



THE CHECK IS IN THE MAIL
November 2008

**EDWARD DULIBA WINS 2007
ABSOLUTE**



Edward Duliba has shown that not only can he play extended correspondence chess by postcard, he can play the faster server variation as well. Duliba added the 2007 Absolute to his growing resume. He has now scored the grand slam of US correspondence chess,

winning outright the 2007 Absolute, (he tied for first in 1998) the 1992 Golden Knights, and 15th US Championship (shown with 15th USCCC trophy)

GAME OF THE MONTH

“I was very fortunate to win the 2007 Absolute tournament. I had quite a few close games. This game was quite even until I stumbled onto a very interesting tactical blow”. – Ed Duliba

CATALAN OPENING (E05)

White: Mark Robledo Sr (2336)

Black: Edward Duliba (2452)

2007 Absolute

(Notes by Edward Duliba)

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 dxc4
5.Nf3 Be7 6.0-0 0-0 7.Qc2 a6 8.Qxc4
b5 9.Qc2 Bb7 10.Bg5 Nbd7 11.Bxf6
Nxf6 12.Nbd2 Rc8 13.Nb3 Be4 14.Qc1**

A common alternative is 14. Qc3.

**14...c5 15.dxc5 a5 16.a4 Qd5 17.Nxa5
Rxc5 18.Qd1 Qa8**

This opening has followed standard opening lines until now, and Black has managed to equalize. The Catalan, however, contains some amusing traps. Black's move was an attempt to keep the game alive. The alternative here has been 18...Qxd1 19. Rfxd1 bxa4 20. b4 axb3 1/2-1/2 (Antunes-Kotronias, Eu Men's Championship 1997).

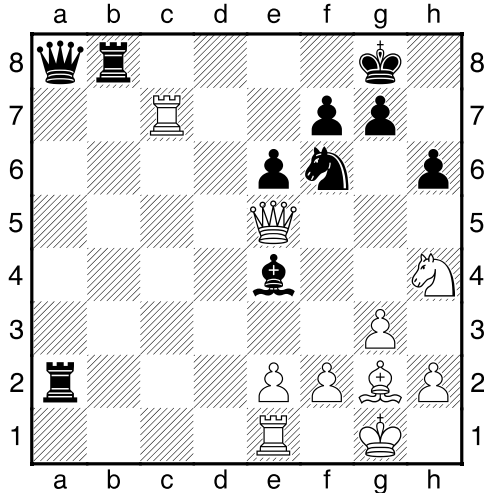
**19.axb5 Rxb5 20.Nc4 Qb7 21.Nd6
Bxd6 22.Qxd6 Rxb2 23.Rfe1 h6**

Securing g5.

24.Rac1 Ra2 25.Rc7

White works on his own attack.

25. ... Qa8 26.Qe5 Rb8 27.Nh4?



Better would have been 27. Qf4 =+ I was fortunate that White overlooked the trick.

27...Rxe2!

This is the key tactical action of the game. It is impossible for White to avoid trouble now.

28.Rxe2 Rb1+ 29.Bf1 Qa6 30.Qb2

Better resistance is provided by 30. Rcc2!? Bxc2 31. Re1

30. ...Rxb2

After this the game is now decided quickly.

31.Rxb2 Qa1 32.Rb8+

There is no help by 32. Rd2 Kh7.

32...Kh7 33.Rbc8

Nor does 33. Rb3 Ng4 34. Rxf7 Bd5 work.

33... Ng4 34.h3

If 34. Rxf7 Bd3.

34. ...Ne5 35.Rc1 Qd4 36.R1c3 g5 37.Ng2 Nf3+ 38.Rxf3 Bxf3 39.Ne1 Bd5 40.Bd3+ f5 41.Kf1 Kg6 42.Be2 Qe4 43.Bf3 Qa4 0-1

A possible continuation is 44. Be2 h5 -+ An alternative was 43...Qb1 44. Bxd5 exd5 45. Rc6+ Kg7 46. Rc7+ Kg8 47. Rc8+ Kf7 48. Rc7+ Ke8 49. Rc3 -+ which also keeps the advantage.

