



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 40, June 2022

Greetings from ICCF-US Friendly Match Central. This is the newsletter concerning everything related to ICCF-US Friendly Matches. Thanks to your ongoing interest in the Friendly Matches, this newsletter has been arriving at your email-doorstep 4 times per year for nearly 10 years!

To explain to any new recipients, Friendly Matches are team versus team chess contests (involving teams affiliated with different nations) where the overall team outcomes do not matter beyond bragging rights. Everyone is eligible to play. The ICCF-US uses both a standing set of interested players and new participants in virtually every match. Each match participant plays two **rated** games, one with white and one with black, against a single opponent of nearly identical rating. The fee to participate is \$5 per match. You are invited to participate!

News of Relevance to Friendly Matches

This newsletter is not used to debate, promote, condemn, or otherwise discuss national or international political issues. However, the ICCF Congress recently held an “extraordinary” meeting in which certain votes affect our ability to run certain friendly matches. It is for that reason, to keep all you informed, that I report this news. ***Please do not write to me to express your thoughts and/or feelings about what has been decided*** as reported below. I am very aware of strong feelings on all sides of the issues and will not debate any of these with anyone anymore (even in my role as ICCF Rules Commissioner). What I am about to report is a “fait accompli” and is being treated as such.

The Russian and Belarusian Federations were both suspended from the ICCF, effective immediately upon the termination of the voting (May 9). The length of these suspensions is indeterminate, dependent on how the Executive Board (or Congress) views signs of decreasing hostilities by those countries in and/or towards Ukraine.

For us involved in organizing friendly matches, these suspensions mean that we cannot organize a new friendly match against either of these countries throughout the period of these suspensions.

To be clear, players from Russia and Belarus were not suspended. (There were Congress votes concerning these options as well, with the stated outcomes.) These players maintain all the rights of players from countries without a member federation (what the Rules call isolated players – see section 1.6.1. of the ICCF Rules for details). This means they can continue to play in all ongoing international events of all kinds (including already ongoing friendly matches) and can enter any new ICCF-approved event for which they are qualified and can arrange the required payment, just like all other isolated players.

I just thought everyone should know why Russia and Belarus have been subtracted from the countries we will play in World Tour 3 (below) while our existing matches against Belarus and Russia continue.

This issue brings you more from “Chess Words of Wisdom”

(by Mike Henebry).

Upcoming Friendly Matches

A match versus **Mexico** was offered by their organizer, then organized, and started during this past 3 months. Stated many times in this newsletter, not all matches are advertised in this newsletter before the teams are assembled and started.

Finland has agreed to a match versus the USA. We are expecting to organize that match and get it started during July.

Wales has also agreed to a match to start during July.

The advertised match versus **Lithuania** was postponed (by them) until September.

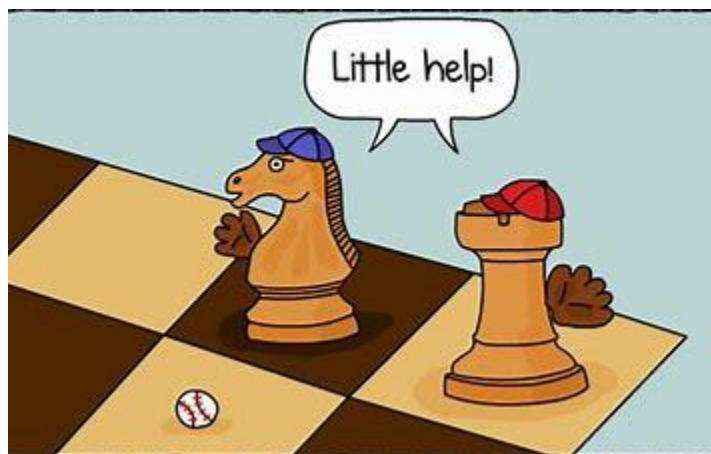
As previously mentioned, an invitation was sent to **Suriname**, a country in the process of applying for ICCF membership. The organizer for that country has not yet been able to organize a team for such a match. I am still hopeful.

Similarly, an invitation has been extended to **Curacao**. This is another country applying for ICCF membership. We are waiting for their response to that invitation.

Sweden has agreed to play the USA in a friendly match to be organized during January.

Other friendly matches to be organized soon have not yet been determined. See the next section about our World Tour #3 concerning possible options in that regard.

