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Chess *Moves*

October 2022



Bodhana takes Silver at the FIDE World Cadet Chess Championships

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EDITORIAL



Dear ECF members

Welcome to the October edition of *ChessMoves*.

Modern chess is punishing, requiring a very strong work ethic and a lot of energy to advance. Like many games or sports, the young are taking over at the top.

It doesn't get much younger than the Under 8 events and we highlight two extraordinary performances by our youngsters, Bodhana and Zoe, at the FIDE World Cadet Chess Championships. Congratulations to both!

Following on from this, the ECF has recently published a Junior Development Pathway, which hopes to build on this type of success. You may view it here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/junior-development-pathway/>

Our young players are travelling all the time, and we bring good news from the HIT Open, which took place in Nova Gorica, Slovenia recently. A terrific result for Matthew Wadsworth and Shreyas Royal - <https://chess-results.com/tnr631671.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=9&flag=30>. This month also saw Shreyas winning his third and final IM norm in the 4NCL GM norm tournament in Hull.

Further congratulations are due to Aga Milewska, Director of Women's Chess, who has recently been selected to be a Councillor on the English Chess Union (ECU) Women's Commission - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/aga-milewska-fide-councillor/>

Meanwhile, we have all the usual columns, some excellent photos and news from the AGM, and it is worth checking out the news about ECF rolling membership, which went live in September - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/rolling-membership-introduction/>

--- IM Andrew Martin Email: a.martin2007@yahoo.co.uk

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Photography by Brendan O'Gorman, Carl Stephens, Chris Stratford, John Upham and FIDE

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COVER STORY

Congratulations Bodhana!



Bodhana Sivanandan came second in the U8 Girls category at the FIDE World Cadet Chess Championship. Bodhana actually finished joint top with 9.5 points after 11 rounds but narrowly missed out on gold on tie-break. England's Zoe Veselow also did well in the same event with 7.5 points. There were a number of good performances from England's players which can be accessed at <http://chess-results.com/tnr670151.aspx?lan=1&art=25&fedb=ENG&flag=30>

FIDE World Cadets Championships – Bodhana's Choice (Game 1 of 2)

Bodhana has kindly selected two of her World Cadet games for publication in the October and November ChessMoves. Both demonstrate some fine attacking play and positional understanding in some complex and unbalanced positions.

This month's game is a Pirc defence where Bodhana, playing with the white pieces, picks up the exchange with a nice tactic in the early middlegame and is then forced to consolidate to develop her pieces. The game finishes with a fine combination to allow her pawn to promote whilst stopping her opponent's passer on the other side of the board.

Bodhana Sivanandan - Zhansaya Sholpanbek [B07] FIDE World Cadets Chess Championships 2, 19.09.2022]

1.e4

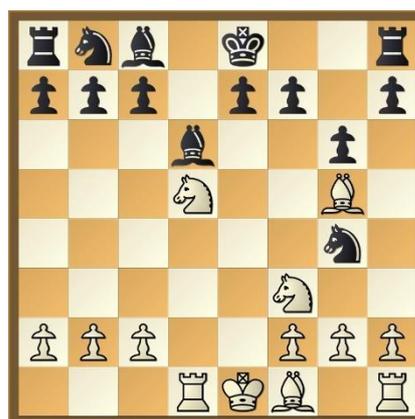
1...d6 2.d4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.Bg5 Nf6 We have now reached a Pirc defence.

5.e5 dxe5 6.dxe5 Qxd1+ 7.Rxd1 Ng4 8.Nd5 Bxe5 9.Nf3



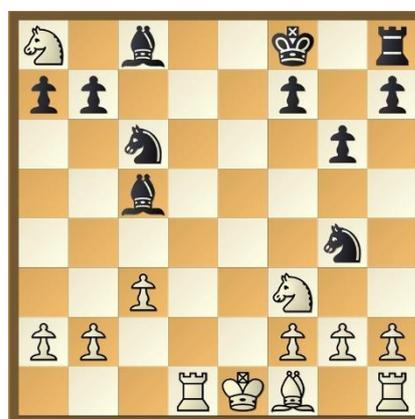
Of course the pawn on e7 can't be taken. 9 Bxe7 would be an error due to 9..c6 picking up the bishop. Likewise 9.Nxe7 would also be wrong as f6 picks up the knight.

9...Bd6?



10.Bxe7 And now the capture on e7 works, deflecting the bishop from protecting the c-pawn. 10...Bxe7 11.Nxc7+ Picking up the rook for the bishop capture on e7.

11...Kf8 12.Nxa8 Nc6 13.c3 Bc5



The dust settles for the moment with Bodhana the exchange and a pawn up. However, black's pieces are much better developed and menacing the white king. This will need some accurate defensive play to consolidate and make it through to an endgame.

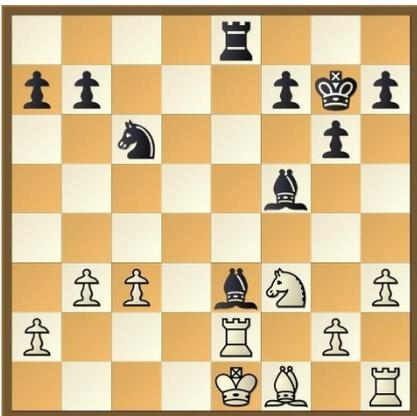
14.Rd2 Kg7 15.Nc7 Bb6 16.Nd5 Re8+ 17.Ne3



17.. Nxf2 Removing the knight's protection and picking up a pawn.

18.Rxf2 Bxe3 19.Re2 Bf5 20.h3 Na5 20...Bd3?! fails to 21.Rxe3! Rxe3+ 22.Kf2.

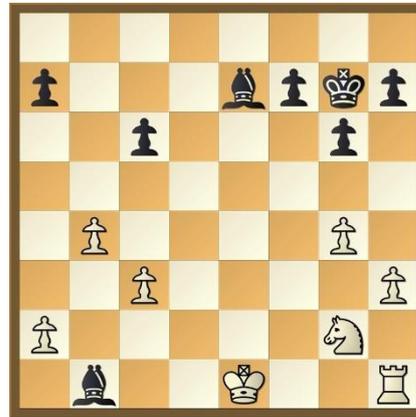
21.b3 Nc6



White remains the exchange up but still needs to untangle her pieces.

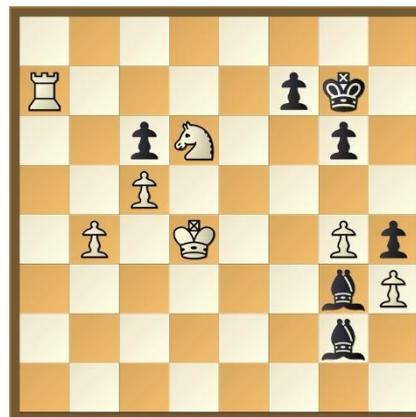
22.g4 Bb1 23.Nh4? 23.Nd2! This is a better line due to the threat of Nc4 winning the pinned bishop. 23...Bxd2+ 24.Kxd2 Rxe2+ 25.Bxe2 Bxa2 26.Kc2.

23...Re4 24.Bg2 Re7 25.Bxc6 bxc6 26.Ng2 Bc5 27.b4 Bd6 28.Rxe7 Bxe7+-



And we transition to an endgame with king, rook and knight against king and two bishops.

29.Kd2 Bxa2 30.Ra1 Bd5 31.Ne3 Be4 32.Rxa7 Bh4 33.c4 Bg3 34.c5 h5 35.Kc3 h4 36.Kd4 Bh1 37.Nc4 Bg2 38.Nd6



38...Bxh3 39.Rxf7+ Kh6 40.Ne4 Be1? 40...Bxg4 41.Nxg3 hxg3.

41.b5 cxb5 42.c6 42.g5+ Kh5 43.c6.

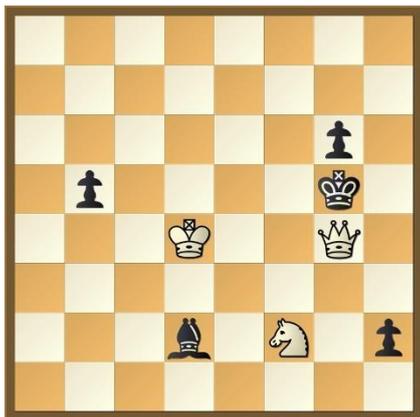
42...Bxg4 43.c7 Rh7+! is the strong threat.

43...h3?



Allowing a nice decoy tactic to stop the h-pawn from promoting, and the rest is straightforward.

44.Rh7+ Kxh7 45.Nf6+ Kh6 46.Nxg4+ Kg5 47.c8Q Bd2
48.Nf2 h2 49.Qg4+



1-0

World Youth Chess Championship - Mamaia, Romania 5-17 September 2022

Narrated by Aayan M Ismail



The World Youth Championships were held in Mamaia, a resort on the Romanian Black Sea.

When I realised that I would be going to Romania, I was really looking forward to playing in my biggest ever tournament.

There were more than 600 players from over 70 countries competing. From England there were only three players: a player in each of the U16 Open, U16 Girls and U14 Open sections.

The U16 Open section I was playing in had an immensely strong field, with the top seeds having ratings of above 2400.

The tournament was at the Exhibition Pavilion, right by the Black Sea. It was really hot and sunny there; the temperatures reached as high as 34 degrees. If you like going to the beach, then Mamaia is really nice.

The opening ceremony started with speeches and talks by arbiters and the organisers. They even handed out awards, and we all stood up when they played a few national anthems. Whilst the ceremony was under way, all players had sat down at their boards. I felt a bit impatient as it seemed to be going on for quite some time, but finally the announcement came for the games to commence.

This was a standard play event, and the schedule for the tournament was one round each afternoon over eleven days.

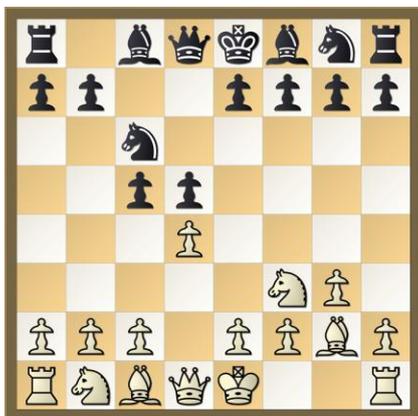
I will go straight into my analysis of my first round game against one of the top Romanian Juniors. I had the white pieces.

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3



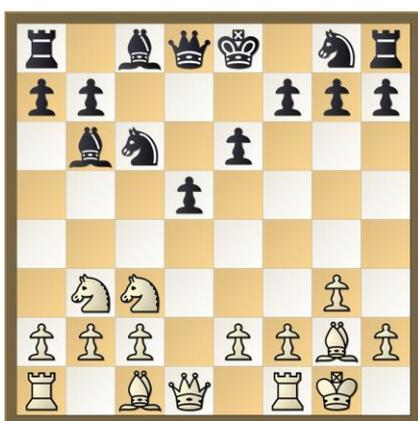
I played the King's Indian Attack, and my opponent reacted by directly taking space in the centre.

2... c5 3.Bg2 Nc6 4.d4



I didn't want to castle immediately and allow an e5 pawn push.

4... e6 5.0-0 cxd4 6.Nxd4 Bc5 7.Nb3 Bb6 8.Nc3



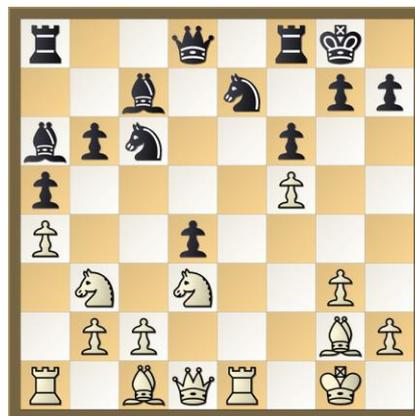
With the plan of playing e4 to try and open up the position quickly.

8... Nge7 9.e4 d4 10.Na4 Bc7 11.Nac5 0-0 12.f4 a5 13.a4



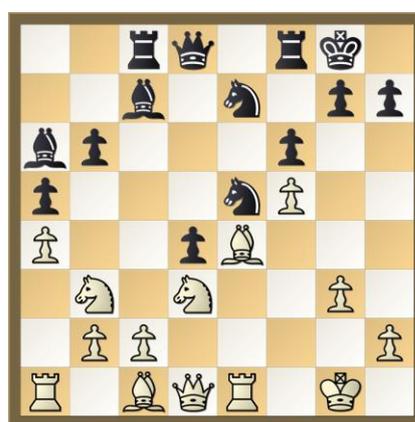
He wanted to play a4 himself to kick away my knight on b3, so I took away his chance to, without much thought.

13... b6 14.Nd3 Ba6 15.f5 exf5 16.exf5 f6 17.Re1



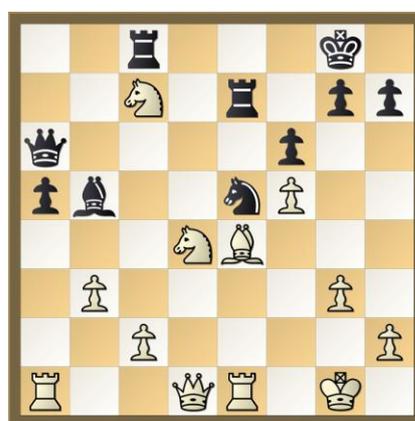
I'm surprised that the engine doesn't think White is much better here, especially with my control of the light squares and the awkward placement of the black knights.

17... Rc8 18.Be4 Ne5



This was a strangely unexpected slip up by my opponent, which allowed a double threat.

