

Chess coach of the 2011

2011 was very eventful for the AoIG chess operation. [Boris GELFAND](#), the former chess student of our chess coaches Tamara GOLOVEY and Leonid BONDAR, won a series of matches to become a challenger to the reigning World Champion Viswanathan ANAND. They will meet in May of 2012 in Moscow in a match for the title of the best chess player on the planet. That is well-known news which has made the headlines in many different media and chess related websites.



Photo.1 On a cover of the most popular Russian chess magazine “64,” from left to right: FIDE President, Kirsan ILYUMZHINOV; runner-up, Alexander GRISCHUK; and the winner of the challenger stage, Boris GELFAND.

The much less known fact is that this match was sponsored by another former Leonid student, [Andrew FILATOV](#). We will let you know more about it soon.

Now we want to return to the local news. Leonid BONDAR was selected for the “Coach of the Year 2011” award from the local Russian newspaper “Zemlyaki,” which should not surprise you.

However, it was not for the success of his former students, as you might assume, but mostly for his

chess teaching and success of his current Chicago area students.



We decided to honor his great work and ask him for an interview. Let’s start with the few relevant photos from the family archive, where even the most famous and glamorous actors appear as normal people:

Photo.2: Leonid is playing in 2011 Holiday blitz tournament (with \$800.00 prize money pool) run by Academy of Intellectual Games (AoIG), December 2011.



Photo.3: Leonid(left) and Boris GELFAND(right), analyzing Chess76™ position at the kitchen table, over the breakfast in Minneapolis, MN, August 2011.



Photo.4 Mutual congratulations: for Boris, as a player, and Leonid, as a coach.

Leonid is 71 years old and he is not only actively teaching kids to play chess, but he is a avid chess player on the senior circle, where he won a Blitz title in 2009 and Championship title in 2010 in the 70-75 age group. What might surprise you if you were to meet him personally, is that, while he was in a teaching profession most of his carrier, he never lost interest in learning himself. He is currently going through the book collections of the local libraries at the rate of two to three books per week; he was one of the first who learned to play Chess76™ and embraced new methodologies in kids' chess

education; and just a few weeks ago, he learned to downhill ski and, after his second lesson, made a safe run on a blue-rated slope. However, after the first 15 minutes of our conversation somehow the chess board magically appeared on our table and the rest of the interview was about Leonid's best chess games. Naturally, we elected to publish the one which was

instrumental in getting him a Championship title in 2010, though the major reason for this selection was to emphasize that this victory should be credited to his homework preparation. His winning position after 14 moves (Black resigned after 20 moves) had already occurred in a 1999 game of yet another of Leonid's students, GM Yury Zezulkin. Leonid knew this position very well. Here is the game with his own comments. We have preserved the Leonid style of presentation where, at the most interesting moment, he would ask the question, "What is the best move?" Try to answer it before reading on to maximize your chess enjoyment.

Leonid BONDAR – Mike LISENTE, US OPEN Senior Chess Championship, August 2010, Florida.

Sicilian defense: B40.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3. D4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Qb6 That is unusual line of defense, more natural is 4. .. Nf6 preparing for the safety rethreat of his majesty – the kingside castling.

5.Nc3 Bc5 6.Be3



Diag.1

In this position **6 . .. Nc6** is naturally the best move, since after capturing a "free" pawn on b2 6. .. Qxb2? 7. Ndb5! Bxe3 8.Rb1! Black's Queen is trapped!

7. Ncb5 a6 After very quick start it took my opponent more than 20 minutes to make his last move.

8. Nxc6



Diag.2 What is the best move for Black in this position?

It took me by surprise to learn that the best line of defense, which will result in 0.00 (completely even) evaluation by Rubka, is to remove both white Knights from the board even if Black must go down an Exchange (exchange the Rook for the Knight) to complete this mission. Here it is: 8. .. axb5 9.Bxc5 Qxc5 10. Qd4 Qxc6! 11. Qxg7 Qxe4+ 12.Be2 Ke7 13. Qxh8 Nf6 (complicating the Queen's return to the main scene). 14. Qg7 Qb4+

Diag.3 (Variation)

What is the best White move? They must move their King to f1(after 14. ... c3? 15. Qxb2 and White will loose the second pawn with tempo), here, despite being down an Exchange, Black's position has a better computer evaluation, since it will take White a long time to develop both rooks.



