

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Max Zavanelli



Max Zavanelli (left) from USA receives Bertl von Massow Silver award.

(Photo Webmaster Raymond Boger)

AMICI SUMUS

Chess is remarkable for its many variations. ICCF is also a remarkable organization of federations with many variations. The key of our past success and the key to our future success is amici sumus. But this means far more than a literal translation. For many years with great satisfaction I have seen the “amici sumus solution”, the compromise, the accord, for federation and for players.

We are a world organization and in this world there are great disparities. You can have “rich” federations in poor countries and “poor” federations in rich countries. You have countries where internet access is greatly restricted by government. You have countries where the wage of a university professor is only \$16 a month. If you own a bicycle you have a major improvement in your standard of living. In the richest countries you can have very poor individuals with great social disadvantages who want to play chess. I was myself an extreme example in my youth.

But chess has no economic barrier. On the contrary we often see the poorest countries having some of the best chess players. Chess requires enormous dedication and effort. Rich countries offer many alternative forms of entertainment that weaken a competitive spirit and the desire to achieve. Chess in itself is a form of freedom, a chance to escape from your daily circumstances and to obtain a purity of thought. You can forget that you are poor, have no job, or have some great physical handicap.

What has amazed me over the years is how federations with very little resources have done so much. The financial sacrifices made to hold a Congress or send someone to a Congress are extraordinary. Hosting a congress is a celebration for a federation. ICCF officials have always bent over backwards to assist federations with financial and other difficulties. This has been equally true for organizers and players. As time moves forward we have added a myriad of rules, guidelines, statutes, congress minutes, footnotes and changes. We have 3 sets; postal, email and now webserver. It is impossible for one to keep track. Perhaps even more important are the reasons why proposals or a change was not made. Why did the dog not bark? Or the World Champion not play that move? All too often the same proposal can appear again later because it superficially appears quite good, but really has a flaw in it.

Since we now meet every year and the world spins much faster on internet time, it is all too easy to forget precedent when we have continuous changes. In such an environment, the spirit of *amici sumus* must prevail. Players who feel that they didn't get a title or qualification because of some oversight or "hole" in the rules have always readily been accommodated. George Pyrich was our Qualifications Commissioner for many years. He was a saint for recognizing and fixing problems for individual players and bringing them to the attention of Congress so it could be fixed collectively. Often before the player or federation were even aware, he had done the calculations and pointed out the inconsistencies and proposed to do something about it. Our new commissioner Eric Ruch is of the same family and continues the grand tradition.

But *Amici Sumus* is still more. At the last congress there was the most serious disagreement in my opinion for ICCF. This was concerning the use of direct entry for all federations. A very strong proposal was put forth which would allow all entrees to go directly to ICCF and not via the federations. There were several variations, but it essentially would end ICCF as an organization of federations. It would dictate to the federations the financials of ICCF entrees

for their players. It had appealing features of efficiency of payment and reduction of paperwork and the opportunity to gain new players. But it would be a mandatory requirement. Mandatory is not Amici Sumus. Instead I proposed an optional scheme. Why not let every federation choose and let all be happy? That is Amici Sumus.

Another example is that in many debates outside and inside the Executive Board, it is easy to forget that we are a world organization and some players have no possibility of having a computer. We want to support the webserver. It was proposed that all federations must have their national championship on the webserver or ICCF would not rate the event. This proposal was narrowly defeated. “Must” is not Amici Sumus. We have a mutual bond, a pact, with national federations to recognize their national championships even if their event is conducted by carrier pigeon. The federations are the “owners” of ICCF and at the same time “customers”.

The age of the internet has brought forth many changes in philosophy and attitude and one can say this makes us more international. Among modern players, we have the age of the internet man. I am personally an avowed libertarian; against government. I don't like rules and restrictions and never like being told what to do. I am very suspicious of decisions of collective bodies. The less government in my life the better. However to function in society you have to have some organization. If the structure is democratic, you accept the decision and get on with it; until you get another chance to become the majority.

The new internet man doesn't want to be told what to do even if the vote is unanimously against him. He is willing to criticize everyone and everything, but won't take criticism himself. If he can't have the white pieces, he takes his chess board and goes home complaining loudly. He is willing to attack anyone he pleases, but is offended when counterattacked. You cannot always get your way or do what you want in a society.

In ICCF there have been major fundamental changes in governance. We have gone from a system where the President had great authority and could make unilateral decisions to one where the President is just one vote on the Executive Board. (A president still has the natural right to set objectives, policies and procedures and say what he wants the organization to do.) In a democratic system, losers remain unhappy and will continue to make their case. If it is a “gray area”, or the vote is close, there will continue to be sharp kibitzing. Even “the winners”

get perturbed and distracted. As a result, we can and have lost good people on both sides of an issue. And of course, we have thousands of players and so soon someone is writing with or without facts and with or without good arguments on message boards.

