

BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #384

Your editor welcomes any and all submissions – news of upcoming events, tournament reports, and anything else that might be of interest to BC players. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue. To subscribe, send me an e-mail (swright2@telus.net); if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, just let me know.

Stephen Wright

HERE AND THERE

Armageddon Blitz (October 19)



This publication tends to focus on competitive tournament chess, but of course there is much chess activity in this province which takes place in other environs. One such chess-friendly location is the [Coffeelicious Coffee Shop](#) at 5063 Anola Drive in Burnaby, which hosted a friendly blitz event on October 19. A twelve-player six-round Swiss tournament took place, with two games between each set of opponents, the colours being reversed for the second game. The unusual factor in this case was that all the games used the Armageddon format, i.e., white has five minutes, black has four, but a drawn game is considered a win for black. The format has been around for some time already but mainly as a tiebreak of last resort in playoffs; it hit the mainstream at Altibox Norway Chess last June when each drawn regular game was followed by an Armageddon game. The argument is that such a format requiring a decisive result produces more drama and excitement. Whether this was the case in Burnaby we do not know (there are some videos in the links below), but from the limited information available it appears the stronger players finished at the top of the crosstable despite (or because of?) the Armageddon format. First was IM Raymond Kaufman with 11/12, second was Aram Arzumanyan a point behind, while Ryan Leong and Sergei tied for third with 8 points. Those involved on the organizational side included Narek Nalbandyan, Aram Arzumanyan, and Konstantin Pyryaev. [Facebook event photos](#)

World Youth Chess Championships (October 2-12)



(photos by Vivek Srinivas)

The lower age groups (U8, U10, U12) of the old WYCC, renamed the World Cadet, took place in Weifang, China at the end of August; the upper groups (U14, U16, U18) which now constitute the World Youth were held in Mumbai, India in the first half of October. Eleven Canadians made the trip, including Patrick Huang from Victoria who competed in the U14. Patrick won his first two games but could only manage three draws in the remaining nine rounds – perhaps illness was a factor? He did play two of the players who tied for second in his section. Theoretically his age group should also have included the Indian prodigy GM Praggnanandhaa, but the latter instead chose to compete in the U18(!) Section which he won with 9.0/11 (it should be noted that he was ranked second in the U18). The big Canadian success story was (now WIM) Svitlana Demchenko, ranked twenty-second in the U16 Girls, who finished fifth on tiebreak with 7.5/11; she celebrated her sixteen birthday during the competition. [Tournament website](#) [results](#) [photos](#)



B.C. CHAMPIONSHIP (October 11-14)

This year the BC Closed returned to New Westminster for the first time since 1993, sharing the same location as the New West Fall Open at Douglas College; our thanks to Eric Gu and the West Chess Club for making the arrangements. Of the eight players from last year only three returned this time around, giving the championship a decidedly different feel and appearance. Due to various circumstances three of the qualifiers were unable to participate, and we had to travel far down the ratings list to complete the field. Making their debuts were Neil Doknjas (Langley Open qualifier), BC senior champion Arpak Worya Mohammed Qanee, and Brandon Zhu; the other 'new' players were former champion Brian McLaren (2006 and 2007) and Roger Patterson, who last played in the Closed in 2011 and 2010 respectively. Rounding out the field were returning co-champions Grigori Morozov and Tanraj Sohal and BC Open qualifier Davaa-Ochir Nyamdorj.

At 2230 the average rating was the lowest it has been in the past decade, but this was offset to some degree by the experience imparted by the three seniors; this was McLaren's seventeenth



Patterson, Sohal, Morozov, McLaren, Mohammed Qanee, Zhu, Doknjas, Eric Gu (photos by Victoria [Doknjas](#))

appearance (his first was in 1973, forty-six years ago, as far as we can tell a record) and Patterson's fifth since moving to BC in the middle of the last decade. The obvious front runners were Morozov and Sohal, both by rating and by virtue of tying for first in the last two championships; would they be able to maintain their winning ways?