2007 Absolute

Duliba	2452	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	1	9
Figlio	2434	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
Miettinen	2364	0	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	1/2	1	1	1	8
Coplin	2401	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
O'Hare	2405	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	1	1	1	7
Brower	2384	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	6.5
Schakel	2329	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	6.5
Brandhorst	2482	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	0	1	1	1/2	5.5
Keating	2382	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	0	0	1/2	0	0	1/2	1	1	5
Rodriguez	2384	1/2	0	0	0	0	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	1/2	5
Wilson	2377	0	0	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	4.5
Robledo	2336	0	0	0	0	0	0	1/2	1/2	0	0	1/2	1/2	1	3
Gray	2365	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	0	0	1.5

It should be noted that William Gray's poor showing was due to his death in January of 2008. William had a solid plus score during his many prior years of Absolute play.

2005 ABSOLUTE CHAMPIONSHIP

With the conclusion of a 100+ move game between Abe Wilson and Robert Keating, the 2005 Absolute came to an end on September 22, 2008. The co-winners, Keith Rodriguez and William Boucher each lost only one game on their way to the championship.

THE OTHER GAME OF THE MONTH



IM William Boucher notes that he always plays with a close eye on modern theory. This win against Wesley Gales is a good illustration of how keen his eye is.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B63) White: William Boucher (2349) Black: Wesley Gales (2336) 2005 Absolute

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6
5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bg5 e6 7.Qd2 Be7 8.0-0-0 0-0
9.Nb3 Qb6 10.f3 Rd8 11.Nb5

The most popular line here has been the odd retreat 11. Be3, odd because the Black Queen on b6 hinders Black's counterplay based on ...a6 and ...b5. Lately 11. Nb5! has come into consideration, pressuring d6.

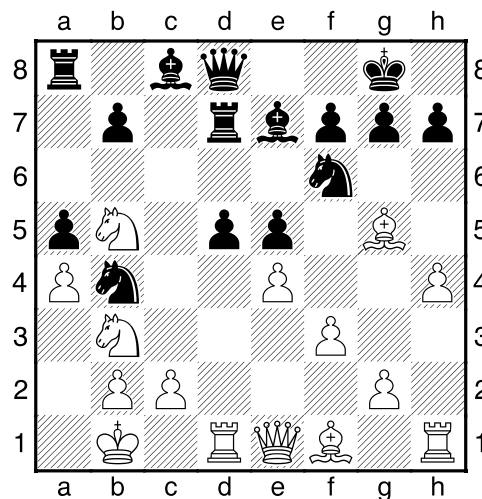
11...Rd7 12.Qe1

Boucher's choice does least well of the three major choices, 12. Bxf6 and 12. Be3 with White dominating the win column, but Boucher has an improvement in mind.

12...Qd8 13.h4

Pugh-Yares Valdes, Capablanca Memorial 2003, varied with 13. g4 b6 14. h4 Bb7 15. Kb1 Ne5 16. N5d4 with an eventual White win.

13...a6 14.N5d4 a5 15.a4 Nb4 16.Kb1 e5
17.Nb5 d5?!



It appears that Black is liberating his game by this advance but it recoils badly. Actually Black is opening up the game for the better developed side.

18.Bxf6 Bxf6 19.Nc5 Rc7

No better is 19...Re7 20. exd5 with a big plus for White.

20.Nxc7 Qxc7 21.c3!

This simplifies the position on the queenside and maintains White's material superiority.

21...Qxc5 22.cxb4 axb4 23.Rxd5 Qf8 24.Bb5

With an exchange plus, domination of the d-file, and no Black counterplay, White has a clear win.

24...Be6 25.Rd3 Be7 26.g4 Bc5 27.Qd2 b3 28.g5 Bb4 29.Qh2 Qb8 30.h5 Kh8 31.Rhd1 Be7 32.g6 fxg6 33.hxg6 h6 34.Qf2 b6 35.Bc6 Ra6 36.Qd2 1-0



Co-winner Keith Rodriguez plays a brilliant thematic game based on a well-known exchange sacrifice on c3.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B96)

White: Lawrence Coplin (2392)

Black: IM Keith Rodriguez (2331) [

2005 Absolute

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6
5.Nc3 a6 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Nbd7 8.Qf3 Qc7
9.0-0-0 b5 10.Bd3 Bb7 11.a3 Be7
12.Rhe1 Qb6 13.Nb3 Rc8 14.Qg3 Rxc3
15.bxc3 Qc7 16.f5 e5 17.Bxf6 Nxf6
18.Nd2 0-0 19.c4 d5 20.exd5 Bxa3+
21.Kb1 Qb6 22.cxb5 axb5 23.Qxe5

Nxd5 24.Be4 Ne3 25.Bxb7 Nxd1
26.Rxd1 Qxb7 27.Ne4 Ra8 28.f6 g6
29.Qd5 Qa7 30.Qa2 h6 31.Nc3 Qb7
32.Nd5 Ra4 33.g3 Kh7 34.Qb3 Bc5
35.Qb2 Qa8 36.Qc3 b4 37.Qb2 Ra3 **0-1**

