



The Friendly Post

News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 5, October 2013

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.

Sign Up Now for the Friendly Matches of 2014!

This past year, I asked all of you to let me know of your interest in playing in upcoming matches. That system worked well - my knowing who was interested in playing in which matches made pairings quick and easy. After making tentative pairings I only needed to confirm each player was still available, and the match could begin.

I would like to expand that idea now. This past year, I told you which countries we were going to play, and asked for you to tell me of your interest in playing.

For 2014, YOU TELL ME!

Below is a survey where you can tell me which countries to contact to set up Friendly Matches during this coming year. I will work to set up Friendly Matches with the countries you show the greatest interest in playing! At the same time, I will also know who wants to play in each match.

The following are your options. I have eliminated from the total list of ICCF Member Nations any that we have played too recently, are currently playing, or I already know declined

or did not respond to a recent offer to play a Friendly Match. So, I am open to trying to set up Friendly Matches with any from the following list:

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| (1) Austria* | (12) France | (23) Luxembourg |
| (2) Belarus | (13) Germany | (24) Poland |
| (3) Belgium | (14) Greece | (25) Scotland |
| (4) Bulgaria | (15) Hong Kong | (26) Slovakia |
| (5) Canada | (16) Hungary | (27) Slovenia |
| (6) Chile | (17) Iceland | (28) South Africa |
| (7) Croatia | (18) India | (29) Spain |
| (8) Cuba | (19) Ireland | (30) Switzerland |
| (9) Denmark | (20) Israel | (31) Turkey |
| (10) Estonia | (21) Latvia | (32) Ukraine |
| (11) Finland | (22) Lithuania | (33) Wales |

* A Friendly Match is already scheduled to start in June 2014, so be sure to sign up if you interested in playing in it!

Here is all I need from you: **ONE VERY BRIEF EMAIL.**

Send me an email (to dmdoren@yahoo.com) that says:

- (1) Your name (if not obvious in your email address),
- (2) Either the word "any" (or if you prefer, "all"), or any combination of the specific numbers (from the list of 1-33 above) that are your countries of interest (for example: #'s 2,3,6,14 & 22), and
- (3) Any special instructions to me, such as "no more than 2 matches in 2014" from your list, or "I would really like to play in a match versus [country name]", or "any 3 matches".

That's it. **Just send me an email.** It can be as brief as one word: "any", or as detailed as you wish.

Just a few more words about how this will work. First, you can express your interest in playing in one or more 2014 Friendly Matches any time during the next year. It does not have

to be immediately. On the other hand, your input will be most effective both for you and me if you do it right away. I will start working on setting up 2014 Friendly Matches as soon as I have enough information to guide me. Likewise, if you wait into 2014 to let me know of your interest, I could have already filled up all our boards in your desired match. Please keep in mind that you can always add or subtract from your list as the year goes on!

Secondly, your stating an interest to me does NOT obligate you to play if the opportunity arises. I understand that "life happens", plans change, and you may not be available when the time comes. I always check to see if people are still interested and available to play before finalizing team placement. So, **SIGN UP NOW**, and worry about your availability later. If you do not let me know of your possible interest, however, I will not know to consider placing you on a team!

Thirdly, please be aware that just because you express interest in a certain match does not automatically mean you will get to play in that match. We simply have more players expressing interest in specific Friendly Matches than there are boards to accommodate (read: the other countries' teams are too small compared to what we can field). I try to accommodate "specially expressed interest", but cannot always do so.

Finally, do NOT send any money to anyone to pay your fee for any Friendly Match until you are specifically told by me to do so - which only occurs after your placement in a specific match has been confirmed. I will always let you know when your money is due.

So, a lot of information, but just one simple thing requested of you: SEND ME AN EMAIL to express your 2014 interest in playing in the ICCF-US Friendly Matches!

[In this issue, we quote from "the philosophers of chess".]

"Age cannot wither...her infinite variety." - Shakespeare

Lots has been happening since the last issue!!

