



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 2, December 2012

Season's greetings from ICCF-US Friendly Match Central! This issue represents the first "repeat move" of our ongoing series of newsletters, bringing you the news from our collective set of Friendly Matches. For any new recipients, Friendly Matches are national team versus national team chess contests 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 players and new participants in virtually every match. Each match participant plays two rated games, one with white and one with black, against an opponent of nearly identical rating.

UPCOMING MATCH AGAINST RUSSIA!!

This will be the first Friendly Match between the USA and Russia since, well, technically, it will actually be **THE FIRST EVER!!** The last time we played a team from that part of the world was a match started circa 1982 (30 years ago!) and was known to end in 1986 - when we played a team from what was then the USSR. Reported in Alex Dunne's Chess Life column in June 1986, the match ended with the score USSR - 63.5, USA 38.5. We can do better than that now!

(Thanks, and a tip of the hat for the info to Alex Dunne, the USCF Corr. Chess Director.)



Come play and join the fun! See details on page 11 of this newsletter to sign up.



Our Friendly Match History

You can always find the current results from any of our Friendly Matches by visiting the relevant portion of the ICCF website (at www.iccf-webchess.com, Tables and Results, Friendly Matches), but this newsletter will also make it easy for you to stay up-to-date. Current standings (through 11/26/12) for ICCF-US Friendly Match teams are listed below, at least those that started since 1/1/07. If anyone has reliable and complete information about any set of results from a Friendly Match started earlier than 1/1/07, please share those results with me.

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Sweden	Server	1/1/07	36.5 - 41.5
	Sweden	Email	1/1/07	16.5 - 15.5
2.	Germany (Women)	Server	2/25/08	12.5 - 37.5
3.	Spain	Server	4/5/08	40 - 44
4.	England	Server	4/15/08	31 - 27
5.	Scotland	Server	10/20/08	15.5 - 16.5
	Scotland	Postal	10/20/08	6.5 - 3.5
6.	Romania	Server	11/1/08	36 - 30
7.	Finland	Server	5/20/09	62 - 32
	Finland	Postal	6/1/09	8.5 - 9.5
8.	Hong Kong	Server	1/31/10	17 - 9
9.	France	Postal	4/15/10	9.5 - 9.5 (1 game still ongoing)
	France	Server	5/1/10	34 - 54

10.	Italy	Server	12/10/10	33.5 - 48.5
11.	Ukraine	Server	12/15/10	47 - 79
12.	Argentina	Server	12/20/10	37 - 15
13.	Czech Republic	Server	4/15/11	23.5 - 26.5
14.	Germany	Server	5/25/11	37.5 - 62.5 (2 games still ongoing)
15.	Sweden	Server	5/1/12	36 - 16 (38 games still ongoing)
16.	England	Server	8/1/12	14 - 14 (40 games still ongoing)
17.	Australia/NZ	Server	11/1/12	2.5 - 0.5 (107 games still ongoing)

TOTAL USA RESULTS: 556.5 - 591.5 (48.5%)

Match Win/Loss Record (excl. 2012 England) 7/9 (43.8%)

EARLY RESULTS: Although it may be premature, our "exit pollsters" have "projected" the USA to win the ongoing match versus Sweden , given we need only 9.5 points out of the remaining 38.

GO players versus Sweden! GO players versus England! GO players versus Australia/NZ!



Where to Find Us

The ICCF-US home website is at www.iccfus.com. The server for playing games is at www.iccf-webchess.com. Contact Dennis Doren at dmdoren@yahoo.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:

International Master Corky Schakel, USA National Federation Representative

Senior International Master Tom Biedermann, Treasurer

Senior International Master Dan Perry, Webmaster

International Master Bob Rizzo, Norms and Communications Organizer

Senior International Master Kristo Miettinen, Tournament Organizer, Tournament Director

International Arbiter Franklin Campbell, Tournament Organizer, Tournament Director

Wolff Morrow, US Correspondence Chess Championship (USCCC) Organizer

Yours truly,

Dennis Doren, Friendly Matches Organizer (dmdoren@yahoo.com)

Games from the Matches

Each newsletter will show games and/or interesting positions from the ICCF-US friendly matches. Do you have a game you would like published here? A position with a great move? Our intention is to show games from across rating levels, so do not be shy about submitting your games (to Dennis Doren at dmdoren@yahoo.com). You can also offer your own commentary, or just leave that to us (which you can review pre-publication) if you prefer.

Both of this issue's featured games were played against Italy, start date 12/10/2010:

[Wieland Belka \(2438\) - SIM Prof. Mattia Mario Boccia \(2466\)](#)

Wieland Belka, who very recently became our newest IM (congrats!), played a very aggressive game here. Initially playing a common pawn sacrifice, he later turned it into a piece sacrifice for a clear advantage in development and the attack. Black finds a way to survive by trading major pieces, but only while also giving White a material advantage. The struggle then is whether or not White still has enough to win...

