

The Oregon Jr. Closed Championship pits the top six available Oregon juniors in a weekend round robin. The winner gets his or her name engraved on a perpetual Jr. Championship trophy and gets seeded into the Oregon Championship, provided his or her rating is at least 1900 at year's end.

Usually, most of the top players in the state hail from the Portland metropolitan area. Recently, though, Corvallis has been emerging as a chess powerhouse, and this year's Jr. Closed featured four Corvallis players. In celebration of their accomplishments, Crescent Valley High School in Corvallis offered to host the event on January 20-22. After a week of unusually heavy rain, the Red Cross took over the high school to use as a shelter for flood victims. The displaced chess players found refuge at nearby Zion Lutheran School, which graciously provided quiet, comfortable playing conditions at the last minute. The time control was G/90 with 30 second increment per move, with one game Friday evening and two games on Saturday and two on Sunday.



The top-rated player in the event was Alexandra Botez (2005), a junior at Clackamas High School. Alexandra's solid, relentless chess is impressive, but equally impressive was her off-the-board behavior. Regardless of whether she won or lost, she would cheerfully discuss the game with her opponent and then retreat to the library to work on her homework--an inspiration to the other players.



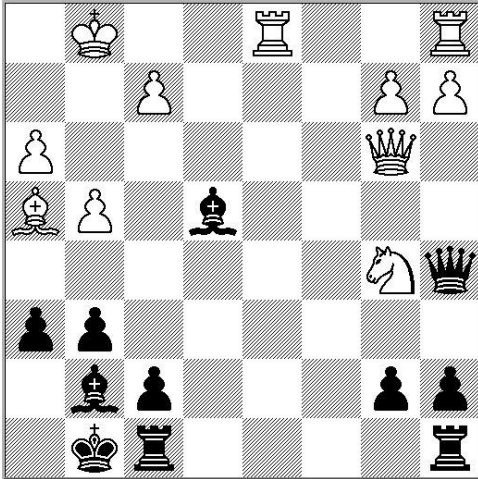
Calvin Parnon (1895), a sophomore "unschooler" from Corvallis plays wonderfully creative attacking chess. But he's also accomplished at finding all sorts of defensive resources. He delighted observers in the skittles room with his quick and witty analysis of all the defensive possibilities available to Matt Dalthorp after Steven Witt delivered him a Greek Gift sacrifice (Bxh7+) in their third round game.

The much anticipated encounter between the two top-rated players began as a relatively quiet, positional struggle in a Caro-Kann. Calvin excels in wild, tactical melees, but Alexandra deftly thwarted his would-be attacks at every turn, built up a number of small positional advantages, and the came up with a creative plan to win.

**(1) Parnon, Calvin (1895) – Botez, Alexandra (2005) [B14]**

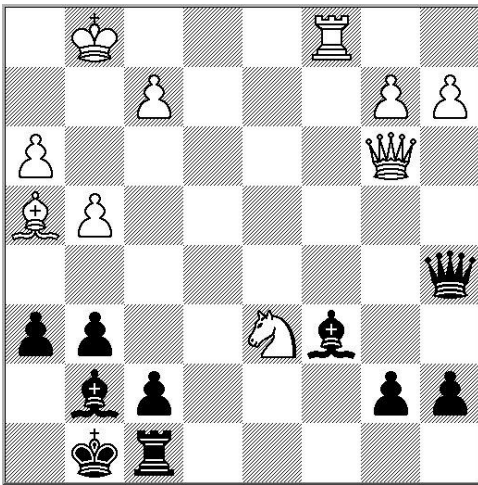
Oregon Jr Closed, 25.01.2012

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 g6 3.Nf3 d5 4.exd5 cxd5 5.c4 Nf6 6.Nc3 Bg7 7.Qb3 e6 8.Bg5 dxc4 9.Bxc4 0-0 10.0-0 h6 11.Bh4 Nc6 12.Rfd1 Na5 13.Qb4 Nxc4 14.Qxc4 Bd7 15.d5 Qc8 16.Qb3 Nxd5 17.Nxd5 exd5 18.Qxd5 Bc6 19.Qb3 Qg4 20.h3 Qh5 21.g4 Qa5 22.Nd4 Be4 23.Nb5 ...**



