



# The Friendly Post

## **News from ICCF-US Friendly Matches from around the world - Issue 38, December 2021**

Greetings from ICCF-US Friendly Match Central. This is the newsletter concerning everything related to ICCF-US Friendly Matches. Thanks to your ongoing interest in the Friendly Matches, this newsletter has been arriving at your email-doorstep 4 times per year for over 9 years!

**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 are invited to participate!

## **2021 IN SUMMARY**

For many years now, we have been saying “If you have a desire to play...on a USA team, please write to Dennis...and let him know!” And what opportunities to play can be expected? Well, from the time I started organizing Team USA Friendly Matches, the frequency of a new offering has been about 1 per month. In 2021, the number of Friendly Matches that were offered was 14, slightly over the typical. The average number of boards per match was about 30. In previous years with fewer matches, the average number of boards per match was typically a bit larger, so about the same number of USA players have been able to play.

**Repeat:** In 2021, there were 14 different USA Friendly Matches involving a total of 404 boards.

If you're not playing but want to, just let me know!!

*This issue brings you "Chess Words of Wisdom" from the book of the same name (by Mike Henebry).*

## **Upcoming Friendly Matches**

The advertised match versus **Lithuania** was postponed (by them) until September. However, as advertised, matches were organized and begun last quarter **Japan, Israel, and Denmark**. An unadvertised match versus **Indonesia** was also organized and started.

Matches **CURRENTLY** being organized are

(a) vs. a combined set of players from **Ecuador, Guatemala, Cape Verde, & Nicaragua**, (involving a total of 11 players, 6 of whom are unrated)

(b) **Russia** (With 50 players rated from about 1650 to about 2540, I will only be able to accommodate USA players rated in that range as well)

**If you wish to play in either of these, please write to me NOW!**

**I cannot guarantee that if you express interest that I will be able to place you in the match, but I will give those who write me priority in selection!**

Just write to Dennis ([dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto:dmdorenchess@gmail.com)) and let me know!

As we have said previously, matches can go from an idea to an active reality within any 90-day period – that is, between newsletters. So, if you have not already let it be known that you want to play, be sure to let us know by writing to Dennis at [dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto:dmdorenchess@gmail.com)!

*The foundation of every tactical combination is the threat.*



## **Around the World a Third Time!!**

### The USA Friendly Match World Tour 3

Whether you want to “collect countries”, wish to have an opportunity to communicate with people from your ancestors’ home country, or just like the opportunity to meet people from around the world, the Friendly Matches bring you that opportunity. During our third World Tour (WT3), we will again make offers for Friendly Matches to all ICCF member federations: all 56 of them (besides us). Come go around the world with US!

#### **So far in WT3:**

We have **at least started play** against the following (7) countries: Austria, Cuba, Denmark, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Philippines

**Current (7) invitations and being organized:** Belgium (scheduled March 2022); the combination of Ecuador + Guatemala + Nicaragua + Cape Verde (being organized now); Lithuania (scheduled September 2022); Russia (being organized now)

Additionally, we have offered a match, but **our (1) invitation was declined (or received no response)** by: Panama

Countries yet to be included (41) in WT3: Argentina, Aruba, Australia, Belarus, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, England, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and Wales.

*The key to success is to seize the initiative.*



## 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](http://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 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](http://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 12/14/2021) are as follows:

	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Server/Email/Postal</u>	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>Result (USA v. other)</u>
1.	<b>Switzerland</b>	Server	2/20/2020	32.0 - 33.0 (1 ongoing game)
2.	<b>England</b>	Server	6/16/2020	101.0 -104.0 (5 ongoing games)
3.	<b>Germany</b>	Server	9/21/2020	136.5 -170.5 (9 ongoing games)
4.	<b>Estonia</b>	Server	10/12/2020	12.5 - 9.5 (2 ongoing games)
5.	<b>Scotland</b>	Server	10/21/2020	31.0 - 26.0 (3 ongoing games)
6.	<b>Slovakia</b>	Server	11/18/2020	40.0 - 38.0 (6 ongoing games)
7.	<b>BeNeLux</b>	Server	11/30/2020	118.5 -121.5 (12 ongoing games)
8.	<b>Belarus</b>	Server	3/13/2021	21.0 - 19.0 (10 ongoing games)
9.	<b>Romania</b>	Server	4/8/2021	29.0 - 36.0 (15 ongoing games)
10.	<b>Philippines</b>	Server	5/31/2021	12.0 - 26.0 (22 ongoing games)
11.	<b>Peru</b>	Server	6/4/2021	30.5 - 28.5 (25 ongoing games)
12.	<b>Slovenia</b>	Server	6/6/2021	12.0 - 13.0 (17 ongoing games)
13.	<b>Spain</b>	Server	6/18/2021	21.5 - 31.5 (31 ongoing games)
14.	<b>Philippines B</b>	Server	7/7/2021	6.0 - 12.0 (16 ongoing games)
15.	<b>Austria</b>	Server	8/15/2021	12.5 - 6.5 (43 ongoing games)
16.	<b>Japan</b>	Server	9/30/2021	3.5 - 0.5 (20 ongoing games)
17.	<b>Indonesia</b>	Server	10/31/2021	5.0 - 6.0 (37 ongoing games)
18.	<b>Denmark</b>	Server	11/15/2021	3.0 - 4.0 (17 ongoing games)

19.	<b>Cuba</b>	Server	11/29/2021	2.5 - 6.5 (151 ongoing games)
20.	<b>Israel</b>	Server	12/21/2021	0.0 - 0.0 (16 ongoing games)

### TOTAL USA RESULTS

Currently (as of 12/14/2021) = 458 ongoing games

Completed games since 1/1/2007\* = 8025 games

Total score since 1/1/2007\* = 3975.5 – 4049.5 (49.5%)

(\* 1/1/2007 is the beginning of USA friendly match records on the ICCF server)

## Highlights and Interesting Tidbits:

(1) Did you catch that: **over 8000 completed games** in USA Friendly Matches.

That's an average of 3 completed games every 2 days for 15 years!! And we completed **over 1000 games during the past 12 months. That's our quickest 1000+ completed games ever!!** – about 3 completed games per day for the past year!! This shows the incredible current interest in the ICCF-US Friendly Matches is at an all-time high. Thank you!

(2) Speaking of interest in the Friendly Matches, we currently have 20 ongoing Friendly Matches. **That is a second-place record.** We once had 21 ongoing matches, and never had 20 before (excluding going up to and down from that 21). Thanks for your ongoing interest in the Friendly Matches!

Now to updates on the specific matches:

(3) Our match versus **Bulgaria** ended in quite an amazing fashion. As of last quarter, there were still 14 ongoing games with a tied score 13 – 13. **Never did I expect** the match's 14 games all to end within one quarter. But they did. And with the USA scoring 8.5 – 5.5 in those last 14 games, we handily won the match!! **Even more amazing: Bulgaria scored no wins** in a match involving 20 boards (40 games)! The USA had a total of 3 wins, including a **sweep by Gary Deskin**. All the other 37 games were draws. **And the whole match (involving 40 games on 20 boards) went from start to finish within 9 months!!** What an incredible match!!

(4) Our match versus **Switzerland** comes down to the final game. We need a win to tie.

(5) In our match versus **Estonia**, there was only one game result this quarter – but that result gave the USA a win!!

(6) Amazingly, the same thing happened in our match versus **Scotland**! One game result was enough! Between **Estonia** and **Scotland** matches, this past quarter saw two USA game wins resulting in two USA match wins!!

(6) We had come from behind and pulled ahead of **Slovakia**, with a 2-point lead as of last quarter. We have held onto that lead! Now with only 6 games to go, it is looking pretty good for the USA. Go team!!

(7) We also came from behind versus **BeNeLux**, closing a large lead by our opponents to just 3. We were not able to continue that trend this past quarter, with each team scoring 5.5 points, maintaining our 3-point deficit. We still have 12 games to catch up. Keep pushing USA!!

(8) We've pulled ahead of **Belarus**, giving us a 2-point lead compared to last quarter's tied score, now with 10 games to go. Go USA!!

