



# Check is in the Mail BY FIDE MASTER ALEX DUNNE

## New World Correspondence Champion

After a long wait, correspondence chess has a new world chess champion, possibly the last champion to play by ordinary mail. Ivar Bern, 37 years old from Bergen, Norway, has won the title with superior tiebreaks over two German rivals, Wolfgang Rohde and Joachim Neumann. To determine his moves, Bern relies heavily on his Fritz chess computer. (In International Correspondence Chess, computers are legal. The joke is, what do you hear at the beginning of an International Correspondence Chess tournament? "Gentlemen, start your engines!") Bern has been many-time correspondence chess champion of Norway and for 20 years has been pursuing the world championship title. At one time he had up to 63 games going at once.

Bern stated in an interview in "ICCF Amici" ([www.amici.iccf](http://www.amici.iccf)) that "My [chess] program isn't even close to playing perfect chess. The same goes for the other programs that some of my opponents use. There is a lot of work left for humans. Therefore, I have no fear of the computer death."

### GAME OF THE MONTH

Bern notes that the best correspondence chess player is he who manages to supplement the computer programs most effectively. He works hard to push the computer program, aided by his own evaluation, beyond the computer's threshold. "Fritz alone," Bern says, "doesn't stand a chance against Bern & Fritz!"



Ivar Bern,  
17<sup>th</sup> World Correspondence Champion

### ENGLISH OPENING [A37]

W: Anders Eriksson (2519)

B: Ivar Bern (2592)

17<sup>th</sup> World Chess Championship

1. Nf3 c5 2. g3 Nc6 3. Bg2 g6 4. O-O Bg7 5. c4 e5 6. Nc3 Nge7 7. Ne1  
White plans to put a piece on d5 with Ne1-c2-e3-d5.

7. ... d6 8. Nc2 Be6 9. Ne3 Rb8 10. d3 a6 11. a4

By ceding b4, White allows Black to neutralize the d5-square.

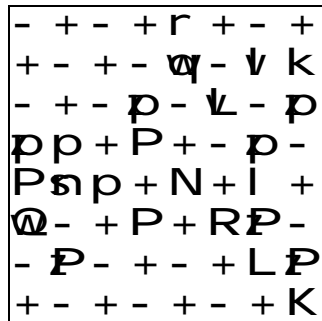
11. ... O-O 12. Ned5 h6 13. Bd2 a5 14. f4 f5 15. Kh1 Kh7 16. Rf2 Nb4 17. Qb3

A critical moment – White could play for a draw with 17. Nxe7. Instead, he allows his pawn structure to be weakened.

17. ... Nexd5 18. cxd5 Bd7 19. Raf1 exf4 20. Bxf4 Qe7 21. Rf3 g5 22. Bd2 Rbe8 23. e4 fxe4 24. Nxe4

After this last violation of his pawn structure, White's game goes down hill. After 24. dxe4, White will have some counterplay.

24. ... Rxf3 25. Rxf3 b5 26. Bc3 c4 27. Qa3 Bg4 28. Bf6



after 28. Bf6

XBlack plays for maximum complications, but Black's next deprives the rook of the f2-square and Black breaks through.

28. ... Qa7 29. Rf1 Be2 30. Re1 cxd3 31. Qc3 Nxd5 32. Qc6 d2 33. Nxf5+ hxg5 34. Qc2+ Kh6 35. Bxg7+

Black also wins after 35. Bxg7+ Kxg5 36. h4+ Kf6 37. Qxd2 Qe3 and White's attack fails.

35. ... Qxg7 36. Qxd2 Qe5, White resigns.

### News and Notes

Bobby Fischer at a simul – "C'mon fella, move! This ain't postal chess!"

Junior Tay, reporting for *Chess Today*, the daily internet chess newspaper [www.chesstoday.net](http://www.chesstoday.net), announces the fall of Chessfriends.com (CFC), Reimund Lutzenberger's vision of big money correspondence chess. Allegedly Lutzenberger has disappeared along with the 70,000 e-prize fund leaving members stranded in cc limbo. The CFC chess server remains on line, but the question is for how long. CFC was a class act while it was on stage. It's too bad its departure had to be so dramatic.

