



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 25, September 2018

Greetings from ICCF-US Friendly Match Central. 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're invited to participate!

This Issue is Dedicated to You!

This issue marks the beginning of the 7th year of Friendly Match newsletters, having reached the **6-year anniversary of the first issue** this month. None of it would happen without you, the player, who participates in the Friendly Matches. So, this issue is dedicated to you.

In this issue, you will find all sorts of information about what we have been doing during the past 6 years, who has been doing it, and what accomplishments you have made. There are also a few findings of special interest...

Upcoming Friendly Matches

First, before we neglect a highlight, let's update you concerning future matches. We have received a challenge from **Denmark**, though without any specific date for when this match will happen. This match will use the Triple Block time control system. (For details, see the explanation of the Triple Block system much further below.)

Anticipated challenges to be extended in the near future include the following: **Czech Republic, India, Norway, and Portugal.**

Please remember that Friendly Matches can be scheduled, organized, and started all in between the publication of these newsletters, and in fact often are. To exemplify, matches versus Israel, Cuba, and the Netherlands all got organized since the last newsletter.

Therefore, if you want to play in the Friendly Matches, make sure you let Dennis know (at dmdorenchess@gmail.com).



What We Have Been Doing the Past 6 Years

How many ICCF-US Friendly Matches have there been?

Do you have any guess? Since September 2012, when the first newsletter was circulated, there have been (drum roll please)...



65 distinct Friendly Matches in which the USA has participated. That's an average of about 11 per year, or just a bit shy of one new one per month.

Of course, they come in various sizes - in substantially different numbers of boards. To follow up further:

What is the number of boards across the 6 years of Friendly Matches?

If you add up the number of boards made available for play across these matches, the total comes to **2,272 boards (= 4,544 games)**.

This means we have an average of 35 boards (= 70 games) per match. Then again, the actual total boards across the matches have differed in size quite a bit.

The smallest was 9 boards (in a 2013 match versus Japan), with matches of 10 boards (in a 2017 match versus the Netherlands) and 11 boards (in two different 2016 matches, versus Estonia and Indonesia). rounding out the smallest set.

The largest was a huge match versus Germany in 2014 that numbered 162 boards. Other large matches involved 136 boards when Russia played Zone 3 (in which the USA was the main participant), a 91-board match versus Italy starting in 2017, and an 81-board match versus Russia in 2013.

So, while 35 boards represents a statistical average size Friendly Match for the USA, that number is not really typical. Many matches number over 50 boards, while many others have a number in the lower to mid-20s.



How many players have been involved?

Now we get to the crux of why we are having this conversation: **YOU**, the USA players. First, let's put a context on the number to make it fully understandable. At the time this newsletter was written, there were 765 active USA players registered on the ICCF server. ("Active" has a specific meaning on the ICCF server, loosely described here as the person has had at least one rated game within the past 2-3 years.] This number of 765 includes all rated and unrated active players. The number of active players changes from rating period to rating

period, but the current figure gives you a reasonable approximation of the total pool of players eligible to play on the USA team in the Friendly Matches.

As compared to that number of 765, the number of different players who participated in an ICCF-US Friendly Match during the past 6 years was...



360. That's (47%,) just shy of 50% of the number of active USA players.

Why not the rest of you?

Who has been playing Friendly Matches?

First, some general information: the ICCF-US Friendly Matches have included players literally from the highest to the lowest of USA player ratings, players of all titles (GMs, SIMs, IMs, CCMs, CCEs, and no title), both men and women, players across the age span (from age 8 to 80+), as well as many other general descriptors of people. And that is just the description of people on the USA teams! In short, the Friendly Matches represent a fine demonstration of the ICCF motto *Amici Sumus* ("We are friends").

So, here is the list of who has participated in the US Friendly Matches during the past 6 years.... No, wait, just listing 360 names would be much too boring to read. Instead, various categories will be described in which many players will be listed.

Please forgive the lack of use of titles below, but including titles would make the lists all the more cumbersome to read.

