

Championship Chronicle



2009 US Women's Chess Championship

Favorites Dominate on Day One

Inside this issue:

Favorites Dominate on Day One	1
Round Two Match-Ups	1
Ben's Best: Baginskaite-Abrahamyan	2
Krush-Melekhina	2
Zenyuk-Zatonskih	3
Fan-Foisor	3
Tsagaan-Goletiani	4

The 2009 US Women's Championship got underway on Sunday, October 4.

The random drawing of lots at the opening ceremony ensured that the five higher rated players would each play one of the five lower rated players in the first round and four out of the five capitalized with a win.

IM's Anna Zatonskih and Rusudan Goletiani were joined by WGM's Camilla Baginskaite and Sabina Foisor in the winner's circle and will head into day two in a cheery mood.

The fifth game of the day was the only peaceful finish as IM Irina Krush was held to a well played draw by WIM Alisa Melekhina.



The participants in the 2009 US Women's Chess Championship. Back row (left to right): Rusudan Goletiani, Alisa Melekhina, Camilla Baginskaite, Anna Zatonskih and Irina Krush. Front row (left to right): Sabina Foisor, Tatev Abrahamyan, Iryna Zenyuk, Yun Fan and Battsetseg Tsagaan. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

Current Standings:

- 1-4 Anna Zatonskih, 1
- 1-4 Rusudan Goletiani, 1
- 1-4 Sabina Foisor, 1
- 1-4 Camilla Baginskaite, 1
- 5-6 Irina Krush, ½
- 5-6 Alisa Melekhina, ½
- 7-10 Tatev Abrahamyan, 0
- 7-10 Iryna Zenyuk, 0
- 7-10 Battsetseg Tsagaan, 0
- 7-10 Yun Fan, 0

Round Two Match-Ups

Round two sees some pretty good match-ups as the players all try to get into that groove and make sure they don't fall back too far.

The pick of the day is probably IM Rusudan Goletiani vs IM Irina Krush. Krush will not want to fall too far behind the leaders having

drawn with the white pieces in round one.

IM Anna Zatonskih gets her first white pieces against WIM Battsetseg Tsagaan and will possibly see this as a chance to put some early pressure on her main rivals.

The other games see WGM Sabina Foisor vs WFM Tatev Abrahamyan, WIM Alisa Melekhina vs WGM Camilla Baginskaite and Yun Fan vs WIM Iryna Zenyuk.

Foisor, Baginskaite and Melekhina will all be looking to build on their good start on day one.

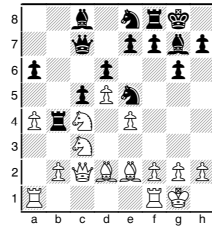


Ben's Best

GM-Elect Ben Finegold Picks His Game of the Day

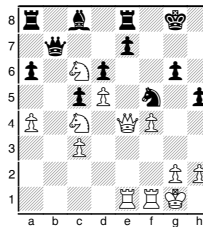
Baginskaite,Camilla (2356) –
Abrahamyan,Tatev (2342)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 Tatev had to decide whether to play the Benko Gambit or King's Indian. I thought the Benko was a good choice. It is usually a good idea to come out swinging! **4.cxb5 a6 5.b6** This is the specialty of Camilla and her GM husband, Alex Yermolinsky. In fact, this has already been seen 2 years previous in a game between these two players. **5...d6 6.Nc3 g6 7.a4 Qxb6 8.Nf3** Normally, white plays **8.a5**. Camilla decides to do without this move, as it allows counterplay via the b5 square, either with **Bd7–b5** ideas, or **Ne8–c7–b5**. [**8.a5 Qb4 9.Ra4 Qb7 10.e4 Bg7 11.Bc4 Nbd7 12.f4 0-0 13.Nf3 Ne8 14.0-0 Nc7 15.Qd3 Nf6 16.Bd2 Bd7 17.Raa1 Bb5 18.b3 Rad8 19.f5 Nd7 20.Bf4 Rb8 21.Rab1 Ne8 22.g4 Nef6 23.h3 Bxc4 24.bxc4 Qc7 25.Bd2 Qxa5 26.Nb5 Qd8 27.Na7 Rxb1 28.Rxb1 Qa8 29.Nc6 Re8 30.Ba5 Nb8 31.e5 Nfd7 32.e6 Nxc6 33.exd7 Nxa5 34.dxe8Q+ Qxe8 35.Qc2 gxf5 36.gxf5 Qd7** '?' **37.Rb8+ Bf8 38.Qc3 1-0** Baginskaite,C (2361)–Abrahamyan,T (2258)/2007 US Women's Ch. 2007] **8...Bg7 9.Nd2 0-0 10.e4 Nbd7 11.Be2 Rb8 12.Nc4 Qc7 13.0-0 Rb4 14.Qc2** Previously, in the game Seirawan–Shirov, white played **14.a5**. I like Camilla's move, as it keeps control of b5. White has a little advantage, but black has good counter chances... typical Benoni/Benko. **14...Ne8 15.Bd2 Ne5**



