

🇷🇸 Velimirović, Dragoljub (12.05.1942 – 22.05.2014)

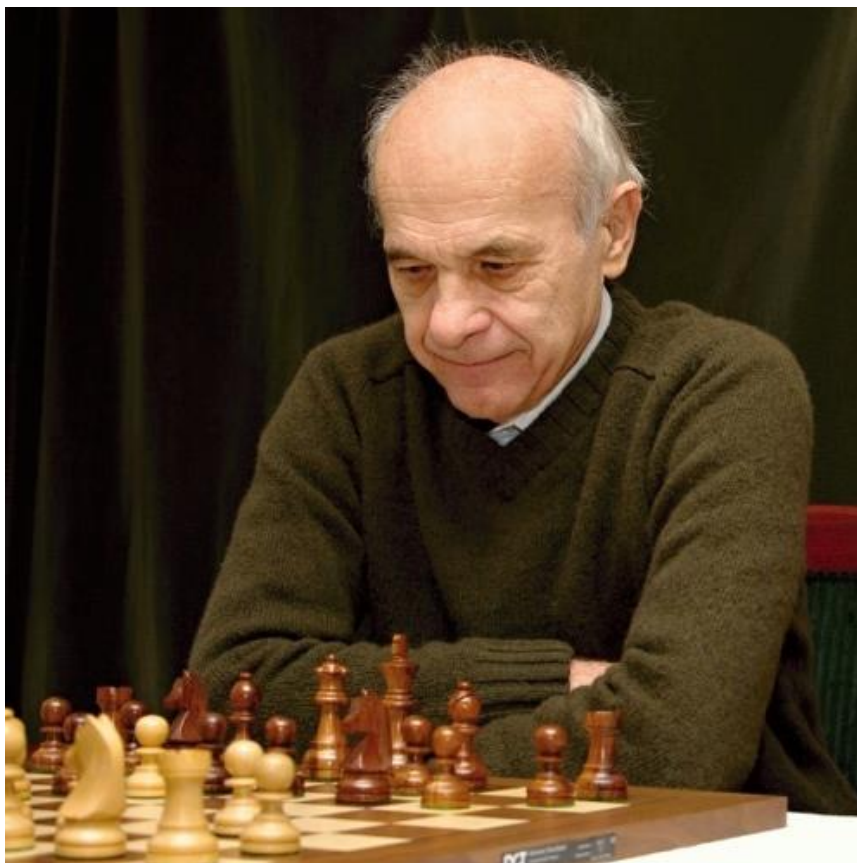


Photo copyright © 2010, Vladimir JAGR. Courtesy of [chessdom.com](http://chessdom.com)

## Virtuoso of Attack

IM 1972, GM 1973, Composition GM in 1984. Dragoljub Velimirović was born in Valjevo, in the part of the former Yugoslavia that is now Serbia. He moved to Belgrade in 1960 where he lived until his death.

He learned chess when he was seven from his mother **Jovanka Velimirović**, who was Yugoslavia's first Women's Champion.

Velimirović is called 'The Yugoslavian Tal'. Nicknamed also 'The Boss'.

Longtime coach and second to Svetozar Gligoric. The World Championship did come calling in 1981, as he seconded Viktor Korchnoi in Merano, Italy in the match with Anatoly Karpov.

**Yugoslav Champion in Vrnjačka Banja 1970 (joint with Vukic), in Novi Sad 1975 outright, and he won the FR Yugoslavian Championship in Nikšić / Belgrade 1997 after play-off.**

**Best results:** =2<sup>nd</sup> Skopje 1971 (behind Polugaevsky, equal with enigmatic Albin Planinc), won Vrnjacka Banja 1973, Praia da Rocha Albufeira (Zonal) 1978 (ahead of Ljubojevic and Ivkov), Zemun 1980 (with Vukic), Budva (Zonal) 1981 (ahead of joint Cebalo and Hulak), **Titograd (40th anniversary Liberation of the City) 1984** (together with Korchnoi, and a full point ahead of sole third Tal in a strong international field, maybe his biggest success), **Vrsac (11<sup>th</sup> Boris Kostić Memorial) 1985**, and **Vrsac (12<sup>th</sup> Boris Kostić Memorial) 1987** (shared with Ehlvest), **Metz Open 1988** (→ below), **Nikšić 1994**, ahead of Božidar Ivanović (12 players, incl. Antoaneta Stefanova), Bijeljina (Savic Mauzer Memorial, closed) 2001.

→ Master of Attack, Dragoljub Velimirovic won the traditional **Metz Open in 1988 with a score of 8.5/9 (!)**, winning in this swiss system event amongst others over Hector, Gutman, Bellon Lopez and Hebden (further players in Metz include also Miles, Kudrin, Eslon, Kraidman, Pein, Haik, Ghițescu, Forintos, Langeweg, Huss, and Pia Cramling).

**He participated at three Interzonal tournaments:** in Rio de Janeiro 1979, Moscow 1982 and in Szirák 1987, but never made the Candidates phase.

Velimirović was selected for the Yugoslav national team many times, one of the earliest occasions being for the USSR vs Yugoslavia match at Ohrid 1972, during which he notably defeated Rafael Vaganian in the first round.

**Velimirović played in six Olympiads from 1974 to 1990.** He was awarded a silver medal for the second board performance on board 5 as well as a silver medal with his team at Nice in 1974. A further silver medal followed in Lucerne 1989 from his participation at the World Team Chess Championship. At the European Team Championships, he won three individual and two team medals in four attempts for individual and team performances respectively.

GM Velimirovic's style of play required a lot of energy: he preferred complicated positions. At the peak of his career he was considered a master of attack. **There is a sharp variation of the Sicilian Defence called the Velimirovic Attack.**

Dragoljub Velimirovic has passed away in Belgrade at the age of 72 after a prolonged illness.