The secret to success of such a democratic committee system is to not propose controversial changes, but instead to find common issues where almost all can agree or at least be able to satisfy any reservations. I remember well lessons I learned from the earliest congresses with President Mostert. We would have a vote and all would be in favor but John Cleeve of Canada. John was a man of few words. Every year he would report the same for his duties. "All events are proceeding normally and without any special problems". That was it! No time wasted, no fuss, no grandiose statements or complaints. Whenever John voted no, President Mostert would sit sharply up. Why? Mostert would then often immediately call a break for coffee, lunch. When we did find out the reason later in private conversations, it would be a good one. We had not fully considered all the implications of such a decision. The Law of unintended consequences. Now we would have to go and cancel the very decision we just made, or at least modify it.

This has been the approach of the current EB. Better not to vote if we cannot agree. Every viewpoint counts. Fortunately, there are many things upon which we unanimously agree and then still have the job to sort out the details and implementation.

Working daily via the internet in a committee with as much as 10 hour time differences between members is an educational experience. You learn to wait for input from all your colleagues. Almost every time, someone improves upon the original proposal, finds faulty analysis, or has alternatives. We are chess players so we are used to this on the chess board, but not in group decision making. In most cases we have too many good ideas with the difficulty of choosing the best move. Adding variations and examining alternatives can delay the decision and create "cascading" emails.

I want to publicly commend my fellow EB members. They have had to go through a set of difficult circumstances and have risen to the occasion. This EB is full of talent, very hard working, and very dedicated to ICCF. It is a privilege to work with them. We have the right people at the right time. Since the beginning of the year, everyone has been energized.

In the past, ICCF officials died with their boots on. Today we have a large corps of past officials who are enjoying their retirement slippers. In the old days it took weeks to exchange ideas by post and there were few problems. Today there seems to be a daily “crisis” on the internet. This leads to burnout, animosity between officials and players, and ruined health for some officials. We are all volunteers. We don’t need to exchange unpleasanties when life can be wonderful. Everyone is far too sensitive about casual comments. You need to keep a sense of humor. Past officials and especially chess players have an irresistible urge to kibitz. But if you have past officials consistently criticizing and second guessing everything you do, the situation is impossible. Today we have a car full of backseat drivers. If you don’t like something, run for office. If you think you can do it better, we are delighted. We have positions open. Help, but don’t’ destroy, detract or annoy the officials trying to do their best.

When there is a major unexpected change, you have to rely upon the statutes of the organization. If there is disagreement, again the statutes become important. You cannot create an all-powerful position such as Chairman of the EB because no such position exists in the statutes. You cannot quickly organize an Extraordinary Congress because it is clearly forbidden. The statutes require 4 months notice and since the Congress has all decision powers and officials will be elected for vacancies there are also schedules and procedures for elections. Changes in the statutes can only be made by Congress. Some are no doubt disappointed. But the EB and myself as President have a duty to see that the statutes are followed whether we agree or not. The statutes have changed radically over the last few years for better or worse, but we intend to uphold them and all other decisions of Congress until the next Congress changes them again. No matter how enthusiastic an official may be, he or she has to work within the rules. A common advice for new cowboys is when you ride ahead of the herd, you have to occasionally look back and make sure it is still there.

Often it is not possible to please everyone because we face a dilemma. Do we start a world championship event when we don’t have enough players? What if the event is not strong enough according to others who have won it before? What if one player at the last second withdraws and we can’t find a replacement without a delay? But then 3 top players threaten to quit on any delay since they have been waiting almost 2 years to start.

These are the practical decisions where you can be criticized from all directions and for some officials you are damned if you do and if you don’t. If criticized heavily before, officials

become afraid to make a mistake. But for me such decisions are easy and natural. We have customers to serve. We exist to provide a forum for chess. More chess versus no chess is better. So for those players who get 7 blacks and only 6 whites, all the more glory if you should win. And if you don't, you have a perfect excuse for not winning. If someone thinks the event is not strong enough, then he should play in it and win it. Winning a game in correspondence chess is not so easy. And every player knows winning a won game is not so easy either. I can certainly tell you about all the big fish that jumped off my hook!

POINT OF VIEW

by Alex Dunne

The time has come for your editor to say goodbye. I have recently undertaken new tasks, new chess duties, and new business opportunities, and I must relinquish my editorship of ICCF Amici. I hope a solid replacement for me can soon be found. This position was fun while it lasted! I want to thank Raymond Boger, the webmaster, whose brilliant technical work made my efforts look much better than they were. I also want to thank Max Zavanelli, who seduced this dinosaur into trying his hand at more modern enterprises.

I would also like to thank the contributors whose works have advanced the history and practice of correspondence chess. Finally I would like to thank Caissa, the goddess of chess, for granting me fifty years of love for the greatest of all games.

Correspondence Chess Reminiscence (4)

By Eric RUCH

Paris – Marseilles correspondence games in the 1880s.

In this 4th issue of the ICCF Amici Sumus, I would like to report about the “strange” correspondence games played between the Paris and Marseilles Chess Clubs in the 1880s. As far as I know, only one of these games has ever been published by Carlo Alberto Pagni in his monograph about CC games between Clubs during the 19th century, but the history of these, probably, unique CC games has never been brought to light.