104th B.C. Championship

New Westminster, 11-14 October 2019

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1 Morozov, Grigorii	2400	*	=	1	=	1	1	1	6.0
2 Sohal, Tanraj	2351	=	*	=	=	=	1	0	4.0
3 Doknjas, Neil	2145	0	=	*	=	1	=	=	4.0
4 Patterson, Roger	2075	=	=	=	*	=	0	=	3.5
5 Nyamdorj, Davaa-Ochir	2330	0	=	0	=	*	1	1	3.0
6 Mohammed Qanee, Arpak Worya	2187	0	0	=	1	0	*	=	3.0
7 McLaren, Brian	2146	0	1	=	=	0	=	*	2.5
8 Zhu, Brandon	2208	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2.0

Cummulative scores:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Morozov	0.5	1.5	2.5	3.5	4.0	5.0	6.0
Sohal	1.0	1.5	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.5	4.0
Doknjas	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.5	3.5	4.0
Patterson	0.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.5	3.0	3.5
Nyamdorj	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	2.5	2.5	3.0
Mohammed Qanee	0.0	0.5	0.5	1.5	1.5	2.5	3.0
McLaren	0.0	0.5	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.5
Zhu	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0

After three rounds the expected two-way race had developed, with Morozov and Sohal on 2.5/3, closely followed by Doknjas and Patterson with 2.0 points. The fourth round proved critical for the tournament outcome; Sohal lost the thread in a Stonewall Dutch and was defeated by McLaren,

while Morozov won a pawn against Doknjas and converted his advantage. Patterson “ran out of gas” against Mohammed Qanee and suffered his only loss of the event. This left Morozov a point ahead of Sohal and one and a half points ahead of Doknjas and Patterson with three rounds remaining. In round five Sohal and Doknjas had substantial advantages against Morozov and Patterson respectively but both games ended as draws; the situation at the top remained unchanged, except Nyamdorj joined the players tied for third. Morozov put the tournament out of reach by winning against McLaren in round six; Sohal was held to a draw by Patterson, while Doknjas moved up equal with Sohal by defeating Nyamdorj. The last round saw Morozov adding icing to his cake by defeating Zhu to finish a full two points ahead of the field. The other three games were drawn, two of them perfunctorily; Doknjas pressed Mohammed Qanee for some time but the latter's defence held.

Grigorii Morozov thus wins the BC Championship for the third year in succession; in the first half of the last century this would have been grounds for the winner to claim the trophy in perpetuity, but the BCCF discontinued that practice at the beginning of the 1960s. Two points is a significant winning margin, last accomplished fifteen years ago; Grigorii's play was not quite as dominant as his score indicates, but he is a most deserving champion. Tanraj Sohal, already a three-time Closed champion, was a little off-form, which can be a problem in a field like this. He obtained a number of advantageous positions but had trouble converting them into full points. Neil Doknjas, the youngest player, had an excellent result in his debut appearance, and will be that much stronger next time. And Roger Patterson had his best result in several years, exceeding his own pre-tournament expectation of two points; notably he drew with both Morozov and Sohal on the black side of the Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit. The other participants will no doubt have their own reasons for dissatisfaction, but all the players demonstrated exemplary fighting spirit; just under 40% of the games were drawn, yet before the last round the shortest draws were 42 moves long.



Many thanks to Brian McLaren, who annotated two of his games; the remaining games of the event can be found in the attached PGN or viewed online at the [tournament website](#).

Sohal, Tanraj – McLaren, Brian [A84] BC ch 104th New Westminster (4.4), 13.10.2019

1.d4 f5 2.c4 I had expected (and hoped for) **2.e4. 2...Nf6 3.Nc3 e6 4.Qc2 d5 5.Bf4 c6 6.e3 Be7 7.Nf3 0–0 8.Bd3 Ne4 9.g4** A standard Stonewall position, Black has established a central structure on the light squares and White attempts to undermine it. The text move is strong because White has not castled kingside. I had dismissed this move because of the answer **9...fxg4** when I thought that the loss of time and the light-squared bishop would make Black's game easier. However, now I realized the ugly truth. The main moves I now considered were **9...Qa5, 9...Na6** and the text move. I later discovered that this position has been played many times and at least twelve different Black replies have been tried. **9...g6** This move retains the pawn formation but weakens the dark squares. **9...fxg4 10.Bxe4. 10.gxf5 exf5 11.0–0–0** Better were **11.cxd5** or **11.Qb3** immediately, the king is not in any danger. **11...Be6 11...Na6 12.a3** planning **13.cxd5. 12.Bh6** The bishop is misplaced here, better is **12.h4**. White's next few moves dissipate his advantage. Better is to create a kingside attack with moves like **h2–h4** and **Rhg1. 12...Re8 13.Ne5 Nd7 14.f3 Nxc3 15.Qxc3 Bg5** At the time I really liked this move as my dark squares will be safer. However, the silicone beast recommends **15...Nxe5 16. dxe5 Qb6. 16.Bxg5 Qxg5 17.f4 Qe7**