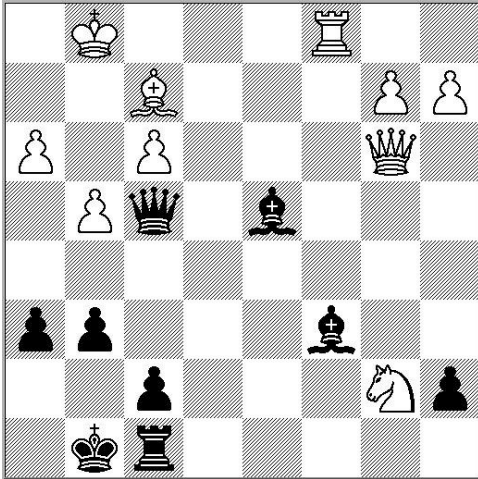
White was ready to call it a day with a draw offer on move 23 Nb5. However, Black had been diligently working on accumulating a number of small advantages--two bishops, open position, exposed white king--and wanted to keep playing. She would target the long diagonal pointing at the white king. A few moves later, she executed a brilliant plan to win the game.

**23...Rac8 24.Rac1 Rxc1 25.Rxc1 Bc6 26.Nd6 Qe5!**



White just played 26. Nd6, attacking the b-pawn. Black's subtle but venomous response 26... Qa5-e5 is winning. Black will take control of the long diagonal and force f3 as soon as the white knight moves. This will open a diagonal for the dark squares bishop to take aim at the exposed king. The queen and two bishops make short work of White's pieces-- a beautiful game.

**27.Bg3 Qe2 28.Nxb7 Qe4 29.f3 Bd4+ 30.Bf2 Qf4**



The decisive blow was 30....Qe4-f4!, threatening Qxc1 and Qg3+. White has no adequate response. 31.Bxd4 Qxc1+ 32.Kg2 Qd2+ 33.Bf2 Rb8 0-1



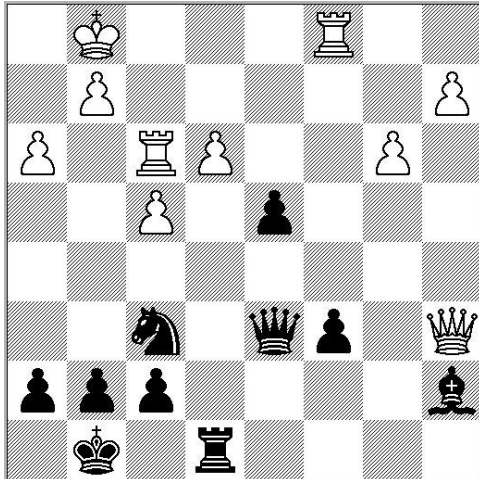
Maxwell Sun (1863), 6th grader from Cheldelin Middle School in Corvallis, was the third highest-rated player and the only non-HS player in the tournament. In the two weeks leading up to the tournament, Max had been playing outstanding chess, twice tying for second with Oregon's top-rated player, Steven Breckenridge, in high-powered

tournaments. After struggling in the early rounds, he won his final round game against Alexandra--a hair-raising marathon lasting well over 100 moves.

