

# Championship Chronicle



2009 U S W o m e n ' s C h e s s C h a m p i o n s h i p

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## Zatonskih Stays Top, Melekhina Moves Into Second

In a round that paired all the unbeaten players together, only Sabina Foisor dropped out of that respective group as she lost to Alisa Melekhina.

Melekhina struggled in the opening but Foisor failed to put the finishing touches on what looks like a great theoretical novelty in the King's Indian. However, Melekhina didn't seem to suffer the same problem when she was given the opportunity to obtain a winning advantage and she duly converted the full point to move into lone second place in the standings.

Overnight leader Anna Zatonskih played an interesting game with Camilla Baginskaite. Both players came into the game unbeaten and both remained that way after a

draw was eventually agreed.

This result leaves Zatonskih still at the top of the leader board with 3½/4 while Baginskaite is still in the hunt just a point behind.

The other exciting game of the day was a tactical melee between Rusudan Goletiani and Tatev Abrahamyan. Abrahamyan's unsound sacrifice confused Goletiani, in severe time trouble, who was unable to find the best continuations on move 39 and 40, the last two moves of the time control.

Move 41 saw Goletiani spend nearly 30 minutes wondering what happened to her winning position as she had to end up fighting for a draw, which was eventually agreed a few moves later.

Yun Fan scored her first half-point of the tournament against the most unlikely of opponents, 2nd seed Irina Krush.

Krush still finds herself 1½ points off the lead and needs to find some victories while hoping others manage to take points off Zatonskih if she is to have any chance of catching the leader.

In the final game to finish of the night, Iryna Zenyuk and Battsetseg Tsagaan played a slow maneuvering game which eventually ended peacefully after nearly 6 hours of play.

## Current Standings:

- 1 Anna Zatonskih, 3½
- 2 Alisa Melekhina, 3
- 3-4 Sabina Foisor, 2½
- 3-4 Camilla Baginskaite, 2½
- 5-6 Irina Krush, 2
- 5-6 Rusudan Goletiani, 2
- 7-8 Iryna Zenyuk, 1½
- 7-8 Battsetseg Tsagaan, 1½
- 9 Tatev Abrahamyan, 1
- 10 Yun Fan, ½

## Round 5 Match-Ups

The game of the day will probably be Alisa Melekhina vs Rusudan Goletiani. Having drawn with Irina Krush in round 1, Melekhina will be looking to take points off another of the IMs in the event although Goletiani will be looking for the win to raise her own hopes of taking the title.

Tournament leader, Zatonskih, has the black pieces against Tatev Abrahamyan who has proved she can play with the big guns having already drawn with Rusudan Goletiani and Sabina Foisor.

Camilla Baginskaite may see a chance to gain some ground as

she has the white pieces against Yun Fan, who should herself be on a high after her previous result.

In the other two games, good friends play each other as Battsetseg Tsagaan plays Sabina Foisor and Krush plays Iryna Zenyuk.



## Ben's Best: Foisor-Melekhina

### GM-Elect Ben Finegold Picks His Game of the Day

Foisor, Sabina (2379) –  
Melekhina, Alisa (2253)

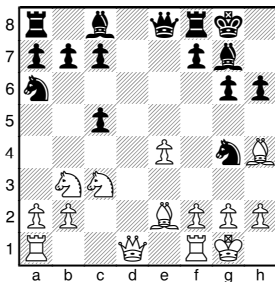
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3  
Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3

Sabina surprises us once again by avoiding her usual Saemisch Variation with 5.f3.

5...0-0 6.Be2 e5 7.Be3  
Na6 8.0-0 Ng4

In round 2, Foisor got this position against Tatev Abrahamyan. However, the move order was slightly different (7.0-0 Na6 8.Be3 Ng4). Melekhina said she looked at this line, and thought she could improve on black's play.

