

Alberta Chess Report



A Publication of the Alberta Chess Association ♦ July 2019



GM Zierk wins 14th Edmonton International

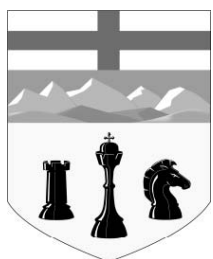


Above: Organizer Rafael Arruebarrena overlooks the start of the first round of the 14th Edmonton International. Left: Alberta Closed Championship organizer and director, Stefan Sklenka, congratulates Omid Malek after the 3rd Steinitz-Menchik. Malek went on to win the Closed a short time later. Photo by Bhavik Dave

NM Omid Malek wins 2019 Alberta Closed Championship

...and more

Alberta Chess Association



President
Angelo Tolentino

Past President
Vlad Rekhson

Vice President
Jim Daniluk

Secretary
Ian Findlay

Treasurer
Ali Razzaq

Directors
Rafael Arruebarrena
Frank Kluytmans
Dale Haessel
Guoliang Wu
Magda Marais
Daryl Bertrand
Wojtek Kowalczewski
Jordan Rohatynski

Executive Director
Leah Hughey

ALBERTA CHESS

REPORT

The Alberta Chess Report is a publication of the Alberta Chess Association. Submissions are welcome and can include photos, chess-related articles of interest, tournament reports, or game analysis. To have your submission included, please contact the ACA at albertachess@gmail.com.

CONTACT

Alberta Chess Association
PO Box 11839
Edmonton, AB T5J 3K9

albertachess@gmail.com
albertachess.org/home

The materials contained in this publication do not reflect the opinions of the Alberta Chess Association. All articles and analyses are written by the editor, Leah Hughey, unless otherwise credited.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Alberta Closed & Reserves.....	3-4, 17
Schleinich Memorial/Lethbridge Open.....	5
Northern Alberta Open.....	6
3rd Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic.....	6
Alberta Youth Chess Championship.....	7-8
Jina Burn Fort McMurray Open.....	8
14th Edmonton International.....	10-13
Alberta Seniors Championship.....	14-15
Alberta Women's Championship.....	16-17
AB Active Championship/Trumpeter Classic.....	18
Ratings Lists.....	19
Tournament Schedule.....	20

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

This is the final edition prepared by the Executive Director. Future editions will depend on volunteers. If you would like to volunteer to contribute, please use the contact information above.



Affiliated with the
Chess Federation of
Canada
www.chess.ca



The Alberta Chess Association is in partnership with the Recreation and Physical Activity Branch of Alberta Culture and Tourism to enhance the quality of life of Albertans through a variety of chess related activities. The ACA gratefully acknowledges the support provided by Alberta Culture and Tourism, as well as the AGLC, which enables the association to deliver its programs.



Alberta Closed Championship



April 19-21, 2019—Calgary

NM Omid Malek stepped in at the last moment to join the 2019 Alberta Championship. He was the final qualifier by rating, joining FM Gary Ng (2388) and CM Rafael Arruebarrena (2350).

The rest of the field was made of the qualifier winners: first time participant David Miller (2166), who won the 2018 Southern Alberta Open, 14 year old Ian Zhao (2281), who won the 2018 Alberta Open, and perennial Closed

contestant and previous winner FM Dale Haessel (2261), who won the 2019 Northern Alberta Open.

IM Bitan Banerjee, who won the last three editions of the tournament, was out of the country and thus unavailable to defend his title.

Malek set the tone early, enjoying a first round upset of CM Arruebarrena while the other two games ended in

Clockwise from top left: Malek, Ng, Arruebarrena, Haessel, Zhao, Miller. Photos by Bhavik Dave.



2019 Schleinich Memorial

January 4-6, 2019—Calgary

FM Dale Haessel (2228), by far the ratings favorite, cruised through Section A of the Schleinich, earning four wins and a draw. Second place was a tie between Sean Perron (2067) and junior Maxim Vasic (2023).

In section B, junior Hemant Srinivasan (1871) finished in first place with three wins and two draws. Second place went to Paul Wang (1857) with 3/5, while the remaining players finished in a four-way tie for third.

Relative newcomer Darwin Corpuz (1406) won Section C with 4/5. Richard Gaulin (1645) and Kevin Qin (1660) split second.

In section D, Maxim Bryuzgin (1141) was perfect, while Jonathan Wu (1055) finished in second and Abigail Sorgard (555) in third.

Thanks to the organizing and directing efforts of Steve Sklenka, twenty-four players participated in the event.



Right: FM Dale Haessel at the 2018 Alberta Open, also held at the Calgary Chess Club. Photo by Bhavik Dave.

2019 Lethbridge Open

April 6-7, 2019—Lethbridge



WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement (2308) was the clear ratings favorite going into this tournament, and despite a surprise first round draw with local Larry Erdos (1793), she did not disappoint. Instead, she reeled off four straight wins to finish in first place with 4.5/5, including a fourth round victory over her nearest competitor, David Miller (2167).

Calgary junior Anand Rishi Chandra (2064) claimed second place with two draws and three wins, while four players split third place. Many thanks to Jerry Mikusek for organizing and Dustin Koperski for directing.

Left: Miller versus Matras-Clement in round 4. Photo by Bhavik Dave.

Red Deer Chess Club

Dawe Centre Library—56 Holt Street
Contact: Alexey Taranik
Phone: (403) 872-1062

Medicine Hat Chess Club

Gas City Kiwanis Centre
Room 5, 826 – 11th Street S.E.
Contact: Bill Taylor 403.526.5484
email: taylormw@shaw.ca
www.mhchess.com

Northern Alberta Open



February 9-10, 2019—Edmonton

FM Dale Haessel (2240) was the winner in this tournament after he held on to beat favorite FM Ian Findlay (2352) in the final round—one of many games between the two this year. Haessel finished with 4.5/5 and grabbed the automatic qualifying spot for the 2019 Alberta Closed.

Second place went to Findlay, Omid Malek (2281), Rob Gardner (2204), and Butch Villavieja (2166) all with 3.5/5.

It's worth noting that the only person to get a draw off

Haessel was Edmonton junior Andi Superceanu (1789), who scored a draw with him in the first round. Andi went on to finish with 3/5.

Twenty-nine players participated in the event, which was organized by Ali Razzaq and hosted at the Edmonton Chess Club. Many thanks to Aaron Sequillion for directing.

Photo: The tournament director with most of the first and second place finishers. From left to right: Butch Villavieja, Aaron Sequillion, Omid Malek, Rob Gardner, and Dale Haessel. Photo by Bhavik Dave.

Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic

March 9-10, 2019 - Calgary

Twenty-seven people participated in the main section of the 3rd Steinitz-Menchik, with another fourteen playing in section B. For the main section, Omid Malek was the clear winner, posting a score of 4.5/5.



