

# Alberta Chess Report

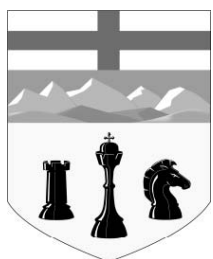
A Publication of the Alberta Chess Association ♦ April 2018



## Alberta Championship

*Six squared off for the chance to become the 2018 Alberta Champion. Plus: The Northern Alberta Open, Alberta Youth Championship, Alberta Chess Challenge, Schleinich Memorial, 2nd Steinitz-Menchik, Edmonton Seniors Championship, and University Battle of Alberta. Photos by Bhavik Dave.*

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## ALBERTA CHESS REPORT

The Alberta Chess Report is a quarterly publication. Submissions are due on the 10th of the month following the quarter: January 10th, April 10th, July 10th, & October 10th. Submissions can include photos, chess-related articles of interest, tournament reports, or game analysis. For other submissions, please contact the editor. Submissions welcome!

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*The materials contained in this publication do not reflect the opinions of the Alberta Chess Association. All articles are written by the editor, Leah Hughey, unless otherwise credited.*

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### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I am now taking submissions for the July 2018 edition of the Alberta Chess Report. Tournaments covered in that issue include the Edmonton International/Open/Qualifier, Calgary International Qualifier, Alberta Seniors Championship, Alberta Women's Championship, Lethbridge Open, Alberta Active Championship, Trumpeter, and Fort McMurray Open. Submissions are due by August 31, 2018.



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The Alberta Chess Association is in partnership with the Recreation and Physical Activity Division of Alberta Culture and Tourism to enhance the quality of life of Albertans through a variety of chess related activities. The ACA gratefully acknowledges the support provided by Alberta Culture and Tourism, as well as the AGLC, which enables the association to deliver its programs.





# 2018 Alberta Championship & Reserves

March 30 - April 1, Edmonton

Over Easter Weekend—the traditional date for the Alberta Championship, the Edmonton Chess Club once again hosted the top six qualifying players in the province in a showdown to see who would be this year's champion—and whether anyone had a chance of knocking Bitan Banerjee (Edmonton, 2472) out of the winner's circle.

Banerjee, the champion for the last two years, was the clear favorite, and he was familiar with the competition as five of the six players from last year's championship returned to compete again. The only newcomer was Omid Malek (Calgary, 2176), who has been rising rapidly in rating over the last few years and qualified by winning the 2017 Southern Alberta Open.

Another qualifying spot went to the 2017 Alberta Open champion (on tiebreak), FM Gary Ng (Calgary, 2377), while the 2018 Northern Alberta Open's spot in the championship remained unclaimed, as the winner, Robert Sasata of Saskatchewan, did not meet residency requirements. Instead, that spot went to the next highest player from the ratings list.

Rounding out the invitation list was FM Dale Haessel (Calgary, 2282), Belsar Valencia (Edmonton, 2367), and CM Rafael Arruebarrena (Edmonton, 2382).

When it came to the actual tournament, Banerjee was unstoppable. He dispatched Malek in round one, drew Valencia in round two, then reeled off three straight wins over the rest of the competition to finish with 4.5/5 (and, interestingly, put himself quite close to the 2400 FIDE threshold needed to claim his IM title.)

Second place went to FM Gary Ng with 3.5/5, while FM Dale Haessel claimed third with 2.5/5. Rounding off the finishers were Valencia (2/5), Arruebarrena (1.5/5), and Malek (1/5).

As champion, Banerjee earned a travel award to attend the 2018 Canadian Open in Quebec City from July 7-14.

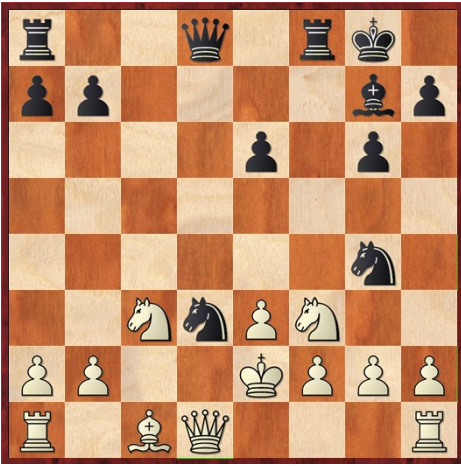
**Banerjee, Bitan (2472) - Haessel, Dale (2282) [D94]**  
2018 Alberta Chess Championship (3), 31.03.2018



*Above: Three-time winner, Bitan Banerjee, holding the trophy alongside tournament director Rob Gardner.*

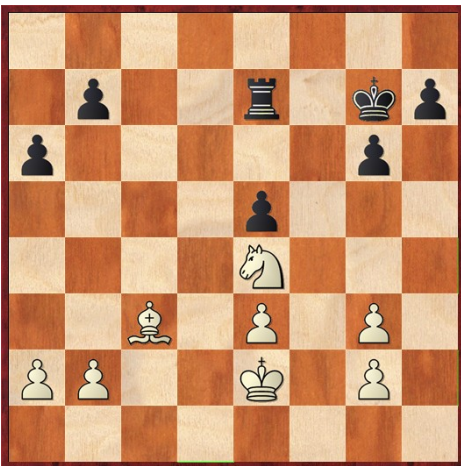
**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.e3 0-0 6.Bd2**  
6. Be3 is most common; however, Mamedyarov played 6. Bd2 a mere two months after Banerjee, in an eventual draw with Vachier Lagrave. **6...c5 7.dxc5 Na6 8.cxd5 Nxc5 9.Bc4 e6 10.dxe6 Bxe6 11.Bxe6 Nd3+ 12.Ke2 fxe6** Interestingly, there is one game in the database that reached this same position - a draw between two IMs in 1989 (Bielicki - Foguelman). **13.Bc1 Ng4?** [See diagram on the following page] Aggressive, but it loses a small amount of material. Retreating the knight was better. **14.Qxd3 Qxd3+ 15.Kxd3 Nxf2+ 16.Ke2 Nxe1 17.Bd2 Ng3+ 18.hxg3**





White has two knights for the rook. **18...Rac8**  
**19.Nd4 Rfe8**  
**20.Ne4 Rc7**  
**21.Bc3 a6** **22.Rf1**  
**e5** **23.Nb3 Rf8**  
**24.Rxf8+ Kxf8**  
**25.Nbc5 Kg8**  
**26.Ne6 Re7**  
**27.Nxg7 Kxg7**  
 [See diagram below] White has