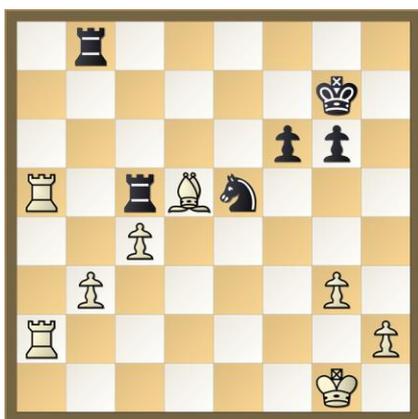
19.Nf4 Qd6 20.Nxd4 Rfd8 21.Nfe6 Rd7 22.b3 b5 23.axb5 Bxb5 24.Ba3 Qb6 25.Bc5 Qa6 26.Bxe7 Rxe7 27.Nxc7



I played this sequence of moves to force a queen trade because I was getting low on time, but it turns out this

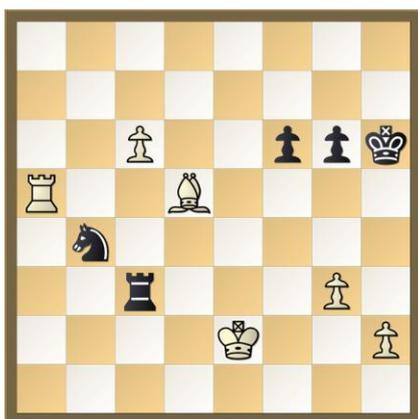
was inaccurate. It would have been better to keep the knight on e6 and play Bd5 instead.

27... Rxc7 28.Nxb5 Qxb5 29.Qd5+ Qxd5 30.Bxd5+ Kf8 31.c4 Rc5 32.Re2 Rb8 33.Ra3 g6 34.fxg6 hxg6 35.Rea2 Kg7 36.Rxa5



With the black rook blockading my c pawn, I couldn't find a plan to win without giving up my b3 pawn in return for his pawn on a5. I could have played Kf2, with the plan of getting the king to d4, but I don't remember why I rejected the idea. I think maybe I didn't want to allow Nd3+ followed by Nb4.

36... Rxa5 37.Rxa5 Rxb3 38.c5 Rc3 39.Kf1 Kh6 40.Ke2 Nd3 41.c6 Nb4



There was no way for me to keep my c-pawn, and after continuing for a bit the game ended in a draw.

It was a long and tiring tournament; the longest I had played was over five days, so this was by far the longest event I had played in. Most of my games went on for three and a half hours; some even lasted four hours!

Although I would have liked to score higher than 5/11 points, playing at the World Youth Championships was an amazing experience. I was lucky to get the

opportunity and would like to thank everyone who made it possible: my family and the English Chess Federation, including Alex Holowczak.

Report on European Club Cup for Women 2022

by IM Lawrence Cooper

Photos courtesy of Fiona Steil-Antoni, ECCC 2022



This year's event took place in Mayrhofen, Austria. The format was a seven-round team Swiss event for teams of four and squads of five. This was the third time that I had sent a team (2015 and 2016 Midland Monarchs teams) but the first time that the team had the experience and strength in depth to realistically challenge the top clubs in Europe.

The Wood Green team comprised four current players from the 4NCL squad (Irene Sukandar, Jovanka Houska, Harriet Hunt and Katarzyna Toma). The fifth, (Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant), had played for the team many years ago. She also played in the 2022 Wood Green International in July.

Arriving the day before the first round of such an event doesn't always give enough time to fully recover but given the cost of the hotels in official events it does, at least, mean a significant financial saving. Irene had by far the longest journey. She lives in Jakarta, so spent many hours on planes to arrive in Munich. Kata flew from Birmingham, Harriet and Ketevan from Gatwick (the latter via a short stay with her sister who lives in England) and

Jovanka from Bergen. In theory, everyone would be met at the airport and be at the hotel in time for dinner. Sadly, the buses hired by the tournament only left the airport when full, so two of our players had to wait four hours (their flight was also delayed by well over an hour) and arrived at midnight. This travel economy was repeated on the return journey where some players were deposited at the airport five or even seven hours before their flights to ensure as few vehicles as possible needed to be hired. Having a non-travelling captain may also have been a disadvantage, as it meant any problems at the hotel or venue had to be handled by the players.

Round 1:

Garoabaer Chess Club 0.5 Wood Green 3.5

1 WGM Lenka Ptacnikova 2055 v IM Irene Sukandar 2401
DRAW

2 Johanna Johannsdottir 1964 v IM Jovanka Houska 2354
0-1

3 Hallgerdur Thorsteinsdottir 1959 v IM Harriet Hunt 2359
0-1

4 Gudlaug Thorsteinsdottir 2014 v WGM Katarzyna Toma
2249 0-1



The first round did give us a fairly kind draw against the 15th seeded Icelandic team 'Garoabaer Chess Club'. The match result itself was never really in doubt; Jovanka and Kata both won with White, while Irene will feel she should have won a complicated game. Only Harriet required some resourcefulness to win her game. As one of the two midnight arrivals (Ketevan being the other), this was partly understandable.

ASVOe Pamhagen 3 Wood Green 1

1 GM Elina Danielian 2431 v IM Irene Sukandar 2401
DRAW

2 GM Anna Ushenina 2445 v IM Jovanka Houska 2354
DRAW

3 IM Yulia Osmak 2428 v GM Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant
2333 1-0

4 IM Aleksandra Maltevskaia 2389 v IM Harriet Hunt
2359 1-0

In round 2 we faced the allegedly local Austrian team ASVOe Pamhagen, which comprised an Armenian, two Ukrainians and a Polish player. They were the third seeds and ultimate winners. It was probably the one match we lost where I have to concede that the 3-1 score was a reflection of how the match went. Jovanka had slightly the better of her game against Anna Ushenina but a draw was a fair result, but Ketevan was caught in the opening/early middle game and was unable to defend a big attack. Harriet had a promising position, but a tactical sequence left her a pawn down and after a few adventures her opponent was able to win. Irene would have been very relieved to save a very difficult ending a pawn down. A strong performance by our opponents, who deservedly went on to win the event.

Wood Green v Philidor Mulhouse 3-1

1 IM Irene Sukandar 2401 v Altan-Ulzii Enkhtuul 2295 1-0

2 IM Jovanka Houska 2354 v WGM Hanna Marie Klek 2301
DRAW

3 GM Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant 2333 v Andreea
Navrotescu 2287 1-0

4 WGM Katarzyna Toma 2249 v Appoline Thomas 1942
DRAW



The team bounced back in round 3 with a 3-1 victory against the French club Philidor Mulhouse, the 12th seeds. Irene won an impressive game on top board, and

Ketevan crashed through on the kingside in her game. Jovanka had the better of an interesting game that ended in a draw, whilst Kata tried to grind out a win but also had to settle for a draw in the end.

Wood Green v Blue & Yellow 2.5-1.5

- 1 IM Irene Sukandar 2401 v Nataliya Buksa 2413 DRAW
- 2 IM Jovanka Houska 2354 v IM Inna Gaponenko 2348 DRAW
- 3 GM Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant 2333 v WGM Evgeniya Doluhanova 2264 DRAW
- 4 IM Harriet Hunt 2359 v Diana Tarleva 2175 1-0

We faced the all-Ukrainian eighth seeds in round 4. The top two boards were close on rating, but we had the edge on the bottom two. Irene's game was hard-fought, but a draw always seemed likely. Jovanka again had the better of her game with Black, but it suited the team when the game simplified into a drawn ending. Ketevan also stood much better, but as time trouble approached she settled for a repetition. Harriet's opponent seemed a little too eager to exchange pieces but went seriously wrong on move 15, allowing a huge initiative which led to a two-pawn advantage which was about to become three when the resignation came. I was pleased with the way the team kept control of the match and made sure of the win, even though there may have been a temptation to play on.

Cercle d'Echecs de Monte-Carlo 3 Wood Green 1

- 1 GM Anna Muzychuk 2534 v IM Irene Sukandar 2401 1-0
- 2 GM Antoaneta Stefanova 2440 v IM Jovanka Houska 2354 1-0
- 3 GM Pia Cramling 2459 v IM Harriet Hunt 2359 DRAW
- 4 IM Elisabeth Paehtz 2469 v WGM Katarzyna Toma 2249 DRAW

Round 5 saw us paired with the huge pre-tournament favourites representing Monte-Carlo. They had just suffered a loss and a drawn match, though, so we had the momentum with us from the previous rounds. It was the first of three successive matches where we were outrated on all four boards. This would not have been clear to anyone watching, though. Harriet's game against Pia Cramling was the first to finish. An early repetition where Harriet was very comfortable with Black suited the team at the time, as Jovanka had built up a promising position against Antoaneta Stefanova. Ety, as she is often known,

is incredibly resourceful and experienced in difficult positions, and the position had become about equal before a time trouble blunder by Jovanka effectively ended the game. Shortly after, Irene, facing Anna Muzychuk with Black, slipped from slightly worse into a lost position, possibly in an attempt to complicate. Kata had recovered well from being in trouble in the middle game and even had one moment where the computer gave her a big advantage. In the end, though, she reached a rook v knight ending that her opponent, Elisabeth Paehtz was easily able to hold. A frustrating 3-1 defeat and a feeling that we could have got a result against the top seeds.

Wood Green 2 BGK KS Gwiazda Bydgoszcz 2

- 1 IM Irene Sukandar 2401 v IM Alina Kashlinskaya 2482 1-0
- 2 IM Jovanka Houska 2354 v WIM Oliwia Kiolbasa 2404 0-1
- 3 GM Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant 2333 v IM Karina Cyfka 2347 DRAW
- 4 WGM Katarzyna Toma 2249 v WGM Joanna Majdan 2301 DRAW



Round 6 was probably the most dramatic match I've ever been involved in (albeit from thousands of miles away). We faced the fifth seeds BGK KS Gwiazda Bydgoszcz from Poland. Both teams knew that a match win was probably required to keep medal hopes alive. The first game to take a decisive swing was Jovanka's. The game featured opposite side castling, with her opponent having more space. Her opponent sacrificed a piece to try to break through, when a more measured approach might have been wise. The game swung on move 21, as Jovanka's opponent played a risky sequence which had a difficult-to-see tactical flaw. Jovanka went for the most tempting

option but a sting in the tail meant that her queen was trapped. Although material was roughly equal, her exposed king proved to be the decisive factor. Elsewhere we had big advantages on boards 3 and 4, albeit with roughly equal material. Kata had to settle for a draw, but Irene outplayed Alina Kashlinskaya (the board 1 gold medallist in the tournament) in an ending to level the match. Although Ketevan had a big space advantage, the lead-up to move 40 meant she couldn't fully calculate how to cash in the advantage. Although she won a pawn, Black became active and won it back. Ketevan then tried to win the game for a second time and did manage to get a clear advantage. Playing off just increment, though, made it difficult to keep full control and, aside from one moment where a tactic won, Black managed to exchange off enough pawns to force a draw after 85 dramatic moves. A 2-2 draw did seem very frustrating, but I was very proud of the fighting spirit shown by the team.

Wood Green 1 CSU ASE Superbet 3

1 IM Irene Sukandar 2401 v IM Irina Bulmaga 2401 DRAW

2 GM Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant 2333 v IM Dinara Saduakassova 2434 DRAW

3 IM Harriet Hunt 2359 v IM Ekaterina Atalik 2406 0-1

4 WGM Katarzyna Toma 2249 v Marsel Efroimski 2462 0-1



In the last round we faced the number two seeds (the heavily-sponsored CSU ASE Superbet, who also had one of the strongest open teams), requiring a win to catch them up and finish 3rd or 4th depending on how the tie-break worked out. Irene Sukandar ended with a draw against Irina Bulmaga (who had played for Wood Green in Division Three of the 4NCL alongside her sister Elena about six years ago!) and a very decent 4/7 on top board without a single rest day. Although she was White this

seemed to suit the team as we had won a pawn on board 2 and had promising positions on board 4 and especially board 3. The end of our tournament was slightly summed up by the outcome, though. Board 4 swung in favour of the opponent (who was 200 points higher than Kata). On board 2, Ketevan had to settle for a draw as her opponent seemed to get more compensation for her blundered pawn than expected. Harriet had played a great game against her higher-rated opponent; move 27 was probably the moment the advantage slipped away and then a blunder on move 32 effectively ended the team's hopes of saving the match.

We were seeded 7th out of 17 teams, so as a rough guide we would be expected to score around 8 match points out of 14. Although we ultimately finished on 7, we faced the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 8th, 12th and 15th seeds. Matches went according to seeding except for our draw with the 5th-placed team. From the positions we had against the 1st, 2nd and 5th seeds, though, it remains a mystery how we only managed one match draw from those three matches. The final standings also don't show that a last round match win would have left us 3rd= (but probably 4th on tie-break) rather than four points behind the third-placed team that beat us in the final round.

Our players deserved credit for getting such good positions against higher-rated opponents. As captain I was happy that we got to play the top three seeds (they were also the top three in the final standings), and that we put them under such pressure. I'm left to reflect on whether I could have done anything different in terms of when to rest players. Irene played all seven without a rest; Jovanka played the first six and I tried to rotate the other three so that everyone was involved, played some big matches, and never sat out more than one round in a row. My thanks to all the players; they got on very well as a team and were very close to a higher finish.

No report is complete without thanking all those who helped make the event possible. It is no exaggeration to say that without the support of the organisations listed below I wouldn't have been able to send a team. Along with other organisers I am incredibly grateful for any contribution that these and similar organisations are able to provide.

The English Chess Federation Women's Director, Aga Milewska, has done so much in her first year as director. Like me, she recognises the importance of giving opportunities and experience to not only our top players but also those looking to break through.