9.Bg5 Qe8 10.c5 h6  
11.Bh4 exd4 12.Nxd4  
dxc5 13.Nb3



#### 13...c4

This was Melekhina's prepared improvement. The idea is to stop white from destroying the black pawn structure on the queenside with the usual Bxa6 ideas (as seen in the above-mentioned Abrahamyan game). 13...g5 14.Bg3 Ne5 15.Bxa6 bxa6 16.Nd5 Rb8 17.Nxc7 Qa4 18.Qd6 Rb6 19.Qxc5 Rc6 20.Qxa7 Nd3 21.Nd5 Kh8 22.e5 Nxe5 23.Nc3 Qb4 24.Rae1 Nd3 25.Re4 Qb6 26.Qxb6 Rxb6 27.h4 Nxb2 28.Be5 Bb7 29.Bxg7+ Kxg7 30.Re2 Nd3 31.hxg5 hxg5 32.Rd2 Nf4 33.f3 Rh8 34.Ne2

Nxe2+ 35.Rxe2 Bd5  
36.Re5 Bxb3 37.axb3 f6  
38.Ra5 ½-½ Foisor, S  
(2379)–Abrahamyan, T  
(2342)

#### 14.Bxc4 Nb4 15.Bb5

Played after long thought. During the live commentary, I did not understand this move. However, Melekhina thought it was a fantastic improvement! If black tries the "obvious" 15...c6, then Alisa was worried about 16.Be2, and the Nb4 has trouble finding a safe haven, after 17.a3.

#### 15...Nc6?

Pinning the knight cannot be correct. Black should bite the bullet and either move her queen or play 15...c6. The long think Foisor took over her accidental novelty pays off quickly.

#### 16.h3

Even better is the immediate 16.Nd5! which we expected in the commentary room. If black tries 16...Qxe4, then 17.f3! is most annoying.

#### 16...Nf6?!

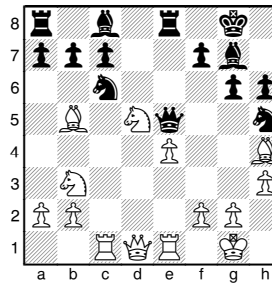
In the commentary room, we were looking at 16...Bxc3 17.bxc3 Qe5 18.hxg4 Qxb5. Rybka thinks this line is best, and that only holds a small advantage.

#### 17.Re1 Nh5 18.Nd5

I thought 18.e5 was stronger, but, Rybka agrees with Foisor's choice. White has a clear advantage.

#### 18...Qe5 19.Rc1! Re8?

This loses immediately. Black is worse, but still fighting after the expected 19...Qxb2.



#### 20.Rxc6?

Throws away the win. In the commentary room, we all thought 20.Na5! won outright. I asked Alisa after the game, and, she agreed, and expected Foisor to play this way. Rybka is absolutely giddy after 20.Na5, but now, after the text move, white is only a little better. 20.Na5 Be6 21.Nc4 Qd4 22.Qxd4 Bxd4 23.Nxc7

#### 20...bxc6 21.Bxc6 Be6 22.Bxa8 Rxa8 23.Bd8!?

A bolt from the blue, and, probably the reason Sabina went in for 20.Rxc6. Black needs to play 23...c6 now, and, after 24.Ne7+ Kh7 25.Nxc6 Qxb2, the game is about equal. Alisa thinks she sees a win, and plays too aggressively with Δ

#### 23...Bxh3? 24.Nxc7?

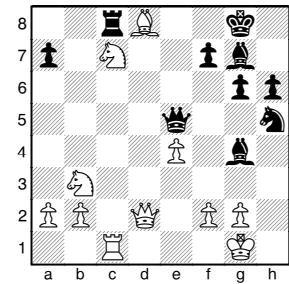
24.f4! A very difficult move to find! 24...Qe6 (24...Nxf4 25.Bxc7+-; 24...Qxb2 25.gxh3+-) 25.Bxc7 Bg4 26.Qd2±

#### 24...Bg4!

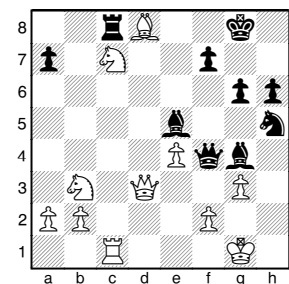
Now the players were in time trouble, as the game as been so tactically rich.

#### 25.Qd2 Rc8 26.Rc1?

Loses. Best was the unusual 26.Na6, and white is worse, but not losing. Now, it's all over.



#### 26...Qf4! 27.Qd3 Be5 28.g3



#### 28...Qf3!

Melekhina had seen this idea when playing 26...Qf4

#### 29.Qxf3 Bxf3

White loses a piece, and the rest is easy for black.

