

## JOE FOGARTY ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT FROM SCHOLASTIC CHESS

or

### *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

BY THE AGE OF ten, Garry Kasparov was the most promising student of the Mikhail Botvinnik chess school, Roger Federer was hitting astounding forehand winners against people three times his size, and Muhammad Ali was training to beat up the kid who took his bike. By the age of ten, I was consuming ice cream, throwing air balls at the wrong basket, playing pokémon, and avoiding girls. So began the legacy of Joe Fogarty.

My father taught me how to play chess at the age of five (opening with 1.e4!, which I have played religiously my entire life), but I did not play in my first tournament until 7<sup>th</sup> grade, when I achieved the astounding USCF rating of 757. After about 18 months of constant tournaments and lessons from NM **Aleksandr Kitsis** I was rated 1621. I was very proud of this rapid progression from the “it moves like an L” stage to the “The girl at the board next to me is cute” stage (yes, this puts me on par with Shabalov). During this time I became inseparable friends with my longtime sparring partner, **Viktor Kitsis**, with whom I played over 100 of my first 500 tournament games.

Entering high school, I had high aspirations and a lot of confidence in my chess game, and I carried this confidence into what I considered to be my breakout tournament, the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade State Championship in Akron on November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004. This was a very significant tournament in my chess career simply because it was my first really big win. Apart from winning all five of my games, this tournament is where I became acquainted with **Jonathan Hilton**, the beginning of a long and very strange relationship that includes highlights such as 4:00 A.M. online conversations and articles like this that are actually being written *during* the deadline. Ironically, my clock reads 12:00 A.M. midnight right now and this is, in fact, my deadline. Of course, this is the second deadline. The first deadline

was sometime last week.

It was also at this tournament that my high school chess team began to make a splash with myself and **Matt DelBrocco** nearly winning the 9<sup>th</sup> grade section despite only have two people. (We finished with a collective 9-1 record.) A final noteworthy moment is that the *de facto* championship game of the tournament was the 4<sup>th</sup> round match between myself and **Bobby Steen**, starting a friendly rivalry that would decide multiple state championships, a national placing, and several Open tournament games.

My confidence continued to swell as 9<sup>th</sup> grade rolled on. The Notre Dame Cathedral Latin chess team began to experience success, as I won almost all of my games at first board, DelBrocco won most of his games as the #2, **Jeff Sustarsic** was undefeated at #3, and **Danny McDonnell** won all the time at #4. We lost only to Rocky River High School, when Expert **Paul Nemeth** laid a hefty beating on me. Of course, we were unable to achieve truly dominate skill until the next year, when **Rebecca Lelko** took over 2<sup>nd</sup> board and everyone else slid down. Unfortunately, NDCL would never conjure up the necessary participation until my senior year, when the aforementioned individuals convincingly won the Northeast Ohio Team Championship.

My first national tournament was at the 2004 grade level championships in Orlando. This was back when it was held at the luxurious Dolphin Resort. The Colorado Springs resort is nice, but is totally lame by comparison. This weekend proved to be one of the most memorable of my life. I played some pretty good chess and had a slight rating increase, but having the whole December weekend free with myself, Viktor, and Rebecca proved to be a more relaxing, crazy, and hilarious than anything I could have imagined.

Up to this point, my scholastic chess life has been a fairy tale. Well, this is where the prince dies or something similar. Remember that 1621 rating I achieved at the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade? Well, midway through 11<sup>th</sup> grade, I was 1619. Although I continued to learn more and more and gain a deeper understanding of chess, my ability to perform was totally shot. There are probably several things to blame here; an addiction to blitz, an addiction to the Max Lange Attack; overconfidence; a short attention span; and quest for chess that was too good to be played. By this last item, I mean that I was often looking for the absolute best moves and would settle for nothing less, wasting large amounts of clock time and playing with too many reservations. It was almost as if I had gotten so caught up in trying to play *good* chess that I forgot how to play *any* kind of chess.

These years of high school were not all bad, however. In 10<sup>th</sup> grade I achieved a rating of 1786, which would be the highest rating I would get for over 2 years. There are many noteworthy moments that I can also dabble into during this time period. At grade level championships in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, I gave up a nasty draw to **Westley Russell** that I still have not forgiven myself for to this day. I had a king, rook, and two pawns against a lone king and rook. The pawns were connected and in the g- and h-files. In case you have not figured it out yet, Westley's king wound up stalemated on h1 following an obvious rook sacrifice. I did perform pretty well at High School Championships in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, however, scoring 4.5 out of 6 and losing only to Jonathan Hilton.