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bg5 e6 7.f4 Qb6 8.Qd2 Qxb2 9.Rb1 Qa3

10.e5 (Not as historically popular a move as 10.f5, but currently the most popular move in top circles.)

10...h6 (The same can be said for this move, as compared to 10...dxe5; with 10...h6 now being the more popular.)

11.Bh4 dxe5 12.fxe5 g5 (This move is neither the most common historically, which is 12...Nd7, nor the most popular in recent play, which is 12...Nd5; but is still associated essentially with positional equality.)

13.exf6 (The most common move found in a database, but that same database and a separate chess engine suggest 13.Bg3 may be slightly better.)

13...gxh4 14.Be2 Qa5 15.O-O Nd7 (The Q-side pieces need to be developed. Also possible was either 15...h3 or 15...Bb4 first.)

16.Kh1 Qg5 (Even though Black's Q is his only developed piece, he would be glad to trade Q's both because he has a sacrificed pawn to the good and to fix his pawn structure. 16...h3 was also a good possibility, giving the pawn back in exchange for opening up White's K and breaking up his protective pawn structure.)

17.Rf4 (White says no thanks to the offered trade.)

17...e5 (Interestingly, this is the only move played in games within a very large database, but analysis by a chess engine indicates this move is not best. Recommended instead is 17...Nxf6.)



Position after 17...e5

18.Nd5 exd4 (18...exf4 is answered by 19.Nc7+ Kd8 20.Nce6+ fxe6 21.Nxe6+Ke8 22.Nxg5 with a clear advantage)

19.Qxd4 (19.Nc7+ is not as good, but was also possible.)

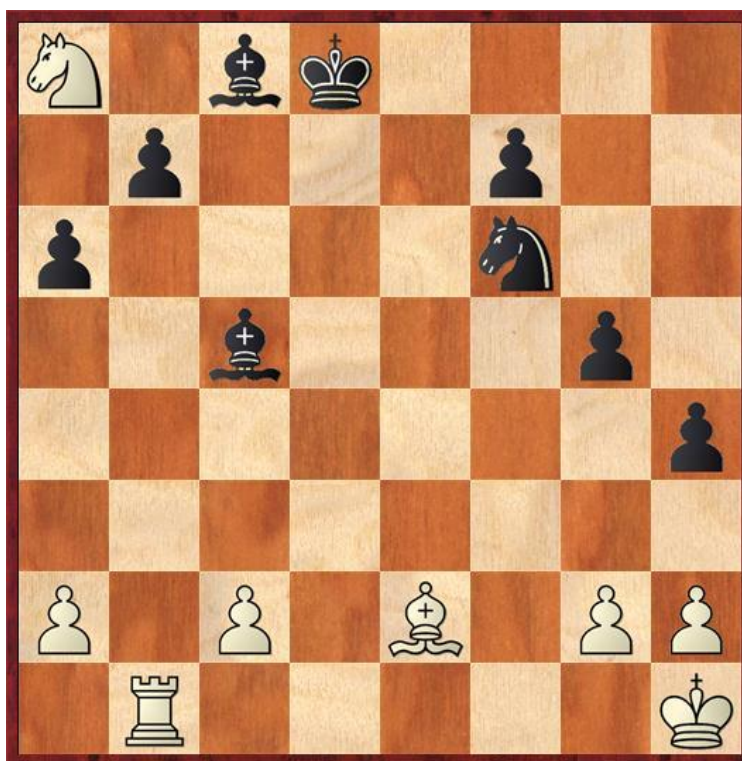
19...Bc5 (19...Kd8 immediately is the common move, and rated as somewhat better than this move. On the other hand, it is understandable that Black would want to develop his completely undeveloped pieces.)

20.Qe4+ Kd8 21.Rf5 (At this point, White has sacrificed a complete piece, but in return has much space and better development. Is this compensation enough?)

21...Re8 (Developing further and forcing a trade of two of White's strongest pieces, though giving back the sacrificed material, plus.)

22.Qxe8+ (22.Qd3 Qg6 23.Bh5 Qh7 24.Rd1 a5 is rated as clearly in Black's favor by a chess engine.)

22...Kxe8 23.Rxg5 hxg5 24.Nc7+ Kd8 25.Nxa8 Nxf6



Position after 25...Nxf6

(White has a R for a B and P, with no passed pawn yet for either side - W is still rated by a chess engine as having a small advantage, but forcing a win seems difficult with

Black's pieces finally coming alive, in particular the two B's, and with no likelihood for a passed pawn for White.)