Matches can go from an idea to an active reality within any 90-day period – that is, between newsletters. So, if you have not already let it be known that you want to play, be sure to let us know by writing to Dennis at dmdorenchess@gmail.com!



Around the World a Third Time!!

The USA Friendly Match World Tour 3

Whether you want to “collect countries”, wish to have an opportunity to communicate with people from your ancestors’ home country, or just like the opportunity to meet people from around the world, the Friendly Matches bring you that opportunity. During our third World Tour (WT3), we again plan to make offers for Friendly Matches to all ICCF member federations: all 54 of them (besides us). Come go around the world with US!

So far in WT3:

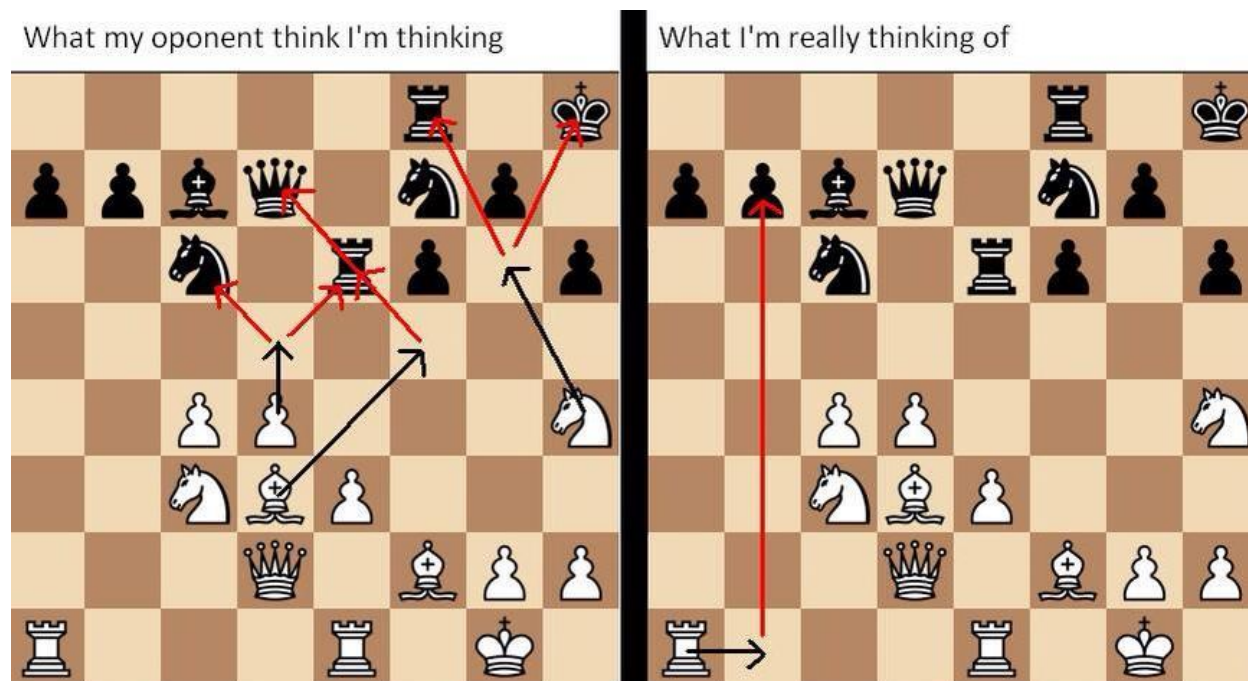
We have started play against the following (16) countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Cape Verde, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Nicaragua, Philippines, Russia

Matches are scheduled versus (a) Finland starting in July, (b) Wales also starting in July, (c) Lithuania starting in September and (d) Sweden starting in February,

Invitations have been sent to: (a) Suriname (a country applying for ICCF membership) and (b) Curacao (another country applying for ICCF membership)

Our **invitation was declined or received no response** by Panama.

Countries yet to be included (35) in WT3: Argentina, Aruba, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, England, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, and Ukraine.



If you are a pawn down, try to leave pawns on one side only. Draws are much more likely with pawns on one wing than on both.

The Friendly Matches that are Already Ongoing...

