of £62.90.

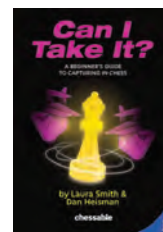


Boris Spassky's Best Games 2

Tibor Karolyi, 404 pages, paperback
RRP £25.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £23.39**

Hungarian IM Karolyi completes his detailed tribute to Boris Spassky, beginning by examining how the 10th world champion earned that title by defeating Tigran Petrosian in 1969. Every year from then until 2002 receives a chapter, including, of course, 1972, before a final chapter charts the end

of Spassky's playing career and takes the story up to his death in February of this year. Karolyi blends a largely minimal biography with the presentation of a large number of quite wonderful games, with this Quality Chess publication also aided by a number of classic photographs.



Can I Take It?

Laura Smith & Dan Heisman,
88 pages, paperback

RRP £8.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £8.05**

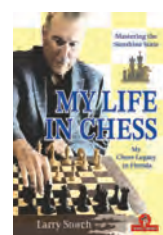
In our September pages Sean Marsh gave a favourable verdict to Heisman's *Maximize Your Chess Potential!*. In this new work, co-authored with New York coach Laura Smith, the highly experienced American trainer makes good use of his favourite 'counting' method while presenting some very useful material aimed squarely at the beginner. Based on a Chessable course, *Can I Take It?* presents the most basic elements of tactics and strategy, aiming to help the inexperienced player quickly be able to evaluate every possible piece trade. If you're looking for a Christmas present for a relative who's recently taken up the game, this Smith and Heisman book may fit the bill.



Chess Informant 165 – Echoes

Chess Informant, 320 pages, paperback
RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

The latest 'Informator' features a detailed report on the Women's World Cup, as well as coverage of Biel and other recent events. There's also the ever enjoyable 'Danny's Chess Diary' from Danny Gormally, as well as all the usual features, not least the many languagelessly annotated games.



My Life in Chess

Larry Storch, 320 pages, hardback
RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

Larry Storch may be a name new to most non-American readers, but he has long been

a leading player and figure in Florida chess circles. This biography and best games collection for Thinkers Publishing explains how Storch balanced family life and a busy job in education with his 43-year tournament career, after which he helped the Central Florida Chess Club to thrive as its President. As well as presenting 121 of his favourite battles, Stork also discusses the players who inspired him and how he gradually honed his opening preparation and other key skills.



Practical Chess Strategy

Julen Arizmendi, 424 pages, paperback
RRP £25.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £23.39**

Spanish-American Grandmaster Julen Arizmendi has a wealth of experience as a player and coach, and in this new work for Quality Chess harnesses it to help readers learn how to break down any position into its core elements. Once that is done, it should be easier to find the best move or plan. This

detailed guide to strategy covers king position, attacking chances, pawn structure, piece activity and material imbalances before being rounded off by 71 exercises. Arizmendi explains clearly and presents a wealth of highly instructive material, making this work one which will surely benefit those who read it in detail.

Do note that both *Practical Chess Strategy* and *Boris Spassky's Best Games 2* may also be purchased in hardback format should you prefer, retailing at £29.99 or £26.99 for Subscribers.

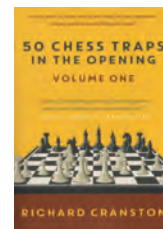


Squeezing the QGD

Semko Semkov, 228 pages, paperback
RRP £23.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.55**

There's nothing novel about this repertoire against the venerable Queen's Gambit Declined, 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Qc3 Qf6 – Semkov advocates the critical Exchange variation, 4 cxd5 exd5 5 Qg5. This old favourite of Botvinnik, Karpov and Kasparov's

is still a staple in the repertoires of many of the world's top players, including Carlsen and Gukesh. In typical Chess Stars fashion, good use is made of the 'Step by Step' approach, while the book begins with an extremely insightful 'Overview', which presents all the common scenarios White should and shouldn't aim for. Semkov also usefully covers those lines after 5 Qg5 where Black doesn't go ...c6 and ...Qe7, as well as the important earlier deviations 3...Qe7 and the trendy 3...a6.



50 Chess Traps in the Opening - Volume 1

Richard Cranston, 112 pages, paperback
RRP £14.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £13.49**

Do you remember the sense of wonder when you first saw some classic traps in the opening, like the Blackburne Shilling Gambit? This new work from The Conrad Press helps readers rediscover such a sense of joy, while providing a fine collection of traps as Richard Cranston covers 25 for White and 25 for Black.



Forthcoming Events

November 1-2 Dyfed Congress, Aberystwyth
aberystwythchess.com/aberystwythchesstournaments

November 4 Muswell Hill Rapid
muswellhillchess.blogspot.com

November 7-9 Central London Congress
form.jotform.com/62236576074964

November 7-9 Hampshire Congress, Fareham
congress.org.uk/congress/618/home

November 7-9 Scottish Women's Ch., Hamilton
congress.org.uk/congress/648/home

November 8-9 Witney Congress
witneychess.co.uk/12thwitney_information.htm

November 8 Golders Green Rapidplay
goldersgreenchess.blogspot.com

November 9 Birmingham Rapidplay
birminghamchess.org.uk/rapidplay/

November 9 Greenwich Rapid
gpchess.com/events/

November 11 Muswell Hill Rapid
muswellhillchess.blogspot.com

November 14-16 Ulster Masters, Lisburn
ulsterchess.org/events

Nov 14-16 West Wales Congress, Swansea
welshchessunion.uk/WestWales25/index.html

Nov 15-16 Birmingham Open Congress
warwickshirechess.org/2025-birmingham-open/

Nov 15-16 Northampton Standard Play
chesseventsuk.co.uk/tournament-information

November 15 20/20 Championships, Eton College
worldchessleague.live/2020chess

November 16 Uxbridge Rapid
uxbridgechessclubs.com

Nov 21-23 Kilkenny Congress
icu.ie/events/1983

Nov 22-23 Southall Congress
londonfidecongress.com/southall-congress

November 22 London Women's Rapid, St Pancras
pci.jotform.com/form/242386475862367

November 22 Medway Rapid
invictachess.co.uk/medway.html

November 22 Paul Haddock Memorial, Tower Hamlets
spanglefish.com/DocklandsChessClub/index.asp

November 22 UK Open Blitz Championships Finals, Leamington
englishchess.org.uk/uk-open-blitz-championships-2025/

Nov 27 - Dec 7 XTX Markets London Chess Classic
londonchessclassic.com

November 29 Bexhill Rapid
bexhillchessclub.co.uk

November 30 Cambridge Rapidplay, Whittlesford
congress.org.uk/congress/524/home

November 30 Lowestoft Rapidplay
suffolkchess.org/category/events

And for the Online Connoisseur:

November 1-25 FIDE World Cup, Goa
worldcup2025.fide.com; Erigaisi, Giri, Gukesh, Keymer, Pragg, etc.

Congress organisers – Don't forget to email editor@chess.co.uk to ensure your event is listed, or if you really want to guarantee a good entry, contact tao@chess.co.uk to discuss having it advertised.



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