The most frequent players

There are two players who have each participated in over half of the 65 Friendly Matches, and both are named **Biedermann**. **Kyle Biedermann** has played in 37 matches. **Tom Biedermann** has played in 34. **Tom** has actually played more boards in Friendly Matches than has **Kyle**, however: 44 to 42. (Under certain circumstances, players can be asked to play multiple boards within a match to help serve as appropriately rated opponents to the other team's players.) Which player has participated the most in the Friendly Matches? We'll let them figure it out...

Rounding out the top 6 players in frequency are **Corky Schakel** (32), **Richard Jenkins** (27), **William Merrell** (26), and **Alex Relyea** (26). **Alex Relyea** may be last among these 6, but he accomplished something else more than twice as often as any of the other 5 players. Can you guess what it was? (See below.)



FINDING #1: Can it be that playing in a lot of Friendly Matches causes your rating to go up?

The most 6 frequent players all had substantial increases in their ratings during the past 6 years. A few showed gains in the 72 - 117 point range (including one player who started 2400+), which is fine indeed, but 2 players had a rating gain of about 370 points and 1 had a whopping gain of 738 points! Maybe frequent practice against someone your own strength causes you to improve substantially.

Might it be fun for you to find out?

"The highest art of the chess player is lies in not allowing your opponent to show you what he can do" - Garry Kasparov

Played about a third of all 65 Friendly Matches

Rounding out the top 25 are the following 19 people who played between 18 and 25 matches, listed in descending order: David White, Robert Cousins, James Ellis, Gary Deskin, Chris O'Connell, Juraj Beres, Patrick Ryan, Michael Brooks, Eric Landes, Kenneth Holroyd, Maurice Carter, Mark Robledo Sr., Viktor Zenkov, Gregory Cross, Wesley Underwood, Lester Weiss, Brian Brzezinski, Kenneth Jones, and Matthew Tedesco. These people played in about a third of all the Friendly Matches during the past 6 years.



The Master Sweeps

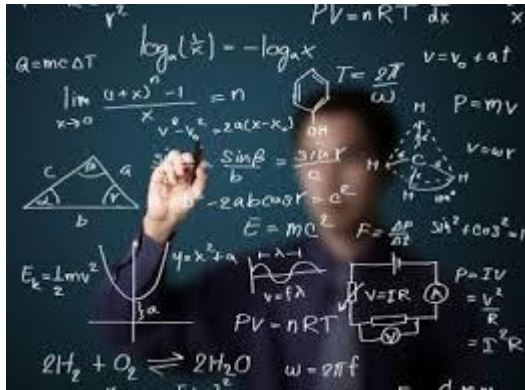
In a Friendly Match, a sweep is the process of winning both games. It is the best you can do. Given that pairings are made specifically to equate opponents' ratings as closely as possible, even winning a single game can be quite a challenge. To win both games is a significant achievement.

There were 299 sweeps by USA players out of the 2,272 boards during the past 6 years. That means a USA player swept an opponent about 13.1% of the time.

FINDING #2: Was 13.1% good, bad, or simply what was statistically expected?

Sweeping opponents on 13.1% of the boards we played means the USA players did 18% better than what would be statistically expected!

[To explain, to the mathematically inclined and statistically suspicious:



We start with the acknowledgement that USA players and their opponents are essentially equally rated. The outcome from 2 games to make a sweep therefore should, on average, occur about 11.1% of the time, 1 out of 9 occasions. This is computed by counting up the options, as equal ratings on each board avoids any rating-based bias: one chance at a score of 2-0 (2 wins = the sweep), one chance at a score of 0-2 (2 losses), and two chances at 1.5-0.5 (a win and a draw in either of two orders), two chances at 0.5-1.5 (a loss and a draw in either of two orders), and three chances at 1-1 (a win, then a loss; a loss, then a win; or 2 draws). The actual rate of 13.1% represents a 2% improvement over the expected 11.1%, equating to an 18% improvement over the expected 11.1%.]



Who were our most frequent "brooms"?

