

NM Chess Champions

Silas Perry

A month ago I ran an article on former New Mexico Chess Champion, Silas Perry. Subsequently Silas sent me his chess autobiography. See below. The rest of this article, including the game and annotations are the same as appeared before.

Silas Perry's Chess Autobiography

"If you look me up in the USCF database, you'll find two entries for "Silas Perry" and they are both me. When I moved to New Mexico from Washington, I suppose I unwittingly registered as a new player when I played in my first New Mexican tournament. In the Washington version of me, it has a record of my first ever tournament. I was only six years old having learned to move the pieces maybe a year before. A few years later, I won the open section of the same tournament of about 80 scholastic players. Surprisingly, this doesn't show up in the database. I do remember Washington having their own state rating system, so perhaps this tournament wasn't USCF-rated. A couple of years later, my family moved to New Mexico and I started to play a bit more chess.

"Fast forward a few years and I won the K-12 Championship, which also allowed me to play in the Denker Tournament of HS Champions. Being rated in the mid-1700s at the time, I was seeded firmly in the bottom half, but in the end, I surprised even myself when I tied for third place.

"I think I probably thought at the time that I was poised to become an expert quite quickly and become one of the strongest players in the state. But, that didn't happen. Despite reaching winning positions constantly, I struggled to convert them to victories. It wasn't until 2008, six years later, that I finally made expert. My rating continued to rise on up to 2100, and I was quite looking forward to eking out the next 100, but something happened. I moved to Taiwan.

"In Taiwan, I'm actually surrounded by countries full of strong chess players—The Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia. But, almost nobody plays chess in Taiwan. I've considered playing in a tournament in one of those other countries, but it would be quite an expense and would require a lot of preparation to make it worthwhile. So, the fifth year I've not played chess is going by, which is not really a happy thing for me, but I'm also in that stage and age of my life where other areas of life require my attention."

Silas Perry, 9/27/2016



Silas Perry, 2009 New Mexico Co-Champion along with Lior Lapid, Chad Schneider and Doug Thigpen, was one of the mainstays of New Mexico chess from 1999 until he moved to Taiwan in 2012. In 2009 he also took sole first in the Albuquerque/Rio Rancho Open. In 2010 he took sole first place in the Don Wilson Memorial, defeating Stephen Sandager in the final round. Also in 2010 he tied for second in the Pir Maleki Memorial and took sole first in the Santa Fe Rooks Finale. In 2011 he took sole first (yours truly was second) in the Larry Evans Memorial. Just when we thought Silas was going to be a formidable force in New Mexico Chess for years to come, he took off for Taiwan. Hopefully we will see him here again someday.

On the left is a photo of Silas holding the New Mexico Memorial Chess Tournament plaque. His name is inscribed third up from the bottom on the right most column. Admittedly you can't read, but, believe me, it's there. The photo is from the cover of the June 2010 Desert Knight.

This is a very nice positional win by Silas Perry, against Ray Fourzan of El Paso. He relentlessly builds pressure against White's queenside and eventually wins a pawn. But after tying up White's pieces with his passed a-pawn, Perry takes advantage of White's unguarded king and launches a sudden mating attack on the kingside. The most remarkable thing about this game is that Perry seems to have played the perfect game - not even the smallest error!

This game can also be found in the June 2011 Desert Knight.

Fourzan, Raynaldo - Perry, Silas, 0-1
New Mexico Memorial/Senior, Open Section, Round 4
Rio Rancho, New Mexico, 2011/1/9

Sicilian Defense, Closed Variation

1. e4 c5 2. Nc3 Closed Variation. Rather than playing 2. Nf3 followed by 3. d4 with an open center and a tactical game, White keeps the position closed aiming for an eventual kingside attack. **2... d6 3. d3 Nc6 4. Nf3!?** This is unusual. White usually holds off on developing the king knight until he has either played f4 or fianchettoed kingside.