**Best ELO Rating:** 2575 in 1986. **Highest official FIDE Ranking:** 20= in 1986.

**LIFE Master AJ:** (<http://db.chessmetrics.com/CM2/Play...>)

I have often thought that if I could write 1,000 (or more) chess books, I would have to do one on this player. An attacking player, his games really fire the imagination. (One example, <http://www.angelfire.com/games3/lif...>)

While not quite a "forgotten player" (<http://www.geocities.com/lifemaster...>); this player deserves to be better known today than he is. (I find that most young players don't even know who he is.)

#### **Goran:**

He wanted to sue Russian publishers when they renamed "**Velimirovic attack**" into something else (Russians were famous for trying to put their own names). Eventually they had to pay him big money.

**Some call me Tim:** According to the openings database on this site the earliest example of the Velimirovic Attack is [Velimirovic vs Bradvarevic, 1962](#) Velimirovic castled K-side in that game and didn't sac on f5 or e6. But he did come up with the basic formation with Be3, Qe2 etc. The wild sac attacks came later. An exciting player, to be sure.

**Ed Caruthers:** I did a search of Velimirovic's games & couldn't find the one that made "Velimirovic Attack" against the Sicilian a main line. I think there was a Nd4xe6 sac. I think it was played somewhere around 1968. Can you find this game & add it to the collection? Are there any other collections I could search?

**Benzo!** <Ed Caruthers> I think this is the famous game your looking for [Velimirovic vs Ljubojevic, 1972](#)

Sources:

<http://www.chessnc.com/biography/person-1931.html> (CNC)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dragoljub\\_Velimirovi%C4%87](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dragoljub_Velimirovi%C4%87) (Wikipedia)

[http://www.chessgames.com/player/dragoljub\\_velimirovic.html](http://www.chessgames.com/player/dragoljub_velimirovic.html) (Chessgames)

<https://www.chess.com/news/dragoljub-velimirovi-1942-2014-6793> (Obituary by Mike Klein)

<http://chess-news.ru/en/node/15595> (Virtuoso of Attack Velimirovic Has Passed Away)

<http://susanpolgar.blogspot.ch/2014/05/the-chess-world-loses-one-of-its-most.html> (Frank A. Niro)

<https://kevinspraggettonchess.wordpress.com/2014/05/24/dragoljub-velimirovic-r-i-p/> (Spraggett)



Photo: Velimirović, Dragoljub (image courtesy Josip Asik)

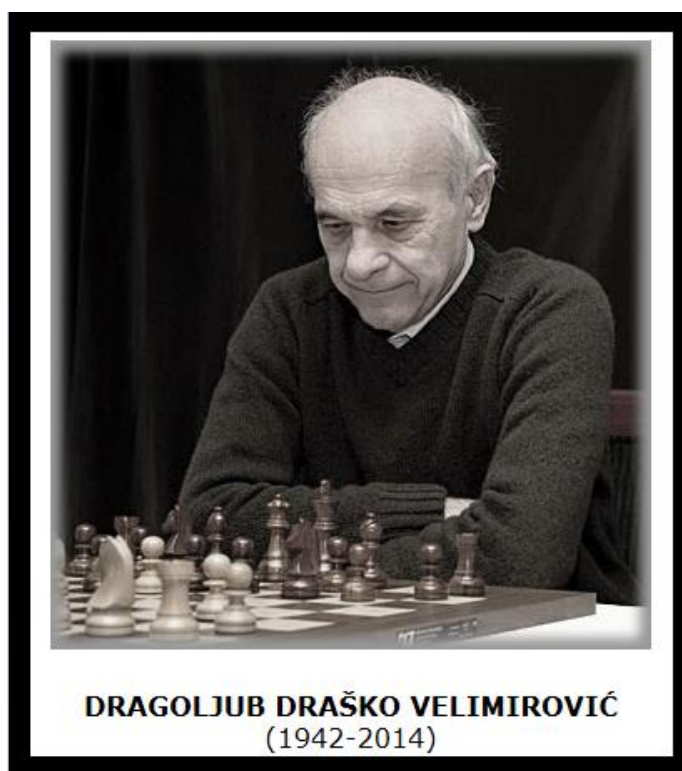
By [Dennis Monokroussos](#). A blog for chess fans, by a chess fan. May 26-2014

## DRAGOLJUB VELIMIROVIC, 1942-2014

From [ChessBase](#) comes word of the passing of Yugoslav/Serbian grandmaster Dragoljub Velimirovic, one of the great masters of sacrifice of the mid-to-late 20th century. The article has a short summary of his career and presents one of the *spectacular wins that made him a fan favorite in his heyday*.

He didn't possess the all-around strength of a Mikhail Tal, but if you're a fan of Tal's - especially of the early Tal - you'll love Velimirovic's games as well. May he rest in peace, and may a new generation of chess fans discover this artist of the chessboard.

### Dragoljub Velimirovic R.I.P.



May 24, 2014 by [kevinspraggettonchess](#)

**He died past Thursday. Born in Valjevo (Serbia) on May 12, 1942, Velimirovic became known as one of the most brilliant attackers of his (or any!) generation, rivalling the reputations of Alekhine, Tal and Kasparov. Bobby Fischer was immensely impressed with his understanding of the Sicilian Defence and the Benoni, and it is said that the two spent some time together analysing. His theoretical ideas and innovations helped advance our understanding of numerous popular opening variations.**

But Velimirovic was much more than just an attacker. He defeated many of the world's top grandmasters, representing his country not less than 6 times at the Olympiad and won the national title 3 times between 1970 and 1997.