

The Pittsburgh Chess Club's
TUESDAY NIGHT BULLETIN
Vol. II, No. 4: PCC championship 2009, Rounds 5–6
(edited by Federico Garcia)

Triple tie for first place

So Finn Overlie was finally caught by the lot. Daniel Gordon beat him in the last round (the game is featured below), ensuring himself a share of the championship, and letting in Adonis Turner as well, who beat Gary Reinhart defending against a Marshall Attack. All tiebreak system would give Overlie the title, but for the 2009–10 the PCC will have the three mentioned champions.

Greg Galanter clinched the upset prize (\$35 off a future PCC tournament entry fee) with his second-round win over...me. But there were other big winners, other players who had a great tournament, and although they are not officially mentioned in the results, the new **2009 Tuesday Night Grand Prix**, of which this tournament was the first event, shows their great play.

Grand Prix report

The three winners, Gordon, Turner, and Overlie, split the "top place points": 8 grand prix points each.

The we have the rating-bracket points:

1900–1999 Gordon and Turner add 4 points to their sum. The rating bracket gives 6 to the winner, minus one each if there is tie, and minus one if the winner(s) also earned top-place points.

1800–1899 Finn Overlie, obviously, wins this as well. 5 points more (not 6 in view of the top-place points).

1700–1799 There were no players with an entry rating in this bracket.

1600–1699 Timothy Crowell gets 6 points for his great tournament. With upsets over Mike Healy and Jeff Schragin (and not withstanding a setback against Randy Wilkins), he finished far ahead of others in this group. 6 points.

1500–1599 Greg Galanter, with several upsets (draws as well as wins), earns 6 points in this group.

1300–1499 With only one player in the 1400–99 bracket, this and the 1300–99 group merge. Randy Wilkins, another consistent upsetter, earns 6 points.

1100–1299 From the remaining players, William Hoppmann ensured 6 points with his last-round upset win over Clyde Kapinos.

Adding the points for games played (2 for won games, $1\frac{1}{2}$ for draws, and 1 for losses, not counting byes), the

standings are available at the PCC's website at www.pittsburghcc.org. The current top places are Overlie–24; Gordon–Turner–23; Crowell–16; Galanter– $15\frac{1}{2}$.

The openings

This is the complete breakdown of the openings used in the last two rounds. As usual, an asterisk means a surprise result (upset win or draw, provided the rating difference is greater than 50 points).

1 e4: 13 games

↳ Double King's Pawn: 2 games

↳ Ruy López: 2 games

↳ Marshall: 1 game (1–0)

↳ Schliemann: 1 game (0–1)

↳ Sicilian: 3 games

↳ Accelerated Dragon: 1 game (0–1*)

↳ Moscow: 1 game (1–0)

↳ Maroczy bind: 1 game (0–1*)

↳ French: 2 games

↳ Advance: 1 game (1–0)

↳ 3 ♘c3 c5: 1 game (1–0)

↳ Others: 6 games

↳ Caro-Kann (Classical): 1 game (1–0)

↳ Alekhine: 1 game (0–1)

↳ Modern defense: 1 game (1–0)

↳ Pirc: 2 games (0–2**)

↳ Scandinavian: 1 game (1–0*)

1 d4: 9 games

↳ Double Queen's Pawn: 6 games

↳ Queen's Gambit Accepted: 1 game (1–0*)

↳ Slav: 2 games ($1\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ **)

↳ Cambridge Springs: 1 game (1–0)

↳ Queen's Pawn Game: 2 games (1–1)

↳ Indian Defenses: 2 games

↳ Nimzoindian (4 ♖c2): 1 game (1–0)

↳ Irregular: 1 game (1–0)

↳ Dutch defense: 1 game (0–1)

1 c4: 1 game

↳ Reversed Closed Sicilian: 1 game (1–0)

Others: 4 games

↳ King's Bishop Fianchetto: 3 games (2–1)

↳ 1 f4: 1 game (0–1)

And we have the complete picture of the tournament as a whole in the table in the following page. Some interesting facts to draw from these statistics, mainly comparing the performance results and the rating ratio. For example, in the 6 Indian games, where White was the higher rated player 3 times, the result is identical: White won three

Opening statistics after 6 rounds			
Class	<i>n</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>H</i> : <i>L</i>
DKP	14	54% (+7-6=1)	9:5
KP defenses	28	50% (+13-13=2)	17½:10½
DQP	13	46% (+5-6=2)	6½:6½
Dutch/Indians	7	43% (+3-4)	3:4
KBF/English	14	68% (+9-6=1)	5:9
Others	3	33% (+1-2)	1:2

DKP Double King's Pawn

KP defenses Defenses to 1 e4

DQP Double Queen's Pawn

KBF King's Bishop Fianchetto

n number of games

P performance for White

H : *L* rating ratio: number of games where White was higher rated to number of games where Black was. ½ when the two contenders were within 50 rating points of each other.

times. The Indian games are comparatively complicated (not only tactically, but positionally as well), and it is not surprising that the higher-rated player would have the better of it.

