

Dan Meinking: *Alpha Sleuth*®

OCC readers may know me as a chess player and composer. This article introduces my latest invention, *Alpha Sleuth*®. Your first thought may be: "What the heck is *Alpha Sleuth*®, and why is it in a chess magazine?" Elementary, my dear woodpusher!

Alpha Sleuth® has 3 components: a letter-set, a grid and a phrase. Your mission, should you dare accept, is to determine where each of the 26 letters should be placed in the grid and phrase, forming valid words. Clues come in the form of numbered cells. All like-

numbered cells share the same letter (grid & phrase). The phrase contains numbers only, while the grid has one of each. Of course, the grid has 26 combined blank and numbered cells, one for each letter (A-Z). Further, the numbers are in alphabetic sequence, which means 1 is assigned to the lowest letter in the phrase, 2 to the 2nd-lowest, etc. Let's say (hypothetically) you determine the number 3 represents F. That tells you 1 and 2 are less than F, and 4 on up is greater than F.

OK, so where's the chess element? The development of the *Alpha Sleuth*® puzzle concept stems from my many years as a chess composer. You have a fixed "board" with "pieces", rules and spatial restrictions. Like any chess problem, *Alpha Sleuth*® requires logical deduction: process of elimination, pattern recognition, memory recall, etc. This particular puzzle has a strong chess theme.

For info, visit www.alphasleuth.com. Our site has solving tips, sample puzzles, articles, etc. We host a weekly Solving Contest, and maintain a solving ladder. We offer a *free Alpha Sleuth*® Solving Tool; if you download it, we can send you this puzzle electronically form! My wife, Colleen, and I produced our first book in August '07. Volume 2 should be ready in the March/April timeframe. Good luck, fellow Sleuths! ♦

The answer to the puzzle will be published in the May/June issue of Ohio Chess Connection. Send your answer to KindlyCoach@gmail.com. All solvers will be recognized in print and on our website!

Not a Grandmaster Sleuth yet?

Here are a few hints to get you started: 3=G, 5=L, 9=T, 4=I, 6=P, 10=U, 8=S, 1=C, 2=E, 7=R.

***Alpha Sleuth*® Word Logic Puzzle**
Rating: 1300 by: Dan Meinking

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M |
| N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |

Move each letter above (A-Z) into the grid and phrase below to form valid words. Like-numbered cells share the same letter. Numbers are arranged alphabetically, so 1 represents the lowest letter, 2 is the 2nd-lowest, etc.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | 7 | O | | E | N | |
| | | 10 | E | E | | | | | 4 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | S | | |
| | | | 1 | | E | C | | | | | | |
| | | | H | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 6 | | | | N | | | | | | |
| | | | N | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 3 | A | | | | | | | 9 | |
| | | | 2 | | | | | | | | U | |
| | | | | E | | E | | 5 | O | P | | 8 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | T |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | 9 | 7 | 10 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 2 |
|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|

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