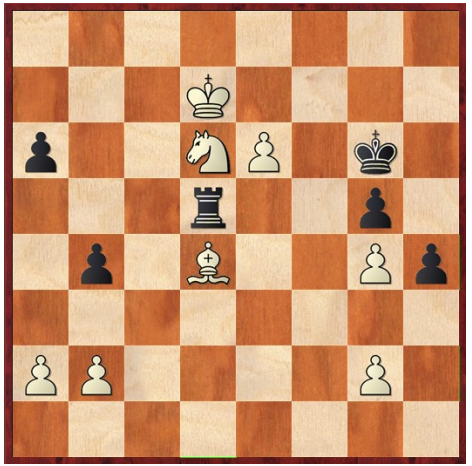
pursued a plan of trading off pieces in preparation for an attack on the isolated and vulnerable e-pawn. **28.Nc5 Kh6** **29.e4** Freezing the black e-pawn on a dark square where the bishop can continue attacking it. **29...Kg5**



**30.Nd3 Kg4** Objectively lost, but Black needed to attempt a defense of the e-pawn with **30. ...Kf6**, as he won't get anywhere attacking White's g-pawns. **31.Bxe5 Re8**

**32.Ke3 Rc8** **33.Nf2+ Kh5** **34.Bc3** White has kept Black's rook as passive as possible. **34...g5** **35.e5** Time to push the passed pawn. **35...Kg6** **36.Ne4 h5** **37.Nd6 Rc7** **38.Ke4 b6** **39.Kd5 h4** **40.g4 Rc5+** **41.Ke6 b5** **42.Kd7 b4** A valid gambit by Black. If **43. Bxb4**, then

**Rxe5** and White has no particular advantage. **43.Bd4 Rd5** **44.e6!** [See diagram] Black resigns. If **44. ...Rxd4** **45. e7**. Black can't get behind the pawn to catch it, and **45. ...Rxc6+** doesn't stop the pawn from queening.

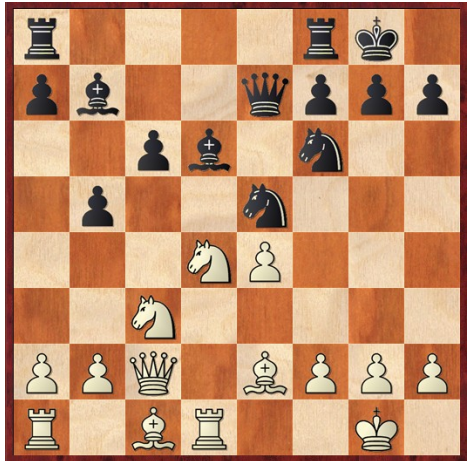


Meanwhile, the black king can't reach the pawn at all. **1-0**

Haessel may have only finished third in the tournament, but he had several games of note, including his round 1 game against Arruebarrena, where he had to fend off a massive, if unsound, attack.

**Haessel, Dale (2282) - Arruebarrena, Rafael (2382)** 2018 Alberta Chess Championship (1), 30.03.2018

**1.d4 d5** **2.c4 c6**  
**3.Nc3 Nf6** **4.e3 e6**  
**5. Nf3 Nbd7**  
**6.Qc2 Bd6** **7.Bd3**  
**0-0** **8.0-0 dxc4**  
**9.Bxc4 b5** **10.Be2 Bb7** **11.e4 e5** **12.dxe5 Nxe5**  
**13.Rd1 Qe7** **14.Nd4** [See diagram] Everything has





Right: Valencia versus Banerjee in Round 2. Valencia was the only one to hold Banerjee to a draw. In the background, Haessel plays Ng in a battle of the second and third place contestants.

Previous page: the tournament hall at the Edmonton Chess Club.

Photos (including first page) by Bhavik Dave.



been normal to this point, when Black suddenly dives into an attack. **14...Neg4? 15.Bxg4 Nxg4 16.h3 Bh2+ 17.Kh1 Qh4?** While the computer is giving a +3 score to White, plenty of people wouldn't want to play against this attack by Black. **18.Nf5 18.f3** gives the strongest score to White **18...Nf2+**

**19.Kxh2 Nxd1 20.Nxd1** White has little development, but Black's attack has fizzled, while White is up a small amount of material. **18...Qxf2 19.Qd2 b4**



**20.Qg5 Be5 21.Na4 Qc2 22.Qxg4** [See diagram left] Only move, eliminating a knight that was prepared to fork on f2, while protecting the d1 rook. **22...Qxa4?** Recovers the piece. On the surface, Black looks good with the

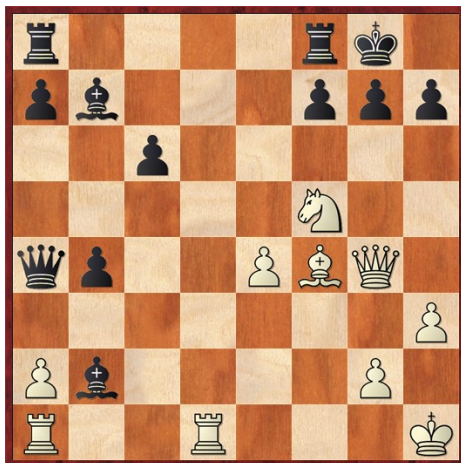
bishop pair and an extra pawn; however, the computer is giving a massive score to White due to the following. **23.Bf4 Bxb2?** [See diagram next column] There is mate in 10 on the board for White. **24.e5! g6 25.Ne7+ Kg7 26.Qh4 f6 27.Rd7 Rf7 28.Qh6+ Kh8 29.Nxg6+ 29.Nc8! Rxc8 30.Rxf7 fxe5 31.Qxh7#**

**29...Kg8 30.Rxf7** No longer mate, but still crushing.

**3 0 . . . K x f 7**

**31.Qxh7+ Ke6 32.Qxb7 Bxa1 33.Qxa8 Qd1+ 34.Kh2 Bxe5 35.Nxe5 fxe5 36.Qe8+ 1-0**

The Alberta Reserves was held alongside the Championship. This tournament enjoyed slightly higher than normal



participation, largely due to a significant advertising effort on the part of organizer Micah Hughey. That tournament brought in 25 players; the top finishers were Arniel Frialde (2156), Edison Sabogal (1959), and Rodney Thiel (1918), each with 4/5. Many thanks to the organizer, Micah Hughey, the director, Rob Gardner, and the onsite help of the ECC President Terry Seehagen.

