

Championship Chronicle



2009 US Women's Chess Championship

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Zatonskih Beats Rival, Baginskaite Gets Lucky Break To Stay In Touch

IM Anna Zatonskih maintained her full point lead with a win against WIM Alisa Melekhina.

Zatonskih came out of the opening in a better position and built a strong central pawn mass, giving her pieces plenty of free space for maneuvering. Melekhina's pieces ended up defending too many things at once and Zatonskih broke through with a kingside attack that transposed into a won ending.

WGM Camilla Baginskaite stayed in second place as her opponent, WIM Iryna Zenyuk, turned down a draw by repetition by blundering material to a simple tactic in a time scramble.

Baginskaite simplified even further into a won rook and pawn ending which she easily converted to stay

in touch with the leader.



WGM Camilla Baginskaite
(Photo Betsy Dynako)

WGM Sabina Foisor showed a greater understanding of the concepts in the opening played by her and IM Rusudan Goletiani, which in turn led to her obtaining a winning advantage.

A simple knight maneuver, threat-

ening mate while winning a pawn made life easy for the UMBC student who now moves into a tie for 3rd-5th.

IM Irina Krush joined Foisor in the same group after she was the grateful recipient of a piece blunder by WIM Battsetseg Tsagaan.

With both players in what has become a common time scramble for all players, Tsagaan fell for a subtle trap that Krush had set and the game finished a few moves later.

In the final game of the day, Yun Fan got her first win of the tournament against WFM Tatev Abrahamyan, despite actually missing two different chances to finish off the game with a brilliant piece sacrifice.

Current Standings:

- 1 Anna Zatonskih, 5½
- 2 Camilla Baginskaite, 4½
- 3-5 Irina Krush, 3½
- 3-5 Sabina Foisor, 3½
- 3-5 Alisa Melekhina, 3½
- 6-7 Rusudan Goletiani, 2½
- 6-7 Battsetseg Tsagaan, 2½
- 8 Iryna Zenyuk, 2
- 9 Yun Fan, 1½
- 10 Tatev Abrahamyan, 1

Round 7 Match-Ups

Anna Zatonskih plays black against Rusudan Goletiani in probably the most challenging of her remaining games, while Camilla Baginskaite, just a point behind the leader, has the white pieces against Battsetseg Tsagaan.

The two former champions are

realistically in a two-horse race for the Championship, which could easily be much closer by the end of the day.

Irina Krush plays against Sabina Foisor in a battle of players on 3½ knowing that a win may give them an outside chance at making

a playoff for the title but will give them a good shot at the Zonal qualification spot.

In the other two games, Melekhina has white against Yun Fan and will also be hoping to stay in the races, while Tatev Abrahamyan has white against Iryna Zenyuk.



Ben's Best: Zatonskih vs Melekhina

GM-Elect Ben Finegold Picks His Game of the Day

Zatonskih, Anna (2492) –
Melekhina, Alisa (2253) [E62]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7
4.g3 0-0 5.Bg2 d6 6.Nf3

Anna sticks to what worked earlier in the tournament against Tsagaan.

6...Bd7

An unusual move. During the break, GM Pascal Charbonneau told me about a game Nakamura won against Ippolito in Foxwoods with a similar idea. I remember looking at that game, and, was surprised how quickly white got a bad position, considering Ippolito is such an expert in this line of the King's Indian.

7.0-0 Qc8 8.Re1 Bh3 9.Bh1

There are a few games in my database in this position, and now, Alisa plays a novelty. White is little better due to her nice space advantage in the center.

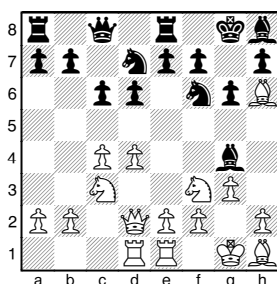
9...Bg4!? 10.Bg5

Anna initiates the same idea Alisa had, attempting to trade off the Bg7. Alisa prevents this idea the same way as Anna, with Re8 (then Bh8 is possible after any attempt of Bh6).

