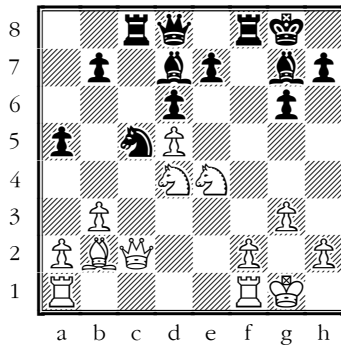


Test Yourself!

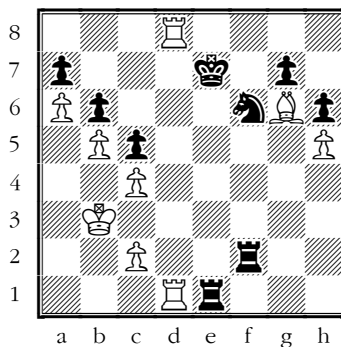
Banikas (2470) – Grivas (2510)

GRE-ch Athens, 1997



Topalov (2801) – Gelfand (2723)

Amber Rapid Monte Carlo (10), 2006



On This Day...

by GM Alex Baburin

WGM **Larisa Volpert** was born on 30 March 1926 in Leningrad. She was one of the best Soviet female players in the 1950s and 1960s, winning the USSR women's championship on three occasions – in 1954, 1958 and 1959.

Greek GM **Efstratios Grivas** was born on 30 March 1966. He is currently No. 9 in Greece, with a rating of 2506. Grivas' recent book on the 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗b6 Sicilian got a very favourable review in CT and elsewhere.



World Chess News

15th Amber Tournaments

Before the last round **Vishy Anand** managed to overtake his archrival Alexander Morozevich. White completely dominated in yesterday's round, scoring +8 =4! Black had particularly severe problems in blindfold chess, making just a single draw.

Round 10 blindfold results:

Grischuk–Leko 1–0
 Morozevich–Ivanchuk 1–0
 Vallejo–van Wely 1–0
 Svidler–Nielsen 1–0
 Anand–Aronian 1–0
 Gelfand–Topalov ½–½

Blindfold after 10 rounds:

1. Morozevich – 8½;
 2. Vallejo – 6½;
 3. Anand – 6;
 4–5. Grischuk and Svidler – 5½;
 6–7. Leko and Gelfand – 5;
 8. van Wely – 4½;
 9. Topalov – 4;
 10. Nielsen – 3½;
 11–12. Ivanchuk and Aronian – 3.

Round 10 rapid chess results:

Leko–Grischuk ½–½
 Ivanchuk–Morozevich 1–0
 van Wely–Vallejo 1–0
 Nielsen–Svidler ½–½
 Aronian–Anand ½–½
 Topalov–Gelfand 1–0

Rapid standings after 10 rounds:

1. Anand – 7½;
 2. Topalov – 6;
 3. Aronian – 5½
 4–7. Grischuk, Ivanchuk, Vallejo and van Wely – 5;
 8–9. Leko and Morozevich – 4½;
 10–12. Svidler, Gelfand and Nielsen – 4

This issue is prepared by GM Alex Baburin; technical editor Graham Brown

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Combined standings before the last round:

1. Anand – 13½;
2. Morozevich – 13;
3. Vallejo – 11½;
4. Grischuk – 10½;
5. Topalov – 10;
- 6–8. Svidler, Leko and van Wely – 9½;
9. Gelfand – 9;
10. Aronian – 8½;
11. Ivanchuk – 8
12. Nielsen – 7½.

Last round pairings, blind:

Aronian–Svidler
Topalov–Anand
Nielsen–Gelfand
Ivanchuk–Grischuk
van Wely–Morozevich
Leko–Vallejo

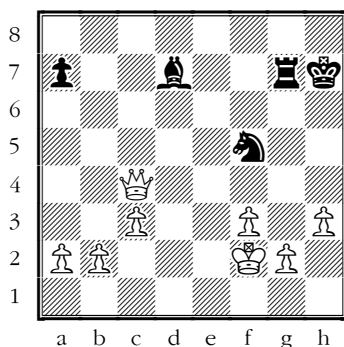
Last round pairings, rapid:

Svidler–Aronian
Anand–Topalov
Gelfand–Nielsen
Grischuk–Ivanchuk
Morozevich–van Wely
Vallejo–Leko

