



# The Friendly Post

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## News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 24, June 2018

Greetings from ICCF-US Friendly Match Central. 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 regular fee to participate is \$5 per match. You're invited to participate!

**To everyone: Please see the announcement on page 2!!**

**Do you regularly believe what the chess engines tell you? See our featured game for a cautionary tale.**

## Upcoming Friendly Matches

Here are the upcoming Friendly Matches that are currently planned:

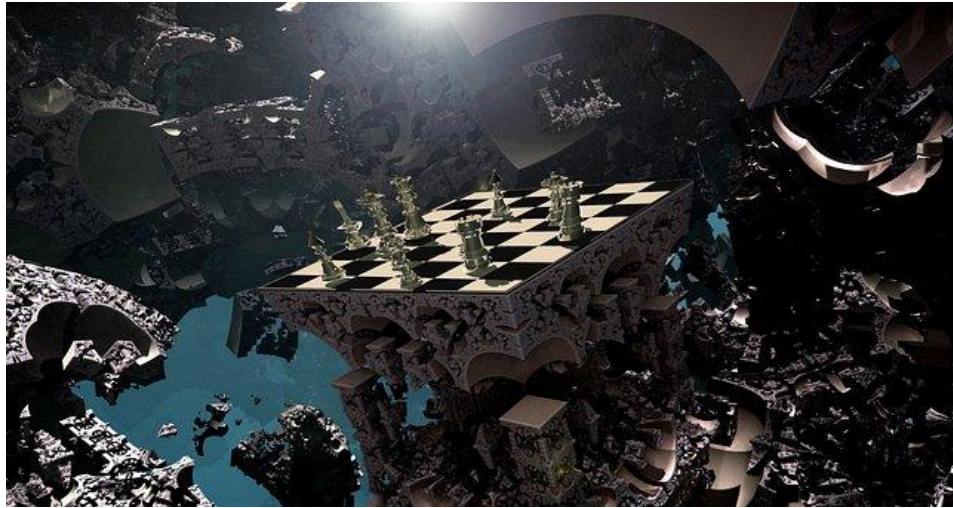
(1) **Finland** - scheduled to start early July 2018. (The USA team is already almost complete, but you can let Dennis know right away (at [dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto:dmdorenchess@gmail.com)) if you are interested in playing in this one - just in case there is still an open slot for you.

(2) **Israel** - Their organizer is currently determining their degree of interest. If they have enough players, this match will likely start by mid-August if not as much as a month sooner.

Let Dennis know (at [dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto:dmdorenchess@gmail.com)) if you are interested in playing in this match; but please know that Israel has only 1-2 players rated below 1800. Therefore my ability to place a USA player rated below 1800 into this match will be extremely limited.

(3) Anticipated challenges to be extended in the near future: **Czech Republic, India, Norway, Portugal**

Please remember that Friendly Matches can be scheduled, organized, and started all in between the publication of these newsletters, and in fact often are. Therefore, if you want to play in the Friendly Matches, make sure you let Dennis know (at [dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto:dmdorenchess@gmail.com)).



**“I have come to the personal conclusion that while all artists are not chess players, all chess players are artists.” – Marcel Duchamp**

## **Exciting News!**

### **The new Triple Block time control system is coming to the ICCF-US!**

Have you heard about the trials going on concerning the new "Triple Block" time control system? The Triple Block system, abbreviated as "TriBI" or "TB", was developed by an ICCF work group specifically appointed during the 2015 Congress to address a variety of complaints about the current 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. Since then, at least 15 different events have used the system without significant problem, with more events officially scheduled during the remainder of 2018 and into 2019.

Some of our as-yet-to-be scheduled Friendly Matches will use this new time control system. You can participate in helping the ICCF make a significant improvement in its 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!

You can learn more about this trial time control system by going to the following ICCF documents:

(1) Go to the ICCF home page, then to "ICCF Rules" (on the left), then in the lower box where it says "Triple Block System Documents", to find the following 3 detailed documents:

(a) "Explanation of how it works" (This is **the document** for players to use)

(b) "Instructions for Tournament Organizers"

(c) "Rule differences - for TDs"

(2) You can also see the original descriptive proposal (including a Power Point presentation) at <https://www.iccf.com/Proposal.aspx?id=103> [That is, go to the ICCF home page, then to "ICCF Congresses" (on the left), then to 2016 Congress "proposals", then to proposal #028].



