

## Blindfold Chess: Chess played in the Mind's Eye

Chess has been known as a game that requires critical thinking and intense focus and calculation. Many say playing it is an exercise in visualization and pattern recognition. Blindfold Chess is the act of playing chess without sight of the board or pieces. Moves are communicated verbally through chess notation. You may wonder how that is even possible. Even for the many who have witnessed a blindfold chess simul, they still find this ability an extraordinary feat. To play one game blindfolded is already impressive, but what about playing multiple boards simultaneously? How does someone remember the chess piece positions of multiple games without ever looking at the board?

One interesting finding by psychologists is that many blindfold chess masters report that what they visualize are not even images of chess pieces on the chessboard, but rather abstract images.

Alfred Binet was a French psychologist who invented the first practical (IQ) intelligence test. Binet was interested in the connection between chess and mathematics and conducted extensive research on Blindfold Chess and how it relates to memory. He found that being able to play Blindfold chess was not a matter of having a photographic memory, but rather those good at Blindfold Chess were using more efficient ways of storing the positions in their minds.

One of his subjects, Dr. Siegbert Tarrasch explained that basically some part of every chess game is played blindfolded. Strong chess players play out a combination of five or more moves in their head. The sight of the whole board can even interfere with their calculations. Advanced chess players remember and visualize meaningful patterns via a process called "chunking" instead of positions of individual pieces on the board. Chunking reduces the complexity of a position and allows a chess player to reconstruct a game or position with ease. (Source: <http://www.chessmaniac.com/alfred-binet-and-chess/>)

A sample of a chunk or cluster would be; a castled king with three pawns in front of it and a knight in front of the pawns might constitute one cluster, while an isolated pawn blockaded by a bishop might constitute another. This method of recalling information in chunks can be seen as a form of shorthand.

What is essential to playing Blindfold Chess is the proficient knowledge of the board. One must master the coordinates and color of each square on the board, as well as the intersecting squares and colors of the diagonals. This has to be second nature before any attempt is made at Blindfold Chess.

If you want to improve your blindfold chess playing abilities, there is a website that can assist you with this. <http://www.blindfoldchesstrainer.com/blindfoldtrainer.php>

Even though you can improve your visualization by playing Blindfold Chess, it can be extremely taxing on your overall health. You need to be in top physical and mental health to successfully play multiple blindfold chess games.

If the history and psychology of Blindfold Chess is interesting to you, check out [www.blindfoldchess.net/](http://www.blindfoldchess.net/)

Blindfold Chess Player extraordinaire, GM Timur Gareyev is attempting to break the Guinness World Record for playing Blindfold Chess. He will attempt to beat the current record held by Miguel Najdorf (Argentina) who played 45 simultaneous blindfolded against some of the best Brazilian players of the time, over 23 hours and 25 minutes. He won 39, drew 4 and lost 2. Marc Lang attempted to break the record playing 46 games in 2011, but because of his percentage of wins did not match that of Najdorf, his attempt did not officially qualify for the record.

Before breaking Najdorf's record, Timur will attempt to a NEW Guinness World Record for playing 64 rapid continuous games (blitz) blindfolded. This attempt will take place this September in Colorado. We are looking for volunteers to help with documenting this event. If you are interested in joining our team, please email [blindfoldchesschampion@gmail.com](mailto:blindfoldchesschampion@gmail.com).

You can follow Timur as he trains mentally, physically and spiritually for these two record breaking events at:

[www.blindfoldchesschampion.com](http://www.blindfoldchesschampion.com)

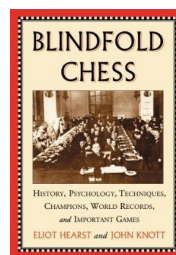


Photo courtesy of Ventura

[www.blindfoldchess.net](http://www.blindfoldchess.net)

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## Introduction



This newsletter is written and edited by Jennifer Vallens. A special thank you to Larry Smith for his contribution.

The purpose of this newsletter is to further chess education in our community.

If you would like me to cover your chess event or have feedback on what you would like to see for future editions, email me at [offdarook@gmail.com](mailto:offdarook@gmail.com)

Enjoy and now GO PLAY CHESS.



Bobby Fischer, although not known to formally have played in any blindfold exhibition matches, was known to often play blindfold chess in all informal settings including during walks, riding on a bus or train and during meal times.

Hi, my name is Jennifer Vallens and I am chess mom living in Conejo Valley in California.

I recently received my Level 1 Chess Coach certification from the USCF and am thrilled to be teaching Beginning chess for the Conejo Valley Parks and Recreation. If you are interested in Group Lessons or bringing Chess to your school, please email me at [offdarook@gmail.com](mailto:offdarook@gmail.com).

This summer I will be joining forces with John Blanks, fitness coach and boxing instructor and Chess Coach Jerry Yee. Together, we will bring a chess conditioning camp for kids to the Conejo Valley.

Last month I was fortunate to be able to visit St. Louis and the Chess Hall of Fame. I attended the Opening Ceremony for the US Chess Champion. It was a thrill for me to be in the same room with such brilliance, especially those who have been so kind to me and have previously contributed to my newsletter (Maurice Ashley, Wesley So, Timur Gareyev, Kayden Troff and Jennifer Shahade. I am so very grateful for the camaraderie of the chess community.

Also I recently joined the Board for the International Chess Institute of the Midwest (ICIM). I hope to help expand their efforts with furthering chess education as well as helping organize an exciting event with GM Timur Gareyev where he will attempt to break the world record for Blindfold Chess.

My son Evan continues to play in tournaments around the country. He was ecstatic to be able to play on a team at the Amateur West Team tournament in Orange County. It was a complete surprise that he was placed on the reigning champion team that went on to win the title of National Team Champions for a 3rd year in a row. Thank you Ted Castro and Nor Cal House of Chess. It was an honor for him to be on the team.

Thank you for reading. Your feedback is always appreciated.

Jennifer

### Every Chess Player Plays Blindfolded by Timur Gareyev

How is it possible for me to blast through the field of over 30 players beating most of them blindfolded? I commonly get this type of question. I imagine once you see one of my blindfold sessions you may assume that I possess super-natural powers. Memory, creativity, imagination, and endurance are all crucial in executing the ultimate feat. Now first I would like to mention that I hate blind adoration when it comes to judging somebody's success. If you think that someone must be born with the ability to be the champion, you got it all backwards.

Abilities responsible for my ultimate success are all possible to develop overtime. Talent may work as an X-factor. Talent multiplies whatever effort you invest in your improvement. Now you still must put in countless hours to fulfill your god-given talent. Secondly we chess players all play blindfold chess already. If you doubt that, just consider the process of playing a single game. You're not only looking at the board playing the move at hand. You must predict the moves happening ahead played by you and your opponent. You do that without moving your pieces inside your mind. Thus you play your game blindfolded.