#### 30.Rc5 Rxd8 31.Nd5

31.Rxe5?? Rd1+

#### 31...Bxe4 32.Ne3 Bxb2

33.Rc7 a6 34.Nc5 Bf3

35.Nxa6 Ra8 36.Nb4 Ba3

37.Nbc2 Bd6 38.Rd7 Bc5

39.Ne1 Bxe3 40.Nxf3 Bc5

41.Rc7 Bf8 42.Rc2 Bg7

43.Kg2 Nf6 44.Ne5 Nd5

45.Nd3 Ra3 46.Nc1 Rc3

47.Rd2 Nf4+ 48.gxf4 Rxc1

49.Rd8+ Kh7 50.Rd7 f5

51.Ra7 h5 52.a4 Kh6

53.a5 Rc2 54.Rd7 Ra2

55.Rd5 Bc3

A nice game by Melekhina

who takes over sole 2nd

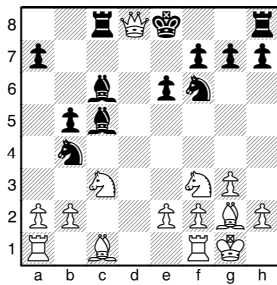
place.

0-1

## Zatonskih Stays Top, Baginskaite Stays Unbeaten

Zatonskih, Anna (2496) –  
Baginskaite, Camilla (2356)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5  
4.g3 dxc4 5.Bg2 c5 6.0-0  
Nc6 7.Qa4 Bd7 8.Qxc4 b5  
9.Qd3 Rc8 10.dxc5 Bxc5  
11.Nc3 Nb4 12.Qd1 Bc6  
13.Qxd8+



Zatonskih had prepared this whole line seeing that Baginskaite had played it previously. She had analyzed her new move here, 13.Qxd8+ and thought it led to an advantage after the rook recaptures. 13.Bg5 0-0 14.a3 Qxd1 15.Rfxd1 Nbd5 16.Bd2 Nb6 17.Ne5 Bxg2 18.Kxg2 a6 19.Nd3 Nc4 20.Be1 Be7 21.b4 ½-½ Kachiani Gersinska, K (2410)– Baginskaite, C (2325)/ Moscow 1994



WGM Camilla Baginskaite and IM Anna Zatonskih speak to the commentary team after their game. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

13...Kxd8

Baginskaite recaptures with the king, something Zatonskih admitted she hadn't looked at.

14.Bg5

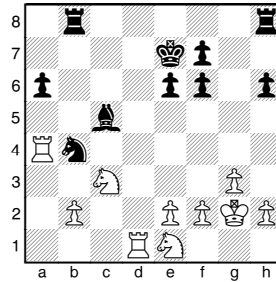
Zatonskih said she looked at the following line which leads to the win of a pawn 14.Ne5 Bxg2 15.Kxg2 Ke7 16.Nxb5 but thought that black had adequate compensation after 16...Rhd8 with the simple idea of ...a6 followed by Bd4.

14...Ke7 15.Rfd1 h6  
16.Bxf6+ gxf6 17.Ne1  
Bxg2 18.Kxg2 a6

Baginskaite has handled the opening well and the position is probably equal.

19.a4 bxa4 20.Rxa4 Rb8

20...f5 denying the knight access to the e4 square runs into 21.e4! and black has to give up the f-pawn or allow her pawn formation to be destroyed.



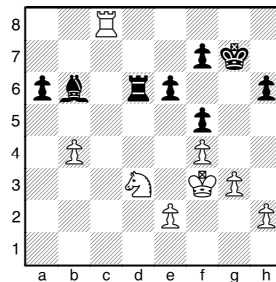
21.Na2

21.Ne4! Ba7 22.Rc1 Rb7 23.Rc4 Rhb8 ties the black rooks down to the defence of the knight, which in turn is defending the a6 pawn. This position must favor white.

21...Nxa2 22.Rxa2

White's knight is possibly slightly better than black's bishop but this is nowhere near enough to provide any sort of noticeable advantage.

22...Rb6 23.Nd3 Bd4  
24.Rc1 Rhb8 25.Rc7+ Kf8  
26.b4 Kg7 27.f4 f5 28.Kf3  
Rd6 29.Rac2 Bb6 30.Rc8  
Rxc8 31.Rxc8



31...Bd4

31...a5 32.bxa5 (32.b5? Rd5) 32...Bxa5 swapping the queenside pawns off leads to an obvious equal-

ity.

