



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 48, June 2024

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 almost 12 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 was \$5 per match but see below!! You are invited to participate!

We Have It Backwards – And You Benefit!!!

Most of the world may struggle with inflation, but the USA branch of this world-wide organization has everything backwards!

In the past, for years, the participation fee for friendly matches was \$6 per board. That was true until 2016. The ICCF-US then **lowered** the participation fee for friendly matches to \$5 per board. Contrary to the constant din of “rising prices” you could hear elsewhere, our fee remained the same, at \$5, during all the intervening 7.5 years through today. Pretty good, huh!

But we now think it is time for a change.

...Usually when I see that kind of introduction, I “know” a price increase is about to be announced. But at the ICCF-US, I would be wrong!

We are changing the participation fee for friendly matches all right, but **we are lowering the fee once again.**

Effective for all friendly matches involving the ICCF-US with an official start date on or after 8/1/24, **the participation fee will be \$4**. Yep, we have it all backwards. No inflation here.

Okay, the reality is that we can afford to lower the price because there are more players playing in these matches than used to be the case. (Thank you!). An increased number of players means we can charge each player less. So, we will, effective essentially immediately!

IN THIS ISSUE, THE QUOTES REPRESENT REFLECTIONS ON THE BEAUTY OF THE GAME. HOPE YOU ENJOY THEM.

Upcoming Friendly Matches

This has been a very busy quarter. Five (5) different matches began or are scheduled to begin during a recent 90-day period. And we continue to hope to receive the team roster any day now from **Canada***.

***Please respond to each invitation, including if you need to decline it.** Please do not just ignore invitations as this causes Dennis more work and more delay in completing the organization of a match. If you need to decline, please just tell him that with a very quick reply email. You do not need to say why.

Please feel free to let us know if you have a particular interest in playing in a specific match (by writing to Dennis at dmdorenchess@gmail.com). There is no guarantee that we can find a proper place for you in any specific match, but we always try.

Matches can go from an idea to an active reality within any 90-day period – that is, between newsletters (and did so multiple times this quarter!). 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!



“I BELIEVE IN MAGIC...THERE IS MAGIC IN THE CREATIVE FACULTY SUCH AS GREAT POETS AND PHILOSOPHERS CONSPICUOUSLY POSSESS, AND EQUALLY IN THE CREATIVE CHESSMASTER.” EMANUEL LASKER



Around the World a Third Time!!

The USA Friendly Match World Tour 3

Whether you want to “collect countries”, wish to have an opportunity to communicate with people from your ancestors’ home country, or just like the opportunity to meet people from around the world, the Friendly Matches bring you that opportunity. During our third World Tour (WT3), we are making offers for Friendly Matches to all ICCF member federations: all 52 of them (besides us). Come go around the world with US!

So far in WT3:

We have almost completed our third World Tour! Come join us!

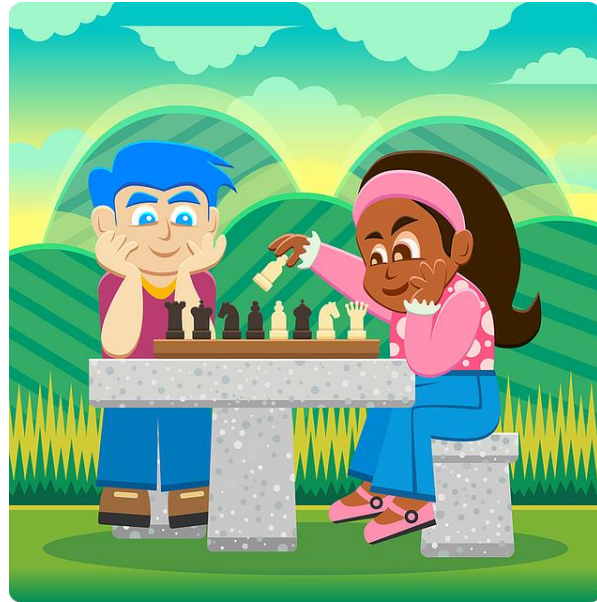
We have at least started play against the following (38) countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Cape Verde*, Croatia, Cuba (x 2), Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Mexico (x 2), Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Russia*, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and Wales [* No longer a member federation]

Scheduled matches: (1) Canada (soon? We have been waiting a loooonnnngggg time...)

Active invitations: (1) New Zealand

Our **invitation was declined by, or we received no response** from the following (10) countries: Chile, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Panama, Portugal, Slovakia, South Africa.

Countries (4) **yet to be included in WT3:** Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain.



“OF CHESS IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT LIFE IS NOT LONG ENOUGH FOR IT – BUT THAT IS THE FAULT OF LIFE, NOT CHESS.” IRVING CHERNEV

The Current Friendly Matches...

