



The Check Is in the Mail

August 2007



MAX ZAVANELLI TO RETIRE RUTH ANN FAY TO RETIRE ARE THERE REPLACEMENTS ?

The story of Max Zavaneli is inextricably interwoven with the recent history of ICCF/US. I remember well the 1987 telephone call from an irate Max about the state of US correspondence chess at the international level. After an introduction to the right people, Max took over the reigns as ICCF/US secretary. Only the 20-year-plus veterans remember the miserable state of US CC affairs internationally: the numerous dropouts, the unenviable record of rarely winning any international matches, the apparent cronyism in selecting team members.. This would all change under Max the Axe.

Max initiated a “Get tough” policy. Dropouts were banned, a new method (rating!) was used to select team members. There were some casualties along the way. A few top-flight players received life-time bans, but Max ushered in “A New Era” for US CC. We actually began winning international matches. Titles began flowing in to US players (Over 50 IM’s during Max’s tenure!) Max moved up the ICCF political ladder, too. An ICCF Vice President in 1992, in 1993 he became a Deputy Chairman, and also in 1993, he received his International Arbiter title. By 1995 he was a Zonal Director.

But with all the politicking, Max did not forget his first love – the game itself. Max continued to play correspondence chess during this time, and in 2001 received his IM title.

Let us take a break from his political rise to see what kind of an attacking player Max is.

GAME OF THE MONTH

Max announces his aggressive intentions on Move 1 – the Dutch Defense announces to the opponent, “Get ready, I intend to attack you,” and that’s what Max does.

DUTCH DEFENSE (A80)

White: Mordechai Rechtman (2378)

Black: Max Zavaneli (2474)

BFCC-40 Email 2002

1.d4 f5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4 g6

The fianchetto of this Bishop makes sense -- Black can contest the e5 square. White can reasonably attack e5 with three pieces. After ...Bg7 and...d6, Black can easily pressure e5 with five pieces.

4.e3 Bg7 5.Bc4

This has a certain superficial appeal to it -- encouraging the "weakening" advance ...e6, but it does not do very well statistically. Black scores very well with it in my CC database -- +4 =3 +11 in Black's favor. More traditional methods score about 50% -- 5. c4 and 5. Nc3.

5...e6 6.Nbd2 b6

An interesting moment both chessically and psychologically -- Dutch fanatics would leap upon the opportunity to play a Stonewall formation with ...d5 and an "extra" tempo, but the g7 Bishop is then misplaced. Max elects instead to concentrate his firepower on the white squares in the center, postponing a center advance until later in the game.

7.0-0 Bb7 8.c3

One of the drawbacks to Bc4 makes itself seen here. If White could swallow his pride, he might try 8. Bd3 and 9. c4 to put counter-pressure on Black's center.

8...0-0

Black has effectively equalized here. Max's plan of attack is interesting. As he has more space on the kingside, he decides that is the sphere of action and elects to exchange his g7-Bishop for White's f4.

9.Qe2 Nh5!?

This is really neat. Max brings an attacker (h5) closer to White's King, catches up in development, gets rid of a defender (f4) for a dubious attacker (g7)

and frees the f-Pawn to advance, taking kingside space.

10.Be5 Nc6 11.Bxg7 Kxg7 12.b4

A brave decision -- White has to drum up some counterplay, and he does so on the queenside. Now the game becomes a race -- who will get there first, kingside or queenside ?

12...a6 13.a4 Qe7 14.b5 axb5 15.axb5 Na5 16.Ba2 d6 17.Rfc1

For better or for worse, White had to react in the center with e4, even if this means conceding the f4 square to the Black Knight. With Black's next move, Max takes over the initiative.

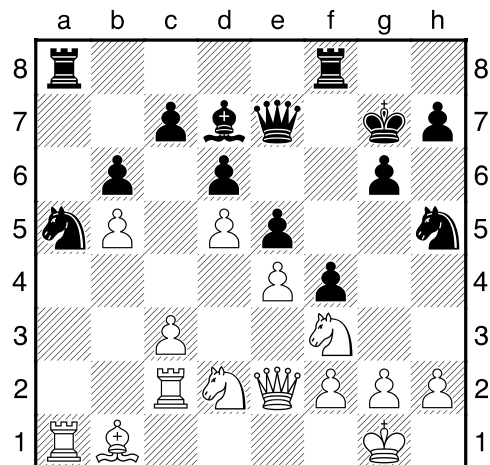
17...e5 18.d5 Bc8

The Bishop seeks a less cluttered diocese while White's Bishop remains excommunicated from the action on the queenside.