However, the 11<sup>th</sup> Grade State Championship hosted what was, by far, the most painful chess loss of my life. True, the tournament did start 8:00 A.M. the night after my high school prom. Despite my blood-shot eyes, after 4 rounds, I was the only player with 4 points. I played a player with 3.5 points in the last round and had a thoroughly winning game, but made one terrible blunder and lost. I lost the game, I lost the title, I lost my confidence. The player that beat me? It was Bobby Steen of course, whom I was also to meet in the last round of Nationals several weeks later. This meeting between us was fairly inconsequential however, because we were only in the middle of the field.

12<sup>th</sup> grade was the year I finally got my feet back on some solid ground. It opened up with another epic



*Joseph Fogarty is getting to old for this kind of chess. In Black and White photographs, even his beard appears to be graying.*

state title, this one being a much more emotional experience than the first. Steen was upset in the first round by **Zel Caldwell**, but I still had to score wins against Westley Russell and **Benjamin Burkholder** while holding a last round draw with **Justin Hale**.

After winning, I called my family to let them know how I had done. Then I immediately went outside into frigid temperatures and yelled celebrations at the top of my lungs. This seems weird in retrospect, but it seemed appropriate at the time. During my senior year in high school I also picked up \$600 for winning first at the Cardinal Open U1800 section and \$1200 for winning first at the Cleveland Open U1800 section. Of course, these were only possible due to rating drops resulting from really awful scholastic tournaments, such as that year's High School Championship. But nonetheless, I'm the guy with the dough.

Conclusively, (that's right, English professors, I opened a final paragraph with "conclusively.") my scholastic chess career has been very rewarding, although it has had spotty success and is the epitome of unachieved potential. Of course, I accept that this is entirely my fault, and, as a wise man wrote in my graduation card, "The will to win is important, but not nearly as important as the will to prepare to win." ♦  
~Joe Fogarty

*To wish Joe off to a happy life playing collegiate chess, we now recap three great games from his scholastic chess career.*

**Fogarty, Joe (1748)—Barbin, Joseph (1798)**  
[B24] World Open (Round 4), 7/2/2006  
*Annotations by Joe Fogarty*

This game is from the World Open in 2006. White opens with reserved development, switches to a powerful pawn storm, switches to quiet maneuvering, then ends with a rook sacrifice.

**1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 d6 4.Bg2 e6 5.d3 Nf6 6.f4 Be7**

If Black is to play 4...e6, he should have his bishop on g7 and his knight on e7. This style of development is too passive because white's kingside attack will undoubtedly prove to be more consequential than black's queenside play.

**7.Nf3 0-0 8.0-0 Qc7 9.h3**

I prefer h2-h3 before Be3 in order to avoid ...Ng4 annoyances, support the g2-g4 push, and eventually consider a Nh2-Ng4 maneuver.

**9...a6 10.Be3 Rb8**

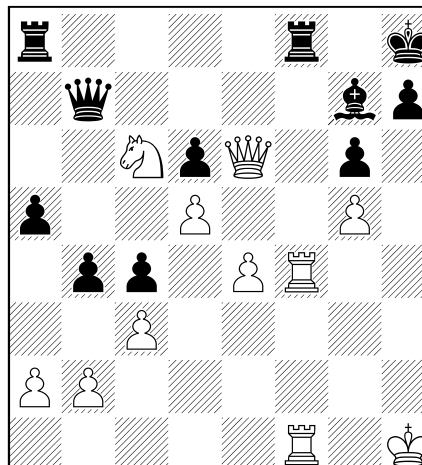
Black has already played ...a6 and does not need to play ...Rb8.

**11.g4 b5 12.Ne2 Re8 13.g5 Nh5 14.Nh2 g6 15.Bf3 Ng7 16.h4 e5 17.Ng4 Bxg4 18.Bxg4 Bf8 19.Ng3 exf4 20.Bxf4 Ne5 21.Bxe5 Rxe5 22.Qf3 Ne6 23.c3 Bg7 24.Ne2 Nd8 25.Nf4 Nc6 26.Nd5 Qa7 27.Kh1 Ree8 28.Rad1 Ne5 29.Qh3 c4 30.d4 Nxc4 31.Qxc4 Re6 32.Rf4 Qb7**

Intending 33...Rxe4 and White will have to work harder to win.

**33.Nb4 a5 34.d5 Ree8**

34...Rxe4 35.Rxe4 axb4 was probably the better.  
**35.Nc6 Ra8 36.Rdf1 Rf8 37.h5 b4 38.hxc6 fxg6 39.Qe6+ Kh8 40.Ne7!**



I rarely give myself exclamation marks, but this is just so cute.