There were **157** USA players who swept an opponent at least once:

(a) **89 players swept one time** - These players, in descending order of their number of boards played, are **William Merrell** (29), **Patrick Ryan** (22), **Michael Brooks** (22), **Kenneth Holroyd** (22), **Steven Ledford** (19), **Dennis Doren** (18), **Edward Barr** (17), **Michael Quirk** (17), **George Stone** (15), **Edwin Meiners** (14), **Steve Greig** (13), **Carl Palmateer** (13), **Larry Parsons**

(13), Andy Ansel (12), Chris Lewis (11), John Ballow (10), Danny Horwitz (10), Glenn Tripp (10), Ferdinand Burmeister (8), Eric Fischvogt (8), Timothy Geier (8), Charles Knouse (8), Jeffrey Levin (8), Daniel Lines (8), Daniel Nenneman (8), David Ballard (7), John DiJoseph (7), Jose Gonzalez-Gigato (7), Geoffrey Haug (7), Stanley Jarosz (7), Gustavo Meillon (7), Charles Merrow (7), Bradley Rogers (7), William Abbey (6), Chris Cendrowski (6), John Galvin (6), Mike Giordano (6), Harry Van Buren (6), Jerry Weiner (6), Douglas Eckert (5), Leonid Korogodski (5), Richard Smith (5), Jerome Winbush (5), William Young III (5), Edward Addis II (4), Peter Bodziony (4), Christopher Dessert (4), Heather Flewelling (4), Harley Greninger (4), Forrest Hoch (4), Casey Jones (4), Hugh Thomas Patterson (4), Julian Trujillo (4), William Arnold (4), Douglas Anderson (3), George Barton (3), Edward Bowling (3), Fred Fanelli (3), Joseph Gates (3), Gary Gravelle (3), Theron Huntley (3), Jayden Lee (3), Filiberto Padilla (3), Jim Vaughan (3), William Vega (3), Hans Knecht (3), William Whited (3), Laurence Bonsack (2), Duane Catania (2), Georgios Charatzoglou (2), Rexford Cristal (2), Arthur Fisher Jr. (2), Steven Kaplan (2), Michael Lee (2), Dominick Pennella (2), Andrew Ritzmann (2), Lary Rust (2), with the players with 1 sweep in 1 board listed separately below.

(b) **27 players swept twice** - The 27 players, in descending order of their number of boards played, are James Ellis (25), Kenneth Jones (18), Eric Arnold (17), Wolff Morrow (17), Joseph Korman (15), Jon Leisner (15), Michael Hailparn (13), Mark Capron (11), Brent Askvig (10), James Howard (8), John Cakars (7), Neil Kulick (7), Pablo Moujan (7), Scott Stewart (7), Chris Torres (7), Darryl Houston Smith (6), Paul Kolojeski (6), David McCann (6), David Sweetland (6), Tom Rossbottom (5), Patrick Walsh (5), Bryce Avery (4), John Millett (4), Madge Smith (4), Michael O'Keefe (4), Steve Wongso (4), and Gregory Bain (3). The last six people on the list had a sweep frequency rate of at least 50% compared to the number of boards they played, with Gregory Bain's rate being 2 out of 3, or about 67%!

(c) **22 players swept 3 times** - The 22 players, in descending order of their number of boards played, are Kyle Biedermann (42), Robert Cousins (25), Juraj Beres (22), Eric Landes (20), Gregory Cross (19), Brian Brzezinski (18), Richard Aiken (17), Mark Stephenson (16), Dana Sylvander (16), Paul Berthelot (12), Mark Neale (11), Steve Baer (9), William Perry (9), Michael Burrus (8), Greg Henderson (8), Eugene Adler (6), Michael Hayes (6), William Brock (5), Shane Overturf (5), Stuart Wittenstein (5), and Jim Stroup (4). The last six people on the list had a sweep frequency rate of at least 50% compared to the number of boards they played, with Jim Stroup's rate being a nearly perfect 3 out of 4, or 75%!!

(d) **12 players swept 4 times** - The 12 players, in descending order of their number of boards played, are Corky Schakel (36), Richard Jenkins (27), Gary Deskin (24), Lester Weiss (19), Fred Jarmuz (17), Gerald Thomas (16), David Huff (16), David Cofer (15), Edward Lupiński (13), Andrew Leonard (12), William Lindberg (11), and Aleksandar Risovic (8). Aleksandar's sweep frequency rate is an incredible 50%, the highest among players with 4 or more sweeps.