19.Bb1 Bd7 20.Rc2 f4

Finally, Except for a5, all of Black's pieces can contribute to the attack on the kingside. White's Rooks and Bishop will be spectators.

21.e4



21...Rg8!

Nimzovich would have called this a mysterious Rook move, but there is nothing mysterious about it. Black is going to play ...Kh8 and ...g5 and open up lines against the White King. Max is sharpening his axe.

22.Rca2 Raf8 23.Bc2 Kh8 24.Nb3

White has to eliminate the a5 Knight to get any play on the queenside as sacrificing the exchange doesn't generate enough play. But the d2 Knight has to leave his King to fend for itself.

24...Nxb3 25.Bxb3 g5 26.g3

Faced with the threat of ...g4 and ...f3, White is forced to weaken his kingside.

26...Bg4 27.Rf1 Rf6 28.Qd3 Rgf8 29.Bd1

Too painful is 29. Nxg5 Qg7! 30. Ne6 Bxe6 31. dxe6 fxg3 32. hxg3 Rf3 33. Qe2 Nxg3! 34. fxg3 Qxg3+ with a complete collapse of White's game.

29...Bh3 30.Re1 fxg3 31.hxg3 Nf4!

Even at email, the sound of this Knight reaching f4 must have been terrifying. This is Max the Axe at his best.

32.gxf4 gxf4

The White King is separated from almost all his forces. All that remains is to separate the King from the board.

33.Ng5 f3! 34.Bxf3

Of course, 34. Nxb3 is met by 34...Qg7+

34...Rg6 35.Bg2 Bxg2 36.f4 Rxf4 37.Rxg2 Rxg5 38.Ree2

White has defended very well, and for his hard labors, he has reached an indefensible endgame.

38...Rxc2+ 39.Rxc2 Qh4 40.Qg3 Qxc3 41.Rxc3 Rxe4 42.Rg2 Rf4 0-1

Max continued his march to the summit. He became Deputy President of ICCF in 2003, and Acting President in 2005. For twenty years the name Max Zavanelli has been synonymous with ICCF and US success. And now Max has decided it is time to retire. And who shall replace him?

J. Franklin Campbell has listed some of the problems facing US international players – no international teams, no one to represent US for titles to our players, no nominations to prestigious international events, no input at ICCF congresses, and no access for US players to play internationally. Someone out there needs to consider taking over the help of ICCF/US. And soon. Ruth Ann Fay has announced her retirement as of October of 2007. Ruth is willing to train her replacement. Who out there is willing (and able) to lead American players to as successful a decade or two as Max and Ruth ?

JULY TOURNAMENT WINNERS

Trophy Quads

Christian Garcia	05Q25	6-0
Laurence Estlick	05QA16	5-1
David Wright	05Q26	5-1

Walter Muir eQuads

Tom Martell	06W09	5 ½-½
Raymond Sollars	07W13	5 ½-½
Lionel Silva	07W10	5 ½-½
David Wright	06W17	4-2

John Collins Tournaments

Charles Truax	06C26	5 ½-½
Mike Eberhardinger	06C10	5-1
William Kossman	06C07	5-1
Frank Coulter	05C38	6-0
John Leitel	05C36	4 ½- 1 ½
Charles Fortner	05C36	4 ½- 1 ½
Charles Truax	06C03	6-0
Richard Wienckowski	06C33	6-0

Swift Quads

Michael Hensley	07SQ06	6-0
Wilbur Tseng	07SQ09	6-0
Phillip Green	06SQ19	6-0

OBITUARIES

Robert Glenn Tomkinson, was born August 4, 1952, and died May 20 of this year. Robert was a Class A player who participated in the Golden Knights. His obituary in the Fredericksburg, VA, paper could speak for all of us: "He was a great chess player who loved the game." Like all of us, Robert occasionally "came a cropper."

BLACKMAR GAMBIT (D00)
White: Robert Miehme (2158)
Black: Robert Tomkinson (1849)
2006 Golden Knights

1.d4 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.f3 exf3
5.Nxf3 e6 6.Bc4 Bb4 7.0-0 Bxc3 8.bxc3
0-0 9.Ne5 Qe7 10.Bg5 c5 11.Bd3 cxd4

12.Bxf6 Qxf6 13.Rxf6 gxf6 14.Bxh7+
Kxh7 15.Qh5+ 1-0

Richard Zelinski was born August 20, 1948, and died May 14, 2007. He is survived by his wife June who notes, "He enjoyed these chess games so much."