**(2) Botez,Alexandra (2005) – Sun,Maxwell (1863)**

Oregon Junior Closed Championship Zion Lutheran School, Corvallis (5), 22.01.2012

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.e3 Nc6 5.Nc3 Nf6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.Be2 a6 8.0-0 Bd6 9.b3 0-0  
 10.dxc5 Bxc5 11.Na4 Ba7 12.Ba3 Re8 13.Nd4 Be6 14.Nxc6 bxc6 15.Rc1 Qc7 16.Nc5 Qa5  
 17.Nxa6? Qxa3 18.Nc7 Qd6 19.Nxe8 Rxe8 20.Qc2 Bg4 21.h3 Bb8 22.f4 Bxe2 23.Qxe2 Ba7  
 24.Rf3 d4 25.Qa6 dxe3!?



Black is ready for a gutsy sacrifice: 25....dxe3 26. Qxa7. In exchange for the bishop, Black gets a menacing passed pawn. He deftly brought his knight into the action to increase the pressure to win back his material--with interest. He then won a queen vs. rook endgame in a mad time scramble, with both players playing on increment.

26.Qxa7 Qd2 27.Rff1 e2 28.Rfe1 Ne4 29.b4 Nc3 Qe3+ 31.Kh1 Ne4 32.Qxc6 Nf2+ 33.Kh2 Nd3  
 34.Qxe8+ Qxe8 35.Rxe2 Qb8 36.Rc7 Nxf4 37.Rb7 Qf8 38.Ree7 Nd5 39.Red7 Nf6 40.Rd4 40  
 Qe8 41.Rd2 Qe5+ 42.g3 Qe8 43.a4 h6 44.a5 Qe3 45.Rb8+ Kh7 46.Rbd8 Ne4 47.Rg2 Ng5  
 48.Rd1 Nf3+ 49.Kh1 Qe4 50.Rf2 Qe3 51.Kg2 Ne1+ 52.Rxe1 Qxe1 53.Rf4 Qe2+ 54.Kg1 Qb5  
 55.h4 Kg6 56.Kg2 f5 57.Kf2 Kh5 58.Rd4 g5 59.hxg5 hxg5 60.Ke3 Qe5+ 61.Kd3 f4 62.gxf4  
 gxf4 63.a6 Qe3+ 64.Kc4 Qe6+ 65.Kc5 Qc8+ 66.Kb5 Qb8+ 67.Kc6 Qc8+ 68.Kb6 Qb8+ 69.Kc6  
 Kg4 70.b5 Qa8+ 71.Kb6 Qb8+ 72.Kc6 Qc8+ 73.Kb6 Qe6+ 74.Kb7 Qe7+ 75.Kc6 Qe6+ 76.Rd6  
 Qc8+ 77.Kb6 Qb8+ 78.Kc5 Qc7+ 79.Rc6 Qa7+ 80.Kd6 Qd4+ 81.Kc7 Qa7+ 82.Kc8 Qa8+  
 83.Kc7 f3 84.b6 Qxa6 85.b7 Qa7 86.Kc8 f2 87.Rc1 Qe3 88.Rc4+ Kg5 89.b8Q Qe8+ 90.Kb7  
 Qb5+ 91.Ka7 Qa5+ 92.Kb7 Qb5+ 93.Ka7 Qxb8+ 94.Kxb8 f1Q 95.Rc5+ Kf6 96.Kc7 Qf4+  
 97.Kc6 Ke6 98.Kb5 Qf1+ 99.Kb6 Qf2 100.Kb5 Qe2+ 101.Kb4 Qb2+ 102.Ka5 Kd6 103.Rb5  
 Qa3+ 104.Kb6 Qa8 105.Rb4 Qd5 106.Rb5 Qc6+ 107.Ka5 Qc3+ 108.Ka6 Qa3+ 109.Kb7 Qa4  
 Black squeezed the white king into the corner and won several moves later. 0-1