Now we know that every chess game we play, we use our blindfold ability. Is it beneficial to do so, or is it somehow straining or even life-threatening? Blindfold chess certainly presents serious challenges to our body, mind, spirit. We must engage all three elements to truly tap in our blindfold chess potential. Using your mind is self-explanatory, it is hard to play chess successfully without applying deep thought and consideration. A strong body and an empowering inner ecosystem you develop is essential in enduring long blindfold battles which may last up to 24 hours. Spirit is what makes blindfold game possible and actually easy in a way.

Meditative mindset and letting go is essential in transcending the routine. For example as you move from

one board to another you must keep in mind the position and your course of action. If you try to hold to every one of the positions, soon you will be exhausted. The miraculous essence to playing multiple blindfold games lies in the ease of games coming back to your memory at a moment's notice. I feel like blindfold chess is a form of meditation. You get to enter the parallel universe of peace and contemplation.

I suggest that playing chess blindfolded as well as reading chess books without moving the pieces on a physical board is highly beneficial to your mastery. That is what I did at the beginning of my career when I traveled to competition. I filled every vacant moment studying the Dvoretzky endgame manual and other books. Whether riding on the train or waiting in line, I had a chess book with me I could read. That certainly helped improve my chess as well as developed my blindfold ability.



Pictured here is Justin Choi, age 9 who played his first blindfold chess game at an Off da Rook event. Playing as White and his back to his group of opponents with only the site of an empty board, he was able to reach checkmate.

Full video of his game can be found at <https://youtu.be/-OFmZsqplGw>

## Q&A with Jennifer Shahade

It was so exciting to get a chance to see you in action doing commentary at the US Chess Championship. The studio was BEAUTIFUL and you, Yasser and Maurice did an amazing job! What a great team. Thank you.

**Besides chess commentary, you have your hands in many pots, but your start was in playing competitive chess. Can you tell me your highest rating? Highest achievement?**  
Hi! My highest rating was over 2400 USCF. My biggest chess achievement was winning two US Women's Chess Championships, and earning two IM norms along the way.

**Do you still play chess? Online?**  
Yes, I still play chess online and love solving studies.

**Do you still compete in tournaments? Teach?**  
I coach regularly, and give lectures and talks all over the World. I was recently at the London Chess Classic, where I gave a speech and lecture to girls and also spoke to educators on chess and math from a player's perspective.

**How did you get into poker? Has chess helped your poker game? How are they similar or different?**  
I've written a lot about the topic of chess and poker in my role as the MindSports Ambassador for PokerStars, and PokerNews recently did a three-part series on my transition from chess to poker. Chess definitely helps me with the right approach to poker. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9qfJUu15bl> The game in which I recently won a major title in Prague, Open Face Poker, is often compared to chess because it is all about finding the correct play—whereas in the most popular form of poker, No Limit Hold Em, the correct play is extremely opponent-dependent. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vXHmdQXGVou>

**Do you enjoy the attention of being one of the few women playing in a sport dominated by men? First chess and now poker?**  
Yes, I do enjoy it though it was difficult when I was coming up as a kid.

**Do you think there should be separate "women" chess tournaments? Why or why not?**  
Yes, I wrote about this topic extensively in Chess Bitch, and also touched on it in Play Like a Girl. I think occasional women's tournaments are a great way to showcase the top females in this sport, and to allow for camaraderie, not to mention financial opportunities for women, to keep them in the game. I do not see women's chess tournaments as an admission of inferiority, but I do think it's best if they are occasional, rather than a major staple in a player's calendar of events.

**Do you have any suggestions on how to get more girls interested in chess?**

I think we're headed in the right direction with the increased glamour of competitions in the Saint Louis Chess Club, and with people like World Chess Champ Magnus Carlsen and former Women's World Champ Alexandra Kosteniuk showing that chess and style go hand in hand.

**How has chess changed since you started competing as a kid?**

I prepared with computers even as a teen, but now the level of preparation has gone way up.

**How do you see it changing in the future?**  
Even more preparation!

**We missed you at Millionaire Chess! What are your thoughts on Chess becoming a high stakes game like poker?**

I love the concept of Millionaire chess. I only missed it because I was in the Isle of Man at the time, organizing and participating in a series of events that combined chess and poker! There was a tournament in which your score in a blitz tournament determined your chip stack in a poker event. I also played a simul in which I contested three chess games and three poker heads-up matches. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kP8VcnLhiP4>

**You seem to have your hand in EVERYTHING...Chess Commentator, Poker Player, Mind Sports Ambassador at Poker Stars, Editor of Chess Life Online, Founder of 9Queens, Board Member of World Chess Hall of Fame.....am I forgetting anything? And when do you find the time? Do you have any more projects in the pipeline?**

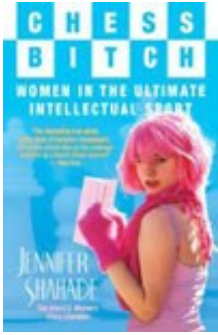
The only thing I notice you missed is coach at Run It Once, a poker training website. <http://www.runitonce.com/users/JenShahade/>

**For what accomplishment are you most proud?**  
My first book, my first US Women's title, and my first poker title (which I earned last week!)

For more on Jennifer, please visit her on Twitter

<http://twitter.com/jenshahade>





Both books can be found at Amazon and other retail booksellers.



Here Jen is with her brother, Greg Shahade as they play rounds of chess while doing their CrossFit workout. Great way to challenge the mind and the body!

Check out [Pokernews.com](http://Pokernews.com) interview with Jennifer that was done in three parts titled *From Chess Queen to Poker Star*.

The videos can be found here:

Part 1: <https://youtu.be/-9qfJUul5bl>

Part 2: <https://youtu.be/U8-p9UVZJfs>

Part 3: <https://youtu.be/lproITQiFtl>

Jennifer Shahade is a true pioneer. She has given chess and now poker a new face. She is changing what was once thought of as a man's game in a man's world.

Jennifer Shahade is a two-time American women's Chess Champion. She has authored two books and is the editor of Chess Life Online. She is also the Mind Sports Ambassador at PokerStars and Chess Commentator for many high level events such as the US Chess Championship and Women's Chess Championship, as well as the Sinquefeld Cup. She is a Speaker and she also started a non-profit 9Queens with Jean Hoffman, currently Executive Director of the US Chess Federation.