You can always find the current results from any of our Friendly Matches by visiting www.iccf-webchess.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*" (which can be found at www.iccfus.com) listed all of our matches from 1/1/07 onward. There are now too many Friendly Matches to keep doing that, so this issue lists only those currently in progress but not yet completed. The current standings (through 10/13/2013) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	Sweden	Server	5/1/12	59.5 - 27.5 (3 games still ongoing)
2.	England	Server	8/1/12	33.0 - 33.0 (2 games still ongoing)
3.	Australia/NZ	Server	11/1/12	57.0 - 40.0 (13 games still ongoing)
4.	Russia	Server	2/1/13	48.5 - 78.5 (35 games still ongoing)
5.	Panama	Server	3/4/13	11.5 - 5.5 (7 games still ongoing)
6.	Cape Verde	Server	3/24/13	14.0 - 5.0 (11 games still ongoing)
7.	Norway	Server	3/31/13	14.0 - 14.0 (16 games still ongoing)
8.	Netherlands	Server	4/11/13	26.0 - 32.0 (70 games still ongoing)
9.	Czech Republic	Server	4/25/13	20.5 - 29.5 (62 games still ongoing)
10.	Portugal	Server	4/25/13	15.5 - 13.5 (25 games still ongoing)
11.	Romania	Server	9/1/13	2.5 - 2.5 (65 games still ongoing)
12.	Venezuela	Server	9/16/13	0.0 - 1.0 (39 games still ongoing)
13.	Peru	Server	9/25/13	0.0 - 0.0 (52 games still ongoing)
14.	Japan	Server	10/25/13	0.0 - 0.0 (18 games still ongoing)

TOTAL USA RESULTS since 1/1/07:

806.5 - 845.5 (**48.8%**)



Interesting Tidbits:

(a) The listed **percentage of wins/losses** (48.8%) went up 0.1% since June 2013 with the completion of another 261 games. Slowly but surely we are making our way to 50%...

(b) **Match (versus game) win/loss record** since 1/1/07: 8 wins, 8 losses (50.0%)

<u>USA Won</u>	<u>USA Lost</u>
Argentina (2010)	Czech Republic (2011)
Australia/New Zealand (2012)*	France (2010)
England (2008)	German (2011)
Finland (2009)	Germany (2008 - Women's only)
Hong Kong (2010)	Italy (2010)
Romania (2008)	Spain (2008)
Scotland (2008)	Sweden (2007)
Sweden (2012)*	Ukraine (2010)

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

Although officially still too soon to call, it can easily be said that the following outcomes also seem very likely, given the current scores in each:

- Loss to Russia
- Win over Panama
- Win over Cape Verde

It looks like the USA could soon have a plus score in Friendly Match outcomes! It has been a few years...

(c) The last time the USA played **Peru** in a Friendly Match was in 1997, involving 20 boards. (Thanks to Alex Dunne for this information!) Anyone know what the outcome score was?

(d) It appears that this is the first time the USA has played **Japan** in a Friendly Match. (Again, thanks for the information goes to Alex Dunne!) That also appears to be true for **Venezuela**. So, we have more historic firsts in this year's matches!

(e) This may also be the first time ever that we have as many as **14 Friendly Matches** all proceeding at the same time. Thanks to all of you participating in the Friendly Matches for making this possible!

**"Chess above all other games lends itself to the postmortem"
- London Times (1937)**



Some Other Statistics, for Those So Inclined!

Friendly Matches involve the pairing of people with nearly equally rated opponents. So, conceptually, it could be argued that players from one rating range (such as 1800-1899, or 2400+) should score no better than players from any other rating range. It turns out this is not accurate, however. After looking at our set of Friendly Match results from 1/1/2007 - 10/11/2013, I discovered a few interesting findings:

(a) The higher a player's rating, the more likely his/her games will end in draws; or said the other way around, the lower a player's rating, the more likely his/her games will end in either a win or loss (versus a draw). The finding was statistically quite strong.

(b) When I divided up all of the USA players from the Friendly Matches into 100-point rating categories (2400+, 2300-2399, 2200-2299, etc.), there was one rating range that showed a statistically significantly better score (scoring 1 for win, 1/2 for draw) than the average across the rest of the players. Can you guess which one that was?

.....2300-2399.

(c) Even with that said, however, the number of people playing within that rating range was not large enough to accumulate the greatest total number of points (1 for win, 1/2 for draw) in the Friendly Matches. Can you guess which category scored the most points overall?

.....2100-2199.