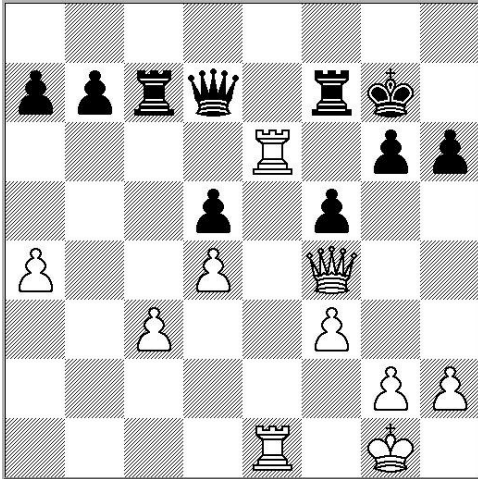


Steven Witt (1859), a junior at Century High School in Hillsboro, got a relatively late start in chess but took to the game with a vengeance once he got rolling. He played his first USCF tournament in February 2008, but by the end of the year, he'd added sixteen more tournaments to his total. He played in yet another 30 tournaments in 2009 and pushed his rating past 1600. Steven displayed great fighting spirit throughout the event and barely missed winning first place.

**(5) Witt, Steven – Botez, Alexandra [B14]**

2012 Oregon Jr Closed, 27.01.2012

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Be2 Bb4 8.0-0 0-0 9.a3 Bxc3  
10.bxc3 Ne4 11.Qc2 Qa5 12.Bd3 f5 13.Bb2 Qd8 14.cxd5 exd5 15.Bb5 Bd7 16.Bxc6 Bxc6  
17.Ne5 Bb5 18.Rfe1 Rc8 19.a4 Bc4 20.f3 Nd6 21.Ba3 Rf6 22.Bxd6 Qxd6 23.Nxc4 Rxc4  
24.Re8+ Kf7 25.Rae1 Rc7 26.R8e5 Qd7 27.Qb3 Rd6 28.Qc2 g6 29.Qd2 Kg7 30.Qg5 Rf6  
31.Qf4 Rf7 32.Re6 h6



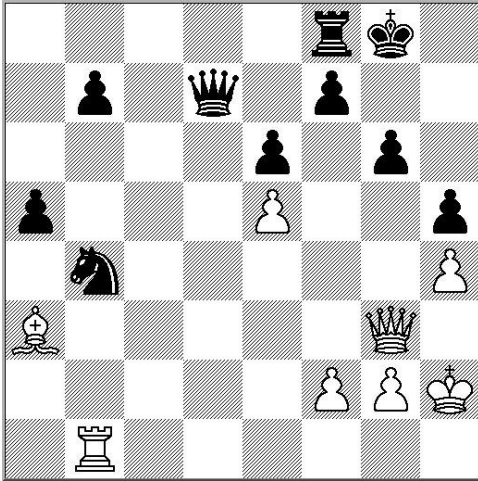
White to play 33. Rd6, winning.

Steven's game against Alexandra was a tense clash of heavy pieces. Black's 32...h6 allows White to penetrate with full force beginning with 33. Rd6. After 34. Ree6, White has total control of the sixth rank for a winning position. **33.Rd6 Qxa4 34.Ree6 Qd1+ 35.Kf2 Qc2+ 36.Kg3 g5 37.Qe5+ Kh7 38.Re8 Rg7 39.Rh8+ Kxh8 40.Rxh6+ Kg8 41.Qe8# 1-0**



David Wen (1786), freshman at Crescent Valley High School in Corvallis, has been one of the top juniors in the state since moving here from Ohio in summer 2010. After struggling a bit in tournaments the past few months, he unveiled a devastating new opening repertoire at the Jr. Closed. After a chaotic first-round draw against Matt Dalthorp, David was able to get exactly the kinds of positions he excels in and swept the next four rounds to finish at 4.5/5 with clear first, a full 1.5 points ahead of second place Steven Witt--amazing performance.

Going into the final round, David was leading Steven Witt, 3.5 to 3 with no other players in striking distance. The winner of their game would be the champion. With a draw, David would come out on top, though, so Steven played all out for the win. At one point he sacrificed an exchange for desperate attacking chances in a losing position rather than winning a pawn and preserving a fighting chance for a draw but very low possibility for a win, 35. Rxb4.



