BCCF E-MAIL BULLETIN #471

Your editor welcomes any and all submissions – news of upcoming events, tournament reports, and anything else that might be of interest to BC players. Thanks to all who contributed to this issue. To subscribe, send me an e-mail (swright2@telus.net); if you no longer wish to receive this Bulletin, just let me know.

Stephen Wright

HERE AND THERE

Victoria Chess Club Annual Fundraiser (September 7)

The Victoria Chess Club held a 5-round CFC rated rapid tournament on Sunday September 7. The event, held at the home of the club, the Esquimalt Recreation Centre, was a fund-raiser with proceeds going toward paying the club's rent. The club meets every Wednesday evening and admission is free thanks to periodic fund-raising tournaments. $895 was raised.

Vivek Vishwanath is a foreign student at the University of Victoria and is the UVic Chess Club President. He is also a certified chess instructor. He holds an 1841 FIDE rating (flag India).

Peter Mingrone, who usually wins these tournaments finished second at 4.0-1.0, losing only to Vivek who finished a half-point ahead of him, giving up only one draw to club President, NM Roger Patterson.

With forty-six entries it was decided to divide the tournament into two sections (Veterans and Challengers) with Vivek winning the Veterans Section and Robert Flores winning the Challengers Section with a perfect 5-0.0 score.

Prizes were chess sets and books donated by Victoria Chess and the estate of Chris Eve. Tournament Director was Marc Moisan, NA. Organizer was Paul Leblanc, NA.

Winners' Circle. Marko Osobik and Joshua Campbell (tied for top U1100), Salam Fazil (top unrated), Vivek Vishwanath (Veterans Section winner), Paul Leblanc (organizer), Robert Flores (Challengers Section winner), Amirmasoud Tirekkar (top U1700), Marc Moisan (arbiter).

14th Pan-American School Championships (August 30 – September 5)

'Tis the season for international youth competitions. We have covered several in the last few issues of the bulletin and here is another one, the Pan-American School Championships (restricted to entrants from the American Continents). Held in Florianópolis, Brazil, the School Championships are similar to the Youth Championships but instead feature odd-year age groups (U7, U9, U11, U13, U15, U17) rather than even. Canada was represented by eleven players, of whom nine(!) placed in the top ten in their respective sections: Chloe Chan (2nd, U07G), Kara Chan (1st, U11G),

Julian Pan (10th, U11O), Shuang Chen (1st, U13G), Joanne Wangluo from BC (5th, U13G), Heye Gao (4th, U13O), Justin Huang (6th, U13O), Daniel Joshua Lee (10th, U13O), Tony Lu (1st, U17O) – congratulations to all! Standings

Zuniga Ugarte, Danya Alexia (1594) – Wangluo, Joanne (1729) [B43] Pan-American School ch 14th Florianopolis (3.3), 01.09.2025

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Nc3 b5 6.a3 Bb7 7.Be3 d6 8.Qd2 Nf6 9.f3 Be7 10.g4 Nbd7 11.0–0–0 Ne5 12.f4 Nc4 13.Bxc4 bxc4 14.Rhg1 Nd7 15.Qe2 Rc8 16.e5 dxe5 17.fxe5 Qa5 18.Qd2 Nxe5 19.Bf4 0–0 20.h4 Rfd8 21.Qf2 Ng6 22.g5 e5 23.Bxe5 Nxe5 24.Nf5 Bc5 25.Qg3 Bxg1 26.Ne7+ Kf8 27.Nxc8 Rxd1+ 28.Kxd1 Qc5 29.Na4 Qd4+ 0–1

Toronto Open (August 30 – September 1)

Here in BC the traditional tournament over the Labour Day weekend is the Langley Open, formerly Labour Day Open (see below), but some of our players took the opportunity to compete elsewhere on the Continent. Occurring on the long weekend but titled simply the Toronto Open, the five-section event was hosted by the Annex Chess Club at St. Casimir's Parish Hall. The thirty-four player Crown Section included Ukrainian GM Petro Golubka and six IMs but he had to be content to tie for second along with IM Nicholas Vettese and FM Victor Plotkin as IM Anthony Atanasov smoked the field with a perfect score. BC's Ryan Leong finished with 2.0 points.