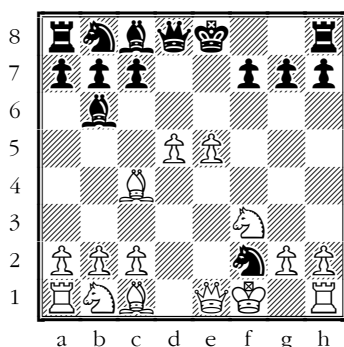
[Official website](#)

Two positions drew my attention:

Svidler–Nielsen



Aronian–Anand



Interview with Bessel Kok

by GM Alex Baburin

A few weeks ago Bessel Kok, who is running for FIDE President, kindly agreed to an interview with *Chess Today*. We invited CT readers to submit their questions and today you can see the result of this effort. I'd like to thank all of those who took part in this project, particularly Mr. Kok. On behalf of the CT team I wish him every success in Turin!

*– How and when did you learn chess?
(GM Alex Baburin)*

– I learned chess from a neighbour when I was 6. It was an almost classical story. I lost 100 games, then won one and the neighbour lost interest. I am a very mediocre player who loves the game.

*– What do you love and value in chess?
(David Surratt, USA)*

– I love the game because it combines strategy, tactics, intuition, emotion, the need for a global view, nerves and in spite of all its reputational problems, it has been able to retain some elements of a myth... But what I like most of all that even mediocre chess players can enjoy a beautiful game by Grandmasters... Similarly, for one to enjoy classical music, one does not have to be a violinist par excellence.

*– How did you get involved with the GMA? Did you play competitive chess?
(GM Alex Baburin)*

– I got involved with the GMA when I met a number of Grandmasters at my first SWIFT Tournament. I realized that they were totally missing an organisation which could represent their interests... In due course they approached me during the Dubai Olympiad in 1986, to set up an organisation looking after the GM's interest.

- You were a leading supporter and advocate of the GMA, which did not prove successful. Do you not have too great an association with expensive failure? (Justin Horton, London)

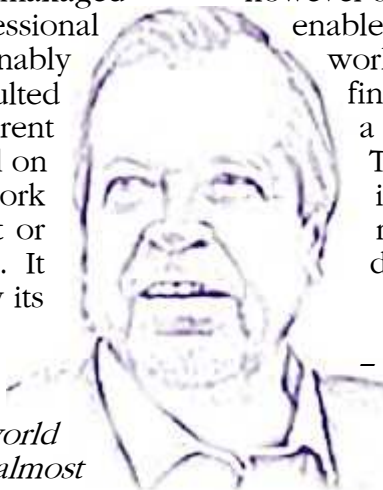
- I do not think the GMA was a failure. It was a wonderful experience for a number of people, in which we organized a great World Cup cycle (including qualification) and managed to get unity amongst professional chess players for a reasonably long time. The failure resulted through a fundamentally different vision at the GMA Board level on whether the GMA should work within the FIDE environment or continue to be independent. It does not diminish in any way its success.

- Much of the chess world perceives FIDE to be almost completely corrupted, how can you restore confidence in FIDE? Do you think that institutional changes need to be made in the way FIDE operates, relates to professional players, and chooses it's leadership? (David Surratt, USA)

- Well, the negative image of FIDE is the only thing that the current Deputy President Makropoulos and I agreed upon in Birmingham earlier this year! To restore the image requires a team of individuals who are wholly respected both inside the organisation and outside FIDE. They must be individuals who have high degrees of competence and integrity in the functions they will carry out and finally they must be professional in their attitude to the chess world and its stakeholders.

- A number of GMs have predicted that the current FIDE president will be re-elected due to his political skills and willingness to spend a lot of money to secure re-election - giving rewards to supporters, programs for small federations, etc. How do you plan to overcome his huge advantages? (J. Franklin Campbell, USA)

- We simply believe that a majority of Federations will disregard these practices in favour of a more pragmatic approach to the results of what has been achieved in all spheres of the chess world these last eleven years. If this is not the case, I will lose and so be it. We will not enter this game of offering 'gifts' or 'waivers of dues' to buy votes. We will offer however strategic programs which will enable Federations all over the world to build up a solid financial base and also develop a sense of self-sufficiency. This process of change will in itself in the future ensure a much higher degree of democracy.



- Are you happy with your election campaign so far? How do you expect your and Ilyumzhinov's campaign to unfold in Turin? (GM Alex Baburin)

- I expect that the decision by many delegates will be made in the last two weeks in Turin. We are very happy with the support and campaign developments so far and the response has been overwhelming.