The Chess Trust was established in 2015 helped by a significant bequest from Richard Haddrell. It has the support of the English Chess Federation and aims to provide support to amateur chess in England both in terms of playing and teaching.

The Friends of Chess have less funding than those mentioned above but have consistently helped support my tournaments. They also offer support to individual players.

Some links that may be of interest ---

Final rankings

<http://chess-results.com/tnr667144.aspx?lan=1&art=63&turdet=YES&flag=30>

Wood Green players

<http://chess-results.com/tnr667144.aspx?lan=1&art=20&turdet=YES&flag=30&snr=7>

European Club Cup website - <https://eccc2022.at/>

The Chess Trust - <https://www.chesstrust.org.uk/>

Harry Grieve Interview

Questions by Mark Rivlin



This year you won the British Championship as 16th seed with 7.5/9 and 59 ELO points, a final IM norm and a first GM norm. You were also joint winner in the Roquetas Open, beating GM Karthik Venkataraman, and won the First ECF Online Blitz Grand Prix along with the Mindsports Masters. How do you explain this amazing year?

I'm not sure myself! From crossing 2300 and becoming an FM in August 2018 to still being rated 2330 at the start of this year, on the face of it I had hit a long plateau, despite having periods of working fairly hard on chess. Eventually that work paid off in January with a breakthrough performance at Roquetas. I made my first IM norm and was not far off a GM norm performance, and this gave me a big confidence boost. Combined with putting all my efforts into chess since graduating a few months ago, this has led to some more improved performances, most notably of course at the British Championship. I still have a few more events planned for this year and my main goal will be to raise my consistency, as there are still too many bad tournaments mixed in with the good at the moment.

The final round game with your Cambridge University colleague Matthew Wadsworth was a thriller in the English Riviera (Torquay). Leonard Barden described your win as one of the best ever championship deciders. How do you remember this game?

Of course, objectively speaking there are plenty of mistakes from both sides, but I hope we both managed to play with a lot of creativity and I've received many kind messages from people who enjoyed watching the game. It's amazing that one of the most interesting games I've ever played also came at this critical moment to decide the British Championships. I think the instincts built up from thousands of games before this took over throughout, and I didn't think too much about what was on the line until the final moments of the game.

You have completed a degree in Mathematics from St Catharine's College, University of Cambridge. You have said you are concentrating on chess over the next year. What are your longer-term plans regarding chess and career?

It largely depends on the progress I'm able to make within the next year or so, before I decide whether my pursuits beyond that will be within chess or elsewhere.

Which people have had an influence on your chess career?

Of course many people have helped me in various ways, but I'll just mention my parents for giving up their time and money driving me around to tournaments in my junior days, which is ultimately essential for any young player to make it within the chess world.

Outside chess and university, what are your other interests?

I play and watch just about any sport you can think of when I have time, probably to be able to further exercise my competitive streak.

Standardplay, rapidplay or blitz?

Standardplay of course, although I do always enjoy over the board blitz tournaments.

The late and great footballer Frank Worthington replied to the question: ‘Most difficult opponent?’ with the answer: ‘The wife.’ Who has been your most difficult opponent?

In the search for an equally witty answer, I’d have to say it’s myself, which is probably true for many of us! I can’t think of a specific person I have a particularly bad score against – I just go into every game believing that if I play my best chess, I can win.

At what stage in your chess career did you believe you could become a titled player?

I don’t know if I ever thought about it as such – when you are very young you don’t tend to look so far ahead. My rating crossed 2100 after the Under 14 World Youth Championships, so I guess it’s clear by that point that you can at least get to FM strength if you choose to keep playing chess actively.

Advice for club players in fewer than 20 words?

Whoever you are playing, just trust yourself and fully believe that you can win.

Not much is known about the annual chess Varsity Match other than occasional analysis from interesting games. Tell us what the occasion is like.

It’s definitely a unique event which I’m pleased to have been part of for the last three years, including once as captain. There’s generally a great atmosphere with lots of fighting chess on display – you would never really see an unnecessarily quick draw in a Varsity Match game. All the matches I’ve played in have been closely fought between the two teams.

Do you think club players are over-concerned with ratings?

Probably yes, and maybe I am too! Both in the sense of worrying too much about your own rating and also judging your likelihood of beating an opponent by their rating. Maybe if someone is 100 points above you they are a stronger player on average, but there are many

factors at play on any one day so this can easily be overcome in an individual game.

In football, a great coach does not necessarily need to have a great career as a player (think of Sir Alex Ferguson and Jose Mourinho). What are the qualities that make a good chess coach?

Most of all, an understanding of the typical problems and obstacles to improvement people at different levels face. Also, remember enough of your own journey and use that experience to help the students overcome obstacles.

Your current Standard play FIDE rating is 2410 and ECF 2497. What are your expectations for 2023?

I won’t set specific rating targets, but I’m very happy with the way the process of both studying and playing chess has been going recently. I have a lot of belief and ambition to move further towards the GM title.

FEATURES

Michael Adams' Game of the Month



A fascinating game from the last round of the British Championship. I was unaware of the enterprising opening idea deployed against the Benko here; definitely not a welcome assault to encounter in an early morning game.

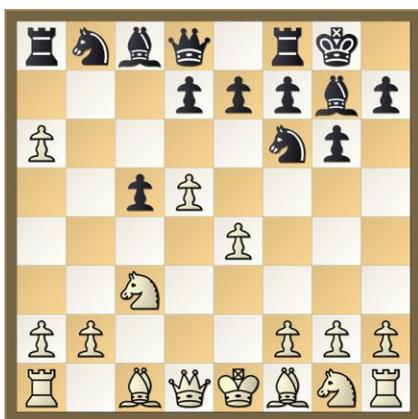
White gives up a central pawn to gain the time to start a snap

attack on the kingside. This creates a razor-sharp situation with a lot of open territory but little development. From a practical point of view White's play is a lot easier with a clear, direct plan, and navigating the difficult trade-offs proves too difficult for his opponent.

A.Balaji – N.Milchev

British Championship Torquay 2022

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 g6 6.Nc3 Bg7 7.e4 0-0 After 7...d6 8.Bb5+ is a little bit awkward as 8...Bd7 9.Bc4 Nxa6 10.Nf3 leaves Black's pieces misplaced. It is better to block with a knight; 8...Nbd7 9.Nf3 Bxa6 10.Bxa6 Rxa6, or 8...Nfd7 gives typical Benko positions.



8.e5! A very dangerous, relatively new, idea.

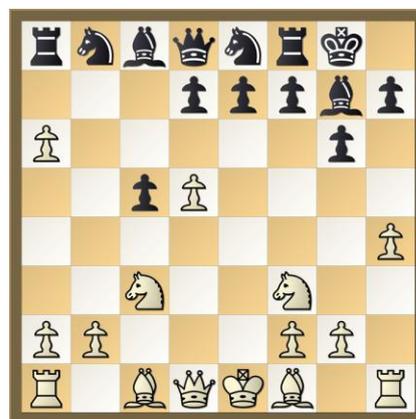
8...Ne8 9.h4! This finesse is the original concept. The more obvious follow up, 9.Nf3 d6 10.e6 fxe6 11.dxe6 Nc6, aiming to put the knight on d4, is less troublesome for Black. (11...Nxa6!?)

9...Bxe5 9...d6 10.e6! (10.exd6 Nxd6 suits Black, or 10.h5 Bxe5 11.Nf3 Bg4 speeds Black's development) 10...fxe6 11.h5! creates strong pressure on the vulnerable light squares.

10.Nf3

The knight emerges, gaining more momentum by targeting the bishop.

10...Bg7 This loses time, but 10...Bxc3+ 11.bxc3 Bxa6 12.Bh6 is also not ideal.



11.h5 Bxa6 Black has been planning this natural move for some time, but it is still not the right time; he should be more wary of the stormy weather building on the kingside. Mobilising his other pieces should take priority - 11...Nf6 12.hxg6 hxg6 13.Bh6 Bxh6 14.Rxh6 Kg7 is a much superior version of the game, as Black is now in time to contest the h-file; 15.Qd2 d6 (15...Rh8 16.Rxh8 Qxh8 17.d6 e6 18.Ne5) 16.0-0-0 Rh8. I also like the move 11...Qb6 - with a very open position, it makes sense to utilise the most powerful piece as soon as possible. By eyeing the pawn on b2, the queen move handily discourages Bh6 ideas.

12.hxg6



Arkell's Endings

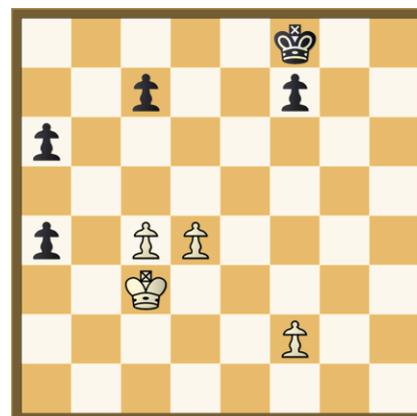
Pawn endings are to chess what putting is to golf

- Cecil Purdy



In order to assess king and pawn endgames correctly calculation is everything, and sometimes the best moves can be counter-intuitive! In each of the three examples try to assess the position first, and then see if your analysis bears out your judgement.

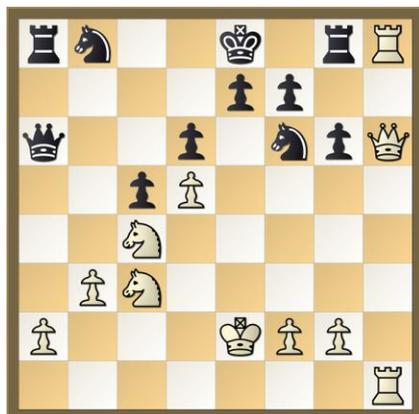
IM Goran Markotic - IM Keith Arkell
Cappelle, 1993



White to play. What is the best move, and what should the result be?

34.Kb4? This wins both my a-pawns but loses the game. The best move is 34 Kb2, after which I would have had to defend accurately to force a draw, e.g. 34...Ke7 35 Ka3 Kd6 36 Kxa4 Kc6 37 Ka5 Kb7 38 d5 Ka7 39 Kb4 Kb8 (not 39...Kb7? when 40 Kc5 utilises Zugzwang to penetrate decisively to c6) 40 c5 Ka7 41 Ka5 Kb7, and if 42 c6+ Ka7. So now it is Black to play and win.

34...c5+!

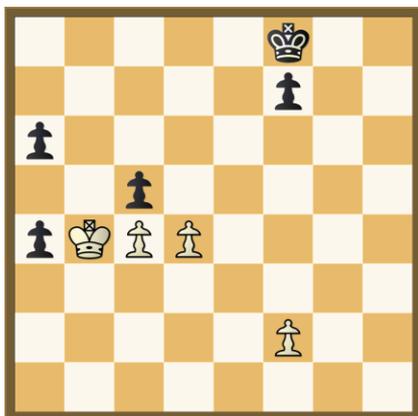


23...Qc8 23...Nbd7 24.Qg7 would be fine if Black could castle queenside, but unfortunately this is no longer allowed. After 23...Rxh8 24.Qxh8+ Kd7 25.Qf8 Nxd5 26.Nxd5 Qxa2+ 27.Kf3 Qxb3+ 28.Nce3 the chain of knights covers White's king, whilst the pawn on e7 is hanging.

24.Qg7 Qg4+ After 24...Kd7 25.Rxg8 Qxg8 26.Qxg8 Nxg8 27.Nb6+ is the fatal sting in the tail.

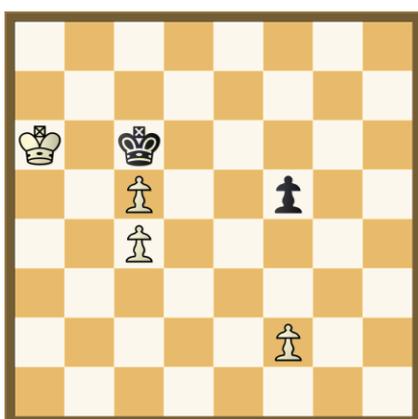
25.Ke1 Rxh8 26.Rxh8+ Kd7 27.Qf8 Kc7 28.Qd8+

Black resigned, 28...Kb7 29.Qb6 is mate.



35.dxc5 35 Kc3 cxd4+ 36 Kxd4 Ke7 and Black will win by virtue of the outside passed pawns.

35...Ke7 36.Kxa4 Kd7 37.Ka5 Kc6 38.Kxa6 f5

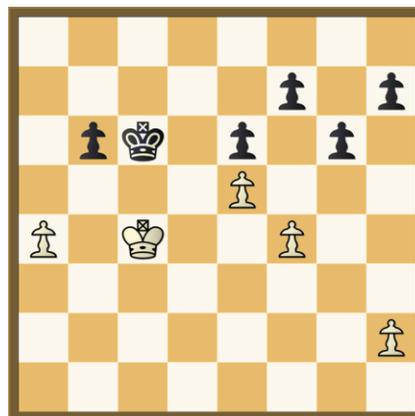


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Despite the material imbalance, my solitary pawn will now win the game.