Labor Day Norm inv IM (August 28 – September 1)

Ethan Song and Rose Atwell

A number of players from this province have taken advantage of the norm tournaments hosted by the Charlotte Chess Centre in North Carolina. Last there in the Fall of 2023, FM Ethan Song participated in the IM section of this year's Labor Day events. A slow start meant that any norm possibility was remote and he finished with 50%, 2.0 points off the pace. The only person to achieve any norms in either section was sixteen-year-old FM Rose Atwell, whose 6.5/9 score in winning the IM section was enough for a norm towards each of the IM, WGM, and WIM titles (multiple norms are possible from the same result). Also playing but in the GM section was Canadian IM Raja Panjwani.

Song, Ethan (2238) – De Silva, L M S T (2395) [C47] Labor Day Norm inv IM Charlotte (8.5), 01.09.2025

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bb4 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.Bd3 0–0 8.0–0 Re8 9.Bg5 h6 10.Bh4 d5 11.exd5 Bxc3 12.bxc3 cxd5 13.Re1 Be6 14.Qf3 Rb8 15.h3 c5 16.Rad1 Qe7 17.c4 d4 18.Re5 Rec8 19.Rde1 Rb6 20.Qg3 Kf8 21.f4 Qd8 22.Qf3 Bd7 23.Qe2 Qc7 24.f5 Kg8 25.Re7 Rd8 26.Qd2 Qc8 27.R1e5 Re8 28.Bxf6 Rxf6 29.Rxe8+ Bxe8 30.Qa5 Bc6 31.Qxa7 Qd8 32.Qxc5 Qa8 33.Qa5 Qb8 34.Re2 Kh7 35.a3 Qb2 36.Kh2 Qc1 37.Qe5 Qxa3 38.Qxd4 Qa8 39.Qf4 Qb7 40.Qg3 Qc8 41.Rf2 Qf8 42.Rf4 Kh8 43.Rg4 Kh7 44.Qe5 Qd8 45.c5 Qa8 46.h4 Bd7 47.Rd4 Qa1 48.Rd5 Qa4 49.Qd4 Qxd4 50.Rxd4 Bxf5 51.Rd6 Kg6 52.g4 Bxd3 53.Rxf6+ Kxf6 54.cxd3 Ke5 55.d4+ Kd5 56.g5 1–0

Illinois Open (August 28 – September 1)

Held in Lisle, a suburb of Chicago, the Illinois Open was held in four sections, three of them consisting of seven-rounds but the top section was stretched to nine rounds and was also FIDE rated, thus allowing for norm possibilities. GM Praveen Balakrishnan scored 7.5/9 to claim the first prize, a half-point ahead of FM Ochirbat Lkhagvajamts who was clear second and IM Sam Schmakel and Saumil Padhya who tied for third. BC junior Elliot McCallum finished with 4.0 points. Standings

V Mindsports International Festival (August 13-18)

Another BC junior, Aiden Leong, participated in a pair of events in Europe. The fifth Mindsports International was held at the London Mindsports Centre, a former Albion Congregational Church which now houses facilities for chess, bridge, and go. There were three blitz tournaments along with one for chess960 but the main event was a classical Super Swiss with one hundred and seven players including six GMs and sixteen IMs. Topping the field after nine rounds was Polish GM Igor Janik and English IM Brandon Clarke, each with 7.0 points, the latter also achieved a GM norm. Aiden scored 5.0 to gain a few FIDE rating points, the other Canadian in the field was Artem Gurevich who finished with 4.5. Standings

Leong, Aiden (2068) – Leung, Hao Ran (1915) [E09] V Mindsports int op London (9.25), 18.08.2025

