

## BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #468

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](mailto:swright2@telus.net)); if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, just let me know.

Stephen Wright



BC Chess Federation

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### HERE AND THERE

#### **58<sup>th</sup> Biel Chess Festival** (July 12-25)

The Biel Chess Festival in Switzerland consisted of several tournaments of different strengths (from amateur to elite grandmaster), time controls, and age groups. There were even three separate events using different names for the same variant (Fischer Random, Chess 960, and Free Style Chess). The festival attracted two Canadians, FMs Vincent Latorre from Montreal and our own Ethan Song, who both participated in the [Master Tournament](#) (MTO, July 14-24) along with one hundred and ten other players. The ten-round Swiss was won by top-rated GM Murali Karthikeyan (India) with 8.0 points, a half-point ahead of GMs Pranav, Yilmaz (Turkey), Karthik, Pranesh, and IM Poh (Malaysia, the rest India). Vincent scored 6.5 points, Ethan 5.5. Ethan also played in the [Blitz](#) tournament where American FM Tanitoluwa Adewumi beat five of the seven grandmasters in the field to claim clear first with 11.0/13, a point ahead of those in second. Ethan scored 9.0 points, finishing tenth out of one hundred and sixty-five.



#### **Song, Ethan (2288) – Yang, Ray (2081) [B51] Biel Chess Festival 58th MTO Biel (8.18), 22.07.2025**

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+ Nd7 4.c4 Ngf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.0–0 Bg7 7.d4 cxd4 8.Nxd4 0–0 9.Bxd7 Bxd7 10.h3 Qb6 11.Nde2 Rfc8 12.Qd3 Qb4 13.b3 b5 14.cxb5 Nxe4 15.Nd5 Bxb5 16.Qe3 Bxe2 17.Nxb4 Bxf1 18.Qxe4 Bxa1 19.Nc6 Bd3 20.Nxe7+ Kh8 21.Qe3 Re8 22.Ba3 Rad8 23.Qc1 Be5 24.Nd5 Rc8 25.Qd2 Be4 26.Ne3 d5 27.Bb2 f6 28.Bxe5 fxe5 29.f3 Bb1 30.Qxd5 Bxa2 31.Ng4 Rb8 32.Nf6 Re7 33.Qd6 Rbb7 34.Nd5 Re8 35.Qa6 Rd7 36.Nf6 Rd1+ 37.Kh2 Rf8 38.Ng4 Bxb3 39.Qa3 Rb8 40.Qe7 Rg8 41.Qxa7 Rg7 42.Qb8+ Bg8 43.Qe8 Rdd7 44.Nxe5 Rge7 45.Qf8 Rc7 46.g4 Re6 47.Kg3 Rce7 48.f4 Rg7 49.Qb8 Ree7 50.Kh4 h6 51.f5 gxf5 52.gxf5 Ra7 53.f6 Rgb7 54.Qf8 Kh7 55.Ng4 Be6 56.Qxh6+ Kg8 57.f7+ Kxf7 58.Qf6+ Ke8 59.Qxe6+ Kf8 60.Nf6 Kg7 61.Nh5+ Kf8 62.Kg5 Re7 63.Qh6+ Kf7 64.Qg7+ Ke6 65.Nf4+ Kd7 66.Qd4+ Ke8 67.Ng6 Ra5+ 68.Kh6 Rea7 69.h4 Kf7 70.h5 Ke6 71.Qe4+ Kf7 72.Qf3+ Ke6 73.Nf8+ Ke5 74.Nd7+ Ke6 75.Qc6+ Ke7 76.Nc5 Kf8 77.Kg6 Rg7+ 78.Kf6 Rf7+ 79.Ke5 Re7+ 80.Kd4 Raa7 81.Qf6+ Kg8 82.Ne6 Red7+ 83.Kc4 Re7 84.Qf8+ Kh7 85.Ng5# 1–0