In this game, Richard may have enjoyed some of his opponent's unusual (yet successful) strategy.

FRENCH DEFENSE (C00)

White: P. Schalkwijk
Black: Richard Zelinski
IECG Email 1999

1.e4 e6 2.d3 c6 3.c3 d5 4.e5 Ne7 5.d4
Ng6 6.Bd3 Be7 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.b4 0-0 9.a4
a6 10.a5 b6 11.axb6 Nxb6 12.h4 f5
13.Bg5 Bxg5 14.Nxg5 h6 15.Nh3 Qxh4
16.g3 Qe7 17.Nd2 Qf7 18.Nb3 f4
19.Qg4 Ne7 20.Ng5 1-0

USCF WEBSERVER

Some members of the USCF have seen the future. They realize the webserver is the way CC will be played in the future, and the future is now. They know that the USCF should set up such a site. At this time the Walter Muir tournaments are being played on the ICCF website. In order to help the USCF establish its own webserver, some members are willing to contribute funds. DO NOT SEND ME ANY MONEY, but if any readers are willing to contribute money (tax deductible?) for a USCF webserver, send me your name and I will pass it on to the powers that be. In the meantime, you can enjoy the use of ICCF's webserver by signing up for a Walter Muir quad.

This year the 2007 Absolute tournament, which starts this August, will be played on the ICCF webserver, thanks to a generous donation by one of the players.

Over the board masters in the main tend to belittle correspondence chess. Somehow it irks them to think that some players whom they would have no trouble in defeating over the board are capable of producing – certainly with considerable labor – games of a higher standard than the average over-the-board master tourneys.” – C. J. S. Purdy

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

On Thursday at the ICCF Forums Pedro Hegoburu wrote: “What do players demand?

In different amounts, they demand all three options (*Postal, E-mail, Web Server - sdo*).

However, a quick look at numbers shows the levels of demand in the three available methods.

During 2006, the Direct Entry office processed 389 entries.

6 were for postal events (1.54%).

41 were for e-mail events (10.54%).

342 were for webserver events (87.92%).

During 2007 (up to May), the DE office has processed 248 entries.

5 were for postal events (2.02%).

31 were for e-mail events (12.5%).

212 were for webserver events (85.48%)."

This is pretty significant in showing how Web Server correspondence chess is preferred.

Now let's look at what Mike Nolan posted over at the USCF Forums back on June 19, 2007:

"Assuming my data is complete, comparing the 2005-06 FY to the 2006-07 FY:

Collins Class registrations are up from 109 to 214

Golden Knights registrations are up from 170 to 277

Electronic Knights registrations are up from 122 to 154

Walter Muir E-Quads are up from 42 to 150"

The Walter Muir E-Quads represent the only USCF correspondence events available on web server (using the ICCF server). The Muirs tripled in activity while the other events lagged far behind in growth. It should be noted that before 2007, USCF correspondence chess was hampered by serious reporting problems. However, the closest competitor in growth was the Collins Class events which almost doubled. Assuming consistent growth, the Muirs will soon out pace all other correspondence activities very soon.

The USCF has an opportunity, an opportunity that has an expiration date, to be the American organization for correspondence chess. History suggests that the USCF will let this opportunity slip by. It is time for something different. I think this board is different from those past and I hope action is forthcoming.

The USCF should immediately:

- Respond to the crisis facing American representation in ICCF in co-ordination with the CCLA should that organization be willing able to participate, and Ruth Ann Fay to make sure the USCF and America are represented at ICCF Congress this Fall by a person who will take over the responsibilities borne by Ruth Ann Fay and Max Zavanelli;
- Make most, if not all, correspondence events available for play via web server;

- Return correspondence chess to the magazine, or at least Chess Life Online, as a monthly feature or column.

Steve Owens

<http://sdo1.blogspot.com/>

When Daniel was tossed into the lion's den, he found away to dull their appetite. Daniel Fleetwood shows some of the same as he dulls the teeth of the 19th and 21st world champion.