- In the USA, during Presidential election campaigns, debates between the top candidates have become almost mandatory, at least from a popular standpoint. Would you like to publicly debate FIDE President Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, and under what circumstances might such a debate take place? (David Surratt, USA)

- Great idea to have a debate in Turin with the delegates asking questions and Kirsan and I on the 'hotspots'! I would accept with pleasure. Let us also include questions and answers from the public!

- Do you think that your opponent, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, might keep the match between Kramnik and Topalov "hanging in the air" till after the FIDE presidential elections? (GM Mikhail Golubev)

- It does not really make sense for Kirsan to keep the thing hanging in mid-air since a solution is necessary to move forward. We are aware that some negotiations have been taking place and that there is some progress on the possibility of a match but the end result is not solely in the hands of Kirsan as there are other decision makers playing a role.

- What does the business/corporate world need from FIDE in order to stimulate their interest in and willingness to support chess financially? (David Surratt, USA)

- It needs to associate its 'brand' with a 'product' or 'service' that is wholesome and beneficial to both areas at the same time. It does not want unpleasant surprises nor does it want to get involved in squabbles or unprofessional behaviour. The research carried out by global companies today on sponsorship or event marketing is huge and we would need to convince the business world that we can talk the same language, liaise with international media, communicate efficiently and deliver what we promise.

There following questions were grouped together, as they covered a similar topic:

- Your detractors say that you are too interested in high-profile events and not in the ordinary operation of chess. How can you show that you are going to help the ordinary chess player and chess outside the world of the top grandmasters, rather than just being interested in raising sponsorship for big-name events? (Justin Horton, London)

- What are your plans concerning supporting chess on grass root level? We have all heard about the Turkish success story, and from a Federations point of view, this is by far the most interesting part of your candidacy. (Jacob Aagaard, Glasgow)

- Mr. Kok, you have been criticised for not showing as much interest in the lower levels of chess as you do with Grandmaster chess. Would you like to respond and in particular will you support the application of smaller nations such as Northern Ireland to join Fide, who will be applying for membership at Turin? (Michael Waters, Belfast)

- I have read your articles in the press and it is all about professional chess. Why don't you have anything for the small federations? How do you propose to help improve chess in Africa where players don't get chances to play abroad and get titles, except for the Olympiad? Will you stand up for the weak or only for the mighty GMs? (Nathan Ateka, Champion of Kenya)

- What are your plans for CACDEC federations? If elected, are you going to continue to provide these federations with only chess sets and clocks – and without improving the level of players as this is what FIDE is doing now? I would also like to ask about FIDE Trainers Academy – this was a good idea, but unfortunately only rich country or rich people can go over there. Do you intend opening other Academies in different areas? (Omar Al-Jabari, Palestine)

- The criticism is wrongly placed. Many people miss that there are different facets to an organisation. The *Right Move* is not made up of Bessel Kok or top grandmasters. You will see that in the ticket we have representation from small Federations and also from large Federations like Turkey representing all levels of players.

FIDE must stop being a one-man circus, and instead we should work as a team harnessing all the positive attributes of individuals who can contribute something to chess. Since the election campaign has been launched in November 2005, the team has consistently grown and we have reviewed and looked at a large number of ideas which will impact across all levels of the chess world and not just the top grandmasters.

I am honoured to have in our team people like Ali Nihat Yazici and Leo Battesti who have worked very hard to develop chess in their regions starting at the roots. Chess has literally exploded in Corsica and in Turkey. Opportunities must be provided for players all over the world to have access to a reasonable number of tournaments on an ongoing basis. It must not be done on the basis of somebody doing a weak country a favour simply for the vote once every four years.

My views on this have been clearly stated in an earlier question. There must be a consistent program of development, training and opportunities with people in power taking a genuine interest in the results. We have members of our team who have been discussing with a large number of small or developing Federations to listen to what they need. We are not arrogant and did not go to these countries and offer them clocks or money, but instead we asked them what they needed to get on their own two feet. We asked them to help themselves play a critical role in their own future. Many were surprised that somebody was even asking them for their opinion!

As I explained earlier, we have different roles to play. The main mission of FIDE is to facilitate an environment where 'wealth' can be created. This wealth comes from utilisation of your chess 'icons', these Grandmasters who dedicate their life to a profession of chess. It is not an easy life and many GMs have had to give up the game.

Regarding the application of Northern Ireland, we will observe completely the United Nations ruling on the status of Northern Ireland, since this is a fundamental aspect of FIDE statutes.