The same is essentially true for the double queen pawn games, where White's performance (6 points out of 13) agrees fairly well with the 6 times that he was higher rated (the ½ in that line means there was one game where the players were within 50 points of each other).

On the contrary, the results for the king's pawn are much more interesting. This tournament featured a high number of king's-pawn defenses (by far the largest group), including basically everything from the usual Sicilians and French to a lot of Pirc, and instances of Caro-Kann, Alekhine, and Scandinavian. The results are fairly removed from the expectations, by 12.5 percentage points. When you think of the double-king's-pawn openings, with White underachieving by 10% (54% won, but 64% expected), it is clear that the 1 e4 games, in this tournament at least, were by far the best ground for upsets. I am not surprised: a lot of tactics and open games, where the lower-rated players are closer in ability to the higher rated.

It is true that the 2009 PCC championship was quite an odd tournament with many more upsets than it is usual. That said, these statistics can be nonetheless revealing.

Selected games

The final

Gordon caught up with the seemingly unstoppable Overlie in the last round. This game follows, with Gordon's commentary.

□ **Overlie, F.** (1832)

Pittsburgh 2009

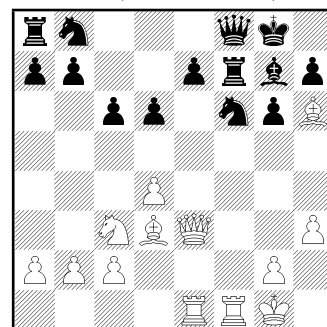
■ **Gordon, D.** (1967)

Staunton Gambit – **A82**

Annotations by Daniel Gordon

1 d4 f5 2 e4 The Staunton Gambit is a good choice for Finn here, since a draw is as good as a win for him. He trades a pawn for positional pressure, and if I can solve the problems he creates, I may still have a difficult time winning the endgame a pawn up. 2...fxe4 3 Qc3 Qf6 4 f3 exf3 5 Qxf3 g6 6 Qd3 d6 7 0-0 Qg7 8 Qg5 Qg4 I aimed at trading off the knight on f3 to reduce his chances at a kingside attack, but exchanging off the light-squared bishop leaves e6 weak. Another possibility was 8...Qe6. 9 h3 Qxf3 10 Qxf3 c6 11 Qae1 0-0 12 Qe3 Qf7 13 Qh6 Qf8 (D)

Overlie, F.–Gordon, D.

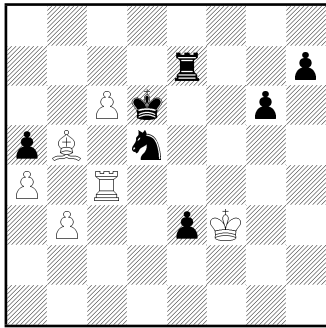


13... Qf8

I like this move. It continues the development of my queenside, which has been difficult so far, and puts my queen in a decent square after the trade. 14 Qxg7 Qxg7 15 Qe6 Qbd7 16 Qe4 Qxe4 [16...Qf8 17 Qxf6] 17 Qxf7 Qxf7 18 Qxe4 [18 Qxd7? Qf2+ 19 Qh2 Qg3 20 Qg1 Qxe1+] 18...Qe8 19 Qf1 Qf6 20 Qe2 Qg7 21 g4 Qd5 22 c3 b5 23 b3 a5 Better was 23...a6 in order to play 24...c5. Now White attacks Black's weakened queenside pawns. 24 Qe3 e5 [24...h6 was necessary to stop what comes next.] 25 g5 Qh5 26 Qe4 Qe6 27 Qxc6 Qe7 28 Qf3 Qf4 29 Qxb5 Simply overlooking my next move. 29...Qxh3 30 Qxh3 Qxh3+ 31 Qh2 Qxg5 Once again I am up a pawn, but now I've reached a much better endgame. We both had around five minutes by this point. 32 dxe5 dxe5 33 c4 Qe4 34 Qe1 Qc3 35 a4 e4 Not 35...Qxb5, giving White his own set of connected pawns and probably losing the game due to the distance of my king. 36 Qe3 Qa2 37 c5 Qb4 38 c6 Qd5 39 Qe2 Qf6 My rook and knight are optimally placed to restrain his c-pawn and support my e-pawn, so it's time to activate my king. 40 Qg3 Qe5 41 Qc4 Qb6 42 Qc2 Qc7 43 Qb5 Qd5 44 Qc5 Qd6 45 Qc4 e3 46 Qf3 Qe7 (see diagram on the next page.)