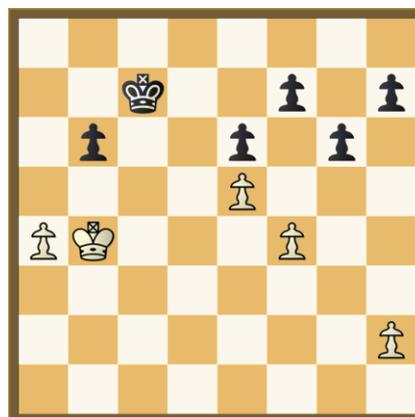
Vladimir Georgiev - Keith Arkell
Cappelle, 1992

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.dxc5 Nc6 5.Bb5 e6 6.b4 Qh4 7.c3 Qe4+ 8.Ne2 Qxg2 9.Ng3 Qh3 10.Bg5 Nh6 11.f3 Be7 12.Bf1 Qxf1+ 13.Rxf1 Bxg5 14.f4 Bh4 15.Nd2 Nf5 16.Qf3 Bd7 17.0-0-0 Nce7 18.Nb3 g6 19.Nxf5 Nxf5 20.Na5 b6 21.c6 bxa5 22.cxd7+ Kxd7 23.bxa5 Rhc8 24.Kd2 Bd8 25.Qd3 Rc4 26.Rb1 Bxa5 27.Rb5 Bxc3+ 28.Qxc3 Rxc3 29.Kxc3 Rc8+ 30.Kd3 Rc7 31.Rfb1 Ne7 32.Rb8 Nc8 33.a4 Nb6 34.Rb4 Rc4 35.Rb7+ Kc6 36.R7xb6+ axb6 37.Rxc4+ dxc4+ 38.Kxc4



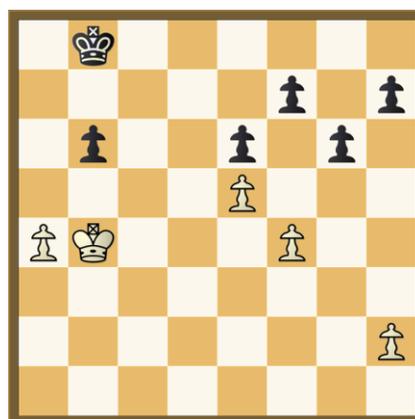
In this one I clawed my way back from Q v B+N down, but am I now winning? It looks as if my opponent can play h4 at some moment to prevent my making any breaks on the kingside. However, I can again use Zugzwang in order to penetrate to the fourth rank with my king via the a file.

38...Kc7 39.Kb4

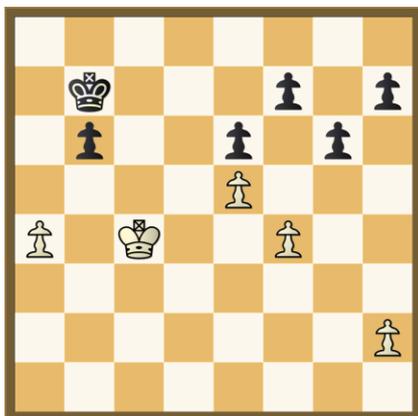


39 h4 Kb7 40 Kb5 h6 41 Kc4 Ka6 42 Kb4 h5 and White must give way with his king.

39...Kb8

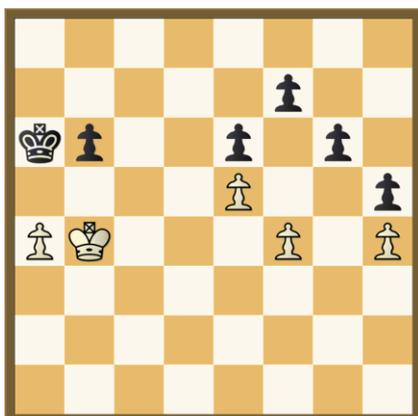


40.Kc4 Ka7 41.Kb5 Kb7 42.Kc4

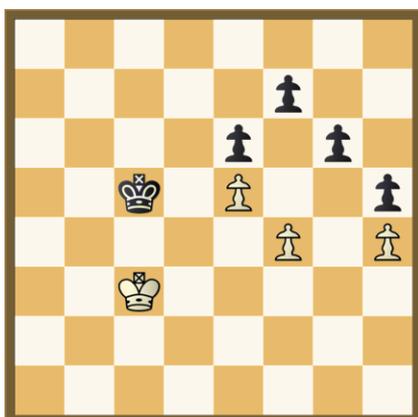


42 h4 (or 42 h3 h6, when I still have spare moves with my h-pawn) 42...h6 43 Kc4 Ka6 44 Kb4 h5 45 Kb3 Ka5 leads to the same winning plan as the game.

42...Ka6 43.Kb4 h6 44.h4 h5



45.Kb3 Ka5 46.Ka3 b5 47.axb5 Kxb5 48.Kb3 Kc5 49.Kc3



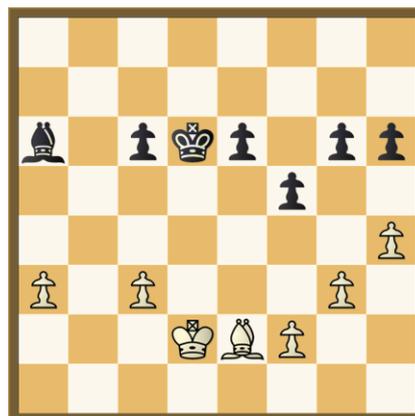
This is where I get to use my extra pawn by breaking up the kingside with my favourite chess move!

49...g5!

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Oystein Dannevig - Keith Arkell
12th Monarch Assurance IOM 2003

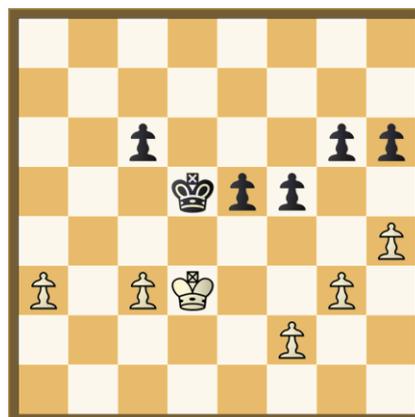
42.Be2



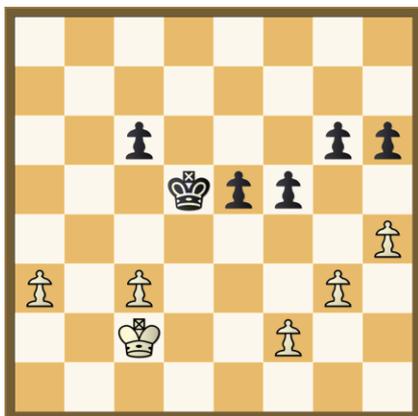
In the third example I have to decide whether to exchange bishops and go into a K+P ending in which my opponent has an outside passed pawn. So should I play 42...Bxe2 or retreat my bishop?

42...Bxe2 I concluded that only Black had winning chances in the K+P ending, and my reasoning was as follows: Normally an outside passed pawn would act as a decoy while White gobbled up the kingside pawns, but in this case I can clog up the centre sufficiently to deny my opponent access to that part of the board.

43.Kxe2 e5 44.Kd3 Kd5

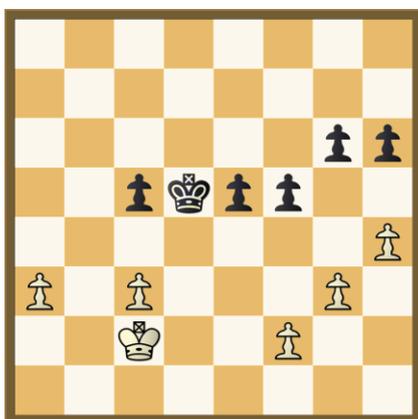


45.Kc2



It may even be that White has no defence to my plan of hunting down the a-pawn while his king is wondering which way to go. The problem is that the king also has to keep an eye on a potential black central breakthrough. Here is a typical line: 45 a4 Kc5 46 f3 h5 47 Kc2 Kb6 48 Kb3 e4 49 fxe4 fxe4 50 Kc2 Ka5 51 Kb3 c5 52 Kc4 Kxa4 and White is stuck.

45...c5?

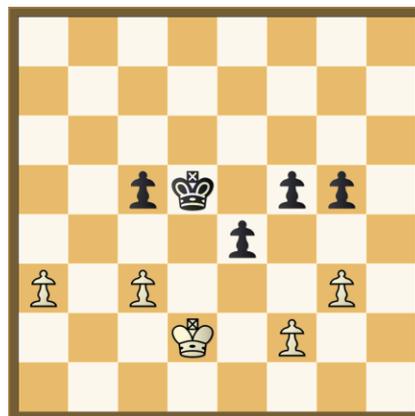


Allowing my opponent the opportunity to force a draw. Instead he would have been powerless to save his queenside after 45...g5! 46 hxg5 hxg5 47 Kd3 g4!

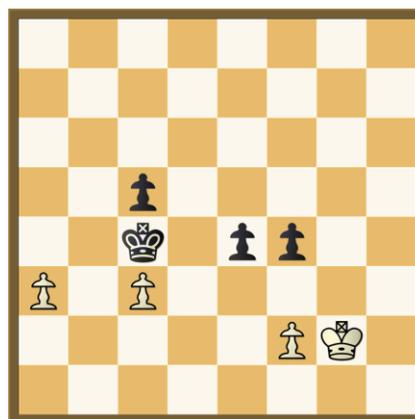
46.Kb3? After 46 Kd3 c4+ 47 Ke3 Kc5 48 f4 Black has no way of winning.

46...e4 Now I can shut his king out while targeting the a- and c-pawns.

47.Kc2 g5 48.hxg5 hxg5 49.Kd2

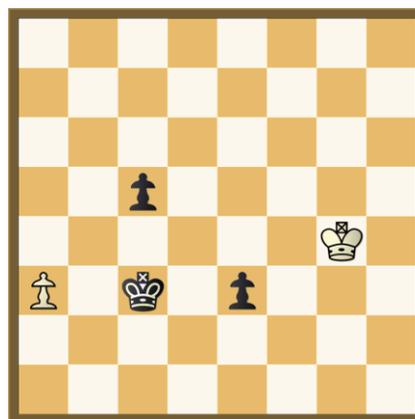


49...f4 50.gxf4 gxf4 51.Ke2 Kc6 52.Kf1 Kb5 53.Kg2 Kc4



54.Kh3 Or 54 a4 Kd3 55 a5 e3 56 fxe3 fxe3 57 a6 e2 58 e7 e1=Q 59 a8=Q Qe4+ and we're back to a won K+P ending.

54...Kxc3 55.Kg4 e3 56.fxe3 fxe3



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Books of the Month by Ben Graff



The best new writing and the greatest classics under one roof ... in association with Forward Chess

Can you remember the first chess book that you ever owned?

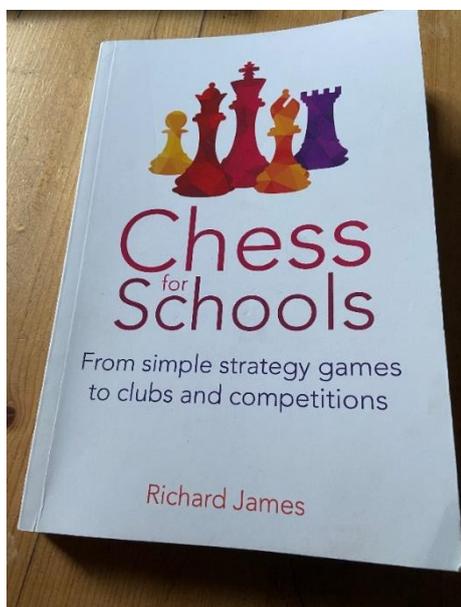
Given you are reading this column, presumably it piqued your interest and helped you on your journey into the chess world. Starting out on a strong footing can make such a difference. This month we look at three very different offerings, all of which focus on introducing players to the game and chess improvement.

Chess for Schools, by Richard James, provides a fascinating perspective on how we teach chess to children, and what we might do differently. *Across the Battlefield – A Pawn's Journey*, by Jonathan Ferry, is a wonderful children's book, setting out the adventures of Prunella the pawn. Our classic is one of the all-time greats, *Chess for Tigers*, by Simon Webb.

Chess for Schools

by Richard James
(Crown House Publishing Ltd)

'Chess transformed my life – and it can transform other lives as well.'



How do we best introduce our children to chess? If anyone knows, it should be Richard James. For thirty years he ran Richmond Junior Chess Club, which counts Grandmasters Luke McShane and Jonathan Rowson amongst its illustrious ranks. Richard has written several renowned children's chess books, as well as the brilliant *The Complete Chess Addict*, and brings a lifetime of experience to the subject. His views are highly original and intensely thought-provoking.

Chess for Schools is divided into three parts. Richard opens with thoughts on chess history and 'the history of children in chess'. He then shares his own journey into the world of education. The 'heart of the book' consists of 'different ways in which primary schools can use the elements which constitute the game of chess.' As Richard highlights, a chess set is '... a magic toolbox containing hundreds of games, thousands of puzzles and an infinity of stories... any one of which might transform a child's life.'

Richard's own story is moving and speaks to the power of the game to give people a sense of purpose and belonging. As a child he struggled socially, had a speech disorder and severely lacked co-ordination. He writes that, if he had been a youngster today, he would have been diagnosed with autism and dyspraxia, '... but in the 1950s these things were not yet understood.' His father had a short temper, which certainly did not help matters, but chess would be Richard's salvation.

Gifted a pocket chess set for Christmas, he was advised by his parents to take it to school as a communication tool. 'If I stood there holding it, another boy would challenge me to a game...They were right as well...' The chess community opened up for Richard, and within a few years he joined Richmond & Twickenham Chess Club, where he is still a member. He reflects that 'I never felt I belonged in the real world, but in the world of chess I was able to make friends with whom I had much in common.'

Richard originally became a chess teacher somewhat reluctantly, but found that he enjoyed it. After so many years working with children, he has concluded that 'The wrong teachers (including me) are teaching chess to the wrong children, in the wrong way, in the wrong place, at the wrong age, for the wrong reasons.' Richard makes important points about both *why* and *how* we should teach children chess.