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.Nbd2 e6 5.g3 Nbd7 6.Bg2 Be7 7.0–0 0–0 8.Qc2 b6 9.e4 dxe4 10.Ng5 Bb7 11.Ngxe4 Qc8 12.b3 c5

(photo by Biró Zoltán)

13.Bb2 cxd4 14.Bxd4 Nxe4 15.Bxe4 Bxe4 16.Qxe4 Bf6 17.Nf3 Nc5 18.Qe3 Bxd4 19.Nxd4 Rd8
20.Rfd1 Qb7 21.b4 Ne4 22.b5 Rd7 23.Nc6 Nc5 24.Qf3 Rc7 25.Rd4 Re8 26.Rad1 Kf8 27.h4 e5
28.Rd8 Rc8 29.R8d5 e4 30.Qf5 g6 31.Qf6 Kg8 32.h5 1–0

28th Caissa International (August 21-29)

Following London, Aiden's next port of call (so to speak) was the city of Miercurea Ciuc in the
Eastern Transylvania region of Romania for the Caissa International, organized by the Caissa
Chess Club at Sapienta University. The thirty-three player A Section included two GMs and five
IMs; the winner was GM Marius Manolache with 8.0/9, a point and a half ahead of IM Claudiu-
Cristian Dobre and GM George-Gabriel Grigore who tied for second (all Romania). Aiden finished
with 50%. Standings

LANGLEY OPEN (August 30 – September 1)

Co-organized as last year by the Fraser Valley Chess Association and the Langley Chess Club,
this year's Langley Open was held at the Christian Life Assembly Church, a familiar site to patrons
of the FVCA's tournaments. Now in its eighteenth year since the former Labour Day Open moved
from Victoria to Langley in 2006, the Langley Open used to be one of the few major tournaments
held in one section, but last year and this has been split into three sections to accommodate more
players.

The forty-four player Open Section included fourteen players over 2000 and five former or current
BC Champions. The top six players were evenly matched (there was only one decisive result
between them, all their remaining games although competitive were drawn), so their final
placement depended upon how many full or half points they gave up to the rest of the field. The
most successful in this regard was NM Yidong Chen who finished clear first with 5.0/6, also taking
the BC Championship qualifying spot. Close behind tied for second were four of those champions,
in tiebreak order FM Grigorii Morozov, IM Raymond Kaufman, FM John Doknjas, and CM Neil
Doknjas. As it turned out 5.0 points was also the winning score in the other two sections. In the
U1700 Section, the largest at sixty-one entrants, there was a three-way tie for first between Allain

Era, Larry Yang, and James Fu who finished a half-point in front of six players with 4.5. And finally the twenty player U1100 Section saw Shivam Devgun and Sergei Issaev score 5.0 points each to tie for first, while Nishwan Shaikh, Miguel Vivas, Avery Leung, Arin Aloke, and Sakhila Sooriarachchi shared third.

Brian Davidson, John Doknjas, Neil Doknjas, Yidong Chen, Grigorii Morozov, Umang Banatwala

Doknjas, John – Lu, Samuel [D77] Langley op Langley (1.1), 30.08.2025

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 g6 4.0–0 Bg7 5.c4 e6 6.d4 0–0 7.Nbd2 b6 8.b4 Bb7 9.a4 dxc4 10.Nxc4 Nbd7 11.Ba3 Re8 12.Rc1 Rc8 13.Qb3 Bd5 14.Qd3 Bh6 15.e3 Be4 16.Qe2 Bd5 17.Nfe5 Nxe5 18.Nxe5 Bxg2 19.Kxg2 Qd5+ 20.Qf3 Bg7 21.b5 h6 22.Nc6 Bf8 23.Bxf8 Kxf8 24.Qxd5 Nxd5 25.e4 Nf6 26.Kf3 Ra8 27.Nb4 Red8 28.Rc4 Rd7 29.h3 Ne8 30.Ke3 Nd6 31.Rc2 Rb8 32.Rfc1 Ne8 33.e5 Rb7 34.Nc6 Ng7 35.g4 Ne8 36.f4 Ng7 37.Ke4 Ke8 38.Rd2 Kf8 39.Rf1 Ke8 40.Rff2 Kf8 41.d5 exd5+ 42.Rxd5 Rxd5 43.Kxd5 Ne6 44.f5 gxf5 45.gxf5 Nc5 46.Rf4 a6 47.e6 axb5 48.e7+ Ke8 49.Rg4 1–0