The text of the game presents the less effective Black's defense:

8. .. Bxe3? 9.Nd6+ Kf8 10.fxe3 Qxe3+ 11.Be2 bxc6 12. Nxc8! (the very active white Knight is exchanged for the black Bishop which did not make a move in this game, with the only purpose of attracting Rook to the square c8). Now Queen is capturing the d7 pawn with the tempo **13. Qxd7**



Diag.4

13. .. Ne7 Black does not have a good defense any more. Almost all roads lead to bad positions for them.
14. Rf1 is another good move by White.



Diag.5

Black is making a very logical move here: **14. .. Qxe4** not only captures the pawn and maintains the pin on Bishop e7; but, most important, they prevent the capture of e6 pawn with 15.Qxe6.



Diag.6

This position deserves its own diagram. If only Black can force the Exchange of Queens with moves like 16. .. Qd5, they would win. It is a very educational position. What is the best move for White here?

16. 0-0-0! the queenside castle is the right answer. The Bishop e2 is left unprotected, but he is “untouchable,” since White needs to defend against the threat of checkmate in 2 moves on square d8.

15. .. g6 may be the best answer, but that is still not enough to protect against all of White’s threats.

16. Bxa6 Qe3+? That was the last grave mistake for Black - to chase the “scholar checkmate” on b2 and release the control of c4 square and the whole a2-g8 diagonal.

17. Kb1 Rb8 18.Bc4 Qe5 with the threat of checkmate on b2 **19.Bb3** and the checkmate on b2 is denied! So, the game was won by White. For the record, two more moves were made:

19. .. Nf6 20.g4 and Black had resigned.



Diag. 7 The best move for Black here is 20. .. Kg7, but that would be exchanging the Knight for a pawn.

(Note that 20. .. Nh6? Will lead to immediate defeat. Try to find White’s 21st move to prove it, on your own)



Photo.5 Here is a bonus position, from Leonid's most recent game of Chess76™, where White will start with 7 pieces of their choice and Black with 6. Leonid(Black) on move: what should be the outcome of this game in your opinion? For your reading convenience we transfer the position from the photo to the regular diagram:



Diag. 8 Black to move:

1. ... Rh1+
2. Kg2 Rh2+
3. Kg1 Rh1+
4. Kg2 Rh2+

It looks like Black are happy with the draw by repetition (repeating the same position 3 times). Should White accept a draw or do they have a win?

I was playing White against my father in this game and I could see two moves ahead:

5. Kf1 Rh1+ 6. Ke2 Rxc1 to his position:



Diag.9 I made those move, but is this position better for White? I was looking for a quick checkmate – I had about 3 minutes left on the clock, but could not find one. After 7. Rf3+ Ke4, my best square for checkmate (g4) is controlled by black's Knight.

See (variation) Diag.10

After 7. Rf3+ Ke4



So , I have decided to capture the black's Queen and to win eventually due to overwhelming material superiority after I would queen the g-pawn.

7. Bxg7?

However, Leonid had a different plan.



Diag.11 Black to move and to checkmate White King in six moves. Can you find this combination which Leonid had demonstrated to me over the board to win this game?

And let us take one move back in position before **7. Bxg7?**



Diag.12 (The same as Diag.9)

What is the winning plan for White?

Send us your answers to the questions on Diag.7, 11 and 12. E-mail it to chess@aoigames.com.

First 10 responders with correct answers will receive the Chess76™ and Road to BRIDGE™ brochure signed by your chess coach of 2011, Leonid BONDAR.

(We will contact winners by e-mail, asking for their mailing address, the correct answers will appear in the [Test Your Skills](#) column on his website in 2 weeks.)

Have a happy, healthy and productive 2012, and YES, do not forget to leave some time to enjoy your favorite intellectual games!

Serge BONDAR, AoIG Executive Director

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