



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 14, December 2015

Greetings again from ICCF-US Friendly Match Central! This issue continues our process of bringing you the news from our collective set of Friendly Matches.

To explain to any new recipients, 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 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 regular fee to participate is \$6 per match.

NEW REDUCED PARTICIPATION FEE!!

But wait! That listed fee of \$6 is no longer true. Our ICCF-US Treasurer (and Deputy Director) SIM Tom Biedermann worked his magic and said, "Let them pay less." So, starting immediately, the regular participation fee has been reduced from \$6 per match to \$5 per match: a 16.7% reduction!! Where else will you find prices going down like this (without it being just a temporary sale)? We hope you enjoy your games all the more!

Friendly Match Plans for 2016

Last issue, we explained what our ICCF World Tour is, and which countries remain for us to challenge. Well, we plan to complete our World Tour in 2016! That means we will be challenging at least the following countries for Friendly Matches some time during 2016:

- (1) **Belarus,**
- (2) **Bulgaria,**

(3) **Estonia,**

(4) **Hungary.**

During our world full of Friendly Match challenges, we either received no response or had our challenge declined by the following 10 countries:

Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Greece, Guatamala, Ireland, Luxembourg, Nicaragua, South Africa, and Tunisia.

We may send a new challenge to some of those countries as well.

Please know there is already a scheduled Friendly Match against **Australia**, in response to their challenging us. This match is scheduled for an official start date of March 1, 2016, meaning invitations to potential players will start being sent out during the first week of February.



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 dmdoren@yahoo.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 specific country you wish to play against, but you do not have to do that.

When I have a specific something 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 of 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 actually 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's it! Let me know your interest, accept my invitation for you to play in a specific match, pay your fee, and enjoy your games!



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 will also make it easy for you to stay up-to-date. The first three issues of "*The Friendly Post*" listed all of 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 12/27/2015) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Canada	Server & Post	1/17/14	54.0 - 38.0 (8 postal games ongoing)
2.	Germany	Server	3/22/14	130.0 - 191.0 (3 games still ongoing)
3.	India	Server	4/3/14	16.0 - 13.0 (1 game still ongoing)
4.	Austria	Server	7/14/14	56.5 - 61.5 (2 games still ongoing)
5.	Switzerland	Server	8/1/14	54.0 - 56.0 (4 games still ongoing)
6.	Slovakia	Server	11/18/14	49.0 - 43.0 (16 games still ongoing)
7.	Venezuela (rematch)	Server	12/8/14	17.0 - 21.0 (2 games still ongoing)
8.	Latvia	Server	2/13/15	33.5 - 25.5 (21 games still ongoing)
9.	Ukraine	Server	3/14/15	23.0 - 24.0 (17 games still ongoing)
10.	Poland	Server	5/1/15	21.5 - 24.5 (34 games still ongoing)
11.	Croatia	Server	6/25/15	11.5 - 17.5 (17 games still ongoing)
12.	Turkey	Server	6/30/15	17.5 - 14.5 (42 games still ongoing)
13.	Lithuania	Server	8/1/15	7.5 - 6.5 (28 games still ongoing)
14.	Slovenia	Server	8/1/15	12.0 - 10.0 (42 games still ongoing)
15.	Cuba (rematch)	Server	9/1/15	10.5 - 9.5 (32 games still ongoing)
16.	Panama (rematch)	Server	10/15/15	4.5 - 5.5 (52 games still ongoing)
17.	Belgium	Server	10/20/15	3.5 - 2.5 (46 games still ongoing)

TOTAL USA RESULTS since 1/1/07: 1699 - 1753 **(49.2%)**

Never be too proud of who you are and what position you hold because after a game of chess the kings and pawns are tossed into the same box.



Highlights and Interesting Tidbits:

- (1) To the good news: We won our match versus Denmark. With two games yet to be completed, we were ahead by 2 points, having secured at least a tied match. Our last two players scored 1 - 1, however, to secure our team's win!
- (2) As with the Denmark match, the match against Peru came down to our last game.: and the USA player won. This gave the USA another team win!
- (3) Unfortunately, although we were gaining back points needed in the Austria match, we could not pull it out in the end. With a couple games left, the USA is still down 5 points. Oh well.
- (4) The lead in our match versus Switzerland has been back and forth, and back again. Most recently, the Swiss took a 4-point deficit from 6 months ago and turned it into their current 2-point lead. On the other hand, there are still 4 ongoing games, enough for us to pull out the win. Go USA!
- (5) Talk about an effective surge! The USA scored 18.5 - 10.5 during the 3 months covered by the previous newsletter to take over the lead. After the 8 - 7 result from the past 3 months, the USA is leading by 6 points with 16 games yet to be completed. Keep fighting USA! It's looking good!
- (6) The USA has also increased its lead against Latvia, adding another point difference. We are now up by 8 points with 21 games to go.
- (7) The Ukraine match is neck and neck, to borrow a phrase from horseracing. The score is 23 - 24, with the Ukraine 1 point up, but there are still 17 games to be completed. Every point counts!!
- (8) In the match versus Turkey, the overall results show the USA with a small lead (3 points, with 42 games still to be completed). For those interested in the results from the two different sections (A and B), the score for Section A currently stands at 3 - 4, while the score for Section B currently stands at 14.5 - 10.5.

Even a poor plan is better than no plan. - Chirogin

Match (versus game) win/loss record since 1/1/07: 21 wins, 16 losses, 1 tie
(56.6%)

<u>USA Won</u>	<u>USA Lost</u>	<u>USA Tied</u>
Argentina (2010)	Austria (2014)	Norway (2013)
Australia/New Zealand (2012)	Cuba (2013)	
Canada (2014)*	Czech Republic (2011)	
Cape Verde (2013)	Czech Republic (2013)	
Denmark (2014)	France (2010)	
England (2008)	Germany (2011)	
England (2012)	Germany (2008 - Women's only)	
Finland (2009)	Germany (2014)*	
Hong Kong (2010)	Iceland (2014)	
India (2014)*	Israel (2014)	
Japan (2013)	Italy (2010)	
Netherlands (2013)	Russia (2013)	
Panama (2013)	Spain (2008)	
Peru (2013)	Sweden (2007)	
Portugal (2013)	Ukraine (2010)	
Romania (2008)	Venezuela (2014)*	
Romania (2013)		
Scotland (2008)		
Sweden (2012)		
Venezuela (2013)		
Wales (2013)		

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



The Record High Sweep?

IM Wolff Morrow posed a question to this office: in all of the USA Friendly Matches (since 1/1/2007; from when we have complete data), what was the highest rating of our opponent where the USA player won both games in the match (that is, swept)? We all know there are a lot more draws in the highest rating ranges than in the lower ranges, such that winning even once against a high rated player is quite an accomplishment. Winning two out of two games cannot be common. However, I did not know the answer to IM Morrow's question. So, he set to work to find his own answer.

The Record

What did he find? The answer is 2441. It occurred back in 2009, by SIM Dr. Michael Millstone in a Friendly Match versus Finland.

How Frequent are Opportunities to Break the Record?

I decided to go one step further, to find out how many times a USA player has been paired with an opponent rated 2442+ since September 23, 2009.

I found there have been 80 such opportunities, each that failed to result in a sweep against an opponent rated 2442+ in a Friendly Match since that date. That is 80 opportunities in the past 6.25 years; an average of one per month for over 6 years. This demonstrates how difficult winning a couple of games against high rated players can be!

Then again, there are currently 16 ongoing Friendly Match boards where this opportunity still exists. Maybe a new record will be announced in the next *Friendly Post*...

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 left in the home page. The server for playing games is at www.iccf.com. Contact Dennis Doren at dmdoren@yahoo.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, ICCF-US Director starting mid-August 2015
Senior International Master Tom Biedermann, Deputy Director & Treasurer
International Master Corky Schakel, Registrations Director
Senior International Master Carl Siefring, Tournament Organizer
Senior International Master Dan Perry, Webmaster
International Master Bob Rizzo, Norms and Communications Organizer
International Master Anthony Kain, Technical Advisor
International Master Kenneth Holroyd, Tournament Facilitator
International Arbiter Franklin Campbell, Tournament Organizer
Senior International Master Kristo Miettinen, Tournament Organizer

Yours truly,
Dennis Doren, Friendly Matches Organizer (dmdoren@yahoo.com)

Chess is mental torture. -Kasparov



The FRIENDLY MATCH ELITE

The Elite program is being phased out in keeping with the reduced participation fee for everyone. If you already earned Elite status, your reduced fee for up to 3 remaining matches will still be honored. There will be no new members of the Elite program starting 1/1/2016.



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 dmdoren@yahoo.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 in either of the listed FMs! 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.