It is time once again for the annual Hames Award for the best games published in this column. In the non-Master division, there were three outstanding games: May, Rodriguez-Jemty; October, Simon-Cacas; and November, Nenciulescu-Campbell. The winner, in a close call, is Harry Simon for the iron logic of his game. In the Master division there was, as usual, a rich selection to choose from. The two nominees from April are, Title-Brandhorst and from October, Novak-Koziol. The winner is Ted Brandhorst. Congratulations, gentlemen!

At the end of this, White has an extra pawn and a king terrified of its future.

### BISHOP'S OPENING [C24]

W: Daniel Waite (2104)

B: Joseph Shipman (2307)

17 USCCC

1. e4 e5 2. Bc4 Nf6 3. d4 exd4 4. Nf3 Bc5 5. e5 d5 6. exf6 dxc4 7. Qe2+ Be6 8. fxg7 Rg8 9. Bg5 Qd6 10. Nbd2 d3 11. Qe4 Rxd7 12. O-O-O Qa6 13. Qe5 Bf8 14. Ne4 Nd7 15. Qxc7 f5 16. Nc3 Bd6 17. Nb5 Bb4 18. a3 Qxb5 19. axb4 Qa4 20. cxd3

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cx d3 21. Qc3 Nf6 22. b3 Qa3+ 23. Kb1 Rc8 24. Qxd3 Rd7 25. Qe3 Ne4 26. Rc1 Rdc7, White resigns.

My seven-year-old no longer believes in the Easter Bunny. This game is just as hard to believe!

**QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED** [D43]

W: Ciaran O'Hare (2358)  
B: Ted Brandhorst (2389)

2003 USCF Absolute Championship

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 d5 3. c4 e6 4. Nc3 c6 5. Bg5 h6 6. Bh4 dxc4 7. e4 g5 8. Bg3 b5 9. Be2 Bb7 10. h4 b4 11. hxg5 bxc3 12. bxc3 Nxe4 13. Be5 Nxc3 14. Qc2 Nxe2 15. Kxe2 Rg8 16. gxh6 Bxh6 17. Rxh6 Nd7 18. Qh7 Rxc7 19. Rb1 Nf8 20. Rxb7 Nxh7 21. Rxh7 Rg8 22. Rbx7 c3 23. Bc7 c2 24. Kd2 Rg1 25. Re7+ Qxe7 26. Rxe7+ Kxe7 27. Nxc3 Rf8 28. Bg3 Rf5 29. Ne2 c5 30. Kxc2 c4 31. Nc3 Kd7 32. a4 Rf3 33. Nb5 Rb3 34. Nc3 Kc6 35. Bf4 Rb4 36. Be3 Rb7 37. a5 Rb3 38. d5+ exd5 39. Bxa7 Ra3 40. Bb6 Ra1 41. Kb2 Rh1 42. Ne2 Kb7 43. Nf4 Kc6 44. Ne6 Rh2 45. Nd4+

Kb7 46. Nc2 Rh3 47. Ne3 Kc6 48. f4 Rh4 49. f5 d4 50. Nc2 d3 51. Ne3 Rf4 52. Kc3 Kb5 53. Bd8 d2 54. f6 Ka6 55. Kc2 Kb5 56. Be7 Kxa5 57. Kxd2 Kb5 58. Kc2 Kc6 59. Kc3 Kd7, draw.

**SICILIAN DEFENSE** [B38]

W: William Turin (1801)  
B: Jeffrey Sellers (2009)

Electronic Knights 2004

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 g6 5. c4 Bg7 6. Be3 Nf6 7. Nc3 0-0 8. Be2 d6 9. 0-0 Bd7 10. Nxc6 Bxc6 11. Qc2 Qc7 12. Rfd1 Nd7 13. Nd5 Bxd5 14. exd5 Ne5 15. Rac1 b6 16. Qd2 Rac8 17. b4 Nd7 18. Bd4 Nf6 19. Bf3 Rfd8 20. c5 bxc5 21. bxc5 dxc5 22. Bxc5 Re8 23. Bd4 Qd7 24. Rc6 Red8 25. Qe2 Ne8 26. Be3 Be5 27. Bg4 f5 28. Bf3 Nd6 29. g3 Bf6 30. Rdc1 Qb7 31. Rac1 Qd7 32. Qa6 Rb8 33. Rc7 Qe8 34. Rxa7 Bd4 35. Rac7 Rb2 36. R1c2 Rxc2 37. Rxc2 Qd7 38. a4 Rb8 39. a5 Rb3 40. Qa8+ Kf7 41. Kg2 Ra3 42. Qc6 Qd8 43. a6 Kf8 44. Be2, Black resigns.