- Should the official FIDE events be held in countries that prohibit or discourage participation by players from certain countries or faiths? (David Surratt, USA)

- No. It is unfair to discriminate against anyone for any reason whatsoever, and FIDE has a moral and ethical obligation to practically ensure that organisers are chosen who will allow all players to participate on an equal footing.

- How should member nations share in the decision making-process in FIDE? Should each member nation receive an equal vote, or should voting take place based on some other criteria, such as the number of professional chess players each member nation has? (David Surratt, USA)

- We live in a democratic society and we follow the structure of all international organisations. If we believe in solidarity with emerging countries then we must also give them a right to shape their future. What we must not allow to happen, is that that statutes of FIDE are massaged to try and favour the current incumbents. This practice must stop and we have a whole project dedicated to modernising and democratising once again the FIDE statutes.

- Will you have a look at the rating system? Currently it is very conservative and supports risk avoidance to a great degree. The top players now are the best players of the past in some cases (Kasparov is one example!) and the best players of the moment have to play sensationally to enter the elite. (Jacob Aagaard, Glasgow)

- There have been some excellent proposals by leading GMs like John Nunn and also people like Jeff Sonas have come up with some ideas on this topic. The discussion becomes highly relevant if somebody dreams up some unorthodox ideas such as challenging for World championships if one has a 2700 rating, or else deciding qualifying places in the World Championship cycle on ratings, etc.

I think that a large number of areas have to be reviewed and this is one of them; I will add however that the rating calculations are one of the services that FIDE is operating correctly and respect should be given where it is due.

- *What is your position on drug testing in chess? (David Surratt, USA)*

- It is clear that there are no known drugs on the WADA list which can be of benefit to chess players. There are some other drugs which have been claimed help improve memory or alertness during a game. Of course, once we have subscribed to the IOC principles and wish to participate in regional Olympic games, then we should also observe all the rules of the 'club' however irrelevant they may appear.

- *Do you play or follow chess games online? (GM Alex Baburin)*

- I think that the Internet was made for chess! The increase of leisure time and the technological explosion of Internet mean that people are online much more frequently. For chess it has meant huge opportunities. We are witnessing games in real time and in the future we will be able to see effective web streaming of the players as well making us virtually there. I follow the games online although I confess I very frequently wish I was there also!

- *Knowing about Mr. Kok's expertise in information technology, we are sure that he has given some thought to Internet chess. Should he be elected to head FIDE, would he be inclined to rate Internet chess tournaments (of course with appropriate security against cheating)? Also, would he revive the project of an official FIDE Internet site? (Bobby Ang, Philippines)*

- Why not? The recent match between Malta and Netherlands Antilles shows that these can be 100% correct tournaments and if the organisers wish they should be allowed to submit them for rating. In Cannes we were also asked whether we would introduce rapid rating lists again or even blitz rating lists. These are great ideas and if they can be done in a cost-effective way, then we will definitely consider them.

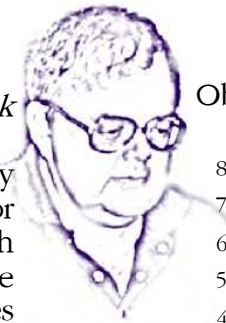
- *What concrete steps do you plan to take, if elected, to end the World Championship schism? (David Surratt, USA)*

- My position remains unchanged since nothing has effectively changed yet: "I will do everything I can within my power and capabilities to get us back on track. I am very confident that I will succeed to give the chess world one championship title and thus one sole champion thus reinstating its unique position, its credibility and thereby also the media attention and respect it fully deserves. In order to do that, I will listen again to all parties concerned and act taking into account the present situation, but keeping in mind in the broad positive spirit of the agreement reached in Prague 4 years ago." - interview for World Chess Network, December 2005



Weekend Gems

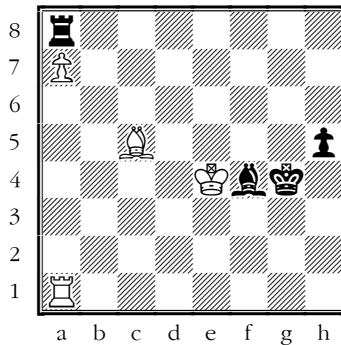
by IM Yochanan Afek



In a recent weekend I played for my Dutch team on Saturday and then for my German team on Sunday. Both games were extremely long and quite boring until the last couple of minutes on my opponents' clock that created some study-like material. Both games were last to end and the final episodes kind of turned into unexpected thrillers for the excited public.