Second place went to Ian Zhao (2263), Georgi Kostadinov (2186), and Maxim Vasic (2121), each with 4/5, though Zhao beat the other two head to head. Numerous class prizes were given out.

Notable upsets included Patrick Tolentino (1889) over FM Ian Findlay (2374) in round 1 and Bhavik Dave (1913) over FM Dale Haessel (2279) in round 4.

In section B, Maxim Bryuzgin (1188) and Avery Li (1114) both finished with 4/5, though Bryuzgin won the head to head matchup. Third place went to the unrated Allan Cao and Matt Fu (764) with 3/5. Many thanks to Steve Sklenka and the Calgary Chess Club for organizing, directing, and hosting.

Photos: Onlookers watch the ending of the decisive final round game between Zhao and Malek, which was won by Malek. Photo by Bhavik Dave.

AB Youth Chess Championships

April 20-21, 2019—Fort McMurray

The Youth Chess Championship series began with three regional events—one each in Calgary, Edmonton, and Fort McMurray—during the month of February, and many of the winners headed up to Fort McMurray over Easter weekend to participate in the provincials.

Jina Burn had laid down much of the work to host the AYCC, and the Fort McMurray Chess Club and Magda Marais worked overtime to make sure everything came together for the big event.

Forty-three players attended the two-day tournament. Helping out as tournament directors for this event were Angelo Tolentino, Cristian Ivanescu, Bogdan Superceanu, Ico van den Born, Agnieszka Matras-Clement, and Gary Huang. Many thanks to the main organizer, Magda Marais, and the many excellent volunteers who helped along the way.

Edmonton's Matthew Ivanescu (1329), the clear favorite in the Under-8 section, pulled together five straight wins for a perfect tournament. Calgary's Aulden Wright-Maley (532) finished in second with 4/5, while Sophia Aldaco Murayama and Scott Swertz split third with 3/5.

In the Under-10 section, Edmonton's Yash Darvekar (1614) was perfect with 5/5. Second place went to Calgary's Jonathan Wu (1041), while Ben Swertz and Ray Jiang split third.

The Under-12 section featured a three-way tie for first between Calgary's Kevin Qin (1707), Edmonton's Jason Pan (1324), and Fort McMurray's Jerry Li (1170).

In the Under-14 section, Edmonton's Andi Superceanu (1853) finished ahead of the two ratings favorites—Edmonton's Mark Ivanescu (2002) and Calgary's Paul Wang (2122). Ivanescu and Wang ended up tying for second.



Above: The organizing team from the Fort McMurray Chess Club. Below: The very tired tournament directors. Next page: Some of the participants. All photos courtesy of the Fort McMurray Chess Club facebook page.

Francois Marais (1237) and Jeffrey Chen (1622) finished tied for first in the Under-16 section; however, Marais won their head-to-head matchup.

The Under-18 section ended up being remarkably balanced—the three competitors finished every game in a draw. As the three were all from Calgary, they were able to hold the tiebreak later.

The winners of the AYCC—as well as many other Albertan players—went on to participate in the Canadian Youth Chess Championship, which was held in Saskatchewan in early July. Among the Albertans who made a splash in Saskatchewan were Ian Zhao (Open U-14 Champion), Lucy Cao (Girls U-18 Champion), Anand Rishi





Chandra (Open U-12 T-Champion—playing up an age group!), Aditya Ranninga (Open U-18 Runner-Up), Sophia Aldaco Murayama (Girls U-8 T-Runner-Up), and Maxim Vasic (Open U-16 T-3rd).

Jina Burn Fort McMurray Open

June 30-July 1, 2019—Fort McMurray

The Fort McMurray Open isn't just a well-sponsored chess tournament; instead, the chess club puts on all manner of events over a week or more during late June and July. Events this year included a simul and interview by WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement, an outdoor blitz tournament, two different day-camps with swimming and chess, a bughouse tournament, and more.

The large prize fund for the tournament, sponsored by local businesses in Fort McMurray, drew several of the best players from the province. WIM Agnieszka-Matras Clement (2314) finished in first place with 4.5/5, but she had to work for it—her last three games featured her defeating IM Bitan Banerjee (2511), drawing CM Rafael Arruebarrena (2342), and defeating Bel-sar Valencia (2345).

With the strongest players taking each other out, David Miller (2187) and Ico van den Born

(2023) were able to put together very strong performances, both finishing with 4/5 and a share of second place. Van den Born, notably, upset Arruebarrena in the final round. Class prizes went to Alvin Guevarra, Francois Marais, and Shawn Jiang.

Many thanks to Magda Marais and the Fort McMurray Chess Club for organizing and hosting, and to Richard Pua for directing.

Photo: Players from the Open work to save the beloved outdoor Chess Park. Photo courtesy of the FMCC facebook page.



Alberta Chess Challenge

March 23, 2019—Red Deer

The annual Chess Challenge event was as grueling as ever. Eighty-six kids showed up, covering twelve different grades, all looking for a chance to make the provincial team and play in the nationals.

The final makeup of the national tournament ended up being, from Grade 1 to 12: Aulden Wright Maley (4/4); Matthew Ivanescu (4/4); Jonathan Wu (4/4); Yash Darvekar (4/4); Anand Rishi Chandra with 3.5/4 on tiebreak over Ron Offengenden; Helen Chen with 3/4 on tiebreak over Hemant Srinivasan; Paul Wang with 3.5/4 on tiebreak over Mark Ivanescu; Andi Superceanu (4/4); Ian Zhao (3.5/4); Elon Wang (3.5/4); Aditya Raninga (3/4); and Andre Tolentino with 3/4 on tiebreak over Lucy Cao.

Second place finishers included Bryan Chan/Lucas Wang/Linus Jin (3/4); William Wu/Jarek Walker (3/4); Christopher Nikolov (3/4); Ben Swertz (3/4); Shawn Jiang (3/4); Andrew Chen (2.5/4); Maxim Vasic (3/4); and David Yao (2/4).

Many thanks to Vera Li for organizing, and Angelo Tolentino, Vlad Rekhson, Paul Gagne, Cristian Ivanescu, and Yilong Qin for directing. Also thanks to the many parent volunteers, particularly from the Calgary Junior Chess Club, who helped with the lead up to the event and with assistance on the day of.

At the national event over Victoria Day weekend, Team Alberta finished in fourth place, after losing to Quebec, Ontario, and BC, but beating all the other provinces.



Outstanding individual performances went to Paul Wang, who won clear first in Grade 7 with 8/9; Anand Rishi Chandra, who tied for first in Grade 5 with 8/9; Jonathan Wu, who tied for second in Grade 3 with 7/9; and Aditya Raninga, who tied for third in Grade 11 with 6/9. Many thanks to Cristian Ivanescu and Angelo Tolentino for heading up Team Alberta, and to the other parents and volun-

teers who helped along the way.



