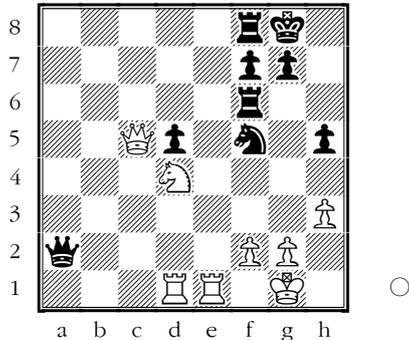


Test Yourself!

Smirin (2649) – Dizdar (2524)
CRO Cup (2) Sibenik, 31.05.2005



On This Day

by GM Alex Baburin

Israeli GM Ilya Smirin was born on the 21st of January 1968 in Vitebsk, Byelorussia. He won the Israeli Championship on three occasions (in 1992, 1994 and 1999). With an aggressive playing style and sharp opening repertoire, [Smirin](#) does very well in open tournaments, particularly in the United States. His best rating so far was 2702. His current rating is 2652.



World Chess News

Tata Steel, Wijk aan Zee

Standings after 8 rounds:

1. Carlsen – 6
2. Anand – 5½
- 3–4. Aronian and Nakamura – 5
- 5–6. Karjakin and Harikrishna – 4½
- 7–8. Caruana and Leko – 4
- 9–10. Van Wely and Wang Hao – 3½
11. Giri – 3
- 12–14. I. Sokolov, L'Ami and Hou Yifan – 2½,

The next round is on Tuesday.

Round 9 pairings:

I. Sokolov – van Wely
Leko – Anand
Karjakin – Harikrishna
Hou Yifan – Carlsen
L'Ami – Aronian
Wang Hao – Caruana
Nakamura – Giri

[Official website](#)

Directing your knights

Every chess player cares about his knights – but does everybody care how the knights stand on the board? Chess journalist Hartmut Metz had a theory that attacking players placed their knights looking straight forward, while positional players preferred that the knights look at each other or to one side (left or right) of the board – and some place them diagonally (at approximately 45 degrees).

Metz wrote a story on this curious subject for *Schachkalender 2013*. He observed how some top players positioned their knights during a Bundesliga match of his home town team OSG Baden-Baden, spoke with them about it and checked a lot of old pictures as well. The results seemed to confirm his theory – players like Anand, Nakamura, Ju. Polgar and Shirov placed knights looking straight forward, while players like Carlsen, Leko and Adams preferred that their knights 'looked' at each other. The knights of Kramnik, Karpov, Bacrot and Capablanca always looked to the same side of the board – as (surprisingly) did Kasparov's knights. Of course, there are some players who don't think much about the issue (e.g. Korchnoi, Fischer, Aronjan, Karjakin and Radjabov).

You can vote in the online poll (the text is both in German and English) on www.rochade-kuppenheim.de

The first 250 votes gave the following results:

- My knights both look in front to the opponent (44%)
- My knights look to each other (19%)
- The knights both look in one direction (left or right) (14 %)
- I place the knights diagonally (at approximately 45 degrees) (7%)
- Both knights look to their wing (left to the queenside, the right to the kingside) (1%)
- I place my knights in other directions (6%)
- I've never paid attention to how I place my knights (9%)

Margaryan Memorial

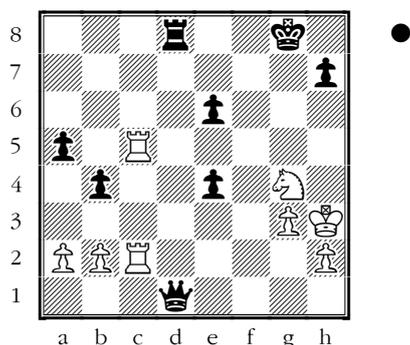
This closed tournament finished 6 days ago in Yerevan. The Elo-favourite GM Martyn Kravtsiv won the tournament outright.

Final standings:

1. GM Kravtsiv (UKR, 2593) – 7/9
2. IM K. Grigoryan (ARM, 2513) – 6½
- 3-4. IMs Baryshpolets (UKR, 2502) and Goganov (RUS, 2545) – 5½, etc

One fragment is worth showing:

Gabuzyan (2525) – Harutyunian (2358) Margaryan Mem Yerevan, 2013



31...♖d5? This is a completely wrong idea – the rook was actually better off on d8! Black could play 31...♗h8–+.