32.Rc7 Rb6 33.h3 h5  
34.g4 hxg4+ 35.hxg4  
fxg4+ 36.Kxg4 Rb5  
37.Rd7 Bc3 38.Ra7 a5  
39.bxa5 Rxa5 40.Rxa5  
Bxa5 41.Kf3 ½-½

*"Baginskaite recaptures with the king, something Zatonskih admitted she hadn't looked at."*

## Fan Scores Shock Draw Against Krush

Fan, Yun (2201) –  
Krush, Irina (2478)

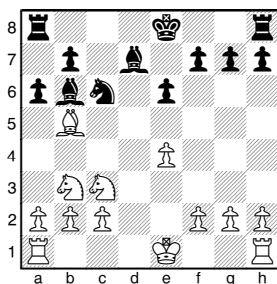
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4  
cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3  
Nc6 6.Bg5 e6 7.Qd2 Qb6  
8.Nb3 Be7 9.Bxf6 Bxf6

9...gxf6 doesn't lead to a pawn sacrifice and may have been a better option for this game. Of course hindsight is a wonderful thing!

10.Qxd6 Bd7

Krush tries a different move, a rather unusual one at that, from the one that lost quickly back in the Netherlands last year 10...Be7 11.Qg3 0-0 12.0-0-0 a6 13.Be2 Qa7 14.e5 b5 15.Ne4 Qc7 16.f4 Nb4 17.c3 Kh8 18.Kb1 Nd5 19.Bd3 Qb6 20.Nd4 Bd7 21.Ng5 Bxg5 22.fxg5 a5 23.Bxh7 Kxh7 24.Qh4+ Kg8 25.Rd3 Rfc8 26.Rf1 b4 27.g6 Be8 28.Qh7+ Kf8 29.gxf7 1-0 Nijboer, F (2578)–Krush, I (2473)/Wijk aan Zee NED 2008; 10...Be5 is actually the most common continuation in this line 11.Qc5 Qxc5 12.Nxc5 Ke7

11.Qc5 Bd4 12.Qxb6  
Bxb6 13.Bb5 a6



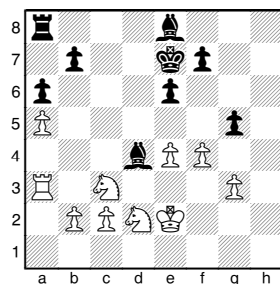
14.Bxc6

The commentary room did not like the idea of voluntarily giving Krush the bishop pair. Ben Finegold gave some good advice when he said do not always be so hasty to trade off pieces when ahead on material. Sometimes your pieces are better than your opponent's.

14...Bxc6 15.a4 Ke7  
16.Ke2 Rhc8 17.f3 Be8  
18.g3 Rc4 19.Rhd1 g5  
20.a5 Ba7 21.Rd3 h5

Black has to create some open lines for the bishops. White's knights do well at defending but they have to remain very passive, giving black compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

22.Nd2 Rd4 23.Rxd4  
Bxd4 24.Ra3 h4 25.f4  
hxg3 26.hxg3



26...g4

26...gxf4 27.gxf4 Bc6  
28.Rb3 is equal and the position has simplified. Krush wants to keep the position complicated and the advanced g-pawn may eventually become important if she can infiltrate on the kingside.

27.Nd1 Bb5+ 28.c4 Bc6  
29.b4 Rh8 30.Ne3 Rh2+  
31.Kd3 Bxe3 32.Kxe3 f5

32...Rg2 33.Nf1 Rb2 34.e5  
Rxb4 may have been a more testing variation for Krush to go for.

33.exf5 exf5 34.Rd3

Krush's compensation has disappeared and she is now just a pawn down.

34...Rg2 35.Kd4 Kd6  
36.Kc3+ Ke6 37.Kd4 Kd6  
38.Kc3+ Ke6 39.Kd4 Kd6

Fan is happy to accept her first half-point of the tournament, especially against Krush.

