Tri-Bridges Tribune

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TRI BRIDGES CHESS CLUB

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US Open - Tri-Bridges on the bridges in Grand Rapids!

Introduction

Located in Exton, Pennsylvania, our club meets every Tuesday for friendly games, socializing, and skill-building. In addition to casual play, we host tournaments that give members the chance to compete, learn, and grow as players. We also offer instructional classes to help members expand their chess knowledge and deepen their understanding of the game.

My name is Azim Julkipli, and I am the editor of these monthly newsletters. Having been a proud member of the Tri Bridges Chess Club for many years, I've made lasting friendships and had the opportunity to volunteer within our wonderful community.

This newsletter is designed to keep our members connected and informed. Each issue will feature updates on local events, tournaments, and club news, along with puzzles, book recommendations, and annotated games. Our goal is to celebrate the achievements of our players and foster a welcoming environment that inspires both beginners and experienced players to continue their chess journey with enthusiasm.

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TBCC Library

By Shivam Wagh

Hi, I am Shivam Wagh, and I have been working on our chess library for about a month this summer. During that time, I cataloged around 2,950 books. It ended up being a much bigger project than I expected, and I definitely couldn't have gotten this far without the help of Rhea and Neil, who spent a lot of time working with me.

I first found out about this project during the winter when I was looking for ways to help at the chess club. I was busy with school and other activities, so I knew I wouldn't have enough time to work on something this big. I waited until summer, when I would have more free time to really focus on it. On the first day, I honestly did not know where to start. Before I could organize any books, I had to figure out what library software to use. I spent a while looking at different library systems that were easy to use but still had the features we needed. At first, I thought Koha was the best option because libraries use it all over the world. But after researching it more, I realized it was much more complicated than I had expected. It also needed Linux to set up properly, which made it impossible for this project.

After searching some more, I found Libib, and it turned out to be exactly what I needed. It was easy to learn, organized books well, and let me scan books using their barcodes. At that point, I thought the hard part was over. I figured I would just scan every book, and I would finish in a few days. Looking at the shelves, I guessed there were maybe 1,500 books. But I was completely wrong. Not only were there almost 3,000 books, but I also found out that many were unscannable because they did not have a barcode. Only about half of the books had barcodes. Some had ISBN numbers, so I had to type those in by hand. There were also books from before 1967 that did not have an ISBN. Many of them had neither a barcode nor an ISBN, so the only way to add them was by typing in the title and author manually. Those books usually took the longest.

Another challenge was organizing everything so people could actually find books later. Having almost 3,000 books in one giant list would make searching almost impossible. Luckily, Libib has a feature called Collections. I organized the books by publisher because it would make them easier to find and easier to put back in the right place. Maintaining the existing publisher grouping on the shelves was a logical choice.

There was one more problem. Some publishers only had one or two books, so making a separate collection for each of them would have created way too many collections. Instead, I made one collection called "Random" for those books. It kept everything organized without making the system messy.

Once I had finished the major library, I still wasn't done. To enable a unified search, I also cataloged the women's chess books from upstairs and the Kids' books from downstairs.
Even after every book had been entered, there was still more work to do. Libib is great for cataloging books, but it isn't really meant to be a public library website. To solve that, I exported every collection from Libib, combined all the files together, and used them to build the online library that everyone can now search.

This project taught me a lot. I learned that things rarely go exactly the way you plan. Every time I thought I had solved one problem, another one came up. Whether it was books without barcodes, really old books that were hard to identify, or figuring out the best way to organize everything. I had to keep finding new solutions. It also gave me experience using library software and showed me how important it is to stay organized and pay attention to minor details.

I hope the library continues to grow and becomes an even better resource for everyone at the chess club. Finally, I want to thank Rhea and Neil again. I couldn't have finished this project without their help. They spent many hours working alongside me, and having them there made such an enormous project much easier to complete.

Also to note: The library is accessible to the public with this link: https://www.libib.com/u/tbcclibrary anyone can access it.

World Open Experiences

By Azim Julkipli

These are two experiences from two of our own club members from their time at the World Open.

Cherry Perumalla

This year I played in the U2000 section of the World Open, one of the biggest tournaments on this side of the country. Honestly, the hotel itself was a maze; just finding my way to the tournament hall for the first time was harder than my first round.

My games went somewhat okay overall. I had a strong start, going 3.5/5, but faded down the stretch and finished 5/9. The funniest part of the whole tournament: I actually beat the eventual first-place, who ended up 8.5/9. So how do you beat someone with no losses? After I beat him on day one, he re-entered through the 3-day schedule and steamrolled everyone from there. Turns out the best thing I could've done for him was beat him early. Overall, I walked away with nine solid games to review, which should help sharpen my play going forward, and some rating points.