Kaufman, Raymond – Doknjas, Neil [B67] Langley op Langley (6.1), 01.09.2025

1.Nf3 c5 2.e4 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bg5 Bd7 7.Qd2 a6 8.0–0–0 e6 9.f3 Nxd4 10.Qxd4 Be7 11.g4 h5 12.gxh5 Nxh5 13.Bxe7 Qxe7 14.Rg1 Bc6 15.Qxd6 Qxd6 16.Rxd6 Ke7 17.Rd2 Nf4 18.Bd3 Rh3 19.Rg3 Rah8 20.Rxh3 Rxh3 21.Rf2 g5 22.Kd2 Ng6 23.Ne2 Ne5 24.Nd4 Bd7 25.Bf1 Rh4 26.Ke3 f5 27.exf5 exf5 28.c4 Kf6 29.b4 Rh8 30.c5 Ba4 31.Kd2 Nc6 32.Nxc6 Bxc6 33.Ke3 Re8+ 34.Kd4 Rd8+ 35.Kc3 Ke5 36.Kb3 Rd1 37.Kc2 Ba4+ 38.Kc3 Kf4 39.Bd3 Bc6 40.Bc2 Rc1 41.Kd4 Ra1 42.Bd3 Rd1 43.Kc3 Re1 44.Kd2 Re3 45.Bxf5 Ra3 46.Be6 a5 47.Bb3 axb4 48.Kd3 Bd5 49.Rb2 Kxf3 50.Kd4 Bxb3 51.axb3 Ra1 52.Kc4 Rg1 53.Kxb4 Rg2 54.Kc3 Rg4 55.b4 Rh4 56.b5 g4 57.Rd2 Ke3 58.Rd7 Rxh2 59.Rxb7 Rh5 60.c6 g3 61.c7 Rc5+ 62.Kb4 g2 63.Kxc5 g1Q 64.Rb8 Kd3+ 65.Kc6 Qg6+ 66.Kb7 Qe4+ 67.Ka7 Qa4+ 68.Kb6 Qd4+ 69.Kb7 Qe4+ 70.Ka7 Qa4+ 71.Kb6 ½–½

Chen, Zhengyu – Chen, Yidong [A37] Langley op Langley (6.2), 01.09.2025

1.Nf3 c5 2.g3 Nc6 3.Bg2 g6 4.0–0 Bg7 5.c4 e5 6.Nc3 Nge7 7.d3 d6 8.a3 h6 9.Rb1 a5 10.Bd2 Be6 11.Qc1 g5 12.Nb5 Rc8 13.b4 axb4 14.axb4 b6 15.Ne1 Ng6 16.e4 Nd4 17.Nxd4 cxd4 18.f4 exf4 19.gxf4 gxf4 20.Bxf4 Be5 21.Bg3 h5 22.Nf3 h4 23.Bxe5 dxe5 24.h3 Nf4 25.Kh2 Nxd3 26.Qd2 Bxc4 27.Ng5 Nf4 28.Rxf4 Qxg5 0–1

Morozov, Grigorii – Gao, Justin [D55] Langley op Langley (6.4), 01.09.2025

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 Be7 5.Bg5 0–0 6.e3 b6 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Bxe7 Qxe7 9.Rc1 Nxc3 10.Rxc3 Bb7 11.Bd3 Rc8 12.Qc2 g6 13.0–0 c6 14.Rc1 Rc7 15.Be4 Na6 16.a3 Rac8 17.Qa4 Qd6 18.h3 f6 19.b4 b5 20.Qb3 Qe7 21.Bb1 Kf7 22.Ne1 Rd8 23.Nd3 Nb8 24.Nc5 Bc8 25.Ba2 Rd6 26.Qd1 Kg7 27.Qf3 Rd8 28.Qe4 Rd6 29.h4 Qf7 30.Qf4 Qe7 31.Qg3 Qd8 32.Ne4 Rdd7 33.Bxe6 Re7 34.Bxc8 Rxe4 35.Bg4 Re8 36.h5 Rce7 37.hxg6 h6 38.Bd1 Qd5 39.Bb3 Qf5 40.Bf7 Rd8 41.Qh3 1–0