To stay up to date on all of Jennifer's events and activities, visit her at one of the following websites or follower her on twitter

<http://twitter.com/jenshahade>

<http://jennifershahade.com>

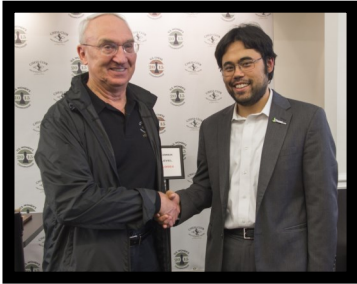
<http://uschess.org/clo>

<http://9queens.org>

<http://pokerfairytale.com>



# Highlights from US Chess Championship



Rex Sinquefeld congratulating 2015 US Chess Champion GM Hikaru Nakamura  
Photo Credit: Lennart Ootes



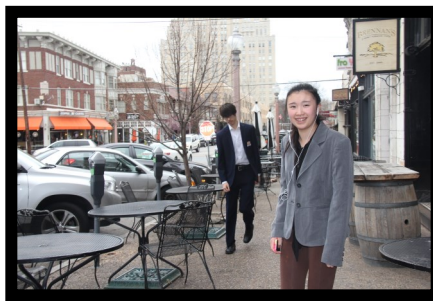
Behind the scenes. Amazing crew and beautiful new studio.  
Photo credit: US Chess Championship



Here I am with 7 time Women's US Chess Champion GM Irina Krush



GM Varuzhan Akobian



WIM Annie Wang (youngest American female master)



I had the pleasure to meet Rex Sinquefeld. Here I am pictured with Rex and Fox Sports Midwest newreporter, Teryn Schaefer



GM Kayden Troff and US Chess Champion GM Hikaru Nakamura



GM Timur Gareyev with GM Sam Sevan (youngest Grandmaster in history)



IM Nazi Paikidze (2nd place) vs. GM Irina Krush (1st Place)



GM Sam Shankland vs. GM Wesley So

## Interview with Marck Cobb, President of ICIM



**Hi Marck. I am so happy to join the board at the International Chess Institute of the Midwest (ICIM). Can you tell me a little about your background and your position at ICIM.**

I have been associated with the chess programs in Lindsborg, Kansas since Jan 2000, when my son became involved with the social chess program that was held in the Student Union at Bethany College in Lindsborg. As a result of my son's involvement with chess, I volunteered to be the chess coach for the Canton-Galva Elementary School and continued coaching students in the elementary school, middle school, and the high school for more than 10 years. In addition to my chess coaching activities, I have served in the US Air Force for 20 years as a pilot and diplomat. I have also worked as an attorney for the past 25 years. I have held the position of President of ICIM since January of 2006.

**Can you tell me a little about the history of the ICIM and Karpov International School of Chess.**

The history of ICIM is relatively short since we have existed for only about 10 years. The purpose of ICIM is to provide chess education for all levels and ages of chess players. We have maintained a local chess education program in area schools of central Kansas and we invite a grandmaster each summer to teach in our summer chess camp program. Our summer chess camp program is a one-week program limited to 30 participants which have come from different countries and several states.

We were able to include the Karpov affiliation with the school which began in May of 2003. World Champion Anatoly Karpov visited Lindsborg for two weeks to prepare for a chess match in New York City and permitted us to use his name for our chess business which is the only Karpov chess school in the United States. World Champion Karpov has visited the school on several occasions and in 2005 he visited Lindsborg with former President Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union.

We have been incorporated as the International Chess Institute of the Midwest since January 23, 2006. We do business as the "World Champion Anatoly Karpov International School of Chess" and as the "Chess Academy of Timur."

**Speaking of the Chess Academy of Timur, GM Timur Gareyev was recently appointed Executive Director of the Karpov Chess School and his Chess Academy (CAT) is now an affiliate of ICIM. Can you tell me a little more of what this means to the organization.**

He was appointed our new Executive Director in December 2014. He brings a wealth of ideas to our organization as a result of his chess programs in Texas, Nevada, California, Colorado, and Kansas. Grandmaster Gareyev has a creative talent for developing chess education programs and has been visiting and working with many schools to offer flexible chess programs with academic accreditation. Doing business as the Chess Academy of Timur will broaden the opportunities for youth and adults to continue their chess development. Grandmaster Gareyev will be offering more summer camp chess programs, as well as a virtual classroom program.

**Karpov holds an annual summer chess camp. Can you tell me more about this year's camp.**

This year's summer camp will be led by GM Timur Gareyev. It will be held on two different sessions: The first session is from June 14 to 19, 2015, and, the second session is from July 12 to 17, 2015, followed by the Kansas State Open Chess Tournament on July 18-19. Students will play a daily rated Game 45 with game analysis followed by chess instruction. Recreation activities are in the afternoon and the evening has a special chess program activity. More information on our chess camp can be found at <http://www.anatolykarpovchessschool.org/chesscamps.html>

**Are classes regularly held at the school? Does the school offer private training or group lessons?**

Presently we hold weekly classes for Lindsborg student at the school and we provide chess education in 15 different school programs to about 250 students.

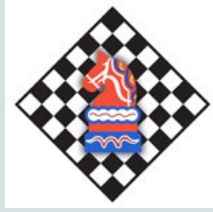
The school offers private and group lessons. Usually, private lessons are given to students who have achieved higher ratings and who continue to compete in chess tournaments locally, nationally, and internationally.

**Is there anything else you would like to share about upcoming events and future plans for ICIM?**

We hope to continue to expand our chess program in the future. To find out more about our chess school program and future events, please visit our website at <http://www.anatolykarpovchessschool.org/>



WORLD CHAMPION  
ANATOLY KARPOV  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF CHESS



***INTERNATIONAL CHESS INSTITUTE  
OF THE MIDWEST  
SUMMER CHESS CAMPS***

**June 14-19, 2015**

**July 12-17, 2015**

KARPOV CHESS SCHOOL  
BETHANY COLLEGE  
LINDSBORG, KANSAS

**785-227-2224**

**[www.anatolykarpovchessschool.org](http://www.anatolykarpovchessschool.org)**

**ABOUT THE CAMPS**

The Karpov Chess School summer chess camp program is designed for chess players of all strengths and level of experience, ages 6 to adult who want to improve their game while enjoying the company of fellow chess enthusiasts.

**Lead instructor:  
Grandmaster Timur Gareyev**



Camp includes Grandmaster simul, tournament play, game analysis and expert instruction. A rotating instructional schedule allows campers to study with several members of the staff during the week. Each day there will also be supervised free time including soccer and/or swimming pool activities, basketball and tennis.



## Local Club play

### American Chess Academy

ACA offers group classes at Calabasas and Simi Valley locations Monday-Friday for kids 5-16 years. Visit <http://www.achessacademy.org/> for more information.

Contact: Jerry Yee (818) 915-5572.

### Los Angeles Chess Club

Weekend Tournaments. <http://www.lachessclub.com>

Contact: Mick Bingham at [mick@lachessclub.com](mailto:mick@lachessclub.com)

### Royal Spartan Chess Club

Every Meets in backroom of Denny's in Sherman Oaks.

First Sunday of every month at 7pm. \$20 EF, senior discount.

Dbl RR, 5 minutes, no delay. Strict USCF rules apply.

