

Alberta Chess Report



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Battle of Alberta: Team North comes back from behind for third straight win



2016 is another successful year for the International tournaments in Alberta.

IM Razvan Preotu (pictured on the left photo) wins the 9th Calgary International finishing ahead of 5 grandmasters.

GM Sam Shankland (pictured on the right photo) wins the 11th Edmonton International with a fantastic score of 8/9.

FM Ian Findlay organizes the first ACA Open tournament in Banff (photo on the back cover).





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11th Edmonton International

The 11th edition of the annual festival took place at the Edmonton Chess Club (ECC) on June 18-26, 2016. The structure of the main event was very similar to that of the previous couple of years: a 10-player round-robin tournament with five strong grandmasters and five local players seeking an IM or even a GM norm.

The rating favourite was GM Alexei Shirov from Latvia, a prominent elite player who needs no introduction. Alexei visited Edmonton in 2005 and 2009 to play in the Canadian Open but this was his first appearance at the Edmonton International.

GMs Surya Shekhar Ganguly (India) and Sam Shankland (USA) participated in the event for the third time. Both grandmasters were clearly eager to improve on their last year's result.

The GM part of the roster was completed by SP Sethuraman (India) and Bator Sambuev (Canada). Both of them played in the Edmonton International for the first time.

The "local" team was led by the Alberta champion Bitan Banerjee and IM Richard Wang. Since Bitan already had three required IM norms, both of them were seeking a GM norm.

The Edmonton champion Belsar Valencia participated in the main event of the Edmonton International just for the second time. In 2011 he scored 3.5/9 and gained a few rating points. On the contrary, FM Dale Haessel from Calgary returned as the only player who participated in all 11 editions of the festival.

As in previous years, the last available spot was granted to the winner of the qualifying tournament. FM Ian Findlay from Banff won the Qualifier convincingly and guaranteed himself an exciting week in Edmonton.

The most intriguing part of the event was a breathtaking and a somewhat unexpected race for the first place that did not involve the rating favorite. GM Ganguly started the tournament with a remarkable 7/7 but it turned out to be insufficient to claim the title! After round 7 GM Shankland was trailing by only half a point and had the white pieces against the leader in round 8. The win in this key matchup of the tournament put Samuel firmly in the driver's seat, while also giving him the better tie-break. Both grandmasters finished with an excellent score of 8/9 but GM Shankland was declared the winner of the main event, since he won the head-to-head encounter.



Round 1 of the 11th Edmonton International. The rating favorite GM Alexei Shirov plays IM Richard Wang at the "featured" table in the middle of the room. Foreground: Bitan Banerjee – GM Surya Ganguly and FM Ian Findlay – GM Bator Sambuev. Background: GM S.P. Sethuraman – FM Dale Haessel and GM Sam Shankland – Belsar Valencia.

An interesting feature of this edition of the Edmonton International was the fact that only one out of ten GM-GM games ended in a draw (Shankland – Shirov). Many of these games were annotated online during the event or shortly after its conclusion. Therefore, in this report I have decided to focus on games played by Albertans. My clear favorite was the following dramatic see-saw battle from round 4.

Wang, Richard (2341) – Findlay, Ian (2257) [D05]

Edmonton International (4), 21.06.2016

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.e3 d5 4.♙d3 c5 5.b3 ♘c6 6.0-0 ♙d6 7.♙b2 0-0 8.♙e5 Richard opts for his customary Colle-Zukertort setup. 8...♙c7 This trick has been known for more than 100 years. The idea is to exchange White's dangerous light-squared bishop. 9.f4 cxd4 10.exd4 ♘b4 11.♙c3 ♘xd3 12.♙xd3 As far as I know, Richard has a pretty good score from this position despite the fact that computers tend to give a slight advantage to Black. Perhaps, the reason is that White's plan is clear and relatively simple, while it's not so obvious what Black should do. 12...♙d7 13.♙f3 ♙c6 Richard faced 13...♙ac8 in one of his earlier high-

level games. The purpose of the text move is to establish control of the e4-square, rather than create pressure along the c-file. 14.♙h3 ♘e4 15.♙xe4 dxe4 16.♙g3 f5

The computer advocates 16...f6!? and asserts that White's best continuation is 17.♙xh7 ♘xh7 18.♙h3+ ♘g8 19.♙xe6+ ♘h7 20.♙h3+ with a perpetual. Perhaps, Richard will show an improvement in his next game.

17.c4 ♙xe5 18.fxe5 The correct recapture. After 18.dxe5?! ♙fd8 White's heavy pieces would look a little silly.

18...f4!? The most interesting and probably best continuation. Now White cannot block the f-pawn.

19.♙h4 h6 20.♙g4 ♙f7? Surprisingly, this gives White decisive advantage.

The only move maintaining equilibrium is 20...♘h7!! stepping out of the check. Now 21.♙xe6? loses an exchange to 21...♙d7 22.♙e7 ♙ae8 23.♙h4 ♘xh3.

21.♙xh6 f3 Black may have counted on this resource but White has a strong reply: 22.♙f6! ♙e7 One of the critical positions of the game.

23.♙xe6+? Capturing with a wrong piece, unfortunately.

23.♙xe6! is decisive. Here 23...♙d7 24.♙xe7 ♙xg4 25.gxf3 ♙xf3 26.d5 leaves Black with nothing.

23...♖xe6 24.♖xe6 f2+ Natural. Another interesting possibility is 24...e3!? 25.gxf3 ♖xf3, also with counterplay. 25.♔f1 e3



26.♖xc6! The black pawns have become very dangerous but Richard finds the only way to play for a win. If 26.d5?! ♔d7, then White has to sacrifice the exchange anyway: 27.♔d4! (not 27.♖g6? ♔f5 and Black wins) 27...♔xe6 28.dxe6. Here after a plausible 28...♖f4 29.♔xe3 ♖e4 30.♔xf2 ♖xe5 31.♖e1 ♖xe1+ 32.♔xe1 ♖e8 33.♔d2 ♖xe6 a handshake is in order. 26...bxc6 27.♔a3 This is a logical way to activate the bishop but Black finds a great reply. Also insufficient for advantage is 27.♔e2 which gives Black an option of 27...f1♖+ 28.♖xf1 ♖xf1 29.♔xf1 ♖f8+ 30.♔e1 ♖f2 The active rook guarantees Black at least equality. The best move is a surprising 27.g3!! preventing the opponent's next maneuver. In this case White's winning

hopes would be alive.

27...♖f4! 28.♔c5 ♖e4! 29.♔e2 a6 30.♔b4 The tactical justification of Black's idea is that 30.♔f3 may be answered by 30...♔f7 The rook is taboo: 31.♔xe4?? e2 and the black pawn queens. 30...♔f7 31.a4 g5 The tension is mounting. I believe that both opponents were playing for a win at this point. 32.g3 White finally covers the f4-square but allows the following play on the kingside. 32.h3 looks more tenacious but has its own downsides. 32...♖h8 33.♖h1 ♔g6 34.a5 ♔f5 35.♔h3! The black king must not be allowed to penetrate. 35...♔e6 36.b5! Correct. White must make his queenside pawn majority count. 36...cxb5 37.cxb5 ♖g4 Black has been planning this move for quite some time.

An alternative is 37...axb5 although after 38.a6 ♖a8 39.a7 ♔d5 40.♖a1 White's counterplay should be sufficient for a draw.



38.♔d1! Best. Certainly not 38.♔f3? ♖xh3 and Black wins. 38...♖xg3 38...♖xh3 leads to the following spectacular draw: 39.bxa6 ♖gxg3 40.a7 ♖h8 41.d5+ ♔f5 42.♔xe3 ♖g1 43.♔xf2 ♖xd1 44.♔xd1 ♔e4 45.e6 ♔xd5 46.e7 ♖a8 47.♔g3 ♔c6 48.♔b8 ♔d7 etc.

39.d5+ The point of White's previous. It looks like Black cannot take the e5-pawn. Or can he? 39...♔xe5 It turns out that the capture is possible! While I was watching the game live, I thought that Black was just winning here.

An alternative is 39...♔f5 40.♔xe3 ♖g1 41.♖xg1 fxf1♖ 42.♔xg1 axb5 43.e6 ♔e5 44.e7 ♔xd5 45.♔e3 with a probable draw.

40.♔d4+ ♔e4 The tactical justification of Black's idea. The computer actually advocates the following line: 40...♔f4 41.♔xh8 ♖g1 42.♔d4 ♖xd1 43.♔xe3+ ♔e4 44.♔xf2 ♖xd5 45.bxa6 ♖xa5 46.a7 ♖a2+ 47.♔d1 ♔f3 48.♔b6 ♔g3 49.♔c1 ♔xh3 50.♔b1 with a tablebase draw.

The time control passed, and Richard got plenty of extra time on the clock to contemplate the situation on the board. The principal move is, of course, 41.♔xh8, since White's previous play doesn't make sense otherwise. However, what to do after 41...♖g1?

42.♖f1 loses to 42...♖xf1 43.♔xf1 ♔f3 with a checkmate in one. During the game I was sure that Richard had no choice but to resign here, which is what he did after a prolonged thought. But the story doesn't end at this point. Shortly afterwards I went to a nearby restaurant for dinner. There I met a

11th Edmonton International Table

#	Name	Fed	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
1	GM Alexei Shirov	Latvia	2682		0	0	0.5	1	0.5	1	1	1	1	6
2	GM Surya Ganguly	India	2654	1		1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
3	GM S. P. Sethuraman	India	2653	1	0		0	0	0.5	1	1	1	1	5.5
4	GM Samuel Shankland	USA	2646	0.5	1	1		1	1	0.5	1	1	1	8
5	GM Bator Sambuev	Canada	2540	0	0	1	0		0.5	1	1	1	0.5	5
6	Bitan Banerjee	India	2341	0.5	0	0.5	0	0.5		0.5	0.5	1	1	4.5
7	IM Richard Wang	Canada	2341	0	0	0	0.5	0	0.5		1	0	1	3
8	Belsar Valencia	Philippines	2277	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0		1	0.5	2
9	FM Ian Findlay	Canada	2257	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0		0	1
10	FM Dale Haessel	Canada	2234	0	0	0	0	0.5	0	0	0.5	1		2

friend of mine who was following the games live. He immediately asked me whether there had been a transmission problem with Richard's game because White isn't worse in the final position according to the computer. I couldn't believe that but the answer to the riddle was soon found: 42...♖a1!! A very hard move to see! Now it is Black who has to fight for a draw: 42...f1♖+ 43. ♖xf1 ♖g2+ 44.♔e1 ♔d3. Here White has a great resource 45.♔d4! although after 45...♖c2 46.♔xe3 ♔xe3 47.♔d1 ♖d2+ 48.♔c1 ♖xd5 49.bxa6 ♖xa5 50. ♖f6 the most likely outcome is a draw. **0-1**

FM Findlay played a great game against GM Sethuraman but missed a golden scoring chance, unfortunately.

Sethuraman, S.P. (2653) – Findlay, Ian (2257) [A06]

Edmonton International (8), 25.06.2016



The position looks fairly standard: White develops pressure on the queenside, while Black seeks his chances on the kingside. 24...g5!? Fearless! The position quickly becomes complicated and hard to play for both sides. This explains a number of errors in what follows.

24...♖g6 is a "normal" alternative.

25.g3 g4 26.♔h4 The point of White's previous move. 26.♔d2? runs into 26...♔xf2! 27.♔xf2 ♖xh2+ 28.♔f1 ♖xg3 with a crushing attack.

26...♔d8 The right idea in principle but the execution is imprecise. It is better to play 26...a5 first to clarify the situation on the queenside. If 27.bxa5, then 27...♔d8 and as in the game.

27.♔g2 The computer advocates 27. b5!? not fearing 27...♔xh4 28.bxc6!

♔e6 29.gxh4 ♖xh4. Understandably, GM Sethuraman doesn't want to expose his king so much.

27...♔g5 28.♔b2 White intends to create threats along the weakened long diagonal. Nevertheless, 28.b5! winning a pawn is stronger.

28...♔f6 29.♔e1 Overprotecting the f3-square as Black had an idea of taking on d4 followed by Nf3. 29...♔h3+ 30.♔g2 ♔g5? Preparing the following combination that White either misses or underestimates. 31.b5?

However, leaving the long diagonal unprotected allowed the following tactical sequence: 31.♔xc6! ♖xc6 32. ♖xc6 ♔xc6 33.♖d4, and Black has nothing better than 33...♖f6 34.♖xf6 ♔xf6 35.♔xf6 ♔xa4 with a worse endgame.

31...c5 Everything is actually ready for 31...♔xf2! 32.♖xf2 ♔xe3 etc. 32.♔c6? White had a chance to disrupt the opponents attack by means of 32.♔f5!



32...♔xf2!! A well prepared crushing blow giving Black decisive advantage.

33.♖xf2 ♔xe3 34.♔d1 ♖xc6! Another spectacular sacrifice. The black bishops will soon become monsters controlling the whole board. 35.bxc6 ♔xc6 36.♖e2 d4+ 37.♔g1 ♖g6 38.♔g2 ♖e4 38...♔f3 wins on the spot. For example, 39.♖e1 ♔xf2+ 40.♖xf2 ♔xd1 etc.

39.♔f1 c4? It was time to switch to simple chess: 39...♔xf2 40.♖xe4 ♔xe4 41.♔xf2 ♔xg2 with three pawns more in the ending. Now White bails out by returning some of his extra material.

40.♔xd4! ♔xd4 41.♖xe4 ♖xe4 42.♖f4! Trading a pair of rooks is also good for White. 42...♖xf4+ 43.♔xf4 ♔e5 Objectively, this endgame should end in a draw. Unfortunately, Black commits a suicide later on.

44.a5 a6 45.♔d8+ ♔g7 46.♖c8 ♔b5 47.♔d5 h5 48.♔f2 ♔d4+ 49.♔e2 ♔e5 50.♔e3 h4! 51.gxh4 ♔xh2 52.♔c3 ♔d7 53.♖xc4 ♔g3 54.h5 ♔e5 55.♖c5 f6 56.♔d5 ♔h6 57.♔f4 ♔b5 58.♖c8 ♔g5? The losing move. White does not have much after 58...♔h7.

59.♖g8+ ♔f5 Also hopeless is 59...♔h6 60.♖g6+ ♔h7 61.♔d5 etc.

60.♔d5 g3 61.h6 1-0

FM Haessel also came very close to scalping a GM but just couldn't pull the trigger.

Sambuev, Bator (2540) – Haessel, Dale (2234) [A48]

Edmonton International (3), 20.06.2016



The players just made the time control. Black has some pressure but the position is not easy to evaluate. 41.♔f3

41.♖f5!? is an interesting resource intending to pick up the f4-pawn later on. For example, 41...♖c4+ 42.♔d3 ♔xc3 43.♔f3! ♖e8 44.♔xf4 ♖e4+ 45. ♖xe4 dxe4+ 46.♔e3 ♔xb4 47.♖c6 White's active pieces will allow him to regain his pawn shortly with equality.

41...♔xc3 Black may indeed snatch this pawn. The pin looks dangerous but it can be dealt with. 42.♔d4 ♖e8+ 43.♔f1? This safe square happens to be wrong for the king.

Correct is 43.♔f3 ♔xb4 44.♖xc8 ♖xc8 45.♔xb5, and White is going to pick up the f4-pawn soon restoring material equality.

43...♔xb4 44.♖b1 The problem is that now 44.♖xc8?? is simply impossible in view of 44...♖e1#

44...♖c4! For the time being, Black has two extra pawns along with excellent winning chances. 45.a3 ♔c5 46.♔b3 46.♔xb5 is possible but after 46...♖e4 Black also forces the queens off the

board. 46...♖e4 47.♗xe4 dxe4 48. ♔d2 ♔d4 49.♙xb5 The critical position of the game.



49...♙xd2? After the simple 49...♙xa3 White has nothing better than 50.♙e2 Then 50...♙g6 followed up by a quick f7-f5 guarantees Black an easy win. Note that 51.♙a5?? loses immediately to 51...♙xd2+

50.♙xc5 f3? Now Black's winning chances evaporate. On the contrary, 50...♙g6!? keeps his winning hopes alive. 51.♙c7?! may be answered by 51...♙d1+ 52.♙e2 ♙g1 picking up the g2-pawn.