### Calgary Chess Club

#274, 3359 27 Street NE  
(403) 264-9698  
www.calgarychess.com

**Tuesdays (7PM—):** Tournament Chess  
**Thursdays (7PM—):** Active Chess  
**Saturdays (10AM-1PM):** Juniors

### Edmonton Chess Club

#204, 10840 124 Street NW  
(780) 424-0283

**Mondays (6:30 PM—):** Active Chess  
**Thursdays (6:30 PM—):** Tournament Chess  
**Saturdays (12:45PM—5PM):** Call for schedule.



# 2018 Schleinich Memorial



January 5-7, 2018, Calgary

The Schleinich Memorial was held as usual on the first weekend of January. Thirty players joined the round-robin sectional, which Jim Daniluk organized and directed.

The section winners were FM Ian Findlay (4.5/5); Andrew Chen and Jim Daniluk (3.5/5); Paul Usselman (4.5/5); Maxim Vasic (4/5); and Griffin Naugler and Maxim Bryuzgin (4/5.)

In the top group, FM Ian Findlay got off to a quick start with a short win over FM Dale Haessel. In this game, Findlay demonstrates his calculating ability, and accurately sacs a full rook to draw White's king into the open for a mating attack.

**Haessel, Dale (2309) - Findlay, Ian (2265) [A61]**  
2018 Schleinich Memorial (1), 05.01.2018



1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5  
3.d5 e6 4.Nc3  
exd5 5.cxd5 d6  
6.Nf3 g6 7.Nd2  
Bg7 8.Nc4 0-0  
9.Bg5 h6 10.Bf4  
Nbd7 Matters get  
complicated after  
11. Nxd6, but it is  
the best move.  
11.Qd2 Nb6

*Three of the winners (left to right): FM Ian Findlay, Maxim Bryuzgin, Maxim Vasic. Photos by Steve Sklenka.*

**12.Nxd6 g5 13.Bg3 Nh5 14.Nxc8 Rxc8 15.e3 Bxc3 16.Qxc3 Nxd5** Black recovers the gambited pawn.  
**17.Qa3** Black now begins moving his pieces into prime attacking positions: **17...Nb4 18.Rc1 Qd5 19.Bc4??** [See diagram previous column] 19. Qb3 was better, challenging the Black queen and allowing an eventual a3 to boot the knight. White presumably didn't want the pawn damage after 19. ...Qxb3 20. axb3 in an endgame. However, Black has a win after the text move. **19...Qxg2 20. Ke2 g4 21.Rhg1 Nxg3+ 22.hxg3 Qf3+ 23.Ke1 Rfd8 24.Qb3??** [See diagram right] Attempting counter-pressure, but failing to a spectacular mating tactic.



**24...Rd2!! 25.Bxf7+** White throws this in to attempt to distract the black queen, but after 25. ...Kf8, White has no choice but to take the hanging rook and make Black prove the mate over the board. **25...Kf8**



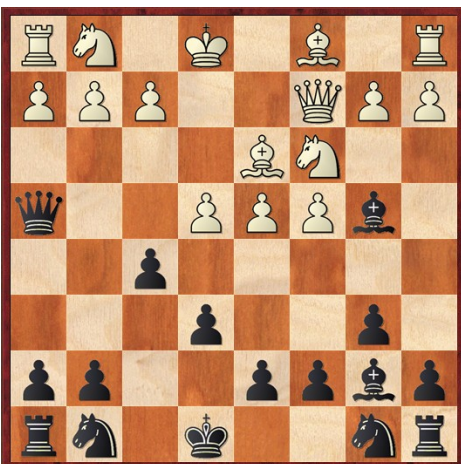
26.Kxd2 Qxf2+ 27.Kc3 If 27.Kd1 Rd8+ 28.Bd5 Nxd5 29.Rxc5 Nc3+ 30.Kc1 Qd2# 27...Qxe3+ White resigns. If 28. Kc4 Qe2+ 29. Kc3 Qd3# 0-1

Findlay went on to three more consecutive wins, followed by a final round draw with FM Gary Ng.

Maxim Vasic won group D; however, he was at the losing end of a relentless attack against the elder Andrew Xu in this exciting game.

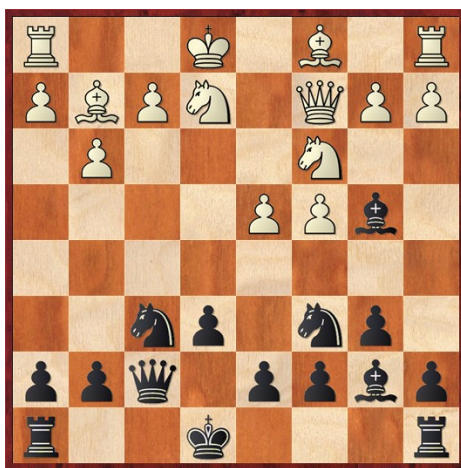
**Vasic, Maxim (1526) - Xu, Andrew (1399) [A40]**  
2018 Schleinich Memorial (3), 06.01.2018

1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 3.Nc3 Bb7 4.e4 Bb4 A slightly off-beat opening, where nonetheless all the pieces are going to good squares. In actual games, this position has favored Black. 5.Qc2 Qh4! By far the strongest and most popular move here. This is the beginning of Black's unrelenting attack: an attack that causes White's pieces to become disorganized. 6.Bd3 Protecting the e4 pawn,



which would have dropped with a move like 6. Nf3. 6...f5 [See diagram] Attacking the pinned e-pawn. 7.g3 The most common move in this position, but 7. Nf3 is better - it kicks the queen out without weakening the a8-h1 diagonal. Of course, 7. Nf3 is littered with pitfalls. 7.Nf3 Bxc3+ 8.Kf1! White will have time to chase the

queen around with moves like h3 or Ne5 and be able to recover the piece at the end. Not to be played: 8. bxc3 which results in massive problems for White, such as: 8.bxc3 Qg4 9.Bf1 The only move to protect the g-pawn and avoid the fork



on e4. but dropping the valuable e-pawn. 7...Qh5 8.Be2 Qf7 9.Bf3 Nc6 10.Nge2 fxe4 11.Bxe4 Nf6 12.Bg2?? [See diagram above] White had no great options here: either trade the bishop, retreat to the unprotected f3 square, or castle into a vulnerable position, but the text moves loses material. 12...Nxd4! 13.Nxd4 Bxg2 14.Rg1 Bb7 15.Bf4 0-0 [See diagram below] A calm move by Black. His pieces are positioned to win more than just a pawn, as follows: 16.0-0 d6 17.Be3 e5 18.Nf5 Bxc3 19.bxc3 Be4 White, faced with losing a piece, resigns. 0-1

Many thanks to the Calgary Chess Club for hosting the event, and to Jim Daniluk for organizing and directing.