26.Bf3 b5 27.Rd1+ Ke7 28.h3 Bd7 29.Re1+ Kd6 30.c3 a5 31.Rd1+ Ke7 32.Nc7 Bd6
33.Nd5+ Nxd5 34.Rxd5 f6 35.Be2 Bc6 36.Rd1 Be5 37.Rb1 Bxc3 38.Bxb5 Bd5 39.a3
Kd6 40.Be2 Bc6 41.Bf3 Ba4 42.Bg4 Bd4 43.Rb8 Bc6 44.Bf3 Kc7 45.Rb1 Be8 46.Rc1+
Kb6 47.Rb1+ Kc5 48.Kh2 Be5+ 49.Kg1 Bb5 50.Rc1+ Kd6 51.Rd1+ Kc5 52.Rd5+ Kb6
53.Rd8 Kc7 54.Rd2 Bf4 55.Rc2+ Kd6 56.Be2 Ba4 57.Rc8 Be3+ 58.Kf1 Bc6 59.Rd8+
Ke7 60.Rd3 Bc5 61.Rc3 Kd6 62.Bf3 Bb5+ 63.Ke1 (and Wieland decided there was no
win here) 1/2-1/2



[Live chess performed during IV European Chess Festival in Lublin, Poland; May 24, 2012]

Gerald K. Thomas (1771) - Susanna Carbone (1800 Provisional)

Jerry Thomas finds himself in a common opening line. After his opponent makes a mistake, Jerry never lets up, showing fine technique to secure the win.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bg5 h6 6.Bh4 O-O 7.e3 b6

8.Bd3 (8.cxd5 is historically more common, but 8.Bd3 is now the most popular.)

8...Bb7 9.O-O Nbd7 10.cxd5 (a popular move nowadays, with only 10.Qe2 more so)

10...Nxd5 11.Nxd5 (White avoids the older and possibly less useful 11.Bxe7, though 11.Bg3 is more popular than the played move.)

11...Bxd5 12.Bg3 (Kramnik - Spassky, 2005, ended in a draw following 12.Bxe7.)

12...c5 13.Rc1 cxd4 14.Bc7 Qe8 15.Nxd4 Bc5 (an alternative was 15...Nc5)

16.a3 a5 (What may be considered a crucial position, as W can choose from various moves such as 17.Qg4, 17.Bg3, or the one played.)



Position after 16...a5

17.e4 Bb3 (??; The first questionable move of the game, but it is also the losing one. Black apparently missed that White can take the B while simultaneously saving his N on d4. Instead, after 17...Bxd4 18.exd5 Bxb2 19.Rc2 Bxa3 20.Bb5 exd5 the position is essentially equal.)

18.Nxb3 (Now it is a matter of technique to secure the win, but watch White's wonderful technique!)

18...Ra7 19.Bg3 Qa8 20.a4 Bb4 21.Qg4 Nf6 22.Qe2 Nd7 23.Rfd1 Nc5 (Understandably trying to make his remaining pieces more active, but Black can ill afford to trade pieces being materially down.)

24.Nxc5 Bxc5 25.Bb5 Kh7 (Activating pieces with 25...Rd8, 25...Re7, or 25...Rc8 would have been better, though White has been doing well building the advantage of his extra piece.)

26.Be5 Rd8 27.Bc3 Qc8 28.Qg4 Rxd1+ (28...Rg8 may have prolonged things a bit)

29.Rxd1 Bf8 30.h4 Qb8 31.h5 (White continues to build the strength of his position quite skillfully.)

31...Kh8 32.Rd3 e5 33.Qf5 f6 34.Bd2 Qc7 35.Qe6 Qb8 (allows the following move, but Black is lost in any case.)



Position after 35...Qb8

36.Bxh6 (!) Rc7 (36...gxh6? allows a mate in 10 starting with 37.Qxf6+, according to one chess engine.)

37.Bxg7+ (!) 37...Bxg7 38.h6 Qf8 (38...Bxh6 results in mate in 8 starting with, you guessed it, 39.Qxf6+)

39.hxg7+ Rxg7 40.Qf5 (A chess engine now indicates the position after this move is a mate within 11.)

40...Rh7 41.Rc3 (The threat of Rc8 is crushing.) 1-0



A New Status and Reduced Fees: The "FRIENDLY MATCH ELITE"

Besides everyone having fun, two things are of greatest importance to the USA teams in Friendly Matches: that there are enough people to play at the various rating levels and that people play games to their natural end (that is, without silently withdrawing, defaulting by going silent and no longer responding to an opponent - a "silent withdrawal" causes a lot of extra effort by Team Captains for both teams, a lot of annoyance for the opponent, and is considered a serious no-no from the perspective of the ICCF-US Board). Both as an incentive for participation as well as a reward for never silently withdrawing, we have developed a new status within the world of ICCF-US Friendly Matches, a status whose reward includes **reduced fees** for future Friendly Matches.