You can always find the current results from any of our Friendly Matches by visiting www.iccf.com, Tables and Results, Friendly Matches, but this newsletter continues to make it easy for you to stay up-to-date. The first three issues of "The Friendly Post" listed all our matches from 1/1/07 to the date of newsletter circulation. (You can find those 3, and all other issues of "The Friendly Post" at www.iccfus.com). There became too many Friendly Matches to keep doing that, so each issue now lists only those currently in progress or just completed since the last newsletter. The current standings (through 6/5/2022) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Switzerland	Server	2/20/2020	32.0 - 33.0 (1 ongoing game)
2.	England	Server	6/16/2020	102.5 - 106.5 (1 ongoing game)

3.	Germany	Server	9/21/2020	139.0 -173.0 (4 ongoing games)
4.	Slovakia	Server	11/18/2020	40.5 - 40.5 (3 ongoing games)
5.	BeNeLux	Server	11/30/2020	122.5 -128.5 (1 ongoing game)
6.	Belarus	Server	3/13/2021	26.0 - 23.0 (1 ongoing game)
7.	Romania	Server	4/8/2021	33.5 - 43.5 (4 ongoing games)
8.	Philippines	Server	5/31/2021	15.0 - 42.0 (2 ongoing games)
9.	Peru	Server	6/4/2021	41.0 - 41.0 (2 ongoing games)
10.	Slovenia	Server	6/6/2021	17.0 - 21.0 (4 ongoing games)
11.	Spain	Server	6/18/2021	33.0 - 43.0 (8 ongoing games)
12.	Philippines B	Server	7/7/2021	12.5 - 18.5 (3 ongoing games)
13.	Austria	Server	8/15/2021	23.5 - 24.5 (14 ongoing games)
14.	Japan	Server	9/30/2021	11.0 - 6.0 (7 ongoing games)
15.	Indonesia	Server	10/31/2021	18.0 - 17.0 (13 ongoing games)
16.	Denmark	Server	11/15/2021	8.0 - 12.0 (4 ongoing games)
17.	Cuba	Server	11/29/2021	53.0 - 65.0 (42 ongoing games)
18.	Israel	Server	12/21/2021	4.0 - 3.0 (9 ongoing games)
19.	NCA/ECU/GUA/CPV	Server	1/2/2022	8.0 - 6.0 (8 ongoing games)
20.	Russia	Server	1/9/2022	34.0 - 33.0 (37 ongoing games)
21.	Australia	Server	3/14/2022	17.5 - 17.5 (67 ongoing games)
22.	France	Server	3/23/2022	7.5 - 11.5 (63 ongoing games)
23.	Belgium	Server	3/26/2022	10.0 - 8.0 (46 ongoing games)
24.	Mexico	Server	6/6/2022	0.0 - 0.0 (34 ongoing games)

TOTAL USA RESULTS

Currently (as of 6/5/2022) = 378 ongoing games

Completed games since 1/1/2007* = 8512 games

Total score since 1/1/2007* = 4200.5 – 4311.5 (**49.3%**)

(* 1/1/2007 is the beginning of USA friendly match records on the ICCF server)

*When you have a choice between what seems to be equally good moves,
play the most necessary move first.*



Highlights and Interesting Tidbits:

(1) This was a tough quarter for the sets of USA teams. We only scored about 45% of the possible points of completed games, the lowest in a very long time. Additionally, the following matches officially became lost:

(a) **BeNeLux** (With one game remaining, the USA is down 6 points – It's too bad, as the USA had made a very large comeback until this past quarter.)

(b) **Romania** (With 4 ongoing games, the USA is behind by 10 points.)

(c) **Spain** (With 8 games still in progress, the USA trails by 10 points.)

(d) **Philippines B** (With 3 remaining games, the USA is 6 points back.)

It has been a long time since the USA registered 4 losses in the same quarter.

(2) We are also on the brink of losing in two other matches:

(a) Versus **Slovenia**, we are 4 points back with only 4 remaining games.

(b) Versus **Denmark**, we are also 4 points behind with 4 remaining games.

(3) On the other hand, the USA officially won its match versus **Belarus**. We took an early lead in that match and held onto it all the way to the end! With only 1 ongoing game, the USA took a 3-point lead. Good going USA!

(4) Then there are the VERY close matches:

(a) Against **Switzerland**, the USA still trails by 1 point, with one remaining game!

(b) Versus **Slovakia**, we were behind, then we caught up, then went ahead, then gave up our lead, and have been tied with 3 remaining games for a second quarter now. Go team!!

(c) **Peru** caught up against our 2-point lead such that we are now tied – with only 2 games involving the same players still ongoing! We wish our remaining player the best of skill!