ARBITER'S CORNER by Brian Davidson

At a recent BC tournament, a player was given a loss for having his cell phone ring in the playing hall. What made the incident unusual was that it happened after his game had ended. From the Arbiter's perspective, the FIDE rules did not offer him any option except to forfeit the game in his opponent's favour. The decision was appealed, and the appeals committee, while acknowledging that point of view, reduced the penalty to a warning, The pertinent facts were that the player had followed the tournament rules and stored his phone in a bag under the table, and he had tried - albeit unsuccessfully - to turn the device off, and that he didn't have access to the phone during the game.

The lesson we can take from this incident is that tournament policies regarding device infractions could or should be published and known by the players and arbiters beforehand, giving guidance to what level of penalty they can expect, with an emphasis on whether the player had access to the device during the game. FIDE published its Fair Play Regulations in November, 2024, dealing mostly with electronic devices and manipulation of events like sandbagging and match fixing. Nova Scotia and Manitoba have each come up with formal Codes of Conduct, and maybe the CFC and BCCF should do the same. Using judgement is good, but having clear guidelines to eliminate ambiguity is better.

MORPHY NUMBERS UPDATED

"Six degrees of separation" is the popular name of a theory which proposes that everyone on the earth is connected with everyone else through a series of at most five intermediate acquaintances. First suggested in 1929 by the Hungarian writer Frigyes Karinthy, the theory came into prominence with the postal experiments of psychologist Stanley Milgram ("the small-world problem") in the late 1960s. The phrase "six degrees of separation" was popularized through the play and film of the same name by John Guare in the early 1990s; this in turn led to the trivia game *Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon*, in which players have to demonstrate a link between a given actor and Kevin Bacon through the least number of shared film appearances. For example, Elvis Presley appeared in *Change of Habit* (1969) with Edward Asner, and Asner was in *JFK* (1991) with Kevin Bacon. Therefore, Asner and Presley would have Bacon numbers of 1 and 2 respectively. Anyone appearing with Presley in another film would have a Bacon number of 3, assuming there wasn't a shorter link. In similar fashion, concert pianists are fond of pointing out their pedagogical lineage (if they have a worthwhile one), e.g., current pianist Craig LiaBraaten studied with Gyorgy Sebok, who studied with Béla Bartók, who studied with István Thomán, who studied with Franz Liszt, who studied with Karl Czerny, who studied with Ludwig van Beethoven.

Well, as you may have guessed by now, the six degrees of separation theory has recently been applied to chess (n.b., this was first written in 2005). Historian Taylor Kingston, on a break from his more profound researches, wrote "Your Morphy Number Is Up." Taking the legendary American player Paul Morphy as the centre of the chessic universe, Kingston links other players to Morphy through games contested between the intermediaries. He uses a rather liberal interpretation of the term 'games' (including simultaneous displays, offhand games, consultation games, etc.) so as to include as many 'average' players as possible. Starting from Morphy, Kingston gives the prominent members of each Morphy number group (those who personally played Morphy have a Morphy number of 1, those who played a MN1 are MN2, and so on). His own MN is 5, as follows: "in 1965 I played in a simultaneous exhibition against GM Arthur Bisguier. At New York 1948-49 Bisguier played former world champion Max Euwe, who at Pistyan 1922 played German master Siegbert Tarrasch, who at Frankfurt 1887 played Louis Paulsen, who at New York 1857 played Morphy."