Between rounds, life still revolves around chess. I'd analyze my previous game, watch some random chess content, and follow other games going on in Daniel Naroditsky Memorial Rapid and Blitz (Great job to Mathew O' Brein beating Gothamchess.) The rest of the time went to eating — there's plenty of good food to be found in D.C.

Overall, this tournament was a solid tournament and a good chance to keep improving my chess.

Adhinanth Karthikeyan

I started my chess tournament journey at the world open back in 2022 so ever since then I have never missed playing in it. There are many events that happen during the world open like the under 13 championship, amateur championship, and the international. I chose to just play the big one, the five day world open championship in the under 2000 section. I knew that this would be a very competitive tournament as there was a grand prize of 12000 dollars. Usually this tournament would take place in Philly so I would travel back and forth everyday but it had been moved to the Omni Shoreham hotel in DC this year. My dad and I would travel down to DC for 4 days of the toughest chess I have ever played.

Now about the tournament itself I finished with a total score of 4.5/9. I finished with one half point bye, 2 wins, 2 losses, and 4 draws. I ended up losing about 20 points from this tournament because many of them were not favorable results for me. Reflecting on this tournament I realized that I have to strengthen my opening prep as it was not solid enough for a 1800-1900 level. This was overall a good learning experience for me to grow as a player even though I didn't win the big bucks. I would definitely say that this is the hardest tournament I ever played because I spent over 24 hours at the chess board across 4 days! In between the rounds I mostly got time to relax and walk around the hotel and surrounding DC area. I would definitely recommend all aspiring players to play this tournament as it provides you competitive chess games and is a great learning experience.

Tri-Talking Chess Podcast

By Charan Perumalla

The purpose of this new podcast is to grow a stronger, more connected chess community through engaging conversations, interviews, shared experiences, and education.

The Tri-Bridges Chess Club Podcast is dedicated to fostering a welcoming chess community by delivering educational discussions, tournament coverage, player interviews, and stories that celebrate the game's impact on people of all ages and skill levels. Through every episode, we strive to encourage learning, build connections, and inspire a lifelong passion for chess.

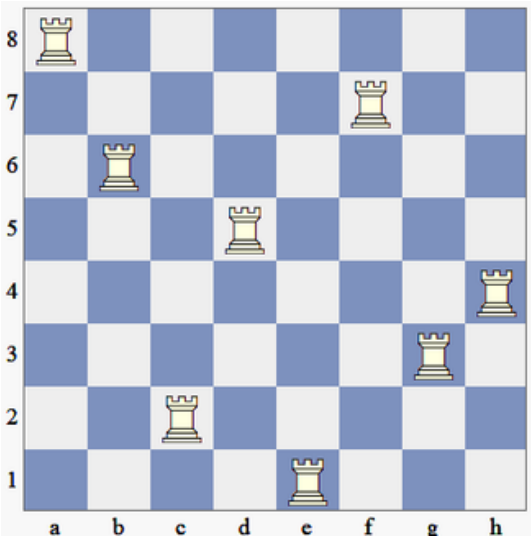
– The Tri-Bridges Chess Club Podcast, Tri-Talking Chess, will be led by members of the TBCC community. The podcast is designed to bring our chess community closer together by highlighting the people, stories, and experiences that make our club special. Episodes will feature interviews with players, along with game analysis, discussions of chess history, local tournament recaps, and even lighthearted conversations about memorable moments and chess drama.

– By giving community members a voice and celebrating achievements both on and off the board, the podcast aims to create a welcoming space where players of all ages and skill levels can learn, connect, and share their passion for chess.

– Usually it will be run in Exton Commons 666, but some episodes will be in other places, such as the U.S. Open and World Chess Hall of Fame.

Would you like to be part of the Tri-Bridges Chess Podcast? To be featured on an upcoming episode, call or text 484-948-5692 or email tribridgesmail@gmail.com. Join us in celebrating the people and stories that make the Tri-Bridges chess community special!

To see the podcast, go to Tri-Talking Chess with this link:
https://open.spotify.com/show/033XD9w3Y9SPHVGcP7VK6f
Or see it on our website here: https://tribridgeschessclub.com/podcast/



This position shows the maximum number of rooks which can be on one chessboard so that no two rooks attack each other.

This condition can be satisfied with any of 40320 positions.

Can you find the maximum number of queens which can be on a chessboard and find an example of it?

What about bishops?