Contact: Scott C. Hunt 818-298-5255 or [schkjv@yahoo.com](mailto:schkjv@yahoo.com)

### Thousand Oaks Chess Club

Meets Mondays 6:00-8:45pm. Goebel Senior Center at 1385 E. Janss Road. Casual play and rated tournament play. All ages welcome. Contact: Cindy Garcia at [thousandoakschess@att.net](mailto:thousandoakschess@att.net)

### Ventura County Chess Club

Meets Mondays at 7pm. Grace Lutheran Church, 6190 Telephone Road, Ventura. Contact: Jack Cashman at [rationality52@hotmail.com](mailto:rationality52@hotmail.com) or (805) 487-2604 <http://www.vcchess.com/>

### West Valley Chess Club

Meets Thursdays 6:30-10:30. 7353 Valley Circle Blvd., West Hills. Continuous rated tournaments, blitz, casual play. Contact Jerry Yee (818) 915-5572 or at [jyee6@socal.rr.com](mailto:jyee6@socal.rr.com).

### Conejo Valley Parks and Recreation

The Conejo Parks and Rec offer Chess instruction at various park locations. See <http://www.crpdp.org/> for more details and registration.

### Ventura Youth Chess League

Train with Women's Master Simone Liao. For more information, visit: <http://www.venturayouthchess.com/learn.html>

### Chess in Schools

If you want to bring chess to your kid's school, contact me at [offdarook.com](http://offdarook.com)



Chess Clubs and Classes

## NEW CHESS CLUB

Royal Spartan Chess Club

Meet in backroom of Dennys  
5525 N. Supulveda, Sherman Oaks

**BLITZ tourney**  
**first Sunday of the month**

\$20 Entry fee (\$10 for 65 or older). All entry fees are returned as prizes.

No need to be rated or USCF member to play, but all rated players will have their games rated for USCF. Strict USCF rules enforced. Only professional players please.

**Bring your own clock and boards.**

Start time 7pm

Tournament Director: Scott C. Hunt  
(818) 298-5255

Chess classes available through  
Conejo Valley Parks and Recreation.

Saturdays

June 15-August 10

Jack Cashman will be teaching at the  
Borchard Community Center

<http://www.crpdp.org/>

## Larry Smith



Larry Smith is a Master level chess player in the Sothern California area. I met Larry at the Thousand Oaks Chess Club. He has become a good friend and helpful contributor of this newsletter. I rely on Larry to check my "chess facts" and help me with awful grammatical errors. I don't know what I would do without him.

Larry reached master at the age of 30 with a peak rating of 2310. He regularly competes in club tournaments and recently played at the US Amateur Team West with his team, taking home the Senior prize and receiving an honorable mention for their team name, **Je Suis Charbonneau**, a play on the recent "Je Suis Charlie" movement for free speech in France. "Charbonneau" is the name of a French-Canadian GM (Pascal Charbonneau). His team consisted of

1st Board: Larry Smith  
 2nd Board: Richard Robinson  
 3rd Board: John Williams  
 4th Board: John Wilson

Congratulations to you and the rest of your team!

If you would like Larry to analyze one of your games for this publication, please send your game to [offda-rook@gmail.com](mailto:offda-rook@gmail.com) for consideration.



### Tips for game following:

#### Moves 1-6: Transpositions

Opening transpositions are different move orders that wind up in the same place/position. This happens frequently in modern chess, and sometimes you can use these to your advantage to trick your opponent into playing a line that they don't like!

#### Position after 8 ... 0-0: Opening Theory

The usual starting point for the Yugoslav Attack against the Sicilian Dragon. This is a heavily analyzed line - if you like studying openings, and you like exciting, attacking chess, this may be the opening for you!

#### Position after 17 Bxh5 gxh5 18 Nf5!

Try to look ahead one or two moves when you are exchanging pieces. The move 17 Bxh5 would fail if after gxh5 18 Nf5 Bc3 was good for Black (say, if Black had already played ... Rfe8, guarding the e-pawn). Then Black could follow with ... Qa5 with very strong threats on the dark squares. Watch out for counterattacking moves!

#### 28 Rg5!

Examine forcing moves! At first, the move 28 Rg5 looks silly, but once you realize that 28 ... fxg5 allows 29 Qg7#, then the move's assessment changes from silly to interesting to... great! But, if you don't even look at moves like 28 Rg5 because you see that the f6 pawn guards that square, then you will miss out on some strong moves. Train yourself to look at all moves that capture, check, attack enemy pieces, and threaten key squares.



## Larry Smith Game Analysis

### Larry Smith vs. Frank Martelli

**1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 g6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Bg7 6.Be3 d6**

After a slightly odd move order, we have reached a standard Dragon Variation. 7 Be2 would now lead to the Classical System.

**7.Qd2 Nf6 8.f3**

White decides to head for the Yugoslav Attack, by far the most common way for White to combat the Dragon. 8.Be2 is still playable, although Black now has the option of playing ... Ng4 exchanging one of the White bishops.

**8...0-0 9.0-0-0**

More common is 9.Bc4 but the text is of course playable. White suggests that saving a tempo or two by omitting Bc4 is the right way to go. After 9 Bc4 Bd7 10.0-0-0, Black has many choices. Neither side is well served by entering these lines without deep study! The moves 10...Rc8, 10...Qa5, 10...Rb8, and even 10...Qb8, among other moves, have been tried here.

**9...Be6**

As Black said after the game, since White didn't grab the a2-g8 diagonal, he decided to!

**10.g4**

The line 10.Nxe6 fxe6 11.Bc4 (11.g3 with the idea of Bh3 is given by De Firmian in MCO) 11...Qd7 is playable for both sides. 10.h4 h5 11.Nxe6 fxe6 is similar to the previous note, but with Black's kingside a bit weaker.

**10...Rc8**

MCO here gives 10...Nxd4 and 10...Ne5.

**11.g5 Nh5 12.Nd5!?**

This seemed logical to me, but the computer does not agree, giving Black more than a half a pawn advantage!

**12...Bxd5 13.exd5 Ne5**

Instead, 13...Nxd4 14.Bxd4 Bxd4 15.Qxd4 e5 16.dxe6 fxe6 17.Qxd6 Qxg5+ 18.Kb1 Nf4 is the line the computer prefers here, and indeed the game appears equal.

**14.b3 a6**

Keeping out the White Knight from b5 and protecting the a7 pawn from possible capture.

**15.Be2 Qc7**

This move may be the source of Black's future problems, as White now appears to get an edge. Gutsy but committal would be 15...Nd7 16.f4 Bxd4!? 17.Bxd4 Ng7 but it's hard to believe that Black's knights will be any match for White's bishops!

**16.f4 Nd7 17.Bxh5 gxh5 18.Nf5! Nc5**

If 18...Bc3 then 19.Nxe7+ Kh8 20.Bd4+! rescues White from trouble on the dark squares. This resource had to be seen when playing 17 Bxh5. The move 18...Rfe8 is similar to the game and may be better than the text.