QUEEN'S INDIAN DEFENSE (E12)

White: Joop Van Oosterom (2725)

Black: Daniel Fleetwood (2546)

18th World Championship 2003

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3 Bb7
5.Nc3 d5 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.Bd2 Nd7
8.Nxd5 exd5 9.g3 Bd6 10.Bg2 0-0 11.0-0
a5 12.Bg5 Be7 13.Bxe7 Qxe7 14.Rc1
c5 15.Re1 Rfe8 16.Nd2 Nf6 17.Qb3 Qc7
18.a4 Rac8 19.Bh3 Rb8 20.Qa3 Bc8
21.Bf1 c4 22.Rc3 Qe7 23.Qxe7 Rxe7
24.Ra1 h6 25.f3 g5 26.h3 Kg7 27.Kf2 h5
28.g4 hxg4 29.hxg4 Bd7 30.e3 Re6
31.Raa3 Rh8 32.Bg2 Rc8 33.Rc2 Rce8
34.Nb1 Rc6 35.Re2 Ng8 36.Nc3 Ne7
37.Ra1 Rf6 38.Ree1 Bxg4 39.e4 Bd7
40.exd5 Rh6 41.Rac1 Nf5 42.Ne4 Bxa4
43.Rxc4 Bb3 44.Rc3 Nxd4 45.Rd3 Nc2
46.Rc1 a4 47.d6 Rd8 48.Ng3 Kg6 49.d7
Nb4 50.Rd6+ Kh7 51.Rd2 Be6 52.Rcd1
Na6 53.Ne4 Kg6 54.Rd6 Nc5 55.Rxb6
Rxd7 56.Rxd7 Nxd7 57.Ra6 Ne5 58.Nc5
Rh4 ½-½

This is how a draw should be fought – both sides playing to win, attacking, threatening, fighting until the last Pawn is about to drop. Bravo, guys!

SEMI SLAV DEFENSE (D49)

White: Robert Rizzo (2473)

Black: Julius Simon (2241)

2nd USCCC Final 2005

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6
5.e3 Nbd7 6.Bd3 dxc4 7.Bxc4 b5 8.Bd3
a6 9.e4 c5 10.e5 cxd4 11.Nxb5 Ng4
12.Qa4 Bb7 13.Nbxd4 Qb6 14.0-0 Bc5
15.h3 Bxf3 16.hxg4 Bd5 17.Nb3 Bb4
18.Be3 Qb7 19.a3 Be7 20.Na5 Qxb2
21.Nc4 Qb7 22.Rfc1 Bxg2 23.Nb6 h5
24.g5 0-0 25.Qxd7 Qf3 26.Bf1 Bxf1
27.Kxf1 Rae8 28.Qc6 Qf5 29.Qb7 Bxg5
30.Bxg5 Rb8 31.Qxa6 Qxg5 32.Nd7
Rb2 33.Rc8 Qf5 34.Rxf8+ Kh7 35.Nf6+
gxf6 36.Rxf7+ Kg8 37.Qc8+ Kxf7
38.Qd7+ Kg6 39.Qe8+ Kg7 40.Qe7+
Kg6 41.Qe8+ Kg7 42.Qe7+ Kg6
43.Qxf6+ Qxf6 44.exf6 Rb5 45.a4 Ra5
46.Ke2 Kxf6 47.Kf3 Kf5 48.Kg3 e5
49.f3 Kg5 50.Ra3 h4+ 51.Kh3 Kf4
52.Kxh4 Ra8 53.Kh3 e4 54.fxe4 Kxe4
½-½

One of the immutable laws of chess is that each side takes turns moving. In this game, White first takes a number of Pawns. Then it is Black's turn.

ENGLISH OPENING (A25)

White: William Nadolny (2061)

Black: Robert Fass (2253)

2006 Electronic Knights semifinals 2007

1.c4 Nf6 2.g3 e5 3.Bg2 Nc6 4.Nc3 Bc5
5.e3 0-0 6.Nge2 d6 7.d4 Bb6 8.0-0 Re8
9.h3 Bd7 10.d5 Ne7 11.e4 a6 12.Qb3 h6
13.Bd2 c6 14.Nc1 Bd4 15.N3e2 Ba7
16.Nc3 b5 17.cxb5 cxd5 18.exd5 e4
19.Re1 e3 20.Bxe3 Nf5 21.bxa6 Rb8
22.Qc2 Qc8 23.Qd2 Nxe3 24.fxe3 Bxh3
25.Nb3 Qg4 26.Qf2 Qh5 27.Qf3 Ng4
28.Bxh3 Qxh3 29.Nd1 Rb5 30.Qg2 Qh5
31.Nd2 Rxb2 32.Nxb2 Nxe3 33.Qf2 Re7
0-1