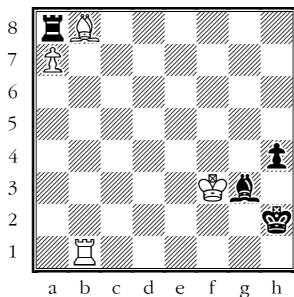
Y. Afek - M. Tan

KNSB 1A klas (7), 04.03.2006



1. **Rg1+ Qg3** 2. **Qd6 h4** 3. **Qb8 Qh3??**
 3... **Qh5** 4. **Qf5 Qxb8** 5. **Rg8 Qxa7**
 6. **Rxa8 Qe3** is, of course, draw.
 4. **Qf3! Qxb8**

After 4... **Qh2** 5. **Rb1!** (D)



Black is in complete Zugzwang!

5. axb8 ♖ ♖a3+

Trying the crazy rook for stalemate in view of 5... **Rxb8** 6. **Rh1#**.

6. Qe4 ♖a4+ 7. Qf5 ♖a5+ 8. Qe5

Even simpler was 8. **Qe6 ♖a6+** 9. **Qd7**.

8... **Rxe5+** 9. **Qxe5 Qh2** 10. **Rg4 h3**
 11. **Qf4 Qh1** 12. **Qg3 h2** 13. **Ra4 Qg1** 14. **Ra1#** 1-0

Contact information. Have some comments about Chess Today? [E-mail us](mailto:info@chesstoday.net) - we appreciate your feedback! **Chess Today** is published by Alexander Baburin, 3 Eagle Hill, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Tel: (353-1) 278-2276. Fax: (353-1) 283-6839. www.chesstoday.net

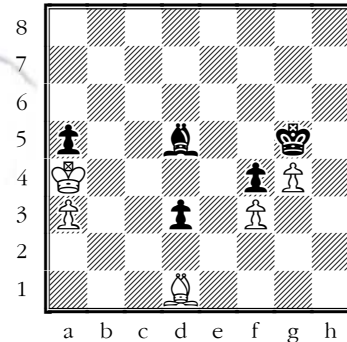
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V. Schudro - Y. Afek

Oberliga NRW (7), 05.03.2006

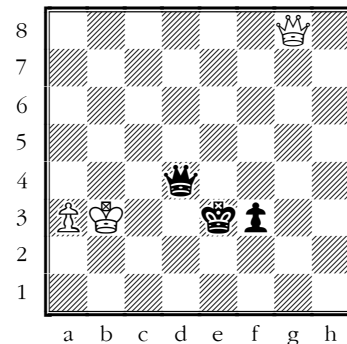


71... **Qa2!?** Or 71... **Qh4!?** 72. **Qxa5 Qg3**
 73. **g5 Qxf3** 74. **Qxf3 Qxf3** 75. **g6 d2**
 76. **g7 d1 ♖** 77. **g8 ♖=.**

72. **Qxa5 Qb1** 73. **Qb3 Qc2** 74. **Qb4 Qh4!** 75. **Qc3**

Better was 75. **g5 Qg3!** 76. **g6 Qxb3**
 77. **Qxb3 Qxf3** 78. **Qc3 Qe3** 79. **g7 d2**
 80. **g8 ♖ d1 ♖=.**

75... **Qxb3** 76. **Qxb3 Qg3!** 77. **Qc3 Qxf3**
 78. **g5 Qe3** 79. **g6 d2** 80. **g7 d1 ♖** 81. **g8 ♖ ♖d4+**
 82. **Qb3 f3** (D)



83. **Qg5+ Qe2** 84. **Qh5 Qe4** 85. **a4 Qd2**
 86. **Qa5+ Qd1** 87. **Qh5 Qe3+**
 88. **Qb4 Qd2** 89. **Qd5+ Qe1** 90. **a5 f2** 0-1

Perhaps it's the fate of a player-composer: even when things fail to go his way and his only wish is to end the game in a peaceful draw and return home in one piece, even then Caissa often has other ideas for him!

Solutions to our quiz: Banikas-Grivas:

16... **Qa4!** 17. **Qd2 Qxb2** 18. **Qxb2 Qb6**
 19. **Rad1 Rc4!** 0-1

Topalov-Gelfand: 57. **Rc8+!** 1-0

Editors: GMs Baburin, Scherbakov and Golubev; IMs Barsky, Notkin and Vlassov. Technical editors: Graham Brown and Ralph Marconi.

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