*Photos:
Above, Team Fort McMurray on the way to the event, photo courtesy of the FMCC facebook page. Left: Photo of the event. Next page: Some of the winners (top left, clockwise: Grade 1, 4, 6, 8). Most photos by Angelo Tolentino.*



14th Edmonton International & Open

June 18-23, 2019—Edmonton

The Edmonton International had a surprise qualifier this year—Bhavik Dave of Calgary (2041). He and Omid Malek (2322) both finished with 4/5 in the qualifying event, but Dave won the qualifying spot on tiebreak.

Dave joined three fellow Albertans—IM Bitan Banerjee, IM Edward Porper, and FM Ian Findlay—at the main event in June, as they took on Grandmasters Alexander Shabalov, Steven Zierk, and Mark Paragua. Also invited were IM Nikolay Noritsyn, IM Praveen Balakrishnan, and FM Balaji Daggupati.

Of the Albertans, Porper had the best finish, posting a final score of 5.5/9. It was a particularly bad tournament for the invited GMs; only GM Zierk emerged unscathed from the lower-rated players—and he finished in first place despite losing to both the other GMs.

Former winner Shabalov was perfect against the other GMs but suffered losses to Findlay, Noritsyn, Banerjee, and Balakrishnan, while GM Paragua suffered an early—and remarkable—loss to Daggupati.

FM Ian Findlay was kind enough to write up his draw against IM Balakrishnan and his win over GM Shabalov.

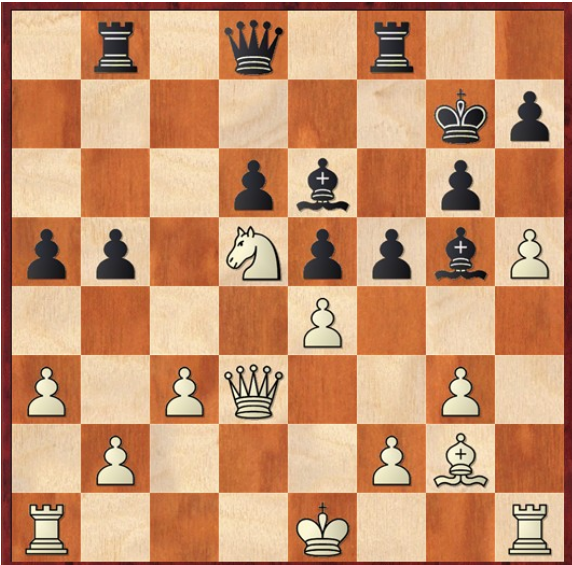
Findlay, Ian T (2206) - Balakrishnan, Praveen (2428) [B33]

Edmonton International (6.2), 22.06.2019

[FM Ian Findlay]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5 6.Ndb5 d6 7.Bg5 a6 8.Na3 b5 9.Nd5 Be7 10.Bxf6 Bxf6 11.c3 0-0

I am more familiar with 11...Bg5 which was played against me in the 70's by IM Lawrence Day and IM Bryon Nickoloff. Then in the 90's vs GM Dmitri Tyomkin, who used to visit his mother in Toronto. More recently Jim Daniluk of Calgary has played this against me many times, since I came out of retirement in 2015. **12.Nc2 Rb8** This move order has been played by Carlsen a few times in 2019, hence I suspect it may become popular. **13.h4 g6 14.h5?!** My first time playing h4 in a tournament game and I was not familiar with the nuances. Better to play 14.g3 and wait for Bg7 before playing h5. My move allowed Bg5. So - Carlsen Norway, 2019 continued 14. g3 Bg7 15. h5 Ne7 16. Nce3 Nxd5 17. Nxd5 Be6 18. Bh3 Bxd5 19. Qxd5 b4 20. c4 when White was slightly better, but the game was a



draw after move 36. **14...Bg5** **15.g3 a5** **16.a3 Be6** **17. Bg2** **Ne7** **18.Nce3** **Kg7** **19.Qd3** **Nxd5** **20.Nxd5** **f5!?** [See diagram left] Incredibly all my moves were designed to stop f5, since I would be able to open the h file for my rook and the h1-a8 diagonal for my bishop and possibly the g-file, but Black played it anyway! Arguably it is his strategic plan, and after the game, Praveen said he did not see a better plan. **21.Rd1** Activating my last piece before opening the position. The latent threat on d6 will stop a lot of tactics by Black. During the game, I thought that Black had over extended, but I did not see his 28th move. **21...Qd7** **22.hxg6 hxg6** **23.exf5?!** The engine likes 23. f4! As I human, I would not dream to open the position with my king still in the centre, but it does force the dark squared bishop into an awkward position. After 23. f4 the engine thinks that Black has to settle for 23..Bxd5 24. fxg5 Bxe4 25. Bxe4 fxe4 26. Qxd6 when White has a favourable ending. Of course, I was more afraid of 23... Bh6, but the engine finds 24.Qe3! threatening Rxh6 24...Rh8 25. exf5 gxf5 26. Qf2 Rbd8 27. Rd3 (+. 64), but as a human, I wonder where will my king seek shelter?! **23...Bxf5** **24.Be4** **Qa7** **25.0-0?** Castling prematurely on move 25! I had to eliminate the bishop with Bxf5.

25...Bh3 On here or in 2 moves, Bg4 would have been awkward for White, when Black stands better. The point is that after Bg4 26. Rde1 Bh3 27. Bg2, Black can play Rh8 and does not have to worry about his d pawn after Ne3. **26.Bg2 Bf5** **27.Be4 Be6** **28.Ne3 Rxf2!?** [See diagram below] This came like a bolt from the blue. I managed to keep my poker face and hoped that it did not force immediate resignation. **29.Kxf2** **Bc4** **30.Qd2 Rf8+** **31.Kg2 Bxf1+** **32.Rxf1 Rxf1** **33.Kxf1 Qxe3** Luckily after 33...Bxe3 34. Qxd6 White has counter play on the g6 pawn. **34.Qxe3** **Bxe3** **35.Ke2!** Most precise when I say that my blockade on the centre pawns would make for an easy draw. **35...Bc1** **36.b4 Bxa3** **37. bxa5** **Bc5** **38.a6** **Kf6** **39. Bd3** **Kg5** **40.Kf3** **d5** **41.Bxb5 e4+** **42.Kg2** **Kf5** **43.Bc6** **Ke5** **44.Kf1** **d4** **45.cxd4+** **Kxd4** **46.Ke2** **g5** **47.g4** **Ke5** **48.Bd7** **Kf4** **49.Bf5** **Ba7** Finally Black gave in and offered a draw. A memorable fight and lucky for me the combo 28...Rxf2 did not win. This sacrifice, the engine agreed was Black's best try. A good example for Bareev's great new book 'Say No to Chess Principles', Chapter 1. 'Play without Castling'. ½-½



Right: Bhavik Dave takes on David Miller in their third round Qualifier game, which ended in a draw. 31 people participated in the Qualifier, which was organized and directed by Jordan Rohatynski at the Edmonton Chess Club in early May. Miller went on to finish with 3.5/5, enough to tie for third place.