10...Re8 11.Qd2 c6?!

I think this is too passive. Black should complete development with 11...Nc6. The idea of mixing Bg4 and Nbd7 is not good, as the Bg4 does not have a lot of squares, and, d4 can get weak with the combination of Bg4, Nc6, and Bg7.

12.Rad1 Nbd7 13.Bh6 Bh8



14.Ng5!

I really liked this move, as it makes the Bg4 uncomfortable. Afterwards, Alisa agreed this was quite strong, and felt she should have played Bxf3 earlier to prevent the big center white gets in the game, along with the Bg4 difficulties.

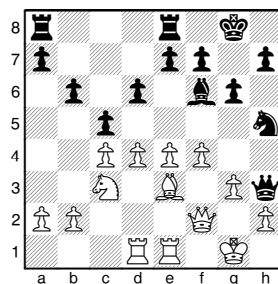
14...Nf8

Passive, but, black had to do something to make sure the Bg4 does not get trapped.

15.Bg2 Ne6 16.f3 Nxc3
17.Bxc3 Bh3 18.Bxh3 Qxh3
19.e4

Black has wasted a lot of time with the maneuver Nbd7, Nf8, Ne6, and finally, Nxc3. Unfortunately for Alisa, white has built a big center in the meantime.

19...Nh5 20.Qf2 Bf6 21.Be3 b6
22.f4 c5



Black cannot take the pressure, and decides to boldly fight back in the center. Anna decides, correctly, to play aggressively, as black's pieces are misplaced on the h file.

23.e5! cxd4 24.Bxd4 dxe5
25.fxe5 Bh8 26.Nd5

This monster knight virtually decides the game.

26...Rac8 27.b3 Qe6 28.Bb2
Ng7 29.Rf1

Black has very little counterplay, and even though both players were about to get into time trouble, Anna keeps her advantages continuing the slow buildup.

29...h5 30.Nf4 Qf5 31.Qe2! Ne6
32.Nd5 Qg4 33.Qg2

In the commentary room, Jen Shahade thought white could simply win a pawn with 33.Qxg4

hxc4 34.Ne3. Rybka agrees this is the best way, but, perhaps Anna wanted to continue building up the pressure, and did not want to make a big decision (trading queens) in time pressure.

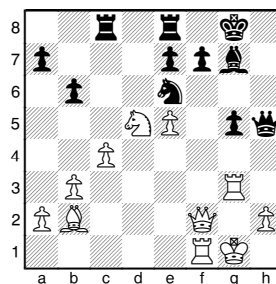
33...h4 34.gxh4 Qxh4 35.Rd3

I thought white was winning here during the live commentary, due to the power of her rooks, compared to the passive placement of black's rooks.

35...Bg7 36.Rh3 Qg5 37.Rg3
Qh5 38.Rh3 Qg5 39.Rg3 Qh5

Anna makes a wise decision here, repeating moves to get closer to the time control at move 40, when she will be able to relax, and find a good winning plan.

40.Qf2 g5



41.a4!

During the game, I was astounded by this move. A very impressive understanding of the position. Anna told me later, that she felt black could only get counterplay with a later b5, so, she nips this in this bud, and continues with her kingside play later. We both agreed Rybka would not like this move, but that it showed an excellent understanding of the position. Black has little to no counterplay, so, white can afford to be patient.

41...Rcd8 42.Qf5 Qg6 43.Qg4
Kh7 44.h4 Bh6 45.Qf3

White had many other strong continuations, but, the text move is also good enough to win. Now Alisa MUST play 45...Kg8, but white would still be

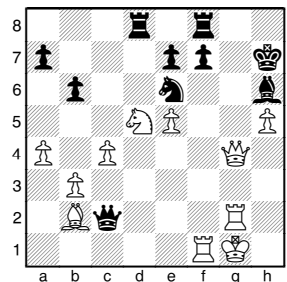
winning after 46.hxc5

45...Rf8? 46.h5

46.Nxe7! Qc2 47.hxc5 Nxc5
(47...Qxb2 48.Qf5+ Kh8
49.Qf6+ Bg7 50.Rh3#)
48.Qh5+-

46...Qc2 47.Rg2 g4 48.Qxg4?

