



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 36, June 2021

Greetings from ICCF-US Friendly Match Central. This is the newsletter concerning everything related to ICCF-US Friendly Matches. Thanks to your ongoing interest in the Friendly Matches, this newsletter has been arriving at your email-doorstep 4 times per year for nearly 9 years!

To explain to any new recipients, Friendly Matches are team versus team chess contests (involving teams affiliated with different nations) where the overall team outcomes do not matter beyond bragging rights. Everyone is eligible to play. The ICCF-US uses both a standing set of interested players and new participants in virtually every match. Each match participant plays two **rated** games, one with white and one with black, against a single opponent of nearly identical rating. The fee to participate is \$5 per match. You are invited to participate!

This issue offers you quotes concerning principles of chess.

Upcoming Friendly Matches

This past quarter saw a LOT of Friendly Match activity. We started 5, count them 5 (!) new Friendly Matches this quarter. (See current list of matches below for details.) And most of those were not previously advertised. They were conceived, organized, and started all within the past 3 months.

As we have said previously, matches can go from an idea to an active reality within any 90-day period – that is, between newsletters. So, if you have not already let it be known that you want to play, be sure to let us know by writing to Dennis at dmdorenchess@gmail.com!

Currently planned matches are against **Panama** (probably to start by August) and **Lithuania** (scheduled to start October 1). It is nearly certain that there will be other matches organized during the next quarter as well.

If you have a desire to play against either of these countries, or just to play on a USA team, please write to Dennis (dmdorenchess@gmail.com) and let him know!

“All rook endings are drawn” according to a common piece of folklore. We decided to distrust emotion and check the figures, comparing the percentages of draws in different types of endings, using a database of more than three million games. The results were very surprising. Bishop endings turned out to be the most drawish, 47%. Second place went to queen endings on 43%. Even more surprising was the third place for knight endings, at 40%. And the notorious rook endings came only second-last at 38%, with pawn endings naturally turning out to be the least drawish at 27% - Andrei Volokitin & Vladimir Grabinsky

Around the World a Third Time!!

The US Friendly Match World Tour 3

Did you ever want to “collect countries” of chess opponents you have played? The USA Friendly Matches can bring those opponents to you.

Did you ever want to play some games with a person from your family’s ancestral country? The USA Friendly Matches may be able to help you.

Do you just like to have conversations with people from around the world? The USA Friendly Matches can take you around the world in a safe and very inexpensive way.

Do you just want to play chess on your schedule? Yes, the USA Friendly Matches can likely be played on your schedule.

These are some of the things the USA World Tour 3 (WT3) is all about. There are currently 55 Member Federations in the ICCF. WT3 will, like the first WT and WT2, involve sending invitations to all the other 54 countries to play a Friendly Match. From Austria to Wales (A through W), from Canada/Russia/Norway to Chile/Argentina/Australia (most northern to most southern), from Cape Verde to Russia (smallest to largest), from Mexico to South Africa to India to Peru to Latvia to Australia (across all 6 continents, or also New Zealand if the research of its being a 7th continent is correct) and across almost all Europe. Come go around the world with US!

Your game is usually won or lost in the first ten moves. - Sammy Reshevsky

Control of the squares in front of your opponent's pawns means the control of his position! - George Koltanowski



The Friendly Matches that are Already Ongoing...

You can always find the current results from any of our Friendly Matches by visiting www.iccf.com, Tables and Results, Friendly Matches, but this newsletter continues to make it easy for you to stay up-to-date. The first three issues of "The Friendly Post" listed all our matches from 1/1/07 to the date of newsletter circulation. (You can find those 3, and all other issues of "The Friendly Post" at www.iccfus.com). There became too many Friendly Matches to keep doing that, so each issue now lists only those currently in progress or just completed since the last newsletter. The current standings (through 6/17/2021) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Switzerland	Server	2/20/2020	29.5 - 31.5 (5 ongoing games)
2.	Brazil	Server	3/27/2020	55.0 - 34.0 (5 ongoing games)
3.	England	Server	6/16/2020	98.0 -101.0 (11 ongoing games)
4.	Aruba	Server	7/29/2020	6.5 - 8.5 (1 ongoing game)
5.	Germany	Server	9/21/2020	122.0 -145.0 (49 ongoing games)
6.	Estonia	Server	10/12/2020	10.5 - 6.5 (7 ongoing games)
7.	Scotland	Server	10/21/2020	28.5 - 24.5 (7 ongoing games)
8.	Slovakia	Server	11/18/2020	29.0 - 30.0 (25 ongoing games)
9.	BeNeLux	Server	11/30/2020	90.5 -101.5 (63 ongoing games)
10.	Belarus	Server	3/13/2021	3.0 - 4.0 (43 ongoing games)
11.	Bulgaria	Server	3/19/2021	8.5 - 8.5 (23 ongoing games)
12.	Romania	Server	4/8/2021	7.0 - 11.0 (62 ongoing games)
13.	Philippines	Server	5/31/2021	1.0 - 1.0 (58 ongoing games)
14.	Peru	Server	6/4/2021	0.5 - 0.5 (83 ongoing games)
15.	Slovenia	Server	6/6/2021	0.0 - 0.0 (42 ongoing games)
16.	Spain	Server	6/18/2021	0.0 - 0.0 (84 ongoing games)