Solutions on page 6

World Open Games

By Azim Julkipli

These games were played by two of our club members at the World Open: Subhang Nettem in the U2000 section, and Hyindhav Murugesh in the U1400 section.

Subhang Nettem vs. Wilbert

1. e4 d6 2. d4 Nf6 3. Nc3 c6 4. Be3 Nbd7 5. f3 e5 6. Qd2 Be7 7. O-O-O O-O
I was happy with my position as we castled on opposite sides where I could happily push pawns down the board on the king side.
8. g4 b5 9. Nge2 b4 10. Nb1 a5 11. Ng3
I wanted to push g5, but I first played Ng3 to make sure that he can't play Nh5.
11...d5 12. g5 Ne8 13. h4 g6 14. h5 exd4 15. Qh2?
I sacrificed the bishop to create an attack on his king, but looking back on it, I should have played Qxd4. This is because my attempt at going Qh2 to checkmate could be easily defended as shown in the game.
15...Bxg5 16. f4 dxe3 17. hxg6 h6
I underestimated how much this move stops me from checkmating with my queen - rook battery. I knew that my best plan from here on out would be to win back pawn and create equality in the position as I can't attack him anymore.
18. gxf7+ Rxf7 19. fxg5 Qxg5 20. Qxh6 Qxh6 21. Rxh6 Rf6 22. Rxf6 Nexf6 23. Bg2
Putting more pressure on the d pawn and protecting the e pawn.
23...dxe4 24. Nxe4 Nxe4 25. Bxe4 Ne5
My plan here was to win the e pawn first to prevent him from pushing it any further. Then, I wanted to try to attack a weak c pawn.
26. Re1 Ba6 27. Rxe3 Rf8 28. Nd2 Kg7 29. Bg2 Rf2 30. Rg3+ Kf8 31. Nf3
I am trying to trade all of the pieces on the board, so that he won't have any chance of attacking me.
31...Nxf3 32. Rxf3+ Rxf3 33. Bxf3 c5 34. a3 Ke7 35. Kd2 Ke6 36. c3 Ke5 37. Ke3
We agreed to a draw because the material is even and we both can't convert this position into a win.
1/2-1/2

Hyindhav Murugesh vs. Lenon Murray

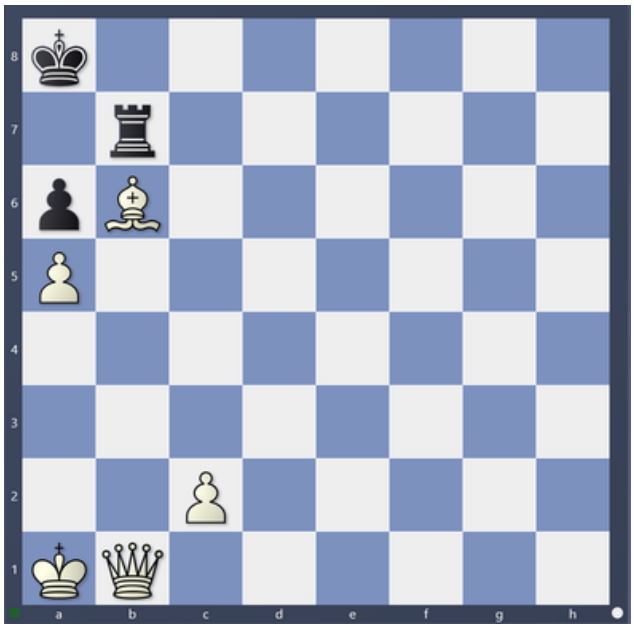
1. Nf3 d5 2. b3 Nf6 3. Bb2 g6 4. d4 Bg7 5. e3 O-O 6. c4 c6 7. Nc3 Bg4 8. h3 Bxf3 9. Qxf3 e6 10. Bd3 Nbd7 11. cxd5 exd5 12. O-O Re8 13. Rfe1 Rc8 14. Rac1 Nf8 15. Ne2 Ne4 16. Ng3 Nxg3 17. fxg3? Qf6?! 18. Rf1?! Qxf3 19. Rxf3 Nd7?! 20. Rcf1 f5 21. Bc1 Nf6 $2 22. g4! Ne4?! 23. gxf5 gxf5 24. Kh2 Bf8 25. Rxf5 Bd6+ 26. Kg1 Rf8? 27. Bxe4! dxe4 28. Rg5+! Kh8 29. Bb2 Rxf1+ 30. Kxf1 Rf8+ 31. Kg1 Be7 32. Re5 Bf6 33. Rxe4 Kg7 34. Rf4 h5 35. Ba3 Re8 36. Rf3 Rxe3? 37. Rxe3 Bxd4 38. Bb2 Bxb2 39. Re7+ Kf6 40. Rxb7 h4 41. Rc7 c5 42. Kf1
1-0