I had planned 17...Qh4 to restrict White's kingside offensive while maintaining mobility for my queen, however I decided that it was better to keep an eye on the queenside. The planned move was probably stronger. **18.Kb1** 18.h4 was stronger. **18...Rac8** Still not too late for 18...Nxe5 19.dxe5 Qh4. **19.h4 dxc4** **20.Bxc4 Nf6** **21.Bd3?** Tanraj pointed out after the game that this was a mistake as he overlooked my next move. **21...c5** **22.a3** 22.Bc4 is probably better as my bishop becomes very strong. With an eye on the endgame it is difficult for White to trade these bishops. **22...Red8** **23.dxc5 Rxc5** I was talking to another opponent the next day and asked him why he didn't offer a draw. He replied that he had and I apparently did not hear it. Tanraj, who was in the conversation, said that he had also offer a draw (about here) in our

game, and wondered why I didn't respond. This must be an advantage of being a senior, as otherwise I would not have won this game. (Note to future opponents: if you are offering a draw please include a hand signal). **24.Qe1?** **Rdc8** **25.Qd2** **Qc7** **26.h5?!** Trying to create threats on the kingside. **26...Nxb5** **27.Rdg1** **Kf8** Better is 27...Qd6 as the knight is immune: 28.Rxb5 Rxe5 and 29...Qd5 winning. **28.Qb4** **Nf6** **29.Qd4**



White is now threatening to destroy Black's kingside with Nxb6+. A big restraint on his threats is that both of his rooks are glued to the first rank to prevent mate. **29...Ke7** **30.Rd1** Black is now clearly winning and gains the point after further inaccuracies. **30...Rd8** **31.Qa4** **a6** **32.Be2** [32.Rc1] **32...Bd5** **33.Rhg1** **b5** **34.Qb4** **a5** **35.Qe1** **b4** **36.a4** **Bb3** **37.Rxd8** **Qxd8** **38.Bb5** **Qd5** **39.Qf2** **Rc2** **40.Qf3** **Ne4** **41.Rd1**



41...Nd2+ [41...Qd2! 42.Nd3 Nc3+!] 42.Rxd2 Rxd2
 43.Nc6+ Kf6 [43...Kd6] 44.Qxd5 Rxd5 45.Nd4 Bd1
 46.Kc1 Bg4 47.Kd2 h5 48.Ke1 h4 49.Kf2 Rc5 50.b3
 Rc1 51.Bc4 Rb1 52.Bd5 Rb2+ 53.Kg1 Ke7 54.Bc4
 Kf6 55.Bd5 g5 56.fxg5+ Kxg5 57.Ne6+ Kf6 58.Nf4
 Bd1 59.Nd3 Rb1 60.Kf2 Bxb3 61.Bc6 Bc2 0-1

McLaren, Brian – Morozov, Grigorii [C02] BC ch 104th New Westminster (6.4), 14.10.2019

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Be3 A move popularized by Kupreichik, the late, great Belarusian grandmaster (known as the "Monster of Minsk" due to his uncompromising attacking style). 5...Qb6 6.Qd2 Bd7 7.Nf3 Rc8 8.Be2 cxd4 9.cxd4 Na5 White has clearly misplayed the opening. Black's position offers many possibilities (trade off bad bishop, queenside initiative, undermine White's centre, etc.) for a strong technical player like Grigorii. 10.0-0 Bb4 10...Ne7 was also good as the dark-squared bishop does not have a lot of squares. 11.Qd1 I rejected 11.Nc3 as, at the minimum, Black can play 11...Bxc3 12.bxc3 Bb5 and the c3 pawn will be a gaping weakness. I rejected 11.Qd3 because of 11...a6. 11...Bb5 12.Bxb5+ Qxb5 13.a3 Better might have been 13.Bd2, as pointed out by Grigorii after the game. 13...Bf8 14.Nbd2 Originally I was planning to play 14.Nc3 so that in the variation 14...Qxb2 15.Qa4+ Nc6 16.Nb5 a6 17.Na7 Rc7 I could play a rook to b1. However, 18.Rab1 Qxa3 and 18.Rfb1 Qc3 both overlook the simple 19.Rc1. 14...Ne7 15.b4 Nc4 16.Nxc4 dxc4 17.a4 Qd5 White wants to prevent Black from strengthening the passed c-pawn with b7-b5. 17...Qxb4? 18.Rb1 simply helps White achieve his



goal. 18.b5 Nf5 [diagram] 19.g4 A pawn sacrifice to try and take advantage of Black's slow development. Allowing him to complete his development and consolidate behind his passed pawn was not appealing. 19...Nxe3 20.fxe3 Qe4 21.Qe2? Better was 21.Kf2. 21...Qxg4+ 22.Kh1 Qe4 23.Kg1 h6 24.Rf2 Better was 24.Nd2, I incorrectly feared 24...Qd3. 24...Bb4 The immediate 24...c3 was stronger. 25.Rc1 c3 26.Ne1 Ba3 27.Rd1 With the idea of Rf4/e2-e4/d4-d5. 27...Be7 28.Rf4 Qg6+ 29.Rg4 Qh5 30.Rc1 g5 31.Nd3 Ba3 An unnecessary excursion, simply 31...Qg6 was better. 32.Rc2 Rc7 To prevent Nc5 as now Bxc5 and the bishop is not pinned after Rxc3. 33.Nf2 Trying to win the queen with 33.Nf4 gxf4 34.Rg8+ does not work as 34...Rxc3 is check. 33...Qg6 34.Rg3 0-0 35.e4 Rfc8