51.gxf3 exf3 52.♙g1! The f3-pawn will be gone sooner or later making further efforts futile. 52...♙d6 53.♙c3 ♙g6+ 54.♙h1 ♙f6 55.♙h2 ♙g6 56.♙g3 ♙g5 57.a4 a5 58.♙c5+ ♙f5 59.♙b5 ♙f6 60.♙b3 ♙e5 61.♙e3+ ♙d4 62.♙g4 ♙f6 63.♙g5 ♙g6+ 64.♙f5 ♙c5 65. ♙xf3. And a draw was agreed on move 80. ½-½

In conclusion, here is the game that secured the title for GM Sam Shankland.

Wang, Richard (2341) – Shankland, Sam (2646) [A47]

Edmonton International (9), 26.06.2016

1.d4 ♔f6 2.♔f3 b6 3.♙g5 e6 4.e4 h6 5.♙xf6 ♙xf6 6.♙d3 ♙b7 7.0-0 g6 8. ♔bd2 ♙g7 9.♗e2 0-0 10.♙fe1 d6 11. e5 Perhaps, a little early. 11.c3!? strengthening the center deserves attention. 11...♗e7 12.c3 c5 13.♔c4 Looks promising but Black finds a way to maintain the balance. 13...♙xf3 14. ♙xf3 d5 15.♔d6 cxd4 16.cxd4 ♔c6 17.♗e3 The knight looks good on d6 but it allows the following tactical blow: 17...♔xd4!? 18.♔xf7! Correct. This

desperado is the only way to keep the material even. Certainly not 18.♗xd4? ♗xd6 with a pawn more for Black.

18...♙xf7 19.♗xd4 ♙ac8 20.♙ac1 If White wants to play for a win, he should keep the rooks on the board: 20.♙e2!? In the future White may be able to develop a kingside attack using the opposite-color bishops to his advantage. 20...g5 21.g3 Objectively, the position is absolutely equal. Black finds a nice way to force a draw by perpetual that guarantees him the title.



21...♙xe5!? 22.♗xe5 ♙xc1 23.♙xc1 ♙xf2+ 24.♙h1 ♙f3+ 25.♙g1 ♙f2+

Neither side can favorably avoid the repetition of moves.

25...♙xd3 26.♗xe6+ ♙f7 27.♙c8+ ♙g7 28.♗e5+ leads to the same result.

26.♙h1 ♙f3+ 27.♙g1 ♙f2+ 28.♙h1 ♙f3+ 29.♙g1 ♙f2+ ½-½

An Open Swiss tournament was traditionally held alongside the main event of the festival on June 24-26. The rating favorite Rob "Rocket" Gardner finished with a perfect score (5/5) and made it look easy. Vlad Rekhson and the surprise of the tournament Michael Ludwig tied for second with a result of 3.5/5.

Here is the only game of the weekend where the "Rocket" got in serious trouble.

Kadavil, Suresh (1653) – Gardner, Robert (2240) [A01]

Edmonton Intl. Open (2.1), 25.06.2016

1.b3 c5 2.♙b2 ♔c6 3.e3 e5 4.c4 d6 5. g3 f5 Already a new position in the database! 6.f4 Overly creatively.

Normal development like 6.♙g2 ♔f6 7.♔c3 g6 8.♔ge2 ♙g7 9.0-0 0-0 10.d3 leads to a good position for White.

6...♔f6 7.♔c3 ♙e6 8.♙g2 e4 9.d3! A

dream scenario for White. Black's ambitious play in the opening left his position overextended. 9...♔g4! Best try. After a natural 9...exd3 10.♗xd3 ♗d7 11.♔f3 0-0-0 12.0-0 White has excellent prospects in the center and on the queenside.

10.♗d2 exd3 11.♗xd3 ♔b4 12.♗d2

The computer points out that Black's play can be refuted by 12.♗e2! with the idea 12...♔xe3? 13.♔d2! ♔xg2 14. ♗xe6+ The stranded g2-knight will soon be picked up leaving White with an extra piece.

12...♔xe3 13.♙xb7 ♔ec2+ 14.♔f2 ♔xa1 15.♙xa1 ♙b8 16.♙d5 ♙xd5?

This gets Black in serious trouble.

Correct is 16...♔xd5 keeping the light-squared bishop on the board. After 17. ♔xd5 ♔d7!? the position is unclear.

17.♔xd5 ♔xd5 18.♗xd5 ♙a5



19.♗e6+ According to the computer, the most incisive continuation is 19. ♔f3 ♙xa2+ 20.♔d2 Nevertheless, despite a huge score in White's favor he still has to convert his lead in development into a full point.

19...♔d8 20.♙f6+? Tempting but incorrect. Developing the kingside 20. ♔e2! is still best. 20...♔c7 Certainly, Black is not obligated to capture the bishop. 21.♙a1 ♙xa2+ 22.♔e2 ♙c2 23.♙e1? Too slow.

White has granted the opponent two crucial tempi but after the correct 23. ♙f7+ the position remains highly unclear. For example, a plausible 23...♔d8 24.♙c3 ♙e7 25.♙c1 ♙e4 26.♙e1 ♙c2 27.♙c1 may lead to a draw by repetition.

23...♙e4 24.♙f7+ ♙e7 25.♗d5? Now Black can breathe a sigh of relief. After 25.♙xf5 White is still in the game.

25...♙e8 The rest goes smoothly for

Black. 26.♗c3 ♖e3+ 27.♔f1 ♗e4 28.♗a5+ ♔d7 29.♗d2 ♗f3+ 30.♔g1 ♗e3+ 31.♗xe3 ♗xe3 32.♔f2 ♗xb3 33.♔c3 ♗a3 0-1

Edmonton International Qualifier

The qualifying tournament took place at the Edmonton Chess Club on April 30 – May 1 and attracted a total of 24 players. FM Ian Findlay from Banff was a nominal rating favorite but Nic Haynes and Robert Gardner were not far behind, and a few other players were capable of delivering a surprise.

After the first day of play Behrooz Ebrahim-Shirazi from Calgary was leading with a perfect score of 3/3, taking full advantage of his favorable pairings in the first 3 rounds. Four players were trailing by half a point, including the top 3 rating favorites. In round 4 Behrooz put a lot of pressure on Nic Haynes on board 1 but the game ended in a draw. Board 2 featured the following heavyweight see-saw battle.

Findlay, Ian (2282) –

Gardner, Robert (2242) [B06]

Edmonton Intl. Qualifier (4.2), 01.05.2016

1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.♔f3 c6 4.♔c3 b5 5.♗d3 d6 6.h3 ♔d7 7.0-0 ♗b7 8.♗e1 e5 9.d5 It is interesting that exactly the same position occurred in Findlay-Hebert, 1989. In that game Ian preferred 9.dxe5 dxe5 10.♗e3 ♔gf6 11.a4 maintaining slightly better chances.

9...a6 10.dxc6 ♗xc6 11.♗f1 Immediate 11.a4 looks promising. 11...♗c7 It turns out to be not the best square for the queen as it can be hit by a white knight from d5.

11...♗b8!? intending to meet 12.a4 with 12...b4 13.♔a2 ♔gf6 is better.

12.a4 bxa4 Now 12...b4 runs into an unpleasant 13.♔d5.

13.♔xa4 ♔gf6 14.♔c3 ♔c5 15.♔g5 This way of covering the e4-pawn looks artificial but not necessarily bad. There is nothing wrong with 15.♔d5!? 15...h6 16.b4 ♔cd7

[16...hxc5 17.bxc5 dxc5 18.♗xg5 is clearly in White's favor.]

17.♔f3 ♗b7 18.♗a3 0-0 19.♗d3 Here and later 19.♔h2!? deserves serious attention. White intends to trade this relatively passive knight for a good one on f6. Then the d5-square may become more accessible for the white pieces. 19...♗fc8 Black took advan-



Round 2 of the Edmonton International Qualifier. Board 1: FM Ian Findlay – Omid Malek. Board 3: Robert Gardner – Hafiz Karmali. Black had just sacrificed two pieces to create dangerous looking threats against the enemy king but White managed to prove that the sacrifice was unsound.

tage of the opponent's somewhat artificial and relatively slow play. He created strong pressure along the c-file, which gives him at least equal chances. 20.♗d1 ♗f8 21.♗b3? ♔b6? Both opponents miss a surprising 21...a5! that puts White in trouble. Black is going to win at least a pawn since 22.bxa5? loses more material to 22...♔c5.

22.♗e3 ♔c4 23.♗c1 ♔b6

23...a5! is still strong: in case of 24.bxa5? ♔xa5 25.♗a3 ♗a6 White can't avoid material losses.

24.♗e3 ♗d8 Black declines a silent draw offer and plays on. 25.♗e2 The position is objectively equal but there is a lot of play left, of course. 25...♗ac8

26.♗e1 ♗a8 27.♔h2 ♗c8 With the idea to prevent the white knight from jumping to g4. 28.♗xb6

Nevertheless, 28.♔g4! is possible! For example, 28...♔xg4 29.hxc4 ♗xc4? runs into 30.♗xb6 ♗xb6 31.♔d5 followed by a fork on f6.

28...♗xb6 29.♗c4 White intends to play on the light squares. 29...♗b7 This allows White to carry out his plan. The computer suggests 29...♗e6!? 30.♔d5 ♔xd5 31.♗xd5 ♗xd5 32.♗xd5 taking advantage of the fact that the knight is relatively far from the d5-

square. Then 32...♗dc8 creates some counterplay on the queenside.



30.♔g4! White finally forces this favorable exchange. 30...♔xg4 31.hxc4 ♗ac8 32.♗d5 ♗c7 33.♗d3

White has achieved a great position and can increase the pressure by means of 33.b5! taking advantage of the opponent's awkwardly placed pieces. After 33...axb5 34.♗xb5 ♗a7 35.♗a1 ♗b8 36.♗ab1 ♗dd7 37.♔a4 Black is in trouble.

33...♗c8 34.♗d1 ♔g7 35.g3 Here and later the computer advocates 35.b5! putting Black under more pressure on the queenside. 35...♗e6 36.♔g2 ♗dc8

37.♟f3 ♞a7 38.♙xe6?! It was the last call for 38.b5! maintaining advantage. 38...fxe6 Now Black is OK. 39.g5 hxc5 40.♟g4 White is playing on the wrong side of the board, which can lead to trouble. 40...♟f7! 41.♟f3?!

Better is 41.♙d2! keeping the d4-square under control.

41...♟xf3 42.♟xf3 ♙e7?! Black misses an opportunity to punish the opponent. 42...♟d4! turns out to be strong. It's hard to find a move for White. For example, 43.♙e2 brings no relief in view of 43...♟d2.

43.♟g4 ♟f8 44.♙d1 ♟f6 45.♟e2 ♟b6 46.♙e3 ♟f8 47.♟c4 ♟b7 48.f3 The position is back to being approximately equal. Instead, 48.♙a3!? presents Black with some problems to solve.



48...♟c8 The queen exchange is possible but not necessary. After 48...♟f7 the position also remains equal.

49.♙a3 ♟xc4 50.♙xc4 ♟c8 51.♙e3 ♟c6 52.c4 g4 A nice try but White responds correctly: 53.f4 denying the bishop the g5-square. 53...♟b6 54.♙a4 exf4 55.gxf4 g5? Allowing White conquer the d5-square again is wrong. After 55...♙f6 the game should end in a draw. White can win the opponent's bishop: 56.e5 dxe5 57.♙xg4 exf4 58.b5 axb5 59.♙a7+ but after the correct 59...♙e7! 60.♙xe7+ ♟f8 61.♙c7 bxc4 he loses his last pawn.

56.f5! exf5? The final mistake.

56...♟f7 leaves Black in the game. For example, 57.♙g3 ♙f6 58.♙xg4 ♙d4 59.fxe6+ ♙xe6 60.♙d5 ♟b8 61.♙xa6 ♙e5 62.b5 ♙c5 with good drawing chances thanks to the reduced material left on the board.

57.♙d5 The knight gets access to the d5-square under favorable circumstances, which decides the outcome of

the game. 57...♟b7 58.exf5 Unlike the line above, the black king can't come to the rescue. 58...♙a7 59.b5 a5 60.b6 ♟b7 61.♙xa5 ♙d8 62.♙a7 1-0

An extremely tense battle propelling Ian to 3.5/4. On board 3 Dante Briones tried too hard and ended up losing a drawn position to Butch Villavieja, which allowed Butch to catch up with the leaders.

In round 5 Butch Villavieja overlooked something in the opening and ended up losing to Nic Haynes despite fierce resistance. It meant that the winner on board 1 would take it all.

Ebrahim-Shirazi, Behrooz (2126) – Findlay, Ian (2282) [D38]

Edmonton Intl. Qualifier (5.1), 01.05.2016

1.d4 ♙f6 2.c4 e6 3.♙f3 d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♙c3 ♙b4 6.♙a4+ ♙c6 7.♙e5 This jump doesn't give White anything after the natural response. 7.♙g5 is the main move. 7...♙d7 8.♙xc6 ♙xc3+ 9.bxc3 ♙xc6 10.♙a3 ♙e4 11.♙f4 ♟f6 12.e3 g5

Black can also play 12...♙xf2 13.♙xf2 g5 with not much to worry about. 13.♙g3 ♟e6?!

The game Lodhi-Serper, 1995, went 13...h5 14.♟b2 ♙xg3 15.hxc3 0-0-0 with a perfectly fine position for Black.

14.♙d3 A solid continuation. White avoids complications after 14.♙xc7 ♟c8 15.♙g3 h5.

14...♙d7?! It is time for 14...♙xg3 15.hxc3 h5 even though it should have been done earlier under more favorable circumstances.

15.♙xe4 Not a bad move but White is going to sorely miss this bishop. Instead, 15.♟c1!? preparing c3-c4 deserves attention. White will be clearly better if he achieves this break.

15...♟xe4 16.0-0 h5 17.f3?! The white bishop is in some trouble but sacrificing a pawn to rescue the cleric is too high a price. The e3-pawn needs to be protected first. Curiously, the computer advocates a suicidal-looking 17.c4!? and claims a nice advantage after 17...dxc4 18.f3 ♟e7 19.♟c3 h4 20.♙f2 h3 21.d5! ♙b5 22.g3.

17...♟xe3+ 18.♙h1 ♟he8 19.♙e5

White has compensation for the pawn but no more than that. 19...h4 20.h3 ♟e6 The game now revolves around pawn breaks c3-c4 and f3-f4; it is tricky to play for both sides.



21.♙ad1?! ♟e2?!

21...f6! 22.♙h2 ♙b5 prevents c3-c4 for a long time leaving Black in complete control of the position.

22.♟fe1?!

Here 22.c4! is actually possible. After 22...♟xc4 23.f4! gxf4 24.♟xf4 White achieves his goal of opening up lines; Black will probably have to return his extra material soon.

22...♟c2 23.♟c1 ♙a4 24.♙xa4 ♙xa4 The exchange of queens has brought relief to the black king. 25.♙g1?

However, here White has another chance to play 25.c4! dxc4 26.d5. The following sample line 26...♙ee8 27.♟xc4 f6 28.♟xc7+ ♙d8 29.♟c4 ♟xe5 30.♙xe5 fxe5 31.♙xa4 doesn't look bad for him.

25...♙ae8 Black is back in the driver's seat. Even stronger is 25...♙b5 preventing c3-c4 for good. 26.c4 White finally achieves this break but it's a little late. 26...dxc4 27.♟xc4

The difference is that here 27.d5?? is impossible because of 27...♙xe5.

27...♙c6 28.♟ec1 f6 29.♙h2 ♟e1+ 30.♟e1 ♟xe1+ 31.♙f2 Black has excellent winning chances despite the opposite-color bishops. 31...♟h1 I can't say that it's the best move but it makes the rest of the game very interesting.

32.♙g1 I suppose that trapping his own rook in the corner was a part of Black's plan. 32...b6 33.♟c3 ♙d5 34.a3 a5 35.♟c1 ♙d6 36.♙h2+

White decides to take the exchange and seek practical chances. 36...♟xh2 37.♙g1 ♟xh3 38.gxh3 b5 39.♙f2 b4 This passed pawn looks very strong but the battle is not over just yet.