Pagni mentioned in his book that the game was given to him by the German CC GM Hermann Heemsoth and that he has found the score in an old polish magazine! Hermann Heemsoth could not give me any more details about the game.

About one year ago, I was very lucky to find the following brief article, published in the Chess Monthly edited by L. Hoffer and J. Zükertort (Vol IV, December 1882, page 104):

“We have received a collection* of one hundred self-mate endings, partly taken from actual play, partly original compositions, and the reminder transformation from direct into self-mates. Also some games played by correspondence between Paris and Marseilles, and games and endings of Four-Chess. The self mates average from two to fifty-five moves. The work is a labor of love, dedicated to the lovers of Chess by the author, Mons. Antoine Demonchy, of Marseilles. The little book of 144 pages , copiously illustrated with diagrams, is lithographed, and altogether of an elegant appearance.

*) « *Une centaine de Fins de Parties Inversées* » *Dédiée aux Amateurs d’Echecs* (Marseille 1882).

The German chess collector Ralf Binnewirtz could confirm that the game was published in this book. Finally, during the summer of 2004, I was fortunate enough to find and buy these two books written by Antoine Demonchy and find out that he actually published six CC games played between Paris and Marseilles during the 80s (probably many more have been played according to the book).



Front page of the book of A. Demonchy.

The unique feature about these games, is that they are not standard games, but “losing games” where you have to get mated to win the game! and as far as know, these are the first CC losing games ever played.

One must also note that these games were not played according to the currently most acknowledged losing chess rules, as for instance the capture was not compulsory.

The game published in the polish magazine was among the games published in the book and probably was the source of this publication.

Let's see this first game and see how you can force a player to mate you!!

Paris - Marseille

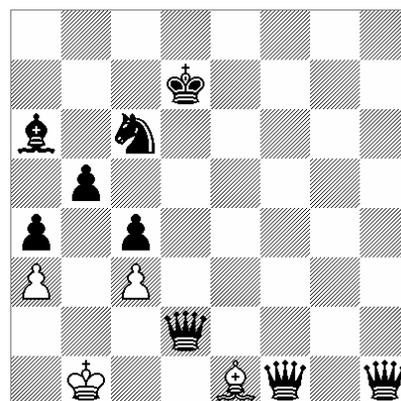
Corr, 1878

(White gives Queen odds)

1.d4 d5 2.♘c3 c6 3.♗f3 g6 4.e4 e6 5.e5 ♟b4 6.♙d2 ♙xc3 7.♙xc3 b5 8.h4 h5 9.0-0-0 a6 10.♗g5 f5 11.g3 ♗h6 12.♙d3 ♗f7 13.♙xf5 gxf5 14.♗xf7 ♗xf7 15.♙d2 ♗d7 16.♞he1 c5 17.dxc5 ♗xc5 18.♙g5 ♞g8 19.♞e3 ♟b7 20.♞c3 ♞c8 21.♙e3 ♗d7 22.♙d4 ♞xc3 23.bxc3 a5 24.♗d2 a4 25.♞b1 ♟a6 26.♞g1 ♞g4 27.♞b1 ♞c8 28.♞b4 ♞c4 29.♞xc4 dxc4 30.a3 f4 31.♗c1 fxg3 32.fxg3 ♞xg3 33.♗b2 ♞xh4 34.♗c1 ♞e1+ 35.♗b2 ♞d1 36.♟a7 ♗xe5 37.♙c5 h4 38.♙d4 ♗c6 39.♙e3 e5 40.♙f2 h3 41.♙g3 e4 42.♙f4 ♗e6 43.♙g3 e3 44.♙f4 e2 45.♙g3 ♗d7 46.♙h2 e1♞ 47.♙f4 ♞ee2 48.♙g3 ♞dxc2+ 49.♗a1 ♞f1+ 50.♙e1 ♞d2 51.♗b1 h2 52.♗a1 h1♞ 53.♗b1 ♞f8 54.♗a1 ♞xa3+ 55.♗b1 ♞ad6 56.♗a1 ♞f6 57.♗b1 ♗c7 58.♗a1 b4 59.♗b1 b3 60.♗a1 ♗b6 61.♗b1 ♗a5 62.♗a1 ♗e7 63.♗b1 ♗c8 64.♗a1 ♟b5 65.♗b1 ♞a6 66.♗a1 ♗b6 67.♗b1 ♞h7+ 68.♗a1 ♞xc3+ 69.♙xc3# 0-1 !!

White mates, but Black wins the game ! Astonishing !

For those who would like a little practical exercise I propose to test your ability by solving the following problem:



Black plays and wins (by getting mated!) in 7 moves!

Some good advice: do not use Fritz to solve it !

This game is already very fascinating but the next two ones played between the Paris and Marseilles during the same period are even much more fascinating. These are two games in one! The first game is played according to the standard chess rules, and the winner will be the player who mates his opponent (you will understand that one cannot resign in such a game). From the mating position, a move is taken back, and this new position is the starting point for a new game played according to the losing chess rules!

Lets have a look to these amazing games!