Hyindhav Murugesh vs. Abhiram

1. d4 (1. e4 Nc6 2. Nf3 Nf6 3. Nc3?! e6 4. Bc4 Nxe4?! 5. Nxe4 d5! 6. Bxd5? exd5) 1... c6 (1... e5) 2. c4 d5 3. cxd5 cxd5 4. Nc3 Nf6 5. Bf4 Nc6 6. Nf3 Bf5 7. a3 Qb6 8. Na4 Qa5+ 9. Bd2?! Qc7 10. g3 g6 11. Bg2 Bg7 12. Rc1 Qd8 13. O-O Rc8 14. Bf4 O-O 15. Nc5 Qb6 16. Qb3 Qxb3 17. Nxb3 Rfd8 18. Rfe1 a6 19. Nc5 Na5 20. Nd2 h6 21. Ndb3?! Nxb3 22. Nxb3 b6 23. h3 Kh7 24. g4 Bc2 25. Na1 Ba4 26. b3 Bc6 27. e3 e6?! 28. Rc2 Ne8 29. Rec1 Bb7 30. Bc7 Nxc7 31. Rxc7 Rxc7?! 32. Rxc7 Rc8 33. Rxb7 Rc1+ 34. Bf1

Rxa1 35. Rxb6 Rxa3 36. Bxa6 g5 37. Bd3+ Kg8 38. Rb8+ Bf8 39. Bf1 Kg7 40. b4 Rb3 41. b5 Bd6 42. Rb7 Kg6 43. Rd7 Bf8 44. Rd8 Be7 45. Ra8 Bd6 46. Ra2 Bf8 47. Ra6 Be7 48. Rc6 Bd8 49. Kg2 Rb2 50. Bd3+ Kg7 51. Kg3 Kf6 52. h4 (52. f3 Kg7 53. e4 dxe4 54. fxe4 $4 (54. Bxe4 Kf6 55. d5)) 52... gxh4+ 53. Kxh4 Rxf2 54. b6 Rb2 55. Ba6
1/2-1/2

Justin Bailey vs. Hyindhav Murugesh
1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nc6 4. Bb5 a6 5. Ba4?! b5 6. Bb3?! dxe4 7. d5 exd5 8. Bxd5 Bb7 9. Nh3?! h6?! 10. O-O Nf6! 11. Re1?! Be7? 12. Nf4 O-O 13. Nxe4 Nxd5 14. Nxd5 Na7?! 15. Nxe7+ Qxe7 16. Ng3 Qc5 17. Be3 Qc6 18. f3! Nc8 19. c3 Nd6 20. Bd4 Rad8 21. Re7 Rfe8 22. Qe2 Rxe7 23. Qxe7 Re8 24. Qh4 Nc4?! 25. Nh5 g5? 26. Nf6+?? Qxf6!! 27. Bxf6 gxh4 28. Bxh4 Nd2?! 29. Re1 Rxe1+ 30. Bxe1 Nc4! 31. b3 Nd6 32. Kf2 c5 33. Ke3 Kg7 34. Kf4 Kg6 35. Ke5 Ne8?! 36. Bf2 c4 37. bxc4 bxc4 38. Bc5 Bc6 39. Kd4 Bb5 40. a4?! 1/2-1/2



Puzzle

Solution on Page 10

These puzzles were made by Neil Gupta, and were designed for the Mock Ira Lee Riddle Memorial, or the mock state championship.

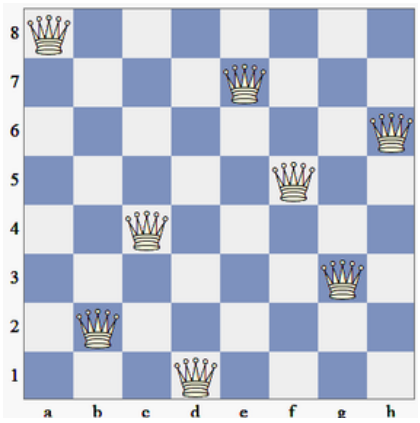
In this position, it is white to play and win with a mate.