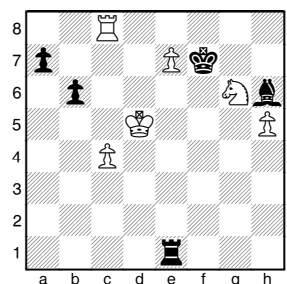
Anna should play... 48.Qxf7+
Rxf7 49.Rxf7+ Kg8 50.Rxc2
Kxf7 51.Rf2+-



48...Rg8?

Alisa is back in the game (although still worse) if she finds.. 48...Qxb3! 49.Nxe7!
(49.Rxf7+?! Rxf7 50.Qg6+ Kh8
51.Qxf7 Qh3!)= 49...Bg5 50.Nd5
Kh8±

49.Rxf7+ Kh8 50.Rxc2+-
Rxc2 51.Rg2 Rxc2+ 52.Kxc2
Nf4+?! 53.Nxf4 Rd2+ 54.Kf3
Rxb2 55.Ng6+ Kg8 56.Rxe7
Rxb3+ 57.Ke4 Rb4 58.Rc7
Rxa4 59.e6 Ra1 60.Rc8+ Kg7
61.e7 Re1+ 62.Kd5 Kf7



63.Rf8+

A positional masterpiece from Zatonskih. Melekhina put up a heroic defense, but it was not quite enough this game.

1-0

Zenyuk Blunders, Baginskaite Says "Thank You"

Zenyuk,Iryna (2281) – Baginskaite,Camilla (2356)

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c4 e6
4.Nc3 Bb4 5.Bg5 h6
6.Bxf6 Qxf6 7.e3 0-0
8.Rc1

Zenyuk plays the main line. Baginskaite has played this line in the US Women's Championship two years ago against Zatonskih. 8.Qc2 dxc4 9.Bxc4 c5 10.0-0 cxd4 11.exd4 Nc6 12.Rad1 Rd8 13.Ne4 Qf5 14.Qe2 Be7 15.a3 Bf6 16.Qe3 Ne7 17.Rfe1 b6 18.Ng3 Qa5 19.b4 Qa4 20.Ne4 Nf5 21.Nxf6+ gxf6 22.Qe4 Rb8 23.Nh4 Bb7 24.d5 Rbc8 25.Qg4+ Kf8 26.Nxf5 exf5 27.Qxf5 Kg7 28.Qg4+ Kh8 29.Qf4 Kg7 30.Rd3 1-0 Zatonskih,A (2462)–Baginskaite,C (2328)/2007 US Women's Ch. 2007

8...dxc4 9.Bxc4 c5 10.0-0 cxd4 11.exd4 Nc6 12.a3

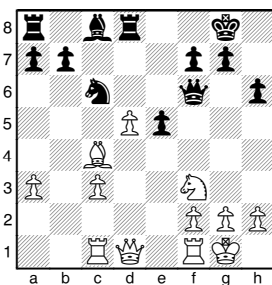
12.Ne4 is the main line as faced by Baginskaite's husband, GM Alex Yermolinsky, earlier this year 12...Qe7 13.a3 Ba5 14.b4 Bb6 15.d5 exd5 16.Bxd5 Bg4 17.Nc5 Rad8 18.Re1

Qd6 19.Nxb7 Qxd5 20.Qxd5 Rxd5 21.Rxc6 Bxf3 22.gxf3 Rd2 23.Nc5 Ra2 24.a4 Rd8 25.a5 Bxc5 26.Rxc5 Rdd2 27.Rf1 Rdb2 28.Rc4 g6 29.Kg2 Kg7 30.Kg3 g5 31.h4 Ra4 32.hxg5 hxg5 33.Rd1 Rbxb4 34.Rxb4 Rxb4 35.Rd7 Ra4 36.Rxa7 Kg6 37.Ra8 Kf5 38.a6 Ra3 39.Rb8 Rxa6 40.Rb5+ Kg6 41.f4 gx4+ ½-½ Zivanic,M (2459)–Yermolinsky,A (2522)/Stillwater 2009

12...Bxc3 13.bxc3

The commentary room liked 13.Rxc3 but after 13...Rd8 14.Rd3 b6 the position is equal.