40.axb4 axb4 41.♙e3 ♙e6 42.♟b1 c5 43.dxc5+ ♙xc5 44.♟c1+

The critical position of the game.



44...♔d5? Very surprisingly, a mistake that could have deprived Black of the fully deserved win. 44...♔b5! turns out to be the only winning move. In case of 45.f4 Black can continue as in the game: 45...♙xh3 46.fxg5 fxg5 etc.

45.f4? To be fair to the players, who had to make decisions in real time over the board, the subtleties of the variations were very hard to understand even in the analysis.

After 45.♖d1+! it looks like a draw! If 45...♙c6, then White gets a crucial tempo to save half a point: 46.f4 ♙xh3 47.fxg5 fxg5 48.♖g1 g4 49.♙f4 b3 50.♙g5 ♔b5 51.♙xh4 ♔b4 52.♖b1 ♙c3 53.♖c1+ etc.

Another line is 45...♙c4 46.♖d6 ♙xh3 but after 47.♖c6+! ♔b3 48.♖xf6 White holds on somehow.

45...♙xh3 Now White lacks that tempo and Black wins. **46.fxg5 fxg5 47.♖g1 g4 48.♙f4 b3 49.♙g5 ♔c4 50. ♙xh4 b2!** This makes all the difference. **51.♙g3 ♔c3 0-1**

This victory allowed FM Ian Findlay to claim clear first and a rendez-vous with five grandmasters in June. Nicolas Haynes and Omid Malek shared the second place with a result of 4/5.

I would also like to include the following endgame catastrophes in this report.

Mo,Michelle (1544) – Hughey,Leah (1664) [C11]

Edmonton Intl. Qualifier (4.9), 01.05.2016

(Please see the next diagram.)

Black had a large advantage earlier but allowed the opponent back into the game. Here the simplest is 43.♖h7. After a plausible 43...h4 44.gxh4 gxh4 45.♙xd5 ♖xf2 46.♖xh4 there is nothing

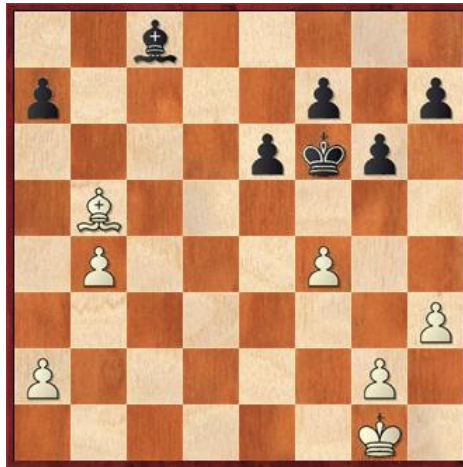


left to play for.

Instead, White opted for **43.♖xd5??** allowing a trade of rooks: **43...♖d2+ 44.♙c5 ♖xd5+ 45.♙xd5**. The remainder of the game is an easy textbook win for Black. **45...♙f7 46.♙c5 ♙e6 47.♙d4 ♙f5 48.♙e3 h4 49.♙f3 a5 50. ♙e3 ♙e5 51.♙d3 a4 52.f4+ gxf4 53. gxh4 ♙f5 54.♙d4 a3 55.♙c3 f3 56.h5 f2**, and Black won in a few moves. **0-1**

Karmali,Hafiz (1977) – Dave,Bhavik (1897) [D90]

Edmonton Intl. Qualifier (4.5), 01.05.2016



The ending looks rather routine but will turn out to be quite eventful. **26.♙c6?** White must centralize the king immediately: 26.♙f2 e5 27.♙e3 and a draw should be easy to achieve.

26...e5 27.fxe5+ ♙xe5 28.♙f2 f5?

After the natural 28...♙d4 29.a3 ♙c3 Black picks up at least a pawn with good winning chances.

29.♙e3 g5 Black has an interesting try here: 29...♙e6 30.a3 ♙d5 forcing White to find the only move 31.b5!

[The pawn ending after 31.♙xd5 ♙xd5 is lost. A sample line is 32.♙d3 g5

33.g3 h5 34.a4 h4 35.gxh4 gxh4 36.♙e3 ♙c4 etc.]

Black can then try 31...f4+ 32.♙f2 ♙xc6 33.bxc6 ♙d6 although White has just enough time to save half a point: 34.♙f3 ♙xc6 35.♙xf4 ♔b5 36.♙g5 ♙a4 37.h4 ♙xa3 38.♙h6 a5 39.♙xh7 a4 40.g4 ♙b4 41.h5 gxh5 42.gxh5 a3 43. h6 a2 44.♙g8 a1 ♖ 45.h7 with a theoretically drawn position.

30.b5 h5 31.a4 Now the position looks completely drawn but play continues.

31...h4 32.a5 ♙d6 33.♙d4 g4 34. hxg4 fxg4 35.♙e4 ♙c7



36.♙c5?? A terrible blunder throwing the game away.

White has several moves that draw, the simplest way being 36.♙e3 h3 37. gxh3 gxh3 38.♙f4.

36...♙b7 It's suddenly all over. **37.♙d4** Or 37.♙f5 h3 38.gxh3 g3 and the pawn queens. **37...h3 38.gxh3 gxh3 0-1**

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mid-September to mid-June

Contact: Bill Taylor 403.526.5484

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2016 Calgary International

The 9th edition of the annual festival took place at the Calgary Chess Club on July 27 – August 1. As in previous years, the tournament was organized and directed by the International Arbiter Vlad Rekson. The event attracted a total of 31 participants, including 5 GMs, 3 IMs and 7 FMs.

Overall, it was the most impressive roster since the inception of the Calgary International in 2008. The featured players included the former World Chess Championship challenger GM Gata Kamsky (USA) as well as the winner of the 2013 edition of the Edmonton International GM Lazaro Bruzon (Cuba).

Naturally, thanks to a relatively large number of players, the tournament was very eventful, every round featuring something interesting. After seven rounds of play GM Kayden Troff (USA) was leading with an excellent score of 6/7 and seemed to be in the driver's seat. However, his slow finish (just 0.5/2) allowed the competitors to catch up. IM Razvan Preotu (Canada) won his crucial games in the last two rounds and finished clear first with 7/9. The second place was shared by the aforementioned GMs Troff, Kamsky as well as GM Gil Popilski (Israel). Daniel Kazmaier was the best Albertan with a score of 5.5/9 and a tie for the fifth place. Another impressive performance was demonstrated by Diwen Shi who managed to draw GMs Bruzon and Popilski as well as IM Michael Bodek. Diwen finished with 4.5/9.

With 130 games played it is hardly possible to provide a detailed coverage of the event within the scope of this report. Below I'll present a few game fragments that stood out for me for one reason or another. First of all, the move of the tournament was played in the following game.



Panjwani-Bruzon, after 17...♙xc4



Calgary International, Round 4. Board 1: IM Michael Bodek–IM Razvan Preotu. Board 2: GM Victor Mikhalevski–GM Gata Kamsky. Board 3: IM Raja Panjwani–GM Kayden Troff.

Panjwani,Raja (2388) – Bruzon,Lazaro (2643) [A05]

9th Calgary International (7.3), 31.07.2016

White has more space and more active pieces. 17...♖b8 [17...♖d5 intending to bring the other knight to f6 is a decent alternative. Black may have been worried about 18.♙b5 but the computer says that it may be answered by 18...♖xc1 19.♖xc1 ♖xe5! with at least equality in all lines.]

18.♙b5 ♖xc1 19.♖xc1 ♖e7 20.♖c4 A big fight for the c-file is in progress.

20...♖d5 Correct.

20...a6? initiates the following tactical sequence that works in White's favor: 21.♙a3 axb5 22.♙xe7 ♖xe7 23.♖c7 ♖xc7 24.♖xc7 ♙a6 25.♖a7 ♙f8 26.♖xf7 Material is approximately equal but White's pieces are far more active, while Black's lack coordination.

21.♖xd5 exd5

Certainly not 21...♙xd5? 22.♖c8 and White wins material.

22.♖c3 White keeps control of the c-file for the time being and retains some initiative. 22...♖d6?!

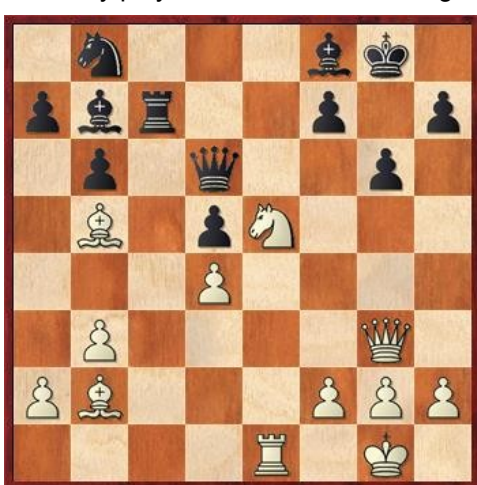
The computer advocates 22...f6 (possibly followed by a7-a6) kicking the white pieces back. Black may have been worried about 23.♙a3 fxg5 24.♙xe7 ♖xe7 25.♖c7 but he manages to hang on by the skin of his teeth:

25...♖xc7 26.♖xc7 ♙a6 27.a4 exd4 28.♖xa7 ♙xb5 29.axb5 ♙e5 etc.

23.♖g3! Creating new tactical opportunities. 23...♖c7

23...a6? runs into 24.♖xg6! winning on the spot. 24.♖e1!? Avoiding a trade of rooks is an interesting decision giving White even more tactical ideas along the h2-b8 diagonal. 24...♙f8? Surprisingly, the decisive mistake.

After 24...♖a6 that kind of protects the c7-rook White can execute the following sequence: 25.♙xa6 ♙xa6 26.♖xg6 ♖xg3 27.♖e8+ ♙f8 28.♖xf8+ ♖g7 29.hxg3 hxg6. Due to the presence of the opposite-color bishops his extra pawn may not be enough to win but he can certainly play on with no risk of losing.



It looks like with his last move Black has defended against the ♖xg6 threat but it is not the case at all.

25.♔a3!! Precisely calculated. White wins in all lines. **25...♞xa3**

After 25...♞d8 White has 26.♜xf7 ♞xf7 27.♞e8 ♞f6 28.♞xb8 etc.

26.♜xg6 hxg6 27.♞xc7 ♞b4

At first glance it looks like 27...♔a6 saves Black but 28.♞e8! is crushing.

28.♞e8 ♔a6 29.a4 The simplest solution. The b8-knight is now doomed.

29...♞xb5 30.axb5 ♞xb3 31.g3 ♞xb5 32.♞xb8 ♞b4 33.♞xa7 ♔g7 34.♞b8 ♔d6 35.♞d8 b5 36.♔g2 1-0

Kazmaier, Daniel (2194) – Chiku-Ratte, Olivier-Kenta (2386) [A36]
9th Calgary International (6.6), 30.07.2016



A double-edged battle is in progress. With his last move (♞h5) White indicated his intention to put the queen on f5 with strong threats. **28...♞xb3?** Ignoring the threat should have cost Black the game. Correct is 28...♜g6! when it's not clear for White how to proceed. A sample line 29.♞f5 ♞xb3 30.♞xb3 ♞xb3 31.♞b1 ♞a2+ 32.♔h3 ♞g8 33.♔xd6! ♞xc4 34.♞b8 ♞c1 35.♞xg8+ ♔xg8 36.♞c8+ ♜f8 37.♞g4+ leads to a draw by perpetual.

29.♞xb3 This wins if followed up correctly. Nevertheless, 29.♞fc1! is even stronger. The main idea is seen after 29...♞d4: 30.♞xb3 ♞xb3 31.♞f5! creating two lethal checkmate threats.

Black can also try 29...♞b2+ but after 30.♔h3! ♞xa3 31.♞xb2 ♞xb2 32.♞f5 ♜g6 33.♞b1 White wins material.

29...♞xb3 Relatively best.

29...♞xb3 loses immediately to 30.♞f5 ♞b2+ 31.♔h3.

30.♞xe5? Unfortunately, White goes wrong here, probably missing Black's



The future tournament winner IM Razvan Preotu before the start of his round 2 game.

31st move. Correct is 30.♞b1!! with the same ideas as above. For example, 30...♞a2+ 31.♔h3 ♞xb1 32.♞f5 and Black is helpless.

30...♞xe5 31.♞f3 ♞d1! The only but sufficient resource. **32.♔xh7?** A nice try but it loses quickly.

32.♞xf7 ♞d2+ 33.♔h3 ♞xh6+ 34.♔g2 may not look very inspiring but the game is far from being over here.

32...♞b2+ 33.♔h3 ♞h1+ 34.♔g4 ♞xh5+ 35.♔xh5 ♞h2+

An important finesse. Clearly wrong is 35...♔xh7? 36.♞xf7+ ♔g8 37.♔g6 ♞b8 38.♞xe7 and it is suddenly White who is playing for a win.

36.♔g4 ♔xh7 37.♞xf7+ ♔g6 38.♞xe7 ♞xh6 The remainder of the game requires no comments. **39.♞e6+ ♔g7 40.♞e7+ ♔f8 41.♞xa7 ♞g6+ 42.♔f5 ♞xg3 43.♞a4 ♔e7 44.♞a7+ ♔d8 45.♞a8+ ♔c7 46.♔e6 ♔b7 47.♞a5 ♞g4 48.♞a4 ♞g8 49.♔d7 ♔b6 50.♔e6 ♞b8 0-1**

The most unusual endgame of the tournament occurred in the following GM – GM encounter (please see next diagram).

Troff, Kayden (2543) – Bruzon, Lázaro (2643) [E15]

9th Calgary International (3.5), 28.07.2016

The position looks totally winning for White. The only problem is his extra



Troff – Bruzon, after 37... ♔e7

knight that is kind of stuck in the enemy territory. **38.a3**

The most incisive continuation is 38.♔xg4! neglecting the a2-pawn. After 38...♞xa2 39.♔xg5 a5 40.♜f6 the knight is back into play, and White should have no problems converting.

The pawn endgame after 38...♞e2+ 39.♔xg5 ♞xh5 40.♔xh5 ♔xe8 41.♔g6 is also an easy win for White

38...a5 39.a4? Best is 39.♜c7 ♔d6 40.♜a8! intending to return some material. After 40...♜c6 41.♞e8+ ♔b7 42.♜xb6 ♔xb6 43.♔xg4 White ends up with two healthy extra pawns.

39...b5! 40.axb5 ♞xb5 41.♜c7 ♞c4 ♔d8 The critical position of the endgame (see next diagram).



Troff – Bruzon, after 42... d8

43. xg4? Curiously, this turns out to be insufficient for a win. The only way to keep White's winning hopes alive is 43. d5! Black can capture either minor piece but White's central passed pawns will give him good winning chances: 43... xe8 44. d3 e6 45. e4 or 43... xd5 44. a4 f3 45. f2 c7 46. e1 d6 47. d2 etc.

43... xc7 44. a4 b6 45. xg5 b5 Black's counterplay is just enough for a draw. The remainder of the game is played perfectly by both sides. 46. b3 c4 47. c2 b5 48. h4 a4 49. h5 a3 50. b1 a2 51. xa2 xa2 52. e4 dxe4 53. f4 c6 54. h6 g8 55. xe4 d6 56. f5 h7+ 57. f6 d5 58. g7 e4 59. h7 xh7 60. xh7 xd4 1/2-1/2

A surprising opening catastrophe occurred in another GM – GM game.

Popilski, Gil (2542) – Kamsky, Gata (2660) [B33]

9th Calgary International (7.2), 31.07.2016

1. e4 c5 2. f3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. dxd4 f6 5. d3 g6 6. dxc6 bxc6 7. e5 d8 8. c4 Overall, this is a pretty good line for White who scores more than 70% from here. But with his next two moves Black is going to make it even worse. 8... c7? This turns out to be not a good square for the queen. 8... g7 minimizes the damage.

9. f4 Now White has strong tactical threats that Black decides to ignore for some reason. 9... g7

9... e6 looks ugly but may be the lesser evil. Black is significantly worse in any case though.

