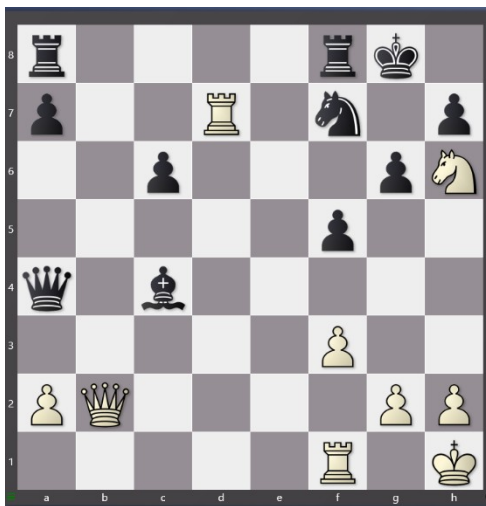


2025 St Patrick Open

Tarquin Bennion (SID) overcame Matteo Nero (BOZ) in the final round to repeat as champion of the 2025 St. Patrick Open with a 4.5/5 score! Tarquin took a bye Saturday night as his college mid-term became his top priority. If a “brilliance prize” were offered, Tarquin’s effort in the final round would have won it as he sacrificed a piece and 2 pawns for an attack against Black’s king. The queen threatened mate from a grand distance on b2, showing how vulnerable the Black king can be without a dark squared bishop in the King’s Indian Defense. Matteo tied for second place with 4/5, only losing in the final game. John Julian (BIL) also tied for 2nd, winning the remainder of his contests after a 2nd round loss to up-and-comer Luke Miller (KAL). The event took place this past weekend (3/15-16) on the 20th floor of the Doubletree Hotel in downtown Billings, MT. The tournament has grown every year, peaking at 38 players in 2024. Twenty-eight players showed up to do battle this year over St. Patrick’s weekend. This year’s prize fund totaled \$450. The cities represented included Billings, Bozeman, Helena, Great Falls, Missoula, Sidney, Kalispell, Gillette, and Sheridan. There were 3 brand-new unrated tournament players this year, but no women in the field this year.



Final position after Nh6+ from Bennion – Nero, Rd 5.

The Biggest Upset prize was won by Bradley Gannon (BIL) for his win over Frank Miller (St Ig) (519 points). Other notable upsets include Bill Chamberlin (BOZ) over Frank Miller (396), Luke Miller (KAL) over Julian (214), Brock Swope (KAL) over Charles Wittnam (BIL) (329), and Ethan Klein’s (GIL) draw with Peter Brooks (SHE) (283).

The largest ratings gain by software estimate go to Bradley Gannon (138), Ethan Klein (106), and Tarquin Bennion (39). The time control was game in 1:30 with a 30s delay. The longer delay resulted in better endgame play, more accurate scorekeeping, and no round took longer than 3 hours 20 minutes.

The venue, as usual, was outstanding with great views of the city. Players did have to contend with raucous street noise this year as the event coincided with St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

The final standings can be viewed [here](#). Selected games can be viewed [here](#).

Thanks to all the players who came and competed!