**19.Nxg7 Kxg7 20.Bd4+ Kg8 21.Rde1**

Preventing ... Ne4. Also good was 21.Rhe1, but naturally I hoped my KR could move to g1 or f1

**21...a5 22.Kb1**

A little slow: 22.Re2 a4 23.b4 Na6 24.a3 appears to be stronger.

**22...a4 23.Re2 Qd7 24.Bb2 Qf5**

As it turns out, the losing move. We both overlooked the chances offered by 24...axb3 25.axb3 Nxb3! White is still better after 26.Qb4 (26.cxb3?! Qf5+ 27.Ka2 Rc5! with considerable counterplay for the piece) 26...Nc5 27.Qd4 e5 28.dxe6 fxe6 29.Qh8+ Kf7 30.Qxh7+ Ke8 31.Qxh5+ Kd8 but it's still a game. If 24 ... axb3 25 axb3 Qf5 then 26.Qd4 f6 27.gxf6 is much like the game; one cute finish here is 27...Nxb3 28.f7+! Kxf7 29.Qg7+ Ke8 30.Qxe7#.

**25.Qd4 f6 26.gxf6 exf6**

If 26...Rxf6 27.Rxe7 axb3 28.axb3 Nxb3 29.Rg1+ Kf8 30.Qxf6+ Qxf6 31.Bxf6+-, and if 26...axb3 27.f7+ mates as given previously.

**27.Rg1+ Kf7**

27...Kh8 meets a similar fate after 28.Rg5! Qd7 29.Qxf6+

**28.Rg5!**

and the rook cannot be taken (28 ... fxg5 29 Qg7#), and the black queen can neither stay nor flee!

**28...Ne6 29.dxe6+ 1-0**

A fairly well-played game by both sides. It's not entirely clear where Black went wrong, or exactly why White prevailed.

## Interview with Simone Sobel

### How long have you been playing chess?

For about 15 years. I became inspired after seeing the movie "Searching for Bobby Fischer".

### What is your highest rating?

My highest USCF rating occurred recently in November 2013 after winning the U2100 section in Southern California Cross Championship, it was bumped up to 2060 USCF, after that it has taken a dive again unfortunately, but going back up slowly. My highest FIDE rating was 2020.

### Is your goal to make Master?

This has always been goal #1 in my book, and it has been incredibly frustrating to me that I haven't reached it yet. I would also like to get my women's titles, first WFM which is 2100 FIDE rating, and then I would like WIM and maybe WGM eventually.

### Have you ever had a chess coach? Why or why not?

I've always had a coach since I began, I was lucky enough for my parents to pay for coaching for a long time. It's very difficult to figure out chess 100% on your own, receiving guidance from an experienced player to help figure out your strengths/weaknesses/ playing style/what your opening repertoire should be, how you should be studying chess, and going over your games to see the mistakes and level of understanding positions that you lack.

### Do you think men and women play chess differently?

I honestly do not feel that we play differently! Men and women are chess players with their own unique styles/strengths/ and weaknesses. The truly fascinating thing about chess is that no game is exactly the same, the possibilities are endless, and therefore we all to a certain extent play and similar and differently because some ideas, themes, tactics, and openings repeat but at some point it veers off course and this is because of our choices.

I've heard men make the opposite argument, but I don't believe in it. They tend to characterize women as "weaker players who play calmly and positional with no real attacking instincts, and there we are making moves that are clearly different from how men would naturally think". While my own personal style has always lent to more of a positional player, there are many positions where I suddenly create an attack, or look for crazy tactical continuations, or sometimes I completely change my repertoire for certain opponents and play completely different openings

which are not my typical style. You have to be strong in all aspects of chess, because you will handle all situations eventually. I study women's games who have a completely differently style them myself, they would not be interested in my openings at all, and I would find it difficult to play theirs, just the same as men. There are many men who play calm and positional, and many men who are just crazy attacking tactical players.

For those men who say women are weak players because there are very few in the top, I would say pay attention to the ratios of male to female. I always look to see how many women typically playing in the big tournaments, and then see how many of them did well. Its amazing that sometimes out of 10 women, 7 of them will get prizes and other three will get good scores. I once participated in an women's promotional tournament, women were to get free entry fee, and being paid money towards travel and hotel. It was a truly amazing tournament, because for the first time I was in a room where it was 50-50 men and women ratio. Among the womens players included Irina Krush, WGM Baginskaite , and about 3 titled women masters, and 5 women experts. Women were dominating this tournament, even beating the men's titled players on the top board.

### Do you like playing in a male dominated sport?

At the beginning I felt truly unique and loved being one of the girls, and just wanted to crush all my male opponents every chance I got. But over time the social aspect of chess started to come into play. I am naturally shy with guys, I was never really a tomboy, and the majority of my close friends have been girls, so sometimes I feel awkward and a little lonely, not to mention that I've learned to keep my distance because if I pursue a friendship with a guy in chess they will look at it as a potential dating opportunity and I'm not interested in most. If there were more women, it would be nice to have more friends and people to talk to with ease. I do have some guy friends in chess though, tons of acquaintances, and have made friends with some female chess players and chessmoms.



Here is Simone Sobel at the Amateur West Team Tournament

## Simone Sobel (continue)

### Do you have a favorite Grandmaster and do you study his/her games?

While a lot of players (especially young ones) choose one or two famous grandmasters/or ex world Champions (Fischer, Tal, Rubinstein, Alekhine) to be their models and study their games religiously, I like many different players, games, and their playing styles for inspiration. Over the course of my chess career, I would say I like to study players whose games I relate to in style and opening repertoire. These players may not be on your typical study list, but I used to study a lot of Walter Browne games (a former US Champion) because he's a d4 player and I gained a lot of ideas from his games, as well as Alexander Khalifman for the nearly the same reason. I like some classic games by Fischer, Alekhine, Rubinstein, , and more modern players such as Karpov, , Alexei Shirov, Alex Yermolinsky, Alex Morozevich, and Garry Kasparov. As for women players, as much as I admire the Polgar sisters and have really enjoyed seeing Judit's games, I can't truly relate because of her style. Some of Susan Polgar's games I have really enjoyed, and I recently loved watching the games from US Women's Championship I thought Irina Krush, Tatev Abrahamyan, and Anna Zatonskih played great games of chess!

### How do you think we can get more girls interested in chess?

I'm not really sure, you can't force a girl to be interested in chess, all you can do is expose them to chess and see if they take to it or not. Chess in schools/afterschool classes/group classes exposes chess to kids and some girls will sign up and like it. Maybe it would be a good idea for girls only chess classes if possible, because these girl tournaments put on by Polgars have their benefits, it's a fun social opportunity for girls and to see each other succeeding and pursuing chess on that level encourages them. I used to be against girl events because in reality we all need to be equals and in tournaments we will play mostly guys so I felt they were saying put girls in a group so they just play each other and not compete for real, but as a way to get girls together and comfortable with chess its nice to have girl chess events. Encouraging girls more in classes, maybe giving them prizes for accomplishments, and featuring their games more would help them feel they are worth of being chess players, I certainly am interested in teaching girls and helping them to become good players.

