



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 28, June 2019

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!

*Help us choose the next countries we challenge for Friendly Matches!
See page 2.*

Upcoming Friendly Matches

Norway is sending us its team roster for a match any day now! This match will begin within a few weeks. Our previous Friendly Match resulted in the only Friendly Match tie the USA has had since at least 2007 (the only 1 out of 71 completed matches)! So, this upcoming match will serve as a tie-break ("grudge match") of sorts.

A previously unadvertised match versus Argentina is being organized at the same time this newsletter was circulated. There are still a few unfilled places on the USA team...

See the next section (the World Tour 2) about other future matches below.

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, the match versus Argentina got organized since the last newsletter.

Therefore, if you have not already let Dennis know, and want to play in the Friendly Matches, be sure you write to him today (at dmdorenchess@gmail.com).

Never interrupt your opponent when he is making a mistake.

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

Are you "Going 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. Mexico has now become the 56th Member Federation of the ICCF (besides the USA). Our second "Go Around the World with US" tour is more than halfway completed. To date, we have engaged with 33 MFs (plus 3 non-MF teams), and have 23 MFs to go to complete "WT2":

(1) We started play or at least scheduled a match versus Argentina (twice!), Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, 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, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Hong Kong, & Nicaragua.

PICK YOUR FAVORITES!

Here's your chance to help choose the next few Friendly Matches. We need to issue some new challenges to other countries to line up more Friendly Matches. Here is the remaining set to complete our second World Tour, and hence from which to choose:

Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, England, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, and Wales

Send me a brief note (dmdorenchess@gmail.com) indicating which countries you would like to see our next challenges go to for Friendly Matches. (List no more than 3 countries, please.) I will follow your lead! I will also presume you are interested in playing on that match.

If there is a reasonably closely rated opponent for you to play (once I get the other team's roster), I will give you first shot at accepting an invitation to play! **So, write to me with your preferred opponents (up to 3), and potentially move yourself to the top of my list!**

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 6/11/2019) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Russia v. Zone 3***	Server	8/31/17 (USA**)	88.5 - 115.5 (4 ongoing games)
2.	Mexico	Server	11/12/17	26.0 - 39.0 (1 ongoing game)
3.	Italy***	Server	12/1/17	74.5 - 105.5 (2 ongoing games)
4.	Venezuela	Server	12/31/17	17.5 - 16.5 (2 ongoing games)
5.	Yorkshire	Server	1/19/18	19.0 - 8.0 (1 ongoing game)
6.	SchemingMind	Server	1/29/18	18.0 - 13.0 (1 ongoing game)
7.	Ukraine	Server	2/20/18	25.0 - 32.0 (3 ongoing games)
8.	Sweden	Server	4/20/18	58.5 - 53.5 (12 ongoing games)
9.	Australia	Server	5/27/18	53.0 - 22.0 (9 ongoing games)
10.	Finland	Server	7/15/18	32.0 - 36.0 (13 ongoing games)
11.	Israel	Server	7/18/18	9.0 - 8.0 (3 ongoing games)
12.	Cuba	Server	8/1/18	26.5 - 37.5 (16 ongoing games)
13.	Netherlands	Server	9/30/18	40.5 - 29.5 (13 ongoing games)
14.	Portugal	Server	11/28/18	30.5 - 16.5 (45 ongoing games)
15.	Denmark	Server	12/11/18	11.5 - 16.5 (14 ongoing games)
16.	Canada	Server	3/16/19	5.0 - 6.0 (37 ongoing games)

17.	Iceland	Server	5/4/19	0.0 - 0.0 (20 ongoing games)
18.	India	Server	5/23/19	0.0 - 2.0 (64 ongoing games)

TOTAL USA RESULTS

Since 1/1/07* (5892 completed games!): 2921.5 - 2970.5 **(49.6%)**

* 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) This is the first quarter in a very long time when no match was either won or lost by the USA! Frankly, I do not know the last time this happened. We had about the same number of ongoing matches as usual, so it seems only by chance that this has occurred. Maybe there will be more definitive match outcomes in the near future, to make up for the current paucity.

(2) Speaking of possible wins, the **Venezuela** match has become tighter than expected. For the past two quarters, it was reported we had a 4-point lead with only 5 remaining games. This meant that any win or 2 draws would take the match for us. During this quarter, however, Venezuela won 3 of those games. This means the USA has a 1-point lead with only 2 remaining games! We still need that single win or two draws to win this match...Go USA!!

(3) The match versus **Israel** also remains quite close. The USA had been a couple of points behind early in the match. We then took a 1-point lead, as reported two quarters ago. Then each team scored a point. And again this quarter, each team scored another point. That means the USA holds onto its 1-point lead with 3 remaining games. Hold them off USA!!

(4) We cut **Finland's** 5-point lead down to 4, but with only 13 games still to be completed, we may be running out of time...