**“Every chess master was once a beginner.” – Irving Chernev**

### **The US Friendly Match World Tour 2 (WT2): "Go Around the World with US"**

Last year, we completed the ICCF World Tour by extending invitations to all of the 55 other ICCF Member Federations (MFs) and playing all takers. We are now in the midst of our second "Go Around the World with US" tour. To date, we engaged with 25 MFs (plus 4 non-MF teams), and have 30 MFs to go to complete "WT2":

(1) We have started play or at least scheduled a match versus Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Finland, France, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico (a future ICCF Member Federation), Netherlands, Panama, Peru, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the Ukraine, and Venezuela. This is besides the British Correspondence Chess Association, SchemingMind, and Yorkshire; all being international CC clubs affiliated with member federations.

(2) Invitations were extended but declined (either actively or passively) by: Cape Verde, Chile, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong, & Nicaragua.

**Are you "Going Around the World with US"?**



**“Avoid the crowd. Do your own thinking independently. Be the chess player, not the chess piece.” – Ralph Charell**

## 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](http://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 of 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](http://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 6/14/2018) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	<b>Spain</b>	Server	8/9/16	57.0 - 51.0 (2 ongoing games)
2.	<b>Brazil</b>	Server	9/13/16	48.0 - 33.0 (1 ongoing game)
3.	<b>Argentina</b>	Server	10/19/16	26.5 - 25.5 (2 ongoing games)
4.	<b>Peru</b>	Server	12/13/16	16.0 - 13.0 (3 ongoing games)
5.	<b>Bulgaria</b>	Server	12/25/16	19.0 - 18.0 (3 ongoing games)
6.	<b>Germany (Chess960)</b>	Server	2/12/17	8.5 - 21.5 (2 ongoing games)
7.	<b>France</b>	Server	3/31/17	35.5 - 27.5 (3 ongoing games)
8.	<b>Japan</b>	Server	6/15/17	23.0 - 6.0 (3 ongoing games)
9.	<b>Russia v. Zone 3***</b>	Server	8/31/17	<b>(USA bds**) 71 - 91 (46 ongoing games)</b>
10.	<b>Netherlands</b>	Server	9/12/17	7.5 - 8.5 (4 ongoing games)
11.	<b>Mexico</b>	Server	11/12/17	16.5 - 25.5 (30 ongoing games)
12.	<b>Italy***</b>	Server	12/1/17	41.5 - 72.5 (82 ongoing games)
13.	<b>Venezuela</b>	Server	12/31/17	7.0 - 4.0 (25 ongoing games)
14.	<b>Yorkshire</b>	Server	1/19/18	9.5 - 5.5 (13 ongoing games)
15.	<b>SchemingMind</b>	Server	1/29/18	7.5 - 5.5 (19 ongoing games)
16.	<b>Ukraine</b>	Server	2/20/18	8.0 - 10.0 (42 ongoing games)
17.	<b>Sweden</b>	Server	4/20/18	7.0 - 5.0 (112 ongoing games)
18.	<b>Australia</b>	Server	5/27/18	7.5 - 0.5 (76 ongoing games)



## TOTAL USA RESULTS

- (a) Since 1/1/07\*: 2547.5 - 2599.5 **(49.5%)**
- (b) During the past 3 years\*: 1041.5 - 1039.5 **(50.0%)**
- (c) During the past 2 years\*: 700.5 - 692.5 **(50.3%)**
- (d) During the past year\*: 361.0 - 388.0 **(48.2%\*\*\*)**

\* Not including Chess960 events versus Russia and Germany. The Chess960 events had far larger rating differences per board compared to regular Friendly Matches. The Chess960 results were therefore not considered comparable to those from regular Friendly Matches.

\*\* Only the results involving USA players are shown or counted in the summary totals. The total score for non-USA players is 18.5 - 35.5, comparable to the USA players' total.

\*\*\* These matches often included pairings with a larger than usual rating difference, for reasons beyond Dennis's control, and usually in favor of our opponents. Hence, these matches have show disproportionate losses for the USA.



## Highlights and Interesting Tidbits:

(1) **Argentina** had been proving itself hard to catch, leading for almost the whole match, but the USA has steadily gained ground. Six months ago, our opponent's lead had been cut to 4 points. Last quarter, their lead was down to 2. And this quarter, the USA has gone ahead!!! With only 2 games remaining, the USA is up by a point. Even a draw in one of those remaining games will mean the USA wins this match, with a great come-from-behind win. Go USA!!!

(2) But the USA does not give up a lead once obtained, especially after being behind. Our 1 point lead versus **Peru** from last quarter was in contrast to being behind early in this match.

Now, with 3 games left in this match, we are 3 points up. We have at least a tie, but again even a single draw among the remaining games ensures the team win. Go USA!