Paris - Marseille

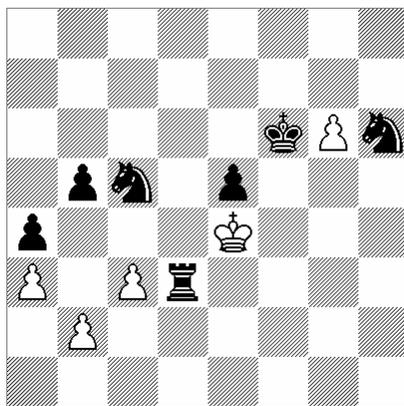
1st February 1880 – 27 May 1880

Antoine Demonchy « Une centaine de fins de parties inverses »

“ Partie jouée en mode normal puis en inverse (à qui perd gagne), par correspondance entre le 1er février et le 27 mai 1880. Les Blancs jouent les trois premiers coups de suite.”

White has the odds of three moves.

1.e4 — 2.d4 — 3.♟c3 c6 4.♞c4 e6 5.♜h3 a6 6.e5 g6 7.♞g5 ♞e7 8.♜e4 ♞xg5 9.♜hxg5
 ♜h6 10.♜d6+ ♜f8 11.♞f3 ♞xg5 12.♜xc8 ♜f5 13.d5 cxd5 14.♞xd5 exd5 15.♞xd5 ♜c6
 16.♞xd7 ♞d8 17.e6 fxe6 18.0-0-0 ♞xd7 19.♞xd7 ♞xc8 20.c3 b5 21.♞hd1 ♜fe7 22.♜d2
 ♞d8 23.♜e3 ♞xd7 24.♞xd7 ♜f7 25.♜f4 ♞d8 26.♞b7 h6 27.♞c7 ♜f6 28.a3 ♜d5+ 29.♜g4
 ♜xc7 30.h4 h5+ 31.♜f3 ♜e5+ 32.♜e2 a5 33.f3 a4 34.g4 hxg4 35.fxg4 ♜xg4 36.♜f3 ♜h6
 37.♜f4 ♞d3 38.h5 ♜a6 39.hxg6 e5+ 40.♜e4 ♜c5# 0-1



Black mates and wins the first part of the game. The last move is then taken back and the games was continued as follows :

40...♞d2! 41.♜f3 ♜f5 42.b4 e4+ 43.♜g3 ♞d3+ 44.♜h4 ♞xc3 45.g7 ♜g8 46.♜h5 e3 47.♜h4
 e2 48.♜h5 ♜f6 49.♜g4 ♜f7 50.♜f4 e1♞ 51.♜f5

There is always a way to release the Knight from his position to play ♜g8!

51...♜e7+ 52.♜g5 ♜g8 53.♜f6 ♞xa3 54.♜g5 ♞e3 55.♜f6 a3 56.♜g5 a2 57.♜f6 a1♞+
 58.♜g5 ♞ac3 59.♜g4 ♞c7 60.♜g5 ♞f2 61.♜g4 ♞ff4+ 62.♜h5 ♜c5 63.bxc5 b4 64.c6 ♞g3
 65.♜h6 b3 66.♜h5 b2 67.♜h6 b1♞ 68.♜h5 ♜d5 69.♜h6 ♞ce5 70.c7 ♞e6+ 71.♜h5 ♞c8
 72.♜h6 ♞a3 73.♜h5 ♞a5 74.♜h6 ♞b2 75.♜h5 ♜b4+ 76.♜h6 ♞e1 77.♜g6 ♜c6 78.♜h6
 ♞h3+ 79.♜g6 ♞hh2 80.c8♜

80.c8♞ ♞e6+!; 80.c8♞+ ♞e8+!; 80.c8♞+ ♞e8+!)

80...♞h6+ 81.♜xh6 ♞h1+ 82.♜g6 ♜e7+ 83.♜xe7#

White mates and Black wins the second part of the game.

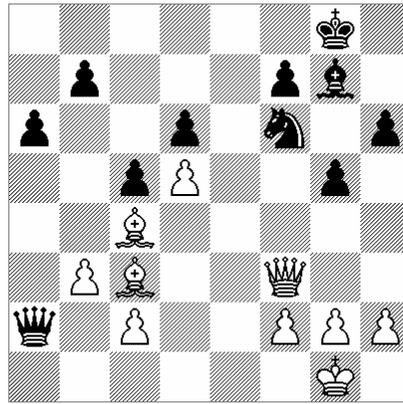
Paris - Marseille

20 mai 1880 – 31 août 1880

Antoine Demonchy « Une centaine de fins de parties inverses »

Games played in normal mode from 20 May till 19 August 1880, and then in losing chess mode from 19 august till 31 august 1880.