32.♖c8+ ♗g7?

It's hard to admit your mistake, but 32...♖d8 was called for. Here White could decide the game in his favour

with a simple enough tactical shot – 33.♖2c7+! ♖d7 (33...♗g6 34.♖g8+ ♗f5 35.♖f7#) 34.♖xd7+ ♗xd7 35.♖g8+!, but he returned the favour:

33.♗h4?? After that mistake Black could still win by playing 33...♖d8. But the game was drawn after **33...e3? 34.♖2c7+ ♖d7 35.♖d8 ♗xg4+ 36.♗xg4 ♖xc7 37.♗f3 ♖c2 38.♖a8 e2 39.♗f2 ♖xb2 40.♖xa5 ♗f6 41.a3 b3 42.♖b5 e5 43.a4 ♖b1 44.♗xe2 b2 45.♗d3 e4+ 46.♗c2 e3 47.♗xb1 e2 48.♖b6+ ½–½**

The online coverage of this tournament was been very poor – some games were posted online, but many were not.

[Official website](#)

Interview with Schripchenko

In recent years many professional chess players took up poker, with varying degrees of success. One of the more successful of them is IM Almira [Skripchenko](#), who recently gave an [interview](#) to the cardplayer.com website.

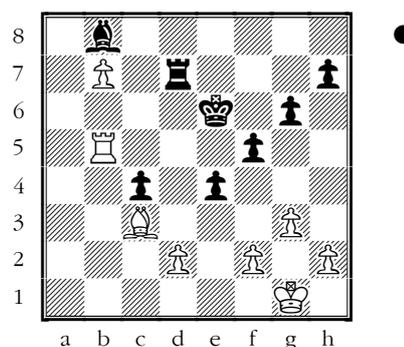
Armenian Championship

This closed tournament with 10 players is in progress in Yerevan.

Standings before the last round:

1. T. L. Petrosian (ARM, 2648) – 6½
- 2-3. Grigoryan (ARM, 2599) and Hovhannisyian (ARM, 2615) – 6, etc

Hovhannisyian (2615) – Kotanjian (2518) Ch-ARM (5) Yerevan 2013



Black should be OK after 42...♖d5, but

he decided to move his king closer to the enemy passer at once - **42...♖d6??**

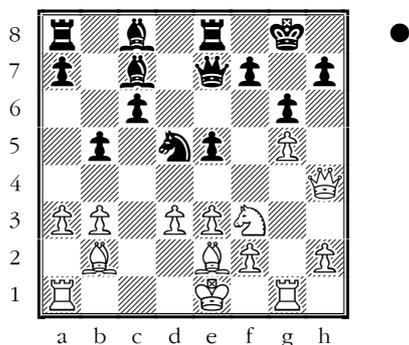
The punishment was swift:

43.♙e5+! ♜c6 44.♙xb8 1-0

Black resigned as he realised that 44...♜xb5 would be met by 45.♙c7!.

Grigoryan (2599) – Aghasaryan (2443) Ch-ARM (7), Yerevan 2013

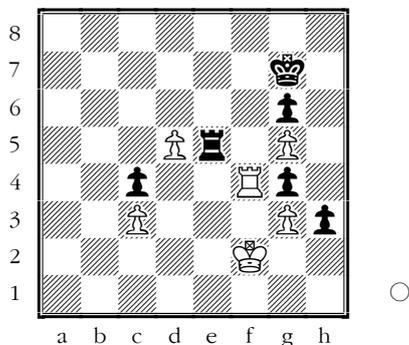
1.♘f3 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 ♘f6 4.♙c3 e6 5.♜c2 ♘bd7 6.b3 ♙d6 7.♙b2 0-0 8.♙e2 ♞e8 9.♞g1 e5 10.cxd5 ♘xd5 11.♙e4 ♙c7 12.g4 ♘7f6 13.g5 ♘xe4 14.♜xe4 ♜e7 15.a3 g6 16.d3 b5 17.♜h4 (D)



Black is fine, but he overestimated his chances: **17...♘f4? 18.exf4 exf4 19.0-0-0! ♜c5+ 20.♜d2!** Black probably missed this move. The shock must be strong as he resigned (**1-0**), while Houdini gives White only +0.86 after 20...♙f5.