Starting immediately, we now have a designation called the Friendly Match Elite. The Elite are the people who have played in at least 7 Friendly Matches (since 1/1/07) and have never silently withdrawn. As a token of thanks for their fine and regular participation, these players will have their fees reduced for each of the next 3 Friendly Matches in which they play, from the usual \$6 to \$4 per match. They are eligible to take advantage of that reduced fee immediately, starting with the upcoming FM against Russia (see below).

To everyone: **Anyone can reach this status!** Just play in enough Friendly Matches and never default a game through silent withdrawal. Your total number of Friendly Matches will automatically be tallied without any effort by you. (If you wish to know your current number of FM's played to date, just ask Dennis at dmdoren@yahoo.com.)

So who are the current Friendly Match Elite? Congrats to those on the ICCF-US current list:

David Ballard; John Ballow, IM; Edward Barr; Kyle Biedermann; Chris Cendrowski; Gregory W. Cross; Gary Deskin; Dennis Doren; James R. Ellis; Gordon Everitt; Leonid Gleyzer; Joseph Korman; Jon S. Leisner; Edwin Meiners; Charles Merrow; Jean L. Moeckel; Chris O'Connell; Larry Parsons; Michael Quirk; Donald Randolph; Mark Robledo, Sr.; Patrick J. Ryan; Corky Schakel, IM; Fred Sharpell; Carl L. Siefring, IM; Gerald K. Thomas; David V. White; & William C. Young, III

Which player has played the most, you ask? Mark Robledo, Sr., with 13 separate Friendly Matches and a total of 14 opponents (he played two different opponents within one of the FMs). Thanks for being such an integral part of the USA team Mark!

Who is just one Friendly Match away from becoming Elite?

**Richard Aiken; Thomas Biedermann, SIM; Steven W. Chilson; Michael G. Hayes;
Alex Herrera; Harry Ingersol; & Edward Lupiensi**

To everyone: you need not complete play from your 7th FM to become FM Elite and have reduced fees for 3 of your next FMs - just start play in your 7th FM, be up-to-date in your fee payments, and continue to avoid defaulting a game.



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 games (one white, one black) against the same opponent who is very close in rating to yours. The total fee is \$6 for your participation per match (unless you are FM Elite as described above, when the fee is \$4 for your next 3 FMs). Just contact Dennis Doren, the ICCF-US Friendly Match Organizer, at dmdoren@yahoo.com and express an interest in playing. Do **NOT** send any money to Dennis or anyone else at this point! You will only need to pay (through Paypal, money order, or by check) when all arrangements have been finalized.

Friendly Match Being Organized NOW!!:

The ICCF-US team will be playing Russia in the very near future. The tentative start date for this match is early February, meaning complete pairings will need to be finalized by mid- to the end of January. We challenged Russia, so we need to get our team list finalized much earlier and present it to the Russian Friendly Match Organizer with enough time for him to find players of near equal ratings to the players we promote. Dennis is looking to finalize the list of USA players by about December 15, 2012.

This will be the first time we will play Russia per se! As mentioned on the front page, the USA played a team from the Soviet Union back in the early 1980's, but there has been no Friendly Match between us and people from that part of the world since.

You can be a part of history, as well as have fun! Play for the USA in a Friendly Match against a country with whom more "friendly" interactions cannot hurt. Contact Dennis Doren at dmdoren@yahoo.com and let him know you are interested in playing.

We can field a team up to 100 players, so it is very likely you will be selected to play if you just express that interest - as long as you do not let too much time pass before letting Dennis know.

A special note to our higher rated and/or titled players: Russia has regularly fielded a very strong team, with many players rated 2400+, IM's, SIM's, and typically more GM's than virtually any other team in the world. Please consider signing up to play - both for the great competition as well as to help the USA field a comparably skilled team.

TIME IS TICKING - please do not delay. Write to Dennis today!! (By the way, for those who already were kind enough to express interest to Dennis, and who already received a confirmation of receipt reply email from Dennis, you need not inform him of your interest again.)



Interested in Being a Team Captain?

One player per Friendly Match is designated as the USA Team Captain. Team Captains serve as the front line person for our players to contact if problems develop during play, and for the opponent's Team Captain to contact if an issue develops within the other team. The Team Captain then works with the opponent's Team Captain to resolve the problem, obtaining guidance from Dennis and ongoing assistance during the match from the overall Tournament Director when needed.

People who have played in multiple friendly matches will be considered for selection as the Team Captain for future matches. **Besides having your fee waived** for participating in the match (yes, you can and in fact are expected to play in the match you oversee), you get to participate in the match like no one else does, being involved across all boards. Typically, there is only a little work. Interested? Express your interest to Dennis Doren at the above address.