1.e4 e5 2.♜f3 ♜c6 3.d4 exd4 4.♜xd4 ♜xd4 5.♞xd4 c5 6.♞e5+ ♞e7 7.♞d5 h6 8.♜c3 ♜f6
 9.♞b3 a6 10.a4 d6 11.♞c4 g5 12.0-0 ♞g7 13.♞d2 0-0 14.♞fe1 ♞e6 15.♜d5 ♞xd5 16.exd5
 ♞c7 17.♞f3 ♞ae8 18.♞e3 ♞xe3 19.♞xe3 ♞e8 20.♞e1 ♞e4 21.♞d2 ♞xe1+ 22.♞xe1 ♞d7
 23.♞c3 ♞xa4



24.b3 ♖a2 25.♙xf6 ♜xc2 26.♙d3 ♜c1+ 27.♙f1 ♜f4 28.♙xg7 ♜xf3! 29.gxf3 ♔xg7 30.♙h3 ♔f6 31.♙c8 a5

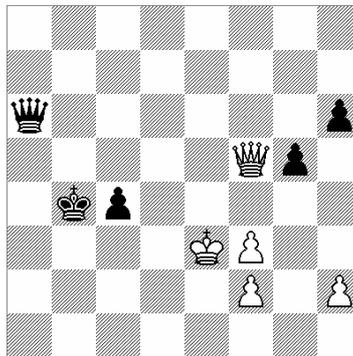
The 31st move seems to be well played on both sides

32.♙xb7 c4 33.bxc4 a4 34.c5 dxc5 35.♙a6 ♔e5 36.♙c4 f5 37.♔f1 a3 38.♔e2 ♔d4 39.d6 ♔xc4

Paris should have moved the Bishop.

40.d7 a2 41.d8♜ a1♜ 42.♜d3+ ♔b4 43.♜xf5 ♜a6+ 44.♔e3 c4

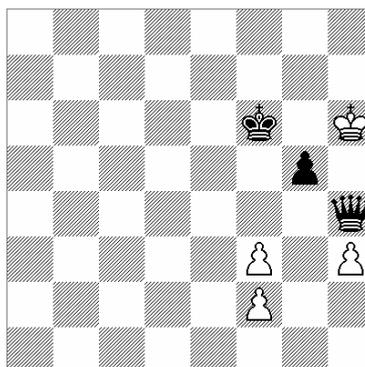
If Paris had given check on b1, the game would probably have been drawn.



45.♔d4 ♜d6+ 46.♔e4 ♜d3+ 47.♔e5 ♜xf5+ 48.♔xf5 c3 49.♔g6 c2 50.♔xh6 c1♜ 51.♔h5 ♜f4 52.h3 ♔c5 53.♔g6 ♔d6 54.♔h5 ♔e6 55.♔g6 ♔e7 56.♔h5 ♔f6 57.♔h6

Paris is not allowed to resign decide to shorten the game.

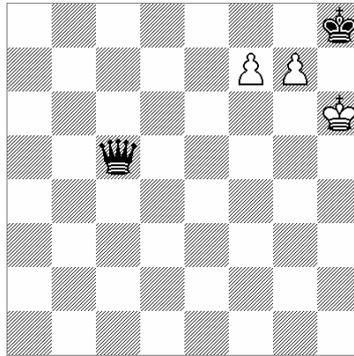
57...♜h4# 0-1



Position of the direct mat.

The game now goes on in losing chess mode :

57...♔e5! 58.♕h5 ♖h4+ 59.♔g6 ♗f4 60.♕f6 ♗xh3 61.♔g6 ♖e6+ 62.♕h5 ♖f7+ 63.♕h6
♕f5 64.f4 g4 65.f3 ♖f8+ 66.♕h5 g3 67.♕h4 g2 68.♕h3 g1♖ 69.♕h4 ♖g2 70.♕h5 ♖fg7
71.♕h4 ♖2g3+ 72.♕h5 ♕f6 73.f5 ♖f8 74.f4 ♕f7 75.f6 ♕g8 76.f7+ ♕h7 77.f5 ♕h8 78.f6
♖c5+! 79.♕h6 ♖g7+ 80.fxg7# 0-1



It should be noted that the players of these two last games are not indicated in the book, but one can assumed that Paris played with White and Marseilles with black according to the notes of the game.

I would be very much interesting to hear from anyone knowing other examples of losing chess games played by correspondence, especially during the 19th century.

During the 20th century, there are least two other well known CC losing games.

The first games played between the problemist Hans Klüver of Hamburg and Thomas R. Dawson of London during March and November 1923. This game has been published for the first time in the Deutsches Wochenschach in May 1924 and is among the very first true losing games played according to the most acknowledged rules of this form of chess.

The other one has been played between E.T.O Slater of London and the same Hans Klüver. I have found this game in "Le Courier des Echecs" February 1955, without any indication of date.

Some CC Losing tournaments have been organized in the past, and, as far as I know, the first one being the German tournament organized in 1948 by H. Kniest.

