



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 31, March 2020

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 7.5 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're invited to participate!

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO THE IDEA OF CHESS AS ART, OR THE SUBJECT OF ART...

But first, a personal note from Dennis:

During this time of a world-wide pandemic, when so many things are temporarily closed and we are told to stay away from others for everyone's safety, I find the normalcy of ICCF chess a great distraction, soothing, and fun. Hope you do too, and stay well.



Upcoming Friendly Matches

We sure have been busy organizing new Friendly Matches this past quarter year! From the 6 invitations to other countries mentioned in the last issue of *The Friendly Post*, matches against 3 have already begun (**New Zealand, Switzerland, & Latvia**) with another, unannounced match versus **Brazil** also begun just days before this newsletter was distributed. As we have said previously, matches can go from an idea to an active reality within any 90-day period – that is, between newsletters. So, if you want to play, be sure to let us know by writing to Dennis at dmdorenchess@gmail.com!

We also received an invitation, which we accepted, for a Friendly Match versus **Mexico**. Despite Mexico being a newly admitted member federation to the ICCF, they gave us a tough time when we played them last (in a Friendly Match beginning in 2017 where we lost 26.5 – 39.5). We should not underestimate them despite their newness!



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

Are you "Going Around the World with US"?

We already completed the ICCF World Tour by extending invitations to all the 55 other ICCF Member Federations (MFs) and playing all takers. Our second "Go Around the World with US" tour is more than halfway completed. To date, we have engaged with 44 MFs (plus 3 non-MF teams), and have 12 MFs to go to complete "WT2":

(1) We started play or at least scheduled a match versus Argentina (twice), Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Cuba, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Ukraine,

Venezuela, and Wales. 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 (no longer an ICCF Member Federation, but it was at the time of our invitation), Ireland, Nicaragua & South Africa.

(3) Remaining MFs to complete our second World Tour: **Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, England, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Romania, Scotland, Slovakia, and Turkey.**

You can be assured that the countries listed in #3 will be the ones most likely included in invitations in the near future. If you have a desire to play against any of these specific countries, please write to Dennis (dmdorenchess@gmail.com) and let him know!



All the places in the world in which we play!!

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 3/14/2020) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Finland	Server	7/15/18	37.5 - 43.5 (1 ongoing game)
2.	Cuba	Server	8/1/18	31.0 - 46.0 (3 ongoing games)
3.	Netherlands	Server	9/30/18	48.0 - 37.0 (1 ongoing game)

4.	Portugal	Server	11/28/18	53.5 - 39.5 (3 ongoing games)
5.	Denmark	Server	12/11/18	19.5 - 20.5 (2 ongoing games)
6.	Canada	Server	3/16/19	17.0 - 23.0 (8 ongoing games)
7.	Iceland	Server	5/4/19	6.5 - 7.5 (6 ongoing games)
8.	India	Server	5/23/19	33.0 - 19.5 (9 ongoing games)
9.	Argentina	Server	7/1/19	8.0 - 8.0 (8 ongoing games)
10.	Norway	Server	7/11/19	13.5 - 21.5 (15 ongoing games)
11.	Slovenia	Server	9/5/19	14.5 - 17.5 (18 ongoing games)
12.	Wales	Server	10/26/19	13.5 - 12.5 (24 ongoing games)
13.	Czech Republic	Server	11/10/19	13.0 - 16.0 (71 ongoing games)
14.	New Zealand	Server	1/26/2020	3.5 - 1.5 (40 ongoing games)
15.	Switzerland	Server	2/20/2020	0.5 - 0.5 (65 ongoing games)
16.	Latvia	Server	3/3/2020	0.0 - 0.0 (44 ongoing games)
17.	Brazil	Server	3/27/2020	0.0 - 0.0 (94 ongoing games)

TOTAL USA RESULTS

Since 1/1/07* (6270 completed games!): 3113 - 3157 **(49.6%)**

Since the first issue of *The Friendly Post*, in September 2012, the USA's results in Friendly Matches showed literally only a 4-point deficit through the previous issue of this newsletter. **During this last quarter, the USA scored 2 more points than did our opponents, cutting our deficit in half!!** Our current tally since September 2012 is equal to 2582 - 2584. Let's see if we can bring our total to a plus score within the next half year!

* 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.

"In chess, there are some extremely beautiful things in the domain of movement, but not in the visual domain. It's the imagining of the movement or of the gesture that makes the beauty in this case."
Marcel Duchamp

Highlights and Interesting Tidbits:

- (1) The USA scored 2 team wins and no team losses this quarter. Nice going!!
- (2) Last quarter, I reported that the USA was ahead 10 – 9 against **Israel**, meaning the last remaining game would determine if the USA wins or if the match ends in a tie. I am pleased to report that first board Kurt Stein again drew against his GM opponent. The USA won!
- (3) The match versus **Denmark** has been remarkable. We had been 5 points behind with only 14 remaining games. Three quarters ago, we narrowed their lead to 3 with 8 remaining games. Two quarters ago, that difference of 3 points remain after 2 more games ended. Now, with only 2 games remaining (on the same board!!), the USA is only 1 point behind!! Can we finally catch up, or maybe even go ahead to win? Stay tuned!!
- (4) **Canada** is giving us trouble in our match. They brought their lead to 6 points two quarters ago. They have maintained that lead this quarter, with only 8 games remaining. Catching them will be tough...
- (5) The match with **Iceland** remains close. We remain behind by the same 1 point which was our deficit a quarter ago. Now, however, there are only 6 remaining games. Go USA!!
- (6) We have won versus **India**. The USA had a huge surge 2 quarters ago, with our result this past quarter being sufficient to sew up the match. Congrats USA!
- (7) The **Argentina** match has tightened up. We had been ahead by 2 points in very early results, but the score is now tied. With only 8 remaining games, every point (and even half point) matters!! Fight hard USA!!
- (8) We tied against **Norway** during the first World Tour. It is looking like they may take this match. With 15 games to go, we are behind by 8 points. This is not insurmountable, but quite an uphill climb. Keep fighting!
- (9) We have cut **Slovenia's** early lead in about half. Now, with 18 remaining games, the USA is behind only by 3 points. There is plenty of time to make up that deficit and go ahead. Go USA!
- (10) With many games yet to be completed (24), the USA holds onto the slimmest of leads (1 point) versus **Wales**.

“Whoever sees no other aim in the game than that of giving checkmate to one’s opponent will never become a good chess player.”

Max Euwe



Friendly Match (versus game) win/loss record

(Since 1/1/07) 45 wins, 33 losses, 1 tie (= 57.6%)

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

Romania (2008)
Romania (2013)
SchemingMind (2018)
Scotland (2008)
Scotland (2016)
Slovakia (2014)
Slovenia (2015)
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.

*** Isn't it amazing that after 79 completed matches, where pairings were made with as equal ratings as possible, that there has been only one tied match?



“You cannot say ‘Go! Go! Rah! Rah! Good move!’ People want some emotion. Chess is an art and not a spectator sport.”

Garry Kasparov

“Chess for me is not a game but an art. Yes, and I take upon myself all the responsibilities which an art imposes on its adherents.”

Alexander Alekhine

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 "TriBl" 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, dozens of events have used the system without significant problem, with more events officially scheduled during 2019.

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. 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].

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 counts towards the required number of directed games to earn the title of International Arbiter.



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 left 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.



“When I speak of the beauty of the game of chess, then naturally this is subjective. Beauty can be found in a very technical, mathematical game for example. That is the beauty of clarity.”
Vladimir Kramnik

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, CCM 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'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; 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 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.