16.Nd1 I was really impressed with this move while Jen and I were commenting live. This shows a high level of understanding of the position. White can later play **Ne3** and **Nc4**, and she keeps on eye on b2, as well as defending c4 and attacking b4. What an all-purpose move! **16...Rb8 17.Na5 f5?** This is Tatev's first error. She thought if white played **Nc6**, she could always kick out the knight, and/or play **e6** and attack the d5 pawn. However, in the game, black gets too passive, and I was certain things had gone wrong if black is forced to play **Ra8**. Better is **17...Bd7**, developing the bishop, and defending c6, when I think the game is dynamically balanced. **18.f4 Nf7 19.Nc6 Ra8 20.Ba5 Qb7 21.Bc3 Nf6** During the live broadcast, I thought this was an excellent move, and that black was about equal. Jen Shahade then showed the right way for white, which is exactly what Camilla played, keeping white's edge. **22.Bf3! fxe4 23.Bxe4 Nxe4** I did not like this move as I was doing live commentary, but, it is probably all right. It is difficult to suggest better alternatives.

24.Qxe4 Re8 Tatev was planning on playing **24...e6!**? but she changed her mind when she saw **25.Ne3 exd5 26.Nxd5!** However, this is still black's best, but, instead of **25...exd5**, better is **25...Bd7**, and if the feared **26.Na5**, then **26...Qc8** holds on. **25.Ne3 Nh6 26.Rae1** Tatev became discouraged when she saw **26...Nf5 27.Nxf5 Bxf5 28.Nxe7+! Kf7? 29.Nxf5!** winning. **26...Bxc3 27.bxc3** Black needs to defend grimly, but time trouble, and no confidence in her position led to a quick demise. Black should try **27...Kh8** or **27...Kg7**. **27...Nf5? 28.Nc4! 28...h5** This loses quickly, but, black had no good defense to both **29.g4** and **29.Rb1** (followed by **30.Nb6**)



29.Nxd6! A quick finish! Tatev did not like the looks of **29...Nxd6 30.Qxg6+ Kf8 31.Qh7** threatening **Ne5** and **Ng6** mate. A very nice strategic game by Camilla Baginskaite. **1-0**

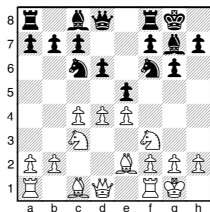
"During the live broadcast, I thought this was an excellent move, and that black was about equal. Jen Shahade then showed the right way for white, which is exactly what Camilla played, keeping white's edge."



WFM Tatev Abrahamyan at the opening ceremony.

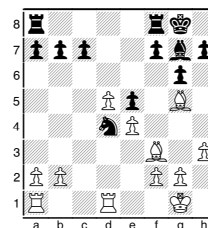
Krush Held by Melekhina

Krush,Irina (2478) –
Melekhina,Alisa (2301)
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 e5 7.0-0 Nc6



8.dxe5 [The main line, one that

Krush usually plays and Melekhina has faced previously in this position, is **8.d5** which contains a lot of theory. Krush probably wanted to avoid going into a theoretical debate and get both players thinking for themselves.] **8...dxe5 9.Bg5 Qxd1 10.Rfxd1 Bg4** Removing the defender from the d4-square so that her knight can use it as an outpost. **11.h3 Bxf3 12.Bxf3 Nd4 13.Nd5 Nxd5 14.cxd5**



14...f5! Melekhina plays actively, although opening up the position for the two bishops is always a risky idea. **15.Rac1 Rf7 16.Be3**

fxe4 17.Bg4 [17.Bxe4? Ne2+] **17...Nf5 18.Rc3 h5** Stopping any ideas the bishop had of coming into e6. **19.Be2 Bf8** As noted in the commentary room, this bishop potentially belongs on the d6 square to help with the defense of c7. **20.Rc4 Nd6 21.Rc3 Nf5** Melekhina is happy to repeat the position with the black pieces against Krush. **22.Rc4 Nd6 23.Rc3 Nf5 ½-½**

Chess Club & Scholastic Center of St. Louis
4657 Maryland Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63108

Phone: (314) 361-2437
Fax: (314) 361-5465

www.SaintLouisChessClub.org
www.USChessChamps.com



Round Schedule

- Round 2, Monday, October 5, 2:00 pm
- Round 3, Tuesday, October 6, 2:00 pm
- Round 4, Wednesday, October 7, 2:00 pm
- Round 5, Thursday, October 8, 2:00 pm
- Round 6, Saturday, October 10, 12:00 pm
- Round 7, Sunday, October 11, 12:00 pm
- Round 8, Monday, October 12, 12:00 pm
- Round 9, Tuesday, October 13, 10:00 am
- Tie-Break (if necessary), Tuesday, October 13, 5:00 pm

