



# The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 1, September 2012

Greetings from the ICCF-US Friendly Match Central Office! This is the first of what is planned to be an ongoing series of newsletters bringing you the news from our collective set of Friendly Matches. In case you do not know, Friendly Matches are national team versus national team chess contests 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 players and new participants in virtually every match. Each match participant plays two rated games, one with white and one with black, against an opponent of nearly identical rating.

Sound like fun? Want to play? There is a Friendly Match currently being organized against Australia and New Zealand. Other anticipated matches are always on the horizon. See details at the end of this newsletter to sign up.



## Our Friendly Match History

Given the nature of Friendly Matches, many players do not visit the relevant portion of the website (at [www.iccf-webchess.com](http://www.iccf-webchess.com), Tables and Results, Friendly Matches) to find out how the USA team did as a whole (given the outcome, by definition, really does not matter.) As a public service, this newsletter will keep you informed on an ongoing basis about matches in progress and recently completed. First, to update everyone (through 9/14/12), the following summarizes the friendly matches in which the ICCF-US has participated during the past 6 years:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Sweden	Server	1/1/07	36.5 - 41.5
	Sweden	Email	1/1/07	16.5 - 15.5
2.	Germany (Women)	Server	2/25/08	12.5 - 37.5
3.	Spain	Server	4/5/08	40 - 44
4.	England	Server	4/15/08	31 - 27
5.	Scotland	Server	10/20/08	15.5 - 16.5
	Scotland	Postal	10/20/08	6.5 - 3.5
6.	Romania	Server	11/1/08	36 - 30
7.	Finland	Server	5/20/09	62 - 32
	Finland	Postal	6/1/09	8.5 - 9.5
8.	Hong Kong	Server	1/31/10	17 - 9
9.	France	Postal	4/15/10	9.5 - 6.5 (4 games still ongoing)
	France	Server	5/1/10	34 - 54
10.	Italy	Server	12/10/10	33.5 - 48.5
11.	Ukraine	Server	12/15/10	47 - 79
12.	Argentina	Server	12/20/10	37 - 15
13.	Czech Republic	Server	4/15/11	23.5 - 26.5
14.	Germany	Server	5/25/11	37.5 - 62.5 (2 games still ongoing)
15.	Sweden	Server	5/1/12	24 - 13 (53 games still ongoing)
16.	England	Server	8/1/12	3 - 2 (63 games still ongoing)

TOTAL USA RESULTS: 531-573 (48.1%)

Match Win/Loss Record (excl. 2012 Sweden & 2012 England) 6/9 (40.0%)

Our match win/loss percentage is slightly lower than our total results percentage because we lost 3 close matches (vs. Sweden from 2007, Spain, & Czech Republic) while winning 2 close matches (vs. England & Scotland). Then again, if our leads hold up against both Sweden and England in our ongoing matches, our overall results will be virtually equal to our match win/loss record.



### Where to Find Us

The ICCF-US home website is at [www.iccfus.com](http://www.iccfus.com). The server for playing games is at [www.iccf-webchess.com](http://www.iccf-webchess.com). Contact Dennis Doren at [dmdoren@yahoo.com](mailto:dmdoren@yahoo.com) concerning anything related to Friendly Matches.

### The People Behind the Organization

Did you ever wonder who keeps it all running? Including some very recent appointments, here is the list of ICCF-US Administrators:

**International Master Corky Schakel**, USA National Federation Representative

**Senior International Master Tom Biedermann**, Treasurer

**Senior International Master Dan Perry**, Webmaster

**International Master Bob Rizzo**, Norms and Communications Organizer

**Senior International Master Kristo Miettinen**, Tournament Organizer, Tournament Director

**International Arbiter Franklin Campbell**, Tournament Organizer, Tournament Director

**Wolff Morrow**, US Correspondence Chess Championship (USCCC) Organizer

**Dennis Doren**, Friendly Matches Organizer ([dmdoren@yahoo.com](mailto:dmdoren@yahoo.com))

Our thanks as well to everyone who is serving, and/or has served as a Friendly Match Team Captain!

## Games from the Matches

Each newsletter will show games and/or interesting positions from the ICCF-US friendly matches. Do you have a game you would like published here? A position with a great move? Our intention is to show games from across rating levels, so do not be shy about submitting your games (to Dennis Doren at [dmdoren@yahoo.com](mailto:dmdoren@yahoo.com)). You can also offer your own commentary, or leave that to us (which you can review pre-publication) if you prefer.

### From the Finland - USA Friendly Match (start date 5/20/2009)

Correspondence chess allows what no other form of chess does: both broad and in-depth analyses of both tactical and positional ideas. Friendly matches allow us the luxury of such analyses without the pressure of tournament play. In the following game, a soon-to-be-crowned IM from the USA finds a shot out of the (red, white, and) blue to close the game.