(d) Our 1-point lead versus **Austria** fell away such that the USA is now 1 point back. There are still 14 games in play, though, so there is plenty of time to pull ahead again!

(e) The USA also holds a 1-point lead versus **Indonesia**, but with 13 remaining games this match still can be won by either country.

Let's hope our next quarter finds better overall results! Go USA!!



Friendly Match (versus game) win/loss record

(Since 1/1/07) 53 wins, 48 losses, 3 ties (= 52.4% for USA)

USA Won	USA Lost**	USA Tied
Argentina (2010)	Aruba (2020)	Argentina (2019)***
Argentina (2016)	Austria (2014)	Norway (2013)***
Australia/New Zealand (2012)	Belarus (2016)	Wales (2019)***
Australia (2016)	Belgium (2015)	
Australia (2018)	BeNeLux (2020)*	
Belarus (2021)*	Canada (2019)	
Brazil (2016)	Croatia (2015)	
Brazil (2020)	Cuba (2013)	
British CCA (2016)	Cuba (2015)	
Bulgaria (2016)	Cuba (2018)	
Bulgaria (2021)	Czech Republic (2011)	
Canada (2014)	Czech Republic (2013)	
Cape Verde (2013)	Czech Republic (2019)	
Denmark (2014)	Denmark (2018)	
England (2008)	England (2020)*	
England (2012)	Finland (2018)	
Estonia (2016)	France (2010)	
Estonia (2020)	Germany (2008 – Women's only)	
Finland (2009)	Germany (2011)	
France (2017)	Germany (2014)	
Hong Kong (2010)	Germany (2020)*	
India (2014)	Iceland (2014)	
India (2019)	Iceland (2019)	
Indonesia (2016)	Israel (2014)	
Israel (2016)	Italy (2010)	
Japan (2013)	Italy (2017)	
Japan (2017)	Mexico (2017)	
Latvia (2015)	Netherlands (2017)	
Latvia (2020)	Norway (2019)	
Lithuania (2015)	Panama (2015)	
Mexico (2020)	Panama (2016)	
Netherlands (2013)	Philippines (2021)*	
Netherlands (2018)	Philippines B (2021)*	
New Zealand (2020)	Poland (2015)	
Panama (2013)	Romania (2021)*	
Peru (2013)	Russia (2013)	
Portugal (2013)	Russia (v. Zone 3) (2017)	
Portugal (2018)	Slovenia (2019)	
Romania (2008)	Spain (2008)	
Romania (2013)	Spain (2021)*	
SchemingMind (2018)	Sweden (2007)	
Scotland (2008)	Switzerland (2014)	
Scotland (2016)	Ukraine (2010)	
Scotland (2020)	Ukraine (2015)	
Slovakia (2014)	Ukraine (2018)	
Slovenia (2015)	Venezuela (2014)	

Spain (2016)
Sweden (2012)
Sweden (2018)
Turkey (2015)
Venezuela (2013)
Wales (2013)
Yorkshire (2018)

Venezuela (2017)
Wales (2016)

* Still officially ongoing, but the final team outcome is already determined.

** Chess960 matches versus Germany and Russia are not included in this list because it is a different game coupled with the very large rating differences in these matches. The USA lost both matches.

*** After 104 completed matches, where pairings were made with as equal ratings as possible, that there have been only three tied results.



Featured Game

Sychov,Aleksandr Vitalievi (2287) - Anderson,Clarence (2289) [B32]
RUS - USA 2022

(All annotations by IM Dennis Doren)
(The game can be found at [ICCF Game](#))

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nb5 d6 6.N1c3 a6 7.Na3 Be7 8.Nc4 b5 9.Ne3

(For those not familiar with this very common variation of the Sicilian (the Lowenthal), it can look like mistakes are being made. White's moving his KN 6 times during the first 9 moves is contrary to what any beginner book instructs about moving the same piece multiple times in the opening. Yet, despite that, White maintains a slight advantage according both to chess engines and ICCF game results. The hole on d5, left by Black's e5, is the main reason.]

9...Nf6 10.g3 [The most common move in the position in ICCF play. Engines offer the quicker development of 10.Be2.]



Position after 10.g3

10...h5 11.Bg2 h4 [Black has equalized.]