Solutions for page 6

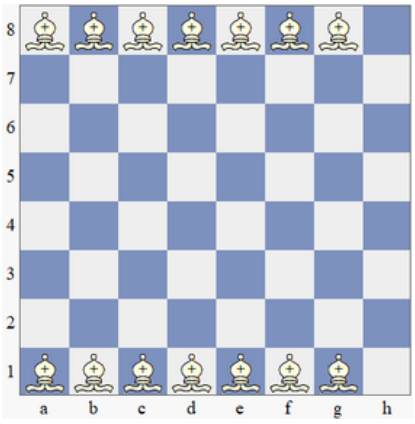
Puzzle 1: 1...Ra4 2. Qa4 Bc6
Puzzle 2: 1.Qc6 bxc6 2. Nxc6

SOLUTIONS FOR PAGE 4

Queens: 8:



Bishops: 14:



Chess Master in History

By Azim Julkipli



José Raúl Capablanca was born in Havana on November 19, 1888. When he was around eight years old, he started going to the Havana Chess Club. This club hosted many big tournaments, and in 1901, he beat the Cuban Chess Champion Juan Corzo. In 1905, Capablanca passed the initial tests to get into Columbia's College, where he wished to join their baseball team and started playing baseball as a shortstop in his freshman year. He also joined the Manhattan Chess Club during that year, and was mainly recognized as the strongest player in the group, particularly in rapid games. He decided to leave college to study and focus on chess more.

Capablanca soon played many simuls due to his rapid skill, and his astonishing performance led to him playing a match against Marshall, who was considered as the 3rd strongest player in the world. Capablanca won with a score of 15-8. After this match, some resources like Chessmetrics noted Capablanca as the third strongest player in the world. Additionally, Capablanca admitted that he did not spend much time working on openings, and instead tried to get to middlegame positions he understood, a difference from many of today's chess players.

In 1913, Capablanca accepted a job at the Cuban Foreign Office, which gave him practically enough money for his life. His job was to be a well-known figure and to also make Cuba well known as well, kind of like an ambassador. As he went from tournament to tournament, he also held simuls in places like London and Paris.

In the St. Petersburg 1914 chess tournament, Capablanca played against Lasker in tournament conditions for the first time. This tournament had a unique structure, where the 11 players played in a round robin, and the top 5 moved onto a double round robin, where each player had their previous scores from the single round robin moved over to the double round robin. Capablanca was in the lead for the second round robin, and it seemed as though he would win the game even though Lasker, 1.5 points behind him, was determined to win the tournament. However, when Capablanca played Lasker for the second time, Lasker worsened Capablanca's position and won the game. Lasker also won his final game, while Capablanca was so shocked he lost the next game as well, so Lasker won half a point ahead.

WW1 had stopped international chess tournaments for some time, but as stated in the last edition, after the war, a match between Lasker and Capablanca was agreed, but then Lasker gave up the title and expressed that this match was him trying to regain the title. In 1922, Capablanca also made the "London Rules" for the future World Championship negotiations. Also during that year, Capablanca had a simul against 103 players, the largest in history at the time, and he was able to win almost all of them, drawing only one game, possibly a record for one of the highest win percentages.

Many people challenged Capablanca for the title, but only Alexander Alekhine was able to raise the money. The match between the two players was scheduled to occur in September of 1927. In the New York 1927 chess tournament, played from February to March of 1927, Capablanca won by a big margin, 2.5 points ahead of second-place Alexander Alekhine.

Due to the previous tournament, it was mainly predicted that the Cuban would win the championship. However, it was Alekhine who won the match, with 6 wins, 3 losses, and an astounding 25 draws, which makes this one of the longest Championship matches until 1984. This surprised the chess world a lot, and many theories popped up, such as Capablanca being overconfident or not focusing as much. Also, Capablanca had entered with little preparation, while Alekhine had studied his opponent's play deeply.

After Alekhine won, he gave Capablanca a chance to play a rematch, but Capablanca was never able to have the match. Their negotiations kept failing, and their connection became more bitter against each other.

Capablanca continued to play in many tournaments, playing great games, but he was losing more with age. He played more slowly and produced more blunders. He withdrew from playing more serious chess in 1931, possibly depressed he couldn't make a rematch with Alekhine.

In 1934, Capablanca met Olga, and the two fell into love. By 1938, he had divorced his first wife and married Olga, and also seemed to have recovered his ambition to play chess. Capablanca started to make a comeback, winning many tournaments. However, Capablanca, now about 67 years old, started to have symptoms of high blood pressure. This was not fixed properly, and led him to have a dangerous hypertension which was only fixed after q tournament. Eventually, Capablanca played in the 8th Chess Olympiad, and won a gold medal from that.

Capablanca died on March 8, 1942, due to a dangerous hypertension which was followed by a stroke, ending the book of one of the strongest chess players in the world.