(9) Unfortunately, **Romania** continues to increase its lead. We now have a deficit of 7 points with 15 games remaining. This is looking tough to overcome.

(10) We have two separate matches versus **Philippines** and having trouble in both. This is rather astounding for a country that is a new member to the ICCF. We must tip our hat, as they say.

(11) But the match versus **Peru** is going our way. From a 1-point deficit last quarter to a 2-point lead this quarter was a really nice finding. Keep up the good fun USA!!!

(12) **Spain** is giving us trouble. Their lead went from 4 to 10 points in 3 months. There are still 31 ongoing games, so we have some time to work on this deficit.

*Activity is so important in lost positions that it is usually better to be full piece behind and active, than to be a pawn down and passive.*



## Friendly Match (versus game) win/loss record

(Since 1/1/07) 52 wins, 42 losses, 3 ties (= 55.2% for USA)

USA Won	USA Lost**	USA Tied
Argentina (2010)	Aruba (2020)*	Argentina (2019)***
Argentina (2016)	Austria (2014)	Norway (2013)***
Australia/New Zealand (2012)	Belarus (2016)	Wales (2019)***
Australia (2016)	Belgium (2015)	
Australia (2018)	Canada (2019)	
Brazil (2016)	Croatia (2015)	
Brazil (2020)*	Cuba (2013)	
British CCA (2016)	Cuba (2015)	
Bulgaria (2016)	Cuba (2018)	
Bulgaria (2021)	Czech Republic (2011)	
Canada (2014)	Czech Republic (2013)	
Cape Verde (2013)	Czech Republic (2019)	
Denmark (2014)	Denmark (2018)	
England (2008)	Finland (2018)	
England (2012)	France (2010)	
Estonia (2016)	Germany (2008 – Women’s only)	
Estonia (2020)*	Germany (2011)	
Finland (2009)	Germany (2014)	
France (2017)	Germany (2020)*	
Hong Kong (2010)	Iceland (2014)	
India (2014)	Iceland (2019)	
India (2019)	Israel (2014)	
Indonesia (2016)	Italy (2010)	
Israel (2016)	Italy (2017)	
Japan (2013)	Mexico (2017)	
Japan (2017)	Netherlands (2017)	
Latvia (2015)	Norway (2019)	
Latvia (2020)	Panama (2015)	
Lithuania (2015)	Panama (2016)	
Mexico (2020)	Poland (2015)	
Netherlands (2013)	Russia (2013)	
Netherlands (2018)	Russia (v. Zone 3) (2017)	
New Zealand (2020)	Slovenia (2019)	
Panama (2013)	Spain (2008)	
Peru (2013)	Sweden (2007)	
Portugal (2013)	Switzerland (2014)	
Portugal (2018)	Ukraine (2010)	
Romania (2008)	Ukraine (2015)	
Romania (2013)	Ukraine (2018)	
SchemingMind (2018)	Venezuela (2014)	
Scotland (2008)	Venezuela (2017)	
Scotland (2016)	Wales (2016)	
Scotland (2020)*		
Slovakia (2014)		
Slovenia (2015)		
Spain (2016)		

Sweden (2012)  
Sweden (2018)  
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.

\*\*\* After 93 completed matches, where pairings were made with as equal ratings as possible, that there have been only three tied results.

*If you can prevent the opponent from executing his plan before you continue with yours, it is often a good idea.... By restricting your opponent's pieces, you will automatically be increasing the effectiveness of your own.*



## Featured Game

This quarter's featured games section was played by our ICCF ex-National Delegate and long-term supporter of the Friendly Matches, IM Corky Schakel. He shows how the combination of human and chess engine analysis (sometimes called "centaur play") can find a win when the engine alone would fail.

All annotations by IM Schakel.



## IM Corky Schakel (2382) (USA) – IM Ivan Skvira (2383) (BLR)

Belarus – USA Friendly Match 2021

The game can be found at: [ICCF Game](#)

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Be3 e5 7. Nb3 Be6 8. f3 Be7 9. Qd2 O-O  
10. O-O-O Nbd7 (In this Sicilian Najdorf opening white attacks on both sides to open the position to threaten the backwards d-pawn)

11. g4 b5 12. g5 Nh5 13. Kb1 Nb6 14. Na5 Qc7 15. a3 Rab8 16. Nd5 Nxd5 17. exd5 Bxd5 18.  
Qxd5 Qxa5 19. Bc4 Qc7 (Qd8 is more common here.)