½-½

*"The commentary room did not like the idea of voluntarily giving Krush the bishop pair."*



Yun Fan scored her first half-point of the tournament, drawing against Irina Krush. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

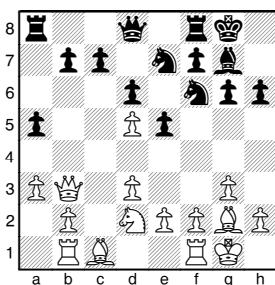
## Good Friends, Goletiani and Abrahamyan, Play Tactical Slugfest

Goletiani, Rusudan (2437) –  
Abrahamyan, Tatev (2334)

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.g3  
Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 5.0-0 d6  
6.Nc3 e5 7.d3 h6 8.Rb1 a5  
9.a3 Nc6 10.Nd2

The immediate 10.b4 is  
more common.

10...Be6 11.Nd5 Bxd5  
12.cxd5 Ne7 13.Qb3



13...a4!? 14.Qa2

14.Qxb7 Qd7 threaten-  
ing ...Rfb8 trapping the  
queen 15.Qb4 Nexd5

14...c6 15.dxc6 Nxc6  
16.b3 Nd4 17.Re1 Rc8  
18.e3

18.bxa4 Rc2 19.Qa1 d5  
20.e3 Ne6 leads to similar  
lines as what was played in  
the game.

18...Rc2 19.Qa1 Ne6

19...Nxb3 20.Nxb3 axb3  
21.Rxb3 Qa5=

20.Rb2 Qc7 21.Qb1 Rc3

21...Rc8 22.Rxc2 Qxc2  
23.Qxc2 Rxc2 24.bxa4  
Nc5=

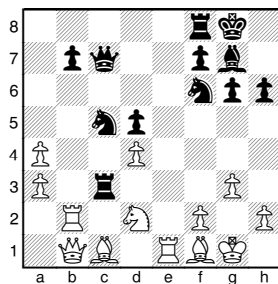
22.bxa4 Nc5 23.Bf1!

Keeping the knight out of  
the d3 square.

23...d5 24.d4

24.Rb4! leads to complica-  
tions favorable to white  
24...e4 25.dxe4 dxe4  
26.Bb2 Nd5 27.Rb5

24...exd4 25.exd4



25...Nxa4

25...Ng4! 26.Rb4! (26.dxc5  
Qxc5 and white cannot  
defend f2 without giving the  
piece back.) 26...Ne6  
27.Bb2 Rc2 is ok for black.

26.Rxb7 Qa5 27.Rb5 Qa7  
28.Qb4

Goletiani plays accurately  
in time pressure. Abra-

hamyan's pieces are all  
getting over worked and  
she will find it hard to show  
adequate compensation for  
the pawn.

28...Ng4 29.Nb3

29.Rxd5 was winning too  
and possibly more accu-  
rate.

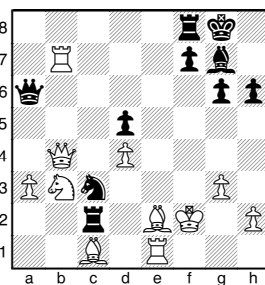
29...Rc2 30.Be2

30.Ra5 winning a piece  
perhaps? Maybe Goletiani  
didn't like black's possible  
attack against the white  
king but 30...Qd7 31.Bd3!  
preventing the queen using  
the f5 square 31...Rxf2  
32.Qxa4 has to be winning.

30...Nxf2

A desperate try by Abra-  
hamyan in mutual time  
pressure.

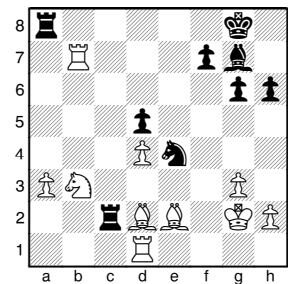
31.Kxf2 Nc3 32.Rb7 Qa6



33.Bd2

The move played should  
be good enough but  
33.Qxc3! was easily win-  
ning, forcing pieces to be  
exchanged and simplifying  
the position 33...Rxe2+  
34.Rxe2 Qxb7 35.Nc5+--  
White is just up a piece.

33...Qf6+ 34.Kg2 Qe6  
35.Qe7 Qf5 36.Rf1 Qe4+  
37.Qxe4 Nxe4 38.Rd1 Ra8



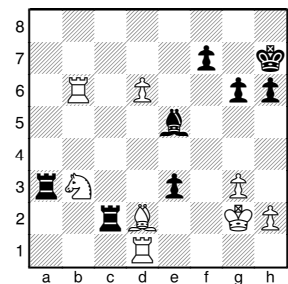
39.Bf3?!