(5) On the other hand, we are on the better end of the same situation against **Sweden**. Although we gave up one point this quarter from what was our 6-point lead, it took Sweden half of the remaining games to get that point. Now, with only 12 games remaining, our 5-point lead is looking pretty darn good.

(6) The USA continues to dominate in the match versus the **Netherlands**. We took an 8-point lead from last quarter and made it into an 11-point lead. With only 13 ongoing games remaining, this win is all but assured. Great going USA!

(7) Unfortunately, **Cuba** has been treating us almost exactly the same way. That country expanded an 8-point lead into an 11-point lead with 16 remaining games. Overcoming that deficit within that number of games seems very difficult.

(8) We started the match versus **Portugal** with a bang, and have continued blasting away! The USA has a 14-point lead (!!) after 47 games have been completed. With about the same number of games remaining, it looks clear that the USA will win this one handily!

(9) The 6-month old match versus **Denmark** seems to be slowly slipping away. With 14 games to go, the USA is behind by 5 points. A winning comeback is possible, but will require some hard work.



A day without chess probably wouldn't kills me, but why risk it?

Friendly Match (versus game) win/loss record

(Since 1/1/07) 40 wins, 30 losses, 1 tie (= 57.0%)

USA Won	USA Lost**	USA Tied
Argentina (2010)	Austria (2014)	Norway (2013)***
Argentina (2016)	Belarus (2016)	
Australia/New Zealand (2012)	Belgium (2015)	
Australia (2016)	Croatia (2015)	
Australia (2018)*	Cuba (2013)	
Brazil (2016)	Cuba (2015)	
British CCA (2016)	Czech Republic (2011)	
Bulgaria (2016)	Czech Republic (2013)	
Canada (2014)	France (2010)	
Cape Verde (2013)	Germany (2008 - Women's only)	
Denmark (2014)	Germany (2011)	
England (2008)	Germany (2014)	
England (2012)	Iceland (2014)	
Estonia (2016)	Israel (2014)	
Finland (2009)	Italy (2010)	
France (2017)	Italy (2017)*	
Hong Kong (2010)	Mexico (2017)*	
India (2014)	Netherlands (2017)	
Indonesia (2016)	Panama (2015)	
Japan (2013)	Panama (2016)	
Japan (2017)	Poland (2015)	
Latvia (2015)	Russia (2013)	
Lithuania (2015)	Russia (v. Zone 3) (2017)*	
Netherlands (2013)	Spain (2008)	
Panama (2013)	Sweden (2007)	
Peru (2013)	Switzerland (2014)	
Portugal (2013)	Ukraine (2015)	
Romania (2008)	Ukraine (2018)*	
Romania (2013)	Venezuela (2014)	
SchemingMind (2018)*	Wales (2016)	
Scotland (2008)		
Scotland (2016)		
Slovakia (2014)		
Slovenia (2015)		
Spain (2016)		
Sweden (2012)		
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.

*** Isn't it amazing that after 71 completed matches, where pairings were made with as equal ratings as possible, that there has been only one tied match?



FEATURED GAME

Paul Berthelot (2039) - William Grummitt (2042)

USA - SchemingMind Friendly Match

This game is online at <https://www.iccf.com/game?id=1004647>

(All annotations by Dennis Doren)

In this game, Pastor Paul Berthelot, a veteran of many friendly matches, shows the value of having active pieces. This game is particularly interesting in that (a) White's attack is balanced over both sides of the board, and (b) despite the fact White gives up castling early in the game, it is Black who cannot find a satisfactory hideout for his king due to White's expert play.

1.d4 e6 2.e4 d5 3.Nd2 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Bd3 c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.Ne2 Qb6 [This is likely a "second-best" move, reflecting an older style of play for Black in the Tarrasch variation of the French Defense. The current more usual move is 7...cd4, typically followed by 8.cd4 f6, although 8...Qb6 is also playable at that point as well.]

8.Nf3 cxd4 9.cxd4 Bb4+ [Again, this is an idea that has been around for a long time, being consistent with having moved the queen to b6. The player with Black must have felt very

comfortable playing this line, as he had an even score (with 3 wins, 2 draws, and 3 losses) in 8 previous games with this position.]

10.Kf1 [The less common option compared to 10.Bd2. The idea for White, rather than trying to save the option to castle, is either to (a) coordinate a K-side attack using both bishops along with the h-pawn and the kingside rook (brought out through the h-file), while using the knights to maintain the center pawn stronghold, or (b) castle "by hand" with g3 and Kg2.]

10...Be7 11.a3 [11.h4 right away is another option. The played move takes away a significant square from Black, from which he could launch a Q-side counterattack.]

11...Nf8 [This is where Black seems to have gone wrong, though the move is understandable. Black wants to open up d7 for his bishop, allowing O-O-O. Similarly, the N on f8 can come to protect the k-side when needed (either to g6 or h7). However, Black's game is already cramped, and he simply does not have time for this type of development. More typical moves for Black in the position are 11...f6 and 11...O-O. Black's game is difficult in any case, being so cramped. That is a significant reason why 7...Qb6 has gone out of favor. The Mega Database 2019 shows a record after 11...Nf8 of 7 wins for White, and 3 draws, with no Black wins. But how best for White to punish 11...Nf8?]