# 2018 Alberta Chess Challenge

March 24, 2018, Red Deer

For Edmonton and Calgary students, it was the weekend leading into spring break—and yet, they showed up en masse to attend the annual Chess Challenge. Seventy-five juniors participated in the event.

Many of the winners had perfect performances in their grades, including Matthew Ivanescu (Grade 1, Edmonton), Ray Jiang (Grade 2, Fort McMurray), Yash Darvekar (Grade 3, Edmonton), Anand Rishi Chandra (Grade 4, Calgary), Hemant Srinivasan (Grade 5, Calgary), Paul Wang (Grade





6, Calgary), Ian Zhao (Grade 8, Calgary), and Maxim Vasic (Grade 9, Calgary)

In Grade 7, Andi Supercanu (Edmonton), was nearly perfect with 5.5/6, as was Aditya Raninga (Calgary) in Grade 10 with 2.5/3. Lucy Cao (Edmonton) faced tougher opposition in Grade 11—after taking an early lead, she was forced into a tiebreak match with Andre Tolentino (3/4), which she eventually won.

The biggest excitement was in Grade 12, where there were three equally matched players—Johnny Burn, Reuben Miller, and last year’s winner, Jean Gueco. After a double round robin, the players were all tied with each other; same after the first round of tiebreaking games. It was only in second tiebreaking round that Johnny (Fort McMurray) emerged victorious.

The twelve winners earned the right to represent Team Alberta at the 2018 Canadian Chess Championship in St. John’s, Newfoundland, over Victoria Day weekend. It’s worth noting that Fort McMurray earned places on the team for the first time—with not one player, but two!

The runners-up in each grade were William Birchall (3.5/5), Jerry Ming (3.5/5), Ben Swertz (3/4), Ron Offengenden and Ricky Chen (3/4), Vishruth



*Above: the twelve winners at St. John’s, Newfoundland, for the national event, alongside coordinator Vera Li. Photo by Virginie Roux. Previous page: the player hall for the provincials.*

Sharma (3/4), Brendan Tan and Khino Tolentino (3/4), Julian Lau (4.5/6), Jeffrey Chen (3/4), Andrew Xu and Kaixin Wang (3/4), Patrick Tolentino (0.5/3), Andre Tolentino (3/4), and Reuben Miller (2/4).

Many thanks to the Tournament Directors—Vlad Rekhson, Paul Gagne, Bernard Offengenden, and Angelo Tolentino, as well as the many volunteers, including Vera Li, Ana Savu, and others. Special thanks to Cristian Ivanescu for organizing everything.



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### **Medicine Hat Chess Club**

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Room 5, 826 – 11<sup>th</sup> Street S.E.  
Contact: Bill Taylor 403.526.5484  
email: [taylormlw@shaw.ca](mailto:taylormlw@shaw.ca)  
[www.mhchess.com](http://www.mhchess.com)

### **Fort McMurray Chess Club**

Wood Buffalo Chess Park (780) 790-1008  
Thursdays 6:30 PM - 9 PM [www.fmchess.com](http://www.fmchess.com)  
Contact Jina Burn [fmchess@hotmail.com](mailto:fmchess@hotmail.com)



# 2018 Alberta Youth

February 24-25, 2018, Calgary

The Alberta Youth Chess Championship is one of the middle tiers of the Youth Chess Championship hierarchy. The winners go on to represent Alberta at the Canadian Youth Chess Championship (July 1-5, Quebec City) which is in turn a qualifier to the World Youth (October, Greece).

The tournament is split into six divisions: Under-8, Under-10, Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, and Under-18.

While the championship wasn't held until February, the regionals leading to the Alberta Youth Chess Championship started in January. There were three around the province: Fort McMurray, Edmonton, and Calgary. Lethbridge, which has hosted regionals in the past, was unable to do so this year.

The first regional was held in Calgary on January 20. Sixty-six players participated; the winners were Jerry Ming, Anand Rishi Chandra, Paul Wang, Maxim Vasic, Aditya Raninga, and Andre Tolentino.

In Fort McMurray, the 2018 Wood Buffalo Regional Youth Chess Championship pulled in twenty-five players. Division winners were Ray Jiang, Jerry Li, Manish Shetagar, Alexander Bai, Sujit Velmurgan, and Johnny Burn.

Finally, Edmonton held their regional. WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement helped direct for the first time (alongside Dustin Koperski). Twenty-eight players participated. The winners were Matthew Ivanescu, Ron Offen-



gden, Mark Ivanescu, Julian Lau, Lucy Cao, and Reuben Miller.

After that, on to the provincial championships! The Calgary Junior Chess Club, headed by President Vera Li, did an excellent job of organizing the tournament. Due to the size, the tournament had to be held at the Sheraton Hotel near the Calgary Chess Club. Seventy-seven juniors participated in the event.

The winners were Jerry Ming (4.5/5), Anand Rishi Chandra (5/5), Mark Ivanescu (4.5/5), Ian Zhao (4.5/5), Aditya Raninga (4.5/5), and Reuben Miller (4/5—on tie-break over Andre Tolentino). Each earned a trip to the Canadian Youth Chess Championship.

The runners-up received valuable ACA coaching grants in the amount of \$100 each (redeemable with any ACA-approved coach.) These awards went to Matthew Ivanescu (3.5/5), Yash Darvekar (4.5/5), James Windram (on tiebreak), Andi Superceanu (4/5), Patrick Tolentino (4/5), and Andre Tolentino (4/5).

Many thanks to organizer Vera Li, directors Cristian Ivanescu, Paul Gagne, Vikas Chandra, and Angelo Tolentino, among many other volunteers.



*Top photo: Director Angelo Tolentino with some of the winners. Bottom left: The tournament room! Photos by Vera Li.*



# 2nd Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic

March 10-11, Calgary  
—By *Stefan Sklenka*

The second annual Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic 2018 took place in Calgary on March 10-11, 2018. A total of thirty-eight players participated in two sections—thirty one players in the Open section and seven in the Amateur section. FM Gary Ng from Calgary repeated as the winner in the Open section with 4.5/5 points and collected the first place prize of \$180. Maxim Bryuzgin won the Amateur section with 4.5/5 points. Roni Gutin won the top female prize in the Amateur section. The tournament attracted seven players rated over 2000 CFC, eighteen juniors, eight players from out of town, including three from Edmonton, four female players, and eleven repeat players who played in the 1st Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic.