13...e5 14.d5 Rd8



15.Ba2

15.Qe2 as suggested by

the commentary room seems the most obvious, removing the pin and attacking black's e5 pawn. 15...Ne7 16.Qxe5 Qxe5 (16...Nxd5 17.Bxd5 Qxe5 18.Bxf7+ Kxf7 19.Nxe5+) 17.Nxe5 Nxd5 18.f4±

15...Bg4 16.Re1 Ne7 17.c4 Ng6 18.Bb1 Bxf3 19.Qxf3 Qxf3 20.gxf3

The queens are traded off and white's kingside pawns ruined. The position becomes much less tactical as it transposes into an ending.

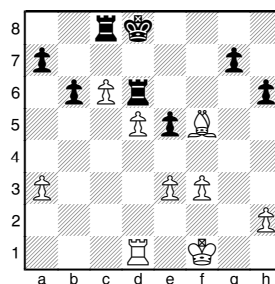
20...Nh4 21.Rc3 f6 22.c5 Rac8 23.Be4 Kf8 24.Rd1 f5 25.Bc2 b6 26.c6

White's pawns look very threatening but Baginskaite has them under control.

26...Ke7 27.Kf1 Rd6 28.Ke2 Kd8 29.Re3 Ng6 30.Bxf5 Nf4+ 31.Ke1 Ng2+ 32.Ke2 Nf4+ 33.Ke1 Ng2+ 34.Kf1?

Zenyuk decides she doesn't want a draw by repetition and feels there must be more in the position. There is more, but not for white!

34...Nxe3+ 35.fxe3



35...Rcxc6!+ 36.Ke2 Rc3 37.e4 g6 38.Be6 Rxa3 39.Rc1 Rxe6

The move played still wins but why allow the complications? 39...a5 40.Rc8+ Ke7 41.Rc7+ Ke8 42.Rc8+ Rd8

40.dxe6 Ke7 41.Rg1 g5 42.h4 gxh4 43.Rg7+ Kxe6 44.Rg6+ Kd7 45.Rxh6 b5 46.Rxh4 b4

The two connected passed pawns make the rook ending a simple win that Baginskaite converts with ease.

47.f4 exf4 48.Rxf4 a5 49.Kd2 Rh3 50.Rf5 a4 51.Ra5 a3 52.Kc1 Kc6 53.Kb1 Kb6 54.Ra8 Kb5 55.e5 Kc4 56.e6 Kb3 57.Kc1 Re3 0-1

"Zenyuk decides she doesn't want a draw by repetition and feels there must be more in the position. There is more, but not for white!"



IM Anna Zatonskih in "deep-thought" mode in her crucial game against WIM Alisa Melekhina. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

Tsagaan Falls For Trap As Krush Scores Win

Tsagaan, Battsetseg (2265) – Krush, Irina (2478) [B28]

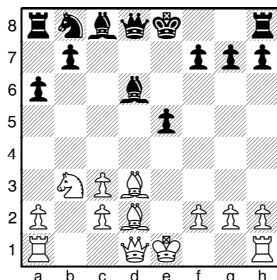
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 a6

The O'Kelly Variation, which apparently holds fond memories for Krush.

3.d4

Apparently this is not the best move against 2...a6 but it is surprising how often it is played. Finegold said in his commentary that most GMs would play 3.c3 or 3.c4.

3...cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e5 6.Nb3 Bb4 7.Bd3 d5 8.exd5 Nxd5 9.Bd2 Nxc3 10.bxc3 Bd6



11.Qh5

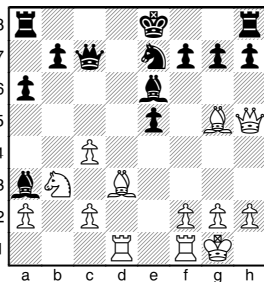
Tsagaan plays the most aggressive line, as usual.