TOTAL USA RESULTS

Currently (as of 6/27/2021) = 568 ongoing games

Completed games during the past 12 months = 1127 games (= a new 12-month record!!)

Total score during past 12 months = 558 – 569 (49.5%)

Completed games since 1/1/2007* = 7549 games

Total score since 1/1/2007* = 3748 – 3801 (49.6%)

(* 1/1/2007 is the beginning of USA friendly match records on the ICCF server)

Dynamic moves based on ignorance tend to be better than passive moves based on fear. — Jeremy Silman

Highlights and Interesting Tidbits:

(1) Well, after 14.5 years of friendly matches, we only had our second tie last quarter and our third tie this quarter! The match versus **Wales** went back and forth. In the end, we could not hold onto our 1-point lead, and the match ended even. Given our previous results versus Wales had been 1 win and 1 loss, it seems rather fitting for this third match to end tied – only the third Friendly Match tie in USA recent history!

(2) In contrast to our giving up our 1-point lead versus Wales, we held onto that lead, and in fact won the last game versus **Latvia** to win the match! Congrats to the USA team!

(3) Our team's performance versus **Brazil** continues to be fantastic! We took an early lead, continued to make it grow, and followed through to win the match. Even after gaining an insurmountable lead, we continued to increase that lead. Great play USA!

(4) Things are nowhere near as certain versus **Switzerland**. The USA came from behind to tie up the match with 10 remaining games. Now, after 5 of those 10 games finished, the USA team finds itself 2 points back. Go USA!

(5) We started slowly versus **England**, falling behind by 9 points during the first 145 completed games. Then, last quarter with 27 remaining games, the USA's deficit was only 2 points. After another 16 games completed this past quarter, we were not able to make any headway. Our current deficit is 3 points, with 11 remaining games. It is still either team's match to win. Push on USA...

(6) We must hand it to **Aruba**. In their first friendly match ever, they came from behind and have won the match. With 1 game remaining, their 2-point lead wins. Congratulations to the Aruban team.

(7) **Germany** continues to be our nemesis in our friendly match competitions. Their lead has remained about the same as it was last quarter, but after another 51 completed games, leaving 49 to go, the USA is still behind by 23 points.

(8) In contrast, the USA has expanded its small lead versus **Estonia**. With only 7 remaining games, the USA's 4-point lead is looking rather good!

(9) The same is true in our match versus **Scotland**. Our 2-point lead from last quarter has been extended to a 4-point lead. And, again, there are only 7 remaining games, so this lead is looking good!

(10) The team from **Slovakia** caught up from last quarter. With 25 games still being played, their current 1-point lead means the match is up for grabs. Go USA!

(11) The combined team called **BeNeLux** has maintained its substantial lead. A whopping 82 games completed last quarter, with our opponent's lead moving from 8 to 11 points. There still is time for the USA to catch up, with 63 ongoing games, but this match could be getting beyond reach...

(12) The match versus **Bulgaria** started last quarter has seen 17 games completed. They were all draws, so of course the match is currently tied. There are 23 games still being played...