36.Nd3? Now that Black has deployed his forces on the queenside, it was time to open up the kingside with 36.h4. **36...f5?!** Stronger was 36...Rc4; the text allows White to create a kingside attack. **37.Nf4 Qf7 38.d5 exd5 39.Nxd5 f4?** 39...Rc4! **40.Rh3 Qe6 41.Nxc7??** 41.Qh5 kept the attack going; short on time I chose the wrong path. **41...Qxh3 42.Qc4+ Kh8 43.Rxc3 f3 44.Rc2 b6** Simple and elegant. **0-1**

NEW WEST FALL OPEN (October 12-14)

Another season, another tournament in New Westminster. This was the third New West Open to be organized at Thanksgiving by the West Chess Club since the inaugural edition in 2017, but more significantly it follows the New West Summer Open. The latter event on the BC Day long weekend took the place of the previous Semiahmoo Open and attracted one hundred and thirty players. The New West Fall Open was modelled on the Summer event, utilizing the same location (Douglas College) and having a similar format; the main difference was the absence of the two-day Reserve Section which occurred in August. The tournament was split between three classrooms in the college, not ideal from a TD's perspective; the tables were a little narrow and the rooms somewhat crowded, but the participants accepted the playing conditions without complaint. The BC Closed was held at the same location, allowing the open players to view the action first-hand and admire the Ed Percy Trophy.

The tournament featured a rare visitor in BC events, a grandmaster; this was Andrey Gorovets, originally from Belarus but now living in Texas, who readers might recall won the Grand Pacific Open last Easter. With a 400+ point ratings cushion over the rest of the field his 6.0-0.0 score was unsurprising, although he had a few anxious moments against veteran H.G. Pitre in the first round.

This left everyone else fighting for second place, which ultimately went to Eduardo Moura, his only loss being to Gorovetz. Madiyar Amerkeshev had a similar record but took a first-round bye and thus finished third. The U1900 prize was split between Ivan Petrov, Matthew He, and Andy Zhang, while Kate Jiang was the top woman (there was one such prize for each section).

The twenty-four player U1800 Section included four young women who chose to play in the open tournament rather than the intended Women's Championship (the latter collapsed due to lack of participants and will be rescheduled for a later date). They made the most of the opportunity: all won in the last round and pushed their respective ratings to lifetime highs. Veronica Guo was clear first with an undefeated 5.0/6 and was also top woman while Jaylord Talosig, Aaron Hoffman, and Andrew Yu Qiu split the remaining prizes (second place and U1600). In the U1400 Section Mark Parpatt and Justin Gao shared first and second place, while Eric Shan was clear first in the U1000

Section ahead of Rohan Wessels and Yuhan (John) Li. There were upset prizes for the first four rounds sponsored by Bubble World; these went to Steven Wang, Gillian Mok, Felix Tian Zhou, and Ethan Song respectively. A full list of prizewinners can be found on the [results](#) page.

The tournament was organized by the West Chess Club, Eric Gu, and Lily Jia along with youth co-organizers Sherry Tian, Lyvia Shan, and Henry Yang; the latter were responsible for a well-attended blitz tournament on the Sunday evening, won by Gorovets. The grandmaster also took on a dozen players in a simultaneous display on the Friday evening, winning every game.

[Tournament website games](#)



Round six, Andrey Gorovets vs. Jungmin Shinn (Photo by Paul Leblanc)

Gorovets, Andrey – Pitre, H.G. [A45] New West Fall op New Westminster (1.1), 12.10.2019

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 d6 3.Nc3 Nh5 4.Bg5 h6 5.Bh4 g5 6.e4 Nf4 7.Bg3 Ng6 8.Qh5 Bg7 9.0-0-0 Nd7 10.h4 Nf6 11.Qe2 gxh4 12.Bxh4 Bg4 13.f3 Bd7 14.Bg3 e5 15.dxe5 dxe5 16.Qe3 Qe7 17.Nge2 h5 18.Kb1 c6 19.Nc1 Bh6 20.Qf2 b5 21.Nd3 Bf8 22.Be2 h4 23.Bh2 Nh5 24.f4 Nhx4 25.Nxf4 exf4 26.e5 Bg7 27.Bxb5 Bxe5 28.Rhe1 0-0 29.Bd3 Bg4 30.Rc1 Rab8 31.b3 Qb4 32.Rxe5 Nxe5 33.Qxh4 Ng6 34.Qf6 Rb7 35.Bg1 Qe7 36.Ne4 Ne5 37.Bd4 Ng6 1-0