Now White can win material in two different ways (see next diagram).



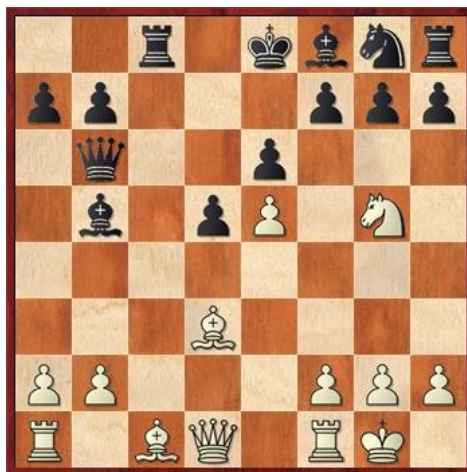
10. xf7+ This is better than 10. e6 xf4 11. exf7+ f8 12. fxg8+ xg8 13. xg8 xg8 when Black gets some compensation for the lost exchange.

10... d8 11. e2 d6 12. b3 f8 13. g3 b8 14. 0-0 White is up a pawn and has a large positional advantage. In the following he doesn't give Black a single chance to come back into the game. 14... b4 15. d2 b8 16. f4 f5 17. d4 d4 18. d3 dxb3+ 19. axb3 b5 20. c3 h6 21. c4 b6 22. b1 a5 23. d2 g5 24. fxg5 g7 25. d4 b8 26. d5 c7 27. bhd1 f3 28. c3 1-0

Wu, Chenxi (1757) – Ebrahim-Shirazi, Behrooz (2050) [C02]

9th Calgary International (2), 28.07.2016

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. e5 c5 4. c3 d6 5. f3 d7 6. d3 cxd4 7. cxd4 b6 8. 0-0 dxd4 9. bd2 The main line of the Milner-Barry gambit. 9... c8 A rare move that looks playable though. 10. dxd4 bxd4 11. f3 b6 12. g5 b5?



Black achieves a positionally desirable

trade of light-squared bishops but gets really behind in development and loses almost by force.

Instead, after a solid 12... e7!? a complex struggle lies ahead.

13. h5 g6 [13... h6 doesn't help either: 14. e3 a6 15. xb5+ xb5 16. xe6 g6 17. g5 fxe6 18. f6 etc.]

14. f3 c7 15. e3 Winning an important tempo. 15... a5

Black can try 15... c5 but after 16. ac1 h6 17. xc5 xc5 18. b4 White wins material.

16. xb5+ xb5 17. ac1! Exchanging a key defender and seizing the c-file.

17... d7 18. xc7 xc7 19. c1 e7 20. f4 h6 21. a4+ d8 22. b6+ Black resigned in view of an inevitable checkmate in a couple of moves. The punishment has been executed exemplarily! 1-0

FM Ian Findlay wins 9th Calgary International Qualifier/Fundraiser

The tournament was held at the Calgary Chess Club on June 4-5 and featured two sections: Open and Under 1400. A total of 27 players participated in the event organized and directed by Vlad Rekhson.

In the Open section the rating favorite FM Ian Findlay cruised to victory finishing with 4.5/5. The second place went to Felix Rose (4/5), and there was a three-way tie for the third place among Martin Robichaud, Behrooz Ebrahim-Shirazi and Mohamad Fellah.

The Under 1400 was won by Paul Wang with a perfect score of 5/5, Arul Papneja took clear second (4/5).

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Over/Under 1800

This year the annual event was moved away from the Labour Day weekend, as an experiment. The tournament took place at Edmonton Chess Club on August 27-28.

The Over 1800 section featured several strong players, including Peter Kalisvaart and Keith MacKinnon who had recently returned to Alberta after a prolonged absence. Keith took full advantage of his favorable pairings to start the tournament with 4/4. In round 5 he offered FM Dale Haessel a draw on move 14 but the offer was justifiably declined. In the ensuing melee the advantage changed sides several times before a draw was agreed on move 34. Thus, Keith MacKinnon finished clear first with a result of 4.5/5, while FM Dale Haessel took second with 4/5.

Peter Kalisvaart and FM Ian Findlay scored 3.5/5 and tied for the third place. Ian's result could have been better had he not walked into an unexpected checkmate against Tristan Tran-Ly in round 2.

The Under 1800 section was won by a newcomer Alvin Guevarra with a result of 4.5/5. Dustin Koperski scored 3.5/5, which somehow turned out to be enough for clear second. A six-way tie for the third place may serve as an explanation.

The best game of the tournament was played in the very first round on one of the top boards. Not something one normally sees at a typical weekend event where the pairings are so mismatched.

Findlay, Ian (2264) – Macleod, Damon (1908) [C65] Over 1800 Edmonton (1.3), 27.08.2016



White is up a pawn but the situation on the board is unclear. His pieces are not well coordinated and most of them are far away from the king. **18.♖c4**



Over/Under 1800, round 2. Foreground: Tristan Tran-Ly – FM Ian Findlay (board 2) and Keith MacKinnon – Mashad Bin Shoeb (board 3).

♟xf3+ Black goes for a tempting sequence. Instead, **18...♖xc4!?** **19.♖xc4 fxe4** **20.♖xe4 ♕h5** with full compensation for the pawn deserves attention. **19.gxf3 ♕xf2+** This strike would be great if White were obligated to take the bishop but he isn't. Instead, the computer points out to **19...♖g6!?** indirectly defending the g4-bishop and threatening a checkmate in two. After **20.♖e5 ♖h5!** the position is totally unclear. Taking the bishop **21.fxf4?** is still not good in view of **21...fxg4** with too many threats. For example, **22.♖d3?** loses immediately to **22...g3**.

20.♖g2! Certainly not **20.♖xf2?** **♖hx2+** when the white king gets in big trouble. For example, after **21.♖e3** Black can play **21...♖xf3** **22.♖xf3 ♖h5+** **23.♖e3 ♖xd1** regaining material while maintaining a strong attack.

20...♖xf3+ Spectacular but unsound. Relatively best is **20...♖g6** but after **21.♖xf2 fxe4** **22.♖e5 ♖h5** **23.♖xg4 ♖xg4** **24.♖e2** White should be able to consolidate his extra piece.

21.♖xf3 ♖g6+ 22.♖g3?

White has to call the opponent's bluff with **22.♖xf2 fxe4** **23.♖xf8+ ♖xf8+** **24.♖e3!** although it's easier said than done, of course. A sample line is **24...♖g5+** **25.♖d4 ♖f6+** **26.♖c5 ♖e7+** **27.d6 cxd6+** **28.♖xd6 ♖c8+** **29.♖b4** and the king walks away to safety.

22...♖xg3 23.hxg3 f4! The tables have suddenly turned; Black's attack is irresistible. **24.♖b3 ♖xe4+** **25.♖h3 fxf3** **26.♖e3 ♖f2** **27.d6+ ♖h8** **28.♖g4**



Black's only problem is that he has too many winning moves. **28...♖g2+** **28...♖f3** intending **g3-g2** was the quickest way to victory. The text continuation leads to an amazing position. **29.♖h4 g5+** **30.♖h5 ♖h3+?**

Hard to believe but this natural check loses the game. Let's consider a few alternatives.

After **30...cxd6** **31.♖c3+** **♖h7** **32.♖d3+** Black has to allow perpetual check: **32...♖h8** **33.♖d4+** **♖h7** **34.♖d3+** etc. **30...♖af8** is an interesting try but White saves half a point by **31.♖xf2 ♖xf2**

32.dxc7 ♖e2+ 33.♔g6. Miraculously, Black doesn't have more than his own perpetual: 33...♖e8+ 34.♔xh6 ♖f6+ 35.♔xg5 ♖e5+ 36.♔h4 ♖e4+ 37.♔h3 ♖f5+ 38.♔g2 ♖f2+ 39.♔h3 ♖h2+ 40.♔g4 ♖e2+ etc.

It turns out that 30...♖g8!! is the only move keeping Black's winning hopes alive. The point is that after 31.♖c3+ ♖g7 the perpetual is prevented. Here 31.♖xg8+ ♔xg8 32.d7 doesn't work because of 32...♔g7 33. ♔xh6 ♖h3+ with a forced checkmate to follow.

Best is 31.♔xf2 ♖h2+ 32.♔g4 h5+ 33. ♔f5 ♖xf2+ 34.♔e4 ♖e2+ 35.♔d4 cxd6 with a crazy position.

31.♔g6 White has the only legal move but it wins. 31...♖g8+ [31...♖xg4 is no good either in view of 32.♖c3+]

32.♖xg8+ Same story here: the only legal but sufficient winning move.

32...♔xg8 33. d7 ♖xg4

[33...♖f8 34.d8♖ makes no difference.]

34.d8♖+ ♖f8 35.♖d5+ 1-0

The Under 1800 section featured the following interesting endgame.

Hughey, Leah (1639) –

Ivanescu, Cristian (1738) [C12]

Under 1800 Edmonton (4.1), 28.08.2016



White has 3 pawns for a piece, including 2 connected passers. 37.♔f3 It is more practical to play 37.h5 first, limiting the opponent's options.

37...♔e6! The f5-rook can barely move, and White has to make a difficult choice. 38.♔e4 The alternative 38.g4 looks wrong to the computer but Black doesn't have anything concrete.

38...♖g4+ 39.f4 ♔d6 Now White can breathe a sigh of relief. 39...exf4!? is actually possible: after 40.gxf4 (40.♖xc5? loses to 40...fxg3+

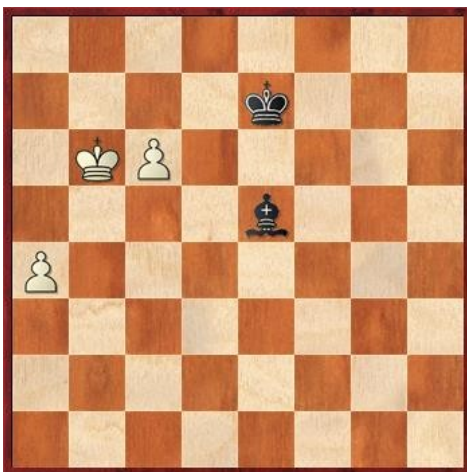
41.♔f3 g2) 40...b6 it's White who has to fight for the draw. She can probably exchange all the pawns by means of 41.b4!? axb4 42.axb4 ♔xb4 43.♖g5! ♖xh4 44.♖g6+ ♔d7 45.♖xb6 but as we know, holding the ♖ versus ♔+♔ ending is not easy in a practical game.

40.♖g5! The only but sufficient resource. 40...♖xg5 41.hxg5 b6? This allows White to achieve a favorable pawn structure on the queenside leading to a winning position. Instead, 41...exf4 42.gxf4 a4 43.f5+ ♔f7 44.♔d5 ♔e7 should suffice for a draw although proving it over the board wouldn't be easy. For example, 45.f6 ♔f8 46.c4 b6 47.♔c6 ♔c5 48.♔b5 ♔d4 49.♔xa4 ♔xb2 50.♔b5 ♔xa3 51.♔xb6 ♔c1 52.c5 ♔xg5 53.c6 ♔f4 etc.

42.a4! exf4 43.gxf4 ♔c5 44.f5+ ♔f7 45.c3 ♔e7 46.♔d5 ♔e3 47.g6 ♔f6 48. ♔c6! ♔c1 Obviously, the f5-pawn is taboo. 49.♔xb6 ♔xb2 50.c4

50.♔xa5 also wins but in a highly non-trivial fashion: 50...♔xc3+ 51.♔b5 ♔xf5 52.♔c4! ♔e5 53.♔d5! ♔c3 54.a5 ♔xg6 55.a6 and queens.

50...♔xf5 51.c5 ♔xg6 52.c6 ♔e5 53. ♔xa5 ♔f7 54.♔b6 ♔e7



White has played very well after the opponent's mistake on move 41 and is inches away from a full point. 55.c7?? Now it's only a draw. 55.♔b7 ♔d8 56. a5 would have forced a resignation. 55.a5 ♔d6 56.a6 suffices as well. 55...♔d7 56.a5 ♔xc7+ 57.♔b5 ♔xa5 58.♔xa5 ½-½


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The 2016 edition of the annual tournament took place at the Sandman hotel in Grande Prairie on May 21-22. Once again, thanks to generous contributions from Caughlin Financial Services and the ACA the prize fund was increased by \$1,000. Wade Caughlin also sponsored a speed chess tournament on Friday night. The main event was directed by Tim Pradzinski and featured a record attendance of 28 players. Five of them participated in their first ever CFC rated tournament with a regular time control.

The first place was shared by the reigning Edmonton champion Belsar Valencia and Butch Villavieja. The winners scored 4.5/5 but somehow avoided playing each other. Chris White from La Crete had a great weekend and ended up clear third with an excellent score of 4/5.

2016 Southern Alberta Open

Frank Kluytmans organized and directed the tournament that was held at the Calgary Chess Club on December 3-4. A total of 32 players competed for the title and a guaranteed spot in the next year's Alberta Closed. The defending champion Gary Ng scored 4.5/5 for the fourth straight year. This time, however, it turned out to be insufficient for clear first. Belsar Valencia ended up with the same result and qualified for the Alberta Closed by virtue of having a better tie-breaker. FMs Dale Hael and Ian Findlay shared the third place with a result of 4/5.

Alberta Women's champion WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement defended her title in a round-robin tournament that took place at the Edmonton Chess Club on August 27


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Team North wins the Battle of AB for the fifth time in six years

The 21st edition of the annual Battle took place at the Red Deer Lodge on September 10. Team North won the previous two Battles with a crushing score but this year was shaping to be a different story. For a change, North wasn't an overwhelming rating favorite but rather a slight underdog. A very close match was anticipated, and Round 1 fully matched the expectations. Team South won 6.5:5.5 and could have easily scored more. For example, on board 6 Robert Gardner performed his magic trick once again and ended up winning a lost position against Martin Robichaud. On board 11 Dante Briones was probably lost as well in his game against Omid Malek but saved an important half a point by tenacious defence and some help from the opponent. The biggest drama of the round occurred on board 7. The ACA President Vlad Rekhson obtained a winning end-game against Anuar Caldera but suddenly blundered a whole rook. Nevertheless, he kept on playing and somehow managed to draw despite a huge material deficit. The best game of round, in my opinion, was played on board 8 between two uncompromising opponents.

Leuchanka, Siarhei (2198) – Villavieja, Butch (2166) [E84]
Battle of Alberta (1.8), 10.09.2016

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6.♗e3 ♘c6 7.♗ge2 a6 8.♗d2 ♖b8 9.♘c1 e5 10.d5 ♘d4 11.♘b3 ♘xb3 12.axb3 c5 13.b4 cxb4 14.♘a4 b5 15.cxb5 axb5 16.♗xb4 So far both players have followed the main roads. 16...♘h5 17.0-0-0?! This novelty looks overly optimistic. All the games that reached this position continued 17.♘c3, which is the best move. 17...f5 18.♘c3 ♗f7 19.♘b1 ♗fb7 20.g3 ♘f6 21.♘d3 fxe4 The computer doesn't like this capture that releases the tension a little too early. 22.♘xe4! Black may have underestimated this recapture. 22...♘xe4 The consequences of 22...♘xd5 23.♗b3 ♗e6 24.♗g5 are unclear but Black is better off avoiding this line. 23.♗xe4?! An interesting moment. 23.fxe4 is evaluated as equal. The reason may be that in this case Black's dark-squared bishop will remain out of play for a long time. On the contrary,



Round 1 of the 2016 Battle of Alberta has just started. Foreground: Keith MacKinnon – FM Ian Findlay (board 5) and Martin Robichaud – Robert Gardner (board 6).

after the text move Black will have a chance to free his bishop by playing e5 -e4 as soon as White moves the e4-bishop anywhere. 23...♗a8 Correct. Black intends to create threats along the a-file. 24.b3! White covers the a4-square... 24...♗a4!? but Black goes there anyway.