Steven is ready to play the fighting, uncompromising 35. Rxb4, sacrificing the exchange to keep alive some fighting chances. He's hoping to take advantage of all the holes in the dark squares around Black's king. The alternative, Bxb4, wins a pawn but there'd be little hope of anything better than a long, uphill fight for a draw.

Full game with annotations by David Wen.

### (7) Steve Witt (1870) – David Wen (1750) [B12]

B12: Caro-Kann: Advance Variation 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.h4 h5 Many of the variations that I played in this tournament were my first. It took me a while to actually take up that Caro-Kann, but I think it fits my style well. 5.c4 Already fighting for space in the center. 5...e6 6.Nc3 Nd7 [6...Ne7 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.Qb3 Qb6] 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.Bd3 Bxd3 9.Qxd3 Ok, the C-file is open and a rook is poised to go onto it, however, right now it has no target. Perhaps if I could get a pawn on the C-file 9...Bb4 10.Nge2 Black has a good square for his knight on C4, an open C-file, and another nice square on F5. In exchange, white has a special advantage in the center. 10...Qb6 11.a3 Bxc3+ 12.bxc3 I was quite surprised to see this move, which allows my C-file to have a target. However, my king is still in the center and a pawn push onto C4 is quite threatening. 12...Rc8 13.Qg3 Attempting to weaken the dark squares, but perhaps this was unnecessary. Maybe 13. Rb1 was a better try. [13.Rb1 Qc7 14.0-0 Ne7 15.Bg5 Nb6] 13...g6 14.0-0 Ne7 Heading straight to F5, a fantastic square for the knight. 15.a4 Nf5 16.Qh3 Qa6 17.Nf4 [17.Re1 b5 18.a5 b4 19.cxb4 Rc2 20.Nf4 Qc4 Black has dominance over the C-file, and will pick up the pawns on D4 and B4] 17...Qa5 Shuffling back and forth, attacking different weaknesses. At this point, there really isn't a great way to save material here. 18.Bb2 Rc4 [18...Nb6 19.Rfb1 Rc4 20.Qd3 Nxa4 21.Ba3 b5 22.Bb4 Qc7] 19.Rfe1 a6 20.Kf1 Rxa4 21.c4 Rxa1 22.Bxa1 Nb6 23.Bc3 Qa4 24.cxd5 Nxd5 25.Nxd5 Qc4+ 26.Kg1 Qxd5 27.Bb4 Nxd4 28.Bd6 Nb5 29.Bb4 a5 30.Rc1 Qd7 31.Ba3 Nd4 32.Kh2 Nc6 33.Qg3 Nb4 34.Rb1 0-0 35.Rxb4 axb4 36.Bc1 Qe8 37.Bg5 Kh7 38.Bf6 Rg8 39.Qg5 Qf8 [39...b3 and Black can already relax 40.Qc1 Qa4 41.Qc7 Qf4+-] 40.Qf4 b3 [Δ40...Qc5 seems even better 41.Qe4 Qb6-+] 41.g4 b2 42.Qe4 Qc5 43.Kg3 Qc6 [43...Qc1 44.Kh2 b1Q 45.Qxb1 Qxb1 46.Kg3 Qg1+ 47.Kf4 Qxg4+ 48.Ke3 Rc8 49.f3 Rc3+ 50.Kd2 Rxf3