(e) **4 players swept 5 times** - Those four players are [Viktor Zenkov](#) (after playing 20 boards), [Wesley Underwood](#) (on 19 boards), [Matthew Tedesco](#) (on 18 boards), and particularly impressively with the lowest number of boards, [Bryan Towery](#) (11 boards), [Bryan's](#) sweep frequency rate is about 45.5%!

(f) **1 player swept 6 times** - [Ronald Nurmi](#) sits alone in third place in the number of Friendly Match sweeps. This is particularly impressive given he did this while playing "only" 15 Friendly Match boards. This is a sweep frequency rate of 40% of the time he plays in Friendly Matches!

(g) **1 player swept 7 times** - [Maurice Carter](#) takes the honor of achieving the second highest number of sweeps. He did this while playing 20 Friendly Match boards, while translates to a sweep 35% of the time he plays!

(h) **1 player swept 9 times (!)** - Our "super-broom" is [Alex Relyea](#). While he plays in many Friendly Matches (27 boards), this is not the sole reason he has scored so many sweeps. The people who have played in more Friendly Matches than he have swept no more than 4 times and typically fewer. [Alex](#) is able to sweep 1 out of every 3 opponents despite being within the top 6 in Friendly Match frequency!



Some "1-hit wonders"

To borrow a phrase from the modern pop music culture, there were some players we could describe as "1-hit wonders". These people played in only one Friendly Match during the past 6 years, but won that match with a sweep. Why they have not come back to play in another Friendly Match after such success leaves us, well, wondering. (To be fair to them, some of these people only began playing Friendly Matches recently. They may very well plan on continuing to play in Friendly Matches, and simply have not had the opportunity yet.)



Whatever the reason, here are the (11) people who scored the maximum possible in "all" of the Friendly Matches in which they played (listed alphabetically):

Jorge Acosta, Adrian Astur Alvarez, George Eichhorn, David Gerber, Gary Gilbert, Larry Kocian, Anthony Ragan, Joshua Smith, Wayne Stevenson, Larry Alan Turner, and Daniel Whitted.

And before you ask, no one played in multiple (2 or more) Friendly Matches during the past 6 years and scored sweeps in all of those matches. It is just not that easy.



The highest rated sweep

The highest rated opponent ever to be swept by a USA player was a player rated 2500. That sweep was conducted by **Wolff Morrow** in the 2015 match versus Slovenia. **Wolff** also has the record for the second highest rated sweep, also from 2015. That sweep involved a Lithuanian GM rated 2485. To our knowledge, that was the only time (at least in recent history) a GM has been swept in a Friendly Match by a USA player.



The US Friendly Match World Tour 2 (WT2): "Go Around the World with US"

Last year, we completed the ICCF World Tour by extending invitations to all of the 55 other ICCF Member Federations (MFs) and playing all takers. Since Mexico has now become the 56th Member Federation of the ICCF (besides the USA), we are now fully **HALFWAY** in our second "Go Around the World with US" tour. To date, we engaged with 28 MFs (plus 3 non-MF teams), and have 28 MFs to go to complete "WT2":

(1) We started play or at least scheduled a match versus Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Cuba, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama, Peru, Russia, Spain, Sweden, the Ukraine, and Venezuela. This is besides the British Correspondence Chess Association, SchemingMind, and Yorkshire; all being international CC clubs affiliated with member federations.

(2) Invitations were extended but declined (either actively or passively) by: Cape Verde, Chile, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong, & Nicaragua.

Are you "Going Around the World with US"?