Perhaps many of us are fixated by the notion of unearthing within the UK the next Bobby Fischer or Garry Kasparov, yet whatever we are doing is not really working. Richard James highlights that over the last twenty years

'England found itself once again to be a second-rate chess country,' without a genuine future world championship prospect in sight. Moreover, many parents believe chess makes children smarter, but again there is little concrete evidence to support this.

So why should we introduce children to chess, if it won't necessarily make them cleverer, or future champions? Richard sees a more social form of chess as a wonderful way of enhancing a child's creativity, imagination, and communication skills. It can help those who dislike physical activities to compete in a more suitable environment, and can be particularly beneficial for those 'with a wide range of special needs'.

As Richard found himself as a junior, 'Chess is a communication tool which will enable children to develop new friendships and cement established ones.' Moreover, 'Low-stakes competition is important in helping children develop resilience and a positive mindset.' A potential by-product of all the above is that 'Some talented children will discover a gift for chess... and take part in competitions outside school.' It is just not the be all and end all.

Richard points out that it is distressing to see 'children in tears,' because they feel under too much pressure in competitive events, and this will resonate with most of us on the circuit, who have at times wondered whether the experience of a child who has lost a game heavily might be damaging to them.

This all leads to Richard's second question, as to how best to introduce children to chess. Richard believes that we are urging children to play the game in its entirety at too young an age. As a result, this causes confusion and means that many do not get the benefits from the 'chess toolbox' that they might otherwise have gained. He highlights the 'Steps Method' which teaches chess 'one piece at a time, one concept at a time reinforced by puzzle sheets and other activities.' This approach is used in Holland and the former Soviet Union.

Richard advocates three more accessible forms of the game: protochess, pre-chess and small-chess games. Protochess games do not utilise kings or pawns but have different aims such as capturing all the pieces. Pre-chess games do not utilise kings and again have different aims. Small chess games have the same aim as normal chess but, as the name suggests, players start with fewer pieces. They are all much easier to grasp and to have quick fun with than standard chess.

Richard sets out a host of such games within the book which will prove invaluable to any educator, but also to any chess player who is looking for a way to amuse themselves. From 'The Eight Officers Puzzle,' through to 'The Knight Tour', a multitude of 'Capture the Flag Games,' 'King and Pawn Games' and various others, there is much to enjoy here. I have no doubt that anyone who introduced a child to chess through these exercises would give them both a strong foundation and a lot of pleasure.

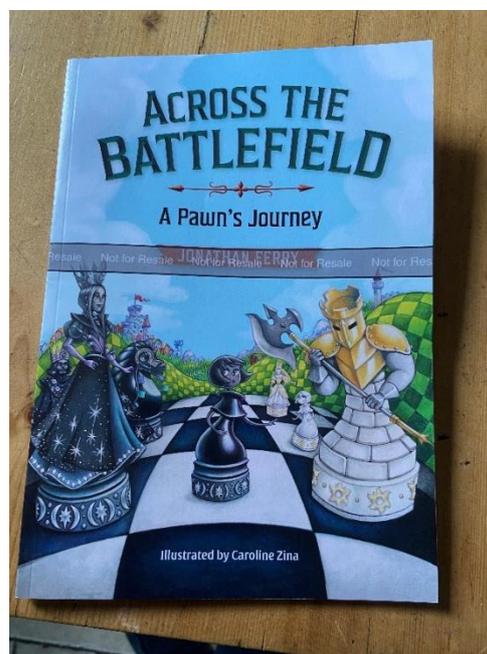
Not everyone will agree with Richard's methods. However, few could argue with his stated aim '...to promote social chess, to improve the quality of children's lives by making them happier and – at least mentally – healthier, and by teaching them how to make better decisions in their lives.' This is a book not only for educators, but really for anyone who wants to reflect on the all-round benefits chess can offer to children.

Richard has written that, as a teacher, he often asked himself the question as to whether his teaching would help the boy he once was. He has clearly alighted on an approach that will aid many, and that can only be a good thing.

Across the Battlefield – A Pawn's Journey

by Jonathan Ferry
(Chess Tales, LLC)

'For the first time, the little pawn believed what her good friend Norry had told her before the game had started. It wasn't her individual status that mattered. It was the contribution of the whole team working together that was important.'



In this enchanting children's story, we follow the adventures of Prunella the pawn, as she attempts to fulfil her dream of becoming a queen. 'A game can be won or lost because of a pawn,' and Prunella will ultimately be integral to the victory of the black pieces, even if it isn't quite in the way she originally envisaged.

Beautifully written throughout, the two chess armies are described thus at the outset: '...one dressed in light-coloured clothes decorated with images of the sun, the other dressed in dark attire accented with silver moons and stars.' This is truly a work that will capture the imagination of players young and old alike.

Jonathan Ferry charts the course of a chess game from the perspective of the pieces, bringing to life a host of characters including Norry the knight, King Orpheus, Queen Nyella and of course our hero Prunella. At the game's outset, Prunella is discouraged by her lack of power and mobility. 'Being short is the worst! I might as well just plop down and wait for the action to come closer, because I can't see a thing, the tiny pawn griped.' Yet as the game proceeds, Prunella becomes more and more integral to the action.

Across the Battlefield also sets out tips which will be useful to those starting out. These cover a range of topics including castling, controlling the centre, 'making all of your pieces happy,' pawn chains and square control. These aren't fully comprehensive, textbook style, nor are they intended to be – but they are enough to get a new player thinking, which is clearly the aim of the book.

The actual game itself is quite a technical one. Not all the moves are shown in the interests of space. It might have been an option to consider publishing the full game score as an appendix, but this would have changed the character of the work somewhat and I can see why it has not been included.

Ultimately it is about understanding what *Across the Battlefield* is and is not. This is not a comprehensive beginner's guide to chess. It is something subtler and rarer, and all the better for that. It is really a way to inspire junior players to use their imagination when they look at the sixty-four squares and thirty-two pieces - to see beyond the shaped plastic counters to the stories they can create, to experience chess as a world within a world, rather than just a game. In other words, this is a book that is likely to unlock what chess means to most of us, and as such is a great buy for a young player.

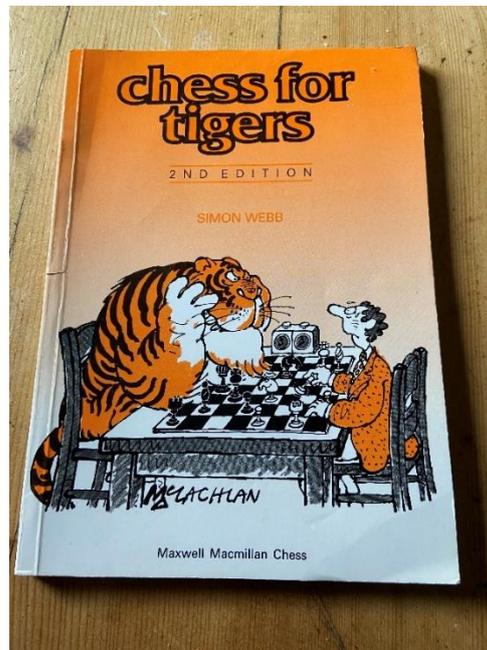
Jonathan Ferry has a real talent as a teacher and as a writer. I very much look forward to seeing what he

chooses to write next. I would recommend gifting *Across the Battlefield* in combination with a standard introductory chess book. The two together would give a new young player a lot of enjoyment and - with a bit of luck – a lifelong love of chess.

Chess for Tigers

by Simon Webb
(Batsford Chess)

'The tiger is a vicious beast. He doesn't care about the aesthetic side of chess. He doesn't even care about making the 'best' moves. All he cares about is winning.'



Chess for Tigers must rank as the warmest and sweetest chess improvement book ever written. Simon Webb starts out with the seductive premise that 'You could be a much better chess player than you are... simply by making fuller use of your natural ability.' What follows is a string of practical tips, with interesting games to support the key points and a joy for chess that radiates from every page.

The book is beautifully illustrated throughout by the legendary Edward McLachlan, who surely deserves to be recognised as the Quentin Blake of chess illustration. My own favourite drawing is that of the tiger throwing a horseshoe at his opponent in the chapter 'Fortune favours the lucky,' but you would need a heart of stone not to find all the pictures delightful.

An online reviewer described *Chess for Tigers* as the book he had been missing when he was a child. In my view, any player irrespective of age will be in for a treat. This is not a technical chess book. Rather, it focusses on chess psychology, with chapters that include 'Play the man –

not the board,' 'Looking in the mirror,' and 'How to improve your opening repertoire.' As well as giving the club player a host of new mental tools for their arsenal, it also brims with positivity and good fun.

The Tiger inhabits a world of opportunity. On the one hand, there are weaker players, the Rabbits. 'Do [Tigers] rush after them and tear them limb from limb? Or do they stalk them through the bush before finally creeping up on them when their resistance is low? The trouble with the first method is that even Rabbits have sharp teeth, and when cornered can be surprisingly ferocious.' On the other, there are the stronger players (Heffalumps). The Tiger '...can put up a fight neither on open plains nor in the jungle; so his only chance is to head for a swamp and hope that the Heffalump gets stuck before he does.'

In respective chapters on Rabbits and Heffalumps, Simon Webb outlines a useful approach against both. Essentially, playing with patience and looking to keep things simple against Rabbits. 'But against an opponent who is considerably weaker than you, it is not so important to search for specific weaknesses in his style – just regard his whole play as one big weakness.' Ultimately the main difference in playing strength turns on levels of positional understanding, and the key is for the better player to wait for this to show itself.

As the author notes, there is sadly no foolproof way for any of us to beat stronger players, but there are ways to maximise your chances. 'The basic principle is to head for a complicated or unclear position such that *neither of you* has much idea what to do, and hope that he makes a serious mistake before you do.' Webb outlines thoughts on choice of openings, playing actively, avoiding exchanges and being brave. As he notes, 'At any rate, if you lose you will go down fighting instead of being ground into the dust or crushed like a bug!'

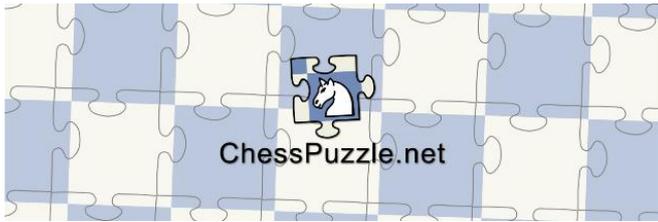
In 'Play the man – not the board' Webb highlights that when we compete in our chess club, we are often aware of how our opponents play. 'You may know that Smith will attack like crazy and go to any lengths to avoid an exchange of queens, that Jones is lacking in confidence and inclined to agree a draw in good positions, and that Bloggs relies mainly on setting cheap traps.' However, '...even against a complete mystery man you should be able to make a few deductions. Does he look a bit past his prime? Is he carrying a briefcase bulging with openings books? Does he look confident or nervous?' Ultimately, Webb encourages chess players to notice all the things we are notoriously not so good at observing. He clearly demonstrates the advantages to be gleaned from shifting

your gaze away from your pieces and considering the living, breathing opponent on the other side of the board.

There are further interesting chapters including those on winning won positions, managing the clock, what to do in drawn positions, and team play. Webb shares his excellent win against the legendary Reshevsky. He highlights that, when losing, looking despondent can cause an opponent to switch off, which proved an invaluable tactic on this occasion. When Reshevsky fell into his trap, Webb played his next move '...instantaneously for maximum shock value. Reshevsky sat bolt upright in his chair, and remained perfectly still for about a minute as he concentrated really hard for the first time in the game. I now felt extremely confident – there was no need to act this part!'

Chess for Tigers is a delight. If you are yet to read it, I envy you. If it has been a while since you looked at your copy, dust it off and settle down for several hours of fun. It may or may not make you more likely to hunt down Rabbits, or to lure Heffalumps into a swamp. But it will lead you to celebrate anew all that chess has to offer, and feel grateful that this is a world in which you belong.

It's a Puzzlement!



Welcome to our almost new puzzles section! Last month's puzzles once again proved very popular, so we are back with more - all hand-picked by ChessPuzzle.net

We provide a link to the relevant ChessPuzzle.net page and a QR code so you can try the puzzles interactively, and get hints (or even the solution if needed)!

The puzzles are arranged in order of difficulty (easiest first). We would be interested in your views about the level of difficulty and whether we graded them about right. When you click on the links below you need to play a move to see the hint and/or solution.