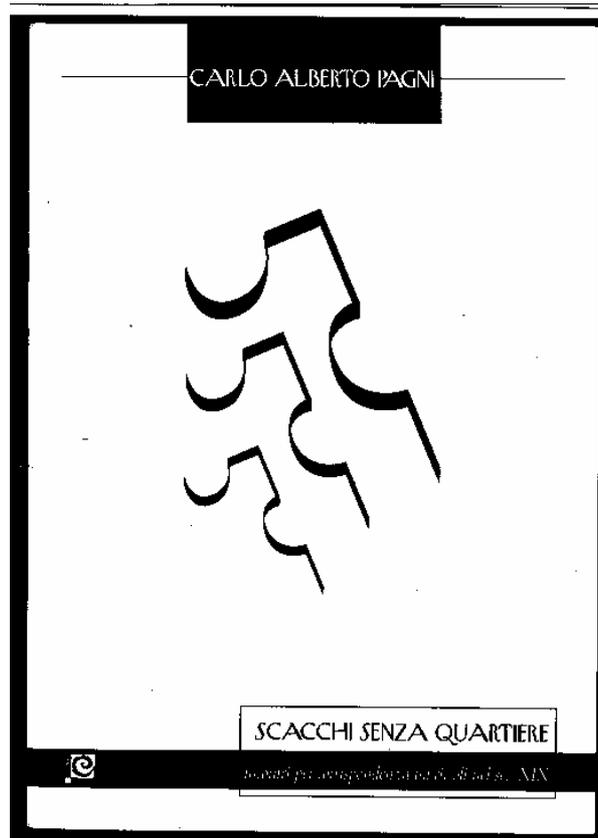
The most important feature of this type of chess are the following

- The game is won for you if you are the first being unable to move; this may happen by losing all your pieces or by stalemate.
- Capturing is compulsory for each player; if there exists more than one possibility to take, the player may choose the most favourable one.
- The king has lost any royal properties, i.e. there exists no check or mate, so the K may be taken as any other piece. Especially he may also be created by a pawn promotion. Logically nowadays castling is not allowed (but it was allowed in older times, see the Klüver game). Therefore a game without kings or with only one king is not unusual!

For more information see the excellent website of Fabrice Liardet (in French), he is one of the greatest LC specialists: <http://www.pion.ch/Losing/index.html>

Scach Senza Quartieri
Incontri per corrispondenza tra circoli nel sec. XIX
By Prof. Carlo Alberto Pagni

(Caissa Italia editore, Roma, 296 pages, ISBN 88 – 88756 – 18- 3. €28,00)



Prof. Carlo Alberto Pagni has published in the last decade some booklets about correspondence chess games played between cities during the 19th century. He has now published a revised and completed edition of this work, in Italian, but the book contains almost 600 games in figurine algebraic notation that can be easily understood by everyone interested in CC in general and particularly in chess history.

Everyone interested in CC history knows the labor involved in such research and this book brings a large overview of the games played between the chess clubs that are now readily available in a single volume. It is obvious that such a work cannot be perfect and that some mistakes can be found here and there,

source of the games.

Tim Harding, in his review of the book, published in Chess Mail 8/2004 (page 58-59) gives the example of the London – Portsmouth games played by telegraph on the 9th and the 10th of April 1845. In fact, the games were played primarily by H. Staunton and Captain Kennedy on the Portsmouth side of the telegraph and George Walker, Captain Evans, Duncan Forbes and some other players from the capital on the London end of the telegraph. Pagni does not list the games in the chronological order and does not report the correct circumstances in which the games have been played, and probably mistakes about the length of the games.

I did not have time to go into the details of each and every game, but I have spotted some other possible problems / mistakes concerning the games played in the first decade on this history:

Amsterdam - Rotterdam (1824)

Pagni has written that the games have been concluded on 20th of December. the same information can be found in Bruno Bassi's CC history, a series of articles published in Mail Chess in the 40s of last century. Bassi's article is probably the source of Pagni.

Von Mauvillon, who was presumably one of the very first authors to have published these games in his book, "Anweisung zur Erlernung des Schach-Spiels mit besonderer Rücksicht auf diejenigen denen das Spiel durchaus unbekannt ist," Essen 1827, page 375 gives the end of the two games on the 15th of December.

There is no indication where Bassi found the date of 20th of December, but I would probably follow von Mauvillon's date.

Manchester - Liverpool (1825)

In the game Manchester – Liverpool, Pagni gives a the last two moves of the game 41...g5 42.Ke5. This can also be found in Fernschach, in 1992 in the game annotations by GM Hermann Heemsoth.

But Bassi gives another end: 41...f4 42. Ke4 g5 43.h3.

Manchester – Liverpool (1825) is a good example of a game that was almost forgotten and was not included in the two major works on CC games in the 19th century, Ludwig Bledow's "Die zwischen dem Berliner und Posener Klub durch Correspondenz gespielten Schach-Partien..." Berlin 1843 and Max Lange's enlarged edition of this early work published in Leipzig in 1872. I have been unable to find any publication of this game before Bassi and it is very hard to conclude what was the actual end of the game.

Hyderabad - Madras (1828)

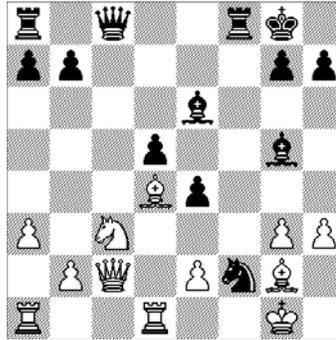
This classical CC game is often presented up to move 44, concluded by the victory of the Madras team. This was to be found in the earlier works of Pagni, in his newly published book, but also for instance in Tim Harding's article about early correspondence chess in India (Chess Mail, 5/2004, page 19).