My application of this to BC players can be found in Bulletin #74; my own MN was 5, through at least two different routes:

Wright - Jursevskis - Bogolyubov - Tarrasch - Paulsen - Morphy, and
Wright - Berry - Keres - Maróczy - Owen - Morphy

At the time it was believed that all MNs went through just four players, Anderssen, Owen, Bird, and Paulsen, but Kingston subsequently discovered a fifth MN1, James Mortimer, which led to a number of following players having their MN reduced by one. Here is a revised version of my previous list as derived from Kingston:

MN0: Paul Morphy (1837-1884)

MN1: Adolf Anderssen (1818-1879), Rev. John Owen (1827-1901), Henry Bird (1830-1908), Louis Paulsen (1833-1891), James Mortimer (1832-1911)

MN2: Wilhelm Steinitz (1836-1900), Joseph Blackburne (1841-1924), Amos Burn (1848-1925), Mikhail Chigorin (1850-1908), Isidor Gunsberg (1854-1930), Emanuel Lasker (1868-1941), Geza Maróczy (1870-1951), Harry Pillsbury (1872-1906), Frank Marshall (1877-1944),

MN3: Edward Lasker (1885-1981), Efim Bogolyubov (1889-1952), Alexander Alekhine (1892-1946), Fedor Bohatirchuk (1892-1984), Friedrich Sämisch (1896-1975), Max Euwe (1901-1981), George Koltanowski (1903- 2000), Herman Steiner (1905-1955), Sammy Reshevsky (1911-1992), Mikhail Botvinnik (1911-1993), Arnold Denker (1914-2005), Paul Keres (1916-1975), Svetozar Gligoric (1923-2012), Abe Yanofsky (1925-2000), Pal Benko (1928-2019), Arthur Bisguier (1929-2017), Arturo Pomar (1931-2016

MN4: Boris Spassky (1937-2025), Robert J. Fischer (1943-2008), Hans Ree (1944-), Yasser Seirawan (1960), Nigel Short (1965-), Alexei Shirov (1972-)

The number of players increases exponentially with each new generation, therefore I have only given those individuals who likely have an influence on BC Morphy numbers; only two Canadians appear - Yanofsky, who is in Kingston's original list, and Bohatirchuk, who qualifies as a MN3 via playing Emanuel Lasker (MN2). So how do BC players measure up in terms of Morphy numbers? An obvious start is those who have played any of the above. This would include the following:

MN3: Thomas Piper (1857-1938) played Blackburne and Gunsberg
Hebert Burrell (1870-1956) played Blackburne
Dave Creemer (1902-1953) played Em. Lasker and Maróczy

MN4: Jack Taylor (1907-1974) played Koltanowski
Elod Macskasy (1919-1990) played Keres
Miervaldis Jursevskis (1921) played Bohatirchuk, Bogolyubov, Sämisch ...
Nathan Divinsky (1925) played Bohatirchuk
Duncan Suttles (1945) played Reshevsky, Botvinnik, Keres ...
Bob Zuk (1947) played Keres
Peter Biyiasas (1950) played Keres
Jonathan Berry (1953) played Keres
Bruce Harper (1954) played Keres

MN5: Gary Basanta (1968) played Bisguier
Jack Yoos (1969) played Tukmakov, who played Reshevsky

Of course, this is based purely upon printed results - there may be quicker links which I am not aware of. In the realm of conjecture one can speculate about the many early immigrants to BC, of whom we know next to nothing about their opponents. For example, Thomas Piper is officially MN3, but likely he is MN2 - it seems probable that he would have played the likes of Owen or Bird before leaving England in the mid 1880s. The same could be said of Bertram Yates (1868-1953), Walter de Havilland (1872-1968), or John Ewing (1889-1952) - we simply do not know who they might have played in offhand or simultaneous games.