12.0-0 h3 [The point of h5-h4. Trading hxg3 to open the h-file for Black's R does not have any easy useful follow-up on that file. For example, if 11...hxg3, 12.fxg3 Bh3? 13.Bxh3, Rxh3 14.Nf5 and White has a clear advantage because 14...g6? fails to 15.Nxe7 and 16.Bg5]

13.Bh1 Rb8 14.Re1 [A new move in the ICCF database at the time it was played, but not a good move. It is too defensive. He needs to start using the d5 square he spent so many moves obtaining and then extricate his QB. For example, 14.Ncd5 followed by 14...Nxd5 15 Nxd5 would have been better.]



Position after 14.Re1

14...0-0 15.a3 a5 [Black now has an edge. He has been taking control of the squares on the sides of the board. White must counter through the center but he is already behind. The defensive move 14.Re1 was not useful enough to maintain equality.]

16.Ncd5 Nxd5 17.Nxd5 Be6 18.Be3 [Developing this B is okay, though another defensive move was better: 18.c3, fighting for b4 and defending against Black's Nd4.]

18...Qc8 19.Nxe7+ [Possibly the losing idea (though an engine does not show this yet). White decides to take the d-pawn. To get it, though, he needs to trade his best piece for Black's worst, and give up a tempo afterwards when Black develops his KR by attacking White's Q. That is a lot to give up for a pawn. Now add the fact White's KB is purely defensive and Black position gains significant momentum for the pawn.]



Position after 19.Nxe7+

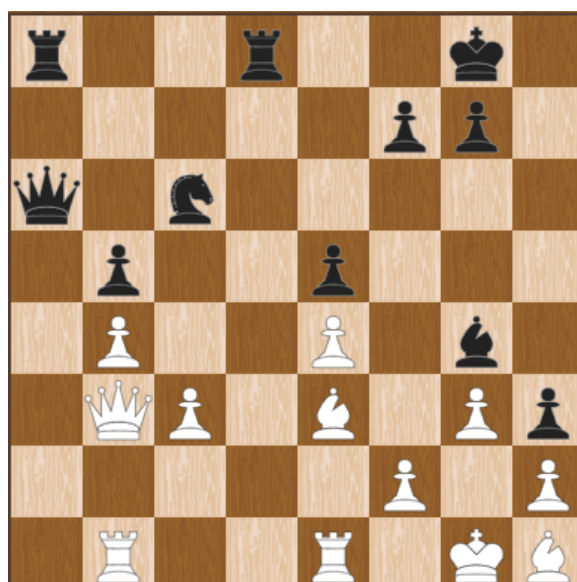
19...Nxe7 20.Qxd6 Nc6 21.c3 [Apparently trying to cover weaknesses but there simply is not enough time for this. Getting his QR out with 21.Rad1 at least fights for the center squares he needs to keep.]

21...Rd8 22.Qc5 Bg4 [Helping cement both control of the d-file by preventing White's Rd1 and ensuring White's B does not escape from h1 by taking away the f3 square.]

23.b4 [Trying to stop the opening of the b-file to Black's R by 23...b4, but this is not where White needs to worry. White needed to play 23.f3, either immediately or after 23.Rac1 to kick the Bg4 away followed by 24.Red1. In any case, Black sits somewhat better despite being a pawn down.]

23...Qa6 24.Rab1 Rdc8 25.Qd5 Rd8 26.Qb3 [White's Q forward placement became a liability, but he should have been happy with 26.Qc5 leading either to a 3-position repetition or Black's deviating with 26...axb4 17axb4 Rd3 where Black maintains his positional advantage. The played move leads to a position that is not sustainable.]

26...axb4 27.axb4 Ra8 [The purpose of 23...Qa6, to control the a-file, along with the d-file.]

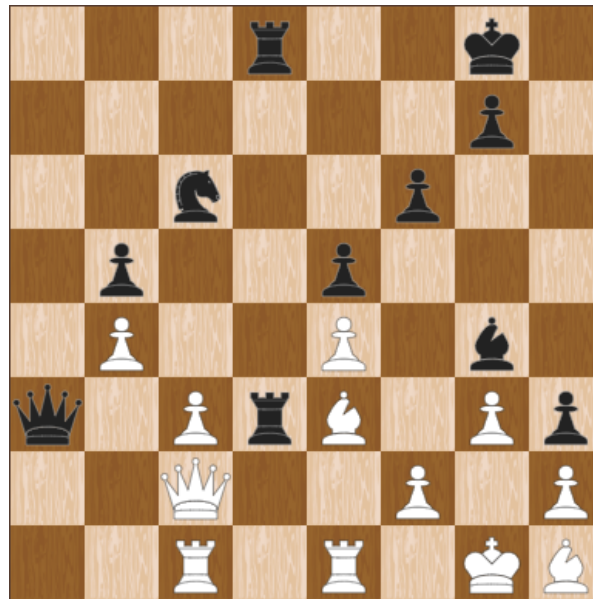


Position after 27...Ra8

28.Rb2 Rd3 29.Qc2 Rad8 30.Rbb1 Qa3 [Black's pieces keep advancing, using the well-earned files, whereas White moves sideways or backwards.]