Puzzle 1 - Nathan Ekanem (1991) - Anthony Y Zhang (2206)

Northumbria Masters 2022



White to checkmate

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 2 - FM Farid Orujov (2352) – Kenneth Hobson (1872)

World Youth Open U14 2022

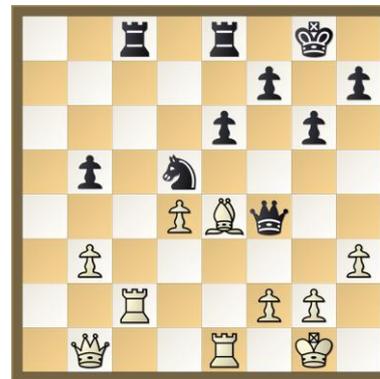


Black to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 3 - Liliya Belaya (1266) – Shambavi Hariharan (1465)

Girls U12 World Youth Championships

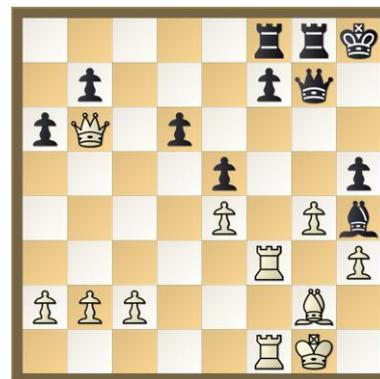


Black to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 4 - Zoe Veselow (1532) – Sujia Diao (1630)

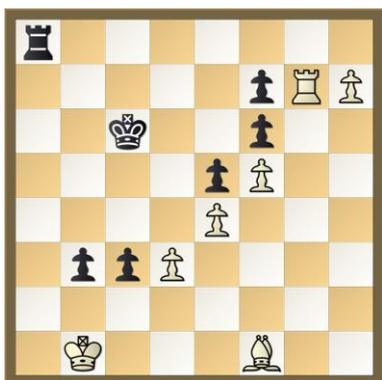
Girls U8 World Youth Championship



White to win

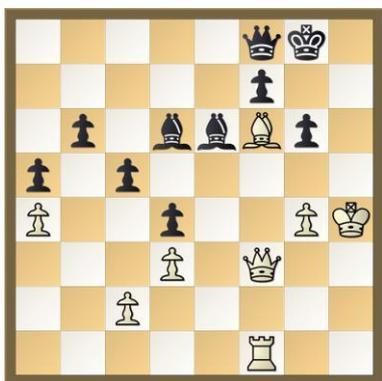
[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 5 - CM Thomas Villiers (2170) – Stefanus Phan (1824)
Northumbria Masters 2022



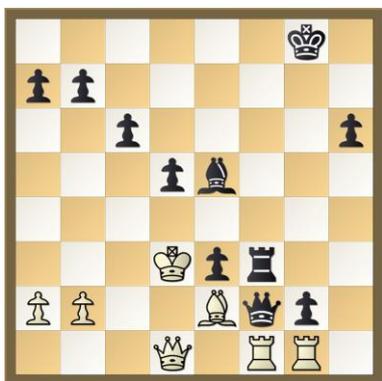
White to win
[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 6 - Cameron Davis (1783) – Rohan Pal (1935)
Northumbria Masters 2022



White to win
[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 7 - Lev Shargin (1402) – Kushal Jakhria (1823)
U8 World Youth Championship



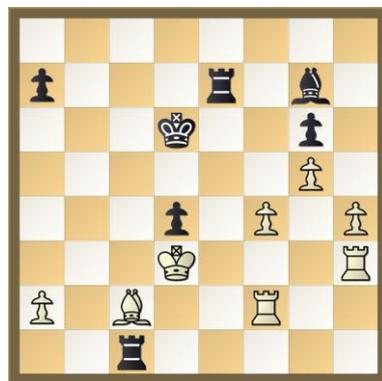
Black to win
[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 8 - IM Sven Tica (2436) – GM David Howell (2650)
Titled Tuesday 23 Aug Late



Black to win
[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 9 - Muhammed Oguz Isik (1597) – Sanjith Madhavan (1846)
Northumbria Masters 2022



Black to win
[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 10 - WGM Katarzyna Toma (2303) – IM Sam Schmakel (2418)
Titled Tuesday 23 Aug Late



White to win
[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 11 - IM Jonah B Willow (2393) – FM Rajat Makkar (2300)
Northumbria GM 2022

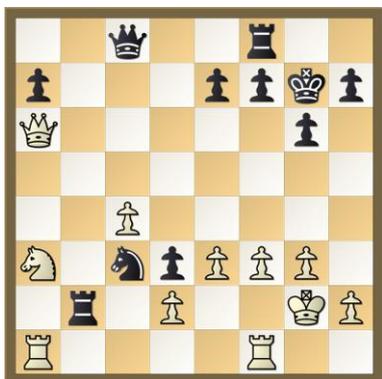


White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 12 - GM Gawain Jones (2632) – GM A.R. Saleh Salem (2679)

Titled Tuesday 23 Aug Late



White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

All in One

For all the puzzles on one page just visit [ChessMoves October Puzzles](#) by clicking the link or via the QR Code below



Great British Chess Players

by Dr John Nunn

Henry Edward Bird (1829 - 1908)



Henry Bird, from Portsea, Hampshire, was a strong but erratic player who could pose a danger to anybody in the world. He scored wins against Staunton, Blackburne and Lasker over a chess career spanning more than half a century, but lack of consistency prevented him reaching the top levels

of world chess. He was an accountant by profession, but despite being an amateur player he found time to take part in 13 strong tournaments. By all accounts he was a chess fanatic, first attending Simpson's Divan in 1846 and indulging in games against all-comers for several decades. It is claimed that the Brilliancy Prize he won at New York 1876 for his game against the winner Mason was the first such prize awarded in the history of the game. The combination for which the prize was awarded was in fact totally unsound, so this started a long tradition in the awarding of such prizes.



Bird wrote about railway finance, but also produced a few chess books which history has not viewed kindly. However, I couldn't help but be amused by the chess etiquette advice: 'It is bad form for spectators to remove the pieces from the board without the consent of the players, even if it be done for the purpose of demonstrating more forcibly what move should be made.' (from *Chess History and Reminiscences*, 1893).

He is remembered today mainly for his contributions to the openings, with 1.f4 (Bird's Opening) and 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nd4 (Bird's Defence to the Ruy Lopez) being named after him. However, to the 21st century eye his adoption of the Accelerated Dragon, which he handled in a quite modern form, looks most ahead of its time. His style was not especially sound, and the number of games he won from bad positions is quite remarkable. He had a good eye for tactics, and everyone knows how hard it can be to beat someone who keeps setting traps even when things are going against him. Here is an interesting attacking game from early in his career.

Henry Bird - Bernhard Horwitz

London 1851 (Game 2, Round 1)

Ruy Lopez, Berlin Defence

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d4

Bird often played this against what is now known as the Berlin Defence. While perhaps not standing up to detailed scrutiny, it provided Bird with a few quick victories against strong players, including a 22-move win over Steinitz.

4...Nxd4

A sound reply, as is 4...exd4 5.e5 Ne4 6.0-0 a6.

5.Nxd4 exd4

5...c6! is probably the most accurate, when the position looks dead equal, but none of Bird's opponents found this move.

6.e5 Nd5

6...c6 is no longer so effective, since both 7.Qxd4 and 7.0-0 give White chances for an edge.

7.0-0

The strongest move, and better than 7.Qxd4, which was played in most modern games with this line.

7...Bc5 8.c3?!

A typical Bird move, planning to offer a pawn for a lead in development. A more restrained player would have

preferred 8.Qg4, which is rather awkward since 8...0-0 loses the exchange to 9.Bh6.

8...a6?!

Black should have played 8...c6, since 9.cxd4 Bb6 10.Qg4 Ne7! leads to equality.

9.Bc4

9.cxd4 is also good.

9...Nb6 10.Bb3 dxc3 11.Nxc3

White has a lead in development for the pawn and has diverted Black's minor pieces away from the kingside.

11...0-0 12.Ne4 Qe7

Now Black's position is critical. 12...Be7 was better, although 13.Bf4 gives White good play for the pawn.



13.Qh5?!

The simple 13.Nxc5 Qxc5 14.Be3 Qxe5 15.Rc1 followed by Re1 and Bd4 would have given White a huge initiative in return for the two sacrificed pawns.

13...d6?!

Too slow. 13...d5! was better, with just a slight advantage for White after 14.exd6 Bxd6 15.Re1 Qe5 16.Bg5 Qf5.

14.Bg5?

It wasn't necessary to give the e-pawn. Instead, 14.Re1! was very strong, since 14...Qxe5 15.Qxe5 dxe5 16.Nxc5 and 14...dxe5 15.Bg5 both lead to the loss of a piece.

14...Qxe5 15.Rae1 Nd5?

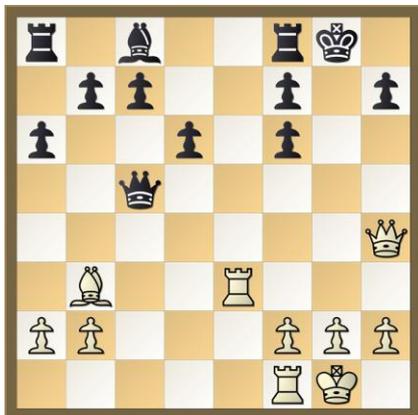
An ingenious defence, but not the best. Rather surprisingly, 15...Qf5! 16.Bc2 Kh8 leaves White with no obvious attacking continuation.

16.Nxc5 Nf6

This was the point of Black's previous move; if now 17.Rxe5 Nxh5 18.Re7 dxc5 19.Rxc7 Be6, when Black largely escapes from his difficulties.

17.Qh4 Qxc5 18.Bxf6 gxf6 19.Re3?!

Typically for Bird, a rather unnecessary flourish. Simply 19.Qxf6 Bf5 20.Re7 Bg6 21.Rfe1 reduces the material deficit to one pawn; moreover, Black can hardly free himself in view of White's total control of the e-file.



19...Bf5 20.Qxf6 Bg6 21.Rg3?!

After this the attack loses some momentum. 21.h4 Qf5 22.Qc3 followed by Rg3 was more dangerous.

21...Qe5 22.Qh4 Qxb2

Black sees no reason not to grab another pawn.

23.f4 Qd4+

Slowing White's attack by pinning the f-pawn.

24.Kh1 Rae8?

24...Kh8 25.Qg5 f5 was a sounder method of preventing the further advance of the f-pawn. Although Black's position looks passive and his bishop inactive, White's attack is slowed and Black has the consolation of two extra pawns.

25.Qg5 Qf2

This looks good but turns out to be only a mild inconvenience.

26.Rf3 Qd2

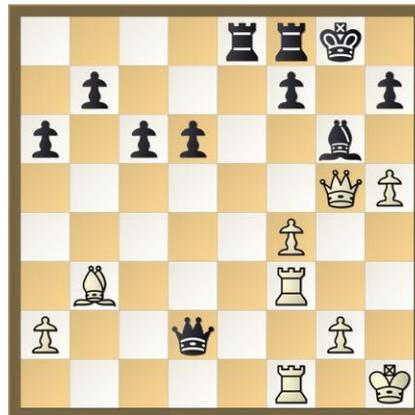
Again pinning the f-pawn, but now the h-pawn joins the attack.

27.h4 c6

A clever idea, setting a trap for White. Not 27...Re1? 28.Rxe1 Qxe1+ 29.Kh2 and Black is in serious trouble.

28.h5?

Bird falls into the trap. 28.Kh2! leaves Black almost paralysed since after 28...d5 the e5 square is not defended by the pawn and so White really can play 29.h5.



28...Re5!

The queen is no longer defended by the h-pawn, so this tactic becomes effective.

29.Bxf7+

The only way to play on, but now Black is at least equal.

29...Rxf7 30.Qd8+ Rf8 31.Qxf8+ Kxf8 32.fxe5+

This forced sequence leaves White with two rooks against a queen and two pawns, although White may be able to win one back. Normally this material balance would favour Black, if only slightly, but he must still be careful with his king.

32...Kg7?!

An inaccuracy, since the king is safer if it heads for the queenside by 32...Ke7. Then 33.hxg6 hxg6 34.Rf7+ Ke6 35.exd6 Kxd6 36.Rxb7 a5 may give Black a slight edge. Horwitz's desire to keep both his extra pawns soon proves costly.

33.hxg6 dxe5?

Instead, 33...hxg6 34.e6 Qe2 35.Rf7+ Kh6 36.e7 d5 is correct. It looks risky to let the pawn advance to e7, but White's king is too exposed to checks for him to win.

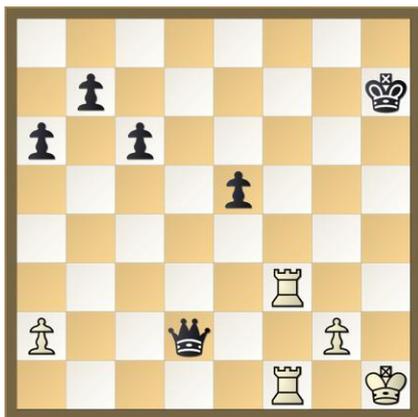
34.gxh7

Black's king is totally without pawn cover and in this situation the two rooks make a dangerous attacking force.

34...Kxh7

There's nothing better, since 34...Kh8 (34...Qd6 35.Rg3+ Kh8 36.Rf5 transposes) 35.Rh3 Qd6 36.Rf5 e4 37.Rg5

Qd1+ 38.Kh2 Qd6+ 39.Rhg3 Qh6+ 40.Kg1 e3 41.Re5! wins for White. Once the rooks are doubled on the g-file, Black will almost always lose his queen.



35.Kh2?

This cautious move should have let Black off the hook. 35.Rh3+ Kg6 36.Rg3+ Kh6 37.Rf6+ wins much as in the game.

35...e4?

Black fails to take advantage of his reprieve. 35...Qd6 36.Rh3+ Kg6 37.Rg3+ Kh6! saves the game since Rf8 is no longer possible.

36.Rh3+

White hits on the correct plan of transferring his rook to g3 with gain of time.

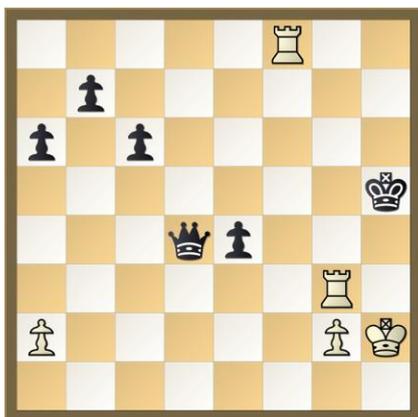
36...Kg6 37.Rg3+ Kh7 38.Rf7+ Kh6

38...Kh8 39.Rf5 Qd1 40.Rfg5 also wins.

39.Rf6+ Kh5

39...Kh7 40.Rfg6 e3 41.R6g4 is hopeless for Black.