Continuing such speculation, it is possible Macskasy played offhand games with Maróczy (they knew each other), giving Macskasy a MN of 3. Or Jack Taylor might have played offhand games with Thomas Piper when they met in Victoria in 1929, thus possibly lowering Taylor's MN to 3. Another source of potential links is through simultaneous displays, although the possibility of tracing such links is very slight - we usually are not given a complete list of participants in a simul. Important Canadian simuls were given by Steinitz, Em. Lasker, Maróczy, and Pillsbury (all MN2), while Henry Bird (MN1) visited Montreal in the 1860s. In BC simuls were given by Marshall, Euwe, Koltanowski, Steiner, Reshevsky, Keres, Yanofsky, and Bisguier (all MN3), also by Spassky (MN4) - this list does not include simuls by the local players mentioned above.

All of the above is based on players' relationship to Morphy, but the same idea has been applied to other legendary players. Following Kingston's original article, Austrian web programmer Karlheinz Zöchling has applied the same idea, but instead of relating everyone to Paul Morphy he instead chosen as his reference point Garry Kasparov, at that point arguably the greatest player of all time. Zöchling programmed his website to calculate the shortest number of connections between an inputted player and Kasparov, with the provisos a) the games must be in Megabase 2005, and b) the connection is established by beating the next player in the chain. For example, by Zöchling's reckoning my own Kasparov number is three: Stephen Wright beat George Levtchouk (Canadian Open 1999), who beat Nigel Short (Quebec Open 1982), who beat Garry Kasparov (OHRA 1986). The site also allows the calculation to be made with other players as the reference; it turns out I have a Capablanca number of four: Stephen Wright - Marcel Milat - Eduard Gufeld - Andor Lilienthal - Jose Raul Capablanca. Unfortunately, it appears the website, https://ibeatgarry.com/, is currently no longer operational.

Time has moved on since the Kasparov era and now Magnus Carlsen is considered by many to be the greatest of all time (G.O.A.T.). Belgium GM Bart Michiels has produced a website which will calculate what he calls Magnus Numbers - https://magnusnumber.com/. However, there are a number of stringent restrictions: you have to beat the next player in the chain, the victory has to be FIDE rated, the game has to be at a classical time control, and only games played during Carlsen's reign are counted (2013-2023). This rules me out, as the last FIDE-rated game I played was in 2005, but loosening the restrictions could produce

Stephen Wright – George Levtchouk – Nigel Short – Fabiano Caruana – Magnus Carlsen

Even with the original restrictions in place we get such intriguing sequences as

James Chan – Joshua Sheng – Hans Niemann – Magnus Carlsen

Hans Neimann seems to be a particularly useful link in the chain, being American and thus a more likely opponent for BC players than many others. Because of him Jason Cao, Bindi Cheng, John Doknjas, Raymond Kaufman, and Tanraj Sohal are all Magnus Number 3. Leon Piasetski is even Magnus Number 2, having beaten Niemann during the 6th Washington International in 2017.
So what's your Morphy/Kasparov/Magnus number? It might not help you win your next tournament, but a small thrill can result from the knowledge that you are linked with some of the all-time greats.

[Postscript: forty years ago in Ontario there was a rather bizarre character by the name of William Klarner, a.k.a. Billy Oxygen. He managed to beat Kevin Spraggett in one of Peter Stockhausen's Belleville tournaments, and thereafter was fond of making the following assertion: "I beat Spraggett, and Spraggett beat Ivanov, and Ivanov beat Karpov, so I'm better than Karpov!"]

COMING EVENTS: see listings at CFC, BCCF and Northwest chess websites

Okanagan Valley Rapid 5

West Kelowna, September 20 Details

Ultimate Chess Club League

Langley/Surrey, September 21 – Dec. Details

BC Junior Championship

Burnaby, September 27-28 Details

RCC Elite Rapid

Richmond, September 28 Details

Fraser Valley Rapid 18

Langley, October 4 Details

Vancouver Chess Festival #12

Vancouver, October 4-5 Details

Thanksgiving Open

Langley, October 11-13 Details

LIC Fall Rapid

New Westminster, October 18 Details

Jack Taylor Memorial

Victoria, October 24-26 Details

RCC Elite Championship

Richmond, October 26 Details