Player	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Tot.
1. Wesley Brandhorst	2453	X	1													8-5
2. Richard Title	2443	0	X													6-5
3. Conky Schakel	2411			X												7-6
4. Boris Ratner	2407				X											4½-8½
5. Lawrence Coplin	2392					X										7-6
6. Walter Brower	2380						X									8-5
7. Kristo Miettinen	2365							X								6-7
8. Roy Tate	2358								X							0-13
9. William Gray, Jr.	2352									X						6-5
10. William Boucher	2349										X					9-4
11. Gordon Everitt	2342											X				5½-6½
12. Abe Wilson	2336												X			7-5
13. Wesley Gales	2336													X		7-5
14. Keith Rodriguez	2331														X	9-4

Miniature games wanted !

The annual December column is coming up. If you have played a game of twenty moves or less that you think is of interest, send it to me!

BOKAR QUALIFIES!

GM Jason Bokar has qualified for the finals of the 26 World Championship. Following is the qualifying game that moved Jason into the Finals.

FRENCH DEFENSE (C18)

White: GM Jason Bokar (2570)

Black: SIM Fedir Savchur (2506)

26 World Championship, 2006

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5
 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.Qg4 0-0
 8.Bd3 f5 9.exf6 Rxf6 10.Bg5 Rf7
 11.Qh5 g6 12.Qd1 Qa5 13.Bd2 Nbc6
 14.Nf3 Qc7 15.dxc5 e5 16.Ng5 Rf8
 17.c4 e4 18.cxd5 exd3 19.d6 Qd7
 20.dxe7 Qxe7+ 21.Be3 Rf5 22.h4 h6
 23.Nf3 Rd5 24.cxd3 Bg4 25.Qa4
 Bxf3 26.gxf3 Qf6 27.Rb1 Re8
 28.Qc4 Qxf3 29.Rh3 Qf5 30.Rg3
 Re6 31.Kf1 Rd7 32.h5 Ne5 33.Qe4
 Qxe4 34.dxe4 g5 35.Rb4 Nc6
 36.Ra4 Kf7 37.Ke2 Rf6 38.Rg4 Ne5
 39.Rg1 Nc6 40.Rb1 Ke6 41.Rc4 Ke5
 42.f3 Rff7 43.Rc3 g4 44.fxg4 Nd4+
 45.Bxd4+ Rxd4 46.Rb4 Rxe4+
 47.Re3 Rxe3+ 48.Kxe3 Kd5 49.Ra4
 Rg7 50.Kf3 a6 51.Rf4 Kxc5 52.Rf6
 Rh7 53.Ke4 Rh8 54.Ke5 b6 55.Ke6
 Rd8 56.Kf7 Rd7+ 57.Kg6 Rd4 58.g5
 hxg5 59.h6 g4 60.h7 Rd8 61.Kh6 g3
 62.Rg6 b5 63.Rxg3 a5 64.Rg8 1-0

MATTHEW CRANE TOPS

TOPS COLLINS 06C51

Crane	2087		11	1=	11	5½
Angres	2091	00		11	=1	3½
Garner	2030	0=	00		1=	2
Hiber	2127	00	=0	0=		1

Black's two Bishops appear to only be sitting there, looking pretty, but their influence affects every move of the game from Move 22 on.

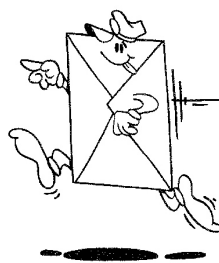
English Opening (A37)

White: Robert Angres (2091)

Black: Matthew Crane (2087)

John Collins 2006

1.Nf3 c5 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 Nc6
 5.0-0 e6 6.Nc3 Nge7 7.d3 0-0 8.Bd2 d5
 9.cxd5 exd5 10.Rc1 b6 11.a3 Bb7
 12.Qa4 a6 13.e4 Re8 14.Rfe1 d4 15.Nb1
 a5 16.Bf4 h6 17.g4 g5 18.Bg3 Ng6
 19.Nbd2 Nce5 20.Nxe5 Nxe5 21.Bxe5
 Bxe5 22.Qc2 Rc8 23.a4 Qf6 24.Nc4 Bf4
 25.Rcd1 Rb8 26.h3 Qc6 27.Ra1 Kg7
 28.Bf3 Bc7 29.Bd1 Re6 30.Qe2 Rh8
 31.Qf3 Rf6 32.Qg2 Rf4 33.Ra3 h5
 34.gxh5 Qe6 35.Kf1 Kh6 36.Nd2 Rg8
 37.Bf3 Bc6 38.Ke2 Qe8 39.b3 f5 40.Kd1
 g4 41.hxg4 fxg4 42.Be2 Qf8 43.Rf1 c4
 44.Nxc4 b5 45.axb5 Bxb5 46.Ra2 Bxc4
 47.bxc4 Qb4 48.Rc2 a4 49.e5 Rf3
 50.Rh1 Qb1+ 0-1