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 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 9/6/2018) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Spain	Server	8/9/16	57.0 - 51.0 (2 ongoing games)
2.	Argentina	Server	10/19/16	26.5 - 25.5 (2 ongoing games)
3.	Germany (Chess960)	Server	2/12/17	9.0 - 22.0 (1 ongoing game)
4.	France	Server	3/31/17	36.5 - 27.5 (2 ongoing games)
5.	Japan	Server	6/15/17	24.5 - 6.5 (1 ongoing game)
6.	Russia v. Zone 3***	Server	8/31/17 (USA**)	81.5 - 106.5 (19 ongoing games)
7.	Mexico	Server	11/12/17	20.0 - 32.0 (18 ongoing games)
8.	Italy***	Server	12/1/17	54.5 - 87.5 (56 ongoing games)
9.	Venezuela	Server	12/31/17	12.0 - 9.0 (15 ongoing games)
10.	Yorkshire	Server	1/19/18	14.0 - 7.0 (6 ongoing games)
11.	SchemingMind	Server	1/29/18	13.5 - 10.5 (8 ongoing games)
12.	Ukraine	Server	2/20/18	12.0 - 16.0 (32 ongoing games)
13.	Sweden	Server	4/20/18	22.5 - 14.5 (57 ongoing games)
14.	Australia	Server	5/27/18	26.0 - 7.0 (51 ongoing games)
15.	Finland	Server	7/15/18	3.0 - 8.0 (71 ongoing games)
16.	Israel	Server	7/18/18	1.0 - 3.0 (16 ongoing games)
17.	Cuba	Server	8/1/18	3.5 - 3.5 (73 ongoing games)
18.	Netherlands	Server	9/30/18	0.0 - 0.0 (86 ongoing games)

TOTAL USA RESULTS

Since 1/1/07*: 2645.5 - 2713.5 (**49.4%**)

* Not including Chess960 events versus Russia and Germany. The Chess960 events had far larger rating differences per board compared to regular Friendly Matches. The Chess960 results were therefore not considered comparable to those from regular Friendly Matches.

** Only the results involving USA players are shown or counted in the summary totals.

*** These matches often included pairings with a larger than usual rating difference, for reasons beyond Dennis's control, and usually in favor of our opponents. Hence, these matches shows disproportionate losses for the USA.



Highlights and Interesting Tidbits:

(1) A major highlight from the **Australia** match: As demonstration how every board in a Friendly Match is important no matter what the rating of the players, something fascinating has occurred in this match. To date, the lowest 10 (of 42) boards have completed 13 of its scheduled 20 games - with **all 13 being wins** for the USA!! Given the current match score is 26 - 7, a huge lead by the USA, this means that the lowest 10 boards have contributed half of all of the USA's current points (13 of 26 points) despite representing only a quarter of the boards. All boards matter!!

(2) The USA won against **Peru**! This was a comeback win for us. The final tally found the USA ahead by 4 points, so it did not even look that close, but appearances can deceive. The fact is we crept back from a deficit a little bit each quarter, until the finishing touches were just added. Nice work team!

(3) And as described in the last newsletter, the same thing could happen, and then did in our match versus **Bulgaria**. The match was very close since it began. The last 3 games were just completed in which the USA earned 2.5 points, so the match was won by 3 points. Exciting to the end, and with great success. Wonderful!

(4) And we completed the "hat trick" this quarter: a third win. With 6 remaining games, the USA has taken a 7-point lead in its match versus **Yorkshire**. Hats off to our teams!

(5) It would have been great to complete a come from behind win in the **Netherlands** match. In this 10-board match (involving only players rated 2300+), we were behind by 1 point with 4 remaining games. Unfortunately, the team could not make up the difference, with the USA ultimately losing by 2 points. I am particularly sorry to say that "yours truly" had one of those late losses, where a win would have tied the match. I tried...

(6) We did not do well in our participation among Zone 3 Federations against **Russia**. With 19 games involving USA players still ongoing, we have already lost our portion of the match. Our only consolation is that the non-USA Zone 3 players are not doing any better than we did. Russia is very tough.

(7) **Mexico** just became a Member Federation, but they already seemed poised to have a Friendly Match win. They keep building their lead against us. With 18 games still in progress, Mexico is 12 points ahead. This does not look good for us...

(8) On the other hand, the USA is doing a fine job of holding onto its early in our match versus **Venezuela**. Our 3-point lead from last quarter has been maintained during the completion of 10 games. With 15 remaining games, our 3-point lead does not guarantee a win, but it looks even better now than it did 3 months ago.