### Do you have any other comments or opinions about women in chess or chess in general?

Chess is truly amazing, it hooks a person for life, you feel on fire and passionate about it and love going and competing. But living the life of a chess player can be difficult in terms of the practical aspects of making a living and feeling like this is really what you can do with your life. Mixing the chess world and the non chess world can be tricky, because you must be passionate and dedicated, but you also can't ignore life and don't want to feel too unbalanced. I think chess players face a lot of hardship and struggle, we suffer for our art. Chess players often compare what happens in chess to our lives, we feel it mirrors life and its patterns. My friend Liulia Cardona FIDE master, constantly talks about the imbalances in chess and how she feels the exact same in life and I feel its true.



**Simone Sobel is available for private lessons, you can contact her via Email: [simone@chessguru.us](mailto:simone@chessguru.us) and check out her website at [www.chessguru.us](http://www.chessguru.us).**

**In the past she has taught for various after-school programs such as The Chess Center, Academic Chess, and the Star Program but has branched off to teaching at her own schools and privately working with students.**

**Currently she is teaching at Kabbalah Children's Academy where she is doing a during school junior high class, it is in their regular school curriculum and is somewhat of a new concept because most programs run during lunchtime or after-school, although it is not new in other states such as Chess in the Schools in New York.**

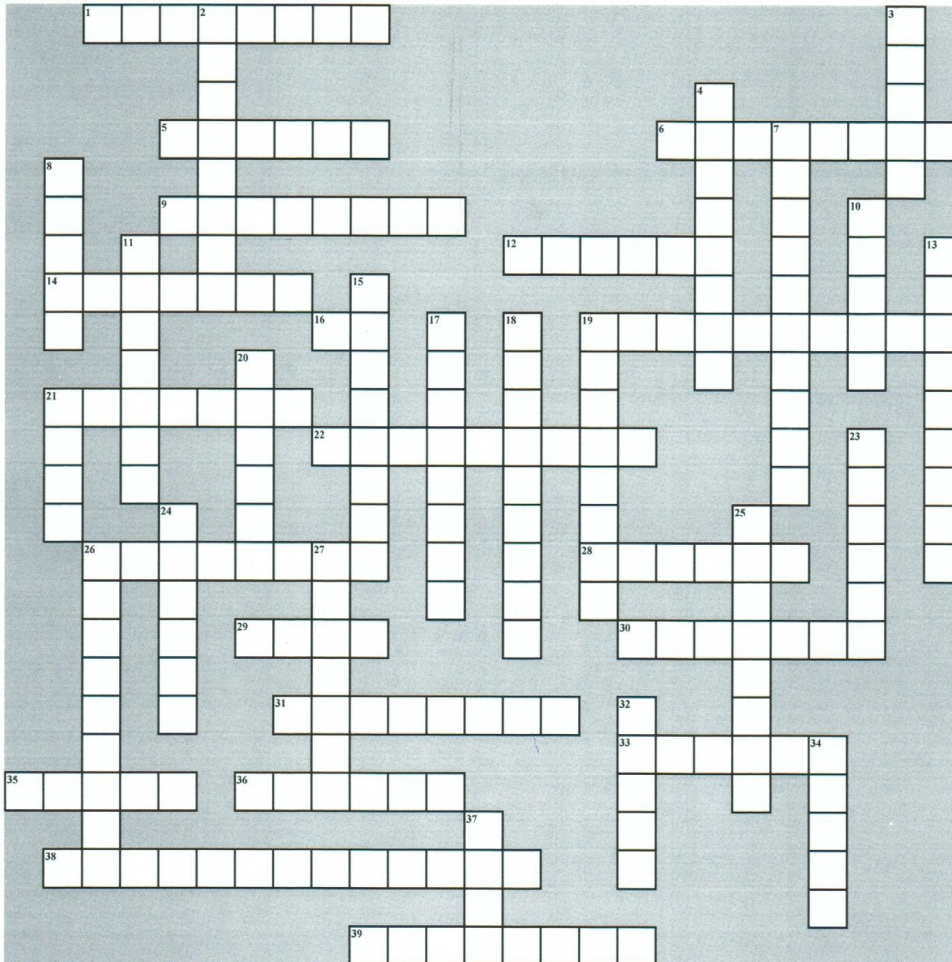
**She is an active tournament player working towards the goal of master and wishes to play internationally in the future.**

**Her most recent victories include:**

**1st place U2100 Southern California Cross Championships 2013**

**1st place Palm Springs Chess Festival 2015**

### Brain Puzzles



**Across**

- 1 Author of "Morals of Chess"
- 5 A Sacrifice in the Opening
- 6 Famous NYC chess club
- 9 e4, e5, Nf3, Nc6, Bb5 opening
- 12 Judit, Susan and \_\_\_\_\_ Polgar
- 14 Author of "Chess Bitch - Women in the Ultimate Intellectual Sport" and "Play Like a Girl!"
- 16 Won first place in the first Millionaire Chess Event in Las Vegas in 2014
- 19 Student Chess
- 21 Wrote "My 60 Memorable Games"
- 22 When the player to move isn't in check, but none of his pieces can move.
- 26 The official design of chess pieces used around the world
- 28 Someone rated 2000 or above
- 29 Short for "checkmate"
- 30 Bad Move
- 31 Recorded moves of a game
- 33 First African American Grandmaster
- 35 Movie Life of A King based on his life.
- 36 A weak chess player
- 38 Final Four of College Chess
- 39 Trading Pieces

**Down**

- 2 2015 US Chess Champion
- 3 Quickest Mate
- 4 Deep Blue IBM computer beat this chess world champion

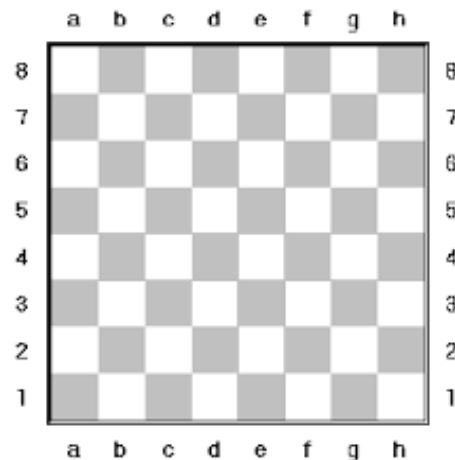
- 7 Someone who keeps his rating low in order to qualify for easier sections to better his chances to win money.
- 8 Grandmaster and 7 time US Women Chess Champion
- 10 3-15 minute rapid chess game using a clock
- 11 Highest rated chess player in history
- 13 Lose a piece intentionally
- 15 Number of squares a Rook can move with no other pieces on the board
- 17 a pawn that has no other pawns of the same color on neighboring files.
- 18 Also known as "Queening"
- 19 Casual Chess
- 20 Youngest US Chess Grandmaster
- 21 Running out of time on the clock resulting on loss or draw
- 23 Famous quote "When you see a good move, look for a better one"
- 24 Involves Moving your King and Rook in the same move
- 25 d4, Nd6, c4, g6, Nc2, d5 opening
- 26 Age when Bobby Fischer died
- 27 A weak square on the opponent's side of the board
- 32 What the rows numbered 1-8 are called
- 34 Youngest female to become a Grandmaster
- 37 Moving a pawn forward