Ballow, John (2308) - Lehtinen, Pentti (2331)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3 Ba6 5.Qc2 c5 6.d5 Qe7 7.Bg5 exd5 8.Nc3 Bxc4 9.e4 h6 10.Bxf6 Qxf6 11.exd5 Bxf1 12.Kxf1



White is a sacrificed pawn down, but has more pieces developed and far more open avenues of attack. White's K is actually quite comfortable on f1 except for the fact his King-R is blocked in.

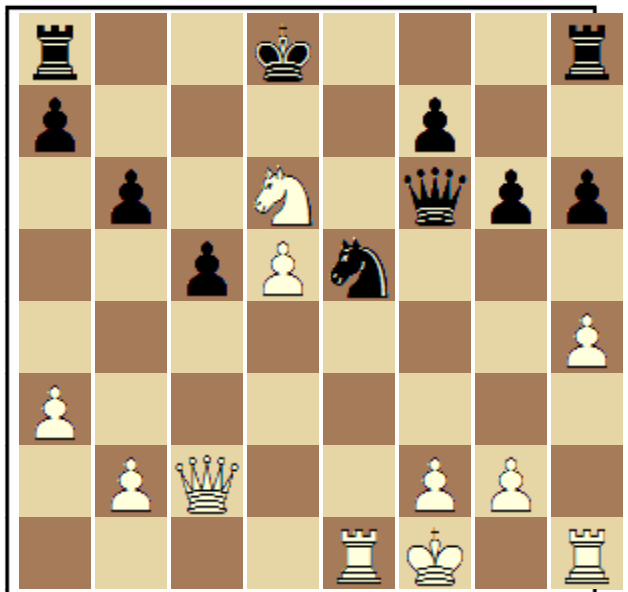
12...Kd8 (A top level computer engine rates this as second best. Instead, the chess engine offers 12...Be7 13.Qe4 d6 14.Re1 a6 15.h4 with a slight advantage for White.)

13.Re1 g6 14.Ne4 Qg7 (Ugly, but best. 15...Qe7 loses to 16.d6.)

15.h4 d6 16.Nfd2 (Working to activate this piece.)

16...Nd7 (Probably the losing move, though it is hard to fault Black for trying to develop his pieces. 16...b5 may have been necessary, though the queen side will open up dangerously for Black after White's soon-to-be-played b4.)

17.Nc4 Ne5 18.Nexd6 Bxd6 19. Nxd6 Qf6



*Position after 19...Qf6*

20. Nb7+! (Putting his N where there is no retreat square, yet Black is now lost! At least some chess engines do not find this move, and in fact label the move as a mistake.)

20...Kd7 (If 20...Kc8 or 20...Kc7, then 21.Nxc5 bc5 22.Qxc5+)

21. Qa4+ Ke7 22.Rh3 Kf8 23.Rhe3 Rb8 24.Rxe5 1-0



From the Spain - USA Friendly Match (start date 4/5/2008)

The next game was played by Ed Barr, our Team Organizer and Team Captain for the upcoming match against Australia and New Zealand (see relevant section below about this).

Barr, Edward (1878) - Hernández Delgado, José Angel (1834)

1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3 e6 5.c4 Nb6 6.Nc3 Be7 7.Bd3 dxe5 8.dxe5 Nc6 9.O-O Nb4 10.Be2 O-O 11.Be3 c5 12.Qc1 a6 13.Rd1 Nd7 14.Ne4 Qc7 15.Bf4 Nc6 16.Qc3 b6 17.Rd2



*Position after 17.Rd2*

17...f6? [17...Bb7 or 17...Rd8 were better. White has been doing a fine job developing his pieces while Black is more cramped. Black's move, while trying to opens things up for himself, opens more avenues of attack for White instead.]

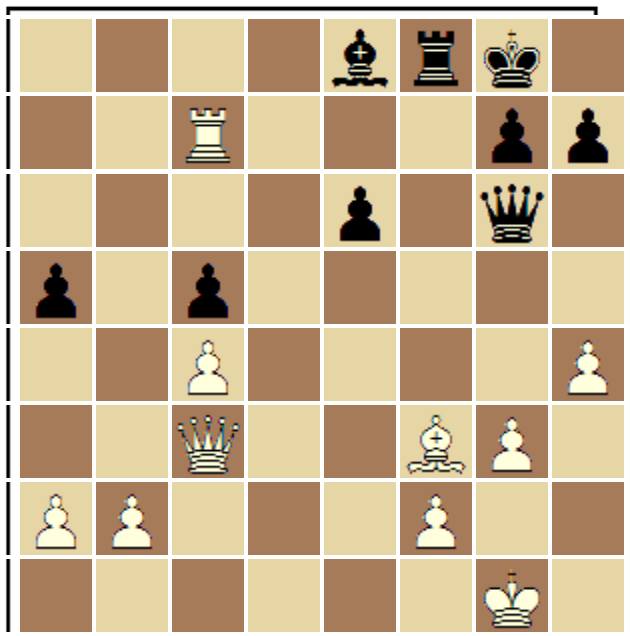
18.exf6 Qxf4 19.fxe7 Nxe7 20.Nd6 Nf6 21.g3 Qh6 22.Ne5 Nf5 23.Bf3 Rb8 24.Nc6 Nxd6 25.Rxd6 [Best. 25.Nxb8 is answered to Black's major advantage with 25...Nde4 or 25...Nfe4.]