25.bxa4!? This leads to a highly unbalanced position with chances for both sides. Nevertheless, the computer prefers 25.♗d2 forcing the a4-rook back. 25...bxa4 26.♗xb7 ♘xb7 27.♗d2 ♗a5 28.♗c1 ♗a6 29.♗b2 a3 30.♗b3 Curiously, it is possible to get the queen back by means of 30.♘d2 axb2 31.♘xa5 bxc1♗+ 32.♘xc1 with a draw but neither side probably wanted this to happen. 30...♗a4 31.♗b8+ ♘f7 32.♗c3 ♘b5 33.♘c2? Allowing the e-

pawn to move forward is not a good idea that should have cost White the game right away.

It turns out that after a waiting move like 33.♘a1 Black cannot make progress on the queenside.

33...♗b4+ 34.♗b3 ♗e1+ 35.♘a2 ♘c4? The winning move is 35...e4!! freeing the dark-squared bishop in a true King's Indian style. After something like 36.♗b7+ ♘f8 37.♗3xb5 (37.♘xa3 ♗a5#) 37...♗a1+ 38.♘b3 ♗b2+ 39.♘a4 ♗xc2+ 40.♘xa3 ♗c3+ 41.♘a4 ♗xe3 Black wins material. 36.♗b7+ ♘f6 37.♘b6!!



Excellent! This counterattacking resource is the only way to save half a point. 37...♘g5 38.h4+ [38.♗xg7? is not good in view of 38...♗c1 threatening a checkmate in one.]

38...♖h6 39.♙d8 ♜xb3+ 40.♗xa3?

After the natural 40.♗xb3 the following sequence of moves is forced:

40...♞e3+ 41.♗a2 ♞xf3 42.♙g5+ ♖h5 43.♞xg7 ♞xd5+ 44.♗xa3. Material remains highly unbalanced but the game goes on. 40...♙f6!! The only but sufficient winning move. 41.♙xf6 ♞a5+ 42.♗xb3 ♞xd5+ 43.♗c3 ♞xb7 0-1

An amazing battle!

In Round 2 North played with more vigor and turned the match around. A good illustration is the game on board 10.

Kalisvaart, Peter (2107) – Tam, Erik (2142) [A41]

Battle of Alberta (2.10), 10.09.2016

Peter lost game 1 in a crushing style but responded strongly in round 2.

1.d4 d6 2.c4 e5 3.dxe5 dxe5 4.♞xd8+ ♗xd8 5.♗c3 ♙e6 6.e4 c6

Black achieves an excellent score in this line but the main reason may be a big difference in rating in favor of the Black players. 7.f4 f6 The computer advocates 7...exf4 although White's game is easy after 8.♙xf4.

8.♗f3 ♗d7 9.fxe5 fxe5

Better is 9...♗xe5! exchanging the f3-knight before it can jump to g5. This was David Bronstein's choice in his 1982 game against Grigory Press.

10.♗g5 ♙e7 11.g3 Black's position looks suspicious but White doesn't

really have anything concrete.

11...♗g6 12.♗xe6 ♗xe6 13.♙h3+ ♗f7 14.♙g5 ♙c5

14...♙b4!? threatening to ruin the opponent's pawn structure is interesting.

15.0-0-0 h6 16.♞hf1 This looks like a bluff that suddenly works out really well. There is nothing wrong with 16.♙d2 when the chances remain approximately equal.



16...♞ad8?? A blunder in a critical position. Black may have stopped calculating after the principal 16...hxg5 17.♞xd7+ but it was worth going further: after 17...♙e7! White's pieces are hanging. Then after 18.♙g4 ♗e8 19.♞xf6 (forced) 19...gxf6 20.♞xb7 ♞xh2 21.♙d7+ ♗f8 22.♙xc6 White has active pieces and compensation for a slight material deficit but Black has his

chances as well. Now it's all over.

17.♞xd7+ ♞xd7 18.♙xf6 Black must have missed this cute intermezzo. Now he cannot avoid material losses.

18...♙e3+ 19.♗b1 ♙d2 20.♙xe5+ ♞f2 21.♞xf2+ ♙xf2 22.♗c2 ♞e8 23.♙d6 ♙g1 24.e5 ♙xh2 25.e6+ ♞xe6 26.♙xe6+ ♗xe6 27.♙b8 White ended up with an extra piece and went on to win convincingly. 1-0

The game on board 8 was an interesting see-saw battle once again.

Villavieja, Butch (2166) – Leuchanka, Siarhei (2193) [B00]

Battle of Alberta (2.8), 10.09.2016



At first glance, the position looks dead equal. A more detailed examination reveals, however, that Black must be

Battle of Alberta Results

North	CFC	FIDE	R1	R2	Bd	R1	R2	South	CFC	FIDE
Bitan Banerjee	2411	2350	½	1	1	½	0	Gary Ng	2351	2254
CM Rafael Arruebarrena	2356	2264	0	½	2	1	½	FM Dale Haessel	2316	2223
Belsar Valencia	2344	2268	1	½	3	0	½	Daniel Kazmaier	2292	2216
Jeff Reeve	2329	2262	0	0	4	1	1	CM Diwen Shi	2259	2251
Keith MacKinnon	2270	2207	½	½	5	½	½	FM Ian Findlay	2253	2232
Robert J. Gardner	2250	2150	1	1	6	0	0	Martin Robichaud	2202	2083
Anuar Caldera	2245	2143	½	1	7	½	0	Vladislav Rekhson	2201	2116
Butch Villavieja	2166	2107	1	1	8	0	0	Siarhei Leuchanka	2193	2198
Micah Hughey	2117	2070	½	½	9	½	½	Kris Boehmer	2191	2163
Peter Kalisvaart	2049	2107	0	1	10	1	0	Erik Tam	2142	2062
Dante Briones	1998	1976	½	0	11	½	1	Omid Malek	2126	2054
Mike Zeggelaar	1994	1946	0	½	12	1	½	Kim Nguyen	2103	2021
North Totals			5½	7½		6½	4½	South Totals		
Grand Totals			13			11		Grand Totals		
Rating Average		2210.8	2154.2					Rating Average		2219.1 2156.1

careful not to allow White to develop initiative on the kingside. **49...♖e6?** Black defends the f5-pawn but suddenly loses the game. Curiously, the only way to maintain equilibrium is **49...♖b3!** intending to meet **50.♖xf5** with **50...♖xc3 51.♖xf7+ ♜xf7 52.♖xc3 ♖xh4**. The queen ending is indeed dead drawn. White's following play is exemplary; he doesn't give the opponent a shred of hope. **50.h5! ♖a1 51.hxg6 fxg6 52.♖h5! ♖a8 53.♖g5 ♖g8 54.♖h1 ♖e8 55. ♖h6+ ♜g8** It's checkmate in 2. **1-0**

Team South was certainly not helped by Gary Ng's flagging in a drawn position against Bitan Banerjee on board 1. The game on board 9 must also have been a huge disappointment for the southerners. After a perfect opening preparation White achieved a totally winning position right out of the book...

Boehmer, Kris (2191) – Hughey, Micah (2117) [D34]
Battle of Alberta (2.9), 10.09.2016

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♟f3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.g3 ♟c6 6.♟g2 ♟f6 7.0-0 ♟e7 8.♟c3 0-0 A tabiya of the Tarrasch defence that must have occurred in hundreds of Micah's games. **9.dxc5 d4** This interesting pawn sacrifice is Micah's pet line. The natural **9...♟xc5** is, of course, the most popular continuation here. I can say that I have played the position after **10.♟a4** with both colors and I really like White's relatively simple play against the isolated pawn.

10.♟a4 ♟f5 11.♟f4 ♟e4 12.♖c1 The game smoothly follows White's preparation. **12...♖d5** The most popular but not necessarily best.

The purpose of White's previous is to get ready for **12...♟d5** which can now be met by **13.♟d6 ♟xd6 14.cxd6 ♖xd6 15.♟c5** with an excellent position.

Caution: White must be prepared for all kinds of moves including **12...h6!?**

13.♖b3 ♖h5 14.♟fd1 ♖ad8 15.♖xb7! This simple pawn grab has been recommended by GM Boris Avrukh although there are no practical examples in the database. **15...d3** The critical test but White is ready. **16.♟c3 dxe2 17.♖xd8 ♖xd8 18.♟xe4 ♟xe4 19.♟e1** Avrukh ends his analysis here with a verdict "White wins". The computer agrees. White's prep has worked out

perfectly!



19...♖g6 The only issue is that Black does have some activity along with a "nail" on e2 that gives him tactical opportunities. White may be asked to find a few precise move to extinguish the opponent's initiative. **20.♖a6 ♟xc5** A nice try but there is a refutation.

21.♟xe4 ♖xe4 22.♖xc5! ♖d1 23.♖c1? Correct is **23.♟d2! ♖xd2 24.♖xc6 ♖xc6 25.♖xc6** taking advantage of Black's back rank problems. In this line Black has to resign immediately but now things get complicated.

23...g5? The right idea but not the execution.

Interestingly enough, the best move is a cold-blooded **23...h6!** casually creating a much needed luft for the king. It turns out that White doesn't have a useful move, and after, say, **24.♖b7** (to pin the knight) **24...g5 25.♟e3 ♖b4! 26.♖xb4 ♟xb4 27.♟g2 ♟xa2** Black will regain a piece with equality.

24.♖c8+ White plays it safe, which is not a bad practical decision.

Objectively, after the brave **24.♟xg5!** Black's days would have been numbered but such a continuation requires nerves of steel and precise calculation. The knight cannot move yet because of a checkmate in a couple of moves but Black has ideas like **24...h6!?** creating another luft square for the king with a tempo. After, say, **25.♟xh6 ♟e5 26.♖c8+ ♟h7** White has to foresee **27.♖h8+! ♟xh8 28.♖f6+ ♟h7 29.♖g7#** or he is lost!

24...♟g7 25.♖g4 h6 26.♖xd1 exd1 ♖ 27.♖xd1 gxf4 28.♖g4+ ♟h7 29.♟f3 ♖b1+ 30.♟g2 fxg3 31.hxg3 So Black managed to survive for the time being although this endgame isn't much fun for him.



31...a5 [Certainly not **31...♖xb2?? 32. ♖e4+** picking up the c6-knight.]

32.♖d7 ♖g6 33.♟h4? After this careless move the win becomes problematic if not impossible. White should prepare the knight jump with **33.♖d5** taking the e4-square under control.

33...♖e4+! 34.♟h2 ♟e5 35.♖f5+ Probably best although Black is happy to exchange queens. **35...♖xf5 36. ♟xf5 ♟d3 37.b3 ♟xf2 38.♟d6** The computer indicates that **38.a3!?** is the best try for a win.

38...♟d3 Even better is **38...♟g4+ 39. ♟g2 ♟e5** keeping the number of pawns on the board even. A handshake is in order after **40.♟c4 ♟c6**.

Now White manages to keep his extra pawn, which gives him the right to play on. **39.♟xf7 ♟c1 40.♟d6 ♟xa2 41. ♟c4 ♟b4 42.♟xa5 ♟g6 43.♟h3 ♟g5 44.♟c4** Nevertheless, the position is probably drawn. **44...♟d3 45.♟d2 ♟f2+ 46.♟g2 ♟d3 47.♟h3 ♟f2+ 48.♟g2 ♟d3 49.♟f3 h5 50.♟e4+ ♟f5 51.♟e3 ♟b4 52.♟f2 ♟g5 53.♟e4 h4 54.g4** A nice try but Black's passer guarantees him half a point.

54.gxh4+ ♟xh4 is a tablebase draw.

54...♟c2 55.♟d3 ♟b4+ 56.♟c4 ♟a2 57.♟d4 ♟f4 58.♟c4 ♟f3 59.g5 ♟xf2 60.g6 h3 61.g7 h2 62.g8 ♖ h1 ♖ 63. ♖f7+ ♟e2 64.♖e6+ ♟d2 65.♖d5+ ½-½

This was the second longest game of the round. The longest one was played on board 3 where Daniel Kazmaier kept on trying for 95 moves but couldn't break through Belsar Valencia's defense. Board 12 saw the same story: Kim Nguyen couldn't pull the trigger against Mike Zegelaar. And so the North won round 2 of the Battle with a score of 7.5:4.5 resulting in the match score of 13:11. Till next year!

Daniel Kazmaier is the 2016 Alberta Open Champion

The 2016/17 Alberta Championship cycle began in Calgary on the Thanksgiving weekend. The traditional six-round Open Swiss took place at the Days Inn Calgary South hotel, with the winner qualifying for the 2017 Alberta Closed. Hoping to attract stronger players the ACA Board of Directors guaranteed a \$3,000 prize fund based on just 30 entries. A total of 40 players ended up participating including the defending champion FM Dale Haessel. The ACA President Vlad Rekhson organized and directed the event.

In the absence of a clear rating favorite the race for the title was predictably tight. After 3 rounds of play there remained only three players with a perfect score: Belsar Valencia, Omid Malek and Robert Gardner. The "Rocket" managed to upset the nominal rating favorite in round 3.



Alberta Open: playing hall during round 4

Yam, Alex (2378) –

Gardner, Robert (2264) [B30]

Alberta Open, Calgary (3.1), 09.10.2016

A very typical win for Rob Gardner: a dubious opening, a lost position after 12 moves, fight on, take advantage of the opponent's mistakes and get a winning position after move 22.

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.♟b5 ♟c7 4.0-0 a6 5.♟xc6 ♟xc6 6.♟c3 e6 7.♟e1 d6 8.d4 cxd4 9.♟xd4 ♟f6 This whole line looks good for White. He parted with the bishop pair but gained a considerable lead in development. **10.♟g5** 10.♟d5!? is possible right here. **10...♟e7 11.♟d5!**



This gives White a winning attack. **11...exd5 12.exd5 ♟c7 13.♟xf6 gxf6 14.♟xf6 ♟f8**

14...♟g8 looks like a more tenacious alternative although Black certainly didn't like **15.♟g5**.

15.♟xe7+?! Tempting but not entirely correct. The computer suggests **15.♟e3!?** with a simple plan of doubling the rooks and indicates that Black's position is critical. A sample line is **15...♟d8 16.♟h6 ♟g4 17.♟d4! ♟e8 18.♟ae1 ♟d7**. Black is on the ropes but it's not obvious how White can deliver a knock-out punch.

15...♟xe7 16.♟e1 ♟e6!

The only move. After **16...♟xe1+ 17.♟xe1** Black's lack of coordination will soon prove fatal.

17.♟c3! Best. White maintains pressure but his position is not as dominating as in the line above. **17...♟c8 18.♟b3 ♟c5 19.dxe6 ♟d8 20.♟b6+?**



Surprisingly, this extra check loses all of White's advantage. Correct is the immediate **20.♟d4!** since **20...fxe6** may be answered by **21.♟xe6+** (with a check!) **21...♟c8 22.♟e3** White will soon be two pawns up.

20...♟c8 21.♟d4?! The computer indicates that White should start playing for a draw: 21.exf7 ♟xf7 22.♟e2. With the material being approximately equal, a draw is indeed the most likely outcome. **21...fxe6 22.♟e3?**

Here **22.♟xe6?** runs into **22...♟xc2** followed by Black's deadly counterattack. **22.♟b3!** is best: the queen returns to defend the king.

22...♟b8 Too much prophylaxis.

22...♟h4! turns out to be surprisingly strong. **23.♟f3** may then be answered by **23...♟xc2!** taking advantage of the opponent's back rank problems. White doesn't have a good way out of this mess.

23.f4? After this Black assumes full control of the position and never lets the opponent off the hook. The best chance is **23.♟xe6! ♟xc2 24.g3 ♟c7 25.♟xc7+ ♟xc7 26.♟xd6**.

23...♟xf4 24.♟xe6 ♟f8 25.♟f3 ♟xc2 26.♟xd6 ♟c8 27.♟d7 ♟c5+ 28.♟xc5 ♟xc5 29.♟xh7 ♟c2 30.♟g7 ♟xb2 31.h4 ♟xa2 32.h5 ♟f6 33.♟e5 ♟f5 34.♟d7+ ♟a7 35.g4 This loses the knight but White has no good move anyway.

35...♟d5 36.♟f7 ♟d1+ 37.♟f1 ♟xd7 38.

