



# NATIONAL OPEN NEWS

Las Vegas International Chess Festival

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## National Open Prizewinners!

If one were to list all the prizewinners in the \$100,000 2017 National Open, this newsletter would be much longer. Instead, please visit [vegaschessfestival.com/results](http://vegaschessfestival.com/results) for the complete breakdown. The highlights follow.

### Open Section

Grandmaster Tigran L. Petrosian of Armenia won the \$8,000 first prize with an undefeated 5-1 score. GM Illia Nyzhnyk of Ukraine, GM-elect Dmitry Gordievsky of Russia, IM Elshan Moradiabadi of Chapel Hill, NC, Rogelio Barcenilla of Arizona & the Philippines, Andrey Gorovets of Texas, and GM Nick De Firmian of California tied for second at 4½-, winning \$1,417 each.

IM Luis Torres Rosas of Texas and IM Keaton Kierwa of California split the Under 2500 prize, winning \$1,250 each.

Albert Lu of California won the \$2,400 Under 2400 prize.

### Under 2300 Section

There was a five-way tie for first place in U2300: IM Josef Pribyl of the Czech Republic (and the Pribyl Defense!), WGM Carla Heredia of Ecuador, as well as Californians Bryon Doyle, FM Ronald Cusi, and Leo Creger. Each won \$2,330.



JANELLE LOSOFF, 2017 CHAMP TIGRAN PETROSIAN, AL LOSOFF

### Under 2100 Section

Congratulations to Peter Walsh of California for a perfect 6-0! Peter won \$6,000.



Peter Walsh cashes chips

Jarod Coulter of Arizona took clear second with 5½, winning \$3,000. James Huddleston of Texas, Saikhanchimeg Tsogtsaikhan of Mongolia, Joshua

Grabinsky of Oregon, and Nicholas Gross of Arizona each won \$750 for their 5-1 scores.

### Under 1900 Section

Three players scored 5½-½ to tie for first: two Californians, Vardan Betikyan and James Gould, and Joseph Levine of Washington. Each won \$2,917.

### Under 1700 Section

Alexander Connelly won more than his share of money at the Las Vegas International Chess Festival. After capturing the Reserve Section of the Browne Memorial blitz, Alexander won \$4,000 for 5½-½ and clear first in U1700. (But wait! There's more!)



Alexander Connelly

Seven players tied for second with 5-1: Californians Guy Sirak and Roman Gurovich, Paulexander Elauria of Nevada, Grant Hodson of Utah, Shaun Adams of Texas, Matthew David of Arizona, and Rohan Patil of Pennsylvania.

### Under 1500 Section

Ronald Martin Cusi, Jr. (a familiar name!) won \$3,000 for his 5½-½ score. Ethan Smith of Alabama, Todd Gutierrez of Arizona,

Photography by Hanks

Matthew Nestler of Virginia, and Rana Imaad of California each won \$713 for their share of second place.

**Under 1300 Section**

Kyriakos Kypriotakis of Oregon won \$2,000 for his 5½-1½ score. Matthew Polentz, Abraham Martinez, Abel Martinez (all of California), as well as Jay Tumanan of Nevada, won \$513 each for their share of second.

**Mixed Doubles**

Alexander Connelly (remember him?) and Patrice Connelly tied with



Patrice Connelly

Ethan Smith and Carla Heredia. Each team scored 10 points out of a possible 14 and won \$1,125.

**Sunday Games**

**GM Ruifeng Li (2664) – GM Tigran Petrosian (2699)**

2017 National Open, Round 5

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 4.Nf3 Nbd7 5.Bc4 Be7 6.0-0 0-0 7.Re1 c6 8.a4 a5 9.h3 h6 10.Ba2 Re8 11.Be3 Qc7 12.Qd2 exd4 13.Nxd4 Bf8 14.Nf5 Nc5 15.Bxc5 dxc5 16.Rad1 Bxf5 17.exf5 Rad8 18.Qc1 Rxe1+ 19.Rxe1 Rd4 20.Qe3 Qd7 21.Qf3 Rd2 22.Nb1 Rd4 23.Nc3 Rb4 24.Rd1 Qe7 25.b3 Rd4

26.Bb1 Qe5 27.Rf1 c4!? 28.Qe3 Qxe3 29.fxe3 Rd8 30.bxc4 Bc5 31.Re1 Bb4 32.Rd1 Re8 33.Rd3 Bxc3 34.Rxc3 Ne4 35.Ra3 Nc5 36.Kf2 Re4 37.Ba2 Kf8 38.Bb3



Black has all the chances despite his pawn minus because of his superior pawn structure and better minor piece. But even a "tall pawn" can dream of becoming active someday.

38...Re8 39.Ra1 Rd8 40.Kf3 Ke7 41.g4 Rd2 42.Rf1 f6 43.Kf4 Nd7 44.e4 Ne5 45.c5 Nd7 46.Ke3 Rh2 47.Kd4 Ne5 48.Rb1 Kd8 49.Be6 Kc7 50.Rb3 Rxc2 51.Rg3 Rh2 52.Rb3 Rd2+ 53.Ke3 Rd1 54.Rc3 Ra1 55.Bb3 Rf1 56.Ke2 Rh1 57.Kf2 Rh2+ 58.Kg3 Rd2 59.Bc2 Re2 60.Kf4 Rf2+ 61.Ke3 Rf3+ 62.Kd4



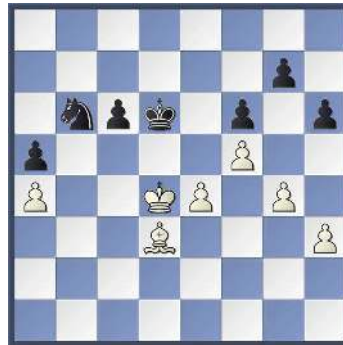
62...Rxc3

Perhaps (as Stockfish suggests) Black cashed in too early. The good knight is better than the rotten bishop, and it's hard for a human not to believe that Black is virtually winning the minor piece ending.