Jose Raul Capablanca vs Frank Marshall

The story around this game is that Capablanca started off playing the Ruy Lopez, and Marshall responded with an opening that previously had never been played and is now called the Marshall gambit. Apparently, Marshall had waited 8 years to play this opening.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.O-O Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 O-O 8.c3 d5 9.exd5 Nxd5 10.Nxe5 Nxe5 11.Rxe5 Nf6 12.Re1 Bd6 13.h3 Ng4 14.Qf3 Qh4 15.d4 Nxf2 16.Re2 Bg4 17.hxg4 Bh2+ 18.Kf1 Bg3 19.Rxf2 Qh1+ 20.Ke2 Bxf2 21.Bd2 Bh4 22.Qh3 Rae8+ 23.Kd3 Qf1+ 24.Kc2 Bf2 25.Qf3 Qg1 26.Bd5 c5 27.dxc5 Bxc5 28.b4 Bd6 29.a4 a5 30.axb5 axb4 31.Ra6 bxc3 32.Nxc3 Bb4 33.b6 Bxc3 34.Bxc3 h6 35.b7 Re3 36.Bxf7+
1-0

A Word from the Publisher

The editor of the newsletter, Azim Julkipli, attempts to have this newsletter come out the first week of each month. Unfortunately, he has an author and publisher who is often involved with a multitude of activities. As such, the newsletter is sometimes late.

I hope no one confuses my delays with disrespect for the work or the editor. The newsletter is finer than most I have seen and, in fact, won an award for online club newsletter just this year. That award, along with several others, will be presented at the party on August 21 at the hotel, the night before the Ira Lee Riddle event. The newsletter is an amazing representation of the club and the wide variety of work that many of us have the pleasure of writing.

This "word from the publisher" also allows an opportunity to point out that as we continue to grow, breaking into new ground in podcasts, class manuals, this newsletter, a book club, etc., we remember to help each other in these activities and that there is only 1 of me. The idea is for everyone to take part in those activities in which they wish to grow and expand in and to all grow together.

As always, thank you to all who help expand the many works and activities that Tri-Bridges Chess Club does.

- Joshua Anderson

350!

By Joshua Anderson

That's the number of games played in the Triple Crown - 350 games over 3 sections and 3 time controls.

The World Cup soccer tournament forced us to reschedule the Triple Crown from July 25th-26th. All sections experienced a lighter turnout than hoped for, which did not help, especially on Sunday when entries usually increased but went down instead.

This event started with the blitz, and in the open section, Pete Minear ran away with the field, scoring 17.5 out of 18, being nicked with only one draw - from Tanay Parripati, the expert who came in second. Tanay's 12.5 was substantially ahead of Pranav Srinivasan and Shivam Wagh, both of whom had nine points. This 10-player double round-robin resulted in quite a few games, 90 in fact.

In the Under 1500 section, an eight-round double Swiss. Lucas Liu scored 12.5 to edge out Gad Alhik. Both players picked up about 500 rating points: Gad Alhaik, 507 points, while Lucas earned 474 points. Riaan Gandhi did not do quite as well, but scored 11 points, though he lost rating points.

In the under-500 section, this was a much smaller event, with five players. It was a round-robin event, and Shourya Methuku won the field and went 527 provisional rating, scoring seven points out of eight, losing only to second place, Vihaan Mishra, who had a 566 rating.

In the quick that evening, the quick was a six-person, six-round Swiss. Alok Chandra surprised Minear in round three. Minear then also had a loss to Pratheek Madasu in the last round, so there would be no Triple Crown winner this year. Chandra, in fact, scored five and a half points to take the lead, drawing only against Shivam, who finished in third place. Minear, despite the two losses, finished in second with four points. Shivam and Max Castrosqui shared third and fourth, who both had three and a half.

Then, in the Under 1500 quick, Aarush Vudathu picked up 258 rating points as he scored five out of six, drawing with Samika Nettem and Devon Patel. Vudathu had five points to finish in first, a half point ahead of Gad Alhik, who had four and a half, losing only to Vudathu and then drawing Samika as well. Samika had three and a half, a first-round loss, and then three draws. It allowed her to tie with Advik Perumalla, who also had three and a half.

A six-person round-robin in the Under 1000 section resulted in a tie for first place between Sam Alhik and Methuku. Sam picked up almost 150 rating points, while Methuku picked up 229. Mithran Kumar and Mishra tied for third and fourth in that section, each scoring three points.