**"...man is a frivolous, a specious creature, and like a chess-player cares more for the process of attaining his goal than for the goal itself."
Dostoyevsky**

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-webchess.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:

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

Glen Shields, North America/Pacific Zone (NAPZ) Tournament Organizer

Yours truly,

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



"Surely chess is a sad waste of brains." - Scott

Another Option for Play!

Did you know that there is another option for international correspondence chess for U.S.A. players besides the ones that have been around for years? Have you heard of the NAPZ? This is the organization of the North Atlantic Pacific Zone countries, the zone that includes the USA. The NAPZ is now running three levels of promotional tournaments: the Master sections, the Higher sections, and the Open sections. Unlike the ICCF tournaments with similar names listed at <http://www.iccf-webchess.com/EventsAnnouncements.aspx> (that is, the World Individual Open Class, the World Individual Higher Class, and the World Individual Open Class), there is no maximum number of people from one country who can play in each tournament. This means there is one less reason for any delay in a tournament being organized and started when you want one. You can find details on entering an NAPZ Promotion Tournament at the same listed webpage just mentioned.

"No chess player sleeps well." - H.G. Wells

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). You can also offer your own commentary, or just leave that to us (which you can review pre-publication) if you prefer.

The featured game this issue is from Leonid (Lenny) Gleyzer, an Elite member of the ICCF-US team of players. In the following game from the still ongoing Friendly Match against

Russia, he slowly but surely maneuvers his pieces to where they do the most good - pointed at Black's K, by taking advantage of Black's difficulties in coordinating his pieces.

Last issue, I added the "pgn" copy of the game and asked for feedback about its inclusion, but received no comments about it one way or the other. Below is the URL for this game's pgn. Please let me know if you find it useful or not:

<http://www.iccf-webchess.com/MakeAMove.aspx?id=428391>

Leonid Gleyzer (2284) - Aleksandr Valentinovich Volkov (2319)

(Annotations by Dennis Doren)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 O-O 5.Nf3 d6 6.O-O Nbd7 7.Nc3 e5

8.e4 [There are many moves played here, with 8.e4 being the most common and still the most popular in over-the-board play.]

8...exd4 [The second most common move in this position in both over-the-board and correspondence play. More common is 8...c6.]

9.Nxd4 Re8 10.h3 a6 [Again a move that is second in commonality in both OTB and CC play, though this time databases suggest better outcomes for Black with the chosen move versus the more commonly played 10...Nc5.]

11.Be3 Rb8 12.b3 Ne5 13.a4 [13.f4 was also an option.]

13...Nfd7 [13...Bd7 is the more common choice. Black has been playing a number of less than the most common moves, but his position is still rated by some chess engines as on the shy side of equal.]

14.Ra2 [Not quite a theoretical novelty, but possibly played only once before - Banusz (2517) - Vajda (2519), 2010 - with that being in an OTB game. Chess engines do not readily find this move, preferring the more systematic 14.Rb1. With this game, 14.Ra2 gets tested in a CC game...]



Position after 14.Ra2

14...Nc5 15.Rd2 Nc6 16.Nxc6 [Banusz - Vajda continued with 16.Nde2, ending in a win for White. Chess engines agree with White's choice over 16.Nde2.]

16...bxc6 17.Bxc5 Bxc3 18.Rd3 Bg7 19.Ba7 Rb4 [Presumably placing the R here was an attempt to keep the piece active, but chess engines suggest 19...Ra8 may have been better.]

20.Re1 [20.Qd2 was a viable option]

20...Bd7 21.f4 Rb7 [Although Black's position is theoretically still close to even according to chess engines, it is difficult to recommend a move here. To exemplify, one engine's recommended move here was the ugly 21...Qa8, sticking the queen into a corner from which it would be hard to extricate.]

22.Be3 Bb2 [With the idea of Ba3 and Bb4, trying to disrupt White's control of the d-file as well as block White's Q-side pawns, though this idea proves problematic. 22...Qb8 was an alternative, putting pressure on the backward b-pawn, though placing the Q in such a backward place clearly has its downside as well.]

23.Kh2 Ba3 24.Qa1 [Taking advantage of Black's vacating the a1-h8 diagonal, even while forcing Black to fulfill his intended idea of placing the B on b4.]

24...Bb4 25.Rf1



Position after 25.Rf1

25...Rb8 [Trying to get this badly placed R somewhere better, but there is no longer time for this. Either 25...f6 or 25...f5 appear to have been needed, to try to defend against the upcoming f4 by White, a move signaled and supported by the previous move of Rf1.]

