

Tempting was 14. Nxe6 but I could not quite make it work after 14. ... fxe6 15. Qxe6+ Be7 16. Nd5 Bxd5 17. exd5 Nc5.

14. ... Nxf6?!

14. ... gxf6 may not look fun, but it was necessary. However, in this Rauzer structure with the c-file open, the black king will never feel comfortable on either side of the board; 14. ... Nc5? 15. Qc4 gxf6 16. b4 wins.

15. Rac1 Qd7 16. Nd5!

The knight threatens to fork from either b6 or c7, and so cannot be ignored.

16. ... Bxd5

No better is 16. ... Rc8 17. Nb6 Rxc1 18. Rxc1 Qd8 19. Bxa6 Bxa6 20. Qa4+ Nd7 21. Nxd7 Qxd7 22. Qxa6.

17. exd5 e5 18. Bf5 Qa7 19. Nc6

The queen has nowhere to go.

19. ... Qc7 20. Nxe5 Qxc1 21. Rxc1

I contemplated 21. Qa4+, which is both prettier and more convincing, but somehow I made the other move. 21. ... Ke7 (21. ... Kd8 22. Nxf7+ Kc7 23. Rxc1+) 22. Nc6 mate.

21. ... dxe5 22. Qa4+ Kd8 23. Qc6, Black resigned.

And my opponent and I went on to analyze, in the amicable spirit of the USATE.

“MyGirl” Does It At The USAT South

Chess with a southern drawl

By Harvey Lerman

Gil Luna, captain of last year’s U.S. Amateur Team South (USATS) winners that also won the national playoff, put together another team for this year’s USATS in Orlando by combining three players from Miami and then searching the list of rated Florida players to choose one from central Florida to give his team a 2193 rating. The team was named “My girl is pissed!,” reflecting the fact that many wives and girlfriends were “a little” upset to be left alone on Valentines Day!

Jeff Haskel, who was on Gil’s winning team last year, meanwhile led a team of four of Florida’s top teenagers. Jeff indicated his pleasure with being included on this team with those players, saying sarcastically, “I would not have to face them over the board!” This team formed by Toby Boas, who recently won the National Grade 12 championship, was second highest rated at 2156. The team eventually named themselves “Pawnographers” and explained that it had to be “said with a southern twang.”

The third highest rated team in the event was made up mostly of “oldtimers” that play in every USATS, consider it their favorite event, and play in very few, if any other, events. This team rated 2133, was named “No Bailout For You,” reflecting the fact that as businessmen they normally were more concerned with the economy than playing chess. This team had a fifth player, to allow any player “a rest” if needed. In fact while reviewing the wallcharts before the event to plan his team strategy, Haskel sluffed off the “Nobail” team as no threat as “they were playing at their floors!” Little did he know at the time that this would do his team in!

See more “Teams” reporting on Chess Life Online in the February archives at uschess.org



So the top three teams were:

#1 MYGIRL My girl is pissed! (2193.3)

Bruce Lopez (2485)
Ernesto Alvarez (2185)
Gilberto Luna II (2069)
Makaio W. Krienke (2009)

#2 HASKEL “Pawnographers” (2145.5)

Jeffrey Haskel (2258)
Christopher Heung (2123)
Toby Boas (2112)
Dalton Perrine (2089)

#3 NOBAIL No Bailout For You (2133.5)

John P. Nardandrea (2200)
Lawrence A. Storch (2200)
Peter Dyson (2071)
Jeremy Mandelkern (2063)
Charles S. Hall (2040)

These top three teams won their first two matches and then “Haskel” had to face “Nobail.” Maybe Haskel’s strategy backfired as their team lost ½-3½ to these oldtimers, which would really hurt their tiebreak points. Going into the last round “Mygirl” was alone at 4-0 and would face “Haskel” at 3-1. While “Nobail” who had lost to the leaders in the previous round faced the “Tampa Tornadoes” rated 2116, and without their first board, as Nardandrea sat out. But this might have been part of “Nobail’s” strategy as this moved Larry Storch (2200, floor) up to play Corey Acor (2274) and as Storch later pointed out “I normally do well against Corey.” Larry’s win against Corey gave “Nobail” the match 2½-1½.

The “Mygirl”-“Haskel” match was the last one to finish. Haskel did his job by drawing Bruce as Nardandrea (2200, floor) had done in the previous round, and the

fourth board match, Perinne-Krienke, was drawn as well. Boas then was able to beat Luna, leaving everything up to Heung-Alvarez. “Haskel” needed a draw to win the match which would leave these top three teams tied for first, but it looked like tiebreaks would favor “Mygirl.” The game was a rook and pawns endgame that was drawn, and “Mygirl” won on tiebreaks.

The Scholastic section was won by “Ludwig’s Warriors,” named after the team’s coach, Daniel Ludwig, and older brother of 8-year old John Ludwig who was on the team. John was rated only 842 in the year-end ratings used for this event, so had to play fourth board, as the “War” team consisted of:

WAR Ludwig’s Warriors (1140.5)

Samuel Leavitt (1370)
James W. Barrick (1336)
Amy Tsai (1014)
John G. Ludwig (842)

But John Ludwig has been tutored by his famous older brother and his current rating is over 1200 and many are predicting that he is improving faster than his brother had. Ludwig was the only player in the scholastics to win all five games, as “War” won all five matches. “Terminators,” the highest rated team in the scholastics finished second.

TERMIN Terminators (1160.3)

Edward Li (1443)
Nick Moore (1340)
Kevin Hu (1238)
Amelia A. Langford (620)

But “Termin” scored the most points (16½), and their top three boards won board prizes. They won all their matches except for the one against “War.”