11...Nc6

Krush said after the game that she spent a lot of time here trying to find the right set up. Most other games that have reached this position have continued with either Nd7–f6, Be6 and Nd7 or the immediate g6.

12.Rd1 Be6 13.Bg5 Qc7 14.0-0 Ne7 15.c4 Ba3

The immediate 15...Ng6 16.Bxg6 fxd6 17.Qf3 Bxc4 18.Rfe1 Bf7 leads to a position similar to what happens in the game.



16.c5!?

Tsagaan plays the move that Krush was trying to prevent anyway. Once again this is the most active continuation and Tsagaan commented after the game that she didn't want black to get castled, which other safe moves like 16.Rfe1 would allow.

16...Ng6 17.Bxg6 fxd6 18.Qf3 Bf7!

Krush is going to get castled anyway, despite Tsagaan's best efforts.

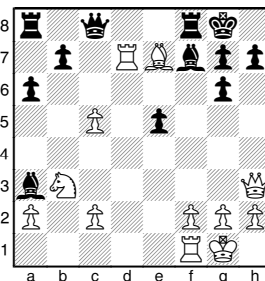
19.Qh3

19.Qe4 0-0 20.Qa4 Bb2 21.Rd7 b5!?

19...0-0 20.Rd7 Qc8

Best. 20...Qc6 allows 21.Na5 Qxc5 22.Nxb7 and white's knight gets into the action.

21.Be7



21...Be8

Krush plays the best move again as both players were getting short of time. 21...Re8 22.Rfd1 is still ok for black but why settle for just ok?

22.Rd3 Qxh3 23.Rxh3 Rf7 24.Bd6 b6 25.Re1 Rd8

26.Rd3

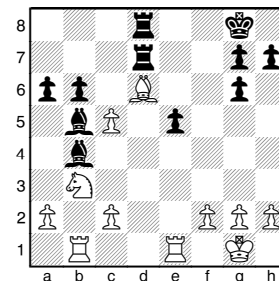
Better was 26.Rhe3 ganging up on the e-pawn.

26...Bb5 27.Rdd1?

It wasn't too late to switch back to ganging up on the e-pawn 27.Rde3 Bxc5 28.Bxc5 bxc5 29.Rxe5 c4 30.Nc5 Rd2 31.a4 Bc6 32.R5e2=

27...Rfd7! 28.Rb1 Bb4

Setting a nasty trap while the players had very little time to reach the 40 move mark.



29.Rxe5?

29.Rec1 would have avoided the trap but black is better after 29...Bc3

29...bxc5

The bishop cannot move because of back rank problems.

30.h4 Rxd6 31.Nxc5 Rd1+ 32.Rxd1 Rxd1+ 33.Kh2 Rc1 34.a4 Bf1 35.Rd5 Rxc2 36.Rd8+ Kf7 37.Ne4 a5 38.Rd7+ Kf8 39.Ng5 Bc4 40.Nxh7+ Ke8 41.Rxg7 Bd6+ 42.Kh3 Be6+ 43.g4 Rxf2 0-1



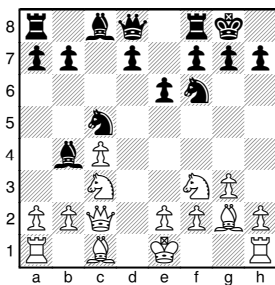
WIM Battsetseg Tsagaan and IM Irina Krush played an open encounter in round 6. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

Foisor Impresses In Accurate Win Over Goletiani

Foisor, Sabina (2390) – Goletiani, Rusudan (2437)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 c5 5.dxc5 0-0 6.Nf3 Na6 7.g3 Nxc5 8.Bg2