40.Rf8 Qd4



41.Rh8+!

A motif which is common in endgame studies but is not often seen over the board.

41...Qxh8 42.Rh3+ Kg4 43.Rxh8 Kf4 44.Rf8+ Ke3 45.Kg3

Bird makes surprisingly heavy weather of this simple ending. Instead, 45.g4 wins easily.

45...c5 46.Rb8 b5 47.Rb6 c4 48.Rxa6 c3 49.Rc6 Kd2 50.Kf4 e3 51.Rd6+

51.Rxc3 Kxc3 52.Kxe3 Kb2 53.g4 was a simple win as White promotes with check.

51...Ke2 52.g4 Kf2

By now White has made it sufficiently hard for himself that he only has one move to avoid losing but, fortunately for Bird, it even wins the game.

53.Rh6 e2 54.Rh2+ Kf1 55.Kf3 e1N+

This underpromotion sometimes saves the game when there are no other pawns on the board, but here it only delays the end by a few moves.

56.Ke3 Ng2+ 57.Rxg2 Kxg2 58.g5 b4 59.Kd3 1-0

Hull 4NCL Congress and Hull 4NCL GM Norm Tournament

The 4NCL and Hull and District Chess Association (HDCA) continued their long-standing collaboration by organising the Hull 4NCL Congress (which also happens to be the 59th edition of the long-running Hull Congress) alongside another in their series of GM Norm Tournaments. The informal arrangement between the two organisations is that the 4NCL financially underwrites the Congress and the HDCA does the same with the GM Norm Tournament, which seems to work well for both parties.



Hull 4NCL Congress

Despite a number of late withdrawals, we were very happy with the final number of players entering the congress – 153, slightly down from last year, but still a good outcome in our view given continuing Covid concerns and the prevailing economic climate. The congress was played at Hull University's Canham Turner Conference Centre, the venue we used for last year's congress and which has always received lots of very positive comments from participants. Many congratulations to our new GM visitor from Norway (and probably the strongest player to ever play in a 4NCL congress) Johan-Sebastian Christiansen, and also to Lorenzo Fava and Joseph Catto (joint winners of the Under 2000 section) and Stellio Jerome (outright winner of the Under 1700 section). Many thanks to everyone who took part!

In the GM Norm Tournament it looked for a long time as if we would have a repeat of the previous edition when no norms were achieved, but England's Shreyas Royal and Poland's Maciej Czipor both came through with two wins

each in the last two rounds (Shreyas beating Hungarian GM Gabor Nagy in the last round) to secure their third and final norms required for the IM title. Again, many congratulations to Shreya and Maciej - and also to Marcus Harvey, who missed out on a GM norm but had the consolation of sharing first place with Dutch GM Twan Burg, whom he beat in their individual game. None of the players escaped without losing a game, an indication of the hard-fought nature of the tournament. Again, many thanks to all the FMs, IMs and GMs who participated!



Shreyas Royal receiving his IM Norm Certificate from David Clayton

Finally, we include a small selection of games selected by long-term friend of the 4NCL the estimable Richard Palliser together with some photos to give readers a flavour of the event. We were particularly pleased with the two six-foot banners we bought (see page 32), which gave us the chance to showcase not only the 4NCL and HDCA but also the Chess Trust, the Friends of Chess and the English Chess Federation, for whose financial support of the GM Norm Tournament we are hugely grateful.



Hull 4NCL GM Norm Tournament

Prize winner details can be found here - https://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/prizewinners_hullotb_2022.htm

Full congress results can be found here -

Open <https://chess-results.com/Tnr682014.aspx>

U2000 <https://chess-results.com/Tnr682012.aspx>

U1700 <https://chess-results.com/Tnr682011.aspx>

All congress games can be found here -

<https://www.4ncl.co.uk/replay/congress/Hull22/replay.htm>

Full norm tournament results and games can be found

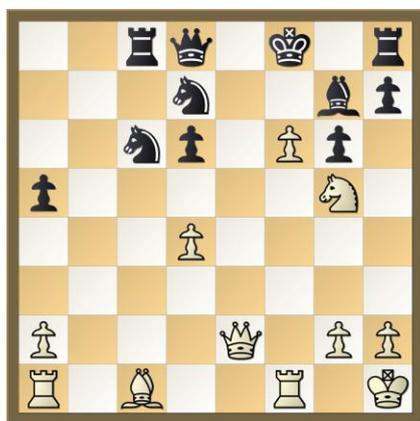
here - https://4ncl.co.uk/fide/info_gmnorm_hull22.htm

--- Mike Truran and Stephen Greep

Hryshchenko, Kamila (2136) - Britton, R. (2132)

Hull 4NCL Open 2022 Hull ENG (5.5), 16.10.2022

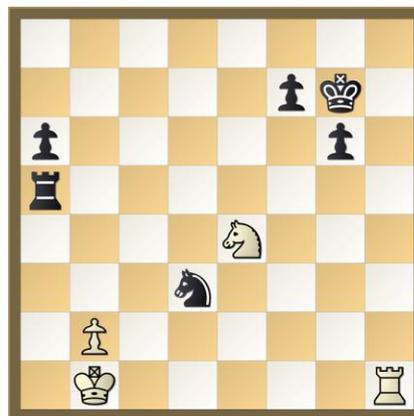
1.e4 c5 2.d3 Nc6 3.Be2 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 d6 6.c3 Nf6 7.0-0 b5 8.Qe1 b4 9.Kh1 a5 10.Nbd2 bxc3 11.bxc3 Ba6 12.d4 cxd4 13.cxd4 Nd7 14.Bxa6 Rxa6 15.e5 dxe5 16.fxe5 f6 17.Qe2 Ra8 18.Nc4 Rc8 19.Nd6+ exd6 20.exf6+ Kf8 21.Ng5 1-0



Willow, Jonah B (2395) - Burg, T. (2511)

Hull 4NCL GM 2022 Hull ENG (6.3), 15.10.2022

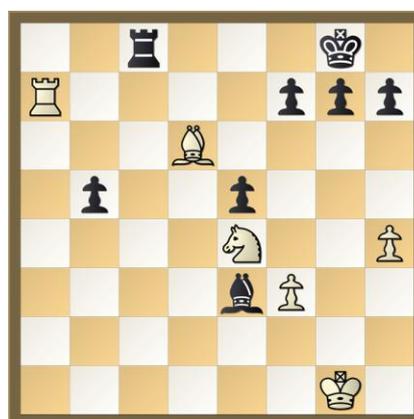
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.h3 e5 7.Nb3 h5 8.Be3 Nbd7 9.f4 b5 10.Qf3 Bb7 11.a4 b4 12.Nd5 Nxd5 13.exd5 Nf6 14.fxe5 dxe5 15.0-0-0 Bxd5 16.Qe2 Qc7 17.Kb1 Be7 18.Bg5 Bb7 19.Rg1 Rc8 20.g4 hxg4 21.hxg4 Ne4 22.Bxe7 Kxe7 23.Rc1 Nc5 24.Bg2 Rh2 25.Nd4 Bxg2 26.Rxg2 Rxg2 27.Nf5+ Kf8 28.Rh1 Rg1+ 29.Rxg1 g6 30.Ne3 e4 31.Rh1 Qe5 32.Qd2 b3 33.Nc4 bxc2+ 34.Qxc2 Qd4 35.Nb6 Rc6 36.a5 Qd3 37.Qxd3 Nxd3 38.Nd5 Kg7 39.g5 Rc5 40.Nf6 Rxg5 41.Nxe4 Rxa5 0-1

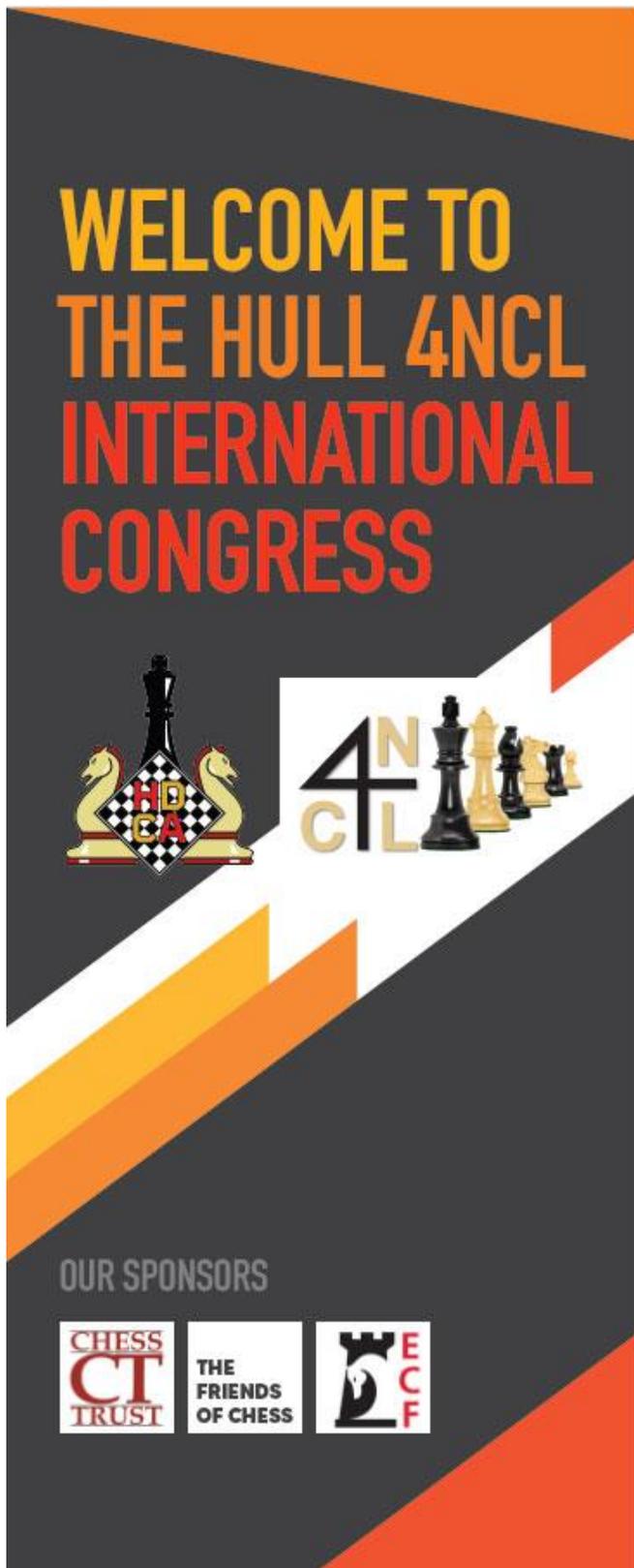


Wadsworth, Matthew J (2467) - Royal, Shreyas (2431)

Hull 4NCL GM 2022 Hull ENG (8.3), 16.10.2022

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 dxc4 5.Qa4+ c6 6.Qxc4 b5 7.Qb3 Bb7 8.d4 a6 9.Ne5 Qxd4 10.Nd3 Qb6 11.0-0 c5 12.Nf4 Bxg2 13.Kxg2 Qc6+ 14.Kg1 Nbd7 15.a4 Rb8 16.Rd1 c4 17.axb5 axb5 18.Qf3 Qxf3 19.exf3 Bc5 20.b3 0-0 21.Bb2 Nb6 22.Rc1 Nfd5 23.bxc4 Nxf4 24.gxf4 Nxc4 25.Bc3 Rfd8 26.Kf1 Bd6 27.Ke2 Bxf4 28.Rg1 e5 29.Bb4 Rd7 30.h4 Nb6 31.Nc3 Rd2+ 32.Kf1 Nd5 33.Bd6 Rc8 34.Ne4 Rdc2 35.Ra7 Rc1+ 36.Kg2 Ne3+ 37.fxe3 Rxg1+ 38.Kxg1 Bxe3+ 0-1





The banner showcasing the 4NCL, HDCA, the Chess Trust, the Friends of Chess and the English Chess Federation



Twan Burg, 2511 Gabor Nagy, 2488 Brandon Clarke, 2485 M. Wadsworth, 2467



Marcus Harvey, 2463 Canham Turner Conference Centre Matthew Turner, 2461



Shreyas Royal, 2431 Maciej Czopor, 2424 James Jackson, 2408 G. Sarakauskas, 2395

The picture from the 4NCL/Hull Congress tweet here - <https://twitter.com/4NCL/status/1578316229692964864>

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Around the Country

The 27th Delancey UK Schools Chess Challenge

Challengers Report from FM Alexander Longson

The 27th season of the Delancey UK Schools Chess Challenge has now reached its nail-biting final stages after months of competition. The 'Terafinal' (the finale of the season) has just taken place at Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire on 15/16 October. Since the Terafinal concluded just as we were going to press, we will issue a full report of this event in next month's edition. This month focuses on the Challengers event.

The UK Schools' Chess Challenge, supported by its long-standing partner Delancey, is a multi-stage chess competition for UK-based young chess players aged 18 and younger. The competition welcomes players of all experience levels through from beginner to seasoned junior international.

Challengers Event

The Challengers Event took place on 17 and 18 September at the Mercure Daventry Court Hotel. The event was a two-day nine-round Swiss played with a time control of 25 minutes plus 10 seconds a move. Players played in five age-group sections: U8/10/12/14/18.

For 2022 we are using the same format as the previous year, with the Terafinal taking place at Blenheim Palace and 12 players in each age-group section qualifying for an 11-round all-play-all event. Competition for these 12 places is fierce and the Challengers represents the final chance, with three spots per age category up for grabs.

In total, 200 players took part in the Challengers with many games on live boards being relayed via Chess24 and lichess. The Mercure has hosted two previous Terafinals, and the format and strength of this event is the equivalent of, or higher than, Terafinals gone by.