**CORRESPONDENCE CHESS TOURNAMENT**  
UPDATES FOR FEBRUARY 2006  
**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**CANDIDATE MASTER**

Constantine Ananiadis 2005  
Raymond J. Birt 2003

**TOURNAMENT WINNERS**

**JOHN COLLINS MEMORIAL CLASS**

Mark Meibers	05CD01	6-0
William Parker	04CA49	6-0
Michael Spradlin	04CB29	5-1
James Dawkins	03CA41	5-1
Norval Turner	04CA37	4-2
John Steele	04CA37	4-2

**VICTOR PALCIAUSKAS PRIZE**

Thomas Langland	03UM5	6-0
David Middleton	04UC7	5½-½

**TROPHY QUAD**

Joseph Daudish	04QB31	5½-½
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**E-MAIL**

**SWIFT QUAD**

Kendrick Aung	05SQ23	5½-½
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**CHECK OUT USCF'S CORRESPONDENCE CHESS RATED EVENTS**

**USCF's 59<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL**

**2006 Open Correspondence Chess Golden Knights Championship**  
**\$1,500 First Prize**

(plus title of USCF's Golden Knights Champion and plaque)

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

**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.

**CORRESPONDENCE CHESS MATCHES (TWO PLAYERS)**

**\$5 entry fee per person** with two, four or six-game options.

**WIN A CORRESPONDENCE CHESS TROPHY**

Four-player, double round-robin with class-level pairings. 1st-place winner receives a trophy. **Entry fee: \$10.**

**VICTOR PALCIAUSKAS PRIZE TOURNAMENTS**

Seven-player class-level pairings, one game with each of six opponents. Players must have a USCF CC rating to enter. 1st-place winner receives \$130 cash prize and a certificate signed by Victor Palciauskas. **Entry fee: \$25.**

**JOHN W. COLLINS MEMORIAL CLASS TOURNAMENTS**

Four-player, double round-robin with class-level pairings (unrateds welcome). 1st-place winner receives a John W. Collins certificate. **Entry fee: \$7.**

**E-MAIL RATED EVENTS (NEED E-MAIL ACCESS):**

**LIGHTNING MATCH** Two players with two, four or six-game option. **Entry fee \$5 per person.**

**Swift Quads** Four-player, double round-robin format. 1st-place prize merchandise credit of \$30. **Entry fee: \$10**

**NEW!! Walter Muir E-Quads**

Four-player, double round-robin e-mail format tournament with class-level pairings (unrateds welcome). 1st-place receives a certificate. **Entry fee: \$7.**

**Express Tournament**

Seven-player events, one game with each of six opponents. Prizes: **1st place** \$30 merchandise credit, **2nd place** \$20 credit. **Entry fee: \$15.**

**USCF's 3<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL**

**2006 E-mail Correspondence Chess**  
**Electronic Knights Championship**

(Seven-player sections, one game with each of six opponents.)

**\$1,500 First Prize**

(plus title of USCF's Electronic Knights Champion and plaque)

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

**The entry deadline is November 30, 2006.**

These USCF Correspondence Chess events are rated and open to all USCF members with e-mail access. Your USCF membership must remain current for the duration of the event, and entry fees must be paid in U.S. dollars. Maximum number of tournament entries allowed for the year for each player is ten.

**Note:** Prize fund based on 400 entries and may be decreased proportionately per number of entries assigned.

**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.

To Enter: 800•903•USCF (8723), Fax 931•787•1200 or on-line [www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
USCF ID# \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit card # (VISA, MC, Discover, AMEX) \_\_\_\_\_  
Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ If using VISA, need V-code \_\_\_\_\_  
Check here if you do not wish to have an opponent who is incarcerated.   
Make checks payable to U.S. Chess and mail to:  
Joan DuBois, USCF, PO Box 3967, Crossville, TN 38557



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[www.uschess.org](http://www.uschess.org)