The next day, the G25, unusually, lost people rather than picking them up like it usually does. The five-player round robin for a nine-person open, and Pete Minear picked up six points, increasing his rating to 2284, as Chandra again had a good day and picked up 54 points, going four out of five, losing only to Minear. Pratik Madasu came in third place with three. Tying him was Divin Iyyappan. Iyyappan was a 1281 who picked up about 140 rating points and scored three out of five.

The under-1500 competition saw Sun and Vudathu finish in a dead heat for first place. Both of them had two draws: a draw against each other, and a draw against the person who came in fifth, Gad Alhaik. Sun and Vudathu all picked about 150 rating points. In third place was Milind Wagh, and he had a 159-point rating gain. In fourth place, going from 999 to 1172, was Advik Perumalla.

In the under 500 section for the regular, four players played in six rounds. They played each person twice. It was basically a double quad, where Vihaan Mishra just edged out Ivan Verma. Mishra picked up about 30 rating points and went five out of six, drawing once with Verma and once with George Zhang. Verma had picked up 144 rating points, as he had four and a half. The top two players in that double quad had 9.5 points; the bottom two, 2.5 points.

It was a rather unique event, as this event always is. It was, as it always is, a lot of fun. Joshua Anderson ran the tournament with Samika Nettem as chief assistant. Many others help to run the event. To them and all the players who took part, we say thank you and hope you will all come back next round.

The Three-Setup System: A Smarter Way to Build a Chess Opening Repertoire

By Riaan Gandhi

Choosing an opening repertoire is one of the biggest decisions every chess player makes. With countless books, videos, and databases available, it's easy to think you need to learn dozens of openings. In reality, the goal isn't to memorize the most theory. It's to consistently reach positions you understand. While there are several good ways to choose openings, I believe the most practical is the Three-Setup System.

Other Ways to Choose Openings

Many players build their repertoire by copying a favorite grandmaster. This is a great way to learn strong, well-tested openings and the middlegame plans that come with them. The drawback is that grandmasters often rely on an enormous amount of theory that most club players don't have time to maintain.

Another popular method is learning from books. A good opening book explains plans, pawn structures, and common ideas instead of only listing moves. This helps you understand the positions rather than simply memorize them.

Some players choose openings that fit their style. Aggressive players may prefer more tactical openings, while positional players often select quieter systems. Others organize their repertoire around familiar pawn structures so that different openings lead to similar middlegames.

All of these methods can work, but they still often require learning many unrelated positions.

The Three-Setup System

Instead of building a large repertoire, I recommend choosing only:

• One flank opening as White
• One system defense against 1.e4
• One system defense against 1.d4

The biggest advantage is consistency. Instead of allowing your opponent to decide what type of game you'll play, you guide the game toward positions you already know well.

This also makes transpositions much easier to handle. Even if an opponent plays a move that isn't covered in your book, the resulting position is often very similar to one you have already studied. Because you're learning structures and plans instead of exact move orders, you spend much less time worrying about whether you're still "in theory." Rather than memorizing hundreds of branching variations, you become an expert in three families of positions.

Why Flank Openings and Systems?

For White, I recommend using a flank opening such as the English Opening, Réti Opening, King's Fianchetto Opening, or Bird Opening. These openings are flexible and often let you steer the game toward structures you enjoy instead of entering your opponent's favorite theoretical lines.

For Black, system openings simplify preparation. White has 20 possible first moves. Depending on who you ask, around 7 to 10 are considered reasonable, and most opening guides recommend preparing for about four of them:

• 1.e4
• 1.d4
• 1.c4 (English Opening)
• 1.Nf3 (Réti Opening)

In practice, however, 1.e4 and 1.d4 account for the overwhelming majority of games. If your repertoire is based on systems, you only need to decide which setup you'll use against each of these two moves. That means your entire Black repertoire is built around just two reliable systems instead of a collection of unrelated defenses.

Studying Flank Openings as Black

Although you don't need to play flank openings as Black, you should still study them.

Understanding the English, Réti, Bird, and other flank openings helps you recognize their ideas and common transpositions. In many cases, these openings can be guided into structures that resemble your chosen systems, making them much easier to handle. A little study goes a long way, even if those openings are never part of your own repertoire.

Conclusion

There are many effective ways to build an opening repertoire. Following grandmasters, learning from books, choosing openings that fit your style, and studying pawn structures are all proven approaches.

The Three-Setup System combines the strengths of these methods while keeping your preparation simple. By choosing one flank opening as White and two system openings as Black, you spend less time memorizing theory and more time developing a deep understanding of the positions you actually play. Instead of letting your opponent dictate the game, you repeatedly guide it into familiar territory where your experience and understanding become your greatest strengths.