**40...Rxf4 41.Rxf4 Be5 42.Rf7 bxc3 43.Rxh7+ Kxh7 44.Qxg6+ Kh8 45.Qh6# 1-0**

**Fogarty (1707)—Russell, Westley (1840)**  
[B19] 12th Grade State Champ. (4) 12/1/2007  
*Annotations by Joe Fogarty*

This game is from the 4th round of the 12th grade State Championship Tournament and was the *de facto* championship game.

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.h5 Bh7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 e6 11.Bf4 Ngf6 12.0-0 Be7 13.Qe2 b5**

This creates weaknesses without doing very much.

**14.Ne5 Nxe5 15.dxe5 Nd5 16.Qg4 Qa5 17.Kb1**

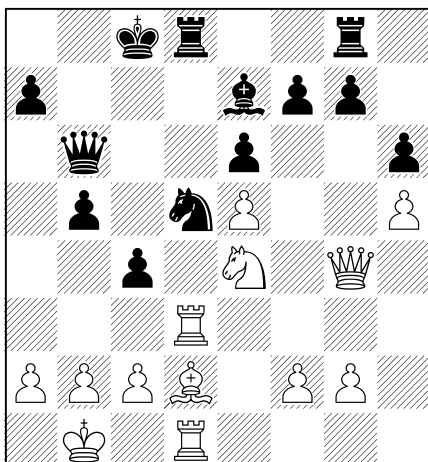
17.Qxg7 Rf8 18.Rxd5! cxd5 19.Kb1 wins for

White.

**17...0-0-0 18.Bd2 Qb6 19.Ne4 Rhg8  
20.Rh3 c5 21.Rd3**

21.Rg3!? was also possible, for instance 21...c4  
22.Qf3 f6 23.exf6 Nxf6 24.Nxf6 Bxf6 allows  
White's queen to penetrate to the a8 square with  
advantage.

**21...c4**



**22.Ba5!! Qc6**

The point is that if 22...Qxa5 White has 23.Rxd5.  
22...Nc3+ 23.Nxc3 Qxa5 is playable but does not  
relieve the pressure on Black's position.

**23.Rf3??**

An awful follow-up to an otherwise brilliant shot.  
23.Rg3, allowing the White queen to still defend  
the rook on d1, is necessary. White would then  
have tremendous pressure on the Black position.  
But now my opponent blunders in time trouble,  
allowing me a quick win. He can instead take the  
advantage immediately with 23...Nf6!! 24.Nd6+  
Bxd6 25.exf6 Bc7.

**23...Nc3+?? 24.Nxc3 Rxd1+ 25.Nxd1 f5  
26.exf6 Bxf6 27.Rxf6 gxf6 28.Qxg8+ Kb7**

**29.a3 Qd5 30.Ne3 Qxh5 31.Qxe6 1-0**

**Fogarty (1798)—Coleman, Anthony (1661)**

[B25] Cleveland Open (Round 3), 6/14/2008

*Annotations by Joe Fogarty*

This game demonstrates a common theme of  
many of my games. My opponent makes mis-  
takes in the opening; I attempt to exploit these  
mistakes and fail miserably; I get lucky and win!

**1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.d3  
d6 6.f4 Nf6 7.Nf3 0-0 8.0-0 Ne8 9.Nd5 f5  
10.c3 Nc7 11.Ng5?!**

I intended 12.Nxd5 followed by 13.Qb3

**11...e6 12.Nxc7 Qxc7 13.exf5 Rxf5 14.Re1  
e5 15.Bd5+ Kh8 16.Qf3 Nd8 17.Be3 h6  
18.Nh3 Be6 19.Be4 Rf6 20.Nf2 Qd7 21.d4  
d5**

Now it is apparent that whatever edge I used to  
have is now gone. I did not want to have spatial  
trouble after 21.Bc2 e4, so I came up with some-  
thing more clever.

**22.dxe5!? dxe4 23.Nxe4 Qc6??**

Possibly rattled by the weird nature of my mate-  
rial exchange, my opponent forgot to move his  
rook. 23...Rf7 24.Nd6 Re7 25.Bxc5 Rb8 26.Rad1  
and White seems to have more activity but an  
interesting battle would surely ensue.

**24.exf6 Bxf6 25.Bxc5 Bd5 26.Bd4 Bxd4+  
27.cxd4 Nf7 28.Qd3 Re8 29.Nc5 Rd8  
30.Rac1 Bh1 31.Ne4 Bxe4 32.Qxe4 Qb6  
33.Red1 Qxb2 34.Qxg6 Qxa2 35.Rc7 Qe2  
36.Qf6+ 1-0 ♠**

*Watch for more on Joe Fogarty as he enters the colle-  
giate world of chess later this year at Case Western  
University!*