Now let's have a look at two curious endgames:

Melkumyan (2656) – Pashikian (2607) Ch-ARM (7) Yerevan 2013

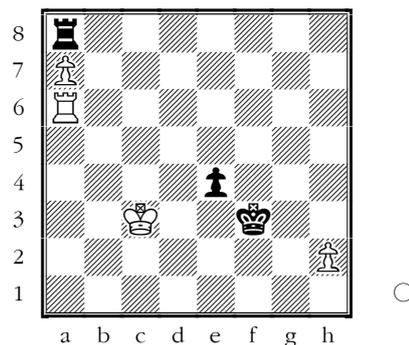


The game should be drawn after 53.d6 ♞d5 54.♙xg4 ♞xd6 55.♞xc4 ♞d1 56.♞h4 ♞c1. Instead of going for that

line White made a natural-looking move - **53.♞d4**. He eventually won after **53...♞f5+? 54.♜g1 ♞e5 55.♞xg4 ♞xd5 56.♜h2 ♞c5 57.♜xh3 ♜g8 58.♜h4 ♜g7 59.♞d4 ♜f7 60.♜g4 (1-0 on move 90)**

However, Black missed a nice shot - 53...♞e1!. Still, White would be OK after 54.♜xe1 h2 55.d6 h1♜+ 56.♜e2 ♜g2+ 57.♜d1 ♜f1+ 58.♜d2 - the d-pawn should give him a draw.

Aghasaryan (2443) – Ter-Sahakyan (2567) Ch-ARM (6) Yerevan, 2013



White is clearly winning - the difference in power of the rooks is very obvious. All White had to do was to play two accurate moves - 59.♜d2 e3+ 60.♜e1 and get a point in the tournament cross-table. However, he started a strange manoeuvre: **59.♞f6+?? ♜e2 60.♞f7 e3 61.♞e7?** Black would have to work harder after 61.♜b4, though with precise play he can still save the game - 61...♜d1 62.♞d7+ ♜e1 63.♜b5 e2 64.♜b6 ♞h8 65.♜b7 ♜f2 66.♞f7+ ♜g1 67.♞e7 ♞h7 68.♞xh7 e1♜ 69.♞g7+ ♜f2 70.♞f7+ ♜g1 71.a8♜ ♜e4+ 72.♜a7 ♜d4+=. **61...♜f2 62.♜d3 ♞d8+ 63.♜c4 e2= 64.♜b5 e1♜ 65.♞xe1 ♜xe1 66.♜b6 ♜f2 67.♜b7 ♜f3 68.a8♜ ♞xa8 69.♜xa8 ♜g4 70.h4 ½-½**

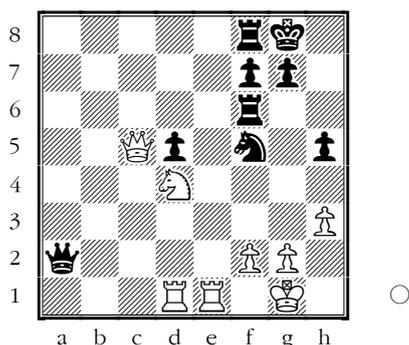
[Official website](#)



Solution to our Quiz:

Smirin (2649) – Dizdar (2524)

CRO Cup (2) Sibenik, 31.05.2005



25. ♖a1! 1-0

Black resigned as after 25...♙c4 White plays 26. ♖xf8+! ♜xf8 27. ♖a8+.

Contact information. Have some comments about Chess Today? [E-mail us](mailto:ababurin@iol.ie) – we appreciate your feedback! **Chess Today** is published by Alexander Baburin, 3 Eagle Hill, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Tel: (353-1) 278-2276.

E-mail: ababurin@iol.ie

Website: <http://www.chesstoday.net>

Editors: GMs Baburin, Scherbakov and Golubev.

Technical editors: Graham Brown, Ivan Baburin and Ralph Marconi.

Chess Today is copyright 2000–2013 by Alexander Baburin and protected intellectual property under the International Copyright convention. Subscribers are allowed to non-commercially distribute copies of Chess Today at their chess club, chess tournaments and via e-mail (on an occasional basis). Any other use and distribution (reproduction, via print, electronic format, or in any form whatsoever), as well as posting on the Web, is strictly prohibited without express written permission.