31.Rbc1 [Forced. If 31.Rec1 Rxc3! 32.Qxc3 Rd1+]]

31...f6 [This "quiet" move follows the idea that bringing more unused material into the attack is never bad. The plan here is Kf7 and g5.]



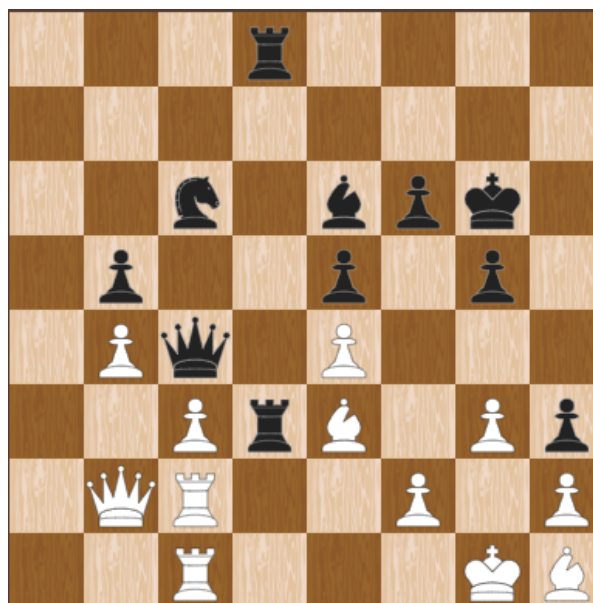
Position after 31...f6

32.Kf1 Kf7 33.Kg1 [White cannot extricate himself without making things worse. For example, if 33.f3 Be6 34.Ra1 Rxc3 35.Rxa3 Rxc2 and 36...Nxb4]

33...g5 34.Rf1 R8d7 35.Rfe1 Kg6 36.Rf1 Qa8 [Black has time to bring his Q to a more effective square.]

37.Rfe1 Qg8 38.Qb2 Rd8 39.Qb1 Qc4 [The point of Qa8 & Qg8.]

40.Qb2 Ra8 41.Rc2 Be6 42.Rec1 Rad8 [Threatening a backrow mate, forcing White's R to move back.]



Position after 42...Rad8

43.Re1 g4 44.Rcc1 Ra8 45.Re2 Nd8 [The one Black piece not yet in on the attack.]

46.Rec2 Nf7 47.Rd2 Nd6 [And it, too, now attacks White, this time the threat to come onto White's side of the board through e4.]

48.Rxd3 Qxd3 49.Qb1 Qxb1 50.Rxb1 Nc4 51.Bc5 Ra3 52.Rf1 Nb2 [White resigns despite still being a pawn up. Black's Na4 leads to picking off White's pawns when Black's R, B, N, and K-side pawns coordinate against White's cornered K and already dead Bh1.] 0-1



Final position

CHES LITE



The strongest counter to a wing attack is a line opening in the center.

The Triple Block time control system has come to the ICCF!

Have you heard about the "Triple Block" time control system? The Triple Block system, most often abbreviated as "TB", was developed by an ICCF work group specifically appointed

during the 2015 Congress to address a variety of complaints about the standard time control system. (There were 6 different proposals during the 2015 Congress alone for changes in the ICCF time control system.) The new system was approved for trials by the 2016 Congress, and officially approved by the 2020 Congress. Since then, hundreds of events have used the system without significant problem.

Some of our recently started Friendly Matches are using this system. Some of our as-yet-to-be scheduled Friendly Matches will also use this new time control system.

In brief, the Triple Block system gives you your reflection time, your leave time, and some additional time right from the beginning. The time keeping is simplified in that there is no doubling of reflection time (as there is currently after 20 days without a move), no 40+ day loss by default and therefore no registering to be allowed to go beyond that time limit, no watching your time at each 10-move interval, and no recording of leave time. Instead, each player has far more control of his/her reflection time. Problematic play related to the "dead man's defense" is also lessened. And you will typically have more reflection time per move available to you than you currently do!