(3) Maybe the same thing is happening in our match versus **Bulgaria**. The match has been very close since it began, and continues to do so. This past quarter, we again took the lead. With only 3 games still remaining, we are up by 1. Can we do it again? Go Team!!

(4) The **Netherlands** match remains quite close as well. The 10-board match (involving only players rated 2300+) finds us behind by 1 point, with 4 remaining games. As stated last quarter, any win may decide this match. Go Team!

(5) **Mexico** will very likely become a Member Federation during the Congress meeting in August, but its players have already been showing they can more than just hold their own in international Friendly Match play. The USA was 7 points behind last quarter, and we fell back another 2 points this quarter. With 30 games remaining, the USA is 9 points back. That's a lot to make up, but you never know...

(6) Just a comment about the **Japan** match (which we won some time ago, though with some games still ongoing). At least 12 of our 16 players registered at least 1 win in this match. That percentage of success is truly remarkable!

(7) Finally, a word about our matches versus the English and Wales sponsored clubs, **Yorkshire** and **SchemingMind**. Early in both matches, the USA has taken leads. A fine set of starts for the USA!

**“Chess holds its master in its own bonds, shackling the mind and brain so that the inner freedom of the very strongest must suffer.” – Albert Einstein**

**Match (versus game) win/loss record since 1/1/07: 35 wins, 26 losses, 1 tie (57.3%)**

USA Won	USA Lost	USA Tied
Argentina (2010)	Austria (2014)	Norway (2013)
Australia/New Zealand (2012)	Belarus (2016)	
Australia (2016)	Belgium (2015)	
Brazil (2016)*	Croatia (2015)	
British CCA (2016)	Cuba (2013)	
Canada (2014)	Cuba (2015)	
Cape Verde (2013)	Czech Republic (2011)	
Denmark (2014)	Czech Republic (2013)	
England (2008)	France (2010)	

England (2012)  
Estonia (2016)  
Finland (2009)  
France (2017)\*  
Hong Kong (2010)  
India (2014)  
Indonesia (2016)  
Japan (2013)  
Japan (2017)\*  
Latvia (2015)  
Lithuania (2015)  
Netherlands (2013)  
Panama (2013)  
Peru (2013)  
Portugal (2013)  
Romania (2008)  
Romania (2013)  
Scotland (2008)  
Scotland (2016)  
Slovakia (2014)  
Slovenia (2015)  
Spain (2016)\*  
Sweden (2012)  
Turkey (2015)  
Venezuela (2013)  
Wales (2013)

Germany (2008 - Women's only)  
Germany (2011)  
Germany (2014)  
Iceland (2014)  
Israel (2014)  
Italy (2010)  
Panama (2015)  
Panama (2016)  
Poland (2015)  
Russia (2013)  
Spain (2008)  
Sweden (2007)  
Switzerland (2014)  
Ukraine (2010)  
Ukraine (2015)  
Venezuela (2014)  
Wales (2016)

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





## **Our Featured Game**

This issue's featured game is from our 2016 Friendly Match against Estonia. This game was chosen because it shows a well played win against the currently very popular Semi-Slav defense. In this game, one of our Friendly Match regulars, IM Harry Ingersol, methodically tears apart a variation despite the fact it is commonly played and engines show Black's initial step into the variation to equalize. This game is instructive both as concerns how to play the White side of the Semi-Slav and why not to trust everything the engines tell you.

### **Harry Ingersol (2415) - Priit Tõnisson (2400)**

All annotations are by Dennis Doren.

This game can be found at <https://www.iccf.com/game?id=855215>

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.Nc3 e6 5.Bg5 dxc4

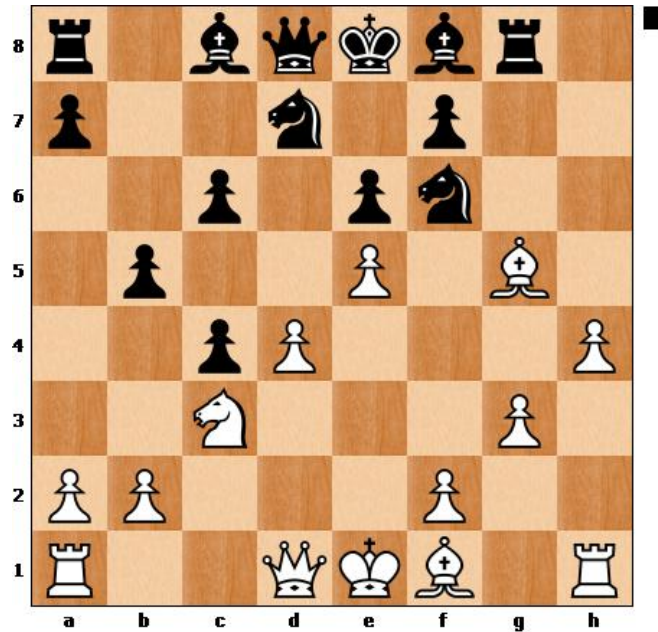
Black plays the Botvinnik Variation of the Semi-Slav. This variation went out of favor for a while, but has been revived and is again played at all rating levels. A less aggressive approach for Black starts with 5...h6. The next few moves are essentially required this variation.