20. Bb3 (Ba2 is much more common with more analysis useful to black)

20...a5 21. Qd2 Kh8 22. h4 TN (Opening books give 22.Bd5 and 22.Rhf1; 22. h4 prepares for an endgame with advanced king side pawns)



Position after 22.h4

22...f5 23. Rhg1 g6?! (Black opens a spot for the knight on h5 to get away from the edge of the board, but would do better to strengthen the d-file with a rook)

24. Rc1 Rfe8 25. Rgd1 Bf8 26. Qd5 Qg7 27. Ba2 Rb7 28. Re1 Rc8 29. Re2 Rbb8 30. Rd1 Rb7 31.  
Rg2 Rbb8 32. Rgd2 Rc7 (Better is 32...Re8 to keep the queen from e6. There are so many repeated positions with black's pieces that computer analysis does not evaluate the position)

well – it takes deeper analysis, telling the computer where to look.)

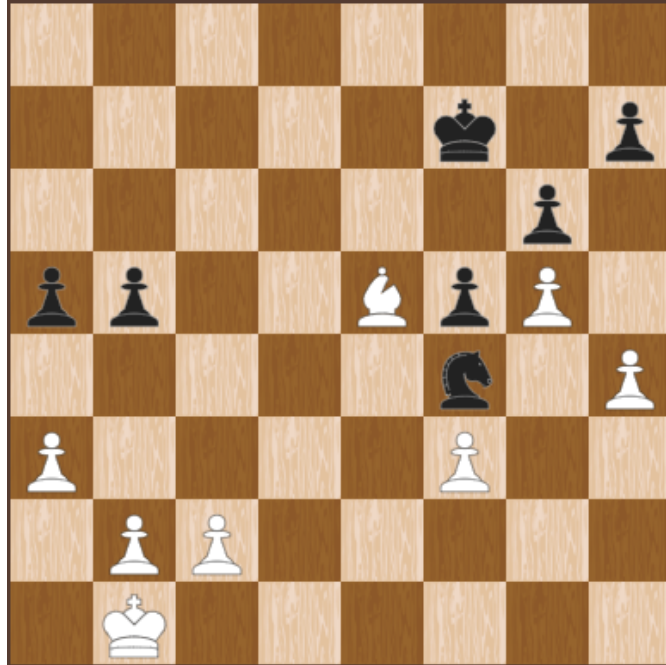
33. Qe6 Rcc8



Position after 33...Rc8

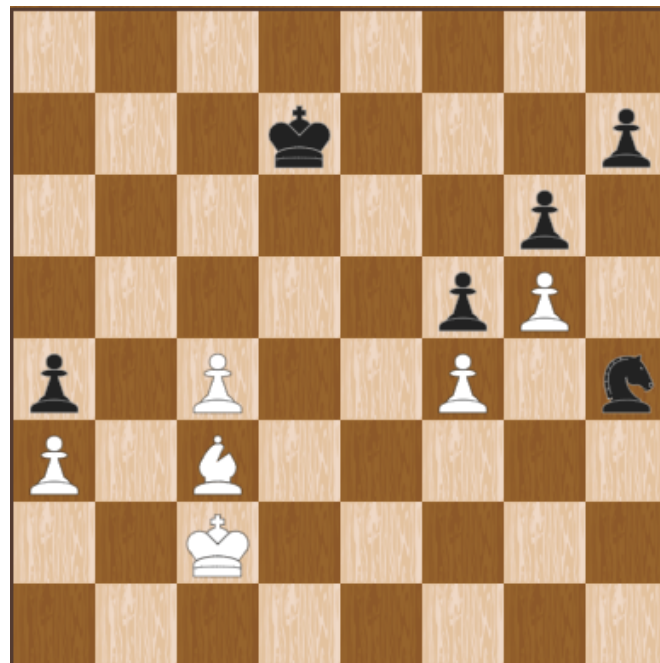
34. Rxd6 (At this point engine analysis can't see deep enough to get to the endgame, and over evaluates black's position after the exchange sacrifice)