Goletiani has been here previously against our esteemed daily commentator 8.a3 Bxc3+ 9.Qxc3 b6 10.Bg2 Bb7 11.b4 Nce4 12.Qd4 Qc7 13.Bb2 Rac8 14.Rc1 d6 15.0-0 e5 16.Qd1 Qd7 17.Ne1 Rc7 18.f4 Qe6 19.Nd3 Nd7 20.fxe5 dxe5 21.Nxe5 Nxe5 22.Qd4 Rxc4 23.Qxe5 Qxe5 24.Bxe5 Rfc8 25.Rxc4 Rxc4 26.Rd1 1-0 (58) Finegold, B (2522)–Goletiani, R (2332)/ Chicago 2005



8...b6

And Foisor was here in two games last year, both against Polish GM Monica Socko at the 2008 Women's World Championship in Nalchik, Russia 8...Nce4 9.0-0 Nxc3 10.bxc3 Be7 11.e4 d6 12.e5 dxe5 13.Nxe5 Qc7 14.Qe2 Nd7 15.Bf4 Nxe5 16.Bxe5 Bd6 17.Bxd6 Qxd6 18.Rab1 Rb8 19.Rfd1 Qc7 20.Qd3 b6 21.Qd6 Qxd6 22.Rxd6 e5 23.Rb5 Ba6 24.Rxe5 Bxc4

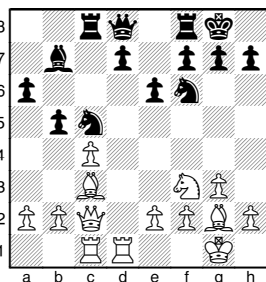
25.Bd5 Bxd5 26.Rexd5 ½-½ (51) Foisor, S (2337)–Socko, M (2473)/Nalchik RUS 2008; 8...Nfe4 9.0-0 Bxc3 10.bxc3 d6 11.Nd4 f5 12.f3 Nf6 13.Rd1 Qe7 14.Ba3 Bd7 15.Nb3 Ba4 16.Rab1 Rac8 17.Qd2 Rfd8 18.Qe3 b6 19.Rd2 h6 20.Nd4 Re8 21.Rb4 Nfd7 22.Nb5 Bxb5 23.cxb5 Nf6 24.c4 e5 25.Rb1 Qe6 26.Bh3 1-0 (69) Foisor, S (2337)–Socko, M (2473)/Nalchik RUS 2008

9.Bd2 Bb7 10.0-0 Rc8 11.Rfd1 a6

11...Qe7 is the most popular move in this position.

12.Rac1 Bxc3 13.Bxc3 b5?

Black should be looking to put a piece on e4 to prevent the following maneuver.



14.Ng5! g6 15.Bxb7 Nxb7 16.Ne4! Ne8

16...Nxe4 17.Qxe4 Rc7 18.cxb5 axb5 19.Qe5 f6 20.Qxb5+–

17.cxb5 axb5 18.Qd3 d6

18...d5 19.Qxb5 Ned6 20.Nxd6 Nxd6 21.Qd3 white is a clear pawn up but the road ahead may be

long.

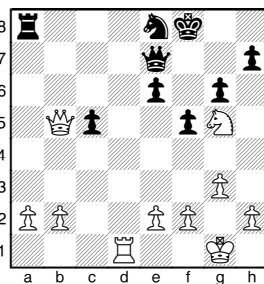
19.Qxb5 Qe7
20.Bd2 Ra8
21.Bh6

Foisor decides to accept the exchange to go with her already existing material advantage.

21...f5 22.Bxf8
Kxf8 23.Ng5
Nc5 24.Rxc5!

Simple and effective.

24...dxc5



25.Qc6

25.Rd7 Qxg5 26.Qxc5+ Kg8 27.Qc6 Rb8 28.Qxe6+ Kh8 29.Qe5+ Kg8 30.f4+–

25...Ra7 26.Nxe6+

26.Rd8 is a cute move that Foisor pointed out after the game. Apparently she saw it after she played 26.Nxe6+ Qxd8 27.Nxe6+

26...Kf7 27.Nf4

White is just two pawns up with better pieces. The most challenging matter left for white is to be careful and reach the time control.