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. Each new issue lists the friendly matches currently in progress. Previous issues of "*The Friendly Post*" can be found at www.iccfus.com. The current standings (through 6/22/2024) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Hungary	Server	12/26/2022	31.5 - 42.5 (2 ongoing games)
2.	Sweden	Server	2/26/2023	53.0 - 45.0 (2 ongoing games)
3.	Switzerland	Server	4/14/2023	24.0 - 24.0 (2 ongoing games)

4.	Estonia	Server	4/27/2023	8.5 - 5.5 (2 ongoing games)
5.	Cuba	Server	5/1/2023	36.0 - 35.0 (1 ongoing game)
6.	Turkey	Server	5/10/2023	8.5 - 9.5 (2 ongoing games)
7.	Peru	Server	7/22/2023	31.5 - 32.5 (4 ongoing games)
8.	Norway	Server	10/21/2023	23.5 - 25.5 (15 ongoing games)
9.	India	Server	10/30/2023	15.0 - 15.0 (10 ongoing games)
10.	Croatia	Server	11/2/2023	14.0 - 16.0 (4 ongoing games)
11.	Mexico	Server	11/19/2023	21.5 - 19.5 (9 ongoing games)
12.	Netherlands	Server	11/21/2023	55.5 - 55.5 (17 ongoing games)
13.	England	Server	2/8/2024	62.5 - 62.5 (41 ongoing games)
14.	Italy	Server	4/14/2024	13.5 - 16.5 (62 ongoing games)
15.	Argentina	Server	4/23/2024	4.5 - 8.5 (29 ongoing games)
16.	Czechia	Server	6/13/2024	0.0 - 0.0 (62 ongoing games)
17.	Poland	Server	6/15/2024	0.0 - 0.0 (70 ongoing games)
18.	Scotland	Server	7/1/2024	0.0 - 0.0 (42 ongoing games)

TOTAL USA RESULTS

Currently (as of 6/22/2024) = **376** ongoing games

Completed games since 1/1/2007* = **10268** games

Total score since 1/1/2007* = **5083.5 – 5184.5 (49.5%)**

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



**“CHESS IS THE ART OF HUMAN REASON.” GUSTAVUS SELENUS
(PSEUDONYM OF AUGUSTUS II, DUKE OF BRUNSWICK-LÜNEBURG)**

Highlights and Interesting Tidbits:

- (1) It seems in this quarter’s report that almost all active friendly matches show a difference in team scores of 2 or fewer – so many matches are very close! But first let’s talk about a USA win:
- (2) Yes, the USA continues its winning ways. We have won the match versus **Sweden**, even with some games yet to be completed. Nice going USA!
- (3) **Cuba** has been a nemesis for us (our score in recent times being 0 – 4), but we have maintained a slim lead throughout the match. We are now 1 point up with 1 remaining game. In other words, at worst we earned a tied match. More optimistically, even a draw in this last game will bring us the win. Go USA!
- (4) Speaking of close matches, the current score versus **Turkey** shows us 1 point behind with 2 games to go. This was after we caught up 1 point a couple quarters ago...
- (5) Similarly, **Peru** gave up 1 of the 2 points it was ahead. It is still 1 point up, now with 4 remaining games. To repeat myself, go USA!
- (6) We’ve continued to cut into the lead **Switzerland** had over us, such that we are now even!! With only 2 remaining games, the outcome of this match is still completely up for grabs. Best of luck USA!
- (7) The situation is the same versus **India**. The score there is also tied, meaning we caught up the 1 point deficit we previously showed. With 10 games remaining, the match outcome is completely open.
- (8) Also tied is our matches versus the **Netherlands** and against **England** – but both involving a lot more games. There are still 17 ongoing games versus the Netherlands and 41 games against England, so lots can yet happen in both matches.

- (9) There is a lesson we might learn from what has happened in our match versus **Norway**. At the beginning of this past quarter the score was tied. We are now 2 points down. The “lesson” pertains to the fact that those 2 points were related to our player going ETL in two games, handing over those points. If a game is lost, then resign. But just giving our opponents free points hurts the team. Anyway, there are still 15 ongoing games in this match, so we have time potentially to recover.
- (10) We are 2 points up versus **Mexico**, and 2 points behind against **Croatia**, with small numbers of games remaining. Go USA!!