There are clues to every combination: lack of development, an unguarded long diagonal, a piece out of place, out of play, or unguarded, a king hemmed in or in a corner, a disarray of pawns, open files upon the king, an advanced pawn, and many others. In every position that admits of a combination, there will be some deviation, however, slight, from the normal. - David Hooper & Bernard Cafferty

Friendly Match (versus game) win/loss record

(Since 1/1/07) 49 wins, 41 losses, 3 ties (= 54.3% for USA)

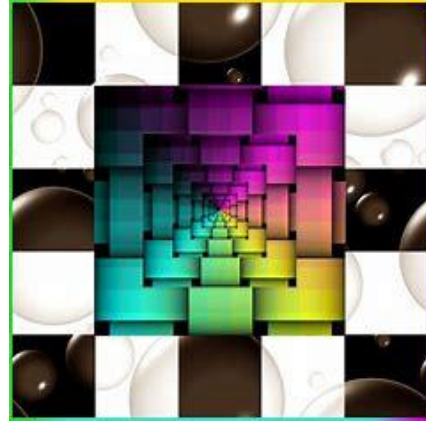
USA Won	USA Lost**	USA Tied
Argentina (2010)	Aruba (2020)*	Argentina (2019)***
Argentina (2016)	Austria (2014)	Norway (2013)***
Australia/New Zealand (2012)	Belarus (2016)	Wales (2019)***
Australia (2016)	Belgium (2015)	
Australia (2018)	Canada (2019)	
Brazil (2016)	Croatia (2015)	
Brazil (2020)*	Cuba (2013)	
British CCA (2016)	Cuba (2015)	
Bulgaria (2016)	Cuba (2018)	
Canada (2014)	Czech Republic (2011)	

Cape Verde (2013)	Czech Republic (2013)
Denmark (2014)	Czech Republic (2019)
England (2008)	Denmark (2018)
England (2012)	Finland (2018)
Estonia (2016)	France (2010)
Finland (2009)	Germany (2008 - Women's only)
France (2017)	Germany (2011)
Hong Kong (2010)	Germany (2014)
India (2014)	Iceland (2014)
India (2019)	Iceland (2019)
Indonesia (2016)	Israel (2014)
Israel (2016)	Italy (2010)
Japan (2013)	Italy (2017)
Japan (2017)	Mexico (2017)
Latvia (2015)	Netherlands (2017)
Latvia (2020)	Norway (2019)
Lithuania (2015)	Panama (2015)
Mexico (2020)	Panama (2016)
Netherlands (2013)	Poland (2015)
Netherlands (2018)	Russia (2013)
New Zealand (2020)	Russia (v. Zone 3) (2017)
Panama (2013)	Slovenia (2019)
Peru (2013)	Spain (2008)
Portugal (2013)	Sweden (2007)
Portugal (2018)	Switzerland (2014)
Romania (2008)	Ukraine (2010)
Romania (2013)	Ukraine (2015)
SchemingMind (2018)	Ukraine (2018)
Scotland (2008)	Venezuela (2014)
Scotland (2016)	Venezuela (2017)
Slovakia (2014)	Wales (2016)
Slovenia (2015)	
Spain (2016)	
Sweden (2012)	
Sweden (2018)	
Turkey (2015)	
Venezuela (2013)	
Wales (2013)	
Yorkshire (2018)	

* Still officially ongoing, but the final team outcome is already determined.

** Chess960 matches versus Germany and Russia are not included in this list because it is a different game coupled with the very large rating differences in these matches. The USA lost both matches.

*** After 93 completed matches, where pairings were made with as equal ratings as possible, that there have been only three tied results.



Maxims about quick development, and all other maxims in chess, are valuable labor-saving devices for avoiding bad news rather than for finding good ones. — Cecil Purdy

The Triple Block time control system has come to the ICCF!

Have you heard about the "Triple Block" time control system? The Triple Block system, most often abbreviated as "TB", was developed by an ICCF work group specifically appointed during the 2015 Congress to address a variety of complaints about the standard time control system. (There were 6 different proposals during the 2015 Congress alone for changes in the ICCF time control system.) The new system was approved for trials by the 2016 Congress, and officially approved by the 2020 Congress. Since then, hundreds of events have used the system without significant problem.

Some of our recently started Friendly Matches are using this system. Some of our as-yet-to-be scheduled Friendly Matches will also use this new time control system.

In brief, the Triple Block system gives you your reflection time, your leave time, and some additional time right from the beginning. The time keeping is simplified in that there is no doubling of reflection time (as there is currently after 20 days without a move), no 40+ day loss by default and therefore no registering to be allowed to go beyond that time limit, no watching your time at each 10-move interval, and no recording of leave time. Instead, each player has far more control of his/her reflection time. Problematic play related to the "dead man's defense" is also lessened. And you will typically have more reflection time per move available to you than you currently do!