CLASSIFIED ADS

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OCTOBER WINNERS

Palciauskas Tournament

Tom Booth 07P01 5 ½-½
Craig Faber 07P04 5-1

John Collins

Brian Flowers 07C24 5 ½-½
Matthew Bennett 07C19 5-1
Antonio Romero 07C19 5-1
Rock Doucet 08C02 6-0
Philip Deaugustino 06C19 4 ½-1 ½
Leonard Horowitz 06C19 4 ½-1 ½

Express Tournament

Michial Schmitt 08ET01 6-0

Walter Muir

John Badger 08W23 4½-1½
Scott Herbert 08W06 6-0
Lloyd Allred 08W33 5 ½-½
Joe Hoffmann 08W08 5-1

Trophy Quad

Patrick Stephens 06Q16 6-0

Quote: Blunders in [correspondence chess] hurt even more since the alibi is harder to come by -- Eric Marchand

A superb defensive effort by Boris Ratner holds the juggernaut Brandhorst to a draw.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE (E97)

White: Wesley Brandhorst (2453)

Black: Boris Ratner (2407)

2005 Absolute

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6
5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 e5 7.0-0 Nc6 8.d5 Ne7
9.Nd2 a5 10.a3 Nd7 11.Rb1 f5 12.b4
Kh8 13.f3 Ng8 14.Nb3 axb4 15.axb4
Ndf6 16.c5 Nh5 17.Be3 Nf4 18.Qd2
fxe4 19.fxe4 Bh6 20.Kh1 Nf6 21.Bd1
Bg5 22.cxd6 cxd6 23.Na5 h6 24.Bf3
Qe7 25.Ne2 Nxe2 26.Qxe2 Bxe3
27.Qxe3 Kg7 28.h3 Nh7 29.Be2 Bd7
30.Nxb7 Bxh3 31.Rxf8 Nxf8 32.Nxd6
Bxg2+ 33.Kxg2 Qxd6 34.Rc1 Qe7 35.b5
Ra3 36.Qd2 Nh7 37.Rc3 Rxc3 38.Qxc3
Qg5+ 39.Kh1 ½-½

The care and Feeding of the Initiative might yet be the title of a new book by Corky Schakel. If so, this game is sure to be included.

DUTCH DEFENSE (A10)

White: William Gray (2222)

Black: Corky Schakel (2391)

2007 Absolute

1.c4 e6 2.g3 f5 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.Nf3 d5 5.0-0
c6 6.d3 Be7 7.b3 0-0 8.Bb2 Nbd7 9.Nbd2
Qe8 10.Qc2 Qg6 11.Nd4 Ng4 12.h3 Nh6
13.cxd5 exd5 14.e4 Nf6 15.e5 Ne8 16.N2f3
f4 17.g4 Nxg4 18.hxg4 Bxg4 19.Qe2 Bh3
20.Ne1 Nc7 21.f3 c5 22.Rc1 Rac8 23.Ndc2
Rf5 24.d4 Bxg2 25.Nxg2 Rh5 26.Qd2 Ne6
27.Nce1 Bh4 28.Qc2 Qg3 29.Rf2 Rc6
30.dxc5 Rxc5 31.Qd2 Rxc1 32.Bxc1 Qxf2+
33.Qxf2 Bxf2+ 34.Kxf2 g5 35.Nd3 Rh1
36.Nge1 Rh2+ 37.Ng2 h5 38.Kg1 Rh3
39.Nge1 Kf7 40.Kf1 Nd4 41.Nf2 Rg3
42.Nh1 Rxf3+ 43.Nxf3 Nxf3 44.Nf2 Ke6
45.Nd3 Nxe5 46.Nc5+ Kf5 47.Nxb7 Nd3
48.Ba3 h4 49.Nc5 Nxc5 50.Bxc5 g4
51.Bxa7 h3 52.b4 g3 0-1