Patrick Tolentino (1737 CFC) had a tournament to remember with wins over FM Ian Findlay (2300) and Georgi Kostadinov (2189), and a draw against the eventual winner FM Gary Ng (2301). Kayode Wharton (1635) also had a breakout tournament playing at over 2000+ CFC strength over the course of the tournament.

The tournament itself had been amply advertised on the Calgary Chess Club Facebook and other media, resulting in the higher than average attendance for the ACA sponsored March tournament. With the success of this year's Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic, next year's version of the tournament promises to be the best ever. - Steve Sklenka

Many thanks to Steve for a fantastic job organizing the event, and the Calgary Chess Club for hosting. Also, thanks to Gary Ng for sending in his analysis of his win over Jerry Kobalenko.

**Ng, Gary (2379) - Kobalenko, Jerry (2199) [A36]**  
2018 Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic Calgary (5.1),  
11.03.2018 Ng, Gary

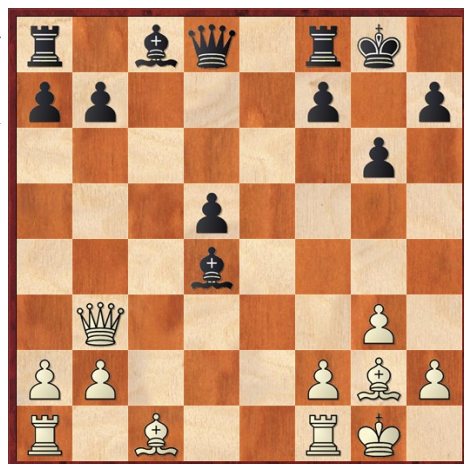
Jerry and I were the two leaders after 4 rounds with 3.5/4, and we played in the final round. **1.c4 g6**



*Above: Organizer Stefan Sklenka, who has put a significant effort into revitalizing and improving the Calgary Chess Club; this effort was on full display during the tournament.*

**2.Nc3 Bg7 3.g3 c5 4.Bg2 Nc6 5.Nf3 e6 6.0-0 Nge7  
7.e3 d5 8.cxd5 Nxd5 9.Nxd5 exd5 10.d4 cxd4  
11.Nxd4 Nxd4**

**12.exd4 0-0** Over 600 games with this position with most games ending in a draw.  
**13.Qb3 Bxd4** [See diagram] [13...Be6  
14. Be3 Qd7  
15.Rac1 Rac8  
16.Rfd1 Rfe8  
17. Bf1 Bg4







**Ra6 24.a4 Kg8**

Black offers a draw here but White is better.

**25.Rc7 Rb8**

**26.Rf3 Rf8**

**27.Rd3 Kg7**

**28.Kf1 g5 29.g4**

**Rb6** [See diagram below] Black decides to go for an active defence here which is a practical choice.

**30.Rxa7 Rb4 31.h3 Rfb8 32.Rdd7**

**Rf4 33.Rab7 Re8 34.Rd2 Re5 35.Ra2 Ra5 36.Rb6**

**c5 37.Kg2 f5 38.gxf5 Rxf5 39.Rc2 h6 40.Rc6 h5**

**41.Kg3 Rd5 42.Rc3 Rf5 43.Rc4 Rd5 44.f3 Rf5 45.f4**

**Rd5 46.Rc3 Rf5 47.Rc4 Rd5 48.fxf5 Rd3+ 49.Kh4**

**Rxb3 50.R6xc5**

**Ra8 50...Rxc5**

**51.Rxc5 Rb4+**

**(51...Ra3 52.a5**

**Kf7 53.a6 Kg6**

**54.Rc6+ Kg7**

**55.a7 Kf7 56.Rc8**

**Rxa7 57.Kxh5 Kg7**

**58.h4 Rb7 59.Rc5**

**Rd7 60.g6 is winning.)**

**52.Kxh5**

**Rxa4 53.Rc7+**

**Kg8 54.Kh6 is winning.**

**51.Rc7+**

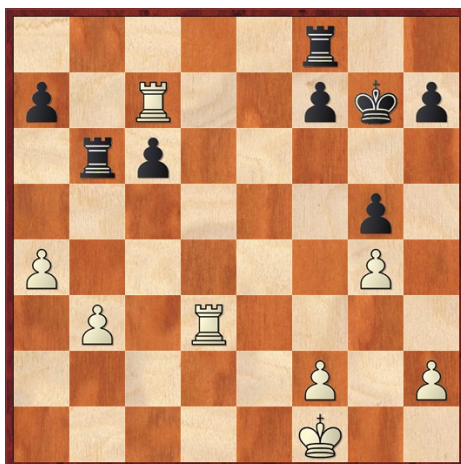
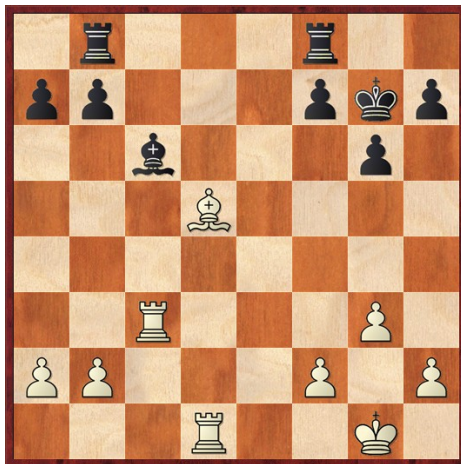
The rest is pretty straightforward.