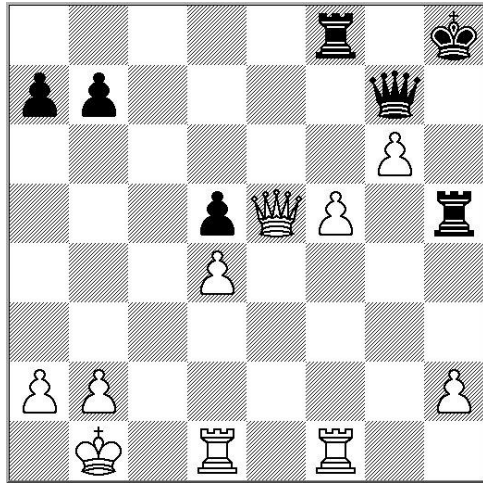
51.Ke1 Qg2 52.Kd1 Rf1#] **44.Qb4 Qc1** [⊔44...hgx4 and the rest is a matter of technique 45.Qxb2 Qf3+ 46.Kh2 Rc8-+] **45.Qe7 Qg1+ 46.Kf3 hxg4+** [-2.32 Fritz 11: 46...Qd1+ 47.Ke3 Qb3+ 48.Kd2 b1N+ 49.Ke1 Qc3+ 50.Kf1 Qc1+ 51.Kg2 Qc6+ 52.Kg3 Qe8 53.Qb4 hxg4 54.Qxb1 Qc6 55.Qd1 Ra8 56.Qxg4 Ra1 57.Qe2 Rg1+ [%eval -336,17]] **47.Kf4 Qxf2+** [47...g5+ 48.hxg5 Qxf2+ 49.Kxg4 Rxg5+ 50.Kxg5 Qg3+ 51.Kh5 Qg6+ 52.Kh4 b1Q 53.Qxf7+ Qxf7 54.Kg4 Qd1+ 55.Kg3 Qg6+ 56.Kf4 Qd4+ 57.Kf3 Qgg4#] **48.Kxg4 Qg2+ 49.Kf4 g5+!** Mate attack **50.Bxg5** [50.Bxg5 Qf2+ Mate attack; 50.hxg5 Qf2+ Promotion] **50...Qf2+ 51.Kg4 b1Q** [51...b1Q 52.Qxf7+ Qxf7 53.h5 Qbf5+ 54.Kg3 Rxg5+ 55.Kh4 Qxh5#] **0-1**



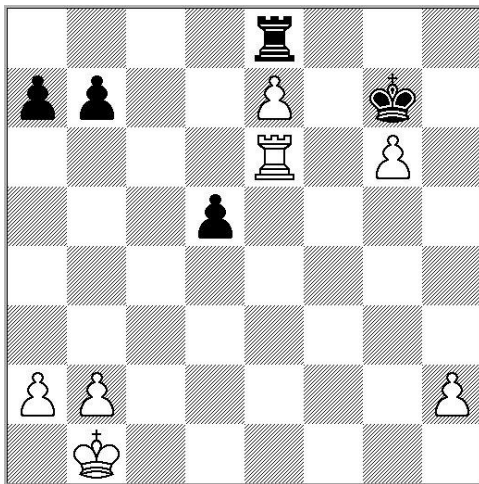
Matt Dalthorp (1777), sophomore at Crescent Valley High School in Corvallis, played his first tournament in fifth grade. Since then, he has gradually and inexorably raised the level of his game to land himself comfortably among the top ten juniors in the state. Lately he has been enjoying blindfold chess. He even played three opponents at the same time in a blindfold simul--and then did it again against another three later in the day. The visualization skills he has been developing help him see through the wild, chaotic positions he like to play.

Matt and Max have played over a dozen or so USCF rated games over the past few years. The games are always sharp and double edged, and their game in the Jr. Closed was no exception.

**(4) Dalthorp, Matt (1776) – Sun, Max (1865) [C63]**  
2012 Oregon Jr Closed, 26.01.2012



The beginning of the end: After a topsy-turvy game, Matt's final blow was a lovely 12-ply combination to freeze Max's king and rook while leaving his own king free to roam. The combination begins with forcing a queen trade after 37. Qe6-e5.



Black to move: there's nothing he can do. The culmination of the combination that began with the last diagram. White is totally winning now. 1-0.