I do not know what is the source of this 44 moves game, but all early sources such as Bledow, Lange or the Chess Players's Chronicle (Vol I, pages 49-51) give the game in 52 moves.

Here is the complete score of this game:

Corr 1828 - 1829

1.g3 f5 2.♙g2 ♘f6 3.c4 e5 4.♘c3 ♙e7 5.d4 exd4 6.♚xd4 c6 7.♘h3 ♘a6 8.a3 ♘c5 9.♚d1 0-0 10.0-0 ♘ce4 11.♚c2 d5 12.♚d1 ♙e6 13.♘g5 ♚c8 14.cxd5 cxd5 15.♘gxe4 fxe4 16.♙e3 ♘g4 17.♙d4 ♙g5 18.h3? ♘xf2!



19.♚f1 ♘xh3+ 20.♔h2 ♚d8 21.♚b3 h5! 22.♙xh3 ♙xh3 23.♘xd5 ♙e6 24.♚f5 ♚xd5! 25.♚xd5 ♚c6 26.♚xg5 ♙xb3 27.♚xg7+ ♔f8 28.♚f1+ ♔e8 29.♚f6 ♚c2 30.♚h6 ♚xe2+ 31.♔h3 ♚f1+ 32.♔h4 ♚f8 33.♚xh5 ♙f7 34.♚xf7 ♔xf7 35.♚f5+ ♔e6 36.♚xf8 ♚xf8 37.♙xa7 ♔f5 38.♔h3 ♚d8 39.♙b6 ♚d3 40.♔h4 e3 41.g4+ ♔f4 42.♙c7+ ♔f3 43.g5 e2 44.♙a5 ♚d1

and here are the missing moves :

45.g6 e1♚+ 46.♙xe1 ♚xe1 47.♔g5 ♔e4 48.g7 ♚g1+ 49.♔f6 ♔d4 50.♔f7 ♔c4 51.a4 ♔b3 52.a5 ♔xb2 0-1

I have informed Carlo Alberto Pagni about these and possible other mistakes, so that he can include the correction in a future edition of his book.

In the last issue of ICCF Amici, I have published an article about “Miss Gilbert”. Tim Harding has informed me that it should have been ‘Mrs Gilbert’! and he was right. One has always to be very careful when writing an article about chess history and there is always something to be learned from others!

I recommend the book of Carlo Alberto Pagni to every chess player and especially the CC players who are interested in the history of our game.

Eric RUCH

ABOUT BOOKS

by Alex Dunne

IMPROVE YOUR POSITIONAL CHESS

by Carsten Hansen

The subtitle of this work is “A practical guide to making positional decisions” and that seems to fit this book. Hansen selects game positions from some of the best players and discusses how those players handle the position. His selection is admirable, and his notes clear and to the point, but his generalizations are lacking. That may be because Hansen takes an opposite tact to the prevailing current view that “chess is 90% tactics.” Whether to support his book or because this is actually how he feels, Hansen has made the statement that “chess is at least 90% based on positional factors.” This is a refreshing view (I say this because the quote more closely gels with my own view of chess) but in order to support this view, Hansen gives the position from which the winning player exploits those advantages, whereas if you really wanted to improve your positional chess, he should give the thinking leading to that positional edge.

Gambit Publications Ltd., distributed in the US by BHB International, Inc., 302 West North 2nd Street, Seneca, SC 29678, has published Improve Your Positional Chess by Carsten Hansen, ISBN 1 904600 00 X at \$25.95 for the soft cover edition.

Nevertheless, the examples given by Hansen are so consistently top-level, that they make up a good book. The reader can learn much in these 192 pages. Hansen breaks down the positional struggle to ten factors – what constitutes imbalances, the initiative, weaknesses, Knights vs. Bishops, Rooks, the exchange, and material for the Queen, structural weaknesses, Pawn sacrifices, and the attack. He rounds off the book with a quiz and answers. This book can benefit players rated from 1700 to 2400.

STARTING OUT: ROOK ENDGAMES

by Chris Ward

Perhaps the most concrete of all endgames is the Rook and Pawn endgame. There are certain techniques to be learned and some generalizations that can guide the student to the correct conclusion, but much calculation is needed otherwise. This 128 page book is rich in instruction to the student who is taking his first forays into the realm of the Rook endgame. Chris Ward takes nothing for granted, starting off with the battle between Kings and Pawns and then introducing the Rook. He discussed the (unfair) battle between Rook and Pawn and then expands on that to battles of two Pawns versus a Rook and even five Pawns against the Rook.

All the basic positions are noted here – what I liked particularly was Ward’s discussion of why passive defense works in the battle of Rook versus Rook and h-Pawn, why passive defense works with Rook versus Rook and g-Pawn, but why passive defense fails in the fight of Rook versus Rook and f-Pawn. When the student can see the Rook can use the h-file to drive the King away from defense, he can begin to understand some of the basics of Rook and Pawn endgames. Then building bridges, Philidor positions, and even zugzwang become more

meaningful to the student.