## **World Chess Day Championship** (July 19-20)



Despite the rigours of potentially playing sixteen rounds of classical chess in the previous CYCC and Canadian Open, thirty-six hardy souls found the energy to participate in the second edition of [Fraser Valley Chess Academy's](#) World Chess Day Championship. Centred around World Chess Day on July 20, the day on which FIDE was founded in 1924, this year's event at the FVCA offices in Langley consisted of six more rounds of classical chess, but unlike the two Canadian championship events this was at the minimum of 50 + 10. There were two players rated over 2000 in the [Open Section](#), NM Yidong Chen and Ryan Leung, but Zhengyu Chen built on his second-place finish in the U2000 Section of the Canadian Open by drawing with both of them and tying for first with Yidong, both scored 5.0/6 (Yidong took a half-point bye). Ryan tied for third with Arnav Shetty. The eight-player [U1000 Section](#) was close to being a round robin but Prabhjot Singh scored a perfect 6.0/6, Rey Shui was second, and Atharv Moorthy was a distant third. There was also a six-round [Blitz](#) tournament on the Saturday evening where Yidong Chen rolled over the field, Ryan Leung and Zhengyu Chen tied for second.

## **Chess.com Community Bughouse Championship** (July 7-11)

Last December we reported that local [NM Janak Awatramani](#) had won the last of Chess.com's Community Championships for the year which involved the chess variant Crazyhouse. The series of monthly championships has continued this year, a different variant each month, and for July Bughouse was on the menu. Each championship involves a series of qualifiers to produce eight finalists (in this case, teams) who then compete in a double-elimination knockout final, i.e., the losers in the first round continue in their own knockout bracket, the winners of each bracket meeting in a grand final. Time control in this event was a fast 2 minutes/game, with the matches decided by the score after 20 minutes. There were two teams involving Canadians, IM Mark Plotkin (Toronto) and FM Richard Zheng (Quebec), and Janak Awatramani and American NM Isaac Chiu. The defending champion GM team of Awonder Liang and Jeffrey Xiong were defeated in the semifinal of the winners bracket by Plotkin and Zheng 7.0-4.0, this after not losing a game last year. The winners final pitted Plotkin and Zheng against Awatramani and Chiu, won by the latter 9.0-2.0. This pattern then repeated itself: Liang and Xiong fought their way through the losers bracket, only to be beaten again in the final by Plotkin and Zheng, who again lost in the grand final to Awatramani and Chiu (13.5-5.5). Congratulations to this year's Bughouse Champions! [Chess.com report](#)

## **2025 CANADIAN YOUTH CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP (CYCC)** (July 8-11) by Victoria Doknjas, Co-Chair

### **A Week of Champions, Chaos, and Community in Surrey, BC**

The 2025 CYCC made a long-awaited comeback to British Columbia — returning to Surrey for the first time since 2012 — and it came back in style. With five hundred and thirty-seven of Canada's top young talents gathering under one roof, it became the second largest CYCC in history, hosted once again at the Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel. This national showdown featured twelve intense sections (technically eleven, due to a merger of the U16/U18 Girls divisions), showcasing future stars in the U8 to U18 age brackets. From nail-biting time scrambles to heartfelt post-game hugs, it was chess at its most human. But no amount of planning could predict a curveball: a labour dispute erupted just before Round 1. With rooms not available on time and some services disrupted, the Sheraton stepped up, offering free breakfast for guests and opening a large ballroom for families. The chess community adapted with grace and resilience.

### **Beyond the Board**


CYCC 2025 wasn't just about classical chess. Players and parents immersed themselves in an electric lineup of side events:

- 2025 CYCC Blitz Championship [U18 Blitz](#) [U14 Blitz](#)
- 2025 CYCC Bughouse Championship
- Simul with GM Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux
- Master class sessions with Team Canada Head Coach GM Gergely Szabo
  - ✓ “How to Grow a Competitive Chess Player”
  - ✓ “How to Be a Supportive Chess Parent”
- Youth Chess Presentation with Christina Tao and GM Szabo
- Master Lecture with GM Gergely Szabo and GM Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux
  - Review of select games from WYCC 2022 including how prep was done.


Whether you were playing, learning, or cheering, there was something for everyone.

### **Crowning Champions**

The U18 Open was the crown jewel, stacked with an IM, two FMs, a CM, and a WCM. It drew ambitious players choosing to “play up” into this elite bracket.


 IM Aaron Reeve Mendes was unstoppable with 6.5/7

 FM Ethan Song (BC) took second with 5.5

 WCM Kate Jiang (BC) edged out on tiebreaks to take 3rd Place with 5.0/7

4th: FM Ryan Yang, also with 5.0 points

Other standout BC finishers include:

Karson Lu ( U8 Open Champion), Xavier Zhang (U8 Open tied 3rd Place), Anh C N Nguyen (U8 Girls tied 3rd Place), Evelyn Lou (U10 Girls tied for 1st Place), Kai Zhongkai Zhang (U12 Open tied for 1st Place), Zoya Singh and Anny Peng (U12 Girls tied for 3rd Place), Johan Aljo and Justin Xu (U16 Open tied for 3rd Place), Gillian Mok (U18 Girls 2nd Place).