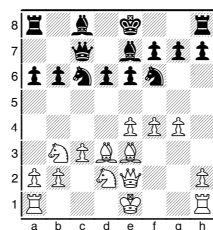
Other Events

- Breakfast with Players at Siteman Cancer Ctr, Friday, October 9, 8:30 am
- Players Simul at Sci-Fest, Friday, October 9, 10:30 am
- Players Lunch at Chess Club, Friday, October 9, 12:00 pm
- Closing Ceremony, Tuesday, October 13, 7:00 pm
- A Game of Chance, 2009 US Women's Champion vs Special Guest Kemper Art Museum, Wednesday, October 14, 6:00 pm

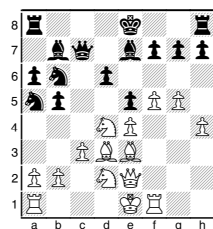
Tsagaan and Goletiani Forget How to Castle

Tsagaan, Battsetseg (2265) –
Goletiani, Rusudan (2437) [B42]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
4.Nxd4 a6 5.Bd3 Bc5 6.Nb3 Be7
7.Be3 [7.Qg4 is a very popular
move here and one that Goletiani
has faced recently 7...g6 8.Qe2
d6 9.0-0 Nd7 10.Na3 Ne5 11.Nc4
Nxc4 12.Bxc4 Qc7 13.Bd3 e5
14.f4 Nf6 15.fx5 dxe5 16.Bh6
Ng4 17.Bd2 Be6 18.Rf3 Nf6
19.Qf1 Nh5 20.Be2 Qxc2 21.Rc3
Qxb2 22.Rc7 Nf4 23.Bc4 Bd6
24.Rxb7 Bxc4 25.Qxc4 0-0 26.g3
Nh3+ 27.Kg2 Ng5 28.h4 Ne6
29.Kh3 Rab8 30.Rxb8 Rxb8
31.Bc3 Qc2 32.Nd2 Rb5 33.Qc8+
Bf8 34.Rf1 Rc5 35.Qe8 Nf4+
36.Rxf4 exf4 37.Bd4 Qd3 38.Bf2
Rc2 0-1 Gaponenko, I (2438)–
Goletiani, R (2391)/Ningbo 2009]
7...Qc7 8.N1d2 [Two moves,
8.Nc3 and; 8.0-0 are more popu-
lar here although as we'll see,
castling doesn't seem to be a part
of either player's plans.] 8...d6
9.f4 Nf6 10.Qe2 Nc6 11.c3 b6
12.g4

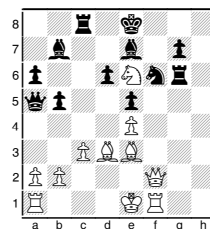


Tsagaan definitely doesn't hide
her intentions with this move.
12...Bb7 13.Rf1 Nd7 14.g5 b5
15.h4 Nb6 16.Nd4 Na5 17.f5 e5



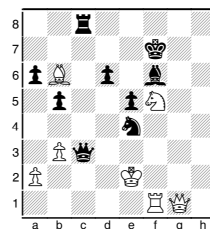
18.N4b3 [An interesting alterna-
tive was the piece sacrifice with
18.f6!? exd4 19.fxg7 Rg8 20.Bxd4
intending Qh5 or Qf2 ensuring a
complicated and messy game,
which would suit Tsagaan's style.]
18...Nc6 19.Nf3 Nd7 20.h5 Na5

21.Nxa5 Qxa5 22.g6 hxg6
23.fxg6 fxg6 24.hxg6 Nf6?! Try-
ing to block off the f-file while
putting pressure on the e-pawn.
However, opening up the white
king with 24...b4 or getting the
black king to a safer place with
24...O-O-O may have been bet-
ter. 25.Ng5 Rh6 26.Ne6 Rxg6
27.Qf2 Rc8



28.Bb6 [28.a4! A very hard move
to find but it is white's best shot.
The simple idea is to remove
access to a4 for the black queen
so now b4 on the next move will
trap her. How does black stop
this? 28...Rxc3! A necessary
counter shot just to try and stay in
the game (28...bxa4? 29.Bb6)
29.Bd2 Bc8 30.Bxc3 b4 and black
will at least win a piece back for
the rook.] 28...Qa4 29.b3? Tsa-

gaan was herself critical of this
move which gives the black queen
the chance to infiltrate the white
camp. 29...Qa3 30.Rg1? A deci-
sive mistake but made in severe
time pressure. 30...Rxc3!
31.Qxg1 Qb2 32.Nxg7+ Kf7
33.Rb1 Qxc3+ 34.Ke2 Bxe4
35.Bxe4 Nxe4 36.Rf1+ Bf6
37.Nf5



Can you find the mate in 6?
Goletiani did with just one minute
left on her clock to reach move
40! 37...Qd2+ 38.Kf3 Qf4+
39.Kg2 Rg8+ 40.Kh3 Rh8+
41.Kg2 Qg4+ [41...Qg4+ 42.Ng3
Qxg3#] 0-1