6.e4 b5 7.e5 h6 8.Bh4 g5 9.Nxg5 (All part of the planned opening variation.)

9...hxg5 10.Bxg5 Nbd7 11.g3 (This is the main variation. The option here for White is 11.ef6 which can lead to its own type of tricky play.)

11...Rg8 (Black plays an older line. The move is clearly supported by at least one modern engine, but the ICCF database shows the move to be associated with one of the highest scoring options for White among common moves. The safer alternative was 11...Bb7.)

12.h4



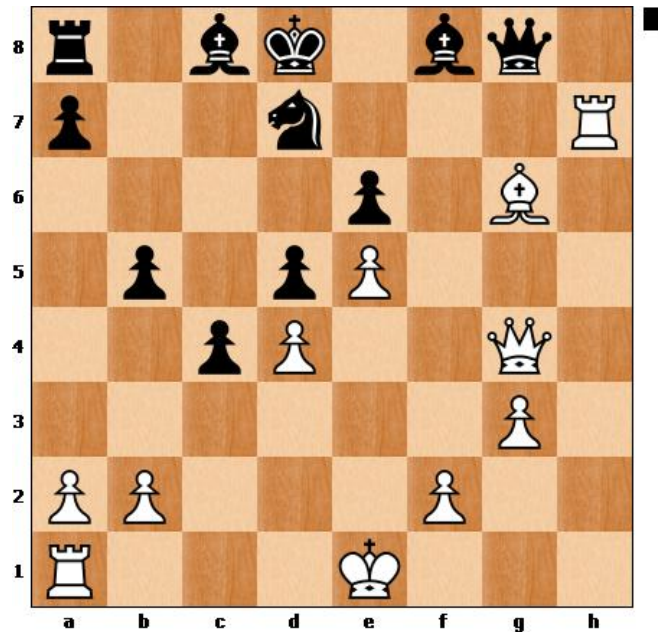
Position after 12.h4

**12...Rxf5** (The point of Rg8, to give back the exchange and rid of the pin of the N on f6; thereby allowing the N to get into the center.)

**13.hxg5 Nd5 14.g6** (If all it took for Black was to give back the exchange to have an easy game, this variation would not be worth White's sacrifice. 14.g6 allows W to continue his K-side attack by creating a new weakness on e6, as well as a more open Black K and some difficulty for Black to develop his pieces meaningfully.)

**13...fxg6 15.Qg4 Qe7 16.Bg2 Qf7** (This is likely a serious error, despite an engine showing the move to be associated with equality. The more common move, and the other move recommended by an engine is 16...N7b6. Conceptually, Black needs to develop more quickly, rather than worry about White winning back the g6 pawn. More importantly, after this move, Black never gets a chance to develop properly, or slow down White's attack. IM Ingersol shows fine technique to take advantage of Black's chosen variation.)

**17.Be4 Kd8 18.Bxg6 Qg8 19.Nxd5 cxd5 20.Rh7** (Black is getting into serious trouble. In fact, the engine's assessment now shows White at a +/- advantage despite the fact that Black's interim moves since 16...Qf7 were essentially forced. A lesson here: we cannot assume that a position assessed as equal by an engine will remain assessed the same way once deeper analysis is conducted.)



Position after 20.Rh7

**20...Be7** (Forced. If 20...Kc7 21.Rf7 threatening 22.Qxe6.)

**21.Qh5** [Threatening 22.Rh8 as well as strengthening the attack on the white squares. An interesting option was 21.Rxe7 Nxe5 (to give the K a better escape square; 21...Kxe7? 22.Qg5 Kf8 23.Kf1 planning Kg2, Rh1 & Rh7) 22.de5 Kxe7 23.O-O-O & material is even but White's pieces are far better developed, Black's K is his most developed piece, and White has a passed g-pawn to use in an endgame. However, White again played the better move once deeper analysis was considered.]

**21...Nf8 22.Rh8** (White again had the option of 22.Rxe7, but 22.Rh8 clearly gives White a more distinct advantage: the engine shows White with a + - advantage after this move.)

