



# THE CHESS

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# CORRESPONDENT

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## JOHN SMAIL WINS NORTH AMERICAN CLASS B SERVER CHAMPIONSHIP

By Vince Sereni

Our featured article is on the winner of the 2014 North American Class B Server Championship: John Smail. John competed with six other CCLA opponents and won the title with a 5-0 record (a winning margin of 1/2 point).

John was born and raised in Sheffield, England. He moved to California in his mid-twenties. He played postal chess to survive a Scottish boarding school in the 1950's where he found a chess club. During the 1960's to 1990's, he played sporadic forays into over-the-board chess.

His employment consisted of computer programming, managing an ornithological research station, teaching, and driving a cab in San Francisco. Asked if he could do it again, would John take a different path or was he satisfied with the route he followed? John's answer was that he would have pursued a scientific career.

Since retirement in 2004, John plays erratic but occasionally amusing server chess with CCLA and some over-the-board with the Berkeley chess school/club, and a few postal games with incarcerated opponents. John has been a CCLA member for about 10 years.

John is married and has two daughters. Besides chess, John's other hobbies include birding and watching Cal women's basketball. I asked John that

when people look back at your life, how do you want to be remembered? His response was: "a decent, silly guy!"

Congratulations, John on your impressive victory in the 2014 North American Class B Server Championship! His favorite game was the one against Duane Catania where in his words: "astonished by how quickly the roof fell in after one soft move". I'm sure we will see your name mentioned other times in future championships!



John Smail

ECO: C02  
French Defense  
Advance Variation

Notes by Jerry Honn

**White: Duane Catania (1720)**

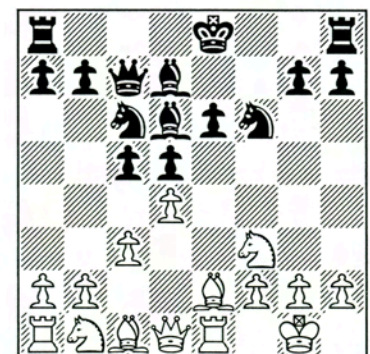
**Black: John Smail (1805)**

*Event: 2014 NA Class B Server Champ.*

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3  
Bd7 6.Be2 f6 7.O-O Qc7

7... fxe5 is frequently played, although White has done well with 8. Nxe5 Nxe5 9. dxe5 Qc7 10. c4 d4 11. Bf4 O-O-O 12. Nd2 Bc6 13. Bd3 g5 14. Bxg5 as in Della Morte-Prates, Vicente Lopez 2005, 1-0 in 34 moves (cited in MCO 14<sup>th</sup>).

8.exf6 Nxf6 9.Re1 Bd6



Position after 9... Bd6



## **SMAIL WINS.....**

**Continued from front cover**

### **10.dxc5?**

Giving-up the center is not good strategy. White had better in 10. Nbd2 cxd4 11. cxd4 Nb4 12. Rf1 Rc8 13. a3 Nc2 14. Ra2 Ng4 15. Nb1 Bxh2+ 16. Kh1 Bg1 17. Kxg1 1-0 Knoppert-Groffen, Vlissingen 1995, or 10. Na3 a6 11. Nc2 O-O 12. Ne3 cxd4 13. cxd4 Ne4 14. Rf1 Rf7 15. Bd2 Raf8 +=, Panken-Guevara, Nassau 2001, 1-0 in 55 moves.

### **10... Bxc5 11.Bd3?**

White needs to develop his remaining forces (this game ends in a few more moves, with White's queen's rook and queen's knight still on their original squares.)

### **11... Ng4 12.Re2 O-O 13.h3 Rxf3 14.hxg4 Qg3 15.Be3 Bxe3**

15... Rxe3 leads to a won ending: 16.Bxh7+ (16.Rxe3 Bxe3 17.Qf3 Qxf3 18.gxf3 Bc1 -+) Kh8 17.fxe3 Bd6 18.Rf2 Ne5 19.Bd3 Nxc4 -+.

### **16.fxe3 Rxe3**

16... Ne5 and 16... Raf8 were also strong.

### **17.Rxe3?**

Nor can White salvage this by 17.Nd2 Rxd3 18.Qc2 Re3 19.Nf1 Rxe2 20.Qxe2 Qd6 and White is a piece down -+ , or 17.Bxh7+ Kxh7 18.Nd2 Ne5 19.Qe1 Qxe1+ 20.Raxel Rxe2 21.Rxe2 Nxc4 -+, same story.

### **17... Qxe3+ 18.Kh1 Rf8 19.Qd2?**

White can try 19. Qe2, but 19... Qg3 threatens ... Ne5, or 19. Nd2 Ne5 20.Qe2 Qxd3 21.Qxe5 Qxd2 22.b3 Qb2 and Black retains the advantage.

### **19... Qg3! 20.Kg1 Ne5! 0-1**

White resigns. Likely continuations lose the queen and mate follows:

(A) 21.Qe2 Nxd3 22.Nd2 Rf2 -+.

(B) 21.Qd1 Rf2 22.Bf1 Bb5 23.c4 Bxc4 24.Nd2 Rxd2 25.Kh1 Rxd1 26.Rxd1 Nxc4 27.Bxc4 Qh2#.

(C) 21.Bxh7+ Kxh7 22.Qc2+ Kh8 23.Qe2 Nf3+ 24.Kf1 Nd4+ 25.Qf3 Rxf3+ 26.gxf3 Bb5+ 27.c4 Bxc4#.

(D) 21.c4 Nxc4 22.Bxh7+ Kh8 23.Bf5 Rxf5 24.Qh6+ gxh6 25.cxd5 Qe1#.

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

GM Jason Bokar will take over as ICCF-US Director during the ICCF-US Congress in Cardiff, Wales August 2015. As NAPZ Director Jason continues as an ICCF Executive Board member. Jason was ICCF-US Deputy for several years prior to 2007 when he took a job transfer to France, so was unable to take the ICCF-US Director position at that time. Jason received the Bertl von Massow Silver medal for ten years of exceptional service to ICCF at the Krakow, Poland Congress in 2013. Jason is one of the top rated players in ICCF-US, and has represented us in the Olympiad Finals twice, finished fifth in World Championship 24 concluded in 2012, and is currently playing in a WCCC Candidates Tournament.

SIM Tom Biedermann was appointed as ICCF-US Deputy Director, maintaining all current duties including Treasurer. For the last three years Tom has handled finances for ICCF-US, including processing all entries, and has helped with recruiting players to fill out brackets and selecting recipients for invitations for ICCF-US and events from other National Federations. Tom will be a major help as ICCF-US makes the transition to GM Jason Bokar as ICCF-US Director. Tom has represented ICCF-US on numerous teams, winning a silver team medal for the 10th Pan Am team, and helping qualify our team for the next Olympiad Final. He has played many WCCCs, including Candidates Tournament 30. And he won USCCC 16.