



The Desert Knight

RETURN OF THE DESERT KNIGHT

Welcome back, everyone! My name is Daniel Serna and I am the current Vice-President of the New Mexico Chess Organization. I have been working tirelessly on growing chess in New Mexico and I've found a new project to stop me from studying opening theory instead of tactics.... I wanted to bring something new for 2023 and this is an area where we can enjoy chess as a community beyond the chess board. My goals for The Desert Knight this year are as follows:

- Bring game analysis and annotations from our events. This will be written by myself and players within the community.
- History of chess for those who are interested in those topics. This can include master's games and information about legendary players, etc.
- Lessons. These can be positional or opening theories. I want it to be something that will bring education to all skill levels
- Interviews and articles from players in the New Mexico community. I want to talk to the highest-rated players, most experienced players/coaches, and anyone with a great story!
- Recaps of tournaments. I will include cross tables and results for the general public
- Any suggestions that you may have for us. I'm open to contributors and writers adding their content to The Desert Knight!

For this issue, I wanted to get started with a slimmed-down version of the content that we want to produce. Some chess news, examples of game analysis/annotation, educational content tied to the games, and some model games to demonstrate the opening theory. We plan to always advertise ALL chess clubs who ask for their information and upcoming events too. As we receive more games with annotations, there will be more content, but we don't want to ONLY be a list of annotated games. Ideally, we will strive to have one game per issue from any major opening variation branch to keep a variety.

I hope that this extra piece of chess brings more motivation, education, and joy to the players of New Mexico. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to create a new project for all of you.

Daniel Serna

Interim Editor-in-Chief, The Desert Knight



Albuquerque/Rio Rancho
Open 2022

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CHESS NEWS AT A GLANCE

- Wesley So wins the Chess.com Global Chess Championship
- Lei Tingjie qualifies for a spot in the Women's Candidates Final
- Magnus Carlsen officially abdicates his World Championship title
- Hikaru Nakamura wins Fischer Random World Championship



Instead of 11...g6, White could have first played 11...cxd4 to open lines for Qf4+

NM WOMEN'S OPEN—5/7/22 FLECK, HEIDI VS. LETARD, WILLOW

(A43 Benoni Defense: Old Benoni)

1.d4 c5 2.c3?! (2.d5 Nf6 3.Nc3 d6 4.e4 e6 5.Bc4 Be7 6.Nge2 exd5)

2...e6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.Bg5 Nf6 5.e3 a6 6.Bd3 Be7 7.Qc2 b6 8.Nbd2 Bb7 9.O-O-O?

(9.O-O h6 10.Bh4 O-O 11.Qd1 d5 12.Re1 Ne4 13.Bxe7 Nxe7 14.Qc2 Nd6 15.dxc5 bxc5)

9...Qc7?

(9...cxd4 10.Nxd4 Nxd4 11.exd4 Bxg2 12.Rhg1 Bd5 13.f4 b5 14.Kb1 g6 15.Rde1 O-O 16.a3)

10.Bxf6?! Bxf6 11.Bxh7?! (11.h4 h6 12.Kb1 d5 13.e4 c4 14.Be2 b5 15.exd5 exd5 16.Nf1 O-O-O 17.Ne3 Kb8)

11...g6?? This was the first losing move for black who had an advantage up to this point. The idea of trapping the bishop with g6 is well-known, but in this position after fxg6, then Queen infiltrates and attacks the King who no longer has any helpful defenders.

(11...cxd4 was best. After 12.exd4, this removes the e3 pawn so after the same series of moves, 15...Qf4+ protects the f6 Bishop and White's attack fails with a whole minor piece advantage for White.)

12.Bxg6 fxg6? (cxd4 was best still.)

13.Qxg6+ Ke7 14.Ne4 Raf8??

(14...Rh8 15.Nxf6 Rxf6 16.Qh7+ Rf7 17.Qh4+ Ke8 18.Ng5 Nd8 19.Nxf7 Nxf7 20.Rhg1 Rc8 21.f3)

15.Nxf6 Kd8 16.dxc5 Ne5 17.Nxe5 Qxe5 18.Nxd7 Qc7 19.Nxf8+ Kc8?! (Checkmate is now unavoidable. Bd5 was best.)