Left to right: Tyler Sanderson, Kate Jiang, Aaron Reeve Mendes, Ethan Song, Victoria Doknjas  
(Photo credits: Juniors to Masters Chess Academy's [Facebook](#) page)

## The People Behind the Magic

An event of this scale doesn't happen without two things: strong sponsors and an even stronger team.

### Event Sponsors:

We want to thank our wonderful Sponsors: Province of British Columbia, Sport Surrey, Surrey Hotel and Motel Association, BC Chess Federation, Tangible Software Solutions Inc., TD Bank, Chess Federation of Canada, Sheraton Vancouver Guildford, Victoria Chess.

### Organizers and Officials:



**Co-Chairs:** Tyler Sanderson and Victoria Doknjas

**Organizing Team:** GM Gergely Szabo, Murray Chu, Mats Philipzig, NM Neil Doknjas, FM Joshua Doknjas, Dave Doknjas, FM John Doknjas, Tony Vu.

**Chief Arbiter:** Alex Ferreira, FA

**Deputy Chief Arbiter:** Abel Talamantez, IA

**Appeals Committee:** Vlad Drkulec, Vlad Rekhson, GM Gergely Szabo


**Special Guest:** GM Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux

**Arbiter Team:** Umang Banatwala, Brian Davidson, Christina Tao, Brandon Zhu, Gideon Tang, Huaicheng Su, WCM Joyce Zhang, Aaron Holmgren, Julius Villamar, Cindy Ren Zheng, Kaitlyn Tao, Joshua Imoo, Ryan Leong.

**Outside Tournament Room Team:** Joanna Imoo, Jason Imoo, April Chruszcz, Bryan Chruszcz, Jiyang Gao, Dr. Ashifa Nurani, Sabrina Jiang, Yao Wang.

Brian Davidson, Umang Banatwala, and Christina Tao each scored a FIDE Arbiter (FA) Norm from their work at the CYCC. Congratulations to Brian and Umang who now have fulfilled all their requirements to achieve the FIDE Arbiter Title!

### **What's Next?**

Players who placed high are now eligible for Team Canada at international youth events. Families are encouraged to explore the CFC Training Subsidy — including the [JtM National Training Program](#), which offers Elite and Intermediate level online group training year-round. Plus, don't miss [KitsFest 2025](#), where youth chess will take over the beach courts once again with blitz and rapid tournaments, and sunshine! For more photos: <https://www.facebook.com/juniorstomasters>  
 Full Results: <https://s3.chess-results.com/tnrWZ.aspx?lan=1&art=0&flag=30&tno=1212500>

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## **2025 CANADIAN OPEN** (July 12-18) by Tyler Sanderson, Co-Chair

### **A Week of National Talent in Surrey, BC**

The 2025 Canadian Open Chess Championship brought Canada's top chess players to Surrey, British Columbia, from July 12th to 18th. Hosted at the Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel, this tournament attracted 246 confirmed participants across its three sections: Open, U2000, and U1600. The tournament delivered a week of high-stakes competition, tactical brilliance, and a friendly spirit among players from across the country and beyond.

### **Crowning Champions**

With over \$25,000 in prizes, the competition was fierce across all divisions – and IM norm possibilities became a reality. The **Open section** (82 players) saw an incredibly tight finish, with four strong players tying for first place, each scoring 7.0 points (in tiebreak order):

-  FM Jingyun (Ryan) Yang (BC) – 1st (photo to right)
  - Ryan achieved his first IM norm at this event
-  GM Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux (CAN) - 2nd
-  FM Tymur Keleberda (CAN) - 3rd
-  FM Stephen Willy (USA) – 4th



Special shout out to GM Gergely Szabo from Romania who spent all 9 rounds on the top three boards, but alas, ended up an ½ point shy of First Place with an undefeated score of 6.5 pts./9 games. GM Szabo and IM David Cummings tied for Fifth Place. Also notable, Jorge Nunez Asencio achieved his FIDE Master title, and the following players achieved National Master norms from the event:

- Tobias Salkeld (SK) – officially a National Candidate Master after the event
- Justin Gao (BC) – officially a National Candidate Master after the event
- Ashton Taylor (BC)
- Bingfei Wang (ON)

The **Under 2000 section** (102 players) featured intense battles, with Aiden Hao-Ting Lu emerging as the sole champion:

- 🏆 Aiden Hao-Ting Lu (BC) with 8.0 points
- 🥈 Zhengyu Chen (BC) with 7.5 points
- 🥉 Norman Verdon (BC) with 7.0 points

In the **Under 1600 section** (62 players), Zachary Halfar claimed the top spot:

- 🏆 Zachary Halfar (BC) with 7.5 points
- 🥈 Jason Ji (BC) with 7.0 points
- 🥉 Shreyas Krishna Prasad (BC) tied for 3rd with 7.0 points
- 🏆 Tommy To (BC) tied for 3rd with 7.0 points

## **Special Events**

The Canadian Open offered two special events for players: a [blitz](#) tournament, and a grandmaster simul. A special highlight was the **Simultaneous Exhibition with Canadian Grandmaster Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux**, providing a unique chance for attendees to challenge a top-tier chess professional.

## **The People Behind the Event**

An event of this scale is made possible by strong leadership and dedicated support.

- **Event Sponsors:** Province of British Columbia, Sport Surrey, Surrey Hotel and Motel Association (SHMA), BC Chess Federation, Tangible Software Solutions Inc, TD Bank, Chess Federation of Canada, Sheraton Vancouver Guildford, Victoria Chess
- **Co-Chairs:** Tyler Sanderson and Victoria Doknjas
- **Organizing Team:** GM Gergely Szabo, Murray Chu, Mats Philipzig, NM Neil Doknjas, FM Joshua Doknjas, Dave Doknjas, FM John Doknjas, Tony Vu
- **Appeals Committee:** Vlad Drkulec, Vlad Rekhson, GM Gergely Szabo
- **Special Guest:** GM Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux
- **Arbiter Team:** Umang Banatwala, Brian Davidson, Brandon Zhu, Aaron Holmgren
- **Outside Tournament Room Team:** Ryan Leong, Sabrina Jiang

We extend our sincere thanks to the entire team for their tireless efforts in ensuring a smooth and successful championship.





Grandmaster faceoff: Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux and Gergely Szabo

### What's Next?

Stay tuned to the [BCCF Events page](#) and [Vancity Chess](#) for details on upcoming tournaments and chess activities in British Columbia. Plus, don't miss [KitsFest 2025](#), where chess will take over the beach courts once again with blitz and rapid tournaments, and sunshine!

 Full Results: [Open](#) [U2000](#) [U1600](#) [Official Tournament Page](#)

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## HOW TO PLAY AGAINST THE LONDON SYSTEM (<2000 ELO) by Nick Beqo

The London System is solid but predictable. You don't need deep theory—just choose a simple setup with clear plans.



### 1. Classical Setup (QGD Style)

Moves: 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4 e6 4.e3 Be7 5.Nbd2 O-O 6.Bd3 c5

Plans: Develop naturally and Avoid passivity—don't let White play Ne5 + f4 comfortably!

Why it's good: Simple structure, similar to Queen's Gambit



## 2. Immediate ...Bf5

Moves: 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4 Bf5 4.e3 e6 5.Bd3 Bxd3 6.Qxd3 c5

Plans: Trade off the annoying Bf4 early

Why it's good: No London bishop = fewer White attacking chances



## 3. King's Indian Setup

Moves: 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bf4 Bg7 4.e3 d6 5.h3 O-O 6.Be2 Nbd7

Plans: Delay center fight, then strike with ...e5 or ...c5  
Typical KID plan: ...Nbd7, ...Re8, ...c6, ...h6, ...g5 if aggressive

Why it's good: Good if you already like KID structures.  
Keeps lots of pieces and creates dynamic play



## 4. Early ...c5 + ...Qb6

Moves: 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.Bf4 c5 4.e3 Qb6 5.Nbd2 Qxb2

Plans: Pressure b2 and challenge White's structure.  
Develop rapidly with ...Nc6 and ...d5  
Force White to think early instead of autopilot moves

Why it's good: Active, creates immediate problems for White





### 5. Solid Slav-like Setup

Moves: 1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4 c6 4.e3 Bf5 5.Bd3 Bxd3 6.Qxd3 e6

Plans: Quiet but solid—develop ...Nbd7, ...Be7, ...O-O, ...c5

Easy pawn breaks: ...c5 or ...e5 when ready

Very hard for White to attack

Why it's good: Low theory, very safe

Which one should you pick?