(9) A final highlight from a brand new match: this being versus the **Netherlands** in a match that just started. This match is being run using the Triple Block time control system (abbreviated as the TriBl or TB system). This is a time control system being used on a trial basis approved by the ICCF Congress. You can expect more of the Friendly Matches to use this system for a while, with the idea of letting our players see what the system is like in a situation without prizes, norms, titles, and all that other stuff. Let Dennis know (at dmdorenchess@gmail.com) what you think of the TriBl system after you have played in one or more of these matches.

Friendly Match (versus game) win/loss record

(Since 1/1/07) 37 wins, 27 losses, 1 tie (= 57.7%)

USA Won	USA Lost**	USA Tied
Argentina (2010)	Austria (2014)	Norway (2013)***
Australia/New Zealand (2012)	Belarus (2016)	
Australia (2016)	Belgium (2015)	
Brazil (2016)	Croatia (2015)	
British CCA (2016)	Cuba (2013)	
Bulgaria (2016)	Cuba (2015)	
Canada (2014)	Czech Republic (2011)	
Cape Verde (2013)	Czech Republic (2013)	
Denmark (2014)	France (2010)	
England (2008)	Germany (2008 - Women's only)	

England (2012)
Estonia (2016)
Finland (2009)
France (2017)*
Hong Kong (2010)
India (2014)
Indonesia (2016)
Japan (2013)
Japan (2017)*
Latvia (2015)
Lithuania (2015)
Netherlands (2013)
Panama (2013)
Peru (2013)
Portugal (2013)
Romania (2008)
Romania (2013)
Scotland (2008)
Scotland (2016)
Slovakia (2014)
Slovenia (2015)
Spain (2016)*
Sweden (2012)
Turkey (2015)
Venezuela (2013)
Wales (2013)
Yorkshire (2018)

Germany (2011)
Germany (2014)
Iceland (2014)
Israel (2014)
Italy (2010)
Netherlands (2017)
Panama (2015)
Panama (2016)
Poland (2015)
Russia (2013)
Russia (v. Zone 3) (2017)
Spain (2008)
Sweden (2007)
Switzerland (2014)
Ukraine (2015)
Venezuela (2014)
Wales (2016)

* 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.

*** Isn't it amazing that after 65 completed matches, where pairings were made with as equal ratings as possible, that there has been only one tied match?



The new Triple Block time control system is coming to the ICCF-US!

Have you heard about the trials going on concerning the new "Triple Block" time control system? The Triple Block system, abbreviated as "TriBl" or "TB", was developed by an ICCF work group specifically appointed during the 2015 Congress to address a variety of complaints about the current 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. Since then, at least 15 different events have used the system without significant problem, with more events officially scheduled during the remainder of 2018 and into 2019.

The very recently started Friendly Match versus the Netherlands is using this system. Some of our as-yet-to-be scheduled Friendly Matches will also use this new time control system. You can participate in helping the ICCF make a significant improvement in its 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!

You can learn more about this trial time control system by going to the following ICCF documents:

(1) Go to the ICCF home page, then to "ICCF Rules" (on the left), then in the lower box where it says "Triple Block System Documents", to find the following 3 detailed documents:

- (a) "Explanation of how it works" (This is **the document** for players to use)
- (b) "Instructions for Tournament Organizers"
- (c) "Rule differences - for TDs"

(2) You can also see the original descriptive proposal (including a Power Point presentation) at <https://www.iccf.com/Proposal.aspx?id=103> [That is, go to the ICCF home page, then to "ICCF Congresses" (on the left), then to 2016 Congress "proposals", then to proposal #028].



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. Until 1/1/17, Friendly Matches were exempt from ICCF rules that governed that "withdrawal from one event means withdrawal from all events". That exemption no longer applies. *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 of 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 now counts towards the required number of directed games to earn the title of International Arbiter. Before 1/1/17, that was not true.

"When a chess player looks at the board, he does not see a static mosaic, a 'still life', but a magnetic field of forces, charged with energy - as Faraday saw the stresses surrounding magnets and currents as curves in space, or as Van Gogh saw vortices in the skies of Provence" - Arthur Koestler

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 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, CCM 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 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!

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.