Friendly Match (versus game) win/loss record

(Since 1/1/07) 66 wins, 59 losses, 5 ties (= 52.7% for USA)

USA Won	USA Lost**	USA Tied
Argentina (2010)	Aruba (2020)	Argentina (2019)***
Argentina (2016)	Austria (2014)	Norway (2013)***
Australia/New Zealand (2012)	Austria (2021)	Peru (2021)***
Australia (2016)	Belarus (2016)	Slovakia (2020)***
Australia (2018)	Belgium (2015)	Wales (2019)***
Australia (2022)	BeNeLux (2020)	
Belarus (2021)	Canada (2019)	
Belgium (2022)	Croatia (2015)	
Brazil (2016)	Cuba (2013)	
Brazil (2020)	Cuba (2015)	
British CCA (2016)	Cuba (2018)	
Bulgaria (2016)	Cuba (2021)	
Bulgaria (2021)	Czech Republic (2011)	

Canada (2014)	Czech Republic (2013)
Cape Verde (2013)	Czech Republic (2019)
Denmark (2014)	Denmark (2018)
England (2008)	Denmark (2021)
England (2012)	England (2020)
Estonia (2016)	Finland (2018)
Estonia (2020)	France (2010)
Estonia (2023)*	Germany (2008 – Women’s only)
Finland (2009)	Germany (2011)
Finland (2022)	Germany (2014)
France (2009)	Germany (2020)
France (2022)	Germany (2022)
Hong Kong (2010)	Hungary (2022)*
India (2014)	Iceland (2014)
India (2019)	Iceland (2019)
Indonesia (2016)	Indonesia (2021)
Israel (2016)	Israel (2014)
Israel (2021)	Italy (2010)
Japan (2013)	Italy (2017)
Japan (2017)	Mexico (2017)
Japan (2021)	Mexico (2022)
Latvia (2015)	Netherlands (2017)
Latvia (2020)	Norway (2019)
Latvia (2023)	Panama (2015)
Lithuania (2015)	Panama (2016)
Mexico (2020)	Philippines (2021)
NCA/ECU/GUA/CPV (2022)	Philippines B (2021)
Netherlands (2013)	Poland (2015)
Netherlands (2018)	Poland (2019)
New Zealand (2020)	Romania (2021)
Panama (2013)	Russia (2013)
Peru (2013)	Russia (v. Zone 3) (2017)
Peru (2017)	Slovenia (2019)
Portugal (2013)	Slovenia (2021)
Portugal (2018)	Spain (2008)
Romania (2008)	Spain (2021)
Romania (2013)	Sweden (2007)
Russia (2022)	Switzerland (2024)
SchemingMind (2018)	Switzerland (2020)
Scotland (2008)	Ukraine (2010)
Scotland (2016)	Ukraine (2015)
Scotland (2020)	Ukraine (2018)
Slovakia (2014)	Ukraine (2023)
Slovenia (2015)	Venezuela (2014)
Spain (2016)	Venezuela (2017)
Sweden (2016)	Wales (2016)
Sweden (2018)	
Sweden (2023)*	
Turkey (2015)	
Venezuela (2013)	
Wales (2013)	
Wales (2022)	
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 130 completed matches, where pairings were made with as equal ratings as possible, there have been only 5 tied results.

**“CHESS, LIKE LOVE, LIKE, MUSIC, HAS THE POWER TO MAKE MAN
HAPPY.” SIEGBERT TARRASCH**

A New Record Was Made – and May Last “Forever”

Years ago, two different issues of this newsletter featured players who accomplished friendly match “sweeps” – the term used to describe when a player wins both games in a friendly match. Based on those historical data, the highest rated opponent who got swept by a USA player (since 2007, anyway) was rated just over 2500, a fantastic sweep accomplished by SIM Wolff Morrow while on team’s first board.

That record has now been broken. GM Tim Murray recently completed a sweep in the Latvia – USA friendly match. His opponent was rated 2684 at the time of the match – the highest rated active player in the ICCF. Because of the rating status of GM Murray’s opponent, it may be a very long time (forever?) before this record is broken!

“AGE CANNOT WITHER...HER INFINITE VARIETY.” SHAKESPEARE
(Okay, so this quote was about Cleopatra, not chess, but it seemed fitting...)

Speaking of Standing Out Among the Friendly Crowd...

Did you know that the ICCF-US offers you a lot more friendly match opportunities than any other country offers to its players?

How many more opportunities you ask?

Over 20% more than the next country’s offerings! That list above, of 130 friendly match outcomes, is at least 20% longer than any other country has offered (Finland being second behind the USA), and 100+ more offerings than about ¾ of the ICCF federations!!

And why do we offer so many? Because you consistently demonstrate interest in and enjoyment of them. Thank you for your great support for the Friendly Matches!



“IT IS ONE OF THE BETTER-KEPT SECRETS OF CHESS THAT [CORRESPONDENCE] PLAYERS PLAY A MUCH STRONGER BRAND OF CHESS THAN OTB PLAYERS DO, WITH LESS ERRORS AND BLUNDERS.... ANALYSIS IS DEEPER, AND THEIR STRATEGY MORE PROFOUND....WITH DAYS INSTEAD OF MINUTES TO FIND THE TRUTH OF A POSITION, [CORRESPONDENCE] CHESS BECOMES THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF OUR GAME.” ALEX DUNNE



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".



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 the 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

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!



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.

