



Check is in the Mail

by FIDE Master Alex Dunne

And still champion ...

The 1996 Golden Knights Championship has come to an end, and we have a repeat! Our 1995 Champion, **Robert Keating**, has returned as our 1996 Champion. Robert has been playing chess since he was taught at age 6 by his dad. He grew up in western Pennsylvania and is now a general surgeon in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Robert took up correspondence chess during his medical and surgical training as he longed for competition, but couldn't afford the time or travel commitment for OTB tournaments.

Robert notes that he has learned not to rush things if a good plan is not apparent. Returning to the position anew at a different time or day will often lead to fresh insights.

Robert has also acquired a healthy chess library of over 200 books that have been a good source of knowledge and inspiration in his games.

His other source of inspiration? Robert and his fiancée Nicole plan to be married in April. I wish them good luck and happiness!



GAME OF THE MONTH

Robert Keating's style resembles that of a surgeon — a surgeon with a machine gun. Black's king is hunted down right out of the opening.

SICILIAN DEFENSE [B47]

W: Robert Keating (2385)

B: Masao Ogaki (2204)

1996 Golden Knights Final

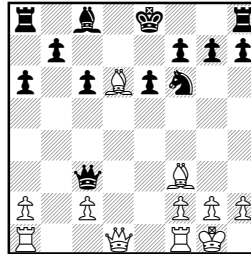
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 e6 5 Nc3 Qc7 6 Ndb5

Looked upon as a beginner's move, Keating shows there is hidden power in it.

6 ... Qb8 7 Be3 Nf6 8 Be2 a6 9 Nd4 Bb4 10 0-0

A large part of successful chess is attitude. Ahead in development, Keating offers a pawn to keep Black's king in the center.

10 ... Bxc3 11 bxc3 Nxe4 12 Nxc6 dxc6 13 Bf3 Nf6 14 Bc5 Qe5 15 Bd6 Qxc3
(diagram)



after 15 ... Qxc3

Keating brands this move as the capture of a relatively meaningless pawn but does not offer an alternative. Perhaps 15 ... Qg5 with the idea of ... Nd5-e7 and ... 0-0 is a plan.

16 Rb1 Nd5 17 Re1 Qc4 18 Rb3 a5 19 Re4 Qa6

With the queen in exile and the king hobbled, Black's two extra pawns are little compensation.

20 Qd4 a4 21 Rd3 Rg8 22 c4 Nf6 23 Be7 Nd7 24 Bh4 g5 25 Bh5 c5 26 Qe3, Black resigns.

Keating gives the following crush: 26 ... Kf8 27 Rxd7 Bxd7 28 Qxc5+ Ke8 29 Bxf7+ Kd8 (29 ... Kxf7 30 Rf4+ gxf4 31 Qe7 mates) 30 Bxg8 gxh4 31 Rf4 with a dominant position.

Rounding out the 1996 Finals and close behind Robert Keating were second place **Boris Ratner**, third place **Tony Pajdar**, fourth place **Edwin Meiners**, and fifth place **Abe Wilson**. Congratulations, gentlemen, and all the other finalists!

• The 17th World Correspondence championship is waiting to declare a champion. Ivar Bern of Norway is the favorite to win the title on tiebreak. Only Borislav Vukcevic of Yugoslavia can surpass him, but Borislav would have to score six out of his remaining seven games.

• "I often had as many as 150 games in progress; this naturally made it impossible for me to play them all well but had the useful effect of deepening my theoretical knowledge and giving me an insight into all aspects of the game. Later on this proved of great value to me in tournament play."
— Paul Keres

• Boris Ratner demonstrates what a fearsome weapon two bishops can be in the hands of a master. You can almost feel the squeeze tightening on Black's position.

NIMZO-INDIAN DEFENSE [E32]

W: Boris Ratner (2366)

B: Walter Brower (2318)

1996 Golden Knights Final

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Qc2 0-0 5 a3 Bxc3+ 6 Qxc3 b6 7 Bg5 Bb7 8 f3 h6 9 Bh4 d5 10 e3 Nbd7 11 cxd5 Nxd5 12 Bxd8 Nxc3 13 Bh4 Nd5 14 Bf2 f5 15 Bb5 c6 16 Bd3 e5 17 Ne2 Rae8 18 0-0 exd4 19 exd4 g6 20 Rfe1 N7f6 21 Nc3 Kg7 22 Bc2 Nf4 23 a4 Ba6 24 a5 Rxe1+ 25 Bxe1 b5 26 g3 Ne6 27 Bf2 Nd5 28 Nxd5 cxd5 29 Re1 Kf6 30 Bb3 Rd8 31 Re5 Bb7 32 g4 f4 33 Kg2 Ke7 34 h4 Kd6 35 Re2 Bc6 36 Bc2 Be8 37 Bd3 a6 38 Be1 Nxd4 39 Bb4+ Kc7 40 Re7+ Kb8 41 Bc5 Nc6 42 Rh7 h5 43 gxh5 gxh5 44 Bf5, Black resigns.

• Ninth-place finisher Jan Verleur moved to Belgium after the '96 Championship, but he shows when it comes to winning, he doesn't waffle.