The rules and procedures for the TB system are incorporated as Appendix 3 in the document "ICCF Rules".

If you have a space advantage and a strong center, the standard plan is to start a pawn storm on the side of the board where you have the advantage.

RULES PERTAINING TO FRIENDLY MATCHES

Since 1/1/17, Friendly Matches are viewed like any other ICCF-approved event, meaning a couple things of possible relevance to you.

For players, it means that **a player withdrawal (of any type, accepted, unaccepted, or silent) from a Friendly Match will also be considered a withdrawal (of the same type) from all other ICCF events;** and a withdrawal from any other ICCF-approved event will also mean a withdrawal of the same type from all Friendly Matches.

If you have dire need to stop playing, ask the tournament director for an accepted withdrawal. If you simply wish to stop playing, it is recommended you resign your Friendly Match games rather than simply abandon them.

The latter causes losses in all your other ICCF games and a 2-year suspension during which you will not be allowed to register for any other ICCF event.

For tournament directors interested in working towards the International Arbiter title, directing friendly matches count towards the required number of directed games to earn the title of International Arbiter.



CHESS

Sometimes the best move is to sacrifice a piece.

Where to Find Us

The ICCF-US home website is at www.iccfus.com. You can always find copies of "*The Friendly Post*" at that site, with a link on the top in the home page. The server for playing games is at www.iccf.com.

Contact Dennis Doren at dmdorenchess@gmail.com concerning anything related to Friendly Matches.



The People Behind the Organization

Thanks to the people who keep it all running, the ICCF-US Administrators:

Grandmaster Jason Bokar, Director

Senior International Master Tom Biedermann, Deputy Director & Treasurer

International Master Corky Schakel, Registrations Director

Grandmaster Carl Siefring, Invitational Facilitator

Senior International Master Dan Perry, Webmaster

International Master Bob Rizzo, Norms and Communications Organizer

Yours truly, **IM Dennis Doren**, Friendly Matches Organizer (dmdorenchess@gmail.com)

How Do I Get On A Team?

Getting selected to play on a USA Team in a Friendly Match takes almost no effort. Just let me know you are interested! Send an email to dmdorenchess@gmail.com and say you wish to play in a Friendly Match. When I have a team slot for you (meaning there is an opponent with about the same rating as your current one), I will let you know. You can also let me know of any specific country you wish to play against, but you do not have to do that.

When I have a specific team placement to offer you, you will receive an email from me - sent to the same address you have listed on the ICCF server. (Don't forget to update any email address changes!) My email will offer you a position on a team in a Friendly Match against a specifically listed country.

Please know that you need to respond to that email, and typically to do so **within 3 days** of my having sent it! I have a lot of positions to fill while all the members of the opposing team simply wait for me to complete my task. That is why there is a time frame for your response. If I do not hear from you within the specified time, I will offer your slot to someone else. However, even if you do not want, or cannot take the offered position, I strongly request that you do me the courtesy of a quick reply saying so. In that way, I can make an offer of "your" team position to someone else right away.

After you accept your offered position, you will get a reply email from me telling you what you need to pay and how to pay it. Please do NOT pay anything to anyone for a Friendly Match before you receive this email from me. "Pre-paying" only makes our administrative task more complicated, not easier. You will be asked to pay your fee before the match starts.

Finally, you will automatically receive your pairings, including an email from the ICCF server informing you that the match has begun and who you are paired against.

That is it! Let me know your interest, accept my invitation for you to play in a specific match, pay your fee, and enjoy your games!

You Can Play on the USA Team in a Friendly Match!

You, too, can play in a Friendly Match, no matter the degree to which you have played in an ICCF-US event of any kind previously. Each match consists of two **rated** games (one white, one black) against the same opponent who is very close in rating to yours. The total fee is \$5 for your participation per match. Just contact Dennis Doren, the ICCF-US Friendly Match Organizer, at dmdorencess@gmail.com and tell him your specific interest in playing.

Do **NOT** send any money to Dennis or anyone else at this point to pay for your participation! You will only need to pay (through Paypal, money order, or by check) when your placement on a USA team in a specific Friendly Match has been confirmed by Dennis. Dennis will tell you when that is.