25...Rb7 26.Rad1 Rd7 27.Ne5 Rxd6 28.Rxd6 a5 29.Rxb6 Nd7

30.Nxd7 [30.Rxe6 was also a good shot. If 30...Qxe6, 31.Bd5 wins the Q.]

30...Bxd7 31.Rb7 Be8 32.Rc7 [White continues to have better piece placement, but now has an extra pawn and is looking to eat more.]

32...Qg5 33.h4 Qg6



*Position after 33...Qg6*

34.Be4! [The difference between a good move such as 34.Rxc5 and a very good move is often patience. Here White begins a maneuver to allow his Q to take on c5 rather than remove his R from the 7th rank. If 34...Qxe4?? 35.Qg7 mate.]

34...Qg4 35.Qd3 Qh5 36.Qd6 Qh6 37.Qxc5 Qf6 38.b3

38...Bg6 [When already down 2 pawns and approaching an endgame, trading down pieces is generally not a good idea. Still Black has to get his pieces out somehow.]

39.Bxg6 hxg6 40.Rc8 Rxc8

41.Qxc8+ [The only thing White needs to watch out for now is Black getting a perpetual check.]

41...Kh7 42.Kg2 Qe5 43.Qc6 Qb2 44.c5 Qc2 45.Qb5 Qe4+ 46.Kg1 Qb1+ 47.Qf1 Qe4 48.Qc1 [There are no more Black checks, and the c-pawn is supported. White wins.]

48...Qc6 49.Qc3 Qc7 50.c6 Kg8 51.Kg2 Kf7 52.a3 1-0

## Friendly Match All-Stars

We recently did an accounting of who has played on USA teams in Friendly Matches since 1/1/07, the farthest back for which we have full data. During these past nearly 6 years, 192 different people have played on USA teams. Of those, 53 people have played in at least 4 different Friendly Matches without ever defaulting a game. (The kind of defaulting meant here is the process of simply going silent and no longer responding to an opponent, what is also called "silent withdrawal". People can lose by overstepping a time limit in the normal course of playing, but that is not the issue here. A "silent withdrawal" causes a lot of extra effort by Team Captains for both teams, a lot of annoyance for the opponent, and is considered a serious no-no from the perspective of the ICCF-US Board.)

Within that group of 53 is a group of true all-stars: our top dozen. These people have played for the team in 9 or more Friendly Matches to date:

Participated in 12 Friendly Matches: **Edward Barr; Mark Robledo, Sr.; Patrick J. Ryan**

Participated in 11 Friendly Matches: **Jon S. Leisner; Larry Parsons; David V. White**

Participated in 10 Friendly Matches: **James R. Ellis**

Participated in 9 Friendly Matches: **John Ballow, IM; Gregory W. Cross; Jean L. Moeckel; Chris O'Connell; Carl L. Siefring, IM**

Two of these All-Stars were selected to showcase a Friendly Match game in this issue. A special thanks goes to these, and all players for your participation!





## You Too 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 will consist of two games (one white, one black) against the same opponent who is very close in rating to yours. The total fee is \$6 for your participation per match. Just contact Dennis Doren, the ICCF-US Friendly Match Organizer, at [dmdoren@yahoo.com](mailto:dmdoren@yahoo.com) and express an interest in playing. Do **NOT** send any money to Dennis. He will help you with all the arrangements. You will only need to pay (through Paypal, money order, or by check) when all arrangements have been finalized.

### Friendly Matches Currently Being Organized:

There is currently a match versus a combination of players from Australia and New Zealand being organized by one of our All-Stars, Ed Barr. Contact Dennis Doren if you wish to play in this match, but do not delay. The team is already being formed.

### Interested in Being a Team Captain?

There are two different roles for Team Captains on a USA team in a Friendly Match. If you are up for it, you actually organize the team's membership from scratch (using lists Dennis Doren will provide you). In any case, no matter who organizes the team's membership, Team Captains also serve as the front line contact for our players to contact if problems develop during play, and for the opponent's Team Captain to contact if an issue develops within the other team. The Team Captain then works with the opponent's Team Captain to resolve the problem, obtaining assistance from the overall Tournament Director when needed.

People who have played in multiple friendly matches will be considered for selection as the Team Captain for future matches. Besides having your fee waived for participating in the match (yes, you can and in fact are expected to play in the match you oversee), you get to participate in the match like no one else does, being involved across all boards. Typically, there is only a little work beyond organizing the match. Interested? Express your interest to Dennis Doren at the above address.