Player Spotlight

This player spotlight for August goes to Jai Advik Perumalla, for crossing the 1000 barrier in his rating. Below is his own writeup:



I'm really happy and a little surprised to be picked as the Player of the Month. I also recently finally crossed 1000. I went from 999 to 1172. When I first started playing chess, I never thought I would get this far, and it means a lot to receive this recognition.

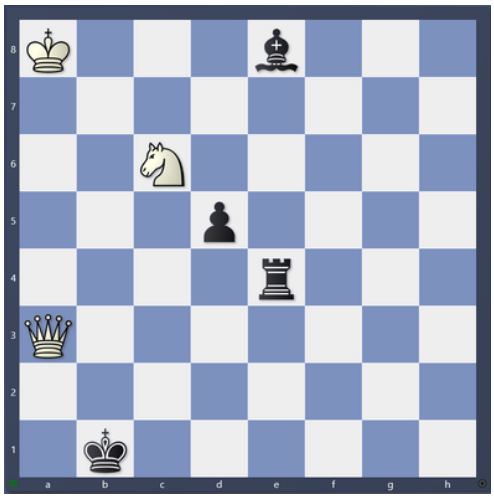
I started coming to Tri-Bridges because my older brother was already going there. I watched him play chess and saw how hard he worked. That made me want to learn too. Seeing how much he liked chess made me want to practice and get better.

When I joined Tri-Bridges, I thought chess would just be fun. It is fun, but it is also really exciting. My favorite part is playing in tournaments because they help me learn and get better. I also really like winning trophies.

I want to say thank you to Josh. He is a great coach and is 50% of the reason I crossed 1000. He is always kind and patient. If I make a mistake, he helps me learn instead of making me feel bad. He also makes Tribridges a fun place where everyone likes to come and play chess.

Tribridges has helped me become a better chess player. I am thankful for Coach Josh, my brother, and everyone at the club for helping me. I will keep practicing, try to win more trophies and/or money, and keep getting better at chess!

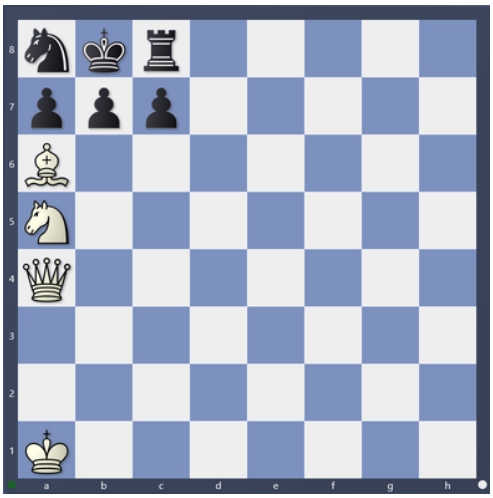
Can you solve these puzzles?



Black to play and win material

Solution on Page 6

These puzzles were made by Neil Gupta, and were designed for the Mock Ira Lee Riddle Memorial, or the mock state championship.



White to play and mate

Solutions:
Puzzle 1: 1. Qh1 Kb8 2. Qh8

UPCOMING EVENTS!

One of the best ways to improve at chess isn't just by studying countless books—it's by playing real games! Our upcoming club events offer great opportunities to put your skills into practice, challenge new opponents, and learn from every match. Remember, practice may not make you perfect, but it definitely makes you better! Here's what's coming up at the Tri Bridges Chess Club.

ECE #136 – Friday Night Tournament
DATE AND TIME: August 14 @ 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm
SECTIONS: Open, U1200, U800, U500, U200
TIME CONTROL: G25 d5

ECE #137 – Sunday Game Hour
DATE AND TIME: August 16 @ 10:00 am - 6:00 pm
SECTIONS: Open, U1400, U700
TIME CONTROL: Game / 60, d5

2026 Mock Ira Lee Riddle Memorial Scholastic(Saturday)
DATE AND TIME: August 22 @ 10:00 am
SECTIONS: U1000, U500
TIME CONTROL: G40 d5

2026 Mock Ira Lee Riddle Memorial
DATE AND TIME: August 22 - August 23
SECTIONS: Open, U1800, U1400
TIME CONTROL: G90 d5

2026 Mock Ira Lee Riddle Memorial Scholastic(Sunday)
DATE AND TIME: August 23 @ 12:00 pm
SECTIONS: U900, U600, U300
TIME CONTROL: G25 d5

ECE #138 – Saturday Tournament
DATE AND TIME: August 29 @ 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm
SECTIONS: U1400, U1000, U400
TIME CONTROL: Game / 25, d5