FRENCH DEFENSE [C11]

W: Steve Chakis (2241)

B: Jan Verleur (2224)

1996 Golden Knights Final

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 dxe4 5 Nxe4 Be7 6 Bxf6 gxf6 7 Nf3 Nd7 8 Qd2 c5 9 d5 f5 10 Nc3 Bf6 11 dxe6 fxe6 12 0-0-0 0-0 13 Bb5 Nb6 14 Qxd8 Rxd8 15 Rxd8+ Bxd8 16 Rd1 Bf6 17 Na4 Nxa4 18 Bxa4 b5 19 Bxb5 Rb8 20 c4 a6 21 Bd7 Bxd7 22 Rxd7 Rxb2 23 Rd2 Rb4 24 Rc2 e5 25 Nd2 Kf7 26 Nb3 Be7 27 f3 Bg5+ 28 Kd1 Be3 29 Ke2 Bd4 30 g4 Kg6 31 Kd3 Ra4 32 h4 Ra3 33 Ke2 fxe4 34 fxe4 Kf6 35 Kf1 a5 36 Kg2 e4 37 Re2 Ke5 38 Nd2 Be3 39 Nf1 Bf4 40 Nd2 Rg3+ 41 Kf1 Be3, White resigns.

• The last of the money prize winners, Robert Rizzo, demonstrates that the Dragon Sicilian sometimes leads to endgames.

SICILIAN DEFENSE [B76]

W: J. Malina (1979)

B: Robert Rizzo (2261)

1996 Golden Knights Semifinal

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 Be3 Bg7 7 f3 0-0 8 Qd2 Nc6 9 g4 Be6 10 0-0-0 Nxd4 11 Bxd4 Qa5 12 a3 Rab8 13 h4 b5 14 Nd5 Qxd2+ 15 Rxd2 Bxd5 16 exd5 Rfc8 17 Bxa7 Ra8 18 Bd4 b4 19 g5 Nh5 20 Bxg7 Kxg7 21 Rd3 bxa3 22 bxa3 Rc5 23 Rb3 Nf4 24 Rh2 Nxd5 25 Rd2

h5 26 Kb2 f6 27 c4 Nf4 28 Rb7 fxg5 29 Rxd6 gxh4 30 Rxe7+ Kh6 31 Rf7 Kg5 32 Rdf6 Rf5 33 Rxf5+ gxf5 34 Rg7+ Ng6 35 Kb3 Re8 36 Kb4 Re1 37 Bh3 Kf6 38 Rg8 Rh1, White resigns.

SEMI-SLAV DEFENSE [D31]
W: Stephen McGregor
B: Robert Keating

GK96NF5

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nf3 e6 4 Nc3 dxc4 5 a4 Bb4 6 e3 b5 7 Bd2 Bb7 8 axb5 Bxc3 9 Bxc3 cxb5 10 b3 a5 11 bxc4 b4 12 Bb2 Nf6 13 Bd3 0-0 14 0-0 Nbd7 15 Nd2 Qc7 16 f4 a4 17 e4 a3 18 Bc1 Qd6 threatening a deadly forking check on d4. **19 d5 exd5 20 exd5 Ba6** threatening

Nxd5 since cxd5 would be met with Bxd3. **21 Qf3 Rfe8 22 Kh1 Qb6** threatening ... Re3. **23 Nb3 Rac8 24 c5 Nxc5 25 Nxc5 Rxc5 26 Be3 Bxd3 27 Bxc5 Qxc5 28 Qxd3 Qxd5 29 Qa6 h6** Safety first — protecting against potential back-rank mates. **30 Rfb1 Ng4 31 Qf1** [31 Rxb4 Nf2+ 32 Kg1 Nd1 33 h3 Re1+ 34 Kh2 Ne3 and White must give up a rook or be mated.] **31 ... Re3 32 Rd1 Qe4 33 Kg1 Re2 34 Qf3** [34 h3 Rf2 35 hxg4 Rxf1+ 36 Rxf1 and Black's queen plus two advanced connected passed pawns should easily win.] **34 ... Rxxg2+ 35 Qxxg2 Qxxg2+ 36 Kxxg2 Ne3+ 37 Kf3 Nxd1 38 Rxd1 (38 Ke2 b3 39 Rxa3 Nc3+ 40 Kd3 b2) ... b3** and the pawns can't be stopped, **0-1**.

CORRESPONDENCE CHESS TOURNAMENT

UPDATES FOR DECEMBER 2005

CONGRATULATIONS!

MASTER

Albert H. Rothaus 2205

CANDIDATE MASTERS

William G. L. Parker 2010

Blair W. Eakin Jr. 2002

Bradford L. Drake 2001

TOURNAMENT WINNERS

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Stephen Brosnan 04CB26 5-1

Adam Whitaker 04CD48 6-0

VICTOR PALCIAUSKAS

Art Marthinsen 03UAB4 5½-½

E-MAIL — SWIFT QUAD

Patrick Neal 05SQEM10 4-2

Brian Stewart 05SQEM10 4-2

Kenneth Coryell 05SQD07 6-0

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Bernard Miller 05ET03 5-1

Michael Quirk 05ET03 5-1

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The entry deadline is November 30, 2006.

These USCF Correspondence Chess events are rated and open to all USCF members who reside on the North American continent, islands, or Hawaii, as well as those USCF members with an APO or FPO address. USCF members who reside outside of the North American continent are welcome to participate in e-mail events. Your USCF membership must remain current for the duration of the event, and entry fees must be paid in U.S. dollars. Those new to USCF Correspondence Chess, please estimate your strength: **Class A:** 1800-1999 (very strong); **Class B:** 1600-1799 (strong); **Class C:** 1400-1599 (intermediate); **Class D:** 1399 and below (beginner level). **Note:** Prize fund based on 400 entries and may be decreased proportionately per number of entries assigned.

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• 2nd place \$800 • 3rd place \$600 • 4th place \$400 • 5th place \$200 • 6th thru 10th place \$100 each. **Entry fee: \$25.**

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Please circle event(s) selected.

NOTE: Except for Lightning Matches, Swift Quads, Walter Muir E-Quads, Electronic Knights & Express Tournaments, players will use post office mail, unless opponents agree to use e-mail.

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