[4. g3 g6 5. Bg2 Bg7 6. Be3 Rb8 7. a4 e6 8. Qd2 Nd4 9. Nf3 Ne7 10. O-O O-O 11. Bh6 e5 12. Bxg7 Kxg7 13. Nxd4 cxd4 14. Ne2 Be6 15. f4 f6 16. c3 Qa5 17. Qe1 dxc3 18. bxc3 f5 19. c4 Qc5 20. Qf2 fxe4 21. Bxe4 Bg4 22. Qxc5 dxc5 23. Rae1 Bxe2 24. Rxe2 exf4 25. Rxf4 Rxf4 26. gxf4 b6 27. Rb2 Rf8 28. a5 Rf6 29. axb6 axb6 30. Kg2 Rd6 31. Ra2 Kf6 32. Ra8 Nc6 33. Kf2 Ne7 1/2-1/2, Hort, Vlastimil (GER) 2474 - Fischer, Robert J (USA) 2780 , Rovinj/Zagreb 1970 It;

4. f4 g6 5. Nf3 Bg7 6. h3 e5 7. g4 exf4 8. Bxf4 Nge7 9. Bg2 Be6 10. O-O Qd7 11. Kh2 h6 12. Qd2 g5 13. Bg3 Ng6 14. Nd5 O-O-O 15. Rab1 h5 16. Nxe5 hxg4 17. b4 gxh3 18. Bf3 Be5 19. Qf2 Rdg8 20. bxc5 dxc5 21. Rb5 Nf4 22. Bxf4 Rxe5 23. Rxc5 Kb8 24. Kh1 Bxf4 25. Nxf4 Rxc5 26. Qxc5 Qd4 27. Qg5 Ne5 28. Qg3 Ka8 29. Ne2 Qb2 30. a4 a6 31. Rf2 Nxf3 32. Qxf3 Qxc2 33. d4 Qxa4 34. d5 Bd7 35. Kh2 Bb5 36. Ng3 Rf8 37. e5 Re8 38. Qe3 Qc4 39. Rd2 Qb4 40. Rc2 Qa4 41. Rf2 Qc4 42. Rd2 Qg4 43. Rd4 Qg7 44. Re4 Bd7 45. Qf4 Qg6 46. Re2 Rg8 47. Rd2 Qg5 48. Rf2 Qxf4 49. Rxf4 Rg7 50. Rf6 Bc8 51. Ne4 Kb8 52. Nd6 Rg2 53. Kh1 Rd2 54. Rxf7 Rxd5 55. Rf8 Rxe5 56. Rxc8 Ka7 57. Rc7 1/2-1/2, Vlassov, Nikolai (RUS) 2425 – Vaulin, Alexander (RUS) 2550, St. Petersburg (Russia) 1994]

4... g6 5. g3 Bg7 6. Bd2!? Again he makes a one off decision. The bishop is really needed on e3 where it helps fight for control of d4 and allows the queen to go to d2 with the idea of controlling the c1-h6 diagonal.

[Better is 6. Bg2 Nf6 7. O-O O-O 8. h3 Rb8 Now that Black's knight can no longer go to g4, White plays 9. Be3 b5 and 10. Qd2]

6... e6 Black aims to develop his king knight to e7, castle and go for a queenside attack.

[A good alternative is to play to trade off White's king knight in order to control d4. 6... Nf6 7. Bg2 O-O 8. O-O Bg4 9. h3 Bxf3 10. Bxf3]

7. Bg2 Nge7 8. O-O O-O 9. Qc1!? This is consistent with the idea of playing Bh6 and going for a kingside attack. However, even if it loses a tempo, it is better to play the bishop to e3 or g5 with the idea of following with Qd2 so as not to block in the queen rook. **9... Re8** Black avoids the forced trade of bishops. **10. Re1!?** It seems that Ray has given up on the idea of a kingside attack and spends the rest of the game just reacting to Black - never a good idea.

[White still has good play on the kingside with 10. Bh6 Bh8 11. Qd2 followed by R(a)e1, Nh4, f4 and f5;

Or 10. Ne2 followed by Bc3, Qd2, Re1, Nh4, f4 and f5]

10... Rb8 11. Rb1



11... **b5!** Here comes the attack! Because of White's cramped queenside, the strength of Black's bishop on the long diagonal and White's lack of counter play, Black has the better game. 12. **Ne2 b4** 13. **c4 Qa5** 14. **a3** This plays into Black's hands because it opens the position on the queenside.