Right: American GM Zierk, winner of the 14th Edmonton International, alongside chief organizer CM Rafael Arruebarrena. GM Paragua and IM Noritsyn finished in second with 6/9.



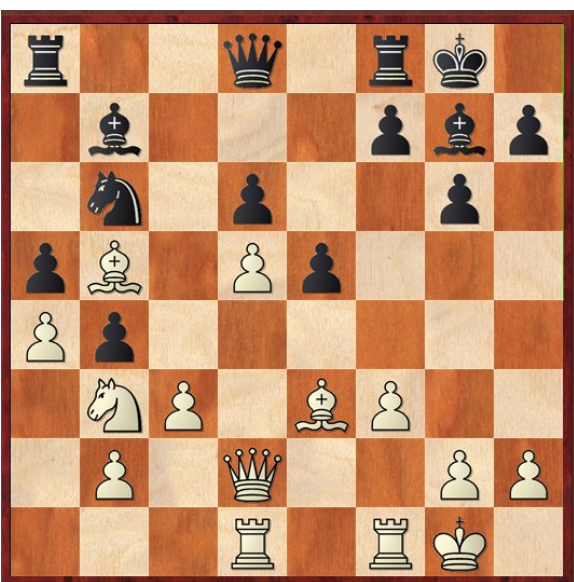
Findlay, Ian T (2206) - Shabalov, Alexander (2528) [B72]

Edmonton International, 19.06.2019
FM Ian Findlay

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 a6 The 'Dragonordorf' variation. A relatively new way to play the Dragon which among its chief advocates is GM Simon Williams from the UK. This is one of 3 openings that I thought Alex

may play against me, so I was somewhat prepared. **7.f3 b5 8.Qd2 Bb7 9.a4** In my opinion, White has to attack the black pawn structure rather than routinely castling queenside. Although the game starts off as a dragon, I believe White's best strategy is to make Black pay for his early expansion on the queenside. In Caruana - Shabalov US Ch 2017, continued **9.g4 h6 10.0-0-0 Nbd7 11. h4 Rc8 12. Bd3 b4 13. Nce2 e5 14. Nb3 d5 15. exd5 Nxd5? 16. h5** and White was much better. But after **15... Bxd5** Black would just be a little worse. **9...e5!** Previously in the game Pichot - Shabolov St. Louis B group 2017, Shabolov played the immediate **9. ...b4 10.Na2 e5 11. Qxb4! Qc7 12. Nb3 d5 13. Qc3! Nc6 14. Bg5 d4.15. Qd2 Nd7 16. Bd3** when White had a comfortable edge out of the opening and went on to win in 40 moves. This was the extent of my prep. I was now on my own. **10.Nb3 b4 11.Nd5** The downside of 9.

consideration. **11...Nxd5 12.exd5 Nd7 13.Rd1!?** The computer likes 0-0-0. After playing **9. a4**, I have to admit this move never entered my mind. **13.a5** was played in Shankland - Kudrin 2008, but did not give White very much and ended in a draw. **13...a5?!** **13...Rb8** may have been slightly better to avoid White's bishop from getting to b5. **14.Bb5 Bg7 15.0-0** **15. c3** could be met by **bxc3 16. bxc3 Ba6** when White is slightly better. However, after Black's 16th move in the game, I was kicking myself for not playing **15. c3 15...0-0 16.c3 Nb6** [See diagram previous column] Ignore the threat! Before the tournament, Alex gave a masterclass lecture on the topic 'Ignore the threat'. Here is a typical example. Black strives to take over the initiative. **17.c4 Ba6 18.Qd3 18. Bxa6 Rxa6 19. c5 Nxa4 20. c6** was worth considering. **18...Bxb5 19.axb5 a4 20.c5!** This is what saw when I played Qd3. I thought White should have equal chances.



...e5, is that White can now play **10. Nd5** which is where the knight wants to go, although **10. Na2** to attack Black's queenside is also worthy of

20...dxc5 21.Nxc5 22.b3?! I was happy to restrict Black's knight with **b3**, however, I should play the more active **Qb3** or **d6**. After **b3?!**



Black is about equal. **22...a2!?** Although this loosens the a pawn, which will probably cost White the exchange, White should be slightly better. If **22...Qd6** **23. Ne4** **Qb8** **24. Nc5**, it is hard to find anything better for Black than to repeat moves with Qd6. Black would not want to draw with a player rated 320 points less than him. **23.Na6** **Re8** **24.d6** **f5??** [See diagram on the previous page] During the game, I was expecting this move and it looks like Black's natural continuation. However, it loosens Black's position too much and the engines evaluation goes from about 0.00 to -



25.Qd2 **f4** **26.Bf2** **e4** **27.fxe4** **a1Q** **28.Rxa1** **Bxa1** **29.Rxa1** [See diagram above] The smoke has cleared and White has 1 pawn for the exchange. However, Black's king is exposed and White has a pawn on d6 which cripples Black's position. Kasparov used to be fond of saying, it cuts Black's position into 2. Meaning difficult for him to defend both sides of the board because the pawn gets in the way. **29...Rxe4** **30.Rd1** **Re5** **31.Nc7** **Rb8** **32.Qxf4** **32. Bxb6** **Rxb6** **33. d7!** would be quicker, but not **33. Qd4??** **Rxd6** **34. Qxd6** **Re1+!** when Black is probably winning! I was happy to play strong non committal centralizing moves, till



move 40 when we would get a 30 minute increment. **32...Rf5** **33.Qe4** **Qd7** **34.Qc6** [See diagram left] This looked crushing to me. It forces Black to sacrifice

the exchange, since he cannot protect his knight which protects his queen and **Qxc6** **bx6** is hopeless. **34...Rxf2** **35.Kxf2** **Rf8+** **36.Kg1** **Qg4** **37.Qc2** **Rf7** **38.h3** **Qg3** **39.Qd3** **Qf2+** **40.Kh1** **Nd7** **41.Nd5** This knight has done a yeoman's job. It will have gone from a6 to c7 to d5 to e7 and then finally to c6 to end the game! Jay Bonin, who is known for dancing knights, would be proud of me. **41...Ne5** **42.Ne7+** **Kf8** **43.Qd4** **Qe2** **44.Nc6** Forcing a won endgame, since **Nxc6** is met with **Qh8** mate. It was a huge thrill for me to beat 4 time US Champion and former top 25 in the world player Alex Shabalov. He was a perfect gentleman in defeat. To add to the humiliation, I was also his driver for the tournament. The victory was slightly tarnished, in that Alex went on to have a bad tournament. The question is, did I put him on 'tilt'? As you can see, this game had many mistakes, so most likely he was not in good form for this tournament. **1-0**

CM Rafael Arruebarrena put in an immense effort in organizing this event, aided by assistant Micah Hughey and the members of the Edmonton Chess Club. Many thanks to them for their efforts in bringing this tournament to Alberta. During the event, Arruebarrena kept a running blog of all the games, which you can still find on the home page of the ACA.