(19...Bd5 20.Qxe6 Rh5 21.cxb6 Qb7 22.Qg6 Rh4 23.Qf6+ Kc8 24.Qxh4 Qf7 25.Qg3 Kb7 26.Rxd5)

20.Qe8+ Qd8 21.Qxd8#

White wins by checkmate. 1-0

1...C5 —

OLD BENONI DEFENSE

The Old Benoni Defense is quite rare and uncommon nowadays but can actually lead to a tactical and sharp game. Black takes a swipe with c5 and gambits a pawn for the exchange, develops, and gets pieces into the game. White normally responds with d5; taking the pawn is not recommended because of 3.e6, and if White tries defending, then a5 and White has no solutions to hold on to pawns while Black gains a tempo. This opening is very fun to play with but is quite rare nowadays. One idea for Black is to transpose to a Modern Benoni while avoiding the Four Pawn Attack (that is, variations with an early f2-f4 for White). Black can fianchetto his King's Bishop, and only after White plays Nf3 blocking an f-pawn, continue with ... e6 and ... exd5.

Another idea for Black is to keep the h8-a1 diagonal of Black's bishop open by delaying ... Nf6. Black could then play ... Ne7 instead of ... Nf6, or possibly, if White plays an early Nc3, give up his bishop by ... Bc3 to double the pawns.

Model Game:

Alexander Alekhine vs.
Grigory Levenfish
St. Petersburg—1912

1.d4 c5 2.d5 Nf6 3.Nc3 d6
4.e4 g6 5.f4 Nbd7 6.Nf3 a6
7.e5 dxe5 8.fxe5 Ng4 9.e6
Nde5 10.Bf4 Nxf3+ 11.gxf3
Nf6 12.Bc4 fxe6 13.dxe6
Qb6 14.Qe2 Qxb2 15.Nb5
Qxa1+ 16.Kf2 Qxh1
17.Nc7+ Kd8 18.Qd2+ Bd7
19.exd7

Black resigns, 1-0

UPCOMING EVENTS

12/3—Santa Fe Rooks, (Santa Fe) 7-SS, G/15d5, \$20, Prizes based on # of entries, Round 1 @ 11am

12/3—December G/60 Warmup, (Albuquerque) 3-SS (Accelerated), G60d5, \$20, 1st-\$160, 2nd-\$90, Bottom Half-\$70, Upset-\$40, Round 1 @ 10:45am

12/10-NM Scholastic Blitz and Rapid, (Las Cruces) 5-SS, G/10d5 & G/5d2, \$30 for both, \$20 for one, Trophies for 1st-3rd per section, Round 1 @ 9am

12/13-Beer and Blitz, (Albuquerque) Single RR, G/5+5, \$10, Prizes based on entries, Round 1 @ 6pm

More information can be found at: www.nmchess.org/tournament-events



“Every chess master was once a beginner.” - Irving Chernev

CHESS CLUBS AROUND THE STATE

Alamogordo Chess Club—

Mondays, 4pm-7pm at Plateau Espresso

575-415-3628 or
matt.grinberg@erols.com

Coronado Chess Club—

Wednesdays, 6:45pm at Frontier Restaurant

Two unrated rounds weekly, G/30

Diamondback Chess Club—

Mondays, 6pm-9pm at Fuddruckers (Pan American)

RATED games, \$5 entry w/ cash prizes

Chess.coachwillow@gmail.com

Empire Chess Club—

Sundays (except holidays), 5pm-9pm at Jason's Deli (Holly Ave)

No charge to play, \$0.25 for rated games

505-315-8709 or
chess.coach.steve@gmail.com

Four Corners Chess Club—

Tuesdays, 5pm-7pm at San Juan College
(student lounge above Mary's Kitchen,
next to SJC Library)

505-330-2923 (Steve Marquez)

505-486-1197 (Preston Herrington)

Santa Fe Rooks—

Monthly Tournaments

Mondays, 6pm-9pm at Violet Crown on
Alcaldesa Street



NEW MEXICO CHESS ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the organization shall be to promote chess in the state of New Mexico by conducting chess tournaments and by cooperating with chess clubs, schools, and chess associations throughout New Mexico whose aim is to broaden and develop chess as an educational, competitive, and cultural activity. NMCO is affiliated with the United States Chess Federation (USCF) and is the official state affiliate representative to USCF with the privileges and obligations pertaining thereto.



NEW MEXICO CHESS EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: John LeTard

Vice President: Daniel Serna

Treasurer: Dean Brunton

Secretary: Annabelle Romero

Tournament Organizer: Kevin Zemko

Scholastic Director: Willow LeTard

Desert Knight Editor: Daniel Serna (Interim)

Webmaster: Joseph Cutchall

Member at Large: Will Barela

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Thank you to Heidi Fleck and Willow LeTard for the game used in this issue.

Thank you to all players at the events featured in the photos.

Thank you to all the chess players in New Mexico. Without you, there would not be a New Mexico Chess Organization!

If you are interested in contributing articles, game analysis, puzzles, lessons, or anything chess related, please reach out to **Daniel Serna** (vicepresident@nmchess.org) to be included in upcoming issues!

If you see any errors or improvements, contact the editor so we can correct them in a future issue.