12.b4 a6 [An unusual move, apparently having been previously played only in one game (back in 1945). Following through with the foreshadowed 12...Bd7 makes more sense.]

13.h4 [White keeps to his game plan - developing his pieces as quickly as he can.]

13...Nd7 [Black, however, reconsiders his plan and backtracks. This variation of the French Defense already promises Black a cramped position. Black cannot afford taking the time to develop the same piece twice before bringing out his other pieces. 13...Bd7, or at least 13...f6 attacking White's center, were better ideas.]

14.Rh3 [Continuing the planned piece development.]

14...f6 15.Be3 fxe5 16.dxe5 Qc7 [Black's cramped position already shows itself, with there being no good place to put his queen. 16...Qd8 gets in the way of an eventual O-O-O. The game shows why the queen on c7 is not a great placement either. Yet, if Black wanted to avoid the problem of having his queen attacked by the bishop on e3 by not playing 15...fe5, the move 14...f6 would have had no meaning, and would have just opened up the k-side.]

17.Bf4 g6 [It is already difficult to recommend a good plan for Black. If 17...Nb6, 18.Rg3 g6 19.Rc1 Bd7 20.Ng5 Bg5 21.Rg5 and 22.h5, and White has a very strong K-side attack with Black's king still hanging around there. White is keeping up the pressure very well.]

18.Rc1 [Exposing the weakness of the Q on c7, while White just continues to make efficient developing moves. It is interesting that White has begun attacks on both wings, while Black is still struggling with the basic development of his pieces.]

18...Qb6 [Although this is a move among those recommended by chess engines, the movement of the same piece again is a conceptual failure. Black has to get other pieces developed.]

19.h5 g5 [There is nothing better.]

20.Nxg5 Bxg5 21.Bxg5 Ndx5 [Black maintains material equality, and finally gets his knight off d7 permanently, but White has 5 pieces developed to Black's 3, and white's are far better placed for the attack. In the mean while, although White gave up castling during the opening, this has not caused him any problems he did not already solve.]

22.Rg3 Qc7 [22...Nd3, trading off one of White's attacking pieces, only seems to make other White pieces better, for example: 23. Qd3 Qb5 24.Qc3 d4 25. Qa1 Qd5 26.Rc5 Qd6 27.Bf6 Rf8 28.Bd4 and White has very strong control of the a1-h8 diagonal, well placed rooks, and has an extra pawn to boot.]

23.b5 [23.Nd4 was another way to improve White's position.]

23...axb5 24.Bxb5 Bd7 [Finally, but a case of too little, too late!]

25.Bh6 [Grabbing the g7 square, a fine place for White's rook]

25...O-O-O [It is hard to fault Black for wanting to get his king to a safer place, and develop another piece. The problem is that he lines up his king and queen with White's rook.]

26.Bf4 [Because White's pieces are so active, he can switch his attack over the queenside very quickly. In the mean while, Black's only developed piece (the knight on e5) loses mobility due to the pin.]

26...Rhf8 [Black finally develops his last piece, but the end is already near.]

27.Qa4 Rxf4 [Not a lot of choice. If 27...Rf5, 28.Rg7 continues to add pressure by adding another pin. In the chosen line, Black gives up the exchange in hopes of lowering the pressure and freeing his pieces, but White's pieces are still much too well placed.]

28.Qxf4 Nc4 29.Qh6 [White could have played 29.Qc7 Kc7 30.Bc4 dc4 31.Rc4, simplifying to an exchange plus pawn advantage where Black has no compensation. Instead, White decides to keep up the pressure by preparing to win the h-pawn, giving White passed connectors on the h- and g-files.]

29...Nd6 30.Rb3 [30.Bd3 was also good.]

30...Nxb5 31.Rxb5 Qd6 [Still trying to extricate his queen from its purely defensive position.]

32.Qxh7 Qxa3 [32...d4 was, relatively speaking, a better choice. Taking White's a-pawn tries to maintain the material difference, but it also opens another line for White. Opening new lines of attack when materially and positionally down quite commonly helps one's opponent.]

33.Qb1 [33.Rcb1 is quicker, but White has the fine idea here of bringing his queen over to the queen side to overwhelm Black's defensive forces.]

33...Qa7 34.Qb4 Kb8 [With the purpose of (finally) unpinning the knight, but Black apparently did not see White's devastating blow that follows.]

35.Rxc6 Bxc6 36. Ra5 [The irony: After Black's queen was hidden away much of the game, Black is lost because he no longer has a place to hide his queen.] 1 - 0



I failed to make the chess team because of my height. - Woody Allen.



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, dozens of events have used the system without significant problem, with more events officially scheduled during 2019.

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. 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.

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.



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.