WGM Sabina Foisor and IM Rusudan Goletiani. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

27...Nf6 28.a3 Rb7 29.Nd5 Nxd5 30.Qxd5+ Kg7 31.Rd2 Ra7 32.e3 Kh6 33.h4 Ra4 34.Qd7 Qe4 35.Qd8 Ra7 36.Qf8+ Kh5 37.Qxc5 Ra6 38.Qd5 Qg4 39.Kg2 h6 40.Qf3

40.Rd4 Qe2 41.g4+ leads to mate eventually.

40...Ra4 41.Qxg4+ fxg4 42.Rd5+ g5 43.hxg5 hxg5 44.Rd4 Ra8 45.a4 Ra7 46.b3 Ra8 47.Rd5 Ra7 48.a5 Ra8 49.b4 Ra7 50.e4 Ra8 51.e5 Ra6 52.f3 Rc6 53.Rc5 1-0

"White is just two pawns up with better pieces. The most challenging matter left for white is to be careful and reach the time control."

Abrahamyan Eventually Succeeds In Handing Fan First Victory

Fan, Yun (2201) –
Abrahamyan, Tatev (2334)

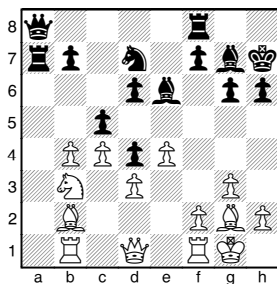
1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.Bg2
Bg7 4.c4 0-0 5.Nc3 d6
6.0-0 Nc6 7.d3 h6 8.Bd2
e5 9.Rb1 a5 10.a3 Be6
11.e4

This move received some criticism from the commentary room who didn't like the idea of blocking in the g2 bishop. The natural move is 11.b4.

11...Nd7 12.b4 axb4
13.axb4 Kh7 14.Ne1 Nd4
15.Nc2 c6 16.Ne2 Ra2
17.Ncxd4 exd4 18.Nc1
Ra3 19.Nb3 Qa8

Ben Finegold stated he liked black's position here with control over the d4 square and a-file. However, white is solid and has a natural plan of playing on the kingside.

20.Bc1 Ra7 21.Bb2 c5

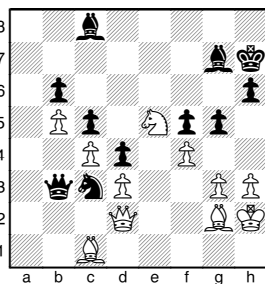


22.b5

22.bxc5 opening up the b-file is the natural move but Fan may not have liked undoubling the black d-pawns. However, black's pieces end up out of play and the g2 bishop comes alive, e.g. 22...dxc5 23.f4 f5 24.e5±

22...Nb6 23.f4 f5 24.e5
Na4!? 25.exd6 Qd8
26.Qc2 Qxd6 27.Rfe1 Bf7
28.Nd2 Nc3 29.Ra1 Rxa1
30.Rxa1 Qe7 31.Nf3 Re8
32.Re1 Qc7 33.Rxe8 Bxe8
34.Qd2 Qa5 35.h3 Bd7
36.Kh2 Qb4 37.Ne5 Bc8
38.Nf7 b6 39.Ne5 Qb3
40.Bc1 g5?

Abrahamyan blunders on the last move of the time control.

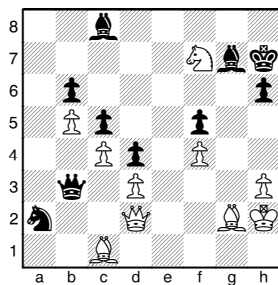


41.Nf7

Fan doesn't find the brilliant win 41.fxg5!! Bxe5 42.g6+! Kxg6 (42...Kg8 43.Qxh6 Bg7 44.Qh7+ Kf8 45.Bh6+-) 43.Qxh6+ Kf7 44.Qh7+ Kf6 45.Bh6+- intending Bg7+.

41...gxf4 42.gxf4 Na2?