The full game with Matt's annotations:

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 f5** Okay then... **4.Nc3 Nf6 5.d3** Not the best, but it seemed logical. [5.exf5 d5 6.Nh4 is apparently good for white, but I don't know any theory outside the main lines.] **5...Bc5 6.Bg5 0-0 7.Nd5** Putting pressure on the f6 knight, though I now must watch out for c6 tactics. **7...Kh8** I guess he was afraid of Bc4 tactics. **8.Qe2** Fritz says [8.exf5 because 8...d6 9.g4 with the pawns solidly placed due to the pin on his knight.] **8...Nd4** Oh look, c6 tactics, good thing I was watching out for them. **9.Nxd4 Bxd4 10.c3 Bb6** [10...c6 11.cxd4 (11.Nxf6 gxf6 12.Bh6 is fine too.) 11...cxd5 12.0-0 with an odd sort of central formation.] **11.Bc4 c6 12.Nxf6** Forced, but just fine by me. I saw a move earlier that this allowed me to cram both my bishops onto the kingside. **12...gxf6 13.Bh6 Re8 14.Bf7 Re7 15.Bh5** [15.Qh5 d5 isn't so good. Fritz says I must play very precisely to stay out of trouble, and those types of games are no fun.] **15...d5 16.exf5**

**e4 17.d4 c5** I'm going to attack on the kingside, so the obvious plan for him is to use that powerful looking center. **18.0-0-0** My, what fun this leads to... **18...cxd4 19.cxd4 Bxf5 20.g4 Be6 21.Kb1** I think it's worth it to make sure my king's "safe" before embarking on a kingside expedition. **21...Rc7 22.f4** Trying to get him to open some lines. **22...f5 23.Bg5** There are bad bishops, then there are good bishops, then there are my bishops. **23...Qf8** The only move to save him from a horrible impending doom. **24.Qf2 Rc4** [24...h6 25.Bh4 fxc4 when Black is clearly better.] **25.Qh4** How many pieces does it take to fill a kingside? **25...Bd8** The best, but he's in trouble anyway. **26.Bg6 Rc7** [26...Qg7 27.Bxd8; 26...Bg8 27.Bxf5 I prefer White.] **27.gxf5 Bxg5 28.fxc5 Qg8** [28...Bxf5 29.Qf4 Bxg6 30.Qxc7 when I guess Black's still in it, though White is clearly better.] **29.Qf4** I was pretty happy about this move, but Fritz prefers shifting a rook to the f-file. **29...Rg7 30.Bxh7 Rxc7 31.g6** Much better than just grabbing the bishop. **31...Rh5** [31...Rg7 32.Qh6+] **32.Qe5+ Qg7 33.Qxe6 Rf8 34.Rhf1 e3** [34...Rxc7 35.Rh1 and he's done.] **35.Qxe3 Kg8** wasted move. **36.Qe6+ Kh8 37.Qe5** I spent a while on this move, making sure that the endgame would be nice and simple. **37...Qxe5 38.dxe5 Rhxf5 39.Rxf5 Rxf5 40.Re1 Kg7** [40...Rf8 41.e6 Re8 42.h4 Kg7 43.h5] **41.e6 Rf8 42.e7 Re8 43.Re6** I saw through this before trading queens; it's simple from here. **43...b6 44.Kc2 a5 45.Kd3 b5 46.Kd4 b4 47.Kxd5 Kh6 48.Kd6 a4 49.Kd7 Ra8 50.e8Q 1-0**

### Final Results

Player	Rd1	Rd2	Rd3	Rd4	Rd5	Total
1. David Wen	D3	W4	W6	W5	W2	4.5
2. Steven Witt	W4	L5	W3	W6	L1	3.0
3. Matt Dalthorp	D1	W6	L2	L4	X5	2.5
4. Alexandra Botez	L2	L1	W5	W3	L6	2.0
5. Calvin Parnon	W6	W2	L4	L1	F3	2.0
6. Max Sun	L5	L3	L1	L2	W4	1.0