**51...Kg6 52.R4c6+**

**Kf5 53.Rf6+ Ke5 54.Re7+ Kd5 55.Rf4 Ra3 56.g6**

**Kd6 57.Re1 Rg8 58.Rf6+ Kc5 59.Re5+ Kd4 60.Rg5**

**Re3 61.g7** Happy to squeeze a win out of a drawish opening and won the tournament with 4.5/5 1-0



18.Re1 Bf3 19.Qb5 Bg4 20.Qa5 b6 21.Qb5 Qxb5 22.Bxb5 Rxc1 23.Rxc1 Rc8 24.Rxc8+ Bxc8 25.Bc6 Be6 26.Kf1 Bf6 27.f3 Kg7 28.Ke2 g5 29.g4 Be7 30.Bf2 Bd6 31.Bg3 Bxg3 32.hxg3 Kf6 33.Ke3 Ke7 34.Bb5 a5 35.a3 1/2-1/2 (35) Le,Q (2697)-So,W (2760) Baku 2015 **14.Bh6 Bg7 15.Bxg7 Kxg7 16.Bxd5 Rb8** 16...Qf6 17.Rac1= **17.Rfd1** Probably more accurate to try and put rooks on c1 and e1 as easier to penetrate 7th rank. 17.Rac1 Qa5 18.Rfe1+= **17...Qa5 18.Rac1 Bd7 19.Qc3+ Qxc3 20.Rxc3 Bc6?** [See diagram next column] This just gives Black an isolated c-pawn. Jerry was likely afraid of Rc7 but the following variation is just equal. 20...Rfd8 21.Rc7 Be6! 22.Bf3 Rxd1+ 23.Bxd1 Bxa2 24.Bf3 a5 25.Rxb7 Rxb7 26.Bxb7 Kf6= **21.Bxc6 bxc6 22.b3 Rb6 23.Rd7**



Left: Ng's game against Kobalenko. Notice the nice tablecloths and individualized placards. Organizer Steve Sklenka went out of his way to create a great tournament environment. Above left: Junior Patrick Tolentino had a tournament to remember, with a 2269 performance rating. Photos by Steve Sklenka.



# 2018 Northern Alberta Open

February 10-11, 2018, Edmonton

Robert Gardner took his turn directing for the first time in several years, as thirty-nine players turned out for the annual Northern Alberta Open.

Robert Sasata (2327) made the journey from Saskatchewan to claim clear first; he finished with 4.5/5, with only a final round draw with FM Ian Findlay (2307) keeping him from going perfect.

Second place was a four-way tie between Findlay, FM Dale Haessel (2299), Peter Kalisvaart (2116), and Hafiz Karmali (2051), each with 4/5.

In the following game, Omid Malek (2190) shows how to build up a positional advantage, force his opponent into a passive position with a bad bishop, and then leap to the attack as soon as White makes a mistake.

**Dave, Bhavik (1865) - Malek, Omid (2190) [E10]**  
2018 Northern Alberta Open (2), 10.02.2018

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Nf3 Ne4 5.Qc2 f5** Ivanchuk played this against Carlsen in 2012 in a rapid game and won. **6.g3 0-0 7.Bg2 d6 8.0-0 Bxc3 9.bxc3 Nd7 10.Rb1 Ndf6 11.Ng5 Nxe5 12.Bxe5 c6 13.d5 cxd5 14.cxd5 e5 15.e4 h6 16.Bxf6 Qxf6 17.exf5 Bxf5**

**18.Be4 Bh3**

**19.Rfe1 Rf7 20.f3**

**Raf8 21.c4 b6**

**22.a4 Rc7** [See

diagram] Black

has built up a

small advantage

here. His bishop

has more freedom

and isn't tied down

to defending any

pawns, whereas

White's bishop is

limited. Also, White's

backwards c-pawn is

weak, and his isolated

a-pawn is problematic,

as White is forced

into a passive position

to defend everything. **23.Qd3**

**Bf5** Offering a trade that

he knows White can't

take. **24.Kg2 Bd7 25.Ra1**

**Rc5 26.Rec1 h5 27.Bh7+**

**Kh8 28.Qg6??** The queen was

needed on the defense.

**28...Qxf3+ 29.Kg1 Qf2+**

**30.Kh1 Bh3 31.Qc2** If

**31.Qe4, Rxc4** is simply a

longer mate for Black.

**31...Bg2# 0-1**

Malek lost to Sasata in

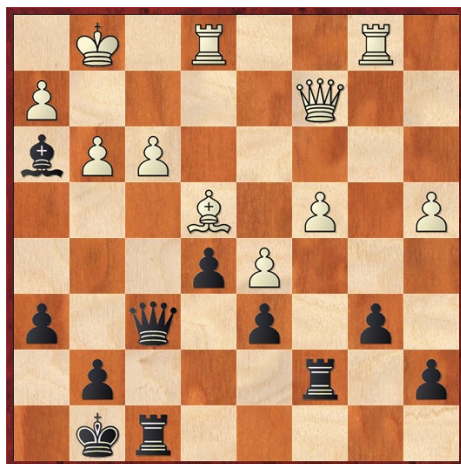
round 3, but found himself

with a chance at second

place going into the last

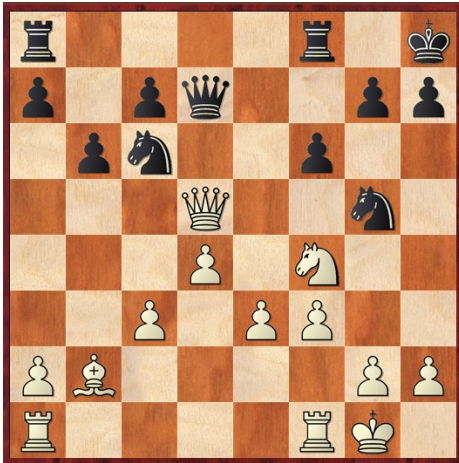
round, when he ran into

this, from Hafiz Karmali.



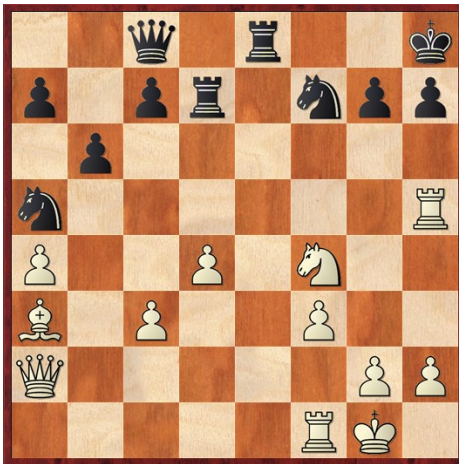


**Karmali, Hafiz (2051) - Malek, Omid (2190) [E43]**  
 2018 Northern Alberta Open (5), 11.02.2018



1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6  
 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e3  
 b6 5.Be2 Uncom-  
 mon, but good.  
 5...Bb7 6.Bf3  
 Bxf3 7.Nxf3 0-0  
 8.0-0 d5 9.cxd5  
 exd5 10.Ne5 Bxc3  
 11.bxc3 Ne4  
 12.Bb2 f6 13.Nd3  
 Nc6 14.Nf4 Qd7  
 15.f3 Ng5 16.Qb3  
 Kh8 17.Qxd5