Several events occurred alongside the International, most notably the Open event, which was won by Dante Briones (1930). Briones defeated favorite FM Dale Haessel (2284) in the final round, and both players ended with 4/5. Third place went to Mike Zeggelaar, Andi Superceanu, Cameron Ratte, and Douglas Nechio with 3.5/5.



Above (right to left): Richard Pua was on-hand to direct the Edmonton International Open. Here he is seen next to winners Dante Briones and Dale Haessel. The Open featured 23 players.

Alberta Seniors Championship

March 23-24, 2019—Calgary
& May 11-12, 2019—Edmonton

The road to the 2019 Alberta Seniors Championship started in Calgary in March with the Calgary Seniors Championship. Only nine players attended the event, but it was strong, drawing two FMs and quite a few players in the 1700-2100 range.

FM Ian Findlay (2352) was the winner, posting a 4.5/5 score to go along with his fourth round victory over his nearest competitor, FM Dale Haessel (2260), who would finish in second with 4/5. Third place went to Brad Booker (2123) with 3.5/5.

Many thanks to Stefan Sklenka for organizing and directing the event, and the Calgary Chess Club for hosting. Below, please see Findlay's annotation of his decisive game over Haessel.

Findlay, Ian - Haessel, Dale [C67]
2019 Calgary Seniors, 24.03.2019
[FM Ian Findlay]

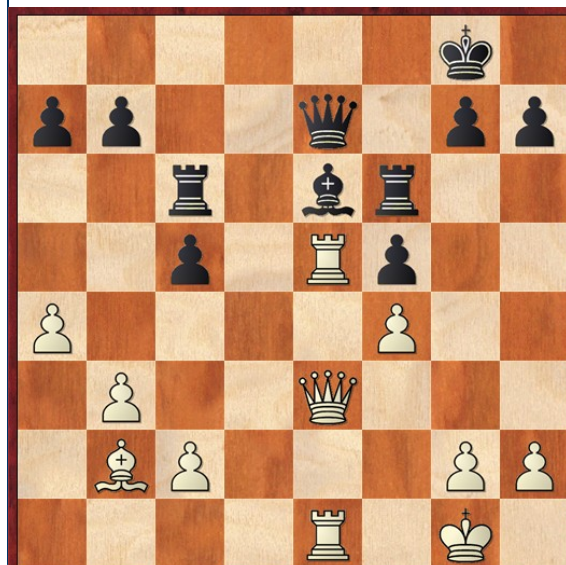
This was the fourth round of the tournament. Most likely, whoever won would win the tournament. Last year, Dale and I drew and ended up with 4.5/5, but Dale won on tiebreak. I did not want that to happen again.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.0-0 Nxe4 5.d4 Nd6 6.dxe5!? Dale knows the Berlin endgames inside out. The previous night in my hotel room, I got a FB post from CC chess club saying that I played Dale in round 4. Since I could not sleep, I decided to prepare a less played line. **6...Nxb5 7.a4 Nbd4** Many years ago, they used to play d6, but White can play e6 and sacrifice a pawn or just take on b5, then after Nxe5, play Re1 and will be slightly better. This line was first showed to me by Brian Hartman, who had studied it with the 'Hamilton crew' back in the early 80's. **8.Nxd4 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 d5 10.exd6** This is the modern treatment. Hartman used to leave the pawn on e5 and try to play f4 and f5, but this can be easily stopped. **10...Qxd6 11.Qe3+ Be6** Frissinet has also played Be7, but in his latest video on the Berlin on chess24's website, he recommends this move. **12.Nc3 Qc6!?** In my prep, only a6 is given to prevent Nd5. This was the move in the video and has been played by Kramnik and Frissinet. Qc6 was new to me, but has been played 7 times before on the online Chessbase database. **13.Nb5 Bd6 13...Bc5 14.Qg3 0-0-0 15.Bf4 Bc4 16.Rfe1 Bxb5 17.axb5 Qxb5 18.Bxc7 Rd2 19.Rf1** White is slightly better. **14.Nxd6+ 14.Nd4 Qd7 15.Nxe6** This would give White a small edge in an endgame, but I wanted more. **14...Qxd6 15.b3 c5?! White** should take advantage of this target with Ba3 b6 **17. Rad1 Qe7 18. Bb2 0-0 19. f4** with



Photo: FM Ian Findlay, champion of the Calgary Seniors, but runner-up for the Alberta Seniors. Photo by Bhavik Dave.

advantage. **16.Bb2 0-0?! The computer** finds f6, which is not natural. f6 and it is White who has a slight pull. **17.Rad1 Qe7 18.f4 f5 19.Rd5 Rac8 20.Re5 Rc6 21.Re1 Rf6** [See diagram below] Black is all tied up, but he may be able to solidify with b6, h6 etc, so I thought I should strike now. **22.c4** preventing c4 by Black, and also Bd5 in some lines, might have been more prudent, but engine evaluates them as early the same! **22.g4 Rg6 23.g5 h6**



24.h4 hxg5 25.fxg5?! This keeps up the threat of h5, but / Black can prevent that and now White's king is slightly more exposed and f4 is a threat by Black in

some variations. **25...Qd8** **26.Bc1?!** I was fixated by wanting to play h5, but Black can now regroup. Qc3 threatening to take twice on e6 may be the best, but I did not want to



allow Qd4+ exchanging queens. Also because of my opening prep, I had a time advantage. Since this was game in 90, Dale would be in time pressure soon. I had about 40 minutes here to his 20. **26...Bd7** **27.Qd3** **Qc8??** [See diagram above] Time pressure. Rcd6 was better and after Qc4+ Kh7 Qf7 White has an advantage, but the game is far from over. **27...Rcd6** **28.Qc4+ Kh7** **29.Qf7** **28.Re7?** 2nd best move. Rd5 is immediately fatal. **28...Rge6?** **29.R1xe6** **Rxe6?** **30.Rxd7** **1-0**

Haessel and Findlay were among the eight players who came to Edmonton in May to attend the Alberta Seniors Championship. In round three, Haessel got his revenge over Findlay in the following game, which mirrored their Calgary Seniors game up until move 12.