26.f5 [Opening up the possibility of Bh6 with the threat of mate on g7, as well as threatening to open up the f-file for the R. White has been increasing his positional advantage very slowly, steadily, move by move, but now senses a time to go in for the kill, as Black's K-position seems full of holes.]

26...gxf5 [Considered best by a chess engine, but I have significant doubts. Opening up more lines of attack around one's K while trying to defend and having no counterattack just seems like a bad idea. Maybe the most viable option for Black was 26...Qe7, but it does not look good in any case.]

27.exf5 Re5 [27...f6 seems a bit better - to try to close some of White's attack lines. Using the R to try to close off White's attack on the dark squares is ineffective because White's Q has too many other good options.]

28.Qd1 Qe7 29.Ba7 Rd8 30.Qg4+ [Showing how Black's pieces, specifically his two R's and his dark-squared B all moved many times but still ended up misplaced - away from where the defense needed to be and with no meaningful counterattack.]

30...Kf8 [30...Kh8 probably lasted a bit longer despite allowing White to win the exchange with 31.Bd4, but it likely would not have mattered in the final outcome anyway.]

31.Bd4 [31.f6 would have also worked for White.]

31...Qf6 32.Bxe5 1-0



"Excellence at chess is one mark of a scheming mind." - Arthur Conan Doyle

The "FRIENDLY MATCH ELITE

Both as an incentive for participation as well as a reward for never silently withdrawing, we recently began a new status within the world of ICCF-US Friendly Matches, a status whose reward includes ***reduced fees*** for future Friendly Matches.

The designation is called the Friendly Match Elite. The Elite are the people who have played in at least 7 Friendly Matches (since 1/1/07) and have never silently withdrawn. As a token of thanks for their fine and regular participation, these players will have their fees reduced for each of the next 3 Friendly Matches in which they play, from the usual \$6 to \$4 per match.

To everyone: **Anyone can reach this status!** Just play in enough Friendly Matches and never default a game through silent withdrawal. Your total number of Friendly Matches will automatically be tallied without any effort by you. (If you wish to know your current number of FM's played to date, just ask Dennis at dmdoren@yahoo.com.)

So who are the current Friendly Match Elite? Congrats to those 25 players on the ICCF-US current list:

Richard Aiken; John Ballow, IM; Michael Brooks; Mark Capron; Maurice Carter; Chris Cendrowski; Steven Chilson; Ken Edwards; Gordon Everitt; Russ Haag; Dr. Michael

Hailparn; Michael G. Hayes; Harry Ingersol; Steven Ledford; Edward Lupiensi; Roger Martindale; William Merrell; Jean L. Moeckel; Cesar Musitani, IM; Donald Randolph; Alex Relyea; Fred Sharpell; Carl L. Siefring, SIM; William C. Young, III; & Viktor Zenkov

Even beyond are the 22 people on the **ICCF-US FM Honor Roll** (those people who achieved Elite status, received their reduced fees for 3 matches, and of course, continue to demonstrate both ongoing interest and integrity in playing FMs):

David Ballard; Edward Barr; Kyle Biedermann; Thomas Biedermann, SIM; Gregory W. Cross; Gary Deskin; Dennis Doren; James R. Ellis; Leonid Gleyzer; Joseph Korman; Jon S. Leisner; Edwin Meiners; Charles Merrow; Chris O'Connell; Larry Parsons; Michael Quirk; Mark Robledo, Sr.; Patrick J. Ryan; Corky Schakel, IM; Gerald K. Thomas; Lester Weiss; & David V. White

Are you next? Who is just one Friendly Match away from becoming Elite? These 9 people:

Juraj Beres; Robert Fass; Alex Herrera; William Lindberg; John Moldovan; Alexander Relyea; Wesley Underwood; Brian Villarreal; & Anthony Zawadski

To everyone: you need not complete play from your 7th FM to become FM Elite and have reduced fees for 3 of your next FMs - just start play in your 7th FM, be up-to-date in your fee payments, and continue to avoid defaulting a game.

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 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 (unless you are FM Elite as described above, when the fee is \$4 for your next 3 FMs).

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 all arrangements have been finalized. Dennis will tell you when that is.