42...Be6 43.Nd6 Qa2
44.Qe1 Qe2=



43.Nd6



Yun Fan and WFM Tatev Abrahamyan at the start of their round 6 game. (Photo Betsy Dynako)

Fan once again misses the chance to sacrifice a piece for a brilliant finish 43.Qe2!! Nxc1 44.Qh5 leads to mate in all variations 44...Bd7 (44...Qxd3 45.Ng5+ Kg8 46.Qf7+ Kh8 47.Qe8+) 45.Ng5+ Kh8 46.Qg6! hxg5 47.Qh5+ Kg8 48.Bd5+

43...Qc3?

43...Nxc1 should lead to a draw 44.Qxc1 Bd7 45.Qe1 Qxd3 46.Qe7 Qe3 47.Qxd7 Qxf4+ 48.Kh1 Qc1+ 49.Kh2 Qf4+=

44.Qxa2

Fan takes the piece on offer and has calculated that black doesn't have a perpetual.

44...Qxc1 45.Nxc8 Qxf4+
46.Kg1 Qe3+ 47.Qf2 Qxd3
48.Nd6 Kg6 49.Bf1 Qb1
50.Qg3+ Kh7 51.Nxf5 1-0

"Fan once again misses the chance to sacrifice a piece for a brilliant finish."

Photo Gallery: All Photos by Betsy Dynako



Irina Krush interviewed by Mike Klein and filmed by the documentary crew.



Arbiters Carol Jarecki and Chris Bird.



Iryna Zenyuk giving an interview to the documentary crew.



WIM Evelyn Moncayo of Ecuador visiting the Championship.



Spectators in the commentary room.



The playing room.

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Remaining Schedule

- 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
- 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

Anna Zatonskih dispatched one of her two closest rivals in round six of the U.S. Women's Chess Championship at the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis. In the longest match of the day, Zatonskih, of Long Island, N.Y., used an impending pawn storm and slowly overwhelmed Melekhhina's defenses.

Melekhhina, of Philadelphia, Pa., was tied for second with Camilla Baginskaite going into the round, but she is still overperforming for someone of her rating. She was ranked ninth going into the tournament and at 18 is the youngest player. "Even in a very bad position, (Melekhhina) came up with some very interesting ideas," Zatonskih said.

The entire field of 10 women all came perilously close to overstep-

ping the time limit. Forced to make their first 40 moves in two hours, many women were reduced to fewer than 30 seconds before crossing the threshold. In the end, all five games were decisive for the first time in the tournament.

In the fast-paced exchange of moves, two women made inaccuracies that cost them the game. Second-seeded Irina Krush, of Brooklyn, N.Y., mired in a slump since winning in round two, got off the schnide by finding a trick against Battsetseg Tsagaan, of Ellicott City, Md., on the 38th move. "She only really messed up in time pressure," Krush said. "In time trouble it just became random. There was a lot of tactics everywhere."

Iryna Zenyuk, of Pittsburgh, Pa., also slipped as she approached

move 40. Locked in a tense battle with Baginskaite, Zenyuk had her king checked back and forth several times. Knowing that repeating the position three times would produce a drawn game (and despite that she was the underdog), she varied her king's placement, but that meant allowing a series of captures that left her behind in pieces. Zenyuk immediately shook her head and scolded herself. The two played on for another hour before Zenyuk capitulated. The win keeps Baginskaite, of Sioux Falls, S.D., within one point of Zatonskih.

Sabina Foisor, of Baltimore, Md., got back to her winning ways after losing two games in a row. She defeated Rusudan Goletiani, of Hartsdale, N.Y., by using a multi-purpose knight sortie that threatened a bishop on one side of the

board and checkmate on the other. Goletiani had no choice but to weaken her king's safety, and Foisor's pieces slowly lurched closer before acquiring enough extra material to win in the endgame.

One of the tournament's youngest players, Yun Fan, 19, of Greencastle, Ind., got her first victory of the event by beating Tatev Abrahamyan, of Glendale, Calif. Fan is the most inexperienced competitor and commentators predicted she would improve the most over the course of her first championship. After starting with three consecutive losses, Fan has an even record over the last three matches.