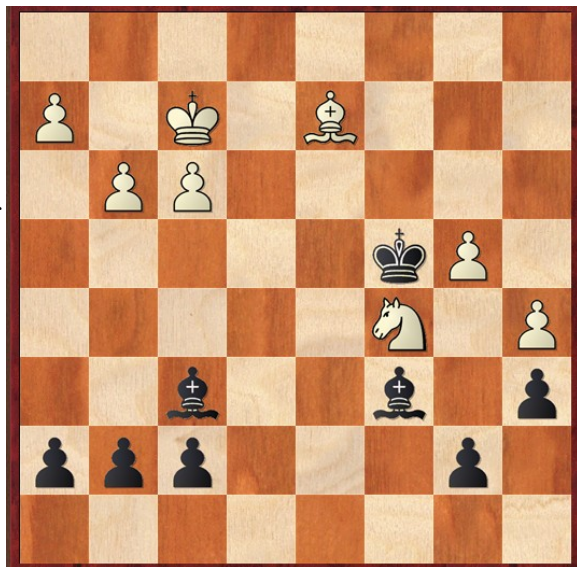
Findlay, Ian (2354) - Haessel, Dale (2257) [C67]
2019 AB Seniors (3), 11.05.2019

1.e4 e5 **2.Nf3 Nc6** **3.Bb5 Nf6** **4.0-0 Nxe4** **5.d4 Nd6** **6.dxe5** An interesting sideline where White temporarily gives up a piece. **6...Nxb5** **7.a4 Nbd4** **7...d6**, chosen by players like Topalov and Wang Hao, is worth a try, but White can equalize with **8.axb5 Nxe5** **9.Re1 Be7** **10.Nxe5 dxe5** **11.Qxd8+ Kxd8** **12.Rxe5**; Vallejo-Pons and Navara both chose **7...Nxe5** in games they won. **8.Nxe5 Nd6** **9.Re1 Be7** etc., with equality. The text move, **7...Nd4**, on the other hand, has been played by the likes of So, Aronian, Mamedyarov, etc. **8.Nxd4 Nxd4** **9.Qxd4 d5** **10.exd6 Qxd6** **11.Qe3+ Be6** **12.Nc3 a6** The first divergence from their last game, and the move Findlay was expecting then. **13.Rd1 Qc6** **14.Nb5 Be7** **15.Nd4 Qd5** **16.Qe2** **0-0-0** **17.Bf4 Qc4** **18.Qxc4 Bxc4** See diagram on the following column. The computer score begins to favor Black, as he's left with an increasingly strong pair of bishops. **19.Nf3 Rhe8** **20.Rxd8+ Bxd8** **21.Re1 Rxe1+** **22.Nxe1 Bf6** **23.b3 Be2** **24.Bd2 Kd7** **25.g3 Kd6** Black's king has jumped into the game, while White is facing activity problems. White's a-c pawn chain is vulnerable. **26.f3 Bd4+** **27.Kg2 Kd5**

28.Nd3 Bd1 **29.a5 c5** Threatening Bxc2, which wasn't possible on the last move due to the knight fork on b4. **30.c3 Bf6** **31.b4 cxb4** **32.cxb4 Ba4** **33.Nc5? Bc6** **34.Ne4 Be7** **35.Kf2 Kc4** **36.Nc5 Bf6** See diagram



below. Black wisely avoids trading into an opposite colored bishop ending to gather up an extra pawn. **36...Bxc5+** **37.bxc5 Kxc5** only moderately favors Black. **37.Ke3 Bd4+** White resigns. Bc3 is coming, and White will no longer be able to defend the bottom of his pawn chain. Unlike the last variation, Black will have avoided the opposite colored bishop ending and should be able to gather both of White's a- and b-pawns. **0-1**



Haessel went on to finish the tournament with a perfect 5/5 score. It's worth noting that Haessel has not only won the Senior Championship (tied-2018, 2019), the Alberta Closed (2001, 2002, 2010), but also the Alberta Junior Championship (1985).

Findlay placed second this year with 3.5/5, while Brad Booker (2144) and Michael Decaire (1841) finished in third with 2.5/5.

Many thanks to Terry Seehagen for organizing and directing, and the Edmonton Chess Club for hosting.

Edmonton Chess Club

#204, 10840 124 Street NW—(780) 424-0283
Mondays & Thursdays (6:30 PM—)
Saturdays (12:45PM—5PM): Call for schedule.
fb.com/theEdmontonChessClub

Alberta Women's Championship



May 11-12, 2019

Photo: WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement (left) and WFM Syeda Shabana (right). Photos by Bhavik Dave.

At the same time as the Alberta Seniors, the Edmonton Chess Club hosted the annual Alberta Women's Championship, with a \$1,000 travel grant on the line to attend the 2019/2020 Canadian Women's Championship.

This championship was always likely to come down to the top two active female players in Alberta—WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement (2310) and WFM Shabana Syeda (2087). They both went into the final round with perfect scores. During their game, Syeda lost her g7 pawn early, then massed all of her pieces to defend her vulnerable king.

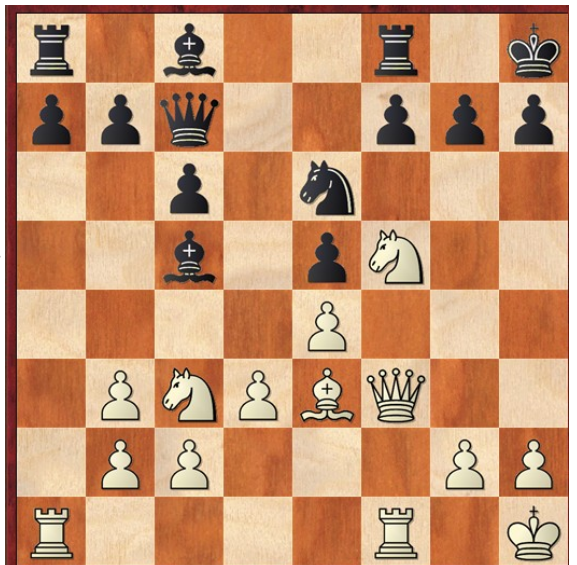
Matras-Clement, Agnieszka (2310) - Syeda, Shabana (2087) [C28]