I foresaw at this point that on Qe4 I had a combination to win the game. 47 Qd4 Qc5 48 Qc4+ Qb6 49 Qe4 Losing immediately. Black has the better of it,

Overlie, F.–Gordon, D.



46... ♖e7

but who knows what would have happened with 15 seconds (plus the all-important 5-second delay) on my clock? Then again, Finn only had a minute himself. 49... ♖xe4 50 ♗xe4 e2 51 ♙xh7 ♖c3+ The point. I exchange to an easily won pawn endgame. 52 ♗d3 ♗xe2 53 ♗xe2 ♗xc6 54 ♗f3 ♗c5 55 ♗g4 ♗b4 56 ♗g5 ♗xb3 57 ♗h6 ♗xa4 58 ♗xh7 g5 59 ♗h6 g4 0 : 1

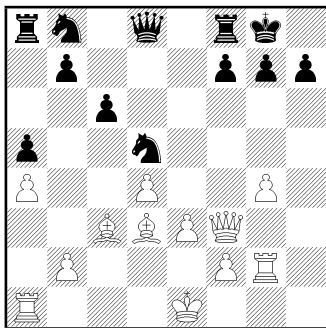
The semifinal

In stopping Overlie, Gordon did what other five players had not been able to. But Peter Jansen had come aggravatingly close in the fifth round. A lively game, with nerves and time trouble playing a part.

□ Overlie, F. (1832)	Pittsburgh 2009
■ Jansen, P. (1961)	Slav – D16

1 d4 c6 2 c4 d5 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 dxc4 5 a4 ♙g4 6 e3 e5 7 ♙xc4 e4 8 h3 exf3 9 hxg4 fxg2 10 ♖g1 ♙b4 11 ♙d2 a5 12 ♖f3 0–0 13 ♖xg2 ♙xc3 14 ♙xc3 ♗d5 15 ♙d3?! (D)

Overlie, F.–Jansen, P.



15 ♙d3?!

White has achieved an active position with attacking possibilities. The rook and pawn battery on the g-file suggests that g4–5 will happen at some point. (In fact, it was a tempting move right now.) In that case, the bishop would be useful on the a2–g8 diagonal. The board shows no reason to move it from there, but Overlie has a wicked idea... 15... ♖e7 16 ♙xh7+!!? This is fun chess!

I can't, however, shake a feeling that the sacrifice is too rushed. It is true that castling long will commit the piece anyway, because after 16 0–0–0 ♗xc3 White cannot retake (17 bxc3? ♖xa3+ is awful). So after the forced 17 ♙xh7+ ♗xh7 18 ♖h1+ we transpose back to the game. My reasons for not liking the sacrifice seem to be: a) the position is not desperate—in fact White has an advantage; b) the sacrifice looks wilder than it looks sound—Black always has ... f6 to open an escape; and c) there is actually a move that wins outright! 16 g5! and now the sacrifice is a huge threat—now, when queen and rook line up on the h-file, Black will get nothing from ... f6 in view of g6! Can Black use the extra tempo somehow? The face is that he has nothing useful to do, and is forced to make room for his king with 16... ♖d8. After 17 ♙xh7+ ♗f8 18 ♙f5 White is sure to win.

The combination played in the game is, however, far reaching, committing both bishops and involving lots of forcing moves—with time running out, anyone can lose his way from now on. 16... ♗xh7 17 0–0–0 ♗xc3 18 ♖h1+ ♗g8 19 ♖gh2 f6 (the announced saving move) 20 g5 ♖e4?? 21 ♖h8+?? There was mate with 21 ♖xe4 and 22 g6. Peter realized what both players had missed, and after such psychological blow he could not get back to precise calculations. 21... ♗f7 22 ♖h5+ ♗e7?! [22... ♗e6 would not allow the next check] 23 gxh6+ gxh6 24 ♖h7+ ♗d6?? [24... ♗d8 and the white attack, and with it the game, is over] 25 ♖c5+ Mate follows.

1 : 0

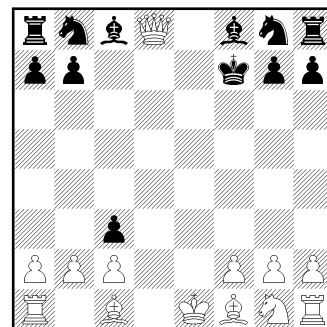
An accident

The following game is one of those strange things that are worth noting when, every once in a while, they happen. We can be sure, too, that it has happened before, somewhere.