The rules and procedures for the TB system are incorporated as Appendix 3 in the document “ICCF Rules”.

When in doubt, play in the center! — Jeremy Silman



RULES PERTAINING TO FRIENDLY MATCHES

Since 1/1/17, Friendly Matches are viewed like any other ICCF-approved event, meaning a couple things of possible relevance to you.

For players, it means that **a player withdrawal (of any type, accepted, unaccepted, or silent) from a Friendly Match will also be considered a withdrawal (of the same type) from all other ICCF events;** and a withdrawal from any other ICCF-approved event will also mean a withdrawal of the same type from all Friendly Matches.

If you have dire need to stop playing, ask the tournament director for an accepted withdrawal. If you simply wish to stop playing, it is recommended you resign your Friendly Match games rather than simply abandon them.

The latter causes losses in all your other ICCF games and a 2-year suspension during which you will not be allowed to register for any other ICCF event.

For tournament directors interested in working towards the International Arbiter title, directing friendly matches count towards the required number of directed games to earn the title of International Arbiter.

In chess, only the attacker wins. — Alexander Kotov

In chess, as in any conflict, success lies in attack. — Max Euwe

Chess is a matter of subtle judgment — knowing when to punch and when to duck. — Bobby Fischer

Where to Find Us

The ICCF-US home website is at www.iccfus.com. You can always find copies of "The Friendly Post" at that site, with a link on the top in the home page. The server for playing games is at www.iccf.com.

Contact Dennis Doren at dmdorenchess@gmail.com concerning anything related to Friendly Matches.



The People Behind the Organization

Thanks to the people who keep it all running, the ICCF-US Administrators:

Grandmaster Jason Bokar, Director

Senior International Master Tom Biedermann, Deputy Director & Treasurer

International Master Corky Schakel, Registrations Director

Grandmaster Carl Siefring, Invitational Facilitator

Senior International Master Dan Perry, Webmaster

International Master Bob Rizzo, Norms and Communications Organizer

Yours truly, **IM Dennis Doren**, Friendly Matches Organizer (dmdorenchess@gmail.com)



How Do I Get On A Team?

Getting selected to play on a USA Team in a Friendly Match takes almost no effort. Just let me know you are interested! Send an email to dmdorenchess@gmail.com and say you wish to play in a Friendly Match. When I have a team slot for you (meaning there is an opponent with about the same rating as your current one), I will let you know. You can also let me know of any specific country you wish to play against, but you do not have to do that.

When I have a specific team placement to offer you, you will receive an email from me - sent to the same address you have listed on the ICCF server. (Don't forget to update any email address changes!) My email will offer you a position on a team in a Friendly Match against a specifically listed country.

Please know that you need to respond to that email, and typically to do so **within 3 days** of my having sent it! I have a lot of positions to fill while all the members of the opposing team simply wait for me to complete my task. That is why there is a time frame for your response. If I do not hear from you within the specified time, I will offer your slot to someone else. However, even if you do not want, or cannot take the offered position, I strongly request that you do me the courtesy of a quick reply saying so. In that way, I can make an offer of "your" team position to someone else right away.

After you accept your offered position, you will get a reply email from me telling you what you need to pay and how to pay it. Please do NOT pay anything to anyone for a Friendly Match before you receive this email from me. "Pre-paying" only makes our administrative task more complicated, not easier. You will be asked to pay your fee before the match starts.

Finally, you will automatically receive your pairings, including an email from the ICCF server informing you that the match has begun and who you are paired against.

That is it! Let me know your interest, accept my invitation for you to play in a specific match, pay your fee, and enjoy your games!



Brief Note

If you wish to contact me, Dennis Doren, please use my current email address: dmdorenchess@gmail.com; not my old yahoo address.

You Can Play on the USA Team in a Friendly Match!

You, too, can play in a Friendly Match, no matter the degree to which you have played in an ICCF-US event of any kind previously. Each match consists of two **rated** games (one white, one black) against the same opponent who is very close in rating to yours. The total fee is \$5 for your participation per match. Just contact Dennis Doren, the ICCF-US Friendly Match Organizer, at dmdorenchess@gmail.com and tell him your specific interest in playing.

Do **NOT** send any money to Dennis or anyone else at this point to pay for your participation! You will only need to pay (through Paypal, money order, or by check) when your placement on a USA team in a specific Friendly Match has been confirmed by Dennis. Dennis will tell you when that is.