♖f2 ♖xf2 39.♔xf2 a5 40.h6 a4 41.g5 a3 42.g6 a2 43.g7 a1 ♖44.g8 ♖d2+ 0-1

In round 4 Belsar Valencia defeated Omid Malek on board 1 and became the sole leader of the tournament. On board 2 Rob Gardner obtained a promising position out of the opening but couldn't develop the initiative. Dan Kazmaier played with great energy and won convincingly.

Gardner, Robert (2264) – Kazmaier, Daniel (2286) [A80]

Alberta Open, Calgary (4.2), 09.10.2016

1.d4 f5 2.♗g5 h6 3.♗h4 g5 4.e4 ♗g7 5.♗g3 fxe4

5...f4? is known to be bad for Black. After 6.♗xf4 gxf4 7.♖h5+ ♔f8 8.♖f5+ ♗f6 9.e5 d6 10.♖xf4 White regains his piece with a superior position.

6.h4 ♗f6?! This natural move gives White strong initiative.

6...d5!? occurred only once in practice but may be Black's best. The idea is to keep developing and to answer 7.hxg5 with 7...♗c6 The check on h5 is actually not dangerous in these lines because the black king has a nice shelter on f8.

7.hxg5 hxg5 8.♗xh8+ ♗xh8 9.♖d2 g4 10.♗c3 d5 11.0-0-0 ♗f5 White has several promising continuations here.



12.f3 But this one allows Black to equalize: 12...♗c6! 13.♗b5?!

This sortie works out in Black's favor. The most direct approach 13.fxe4 ♗xe4 14.♗xe4 ♗xe4 15.♖g5 can lead to some wacky variations after 15...e6 16.♖xg4 ♖f6!? 17.♖g8+ ♔d7 18.♖xa8 ♗xd4 19.♗e1! ♗e2+ 20.♗xe2 ♖xb2+ 21.♗d2 ♖xc2+ 22.♗e3 ♖xd1 etc.

The game can also quickly end in a draw by repetition: 15...♗f6 16.♖xg4

♖c8 17. ♖g8+ ♔d7 18.♖g4+ ♗e8 etc. 13...♗c8 14.♖f4 e6 15.♖h6

15.♗xc7+ ♗f7 leads White nowhere. 15.fxg4 ♗xg4 16.♗e2 ♗xe2 17.♗xe2 looks better but Black is still ahead after 17...♗d7!

15...♗d7! Black has emerged with a large advantage that he doesn't relinquish for the rest of the game. 16.♗e2 ♖f8 17.♖h2 a6 18.♗c3

18.♗xc7 opening up the c-file for the black rook doesn't look right.

18...gxf3 19.gxf3 b5 20.fxe4 ♗xe4 21.♗xe4 ♗xe4 22.♖f1 ♖g7 23.c3



23...♗xd4! The most incisive continuation. Black is not afraid to sacrifice material in order to break through. With that said, 23...b4 is also a good way to continue the attack.

24.cxd4 ♖xd4 25.♖f7+ ♗c6 26.♗f3 ♗g6! 27.♖xc7+ ♖xc7 28.♗xc7 ♗f6

Black has just two pawns for a piece at the moment but his attack is irresistible. 29.♗f4 e5 30.♗h6 ♖c4+ 31.♗d1 ♖xa2 32.♖d2 ♖b3+ 33.♗e1 e4 34.♗e2 ♗xb2 35.♖g5 ♖c3+ 36.♗d1 ♖d4+ 37.♗c2 ♖f6 38.♖g4

38.♖xf6+ ♗xf6 prolongs the agony but the black pawns will eventually decide the game.

38...♗f5 39.♖f4 ♖c3+ 40.♗d1 e3 41.♗xb5+ axb5 42.♖xe3 ♗g4+ 43.♗e2 ♖xe3 44.♗xe3 d4 0-1

In round 5 Dan Kazmaier defeated Belsar Valencia on board 1 and took the lead with 4.5 points. FMs Dale Haessel and Ian Findlay as well as Omid Malek won their games and joined Belsar with 4/5. The SwissSys pairing software decided that Dan would be challenged by FM Haessel in his last game on board 1.

The round featured the following interesting rook endgame on board 6.

Booker, Brad (2221) – Daniluk, Jim (1986) [B30]

Alberta Open, Calgary (5.6), 10.10.2016



White dreams of exchanging the d6-pawn for the b4-pawn with a theoretical draw but Black finds a nice and clear path to victory. 50...♖b4 51.♗g2 ♖b1 52.h4 b4 53.♗h2 b3 54.♗g2 b2! Such a committal decision requires precise calculation. Black must have foreseen the winning plan at this point.

55.♗h2 White can't do anything to cross the opponent's plan. The rook has to stay on b6, while the king is restricted to just two squares: g2 and h2. 55...h6 56.♗g2 g5 57.hxg5 hxg5 58.♗h2 f4 59.gxf4 gxf4 60.♗g2 f3+ 60...e3 is also sufficient. 61.♗h2 e3 62.d7+ ♗xd7 63.fxe3 f2 0-1

In the decisive game of the tournament Dale obtained a promising position out of the opening but just couldn't capitalize on it. Dan took advantage of the opponent's mistakes and went on to win in 34 moves. Thus, Daniel Kazmaier finished clear first with an excellent score of 5.5/6. The second place went to FM Ian Findlay (5/6) who defeated Omid Malek in the last round. Despite a great start, Belsar Valencia ended up only third (4.5/6).

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2016 Edmonton Fall Sectional

The 2016 edition of the annual event was held at the Edmonton Chess Club on October 29-30. The tournament was organized by Micah Hughey and directed by Dustin Koperski. As usual, participants were slotted into groups of 6 according to ratings, then each group played their own round-robin tournament.

Section A was dominated by FM Ian Findlay who won yet another tournament in 2016. Ian clinched the first place with a round to go, then agreed to a quick draw with Keith MacKinnon to make his final 4.5/5 score official. Rob Gardner had an eventful weekend and ended up clear second with 3/5. Butch Villavieja, Erik Tam and Omid Malek shared the third place with 2/5. I have decided to include two following fragments in this report.

Malek, Omid (2180) –

MacKinnon, Keith (2295) [A45]

Edmonton Fall Sectional A (2), 29.10.2016



After a long manoeuvring middlegame battle Black has achieved a better position. White's main consolation is a safer king but after his next it's no longer the case. **40.g4? hxg4 41.fxg4** **g8!** **42.h5 fxg4 43.gxg4 d6 44.f2** **f5?!** This is not the right plan.

Instead, **44...ag8** looks pretty good.

45.f3? g7? **45...ag8** still looks good. After **46.fxf5** **g2+** **47.f2** **exf5** the h5-pawn is going to fall soon leaving Black with both material and positional advantage. **46.b1 f5** Forced. The white queen must not be allowed to penetrate. **47.b5**

Also possible and probably better is **47.f3!** intending to play **g5** next. Black, however, has **47...f5** with the following wacky variation: **48.f5**



Round 2 of the Edmonton Fall Sectional. Foreground: Robert Gardner – Erik Tam. Background: Omid Malek–Keith MacKinnon.

xf4 49.fxf5+ e8 50.fxe6 and it's only the computer that knows why this position is drawn. A possible way to get to this result quickly is as follows: **50...fxh3+ 51.fh1 f2+ 52.g1** **h3+ 53.fh1 f2+** with a perpetual.

47...fxg4 48.fg5+? This knight is an important defender. Correct is **48.fg4** even though Black's chances must be preferred after **48...fxh5**.

48...f6 49.fg4 fxh5+ 50.fg2 **xc3?** Looks crushing except that White has a great reply. Instead, after **50...fah8** White is in serious trouble.



51.f2!! Suddenly turning the tables. The queen is going to e5 with lethal threats so Black doesn't have time to take the rook. **51...fah8?** Throwing

away the rest of the full point.

51...g8 was proposed in the post-mortem and this move does hold Black's position together. After **52.b1** **c7!** Black has everything covered.

Another good move is **51...e7** Now after **52.f5** Black can take a draw by perpetual: **52...b2+ 53.f3 c3+ 54.f2 b2+** etc.

52.f5+ e7 53.fg7+ e8 In this position White has two ways to win.

54.fg6+ Omid demonstrates the first one. The other route is **54.f7+ d8 55.fxe6+ c8 56.fg8+ fxg8+ 57.fg8+ d7 58.f5+** with a quick checkmate to follow.

54...d8 55.f6+ c8 56.fxe6+ c7 57.f7+ c6 58.f5+! The only but sufficient move here. **58...fxc5 59.dxc5 f2+ 60.fg3 fxc5 61.fxa5+ c6 62.f5** The rest is redundant.

62...f1 63.f3 d1 64.fg6+ fb7 65.f2 f5 66.f2 1-0

Gardner, Robert (2291) –

Villavieja, Butch (2201) [E84]

Edmonton Fall Sectional A (5), 30.10.2016

An interesting endgame on the next diagram has a drawish flavor thanks to the presence of the opposite-color bishops on the board.

47...b5 48.a4 d3

48...d4 looks like a clear-cut way to



Gardner – Villavieja, after 47. ♔e4

a draw: 49. ♖xd4 ♗xd4 and the white pawns will be blocked soon.

49. ♗f3 g5 Possible but makes Black's task more complicated. Simpler is 49... ♖c5 intending to meet 50.a5 with 50... ♗b5 with an easy draw.

50.a5 ♗b5? It's hard to believe but after this natural move Black won't be able to stop the a-pawn. Correct is 50... ♖d5! which doesn't really look right at first glance. Now 51.a6 ♗xc6 52. ♗xd5+ ♖b6 is an easy draw.

White can also try 51. ♗xd5 ♗xd5 52. ♗b4+ hoping for 52... ♖c5? 53.a6! ♖b6 54. ♖d5+. However, after 52... ♖d6 a draw is inevitable.

51.a6! White doesn't miss his chance.

51... ♖c5 52.a7 ♖c7 53. ♗b8! ♗d4 54. ♗a6 1-0 [53... ♖b4 54. ♗a6+ leads to the same result.]

Section B was closer: Alvin Guevarra and Bhavik Dave tied for the first place with 3.5/5, while Dante Briones ended up third (3/5). Section C was similar to Section A: Cristian Ivanescu won easily with 4.5/5, Matthew Zita took second with 3/5 and Dustin Koperski finished third (2.5/5).

Finally, Section D was won by Mark Tavera with a perfect score. Leonard Relling, Dean MacDonald and Ron Offengended shared the second place with 3/5.

22nd Annual Medicine Hat Open

By Dr. Bill Taylor, Organizer and TD

The 22nd Annual Medicine Hat "Open" (Fall) Chess Tournament took place on another sunny, warm, "Fall" weekend. Considering the relatively rainy Spring and Summer we've had in Alberta, it was a blessing to have warm, sunny days for this event, now in its 22nd year.

This year the Medicine Hat Chess Club (MHCC) was pleased to welcome **16** players (exactly the same number as last year), including 4 first time participants. In particular, we welcomed another young (age 7) Junior Chess Player (Anand Rishi Chandra). We had another 7 year-old last year. Anand distinguished himself by beating two adults and finishing with 2/5 points. He gave me a tough game in the opening round! To the best of my knowledge, we welcomed our first FIDE master (FM) in the personage of Ian Findlay, who is now based in Banff. He was the highest rated player, and delivered on his promise. Five players(!) joined us from Lethbridge, including 2 new participants (Bruce Coates and Jeff Milner); Dr. Paul Viminitz (a "veteran" of Lethbridge attendees. I think he's been with us at least 8 times over the years); Jack Davies (who returned to us after an almost 10 year absence); and Jerry Mikusek. Our very faithful Edmonton participants, John Quiring and Steve Panteluk were in attendance.

This year we had another new first time winner, **Ian Findlay**, who finished with a perfect score of **5/5**. In second place, also for the first time(!), was **Steve Panteluk** with **4/5**. Steve was presented with a 2nd place plaque, and commented that he had never before received a plaque for any chess accomplishment. He was very excited!!!! There was a 4-way tie for 3rd place in the top section between the following participants: **John Quiring**, **(Dr.) Bill Taylor**, your intrepid reporter, **Jack Davies**, and **Adam Szulski** with **3/5**. In the lower (under 1700) section, **Jerry Mikusek** finished 1st with **3/5**. There was a 4-way tie for 2nd place between the following participants: **Chris Jonker**, **(Dr.) Paul Viminitz**, **Mike Scholz**, and our Junior, **Anand Rishi Chandra**. The entry fees minus the requisite deduction for ACA dues (16 x \$5.00) were returned as cash prizes. This was supplemented with a small cash injection by the MHCC and merchandise prizes to the "top" finishers in each section.

True to tradition, all tournament participants were treated to the usual Medicine Hat and "Taylor-made" hospitality. My wife, Margaret, continues to make this a reality for which all participants (especially myself) are grateful!! She coordinated the Saturday Night drinks and dessert (which this year offered an enormous, gigantic, overwhelming huge slab of carrot cake from the Cheesecake Café [it proba-

bly weighed 20 lbs. – we only consumed about 10% of it!]). Additionally, there were yummy pumpkin chocolate chip cookies, frozen strawberries, ice cream, and Redi-whip type of topping. Complimentary coffee, tea, hot chocolate, a variety of soft drinks, assorted muffins, and a plentitude of Werther's® soft and hard candies, chocolate covered raisins, Skittles®, and wine gums were offered up. All of this came courtesy of the generous support of **49** sponsors.

Once again, I shared, and cajoled others to share, jokes with the assembled multitude. Most of this came from a joke calendar I received as a Christmas present. This tradition, started in 2009, will continue, as "Laughter, truly is the best medicine". There were a few descending opinions (e.g. Dr. Paul Viminitz), but hey it's a free world, and there's no accounting for taste. Thank you to all who dignified my request to promote levity.

In addition to the Saturday night "**Drinks and Dessert**" social (for the fifteenth consecutive year!), we once again offered "**Lunch for a Buck**" on Sunday, for the 19th straight year. My wife (Margaret) provided thick, creamy, potato cheddar soup (to which fresh broccoli had been added), sliced lumberjack sandwiches, and potato salad. Additionally, there was a massive amount of leftover carrot cake for dessert. Thanks to our sponsors, **\$175.00** was injected into the tournament prize fund, over and above the entry fees. This is the 18th straight year that our prize fund has exceeded the value of our entry fees. With the anticipated ongoing support of our many sponsors, and the new sponsors that I recruit, I will continue to offer all of these "perks" and enhancements next year. I continue to encourage and challenge other tournament committees/TDs elsewhere, to offer similar enhancements at their Chess tournaments. Ian Findlay is organizing and coordinating the Banff Open in November. He plans to have wine and cheese at his house. He commented to me that I have set a pretty high standard for the beneficence offered to our MHO tournament participants. I know that such enhancements would not be possible, without the support of sponsors. As stated many times before, (and I will continue to repeat myself like the proverbial broken record!), **SPONSORSHIP MAKES IT ALL POSSIBLE!!** Please feel free to contact me if you want some ideas on how to go about it. Until next year ...

Jerry Kobalenko and Robert Sasata tie for first at the 2016 Banff Open

The 2016 ACA calendar featured a new event – Banff Open. A six-round Open Swiss took place at the Banff Centre on November 11-13 and attracted a total of 32 participants. The tournament organizer FM Ian Findlay did an excellent job in putting everything together, including a Wine and Cheese party after the end of round 4.

The ACA Board of Directors guaranteed a prize fund of \$1,000 and another \$100 was added by the Society of Chess Aficionados. Even though only two rounds were played every day, the time control was shortened to a game in 90 minutes (with a 30-second increment) to give participants more opportunities to explore Canada's oldest national park.

The story of the tournament turned out to be Jerry Kobalenko from Canmore, whose CFC rating prior to the start of the event was just 1934. Jerry managed to score 5/6, including three straight wins over FM Dale Haessel, Robert Sasata and FM Ian Findlay. In round 5 he was completely lost against Omid Malek but saved half a point somehow. In this report I'll try to figure out what happened in those games.