[But the only other way to avoid the loss of a pawn is 14. **Ra1** which is ugly because it puts the rook back on the diagonal of Black's bishop]

14... **Qa6** 15. **axb4 Nxb4** 16. **Bxb4 Rxb4** 17. **b3** Whether he plays it here or leaves it on b2, the b-pawn is White's Achilles heel. 17... **Nc6** 18. **Qc2 Bd7** 19. **Nc3 Reb8** 20. **Nb5?!** The pawn is lost after this.

[The only hope to save it is 20. **Ne2 Qb7** 21. **Nd2**, but White is so tied up trying to defend the b-pawn that it is likely lost anyway]

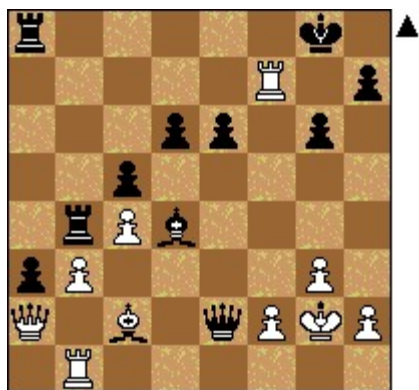
20... **Na5** 21. **Nd2?!** He loses a pawn on b5 and is STILL saddled with the problem of the b3 pawn.

[He is better off just letting the b3 pawn go with 21. **Nc3 Rxb3**, but Black's a-pawn should win]

21... **Bxb5** 22. **cxb5 Qxb5** 23. **Nc4** White hopes to get to an endgame where the bishops of opposite color will give him a chance to hold. But Black makes sure White never has a chance to trade off the major pieces. 23... **Nxc4** 24. **dx4 Qb6** 25. **Re3 a5** 26. **Rd3 Bd4** 27. **Bf3 a4** 28. **Bd1 Qb7** 29. **Rf3 a3** Black goes for the slow torture method of winning.

[He could instead go for the immediate decisive breakthrough. 29... **d5!** 30. **cx5 exd5** 31. **exd5 c4** 32. **Kg2 cxb3** The connected passed pawns win]

30. **Kg2 Ra8** 31. **Qa2** White is forced to stop the passed pawn with his queen, but now he loses the e-pawn. 31... **Qxe4** 32. **Bc2** White allows Black's queen into his position because he sees a nifty trick. It doesn't work, but in this position nifty tricks are White's only hope. 32... **Qe2** 33. **Rxf7!**



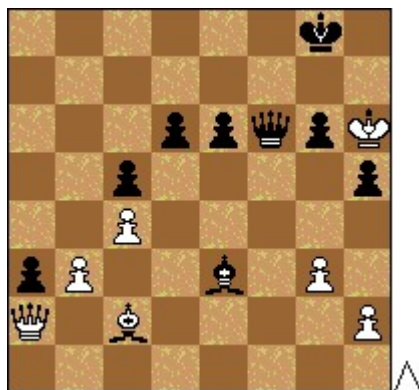
33... Rbb8!! Yes, White has "won" a pawn. But in the process he has also opened the f-file. With his pieces more active, Black is better able to make use of the open file than White.

["Sorry, we are not falling for 33... Kxf7 34. Bxg6 hxg6 35. Qxe2 ." Though after 35... a2 Black still has some winning chances anyway]

34. Rf3?? The rook still cannot be taken. Moving it back is a waste of time. What White needs to do is get another piece over to the kingside for defense. Now Black has a forced mate.

[Best is 34. Rf1, but then Black still wins after either 34... Rf8 (or 34... Kxf7! 35. Bxg6 hxg6 36. Qxe2 a2) 35. Bb1 Qxf1! 36. Kxf1 Rxf7 37. f4 g5]

34... Rf8 35. Rxf8 Rxf8 36. Rf1 Rxf2 37. Rxf2 Qxf2 38. Kh3 Qf1 39. Kg4 h5 40. Kg5 Qf6 41. Kh6 Be3#



[0:1]

Matt Grinberg, 10/9/2016