2019 AB Women's Championship (5), 12.05.2019

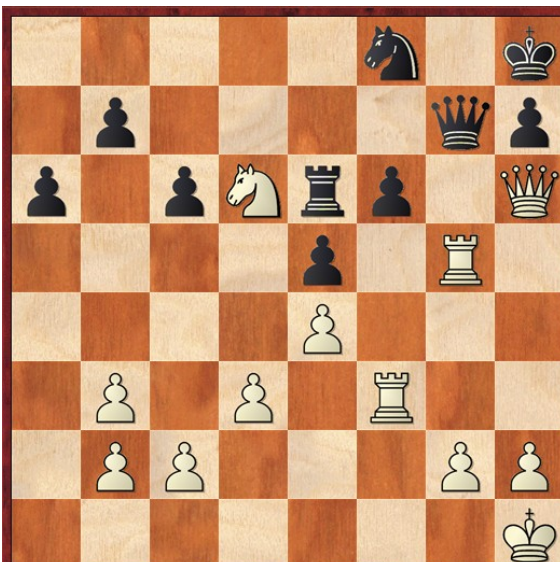
1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 Nf6 3.d3 Be7 4.Nc3 Nc6 5.f4 The most popular and best-scoring move in this position. 5...d6 6.Nf3 0-0 7.0-0 Na5 8.Bb3 c6 9.Kh1 Qc7 10.Qe1 Nxb3 11.axb3 Kh8 12.fxe5 dxe5 13.Qg3 Bd6 14.Nh4 Nh5 15.Qf3 Nf4 16.Nf5 Ne6 17.Be3 Bc5 See diagram. Coming

after a lot of maneuvering, this is the first tactical mistake on the board. Matras-Clement can simply take the g7 pawn,

either on this move, or after trading bishops. 18. Bxc5 Nxc5 19. N x g7 Qe7 If 19...Kxg7? 20. Qf6+ Kg8 21.Rf3 Black must lose material to defend mate. 20.Nf5 20.



Nh5, leaving the f-file clear for an attack is also good. 20...Bxf5 21.Qxf5 f6 22.Ne2 Nd7 23.Ng3 Rg8 24.Qf2 a6 25.Nf5 Qf8 26.Qh4 Rg6 27.Rf3



Re8 28.Raf1 Matras-Clement has maneuvered all her pieces into the attack, while Syeda has done the same for her defense. 28...Re6 29.Qh3 Qe8 30.Rg3 Nf8 31.Rff3 Rg5 A fatal mistake, as Matras-Clement demonstrates: 32.Qh6 Qf7 33.Nd6 Qg7 34.Rxg5 See diagram above. 34...fxg5 and 34...Qxg5 both lead to mate in two, while 34...Qxh6 is mate in one. 34...Qe7 requires more calculation, but the knight escapes to e8 with mate to follow eventually. 1-0

Matras-Clement finished the tournament with 4/4, while Syeda came in second with 3/4. Third place went to Edmonton junior Michelle Mo (1693), who scored 2/4.

Many thanks to Terry Seehagen for organizing and directing, and to the Edmonton Chess Club for hosting.

...continued from page 4, here is the Alberta Closed runner-up Ian Zhao with a victory over NM David Miller. Black is hyperaggressive from the start, but gets into trouble as White is able to jump into activity by harassing Black's queen. White is very precise in finding moves that eventually target Black's king, while seeming to target the queen instead.

Zhao, Ian (2281) - Miller, David (2166) [C03]
Alberta Closed Calgary (3), 20.04.2019

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 h6 Rare, but some top players have played it in blitz. 4.c3 c5 5.Ngf3 Nf6 6.Bd3 Nc6 Already a unique position. 7.e5 Nd7 8.0-0 g5 Rather than sit back and wait for White's attack--which so often happens in the French with the king in the middle--Black has opted to go on offense. 9.b3 g4 10.Ne1 cxd4 11.cxd4 h5 11...Nxd4 12.Qxg4 is worth considering. 12.Bb2 Qb6 13.Nc2 a5 See diagram below. With Black extending in all directions and his king in the middle, the computer score has started to creep up for White. 14.a4 Bh6 15.Qe2 Nb4? This move will drag the black queen into a vulnerable position. The



computer prefers to continue play on the kingside, with h4 being one of several good options. 16.Nxb4 Qxb4 17.Rfd1 Bxd2 18.Rxd2 Qxb3?? Tempting,

but not a pawn Black could grab. 19.Bb5 Cutting off escape routes for the queen. 19...Qb4 20.Ba3 Qc3 21.Qd1 Qc7 The queen had to flee then before getting trapped, but the positional damage is done; White's pieces are trained at Black's king. 22.Rc2 Qd8 23.Rac1 f5 An attempt at an escape square, with no better option. 24.exf6 Kf7 25.Be7 Qg8 26.Rc7 See diagram. Only a matter of time now. 26...Nxf6 27.Bxf6+ Kxf6 28.Qd2 e5 29.dxe5+ Ke6 30.Qd4 Qf8 31.Qb6+ It's mate in a few. 1-0



Calgary Chess Club

#174A, 3359 27 Street NE
www.calgarychess.com

Tuesdays (7PM—): Tournament Chess

Thursdays (7PM—): Active Chess

Fort McMurray Chess Club

Wood Buffalo Chess Park
Seasonal Hours
www.fmchess.com

Contact: Magda Marais
fortmcmurraychessclub@yahoo.com

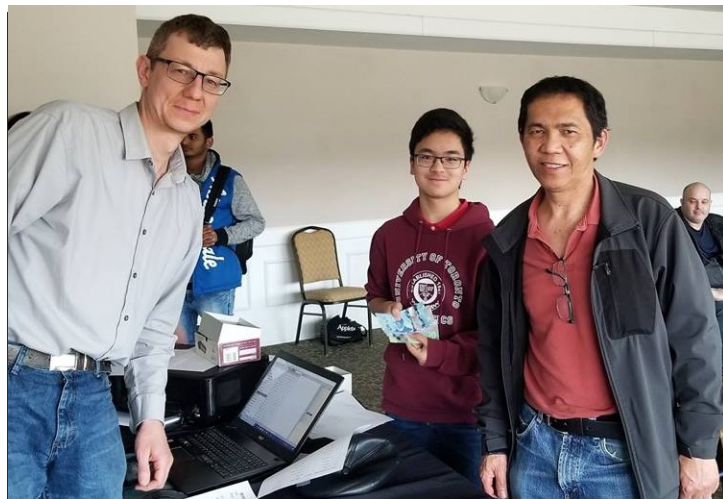
Alberta Active Championship

April 13, 2019 - Red Deer

Twenty-one players showed up for the Alberta Active this year, including many strong masters. First place went to FM Dale Haessel (2282), who had four wins, plus a draw with second-place finisher Belsar Valencia (2350).

Also finishing in second with 4/5 was Calgary junior Ian Zhao (2281). Class prizes went to Dean MacDonald (1572), Bhavik Dave (1835), and Spiro Latorre (1882).

Many thanks to Alexey Taranik for organizing and directing this rapid chess event, and to Vlad Rekhson for assisting.