Haessel, Dale (2264) – Kobalenko, Jerry (1927) [E73] 2016 Banff Open (2.3), 11.11.2016

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♗e3 e5 7.d5 ♖e8 8.g4 f5 9.gxf5 gxf5 10.♖f3 Another promising direction is 10.exf5!? with a different pawn structure. 10...f4 11.♗d2 ♖h8 12.♗c2 a5 13.0-0-0 ♖a6 14.♗dg1 ♖c5 15.h4 ♗d7 16.h5 White's following plan ends up working in Black's favor. Instead, 16.♖e1!? intending to exchange the c5-knight deserves attention. 16...♗h6 17.♖h2 ♖f6 18.♖g4 ♖xg4 19.♗xg4 ♗xg4 20.♗xg4 ♗g8 21.♗xg8+ ♗xg8 (see next diagram). Exchanges have improved Black's position a lot, and he has also seized control of the g-file. White must now switch to defence.

22.♖b5? This sortie leads to trouble. It is essential for White to find the following line: 22.f3! ♗g2 23.♗d1 The point is that 23...♖d3+ 24.♖c2 ♖f2? doesn't work in view of 25.♗g1 ♖xd1 26.♗xg2 ♖xc3 27.♗xc3 with a much better endgame for the first player. 22...♗e1 23.♗e1 ♗xf2 24.♖xc7 ♗c8



Round 4 of the Banff Open. Foreground: Robert Sasata – Georgi Kostadinov.



Haessel – Kobalenko, after 21... ♗xg8

Good enough for decisive advantage but there is an even stronger alternative. 24...♗g8! turns out to be lethal. The threat of ♗g2 is hard to parry; in case of 25.♗c3 f3+ 26.♖b1 ♗xc2+ 27.♖xc2 f2 28.♗f1 ♗g1 the white king suddenly walks into a checkmate: 29.♗xf2 ♗c1#

25.♖b5 f3 26.♖d1 ♗xd2+? It turns out that 26...♗g2! clearing the way for the pawn wins on the spot. White has nothing better than 27.♗xh6 f2 28.♗e2 then 28...fxe1+ 29.♖xe1 ♗h1+ etc. 27.♗xd2 ♗xd2 28.♖xd2 f2 29.♗f1 ♖xe4+ 30.♖d3 ♗xc4! 31.♗xf2?

Blundering a piece. Instead, after 31.♖xc4 ♖d2+ 32.♖d3 ♖xf1 33.♖e2 ♖e3 34.♖xf2 ♖f5 Black is up a pawn but

has got a lot of work to do to convert. 31...♗b4 0-1

Kobalenko, Jerry (1927) – Sasata, Robert (2341) [D02] 2016 Banff Open (3.1), 12.11.2016



After 20 moves of play the position looks normal and approximately equal. 21.f3?! Voluntarily weakening his own king. Instead, rearranging the rooks by means of 21.♖d1 ♖e8 22.♗ac1 is logical. 21...h5 Immediate 21...♖e8 is preferable. 22.♖f2 Steinitz would have been delighted but this king's centralization doesn't look right. 22...♖e8 23.♗c3 ♗c5 24.♗d4 ♗f5 25.♖d1?! Looks natural but the rook had to go to c1 instead. 25...♗f6 Black misses a chance to play 25...♖d6! threatening

to jump to e4 or to take on c4. Here 26.♖xd6? doesn't work in view of 26...♖c2+ 27.♔g1 ♖xd6! 28.♖b1 ♖dc6 with deadly threats.

26.e4! Forcing favorable simplifications. 26...♖xd4+ 27.♖xd4 ♖xd4

Black can try 27...♖h3 but after 28.♖xd8 ♖xd8 29.♖xd8 ♖xh2+ 30.♔e3 ♔f8 31.♖ad1 ♖xg3 32.♖a8 White's active rooks will be a big nuisance.

28.exf5 ♖xd1 29.♖xd1 exf5 30.♖d7 ♖c7 31.♖xc7 ♔xc7 32.♔d6 Black will not be able to hold on to his extra pawn, so the endgame should be a draw. **32...♔e6?!**

The computer recommends 32...f4!? intending to split White's queenside pawns. After 33.gxf4 ♔d5 the position is drawn. 33.♔c8 fxg3+ 34.♔xg3 ♔d5 35.♔xa7 f6 is also OK for Black.



33.♔c8 Now Black has problems with his queenside that he was unable to solve. **33...a5 34.♔xb6 ♔c5 35.♔e3 ♔xb3 36.♔d3 f4 37.gxf4 ♔f8 38.♔c3 ♔c5?** Black's desire to defend the a5-pawn gives White a crucial tempo. The best chance is 38...♔c1!? 39.♔c4 ♔e7 40.♔b5 ♔d6 41.♔c4+ ♔c7 42.♔xa5 ♔e2 and the game is far from being over.

39.♔c4 ♔b7 Now Black is completely lost. The last chance is 39...♔e6 40.♔b5 ♔e7 41.♔c4 ♔d7 bringing the king to the queenside even though after a plausible 42.♔e5+ ♔c7 43.♔xf7 ♔xf4 44.♔xa5 White's position still looks close to winning. **40.♔b5 ♔e7 41.♔c4 ♔e6 42.♔b6 ♔d8 43.♔xa5 ♔f5 44.♔c6 ♔e6 45.a5 ♔xf4 46.a6 1-0**

In round 4 Jerry was very close to being lost against FM Ian Findlay but the opponent's surprising mistake turned the tables.

Kobalenko, Jerry (1927) –

Findlay, Ian (2319) [A14]

2016 Banff Open (4.1), 12.11.2016

1.♔f3 ♔f6 2.g3 d5 3.♖g2 e6 4.0-0 ♖e7 5.b3 0-0 6.♖b2 c5 7.d4 ♔c6 8.♔bd2 b6 9.c4 ♖b7 10.e3 ♖c8 11.♔e5 cxd4 12.exd4 dxc4 13.♔dxc4 b5!

A good novelty. 13...♔d5 was played before, which is less energetic.

14.♔xc6?! Inaccurate. White's best is 14.♔e3 keeping pieces on the board. If he does want exchanges, the way to do it is 14.♖xc6 ♖xc6 15.♔xc6 ♖xc6 16.♔e5 etc.

14...♖xc6 15.♖xc6?!

15.♔e3 is still relatively best. Now Black takes advantage of the opponent's inaccuracies.

15...bxc4! 16.♖f3 c3 This strong passer gives Black a significantly better position. **17.♖c1 ♔d5 18.a3 a5 19.♖c2 ♖b6 20.♖d1 ♖fd8 21.♖d3 ♖f6 22.♖e3?**

Black's last two moves gave White a chance to bail out with 22.♖xd5! ♖xd5 23.♖e3 ♖xd4 24.♖xd4 ♖xd4 25.♖xc3 simplifying into an almost equal endgame.

22...♔xe3 23.fxe3 e5 24.d5 e4! 25.♖xe4 ♖e8 26.♖f5 ♖xe3 The computer advocates 26...♖cd8!? even though it gives White time for 27.♖e1.



27.♖f2? White is trying to be tricky but this move should lose the game. Relatively best is 27.♖xe3 although White's position remains unpleasant after a plausible 27...♖xe3+ 28.♔g2 ♖e8.

27...♖xd3? Black must have overlooked something.

He should play 27...c2! first hitting the rook on a1. Then after 28.♖c1 ♖xd3 29.♖xb6 ♖d4+ works well. 27...♖ce8 is not bad either as White remains on the

ropes after 28.♖xe3 ♖xe3.

28.♖xb6 ♖d4+ 29.♖xd4 ♖xd4 30.♖xc8 c2 31.♖g4! This may be the resource that Black missed in his calculations. **31...♖xg4?**

It is time to secure half a point by means of 31...a4! After 32.bxa4 ♖xg4 33.♖c1 ♖c4 Black holds on to the c2-pawn for a few moves. The position is drawn as White's pawns are too weak.

32.♖c1 ♔f8 33.♖xc2 ♖d4 34.♖c5 a4 35.bxa4 ♖xa4 36.d6! An excellent try. **36...♔e8 37.♖e5+ ♔d7 38.♖e7+ ♔xd6 39.♖xf7 g5 40.♖f3 ♔e5**



Black has good drawing chances but was unable to hold this ending. **41.♖b3 h5 42.h3 ♖c4**

42...g4!? intending to exchange pawns may be a draw right there. 43.h4 ♖a5 is not dangerous for Black.

43.♖e3+ ♔f5 44.♔f2 h4 45.g4+ ♔f4 46.♖f3+ ♔e4 47.♔g2 ♖a4? Why not 47...♖c2+ 48.♖f2 ♖c4? 49.♖b2 may be answered by 49...♔e3 and White cannot make progress.

48.♖b3! ♔e5 49.♔f2 ♔f6 50.♔e2 ♔g6 Things are quickly going downhill for Black from here. **51.♔d2 ♖a8 52.♔c3 ♖c8+ 53.♔b2 ♖a8 54.♖b4 ♖a7 55.a4 ♖a8 56.♔a3 ♖a7 57.♖b5 ♖e7 58.a5 ♖e3+ 59.♖b3 ♖e5 60.♔a4 ♖e4+ 61.♖b4 ♖e3 62.a6 ♖e1 63.♔a5 ♖a1+ 64.♔b6 ♖e1 65.a7 ♖e8 66.♖a4 1-0**

Malek, Omid (2177) –

Kobalenko, Jerry (1927) [A45]

2016 Banff Open (5.1), 13.11.2016

1.d4 ♔f6 2.♖g5 g6 3.♖xf6 exf6 4.e3 f5 5.g3 ♖g7 6.♖g2 d5 7.♔e2 b6?

There is no such move in the database, and for a good reason. **8.c4!** Certainly. White is going to win the d5-pawn soon. **8...c6 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.**

♖bc3 ♜b7 11.♙b3 0-0 12.0-0 ♜c6
 13.♙xd5 ♙e7 14.♙b5 White has a
 decisive advantage already.



14...♖a5 15.♙xb7 ♙xb7 16.♙d5 ♙e7
 17.a3 ♜fd8 18.♙g2 ♜c4 19.b4 ♜ac8
 20.♙fc1 a6 21.h4 b5 22.♜h2 ♜h6 23.
 a4 ♜b8 24.axb5 axb5 25.♜d5 ♙d6
 26.♜ec3 ♜d2 27.♜a7 ♜g7 28.♜ca1
 ♜dc8 29.♜1a6 ♜c6 30.♜xc6 ♙xc6 31.
 ♜c7 ♙e6 32.♜c5 ♙a6 33.f4 ♜b3 34.
 ♜c7 Allowing Black to exchange the
 queenside pawns brings him some
 relief. Better is 34.♜c7! maintaining a
 dominating position. 34...♙a3 35.♜xb5
 ♜xb5 36.♜7xb5 ♙xb4 Starting from
 here, White gradually goes astray and
 ends up losing his extra pawn. 37.d5
 ♜c5 38.♙d2 ♜g8 39.d6 ♜d7 40.♙g2
 ♜f8 41.e4 ♜xd6? This natural move is
 actually a blunder. Correct is 41...fxe4
 42.♙xe4 ♙c5! emphasizing that the
 white pieces are tied up.



42.♜xd6? The final mistake.
 Instead, 42.♙d2! wins a piece. Per-
 haps, Black counted on 42...♜c5 43.
 ♙xd7 ♙b2+ 44.♜h3 ♜g1 threatening
 checkmate, and White understandably
 decided not to take any chances. In



Alberta Junior Championship: playing hall during round 1

fact, after 45.exf5! ♙h2+ 46.♜g4 h5+
 47.♜g5 ♙xg3+ 48.♜f6 ♙xh4+ 49.♜e5
 the king reaches safety, then White's
 extra piece should tell.
 42...♙xd6 43.e5 ♙c5 44.♜d5 ♜g7 45.
 ♙d2 h5 ½-½

When the dust finally settled, Jerry Ko-
 balenko and Robert Sasata tied for the first
 place with 5/6. Ian Findlay, Omid Malek
 and Georgi Kostadinov shared the third
 with a score of 4.5/6. Special thanks to
 Dustin Koperski for directing the event.

2016 Alberta Junior Championship

The annual competition open to all players
 of under 20 years of age took place at the
 Edmonton Chess Club on November 19-
 20. The participants were slotted into four
 sections: Championship, Open, Under
 1300 and Girls.

The Championship section was once again
 a round-robin tournament of six players
 led by the rating favorite and the defend-
 ing champion Diwen Shi. Unlike 2015,
 Diwen never let his foot off the gas pedal
 and smoothly cruised to victory with a
 score of 4.5/5. The second seed Mohamad
 Fellah had an eventful weekend and fin-
 ished half a point behind the winner. The
 third place was decided in the last round
 game Kaixin Wang – Chenxi Wu. White
 was totally winning but an unfortunate
 blunder turned the tables completely, and
 Chenxi ended up clear third with 3/5.

The Open section was won by Karlo Gas-
 parac with a result of 4.5/5. The second
 place went to Anand Rishi Chandra (4/5);
 Cameron Ratte and Julian Lau tied for the
 third place with 3/5.

The Under 1300 section was tightly con-
 tested, Paul Le emerging victorious with
 5/6. Three players shared the second place
 with 4/6: Yash Darvekar, Piaoyi Wu and
 Kevin Qin.

The Girls section was also a qualifier for
 the 2017 Susan Polgar Foundation Girls'
 Invitational tournament. Lucy Chao won



Jerry Kobalenko at the 2016 Banff Open

the section along with the right to represent Alberta in St. Louis next year. Michelle Mo finished second, and Sydney Mah ended up third.

Special thanks to Dustin Koperski for organizing and directing the tournament.

I have decided to include the following two fragments in this report.

Fellah, Mohamad (2051) – Wang, Kaixin (1845) [B90]

AB Junior Championship (1), 19.11.2016

The most adventurous game of the weekend. 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.f3 e5 7.♗b3 ♕e6 8. ♕e3 ♕e7 9.♖d2 0-0 10.0-0 ♗bd7 11.g4 Both players follow the main roads of the Najdorf. 11...♖c8 Here 11...b5 is far more popular. 12.g5 ♗h5 13.♖g1 ♗b6 14.♖f2?

In such positions prophylactic 14.♗b1 is usually a good move. White doesn't fear 14...♗c4 15.♕xc4 etc.

14...♗c4 Natural. Nevertheless, Black has an interesting resource 14...♖xc3! 15.♕xb6 ♕xg5+ 16.♗b1 ♕h4! He will end up with a slightly better position when the dust settles.

15.♕xc4 ♕xc4 16.♗a5?! A trap that suddenly worked. Michael Adams opted for a solid 16.♗b1 in his 2005 game against Alexander Grischuk.

16...♖xa5? Now the black queen will be trapped. Instead, 16...♕e6! leaves him with a slightly better position. Here 17.♗xb7? ♖c7 18.♗a5 doesn't work because the c4-square has become available: 18...♖xa5 19.♕b6 ♖b4 20. a3 ♖c4 and the queen returns home unscathed.

17.♕b6 ♖xc3 [17...♖b4 18.a3 doesn't make much of a difference.]

18.bxc3 ♗f4 Black has a lot of positional compensation but it is still not enough to offset the material deficit.

19.♖g4 White's idea to return some material is correct but the execution isn't the best. The computer advocates 19.♖ge1!? ♕xg5 20.♕e3 consolidating.

19...♕xa2 20.♗b2 ♕e6 21.♖xf4! It is indeed the right decision to eliminate this knight. 21...exf4 22.♕d4?

But sacrificing the g5-pawn isn't. Correct is 22.h4! holding on the pawn.

22...♕xg5 23. ♖g1 f6! The only defence that White must have underestimated.

24.h4 ♕h6 Now he doesn't have any material advantage. 25.♖d1 ♖c6 26.



Alberta Junior: Mohamad Fellah – Kaixin Wang and Matthew Zita – Diwen Shi

♕b6 ♖fc8 27. ♕a5 b6 28.♕b4 ♖d8

28...a5!? looks more to the point. I don't think that White would have gone for 29.♕xd6 ♖xc3 30.♖xb6 ♖xc2+ 31. ♗a1 exposing his own king to the maximum. An alternative is 29.♕a3 but Black can still play 29...♖xc3 30.♖xd6 ♖xc2+ 31.♖xc2 ♖xc2+ 32.♗xc2 and here 32...♕h3! 33.♖xb6 ♕g2 gives him enough counterplay for a draw.

29.♖d4 ♗f7 30.♖d2 What to do now?