Oops. With just seconds to  
make two more moves,  
Goletiani put the bishop on  
the wrong square. Instead  
39.Bd3 should maintain her  
winning advantage.

39...Rxa3 40.Rb8+?!

40.Bxe4 dxe4 41.Kf1 e3  
42.Bxe3 Rc3

40...Kh7 41.Bxe4 dxe4  
42.d5 Be5 43.Rb6 e3  
44.d6



44...Bxd6! 45.Rxd6 Rxb3  
46.Kh3 exd2 47.R1xd2  
Rbb2 48.Rxc2 Rxc2

The rook and pawn ending,  
3 vs 2 on the same side  
should be drawn.

49.g4 g5 50.Kg3 Rc3+  
51.Kg2 Kg7 52.Ra6 f6  
53.Ra7+ Kg6 54.Ra6 1/2-1/2



Rusudan Goletiani and Tatev Abrahamyan, good friends, share a friendly moment before their game. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

## Zenyuk-Tsagaan Play to Draw in Longest Game of Day

Zenyuk,Iryna (2281) –  
Battsetseg,Tsagaan (2265)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3  
Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nge2 0-0  
6.Ng3 c5 7.d5 e6

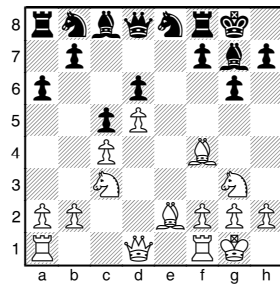
Zenyuk herself has been on the black side of this opening and played 7...Nbd7 8.Be2 h5 9.h3 b5 10.cxb5 h4 11.Nf1 a6 12.Nd2 axb5 13.Bxb5 Ne5 14.f4 Ned7 15.0-0 Nh5 16.Nf3 Qa5 17.Qd3 Nb6 18.a4 Bf6 19.e5 Bf5 20.Qe3 Bg7 21.Nxh4 Bd7 22.Be2 Qb4 23.g4 dxe5 24.gxh5 exf4 25.Qxf4 Bxh3 26.Rf3 Bg4 27.Rf2 Bxe2 28.Qxb4 cxb4 29.Nxe2 gxh5 30.Nf5 Bf6 31.Nf4 Kh7 32.Nxh5 Nxd5 33.Nxf6+ Nxf6 34.Nxe7 Ng4 35.Rf4 Rae8 36.Rxg4 Rxe7 37.Kf2 Rb8 38.Bf4 1-0 Formanek,E (2284)–Zenyuk,I (2188)/

Philadelphia 2005

8.Be2 a6 9.0-0 exd5  
10.exd5 Ne8

Both 10...Re8 ; and 10...Nbd7 are more popular continuations here.

11.Bf4



11...f5

As Ben Finegold noted in his commentary, Tsagaan plays the most aggressive continuation.

12.Qd2 Nd7 13.Bg5 Bf6  
14.Bxf6 Qxf6 15.f4 Nc7  
16.Kh1 Rb8 17.a4 Re8  
18.Rfe1 Qd4 19.Bd3

Not 19.Qxd4?! cxd4 20.Na2 (20.Nd1? d3-+) 20...Nc5 with advantage to black.

19...Nf8 20.Rxe8 Nxe8  
21.Nge2 Qf2 22.Nd1 Qh4  
23.Ng1 Bd7 24.Nf3 Qf6  
25.Nc3 Nc7 26.h3 h6  
27.Bf1 Re8 28.Rb1 a5  
29.Bd3 Na6 30.Rg1 Nb4  
31.Bb1 Qe7 32.Re1 Qf6  
33.Rg1 Qe7 34.Qf2

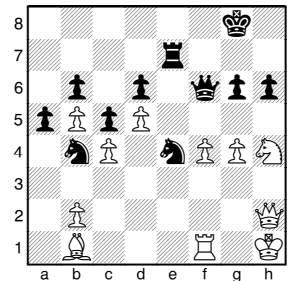
Zenyuk declines the invitation to repeat as Tsagaan was in her usual time pressure.