34...Nf4 35. Qd7 Bxd6 36. Qxd6 Qc7 37. Bc5 Qxd6 38. Bxd6 Re8 39. Bf7 Kg7 40. Bxe8 Rxe8 41. Re1 Kf7 42. Rxe5 Rxe5 43. Bxe5



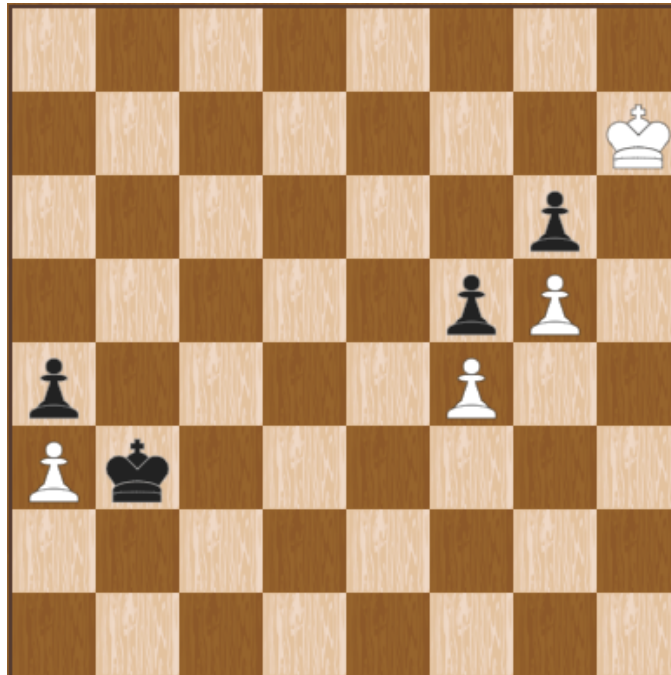
Position after 43.Bxe5

43...Ne2 44. b3 Ke6 45. Bc7 a4 46. bxa4 bxa4 47. c4 Nd4 48. f4 Kd7 49. Be5 Nf3 50. Bc3 Nxh4 51. Kc2 (It is now clear that white can threaten the a-pawn or the h-pawn with a winning endgame)



Position after 51.Kc2

51...Nf3 52. Kd3 Kd6 53. Ke3 Nh2 54. Bb4+ Kc6 55. Ke2 Kd7 56. Bf8 Ke8 57. Bh6 Kd7 58. c5 Kc6  
59. Bf8 Ng4 60. Kd2 Nf2 61. Kc3 Kb5 62. Kd4 Ne4 63. Kd5 Nc3+ 64. Ke6 Ne4 65. Kf7 Nxc5 66.  
Bxc5 Kxc5 67. Kg7 Kc4 68. Kxh7 Kb3



Position after 68...Kb3

69. Kxg6 1-0

*Impatience is one of the biggest reasons for drawing a won game or losing an otherwise even game.*



## The Triple Block time control system has come to the ICCF!

Have you heard about the "Triple Block" time control system? The Triple Block system, most often abbreviated as "TB", was developed by an ICCF work group specifically appointed during the 2015 Congress to address a variety of complaints about the standard 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, and officially approved by the 2020 Congress. Since then, hundreds of events have used the system without significant problem.

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.

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!

The rules and procedures for the TB system are incorporated as Appendix 3 in the document "ICCF Rules".

*Releasing the (center pawn) tension reduces your options, which might eliminate some of your counterplay.*

## 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 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 count 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](http://www.iccfus.com). You can always find copies of "*The Friendly Post*" at that site, with a link on the top in the home page. The server for playing games is at [www.iccf.com](http://www.iccf.com).

Contact Dennis Doren at [dmdorencness@gmail.com](mailto:dmdorencness@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, **IM Dennis Doren**, Friendly Matches Organizer ([dmdorenchess@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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 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 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 is 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.