Gorovets, Andrey – Moura, Eduardo [B07] New West Fall op New Westminster (3.1), 13.10.2019

1.d4 d6 2.e4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 4.Nge2 Be7 5.g3 c6 6.a4 0-0 7.Bg2 Nbd7 8.0-0 b6 9.h3 Bb7 10.f4 a6 11.g4 b5 12.Qe1 b4 13.Nd1 c5 14.d5 exf4 15.Nxf4 Ne8 16.Ne3 a5 17.Nf5 Ba6 18.Rf3 Bf6 19.Nh5 Bg5 20.Bxg5 Qxg5 21.Qg3 Ne5 22.Rf2 Kh8 23.Ne3 g6 24.Nf4 Ng7 25.Bf1 Bxf1 26.Raxf1 Qe7 27.Nd3 f6 28.Nxe5 fxe5 29.Nc4 g5 30.Rxf8+ Rxf8 31.Rxf8+ Qxf8 32.Qf2 Qxf2+ 33.Kxf2 Ne8 34.Nxa5 Kg7 35.Nc4 Kf6 36.a5 Ke7 37.a6 Nc7 38.a7 Kd7 39.Nb6+ 1-0

Cheng, Louis – Wu, Nathan Ping-Ying [D20] New West Fall op New Westminster (4.8), 13.10.2019

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 b5 4.a4 c6 5.axb5 cxb5 6.Nc3 a6 7.Nxb5 axb5 8.Rxa8 Bb7 9.Ra1 e6 10.f3 f5 11.Bf4 fxe4 12.fxe4 Bb4+ 13.Kf2 Nf6 14.e5 Ne4+ 15.Ke3 Bd2+ 16.Ke2 Qxd4 17.Qxd2 Nxd2

18.Bxd2 Qxe5+ 19.Kd1 Qxb2 20.Ra7 Be4 21.Ne2 Qb1+ 22.Bc1 c3 23.Nd4 0–0 24.Bxb5 Rd8
25.Ke2 Rxd4 26.Be8 Qd3+ 27.Kf2 Qc2+ 28.Ke3 Rd3+ 29.Kf4 Qf2+ 30.Kxe4 Qf5# 0–1

Moura, Eduardo – Zhang, Andy [B21] New West Fall op New Westminster (6.2), 14.10.2019

1.e4 c5 2.d4 cxd4 3.c3 dxc3 4.Nxc3 Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.Bc4 Nf6 7.e5 dxe5 8.Qxd8+ Nxd8 9.Nb5 Rb8
10.Nxe5 e6 11.Bf4 Bb4+ 12.Ke2 Nh5 13.Be3 a6 14.Ba7 axb5 15.Bxb5+ Ke7 16.Bxb8 Nf4+ 17.Kf3
Nd5 18.Rac1 Nb6 19.Ba7 Nd7 20.Nxd7 Bxd7 21.Bxd7 Kxd7 22.Rhd1+ Ke7 23.Rc7+ Kf6 24.Rc8
Ba5 25.b4 1–0

THE ARMCHAIR ANALYST by Dan Scoones

In 2013 and 2014 I published a series of articles in *The British Chess Magazine* on the topic of *Forgotten Masters*. By my criteria, Forgotten Masters were players of considerable accomplishment who for one reason or another had not received the full recognition that they deserved. In particular, none of them were ever the subject of a published game collection. This series represented my own small attempt to redress the balance. The articles were focussed mainly on games; games that were dramatic, or at least representative of each player's style. If memory serves, the masters in this series were Lev Aronin, Nicolas Rossolimo, Erich Eliskases, and Fred Reinfeld. (Yes, Fred Reinfeld -- a very strong player who twice defeated Samuel Reshevsky, but who abandoned tournament play for the more lucrative field of chess writing.) Toward the end of my series, majority ownership of *The British Chess Magazine* passed to the owners of *Sahovski Informator*, the well-known Serbian periodical that has been in continuous publication since 1966. The change in ownership brought a change in editorial policy, and a shift away from contributors who did not possess an international title. When the change was made, I was putting the final touches on an article about the Soviet grandmaster Georgy Agzamov, whose career was cut short in 1986 by an accidental death on a hiking expedition. With no reasonable publishing venue on the radar, I am submitting this article to the BCCF Bulletin in the hope that my authorship will constitute enough local relevance to warrant its publication.