36th Trumpeter Classic



Contact Wade Caughlin
wade.caughlin@sunlife.com
www.gpchessclub.com

June 1-2, 2019—Grande Prairie

Twelve players turned out for the 36th annual Trumpeter Classic. Top seed David Miller (2163) was perfect in his performance, reeling off five straight wins. Four players tied for second with 3/5: Philip Enns (1543), John Quiring (1838), Wade Caughlin (1812), and Paul McGinnis (1626).

As usual, the event featured a Friday-night speed chess event, many excellent door prizes, and refreshments.

Many thanks to Wade Caughlin and Tim Pradzynski for organizing the event.

Photo left: Winner David Miller hosts the Trumpeter Classic trophy. Above right: Organizer and director Alexey Taranik, with Alberta Active second place finishers Ian Zhao and Belsar Valencia (left to right).

Wrapping Up

Top 10 FIDE Rated Albertans

July 1, 2019—Active Residents Only

1	GM Eric Hansen	2611
2	GM Aman Hambleton	2487
3	IM Bitan Banerjee	2427
4	IM Edward Porper	2393
5	IM Richard Wang	2342
6	FM Blagoj Gicev	2283
7	Belsar Valencia	2261
8	CM Rafael Arruebarrena	2248
9	FM Vladimir Pechenkin	2238
10	WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement	2232

Top 20 CFC Rated Albertans

Active Residents—July 1, 2019

1	GM Aman Hambleton	2549
2	IM Bitan Banerjee	2511
3	IM Edward Porper	2469
4	IM Richard Wang	2410
5	FM Gary Ng	2367
6	FM Blagoj Gicev	2348
7	Belsar Valencia	2345
8	Ian Zhao	2343
9	CM Rafael Arruebarrena	2342
10	FM Ian Findlay	2335
11	WIM A. Matras-Clement	2314
12	Omid Malek	2313
13	FM Vladimir Pechenkin	2301
14	Anuar Caldera	2297
15	FM Dale Haessel	2273
16	Jeff Reeve	2266
17	FM Diwen Shi	2259
18	Georgi Kostadinov	2213
19	Rob Gardner	2190
20	David Miller	2187

Calgary Junior Chess Club Contact: Vera Li xiaoqin_li@hotmail.com www.calgaryjuniorchess.com
University of Calgary Chess Club MacEwan Student Centre chess.calgary@gmail.com fb.com/UofCChessClub/
Edmonton Chess Club #204-10840 124 Street (780) 424-0283 fb.com/TheEdmontonChessClub
Okotoks Chess Club Okotoks Library, 7 Riverside Dr. West Richard Bradley: (403) 938-2220 richard.bradley@shaw.ca
La Crete Chess Club Seasonal Hours Contact: Chris White (780) 821-0044 (Cell) cwnlca@gmail.com
Portage College (Lac La Biche) Contact: Leslie Boake (780) 623-5686 leslic.boake@portagecollege.ca
Ads (page): Banff (15); Calgary(5); Edmonton(5); Fort McMurray(8); Grande Prairie(8) ; Red Deer(8)

Airdrie Chess Club Airdrie Public Library 111-304 Main Street SE Seasonal Hours Contact: Susanne Rempel
University of Lethbridge Chess Club email: martin.heavyhead@uleth.ca
Fort McMurray Chess Club Seasonal Hours www.fmchess.com
Medicine Hat Chess Club Contact: Bill Taylor (403) 526-5484 taylorwm@shaw.ca www.mhchess.com
Sherwood Park Strathcona County Library, 2nd Floor Seasonal Hours Contact: Les Jones (780) 467-7393
University of Alberta Chess Club All skill levels welcome to attend! fb.com/uachess
Lethbridge Junior Chess Club Contact: Peter Davis-Imhof phone: (403) 320-4232 peter.davisimhof@gmail.com

Banff Chess Academy

101 Bear Street — above the library
 Seasonal Hours
 Active games
 Contact Jonathan Day
 Email: albertachessday@gmail.com

2019 ACA Tournament Schedule

All tournaments subject to change by the ACA and/or organizer. Tournaments with an * are *Road Warrior* events. For updated info, please visit our website: albertachess.org/home/schedule

Dates	Tournament	Organizer	Location
Jan 4-6	Schleinich Memorial*	Steve Sklenka	Calgary
Feb 9	Calgary Regional Youth Chess Champ.	Angelo Tolentino	Calgary
Feb 9-10	Northern Alberta Open*	Ali Razzaq	Edmonton
Feb 10	Wood Buffalo Youth Chess Championship	Magda Marais	Fort McMurray
Feb 23	University Battle of Alberta	Kevin Zhao/U of C	Calgary
Feb 23	Edmonton Youth Chess Championship	Cristian Ivanescu/David Yao	Edmonton
Mar 9-10	3rd Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic*	Steve Sklenka	Calgary
Mar 23	Alberta Chess Challenge	Vera Li/Angelo Tolentino	Red Deer
Mar 23-24	Calgary Seniors Championship	Steve Sklenka	Calgary
April 6-7	Lethbridge Open*	Jerry Mikusek	Lethbridge
April 13	Alberta Active Championship*	Alexey Taranik	Red Deer
April 19-21	Alberta Closed and Reserves*	Steve Sklenka	Calgary
April 20-21	Alberta Youth Chess Championship	Magda Marais	Fort McMurray
May 4-5	Edmonton International Qualifier/Fundraiser*	Jordan Rohatynski	Edmonton
May 11-12	AB Seniors/Women's Championships	Terry Seehagen	Edmonton
June 1-2	36th Trumpeter Classic*	Wade Caughlin/Tim Pradzinski	Grande Prairie
June 8-9	Calgary International Qualifier/Fundraiser*	Dale Haessel	Calgary
June 18-23	14th Edmonton International & Open*	Rafael Arruebarrena	Edmonton
June 30-July 1	Jina Burn Fort McMurray Open*	Magda Marais	Fort McMurray
July 31-Aug 5	Calgary International & Open*	Dale Haessel	Calgary
Aug 17-18	Over/Under 1800*	Dale Haessel	Calgary
Sep 7	Battle of Alberta	Arruebarrena/Taranik/Malek	Red Deer
Sep 14-15	Edmonton Junior Regional	Dustin Koperski	Edmonton
Sep 28	Junior Battle of Alberta	Vlad Rekhson/Cristian Ivanescu	Red Deer
Oct 12-14	Alberta Open*	Ali Razzaq	Edmonton
Oct 19-20	Calgary Junior Regional	Angelo Tolentino	Calgary
Oct 25-27	Edmonton Fall Sectional*	Micah Hughey	Edmonton
Nov 9-11	Banff Open*	Ian Findlay	Banff
Nov 16-17	Alberta Junior Championship	Paul Gagne	Calgary
Nov 23-24	Southern Alberta Open*	Steve Sklenka	Calgary
Dec 14-15	WBX Team Tournament*	Terry Seehagen	Edmonton