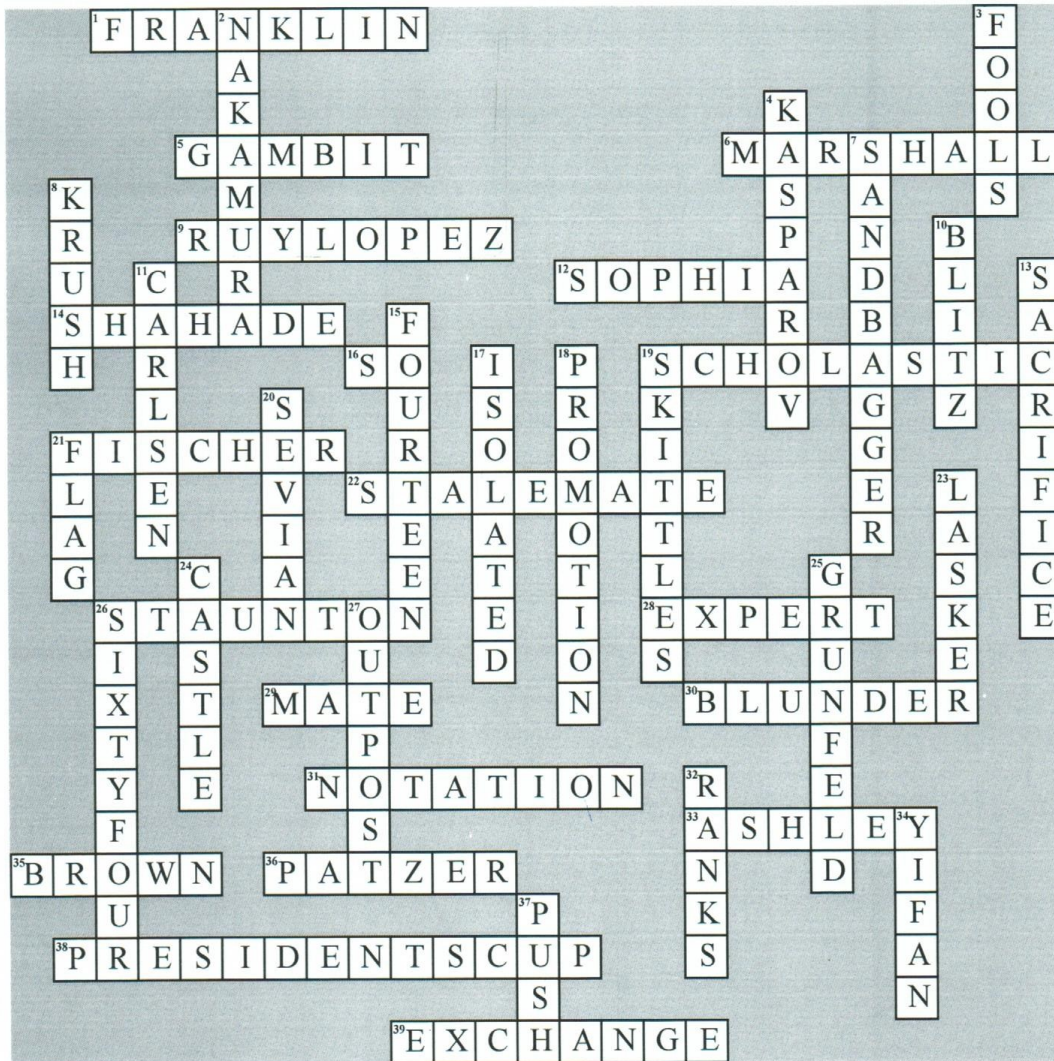
**How many squares are on a chessboard?**

**Can you find them all? See the answer on the next page.**

Can you find the  
the mistake?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9



## Puzzle Answers

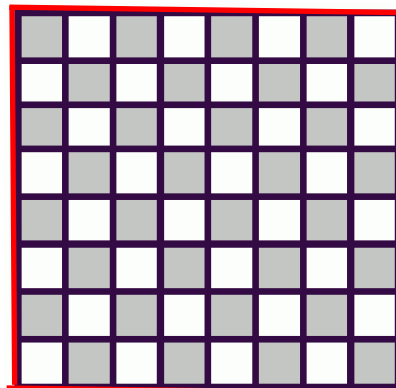


How many squares on a chess board? More than you think.....

You might think there are 64 squares on the board, but the correct answer is 204. See most people don't think "outside the box" and only see the 64- 1x1 squares. The diagram below shows that there are indeed 64 squares, but there are also some more... Don't forget the one large square (outlined here is RED), now can you find all the squares on the chessboard....

There are:

- 1- 8x8 square
- 4- 7x7 squares
- 9- 6x6 squares
- 16- 5x5 squares
- 25- 4x4 squares
- 36- 3x3 squares
- 49- 2x2 squares
- 64- 1x1 squares



# 2015 ACA & Metropolitan Summer Chess Camp w/ World Top 10 GM Wesley So! July 22-26, 2015 Glendale Hilton Hotel

100 West Glenoaks Boulevard, Glendale, CA 91202

## Instructors:

**GM Wesley So** – World Top 10 Player  
**GM Melik Khachiyan** – U.S. Olympiad Coach  
**GM Dejan Bojkov** – FIDE Senior Trainer  
**IM Andranik Matikozyan** – U.S. World Youth Coach  
**IM Armen Ambartsoumian** – U.S. World Youth Coach  
**IM-elect Tatev Abrahamyan** – One of Top U.S. Female Players  
**FM Aviv Friedman** – U.S. World Youth Coach  
**Jay Stallings** – Founder of California Youth Chess League

## Daily Schedule

9:30 AM – 12:00	Instruction
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch buffet
1:00 – 3:00	Training Games
3:00 – 5:30 PM*	Instruction
After 6:00 PM	Evening Fun

\*The U1000 section ends at 4:30 PM

deadline	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
	2000+	1700 – 2000	1400 – 1699	1000 – 1399	U1000
5/01/15	\$785	\$685	\$615	\$535	\$435
6/12/15	\$845	\$745	\$675	\$595	\$495
7/21/15	\$895	\$795	\$725	\$645	\$545

**NEW: Adults Only Section (18+):** \$785 by 5/01, \$845 by 6/12, \$895 by 7/21. Sibling discounts available. Please contact [info@metrochessla.com](mailto:info@metrochessla.com) for any questions, comments, or concerns.