30...♗e7? Black has to let the d6-pawn go: 30...a5 31.♕xd6 ♖dc8 and he may still be OK.

Now White finds a winning breakthrough: 31.♖e2! b5 32.e5! fxe5 33.

♖xe5 The pin decides the outcome of the game. 33...♗f7 34.♖xd6 ♖dxd6

35.♕xd6 ♖c4 36.♕c5 ♖a4 White's attack is irresistible, and he finds a right way after a few moves. 37.♖c7+ ♗g6

38.♖e5 ♗f7 39.♖h5+ ♗f6 40.♕d4+ ♗e7 41.♖c5+ ♗e8 42.♖e5 ♗f7 43.h5

♖c4 44.♕c5 g6 45.♖c7+ ♗g8 46. ♖d8+ It's checkmate in 3. 1-0

Wu, Chenxi (1892) –

Fellah, Mohamad (2051) [B91]

AB Junior Championship (2), 19.11.2016

(Please see the next diagram.)

Black is threatening ♕h4. White decides to parry the threat by striking first: 23.♖xe7? Correct is 23.♖g4 with a normal game. 23...♖xe7 24.♕xd6



Wu – Fellah, after 22... ♖d8

♖xf1+ 25.♕xf1 ♖a7! The refutation.

26.♖e3 Certainly not 26.♕xf8? ♗e4+ and the white queen is gone.

26...♖c8? This justifies White's play.

The winning move is 26...♖xf1+! with the idea 27.♗xf1 ♖a6+ 28.♗f2 ♖xd6.

27.♕b5 ♖b6 28.♕c6 ♗a4 29.♖xb6

The computer advocates a pawn sacrifice 29.♗f2!? ♖xe3+ 30.♗xe3 ♗xb2 31.♗d4, when the passed d5-pawn becomes very strong.

29...♗xb6 Now the position is equal but White misses a trick later on.

30.♗f2 ♗f7 31.b3 ♗f6 32.♗e3?

He should play 32.♗f4 maintaining equality. 32...♕xd5+ That's the trick.

33.♕xd5 ♖d8 34.♗d4 ♖xd6 35.♗c5 ♗e5 And Black went on to win this end-game; 0-1 on move 47.

BEYOND ALBERTA

This summer several Albertans travel out of the province to participate in the national championships. In particular, Alberta Closed champion Bitan Banerjee and Alberta Junior champion Diwen Shi played in the Open section of the 2016 Canadian Open that took place in Windsor, Ontario, July 10-17. In the field of 48 players Bitan scored 6/9 and tied for the fourth place with GM Alexander Cherniaev and Ben Li. Diwen finished with 5/9. The tournament was won by GM Gergely Antal from Hungary with a score of 7.5/9. In the following game Diwen had a real chance to get a GM scalp.

Shi, Diwen (2132) – Cherniaev, Alexander (2451) [B06]

Canadian Open, Windsor (7), 16.07.2016

1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♗g7 3.♖c3 a6 4.f4 b5 5.♗f3 ♗b7 6.♗d3 d6 7.e5 ♗d7 8.♖e2 Delaying castling in favor of more useful developing moves also keeps the option of queenside castling open. 8...c5 9.♗g5 Leaving the d4-pawn undefended but White probably knows what he is doing. 9...cxd4 Black is up to the challenge. 10.e6 f6? A novelty that will not attract any followers. So far Black has exclusively played 10...f5 with great results in spite of unfavorable computer evaluation after 11.exd7+ ♖xd7 12.♗d1 e5 13.fxe5 dxe5 14.a4!

11.exd7+ ♖xd7 12.♗e6 dxc3 The first critical position of the game.



13.♖g4? After this White is left empty-handed. On the contrary, after 13.f5!

he wins the opening battle. Black is hard pressed to find a move. For example, 13...♗d5 14.♗xg7+ ♗f7 15.♗e6 cxb2 16.♗xb2 ♗xe6 17.fxe6+ ♖xe6 18.♖xe6+ ♗xe6 and the white bishops outweigh the opponent's pawns.

13...♖c6 14.♗xg7+ ♗f7 15.♗e6 ♗h6 Gaining valuable time on the queen.

16.♖h3 ♖xg2 17.♖xg2 ♗xg2 18.♖g1 ♗b7 19.♗d4 cxb2 20.♗xb2 e5

In comparison with the line above, Black kept an important light-squared bishop and managed to put his central pawn mass in motion.

21.fxe5 dxe5 22.♗b3 The position is approximately balanced. 22...♖hc8 23.0-0-0 ♖c7 24.♗a5 ♗f3? This natural move has a tactical flaw but Black gets away with it.

Instead, 24...♗d5!? loses a pawn to 25.♗xg6+ hxg6 26.♖xd5 but somehow gives Black sufficient counterplay: 26...♗f5 (threatening the c2-pawn) 27.♖d2 ♖h8 with compensation for the material deficit.



25.♖de1? Pity. After 25.♗xe5! Black loses a pawn without a shred of compensation. For example, 25...♖e7 26.♖df1 ♖xe5 27.♖xf3.

Or 25...fxe5 26.♖gf1 etc.

25...♗g4 26.♖gf1 ♗f5! 27.♗xf5?

Leaving the opponent's pawn structure as is 27.♗b1 is a lesser evil.

27...gxf5 28.♗b1 ♖ac8 29.♖e2 f4 30.♗b3 ♗g4 31.♗c1? Blundering another pawn certainly doesn't help White's cause. 31...♖xc2 32.♖xc2 ♖xc2 33.♗xc2 ♗e3+ 34.♗d3 ♗xf1

Black's passer will decide the outcome of the game. 35.h3 ♗e6 36.♗e2 ♗e3 37.♗d3 ♗c4 38.♗c1 a5 39.♗b2 ♗d5 40.♗xc4 ♗xc4 41.♗b2 b4 42.♗d2 a4 43.a3 bxa3 44.♗xa3 ♗b3 45.♗e7 f5 46.♗d6 e4 47.♗xf4 a3 48.♗e5 a2 49.♗d4 f4 50.♗e5 f3 0-1

Jim Daniluk from Calgary also played in the Open section and finished with 4/9.

The Under 2000 section also featured three Albertans. Jafar Faraji from Lethbridge actually ended up winning the section with 7.5/9, a full point ahead of the second place finisher. Chris White from La Crete and David Deimert from Grande Prairie scored 3.5/9.

Alberta Women's champion WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement participated in the Canadian Closed Women's Championship and Zonal that took place in Ottawa, September 22-25. In a round-robin tournament of 7 players Agnieszka scored 4.5/6 and finished clear second, a point behind the rating favorite and a member of the Canadian Women's Olympic team Qiyu Zhou. In round 3 Agnieszka defeated the defending champion WIM Natalia Khoudgarian.

Matras-Clement, Agnieszka (2308) – Khoudgarian, Natalia (2263) [C01]

CWCC Zonal, Ottawa (3), 23.09.2016

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 exd5 4.c4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 ♗e7 6.♗f3 0-0 7.♗d3 dxc4 8.♗xc4 ♗g4 9.♗e3 ♗bd7 10.0-0 ♗b6 11.♗b3 c6 12.h3 ♗h5 13.g4 ♗g6 14.♗e5 ♗fd5 15.♖f3 ♗f6 16.♖ad1 ♖e8 17.♗f4 ♗xf4 18.♖xf4 ♗xe5 19.dxe5 ♖h4 20.♗g2 ♖ad8 21.♖fe1 ♖xd1 22.♖xd1 ♖e7 23.♗e4 ♗d5 24.♗xd5 cxd5 25.♖xd5 ♖e6 26.♗c3 h5 27.♗g3 hxg4 28.hxg4 ♖b6 29.♖d2 ♖b4 30.f4 f5 31.♖d7 ♖c5 32.♖d5+ ♖xd5 33.♗xd5 fxg4 34.♗xg4 ♗e4 35.♗g5 ♗f8 36.♗c7 ♗c6 37.♗xe8 ♗xd7 38.♗d6 b6 39.f5 ♗c6 40.♗g6 ♗d5 41.a3 a5 42.f6 1-0

Last but not least, Alberta Seniors champion Brad Booker played at the Canadian Seniors Championship in Surrey, BC, June 24-26. Brad scored 4/6 and tied for the 6th place. The tournament was won by the rating favorite David Cummings.

2017 ACA Tournament Schedule

All tournaments subject to change by the ACA and/or the Organizer.

For updated info, please visit our website:

www.albertachess.org/

Tournaments marked with a star are

Road Warrior Events



Date	Event	Organizer	Location
Jan 6-8	Schleinich Memorial*	Frank Kluytmans	Calgary
Jan-Feb	Regional Youth Ch.	Multiple	Multiple
February	University Battle of AB*	TBD	Calgary
Feb 18-19	Northern AB Open*	Ali Razzaq	Edmonton
Feb 25-26	Calgary Seniors Ch.	Frank Kluytmans	Calgary
Feb 25-26	AB Youth Championship	TBD	Edmonton
Mar 11-12	March of Kings*	Giridhar Koneru	Calgary
Mar 25	AB Active Championship*	Alexey Taranik	Red Deer
Apr 1-2	Lethbridge Open*	Jerry Mikusek	Lethbridge
Apr 8	AB Chess Challenge	Guoliang Wu	Red Deer
Apr 8-9	AB Seniors Championship	Terry Seehagen	Edmonton
Apr 14-16	AB Closed/Reserves*	Frank Kluytmans	Calgary
Apr 29-30	Edmonton Intl. Qualifier*	Leah Hughey	Edmonton
May 13-14	Red Deer Open*	Alexey Taranik	Red Deer
Jun 3-4	34th Trumpeter Classic*	Wade Caughlin	Grande Prairie
Jun 10-11	Calgary Intl. Qualifier*	Brad Booker	Calgary
Jun 17-25	12th Edmonton Intl.*	TBD	Edmonton
Jun 23-25	12th Edmonton Intl. Open*	TBD	Edmonton
Jul 1-3	Fort McMurray Open*	Jina Burn	Ft. McMurray
Jul 1-3	AB Women's Championship	Jina Burn	Ft. McMurray
Aug 2-7	10th Calgary International*	Vlad Rekhson	Calgary
Aug 26-27	Over/Under 1800*	Giridhar Koneru	Calgary
Sep 9	Battle of AB	Alexey Taranik	Red Deer
Sep 16-17	Calgary Jr. Regional	Guoliang Wu	Calgary
Sep 23-24	23rd Medicine Hat Open*	Dr. Bill Taylor	Medicine Hat
Sep 30-Oct 1	Edmonton Jr. Regional	Dustin Koperski	Edmonton
Oct 7-9	Alberta Open*	Ali Razzaq	Edmonton
Oct 27-29	Edmonton Fall Sectional*	Robert Brazeau	Edmonton
Nov 10-12	Banff Open*	Ian Findlay	Banff
Nov 18-19	AB Jr. Championship	Guoliang Wu	Calgary
Nov 25-26	Southern AB Open*	Frank Kluytmans	Calgary
Dec 16-17	WBX Team Tournament*	Terry Seehagen	Edmonton

TOP 40 CFC RATED ALBERTANS

As of December 8, 2016

1	Hansen, Eric	2626
2	Porper, Edward	2468
3	Banerjee, Bitan	2416
4	Wang, Richard	2408
5	Ng, Gary	2368
6	Valencia, Belsar	2364
7	Yam, Alex	2354
8	Pechenkin, Vladimir	2337
9	Arruebarrena, Rafael	2335
10	Kazmaier, Daniel	2323
11	Reeve, Jeff	2310
12	Matras-Clement, Agnieszka	2305
13	Findlay, Ian	2304
14	Laceste, Loren Brigham	2301
15	Haessel, Dale	2294
16	Gardner, Robert J.	2291
17	Shi, Diwen	2277
18	Haynes, Nicolas	2271
19	MacKinnon, Keith	2270
20	Caldera, Anuar	2251
21	Miller, David	2239
22	Peter, Steven	2235
23	Grumic, Sasa	2227
24	Booker, Brad	2200
25	Sequillion, Aaron	2198
26	Villavieja, Butch	2194
27	Rekhson, Vladislav	2190
28	Malek, Omid	2182
29	Robichaud, Martin	2176
30	Kobalenko, Jerry	2173
31	Boehmer, Kris	2170
32	Efemuai, Martins Oteri	2165
33	Leuchanka, Siarhei	2158
34	Tam, Erik	2142
35	Nguyen, Kim	2130
36	Hughey, Micah	2118
37	Abdelrhman, Hamid	2087
38	Kostadinov, Georgi	2087
39	Yearwood, Roy	2077
40	Ebrahim-Shirazi, Behrooz	2066

TOP 10 FIDE RATED ALBERTANS

As of December 1, 2016

1	GM Hansen, Eric	2603
2	IM Porper, Edward	2411
3	Banerjee, Bitan	2355
4	IM Wang, Richard	2337
5	FM Diwen Shi	2293
6	FM Pechenkin, Vladimir	2290
7	Laceste, Loren Brigham	2286
8	Valencia, Belsar	2281
9	Yam, Alex	2268
10	Arruebarrena, Rafael	2252

2016 Banff Open
View from the playing hall

Calgary Junior Chess Club

Contact: Guoliang Wu
email: wuguoliang@hotmail.com
website: www.calgarychess.com

University of Calgary Chess Club

Macewan Student Centre
email: chess.calgary@gmail.com
web: www.facebook.com/UofCChessClub/

Edmonton Chess Club

#204-10840 124 Street
Mondays and Thursdays 6:30 pm to 11 pm
Saturdays 1 pm to 5 pm
phone: (780) 424-0283
website: <http://www.facebook.com/TheEdmontonChessClub/>

Grande Prairie Chess Club

Contact: Tim Pradzinski
phone: (780) 518-2281
email: database@telusplanet.net
website: www.gpchessclub.com

La Crete Chess Club

Wednesday: 7 pm to 9:30 pm
Contact: Chris White
phone or text: (780) 821-0044 (Cell)
email: cwnlca@gmail.com

Portage College (Lac La Biche)

Contact: Leslie Boake
phone: (780) 623-5686
email: leslie.boake@portagecollege.ca

Airdrie Chess Club

Airdrie Public Library
111-304 Main Street SE
Thursdays 6:30 pm to 8 pm
Contact: Susanne Rempel

University of Lethbridge Chess Club

email: martin.heavyhead@uleth.ca

Fort McMurray Chess Club

Westwood Family YMCA, 221 Tundra Drive
Thursdays: 7 pm to 9:30 pm
phone: (780) 790-1008
email: fmchessclub@hotmail.com
web: www.fmchess.com

Medicine Hat Chess Club

Room 5, 826 - 11th Street S.E.
Wednesdays 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
Contact: Bill Taylor phone: (403) 526-5484
email: taylormw@shaw.ca
web: www.mhchess.com

Sherwood Park

Strathcona County Library, 2nd Floor
Wednesdays from 4 pm to closing
Contact: Les Jones
phone: (780) 467-7393

University of Alberta

All skill levels welcome to attend!
Blitz once each month in CAB 373 or 369
Email uachess@ualberta.ca for info
web: <http://uachess.wikifoundry.com/>

Red Deer Chess Club

Dawe Centre Library, 56 Holt Street
Mondays beginning at 4:30 pm
Contact: Alexey Taranik
phone: (403) 872-1062
email: taranik1978@yahoo.ca

Okotoks Chess Club

Okotoks Library, 7 Riverside Drive West
Wednesdays 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Contact: Richard Bradley
phone: (403) 938-2220
email: richard.bradley@shaw.ca

Lethbridge Junior Chess Club

Family Centre, Suite 225
200 - 4th Avenue South, Lethbridge Centre
Towards a Brighter Future
Presentation Room.
Fridays 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Contact: Peter Davis-Imhof
phone: (403) 320-4232
website: <http://www.famcentre.ca/>
email: peter.davisimhof@gmail.com

Calgary Chess Club

#274 3359 27th Street NE
Parma Tech Centre, North Building
Tuesday nights from 6:30 pm to 11 pm
Thursday nights from 6:30 pm to 11 pm
Saturday from 10 am to 1 pm
phone: (403) 264-9498
website: www.calgarychess.com