34...Qf6 35.Nb5 Re7  
36.Qd2 Rf7 37.Qc3 Nh7  
38.Re1 Bxb5 39.axb5

Black can no longer trade

queens on the diagonal as the knight will have no safe squares to move to.

39...Re7 40.Rf1 b6 41.Qd2  
Qf7 42.g4 fxe4 43.hxe4  
Nf6 44.Nh4 Ne4 45.Qh2  
Qf6



46.Nf3

Tsagaan was surprised that Zenyuk offered a draw after 46.Nf3 and proceeded to show her that she probably had a good advantage after 46...Qg7 47.Re1! Nf6 48.Rxe7 Qxe7 49.Qxh6 Qh7 (Tsagaan actually thought she would have to play 49...Nxg4? but it loses to 50.Qxg6+ Qg7 51.Qe6+ Kh8 (51...Kf8 52.Qc8+ Ke7 53.Qc7+ Kf8 54.Qd8+ Kf7 55.Ng5+) 52.Qe8+ Qg8 53.Qh5+) 50.Qxh7+ Kxh7 51.Nd2 and white is indeed probably winning although she definitely should be able to play on without any chance of losing.

1/2-1/2



WIM's Iryna Zenyuk and Battsetseg Tsagaan faced off in round 4. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

# Photo Gallery: All Photos by Chris Bird



Hula chess at the Contemporary Art Museum during the opening day festivities.



Chief Arbiter, Carol Jarecki.



Camilla Baginskaite and Anna Zatonskih relax on the Chess Club couch after their game.



Far Left: The Chess FM commentary team of Macauley Peterson, IM/WGM Jennifer Shahade and GM-Elect Ben Finegold.



Left: FM Mike Klein who writes reports/press releases for the bulletin and website.

The comfortable playing venue, the VIP Room at the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis.



Official photographer of the 2009 U.S. Women's Championship, Betsy Dynako.



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## Schedule: Remaining Rounds

- 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

## FM Mike Klein's Daily Wrap-Up

The quartet of undefeated women was reduced by one in Wednesday's round four of the 2009 U.S. Women's Chess Championship, held at the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis. All four women played each other today, with 18-year-old Alisa Melekhina making a dramatic comeback against Sabina Foisor to remain unbeaten, while top-seeded defending champion Anna Zatonskih drew with 2000 champion Camilla Baginskaite.

Zatonskih, of Long Island, N.Y., now has three wins and one draw for 3.5 points, while Melekhina, of Philadelphia, Pa., the tournament's youngest player, is in clear second with two wins and two draws for 3 points. Looking ahead, Zatonskih and Melekhina, who have the best chance to win the record \$15,000

first prize, will play in round six of the nine-round championship on Saturday. Baginskaite, of Sioux Falls, S.D., remains unbeaten as her one win and three draws gives her 2.5 points, the same number as Foisor, of Baltimore, Md.

Foisor and Melekhina played the exact same first 12 moves as in Foisor's round two game. Melekhina then steered the game differently and Foisor found a very strong novelty, a move that has never been played before in tournament play. The unorthodox bishop strike surprised grandmaster commentator Ben Finegold, but he eventually warmed to its subtle charms.

"I'm just barely hanging on," Melekhina said after Foisor's bishop repost. But as has been her tem-

perament this tournament, she remained calm in the face of a difficult position, and eventually engineered a blistering counterattack that netted an extra piece and the game. "I wasn't expecting such a good start," Melekhina said about her standing in the tournament.

The other news of round four is the continued struggles of second-seeded Irina Krush. She drew in round four despite being heavily favored against 10th-seeded Yun Fan, who had lost her first three matches. "I didn't make a lot of mistakes," said Fan, of Greencastle, Ind. She called it her best game of the tournament. Prior to the beginning of the event, the chess public made Krush, of Brooklyn, N.Y., a slight favorite to win. Today's result, coupled with a

draw in round one and a loss in round three, now makes her a longshot.

"My play hasn't really been inspired," Krush said. "It has been very disappointing."

In other round four matches, good friends Tatev Abrahamyan and Rusudan Goletiani battled to a five-hour draw. They had spent the better part of the last day together, sharing dinner Tuesday night and a pre-game lunch today. Iryna Zenyuk also played to a draw with Battsetseg Tsagaan.