Everyman Chess, Everyman Publishers plc, distributed in North America by the Globe Pequot Press, PO Box 480, 246 Goose Lane, Guilford, CT 06437-0480, has published Starting Out: Rook Endgames by Chris Ward, ISBN 1 85744 374 8 at \$18.95 for the soft cover.

The Starting Out series is mainly concerned with opening play, but this volume discussing endgames is worthy of inclusion in the series. Very thorough, a digestion of this book will make you a stronger endgame player. I can strongly recommend this book for junior players rated 500-1800. Easy to read, pertinent, clear, and accurate, this is a good book to start out with in learning about Rook and Pawn endgames. If you are rated below 1800 and want to learn about the most common endgame in chess, buy this book!

MY GREAT PREDECESSORS, PART IV

ON FISCHER

by Garry Kasparov

Buy this book, buy this book, buy this book.

Kasparov covers Reshevsky, Najdorf, and Larsen in the first half of this volume, Fischer makes up the second half. This is a good book in the first half. It is a great book in the second half. Eminently readable, for an old fogey (pre-1972) like myself, it was like reliving the heady days of Fischer's ascendancy. The games of Fischer are presented with the usual help of Fritz, and what is remarkable is how much more accurate Fischer was than his contemporaries. Everything is here – Fischer's youth, the Game of the Century, Portoroz at age 14, qualifying for the Candidates, Fischer's tournament triumphs, his failures, his demands, his 6-0 shut outs, his winning the world title, Sveti-Stefan 1992. All that is missing is his incarceration in Japan. But the games are here, well analyzed. And they help make this volume great.

Everyman Chess, Everyman Publishers plc, distributed in North America by the Globe Pequot Press, PO Box 480, 246 Goose Lane, Guilford, CT 06437-0480, has published My Great Predecessors, Part IV by Garry Kasparov, ISBN 1 85744 395 0 at \$35 for the hard cover.

I realize I sound too enthusiastic in reviewing Kasparov's first four volumes, but as a long time bibliophile, I have to simply state that these four volumes are without equal in the history of chess. Anyone who is interested in great games and the past of chess will bless these volumes. Buy this book!

THE GRANDMASTER'S MIND

by Amatzia Avni

I am not certain whether this was an ambitious book that fell short of its goal, or a light-weight effort that fell short of its goal. The format was clear: author Avni would present is (largely) Grandmaster friends with a chess position or game (or ask them about one of their games) and ask them to verbalize their thoughts. That way, the reader would get an insight into the Grandmaster mind, a key to thinking like a Grandmaster. This was first done in a systematic fashion by de Groot who interviewed some strong players in this fashion almost sixty years ago. Unfortunately, too many of Avni's GM friends are much stronger players than they are literate.

I suppose it is valuable, somehow, to have a GM tell us about his 14-move draw with Smyslov or that in chess, sometimes poetry is needed rather than calculation, or Wow! as a GM is shown a move in a game he is analyzing, a move that caught him by surprise. Sometimes the GM is at a loss to explain why he made the move he made, only that the move is the correct one for the position even if he can't explain why.

Gambit Publications Ltd., distributed in the US by BHB International, Inc., 302 West North 2nd Street, Seneca, SC 29678, has published The Grandmaster's Mind by Amatzia Avni, ISBN 1 904600 19 0 at \$23.95 for the soft cover edition.

I don't want to dwell on the negative aspects of this book. There are positive insights. Even the insight that some very strong players rely greatly on intuition is valuable to give confidence to those who rely on intuition. But overall I found this book not very helpful to me, and I am not sure just who it would be helpful for. I can say that the combinations and endgame positions are mostly interesting and instructive. I know, too, that Avni has some interesting friends. If you are interested in different patterns of thinking about thinking, this book may interest you.

ALEXANDER ALEKHINE MASTER OF ATTACK
by Alexander Raetsky & Maxim Chetverik

There are books on the market that are designed to improve your tactics. For the most part, these books give you a position and ask you to find the tactical continuation. These books will increase your tactical expertise by exposing the reader to different patterns of combinations. For the most part these combination books lack personality. Not so with this book.

Everyman Chess, Everyman Publishers plc, distributed in North America by the Globe Pequot Press, PO Box 480, 246 Goose Lane, Guilford, CT 06437-0480, has published Alexander Alekhine Master of Attack by Alexander Raetsky & Maxim Chetverik, ISBN 1 85744 372 1 at \$18.95 for the soft cover.

All the combinations in the book are by Alexander Alekhine, one of the great combinational geniuses. Further, the entire game is given, though the moves leading up to the combination are not annotated. Once the critical combinational moment is reached, then there are notes and variations given, if necessary. This allows the reader to gain an appreciation of some of the brilliant chess of Alekhine. Of course it would be a better book if the earlier moves were analyzed too, but it would also be a different kind of book. As a combination book, I rather like the mixture of chess history and chess combination. So, though the book is slight, Alekhine's genius remains very much alive. This book can help you improve your tactics if you are rated 1800-2400. Perhaps the pages from 84-94, "Alekhine Tips" for solving the various positions could have been left out. The "hints" are more of a distraction than a help.