For full details/registration, please visit [www.metrochessla.com/camp2015](http://www.metrochessla.com/camp2015)





# Announcements

# Congratulations!



The US Amateur Team Chess Tournament is an annual event that is held separately in four US locations: West, East, Midwest, and South. For the Open Section, the makeup of each team must average below 2200. Sometimes teams come in at 2199.75, the highest legal average! Finally, the winning team from each locale then plays matches against the other winning teams.

The US Amateur Team West was held in Orange County. The winners were Nor Cal House of Chess who won this title for a 3rd year in a row. My son, Evan was fortunate to play as an alternate in the tournament and had the best game of his chess career when he beat a 2000 rated player.

Nor Cal House of Chess went on to make history when they competed in the US Amateur Team National Championship gaining them a 3-peat victory.

Congratulations to the team led by Captain and Coach Ted Castro. The team included GM Enrico Sevillano, IM Ricardo de Guzman, FM Ronald Cusi, Ronit Pattanayak.

Ted runs the Nor Cal House of Chess, a chess center in the Bay Area. NHC has produced several top players who have made it into the Top 100 Nationwide List, State Champions, National Champions, Silver/Gold Medalists a in North American Chess championship, Silver/Gold medalists in World Youth Chess Championship & Pan American Youth, and also the youngest FIDE master in the world.

<http://norcalhouseofchess.com/>



Here Coach Ted is giving Evan an End Game lesson



Coach and Captain Ted Castro



GM Enrico Sevillano



IM Ricardo de Guzman



Ronit Pattanayak

## Summer Tournaments and Summer Camps

June 18-21, 2015

Las Vegas Chess Festival

<http://www.vegaschessfestival.com/>

June 14-19, 2015

Kansas, Missouri

Featuring GM Timur Gareyev

Karpov International School of Chess

<http://www.anatolykarpovchessschool.org/chesscamps.html>

June 15-August 21, 2015 (weekly options)

Fremont, CA

Nor Cal House of Chess Summer Camps

[http://norcalhouseofchess.com/?page\\_id=7](http://norcalhouseofchess.com/?page_id=7)

June 22-26, 2014

Newbury Park, CA

Chess Camp, All Stars Athletics (Jack Cashman)

Contact Jack at [rationality52@hotmail.com](mailto:rationality52@hotmail.com)

June 22-26 and June 29-July

Santa Clarita, CA

California Youth Chess League (CYCL)

<http://cycl.org/programs/summer-camp/>

June 24-26, 2015

Thousand Oaks, CA

Off da ROOK Chess and Sports Conditioning Camp

<http://www.offdarook.com/#!chess-conditioning-camp-registration/c1pv1>

July 6-19, 2015

Agoura, CA

Pacific Open

<http://www.chesstour.com/pco15.htm>

July 12-17, 2015

Kansas, Missouri

Karpov International School of Chess

Featuring GM Timur Gareyev

<http://www.anatolykarpovchessschool.org/chesscamps.html>

July 22-26, 2015

Glendale, CA

MetroChess / ACA Chess Camp

Featuring GM Wesley So

<http://metrochessla.com/camp2015/>

August 15-16, 2015

Glendale, CA

Kasparov Chess Foundation, ACA, Beyond Chess Tournament

Contact Coach Armen (818) 640-5374

August 24-28, 2015

Newbury Park, CA

Chess Camp, All Stars Athletics (Jack Cashman)

Contact Jack at [rationality52@hotmail.com](mailto:rationality52@hotmail.com)





KASPAROV  
CHESS FOUNDATION

# 2015 Greater California Scholastic Chess Championship

## AUGUST 15th and 16th



**5 SECTIONS**  
**60 TROPHIES GUARANTEED.**  
**\$2,000 GIFT CARD PRIZE FUND!**

K-12 Open	Top 3 win gift cards (First Place \$300)
K-12 Under 1500	Top 4 win gift cards (First Place \$150)
JV K-8 Under 1200	Top 4 win gift cards (First Place \$150)
JV K-6 Under 900	Top 4 win gift cards (First Place \$100)
JV K-3 Under 600	Top 4 win gift cards (First Place \$100)

Maple Park Community Center  
 800 E. Maple Street, Glendale, CA 91205



Food and drink tickets available for purchase

Byes: one 1/2 point bye allowed (1-point for double round.  
Must request before the start of the tournament.)

**K-12 Sections:**  
 6 rounds G/60  
Round Times:  
 Saturday: 10am, 12:30pm, 3pm  
 Sunday:  
 10am, 12:30pm, 3pm  
 Trophy Ceremony at 5:15pm

**JV Sections:**  
 5 double rounds G/30  
 (total of 10 games will be played. A double round means players will play 2 games—one as white and the other as black against the same opponent)  
Round Times:  
 Saturday: 10am, 12:30pm, 3pm  
 Sunday: 10am and 12:30pm  
 Trophy Ceremony at 3pm

**EF: \$60** by August 5th. (late entry fee after August 5th is \$75). Entries after 9:45am receive automatic 1/2 point bye. Checks made payable to American Chess Academy. **Advanced Entries:** [www.westvalleychessclub.com](http://www.westvalleychessclub.com)

**Mail Entries:** "ACA" 411 N. Jackson Street, apt. 101, Glendale, CA 91206

**Contact:** Armen [americanchessacademy@gmail.com](mailto:americanchessacademy@gmail.com) **Email:** [artmik@charter.net](mailto:artmik@charter.net) **Phone:** (818) 640-5974

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ USCF ID \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating: \_\_\_\_\_ Byes: 1 2 3 4 5 Team/Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Section: (please circle) K-12 Open K-12 U1500 JV K-8 U1200 JV K-6 U900 JV K-3 U600

I, as the parent or guardian of the above named child, hereby give permission for my child to participate in the programs and activities offered by the American Chess Academy. I and my child agree to accept and comply with all rules and regulations of the American Chess Academy.

I hereby authorize any agent of the American Chess Academy to act as agent for the understand to consent to any emergency medical treatment and/or hospital care which is deemed advisable by, and is to be rendered under, the general or special supervision of any physician and surgeon licensed under the provisions of the medical practice act, should an emergency arise and I cannot be located in a timely manner. I understand that the American Chess Academy assumes no financial responsibility for any such medical care.

# CHALLENGE YOUR MIND, CHALLENGE YOUR BODY

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Grades 2-8



Wednesday, Thursday, Friday  
June 24, 25, 26  
(12pm-4pm)



Chess Instruction with  
Jennifer Vallens and Jerry Yee



For more information and to  
Register, visit:

[www.offdarook.com](http://www.offdarook.com)

Sports conditioning with  
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\$75/day or  
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