**22...Qg7 23.Bf7** (Another option for White was the immediate 23.Ke2, planning Rh1. White's move order, however, may be more exact.)

**23...Bb4+ 24.Ke2 Ke7** (The threat of 25.Rg8 winning the N had to be addressed.)

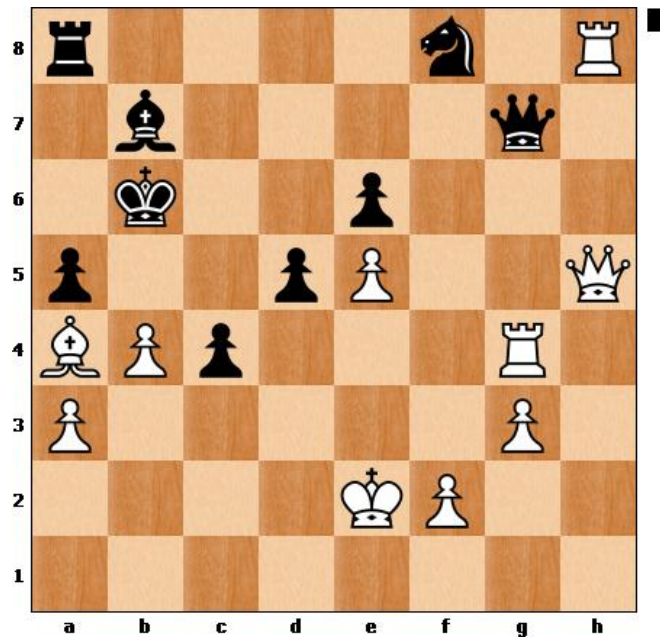
**25.Be8** (Working to expose the weakness of Black's centralized K more than the pawn on b5. White threatens to use the white squares to continue that attack.)

**25...Bb7 26.Bxb5 Kd8** (If 26...Qg6 27.Qxg6 Nxd6 28.Rh7+ & 29.Rxb7)

**27.a3 Ba5 28.b4 Bb6 29.Rh1 Kc7 30.Rh4** (planning Rf4, then Rf7)

**30...Bxd4** (Stops 31.Rf4: if 31.Rf4 Qxe5+)

31.Rxd4 Kb6 32.Ba4 a5 33.Rg4 (Being consistent with the original attack on the K-side. Why play with the Q-side pawns when the attack on the other wing is so powerful?)



Position after 33.Rg4

33...Qc7 34.Rhg8 axb4 35.R4g7 Qc8 36.Qh4 Rxa4 37.Qe7 Qc6 38.Rxf8 d4 (Black's center passed pawns may look menacing, but for Black they are too little, too late.)

39.Qd6 Ka5 40.Qxc6 Bxc6 41.Ra7+ Kb6 42.Rxa4 Bxa4 43.axb4 c3 44.Kd3 Kc7 (Trying to stop White from playing Rc8, completely stopping the pawns)

45.Ra8 c2 46.Kd2 Bc6 47.Ra7+ Kb6 48.Re7 (Black's B and blockaded pawns are no match for White's R and passed pawn(s).) 1-0



## 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. Until 1/1/17, Friendly Matches were exempt from ICCF rules that governed that "withdrawal from one event means withdrawal from all events". That exemption no longer applies. 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 comes losses in all of 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 now counts towards the required number of directed games to earn the title of International Arbiter. Before 1/1/17, that was not true.

**“The game of chess is not merely an idle amusement. Several very valuable qualities of the mind, useful in the course of human life, are to be acquired or strengthened by it... For Life is a kind of Chess, in which we have often points to gain, and competitors or adversaries to contend with.” – Benjamin Franklin**

### Where to Find Us

The ICCF-US home website is at [www.iccfus.com](http://www.iccfus.com). You can always find copies of "*The Friendly Post*" at that site, with a link on the left in the home page. The server for playing games is at [www.iccf.com](http://www.iccf.com). Contact Dennis Doren at [dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto: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 Sieftring**, Invitational Facilitator

**Senior International Master Dan Perry**, Webmaster

**International Master Bob Rizzo**, Norms and Communications Organizer

Yours truly, CCM Dennis Doren, Friendly Matches Organizer ([dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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 of 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 actually 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's it! Let me know your interest, accept my invitation for you to play in a specific match, pay your fee, and enjoy your games!

### **Brief Note**

If you wish to contact me, Dennis Doren, please use my current email address: [dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto:dmdorenchess@gmail.com); not my old yahoo address.



### **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 [dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto:dmdorenchess@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 in either of the listed FMs! 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.