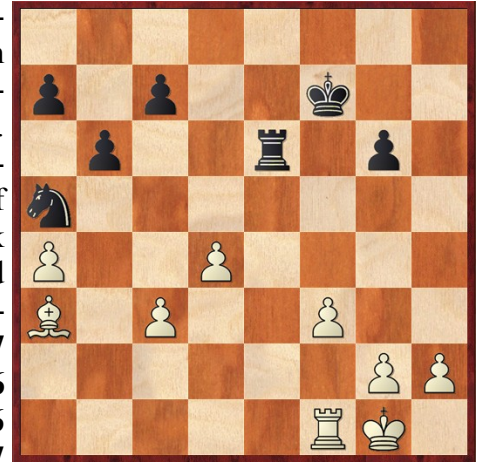
[See diagram above] White wins a pawn and is ready to attack; Black tries to keep it complicated. 17...Qe8



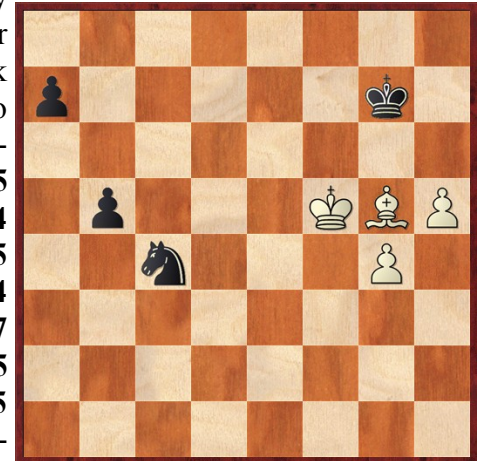
18.e4 Na5 19.a4  
 Rd8 20.Qa2 Rd7  
 21.Rae1 Qc8  
 22.Ba3 Rg8 23.e5  
 fxe5 24.Rxe5 Nf7  
 25.Rh5 Re8? [See  
 diagram right]  
 Black was already  
 in trouble; how-  
 ever this allows  
 the following:  
 26.Ng6+ Kg8  
 27.Ne5 Black  
 should lose sig-

nificant material, if White plays the best moves. 27...g6 28.Nxf7? Seems natural, but White needed to

keep up the pressure rather than immediately trading off material. White is still better, however. If 28.Rh4 Black simply can't hold on to the exchange. 28...Rxf7 29.Rxh7 Qe6 30.Qxe6 Rxe6 31.Rxf7 Kxf7



[See diagram above] White emerges up two pawns in an endgame, but everything is far from over. 32.f4 Nc4 33.Bc1 Re2 34.f5 Rc2 35.fxg6+ Kxg6 36.Bf4 Rxc3 37.Rc1 Rxc1+ 38.Bxc1 White gives back a pawn to trade into a bishop versus knight ending up one pawn. With the connected g- and h- passed pawns, this seems very favorable for White, but Black will show how to make it complicated. 38...Kf5 39.Kf2 Ke4 40.h4 Kxd4 41.h5 Ke5 42.Kf3 c6 43.Kg4 Kf6 44.Bg5+ Kg7 45.Kf5 b5 46.axb5 cxb5 47.g4 [See diagram] The computer shows an equal score if Black pushes his pawns.



*Previous page: Winner Robert Sasata versus Omid Malek with Mike Zeggelaar and second-place finisher Peter Kalisvaart in the background. Left and right: second place finishers FM Dale Haessel and FM Ian Findlay. Photos by Micah Hughey.*





Instead, he opts for the following, perhaps thinking that if he can trade knight for bishop, he'll be winning, given how far the white king will be drawn away from the queenside pawns. White does not allow the trade, and instead accurately sets up his bishop and pawns for a mating attack. 47...Nd6+ 48.Ke6 Ne4 49.Bf4

Nc5+ 50.Kf5 Nd3 51.Be3 a5 52.h6+ Kh8 53.g5 Black resigns. His king is cornered and facing mate in a few. 1-0

Many thanks to Ali Razzaq for organizing, Rob Gardner for directing, and the Edmonton Chess Club for hosting.

# University Battle of Alberta

February 3-4, 2018, Edmonton

Despite the best efforts of organizer and director Jordan Rohatynski, the annual University Battle of Alberta ended as a default win for the University of Alberta, which hosted the event. As Jordan put it, it was a win in the style of Spassky-Fischer Game 2.

The most outstanding performance went to Edmonton junior Lucy Cao, who finished with 7/8 and in clear first place.

Second was claimed by Gerald Aspler with 6.5/8, while Mark Tuvera took third on tiebreak (6/8) (his fellow third place finisher is mysteriously named *Gladiator* on the crosstable.)

Thanks to Jordan for organizing and directing, and the University of Alberta for hosting.



Above: Competitors at the event, including director Jordan Rohatynski (far right), Mark Tuvera (second right), along with the trophy. Below: Hafiz Karmali.

## 2018 Edmonton Seniors



March 17-18, 2018, Edmonton

*Small but strong* describes the 2018 Edmonton Seniors Championship. Only seven players attended the 4-round event; however, it was still a tight race, as Hafiz Karmali (2062) and Arniel Frialde (2150) finished tied for first with 3/4. Third place was taken by ratings favorite Rob Gardner (2245) with 2.5/4.

The prize in the event was a \$300 travel grant to attend either the 2018 Alberta Seniors Championship (May 12-13, Calgary) or the 2018 Canadian Seniors Championship (August 3-6, also Calgary). Karmali claimed that prize, as he'd beaten Frialde in their round 2 matchup.

Thanks to Terry Seehagen for organizing and directing, and the Edmonton Chess Club for hosting.