- Want easy & solid → Slav-like setup
- Want quick piece activity → Immediate ...Bf5
- Want sharp & dynamic → King's Indian setup
- Want to surprise London players → ...c5 + Qb6 gambit

**Nick Beqo, FIDE Instructor**

For private coaching email: [besnik@telus.net](mailto:besnik@telus.net) or visit: [www.facebook.com/nickb.the.coach/](https://www.facebook.com/nickb.the.coach/)

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## THE CANADIAN OPEN IN BC

Previous to this year the Canadian Open had been held in BC four times since its inception in 1956 – see [Canadian Open History](#).

### Vancouver 1971

The 1971 Canadian Open, the ninth such tournament, was held at UBC and featured World Champion Boris Spassky: [feature article](#).

### Vancouver 1982

Held at UBC, the 1982 Canadian Open experienced scheduling, advertising, and monetary issues. There were no international superstars in the field, in fact none of the one hundred and forty-eight players held international titles. Clear first was BC Champion Gordon Taylor with 8.5/10, tied for second were Jonathan Berry and Rob Hawkes ahead of Tom O'Donnell, Wayne Barclay, Nigel Fullbrook, Alex Kuznecov, and Jeff Reeve.

### Richmond 1999

Organized by Peter Stockhausen and combined for the first time with the CYCC, the 1999 Canadian Open attracted two hundred and four players to what at the time was the Delta Pacific

Conference and Resort Centre. The two highest rated players, GM Kevin Spaggett and IM Georgi Orlov, shared first place on 9.5/11, IM David Cummings was clear third and NM Nenad Ristic clear fourth, followed by a dozen players tied for fifth!

The brilliancy prize-winning game:

**Tsui, Edwin (1412) – Wing, Richard (1799) [C44] CAN op Richmond (6), 06.07.1999**

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.c3 dxc3 5.Nxc3 Bb4 6.Bc4 d6 7.0–0 Bg4 8.Qb3 Bh5 9.Nd5 a5 10.a3 a4 11.axb4 axb3 12.Rxa8 Nb8 13.Be3 b6 14.Bb5+ Kf8 15.Bg5 f6 16.Nd4 Kf7 17.Bc4 Ne7 18.Nxe7+ Kxe7 19.Rxb8 Qd7 20.Nf5+ Qxf5 21.exf5 Rxb8 22.Bd2 Kd7 23.Bxb3 Be2 24.Re1 Bd3 25.Be6+ Kc6 26.Rc1+ Kb7 27.Bd5+ Kc8 28.Re1 Kd8 29.Bc6 1–0

## **Victoria 2012**

Organized by Victoria Chess at the Grand Pacific Open, the 2012 Canadian Open was the first in BC split into sections. Clear winner of the Open Section was then IM Eric Hansen with 7.5/9, GM Eugene Perelshteyn was clear second, while FM Richard Wang, GMs John Fedorowicz and Victor Mikhalevski, and IMs Steven Zierk and Edward Porper tied for third. Darren Bates, Robert North, Paul Leblanc, Yifei Han topped the U2000 Section, while the U1600 Section was won by Kajan Thanabalachandran and Kristijan Gjorgjevik. One hundred and fifty-five players participated.

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**COMING EVENTS:** see listings at [CFC](#), [BCCF](#) and [Northwest chess](#) websites

### **Grand Chess Classic**

Abbotsford, July 26-27 [Details](#)

### **BC Summer Chess Festival**

Vancouver, August 1-3 [Details](#)

### **BC Day Open**

Victoria, August 2-4 [Details](#)

### **Kelowna Summer Rapid Championship**

Kelowna, August 7 [Details](#)

### **Kitsfest**

Vancouver, August 8-10 [Details](#)

### **RCC Elite Championship #5**

Richmond, August 9-10 [Details](#)

### **August 11 Puzzle Night**

Langley, August 11 [Details](#)

### **Fraser Valley Rapid 17**

Langley, August 16 [Details](#)

### **LIC Classical 4**

New Westminster, August 23-24 [Details](#)

### **Langley Open**

Langley, August 30 – September 1 [Details](#)

### **Ultimate Chess Club League**

Langley/Surrey, Sept. – Dec. [Details](#)