Forgotten Masters: Georgy Agzamov

Georgy Tadzhihanovich Agzamov (1954-1986) was one of three chess playing brothers from the Soviet republic of Uzbekistan. All three became masters, but only Georgy managed to become a grandmaster – the first from that region of the USSR. These days his name is largely forgotten because he suffered an early death – in a hiking accident – several years before Soviet players were permitted to travel to the West. Thus his tournament appearances were largely restricted to Eastern Bloc events. Georgy Agzamov was a classical player, his best games having a smooth flow that showed the power of logical positional play. We will start things off with a convincing win over legendary Yugoslav grandmaster Svetozar Gligoric from the international tournament at Vrsac 1983. In this event Agzamov tied for first with GMs James Tarjan and Predrag Nikolic, and we will draw upon his annotations, which were published – after his death – in *Shakhmaty v SSSR* 10/1986.



Agzamov, Georgy – Gligoric, Svetozar [E05] Kostic Memorial Vrsac, 1983

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3 0–0 6.0–0 dxc4 7.Qc2 a6 8.Qxc4 b5 9.Qc2 This variation – as opposed to 9.a4 – is recommended by GM Viktor Bologan in his monograph on the Catalan. **9...Bb7 10.Bd2 Be4 11.Qc1 Nc6 12.Be3!** A novelty prepared by Agzamov for this game, and still the main line after 11...Nc6. **12...Rc8 13.Nbd2 Bd5 14.Rd1 Ng4 15.Nb3** Stronger was 15.Bf4!?, meeting 15...g5 with 16.e4! gxf4 17.exd5 Qxd5 18.Ne5 Qxd4 19.Nxg4 and wins. After 15.Nb3 Black should play 15...Bxb3!? 16.axb3 Nxe3 17.Qxe3 Nb4, when White has only a small advantage. **15...Nb4 16.Bd2 Nf6** Also possible was 16...Nxa2!? 17.Qc2 Nb4 18.Bxb4 Bxb4 19.Rxa6 Ra8 with mutual chances. **17.Nc5 Nc6** And not 17...Bxf3?! 18.Bxf3 Qxd4 19.Bxb4 Qxb4 20.Nxa6 Qa5 21.Bb7, winning the exchange or Black's c-pawn. **18.Be3 Bxc5 19.Qxc5 Ne4 20.Qc2 Nb4 21.Qb1 Nf6**



22.Bg5! h6 23.Bxf6! A thematic exchange, enhancing White's control of the central squares. **23...Qxf6 24.a3 Bxf3 25.Bxf3** "White's advantage is obvious, since his bishop is stronger than the knight; not only that, Black's queenside pawn structure has been weakened" (Agzamov). **25...Nd5 26.Qc2 Rfd8 27.Rac1 Rd6 28.Qc5 Nb6 29.Kg2 Na4?!**



Gligoric has either overlooked or underestimated White's next move. **30.Qxd6!** "White realises his advantage through tactical means. By giving up his queen for two rooks he transposes into a winning endgame" (Agzamov). **30...cxd6 31.Rxc8+ Kh7 32.b3+– Nb6 33.Rc6 Qd8 34.Rdc1 Kg6 35.Rc7 Nc4 36.Ra7 Qb6 37.Rb7 Qxd4 38.bxc4 Qd2 39.Rb1** More incisive was 39.cxb5!? Qxc1 40.bxa6 Qxa3 41.a7 d5 42.e4 f5 43.exd5 e5 44.d6 e4 45.Be2 Qa2 (45...f4 46.gxf4 Qa2 47.d7 Qxe2 48.d8Q) 46.d7! Qxe2 47.d8Q Qf3+ 48.Kg1, etc. Agzamov notes that he worked this out during play but due to time pressure he could not be certain that his calculations were correct. **39...bxc4** Or 39...Qc2 40.cxb5! Qxb1 41.bxa6 Qa1 42.a7 Qxa3 43.Be4+ Kh5 44.Bc6! Qa6 45.Rc7 and wins.

40.Rc7 d5 41.e3 Kf6 42.Rbb7 Ke5 43.Rc6! Definitely not 43.Rxf7? c3!, when Black's c-pawn will cost White one of his rooks. **43...Qa5 44.Rxf7 Qa4 45.Rfc7 Qxa3 46.Bg4 Ke4 47.Bxe6 1–0** Black is losing most if not all of his pawns.