□ Rinehart, G. (1821)	Pittsburgh 2009
■ Lokmer, J. (1613)	French – C10

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 c5 4 exd5 cxd4 5 dxe6 dxc3?? 6 exf7+ ♗xf7 7 ♖xd8 (D) 1 : 0

Rinehart, G.–Lokmer, J.

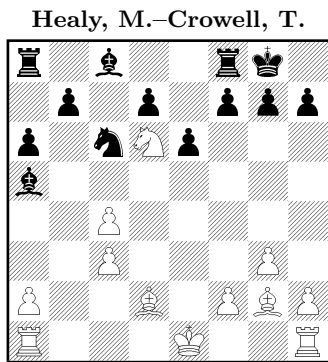


7 ♖xd8

An upset from Round 5

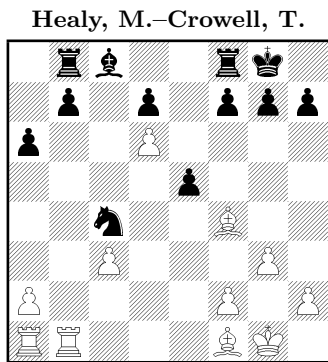
□ Healy, M. (1929) Pittsburgh 2009
 ■ Crowell, T. (1660) Sicilian – Maroczy bind – B44

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 e6 5 c4 ♗h4 6 ♘c3 ♖b4 7 ♗d3 ♘f6 8 g3 ♗xe4+ 9 ♗xe4 ♘xe4 10 ♘db5 ♘xc3 11 bxc3 Both player have treated the opening much like the Steinitz defence to the Scotch game, with Black early counterattack and White's sacrifice of the e4 and the 'voluntary' doubling of the c3 pawns. But in that variation the queens, unlike here, are not off the board, and this is a big drawback to White's strategy. 11... ♖a5 12 ♘d2 0-0 13 ♖g2 a6 14 ♘d6 (D)



14 ♘d6

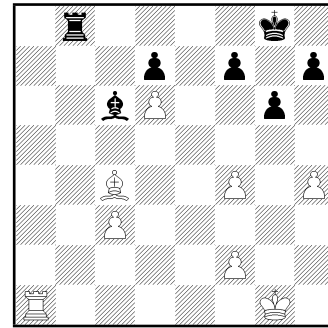
White has achieved compensation with this cramps on Black's position. But in the next few moves Black will organize the trade of the knight and the attack on the advance pawn that will take its place. 14... ♖c7 15 c5 ♗b8 16 0-0 ♘e5 17 ♗fb1!? ♖xd6 18 cxd6 ♘c4 19 ♖f4! e5 20 ♖f1! (D)



20 ♖f1!

The culmination of White's far-sighted strategy to deal with the weakness of d6. Trading off the offending knight leaves White a pawn ahead, and the rooks are well placed on the queenside. 20... exf4 21 ♖xc4 b5 22 a4 ♖b7 23 axb5 axb5 24 ♗xb5 ♖c6 25 ♗xb8 ♗xb8 26 gxh4 g6 27 h4?! (D)

Healy, M.–Crowell, T.



27 h4?!

This move prevents first-rank mate, but it is a little slow. The Grandmaster-looking move 27 f5! would threaten to spread chaos in Black's formation. A possible line (Black should not capture) is 27... gxf5?! 28 h3 ♗b2 29 ♗a5, starting the invasion. 27... ♖g7 28 ♖d3? ♗b2 29 ♖f1? This abandons the pawns, betting on the rook endgame to look for a draw. The position is frustrating because only White has weak points, but it was necessary to hold on to the pawns with 29 ♗d1.

Now Black will win both queenside pawns, and this eventually pays off. 29... ♗d2 30 ♖g2 ♖xg2 31 ♖xg2 ♗xd6 32 ♖g3 ♗d3+ 33 f3 ♗xc3 34 ♗d1 ♗c7 35 f5 ♖f6 36 fxg6 hxg6 37 ♗d5 ♖e6 38 ♗a5 d5 39 ♖f4 f6 40 ♗a6+ ♖e7 41 h5 ♗c4+ 42 ♖g3 gxh5 43 f4 h4+ 44 ♖g4 ♗e4 45 ♗a1 ♖e6 46 ♗h1 d4 47 ♗xh4 d3 48 ♗h1 ♖d5 49 ♖f3 ♖d4 50 ♗a1 f5 51 ♗a5 d2 52 ♗a8 ♗e1 0:1