# Wrapping Up

## Top 10 FIDE Rated Albertans

April 1, 2018—Active Residents Only

1	<b>Bitan Banerjee</b>	2379
2	<b>IM Edward Porper</b>	2377
3	<b>CM Rafael Arruebarrena</b>	2296
4	<b>FM Vladimir Pechenkin</b>	2285
5	<b>Belsar Valencia</b>	2281
6	<b>FM Loren Laceste</b>	2267
7	<b>FM Diwen Shi</b>	2260
8	<b>FM Gary Ng</b>	2217
9	<b>Jeff Reeve</b>	2216
10	<b>WIM Agnieszka Matras-Clement</b>	2213

## Top 20 CFC Rated Albertans

Active Residents—April 1, 2018

1	<b>Bitan Banerjee</b>	2499
2	<b>IM Edward Porper</b>	2459
3	<b>FM Gary Ng</b>	2389
4	<b>CM Rafael Arruebarrena</b>	2361
5	<b>Belsar Valencia</b>	2356
6	<b>FM Vladimir Pechenkin</b>	2333
7	<b>WIM Agn. Matras-Clement</b>	2300
8	<b>FM Ian Findlay</b>	2290
8	<b>FM Dale Haessel</b>	2290
10	<b>Jeff Reeve</b>	2286
11	<b>FM Diwen Shi</b>	2281
12	<b>FM Loren Laceste</b>	2280
13	<b>Daniel Kazmaier</b>	2270
14	<b>Anuar Caldera</b>	2246
15	<b>Robert Gardner</b>	2233
16	<b>David Miller</b>	2221
17	<b>Jerry Kobalenko</b>	2197
18	<b>Martin Robichaud</b>	2193
19	<b>Roy Yearwood</b>	2189
20	<b>Vladislav Rekhson</b>	2179

**Calgary Junior Chess Club**  
Contact: Vera Li  
xiaoqin\_li@hotmail.com  
www.calgaryjuniorchess.com

**University of Calgary Chess Club**  
MacEwan Student Centre  
chess.calgary@gmail.com  
fb.com/UofCChessClub/

**Edmonton Chess Club**  
#204-10840 124 Street  
(780) 424-0283  
fb.com/TheEdmontonChessClub

**Okotoks Chess Club**  
Okotoks Library, 7 Riverside Dr. West  
Weds: 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm  
Richard Bradley: (403) 938-2220  
richard.bradley@shaw.ca

**La Crete Chess Club**  
Wed: 7 pm to 9:30 pm (seasonal)  
Contact: Chris White  
(780) 821-0044 (Cell)  
cwnlca@gmail.com

**Portage College (Lac La Biche)**  
Contact: Leslie Boake  
(780) 623-5686  
lesliec.boake@portagecollege.ca

**Ads (page): Banff (15); Calgary(5);  
Edmonton(5); Fort McMurray(8);  
Grande Prairie(8) ; Red Deer(8)**

**Airdrie Chess Club**  
Airdrie Public Library  
111-304 Main Street SE  
Thurs: 6:30 pm to 8 pm (seasonal)  
Contact: Susanne Rempel

**University of Lethbridge Chess Club**  
email: martin.heavyhead@uleth.ca

**Fort McMurray Chess Club**  
Thursdays: 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm  
(780) 790-1008  
fmchessclub@hotmail.com  
www.fmchess.com

**Medicine Hat Chess Club**  
Contact: Bill Taylor  
(403) 526-5484 taylorwm@shaw.ca  
www.mhchess.com

**Sherwood Park**  
Strathcona County Library, 2nd Floor  
Wednesdays from 4 pm to closing  
Contact: Les Jones  
(780) 467-7393

**University of Alberta**  
All skill levels welcome to attend!  
fb.com/uachess

**Lethbridge Junior Chess Club**  
Contact: Peter Davis-Imhof  
phone: (403) 320-4232  
peter.davisimhof@gmail.com

### Banff Chess Academy

101 Bear Street — above the library  
Saturdays, 6:30 PM — close  
\$2 drop in fee  
Active games  
Contact Jonathan Day  
Email: albertachessday@gmail.com



## 2018 ACA Tournament Schedule

All tournaments subject to change by the ACA and/or organizer. Tournaments with an \* are *Road Warrior* events. For updated info, please visit our website: [albertachess.org](http://albertachess.org)

Dates	Tournament	Organizer	Location
Jan 5-7	Schleinich Memorial*	Jim Daniluk	Calgary
Feb 3-4	University Battle of Alberta*	Jordan Rohatynski	Edmonton
Feb 10-11	Northern Alberta Open*	Ali Razzaq	Edmonton
Feb 24-25	AB Youth Chess Championship	Vera Li	Calgary
Mar 10-11	2nd Steinitz-Menchik Chess Classic*	Stefan Sklenka	Calgary
Mar 17-18	Edmonton Seniors Championship	Terry Seehagen	Edmonton
Mar 24	Alberta Chess Challenge	Cristian Ivanescu	Red Deer
Mar 30-Apr 1	Alberta Closed & Reserves*	Micah Hughey	Edmonton
April 7-8	Lethbridge Open*	Jerry Mikusek	Lethbridge
April 14	Alberta Active*	Alexey Taranik	Red Deer
May 5-6	Edmonton International Qualifier*	Jordan Rohatynski	Edmonton
May 12-13	Alberta Seniors Championship	Jim Daniluk	Calgary
May 12-13	Alberta Women's Championship	Wojtek Kowalczewski	Calgary
Jun 2-3	35th Trumpeter Classic*	Tim Pradzinski	Grande Prairie
Jun 9-10	Calgary International Qualifier*	Brad Booker	Calgary
Jun 19-24	13th Edmonton International & Open*	Rafael Arruebarrena	Edmonton
Jun 30-Jul 1	Fort McMurray Open*	Jina Burn	Fort McMurray
Aug 3-6	2018 Canadian Seniors Championship	Vlad Rekhson	Calgary
Aug 14-19	11th Calgary International & Open*	Vlad Rekhson	Calgary
Sep 1-2	Over / Under 1800*	Daryl Bertrand	Edmonton
Sep 8	Battle of Alberta	Alexey Taranik	Red Deer
Sep 15-16	Calgary Junior Regional	Angelo Tolentino	Calgary
Sep 15-16	Edmonton Junior Regional	Dustin Koperski	Edmonton
Sep 22-23	24th Medicine Hat Open*	Dr. Bill Taylor	Medicine Hat
Sep 29	Junior Battle of Alberta	Vlad Rekhson	Red Deer
Oct 6-8	Alberta Open*	Stefan Sklenka	Calgary
Oct 20	Alberta Blitz Championship*	Alexey Taranik	Red Deer
Oct 26-28	Edmonton Fall Sectional*	Micah Hughey	Edmonton
Nov 10-12	Banff Open*	Ian Findlay	Banff
Nov 17-18	Alberta Junior Championship	Dustin Koperski	Edmonton
Nov 24-25	Southern Alberta Open*	Wojtek Kowalczewski	Calgary
Dec 15-16	WBX Team Tournament*	Terry Seehagen	Edmonton