Our hero compiled an impressive record on the White side of the Catalan. In fifteen games against high-level opposition he scored eight wins, six draws, and only one loss. Here is one of his impressive victories in this opening:

Agzamov, Georgy – Foisor, Ovidiu Doru [E04] Chigorin Memorial Sochi, 1985

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 dxc4 The early capture of the c-pawn leads to sharp positions if Black is stubborn about returning the extra material. **5.Nf3 b5 6.a4 c6 7.Ne5 Nd5 8.0–0 Bb7?! 9.b3 cxb3 10.axb5 cxb5 11.Qxb3 a6** If **11...Qb6?! 12.Qf3! Qc7 13.Bf4 Bd6 14.Nxf7 Bxf4 15.Nxh8 Bd6 16.Nc3!** and wins. **12.e4 Nf6 13.d5!** Black's next move is a novelty, though hardly a good one. **13...Qb6N** A 1977 correspondence game G. Nesis v J. Zelinskis went **13...exd5 14.exd5 Bd6 15.Nc6!** and White had a winning attack. Best was **13...Bc5! 14.dxe6 fxe6 15.Qxe6+ Qe7 16.Qxe7+ Bxe7 17.Nc3 0–0** with only a small edge for White. **14.Nc4!**



14...Qc7? In his notes in *Chess Informant* Agzamov assessed the variation **14...Qd4 15.Ra4!! Qc5 16.Na5** as winning for White. A little engine-assisted analysis shows Black holding on with **16...Bxd5!?** **17.exd5 bxa4 18.Qb7 Qxa5 19.Bf4 Qd8 20.dxe6 fxe6 21.Qxa8 Nbd7 22.Qxa6 Nc5 23.Qa7**, but here too White's advantage is indisputable. **15.Na5 e5 16.Be3 Bd6 17.Rc1 Qe7 18.f3 Qd7**



19.Bc5 White could have won immediately with **19.Bh3! Qxh3 20.Nxb7 Be7 21.d6 Bd8 22.Nxd8 Kxd8 23.Qxf7** with a quick mate in prospect. **19...Bxc5+ 20.Rxc5 Bc8 21.Qc3 0–0 22.Rc7!** Agzamov notes the blunder **22.Qxe5? Qa7 23.Qc7 Bb7!**, when Black has more or less equalised. **22...Qe8 23.Nd2 Nbd7 24.Nc6 Kh8 25.Nb3 Ng8 26.Rc1 f6 27.Na7 Nb6 28.Qc6 Nc4?** Here Black resigned before White could take the hanging rook. The blunder did not affect the result since **28...Rb8 29.Nxc8 Qxc6 30.R1xc6 Rbxc8 31.Rxc8 Nxc8 32.Rxa6** is hopeless for Black. **1–0**

We have struck a theme. Let us stay with it and enjoy yet another Catalan.

Agzamov, Georgy – Novikov, Igor A. (2460) [E02] USSR, 1985

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 dxc4 5.Qa4+ In this way White avoids the gambit line seen in the last game. **5...Nbd7 6.Nf3 a6 7.Nc3 c5 8.Qxc4** It is more accurate to recapture the pawn when the threat to keep it with ...b5 is real. **8...b5 9.Qd3 Bb7 10.0–0 Qb6N** Black is fine after 10...cxd4!? **11.Nxd4 Bxg2 12.Kxg2 Ne5 13.Qe3 Bd6** as given by O.Stetsko in *Chess Informant*. **11.Be3 cxd4** If 11...b4 then 12.Na4! Qa5 13.Nxc5 Nxc5 14.dxc5 Bxc5 and now 15.Bxc5! Qxc5 16.Rfc1 Qe7 17.Ne5 is clearly better for White. **12.Bxd4 Bc5 13.a4! Bxd4** Stronger than 13...b4?! 14.a5! Qa7 15.Na4 with advantage to White. **14.Qxd4 b4** Or 14...Qxd4 15.Nxd4 Bxg2 16.Kxg2 b4 17.Nd1 Rc8 18.Ne3 Ke7 (Stetsko) and now 19.Rfc1! is clearly better for White.



15.Nd1 White can maintain a clear advantage with 15.Qxb6! Nxb6 16.a5 bxc3 17.axb6 cxb2 18.Ra2 Nd5 19.Rxb2. **15...0–0 16.Ne3 Rac8 17.Rfd1 Rfd8** In *Chess Informant* Stetsko gave 17...Nc5!? 18.Nc4 Qc7 9.Qd6, overlooking the shot 19...Bxf3! 20.Bxf3 Nb3!, winning the exchange. Of course White should play 19.Nd6 when the chances are about equal. From now on Black begins to lose control of the game. **18.Qxb6! Nxb6 19.Rxd8+ Rxd8 20.a5!** Guaranteeing White a stable advantage. **20...Nbd5 21.Nc4 Kf8 22.Nfe5 Ke7 23.Rc1 Ne8 24.Nb6 b3 25.Nd3 Nxb6 26.Bxb7 Nd5 27.Nc5 Ndc7 28.Nxb3 Rb8 29.Nc5 Nd6 30.Nxa6 Nxa6 31.Bxa6 Rxb2**