63.Kxc3 b6 64.cxb6+ Kxb6 65.Bd1

As ugly as this good knight vs. bad bishop endgame looks, the opinionated Stockfish again kibitzes that 65.Kd4 may hold.

65...Kc5 66.Be2 Nd7 67.Bd3 Kd6 68.Kd4 Nb6



69.e5+?

Stockfish has not completely convinced me that 69.Bc2! draws, but it seems to give much better drawing chances: 69...c5+ 70.Kd3 Ke5 71.h4! (71.Ke3? c4 72.h4 Nd7 73.Bb1 Nc5 74.Bc2 Na6+ 71...Kf4 (71...c4+ 72.Kc3 Kf4 73.Kd4 Kxg4 74.Kc5=) 72.Bd1 Kg3 73.e5! fxe5 74.g5! hxg5 75.hxg5 Kf4 76.f6 e4+ (76...g6 77.f7 Nd7 78.Kc4 Kxg5 79.Kb5 c4 80.Kxa5=) 77.Ke2 g6 78.f7 Nd7 79.Bc2 Kxg5 80.Bxe4 Kf6 81.Bc6 Nf8 82.Kd3 Ne6 83.Kc4 Kxf7 84.Bf3 and it appears that Black has no way to make progress despite being two pawns up. For example, 84...Kf6 85.Kd5! (85.Kb5?? Nd4+) 85...g5 86.Bg4 Nd4

87.Kxc5 Ke5 88.Kb6=.

69...fxe5+ 70.Ke4 Nxa4 71.Bc4 Nb6 72.Ba2 Nd5 73.Bc4 a4 74.h4 a3 75.g5 hxg5 76.hxg5 a2 77.Bxa2 Nc3+ 0-1

**GM Nick De Firmian (2565) – IM Pavlo Vorontsov (2613)**

2017 National Open, Round 6

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 dxe4 5.Nxe4 Be7 6.Bxf6 gxf6 7.Nf3 f5 8.Ned2 c5 9.Nb3 cxd4 10.Qxd4 Bf6 11.Qxd8+ Kxd8 12.0-0-0+ Kc7 13.g3 Nc6 14.Bg2 e5 15.Nfd2 Be6 16.Nf1 Bg5+ 17.Kb1 Rad8 18.Ne3 Bxe3 19.fxe3 Rxd1+ 20.Rxd1 h5 21.Nc5 h4 22.gxh4 Rxh4 23.h3 e4



Black is obviously for choice here.

24.a3 Rh6 25.Bf1 Rg6 26.Kc1 Ne5 27.b3 Kc6 28.Na4 Rg3 29.Kd2 Ng6

Stockfish prefers 29...Nf3+ 30.Ke2 Nh2

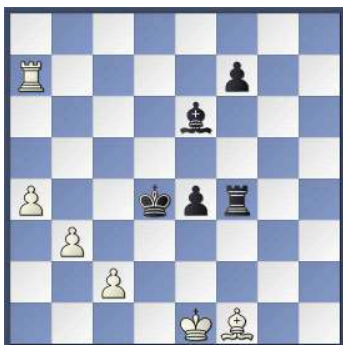
30.Nc3 Kd6 31.Ne2

White exploits the rook's temporary awkwardness.



31...Rg5 32.Ke1+ Ke5  
33.Rd4 f4 34.h4 Rh5  
35.Rb4 Rxh4 36.exf4+  
Nxf4 37.Rb5+ Kd6  
38.Nxf4 Rxf4 39.Rxb7  
Ke5 40.Rxa7 Kd4 41.a4

Objective merits aside, it is good to threaten checkmate at the end of a long weekend. Your opponent might miss it! (This "advice" is the first cousin of "Always check, it might be mate.")



My laptop suggests that the objectively better move was 52...Rh1+, which seems to hold the balance, as in the line 53.Kg5 f6+ 54.Kg6 Rg1+ 55.Kh6 Rh1+ 56.Kg7 Rg1+ 57.Kf8 Rg8+ 58.Ke7 Rg7+=

53.Kh6 Bf3 54.Bd3 Ra1  
55.Rf5+ Kg3 56.Rxf7

And now White has fully equalized.

41...Rh4 42.a5 Rh1  
43.Re7 Rh5 44.a6 Ra5  
45.Kf2 e3+ 46.Kg3 Rg5+  
47.Kh4 Rg4+ 48.Kh5 Rg8  
49.a7 Ke5 50.Rb7 Bd5  
51.Rb8 Rg1 52.Rb5 Kf4?!



Now White is probably winning: chess is a funny game!

56...e2 57.Bxe2 Bxe2  
58.b4 Bc4 59.Rc7 Be2  
60.Kg5 Bf3 61.b5 Ra5  
62.c4 Be2 63.Kf6 Kf4  
64.b6 Bf3 65.c5 1-0



Thanks to Tim Hanks, ably assisted by Sarah Heller and Rita Hanks. for so many wonderful photos!



Yes, Tigran Petrosian also won the Spirit of Chess Grandmaster Blitz invitational on Sunday night



115 degrees, and he's wearing a hat? (Thank you for coming, and see you next year!)