32.Bd3 The thematic 32.Ra1!? deserved attention here. **32...Ra2 33.Rc7+ Kf6?** The wrong way. Instead 33...Kd8!? 34.Rc5 Kd7 35.a6 f5 is a much tougher defence for Black; in fact it is difficult to see how White can make progress. **34.a6 e5 35.f3 h5 36.h4 Ke6 37.Kf2 g6 38.a7 Ra3 39.Bc2 e4 40.Bb3+ Ke5 41.f4+** White now wins easily: 41... Kd4 42.e3+ Kd3 43.Bd5 Nb5 44.Bc4, etc. Therefore Black resigned. **1–0**

At the Moscow 1936 international tournament Salo Flohr introduced a new system for Black in Alekhine's Defence. He was not successful with it, losing to Mikhail Botvinnik in 57 moves. At Nottingham later in the year he improved the variation against the same opponent, coming close to a win but eventually letting Botvinnik off with a draw. Despite the positive trend, Flohr immediately abandoned the variation that was to be named after him. In the late 1970s Georgy Agzamov took

up Flohr's line and scored a respectable +4 -3 =1 with the Black pieces. In the USSR it soon became known as the Flohr-Agzamov variation.

Smagin, Sergey – Agzamov, Georgy [B05] URS-ch52 Riga (15), 1985

1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Be2 c6!? Historically, the Flohr-Agzamov line has given Black better results than the main move 5...e6, but part of that has to be the surprise factor. **6.Ng5!?** More aggressive is 6.c4!? Quite wrong, though, is 6.0-0?! Bxf3! followed by 7...dxe5, 8...e6 and counterplay against White's e-pawn. **6...Bf5!?** **7.Bd3** The sharper 7.e6!? fxe6 8.Bh5+ g6 9.g4 can be met by 9...Be4!? 10.Nxe4 gxh5 11.g5 Bg7 12.c4 Nc7 13.Qxh5+ Kd7 with an unclear position. **7...Bxd3 8.Qxd3 h6 9.Nf3 e6 10.0-0 dxe5 11.dxe5 Nd7 12.Qe2N Qc7 13.Bd2 a5 14.Re1 Nc5 15.Nc3 Nxc3 16.Bxc3 Be7 17.Bd4 Rd8 18.Qe3 b6 19.Rad1 0-0 20.Rd2 Nd7 21.Red1 c5 22.Bc3 Qc6 23.b3 a4 24.Qf4 axb3 25.axb3 Rfe8 26.Bb2?!** Agzamov suggested 26.h4!? in *Chess Informant*. **26...b5! 27.h4 Nb6 28.Rxd8 Rxd8 29.Rxd8+ Bxd8 30.Qd2 Qd5 30...Be7!?** was interesting. **31.h5 Bc7 32.Qe2 c4! 33.b4** No better was 33.bxc4 Nxc4! followed by b4 and Na3 (Agzamov) **33...Nc8 34.Bd4 Ne7 35.c3 Qa8!** Also strong was 35...Nc6!? **36.g4?! Nd5 37.Qe4 Qa1+ 38.Kg2 Qc1 39.Ng1 Bd8 40.Ne2 Qd1 41.Ng1 Bg5**



42.Nf3? Losing immediately. 42.Qf3! defends everything, but Black can still win by playing for zugzwang: 42...Qc2 43.Ne2 Qd3! 44.Ba7 Bd2 45.Bd4 g5! 46.Kg3 Qb1 47.Kg2 Qe1 48.Kh2 Kg7 49.Kg2 Bf4, etc. **42...Bc1! 43.Be3** If 43.Qe1 then 43...Nf4+ 44.Kg3 Qd3, etc. **43...Bxe3 44.fxe3 Qe2+ 45.Kg3 Nxc3 46.Qa8+ Kh7 47.Qa7 Ne4+** Another way to finish off the game was 47...Qf1!?, mating or winning the queen. **48.Kf4 Qg2** Threatening 49.Qg3+ followed by 50.Qg4#. White can defend with 49.Qxf7 but then Black has 49...Qxf3+! 50.Kxf3 Ng5+ with an extra piece and therefore White resigned. **0-1**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jack Taylor Memorial

October 25-27, Victoria
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BC Junior Championship

November 9-11
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Banff Open

November 9-11, Banff, AB
[Details](#)

Victoria Open

January 17-19, 2020
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