Under 8s

1st George Chen (9/9)
2nd Harvey Li (7.5/9)
3rd Ashwin Anjulan (6.5/9)
Top girl – Grace Wilde (6/9)

England (and Scotland) are now seriously competitive forces at the U8 level and it was amazing to see the high level some of these players have already reached – although for some the two-day format was clearly very tough and tiring! George's spectacular 9/9 must make him one of the favourites at the Terafinal – having last year competed in the U7 section.



The winner, George, struggling to hold that giant trophy!

Under 10s

1st George Zhao (9/9) – already qualified, so the place went to the next highest player
2nd Beni Sisupalan (7/9)
3rd Anh Nguyen (7/9)
4th Oleg Verbytski (7/9) - 3rd qualifier, as George Zhao already qualified
Top girl – Ananya Patel (4.5/9)

Another 100% score from a George! George had already qualified for the Terafinal by winning the Northern Gigafinal. We have been asked why already-qualified players can play in the Challengers, but to our mind it is a simple decision – we want junior players to be able to play in the best events and so it seems completely counter-productive to tell players they cannot play an event because they did too well.



Under 10 girls' champion Ananya Patel

Under 12s

- 1st Livio Cancedda-Dupuis (7.5/9) – already qualified, so the place went to the next highest player
- 2nd Pengxiao Zhu (7/9)
- 3rd Avyukt Dasgupta (6.5/9)
- 4th Balahari Bharat Kumar (6.5/9) – 3rd qualifier, as Livio Cancedda-Dupuis had already qualified
- Top girl – Naavya Parikh (5/9)

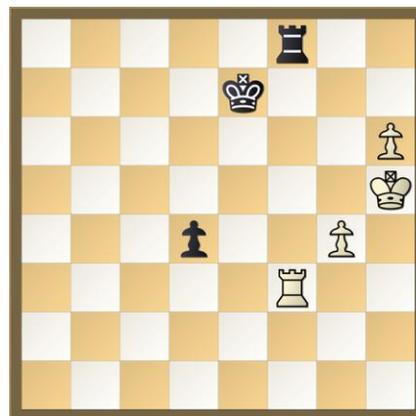
The Under 12s was the only section which required playoffs to determine the 2nd and 3rd Terafinal qualifiers. Four players finished tied on 6.5 (Avyukt Dasgupta, Balahari Bharat Kumar, Tom Junde He and Jainill Vadalia). Two knockout blitz matches were held, with Avyukt and Balahari winning their games to qualify.

The following round 9 game had a thematic endgame finish.

(2052) He, Tom Junde (1374) - Sefton, Adam (1481) [C30]

U12 UK Chess Challenge Terafinal Challengers
06.10.2022

Black has just played 51...Rf8, offering an exchange of rooks – no doubt counting on his passed d-pawn.



52.Rxf8 [Not the only winning move but very well calculated!]

52...Kxf8 53.Kg6! Kg8 54.h7+ [1–0 White wins. Black resigned without waiting to see 54...Kh8 55.Kh6 d3 56.g5 d2 57.g6 d1Q 58.g7#.]

1–0

Under 14s

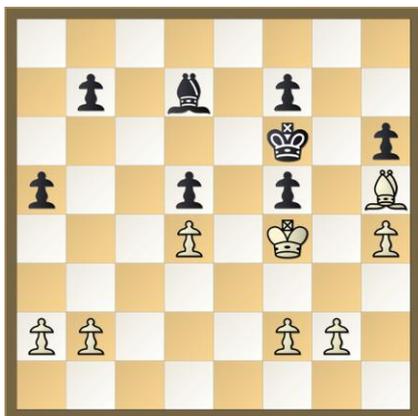
- 1st Denis Dupuis (8.5/9)
- 2nd Rohan Pal (6.5/9)
- 3rd Raman Vashisht-Pigem (6.5/9)
- Top girl – Amanthika Anbalagan (5.5/9)

An excellent performance from the 2019 U10 Champion Denis Dupuis, who looked accomplished and untroubled throughout. Denis hasn't been playing as much as some of his contemporaries, but his break from the game doesn't seem to have done any harm. An excellent performance from Amanthika, who was very close to grabbing a qualifying spot.

Another example of endgame calculation in action – from the section winner's final round game against Alex Royle (who has also qualified to the Terafinal via the Online Gigafinal).

(1) Dupuis, Denis K (1570) - Royle, Alex (1475) [C42]
U14 UK Chess Challenge Terafinal Challengers
06.10.2022

White has a significant advantage - better pawn structure, more active king - and can play on all parts of the board. However, if Black sits tight it may not be easy to make progress.



31.f3?! [White obviously feels the g4/g5 plan is very strong but this loses a lot of flexibility by trapping the bishop on h5.]

31...a4? [A serious mistake, giving access to the b4 square for the white king. In these endgames, if possible, it makes sense to place pawns on the same colour square as your bishop as you are then controlling two colour complexes.]

[31...Bb5 32.g4 fxg4 33.fxg4 b6 34.g5+ hxg5+ 35.hxg5+ Ke6, and Black should hold.]

32.a3 Be6 [32...Bb5 It is more stubborn to keep the e6 square free for the king - but after 33.Ke3 White is still likely to break through on the queenside.]

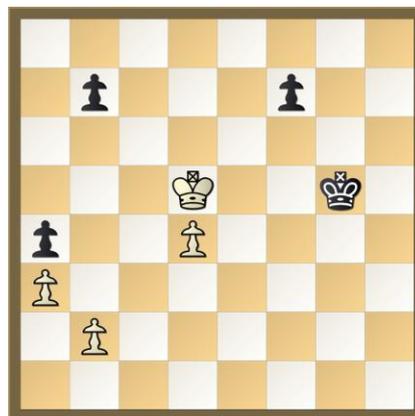
33.g4?! [33.Ke3! intending Kd2/Kc3/Kb4 etc is decisive.]

33...fxg4 [33...Bd7! was the only way to survive - the point is the king can now go to e6 after g5+ 34.g5+ hxg5+ 35.hxg5+ Ke6. White is still better and can improve the position by Ke3/f4/Bf3 etc and look to invade with the king via b4. But Black is still in the game.]

34.fxg4 Bd7 35.g5+ hxg5+ 36.hxg5+ Kg7 [36...Ke6: this defensive idea no longer works as White wins the pawn endgame - 37.Bg4+ Kd6 38.Bxd7 Kxd7 39.Ke5 Kc6 40.Kf6+--.]

37.Ke5 Bc6 38.Bf3 Kg6 39.Bxd5 [Well calculated]

39...Bxd5 40.Kxd5 Kxg5



41.Ke5! [The only winning move - and the only move which doesn't lose!]

41...f5 42.d5 f4 43.d6 f3 44.d7 f2 45.d8Q+ White queens with check!

1-0



Under 14 champion Denis Dupuis

Under 18s

- 1st Edward Jackson (8/9)
- 2nd Aron Saunders (7.5/9)
- 3rd Frankie Badacsonyi (6/9)
- Top girl – Anum Sheikh (5/9)

After surviving a first-round scare against eventual runner-up Aron Saunders, Edward Jackson (3Cs) never looked back and swept to an impressive victory founded on good opening knowledge and clinical positional play. The race for both third place and Top Girl was very close, with Frankie eventually clinching the final spot by winning his last three games and finally qualifying after several near misses previously.

Here's the decisive round 1 battle between eventual 1st and 2nd place players -

(1) Saunders, Aron (2026) - Jackson, Edward (1825)

[A08]

U18 UK Chess Challenge Terafinal Challengers

06.10.2022

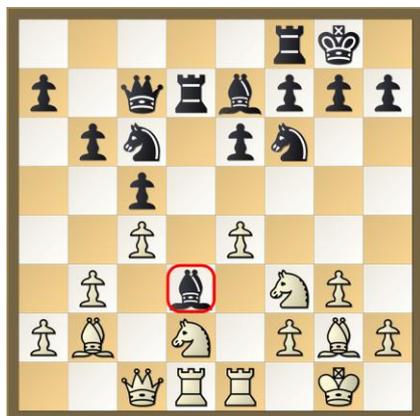
1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 d5 3.Bg2 c5 4.0-0 Nc6 5.d3 e6 6.Re1 Be7 7.Nbd2 0-0 8.e4 b6 9.c3 [9.e5 Nd7 10.Nf1 is the main continuation.]

9...Bb7 10.Qc2 [White's set-up is solid of course, but lacks the usual bite of the e5 lines.]

10...Qc7 11.b3 Rad8 12.Bb2 dxe4 13.dxe4 Ba6 [13...Ng4 is another typical idea, intending ...Nge5...Nd3.]

14.Rad1 Bd3 [A very tempting idea, but this piece ends up getting trapped!]

15.Qc1 Rd7 16.c4 [Black's bishop could end up stuck.]



16...Nb4? [Probably overlooking White's next.]

[16...Rfd8 17.a3 and Black is fine, though it isn't obvious how to best continue.]

17.Ne5 Rdd8? [17...Bc2 is the computer's recommendation, but it isn't at all obvious. 18.Nxd7 Nxd7 19.a3 Bxd1 20.axb4 Bh5 21.b5 with an interesting position, perhaps slightly better for White: 17...Nxa2 18.Qa1 Nb4 19.Nxd7 picks up an exchange.]

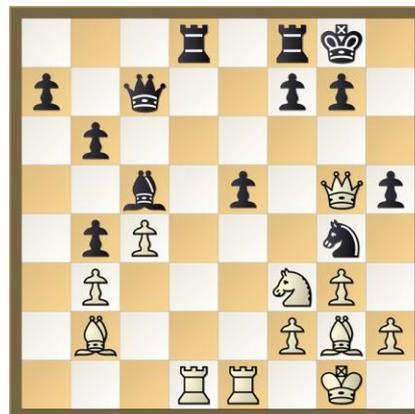
18.a3 [Now White simply wins material.]

18...Bd6 [18...Nc2 19.Nxd3 Nxe1 20.Nxe1 White is winning; 18...Na6 19.Re3 and the bishop is trapped.]

19.Ndf3 Bxe4 20.axb4 cxb4 21.Ng4 Nxe4 22.Rxe4 h5 23.Qg5 [White is completely winning of course - but I was impressed with the way Black managed to fight back into the game.]

23...e5 24.Ree1 [24.Qxh5 Nf6; 24.Rxg4 may be the simplest, though it is understandable that White doesn't want to give any material back - 24...hxg4 25.Qxg4. Two pieces usually beat a rook in the middlegame, and here White is very active and the black king vulnerable.]

24...Bc5 [Black succeeds in creating some problems]



25.Rxd8?! [25.Bxe5! is the best but it does require some calculating 25...Bxf2+ 26.Kf1 Nxe5 27.Rxd8 Rxd8 28.Qxe5 Qxe5 29.Rxe5 and White wins.]

25...Qxd8! [I was impressed by this decision to exchange queens despite being a piece down.]

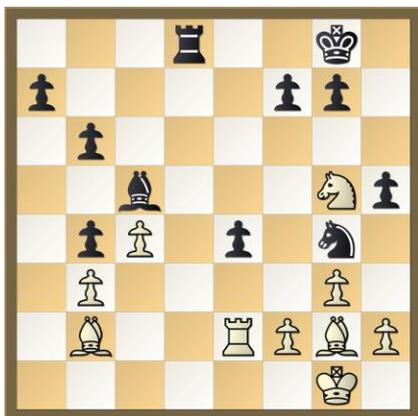
[25...Rxd8 This allows White to transpose to the 25.Bxe5 line, which is perhaps what he had in mind - 26.Bxe5 and White wins 26...Bxf2+ 27.Kf1 Nxe5 28.Qxe5 Qxe5 29.Rxe5 as per 25.Bxe5]

26.Qxd8 Rxd8 [It isn't straightforward at all now for White.]

27.Re2? [27.Kf1! Bxf2 28.Ra1 Bc5 29.Ke2 a5 and White might still be better, but the technical task is difficult as Black has three pawns for the piece.]

27...e4?! [27...Rd1+ 28.Bf1 Bxf2+ 29.Rxf2 Nxf2 30.Kxf2 e4 worked already!]

28.Ng5?? [Now White loses.]



[28.Rxe4 Nxf2 29.Re2, and despite the discovered check Black has nothing better than a draw: 29...Rd1+ 30.Ne1 Ng4+ 31.Kh1 (31.Kf1?? Nxh2#) 31...Nf2+ 32.Kg1=.]

28...Bxf2+! 29.Rxf2 Nxf2 30.Nxe4 [30.Kxf2 Rd2+ wins.]

30...Nxe4 31.Bxe4 Rd1+ [31...Rd2: even this wins, due to the skewer after 32.Be5 Re2.]

32.Kf2 Rd2+ A startling turnaround!

0-1



Under 18 Champion Ed Jackson

Thanks

Many thanks to our incredible team for making the event possible ---

Nevil Chan (Event Director); Alex Holowczak (Chief Arbiter); Thomas Evans (Arbiter); Ritika Maladar (Arbiter); Richard Buxton (Arbiter); Sathya Vaidyanathan (Arbiter); Andrew Smith (Coordinator); Matthew Carr (Live Boards)

Registration for 2023

We are now taking school registrations for the 2023 competition – please see the website details below or email admin@ukchess.co.uk. Although players are

permitted to register directly for the Megafinal, many teachers and coaches like to run the school competition complete with tournament prize kit.

Parents can join the notification list for 2023 events via the following weblink - tinyurl.com/ukcc2023

Main website -

<https://www.delanceyukschoolschesschallenge.com/>

ECF Online

Nigel Towers reports on ECF Online clubs and tournaments

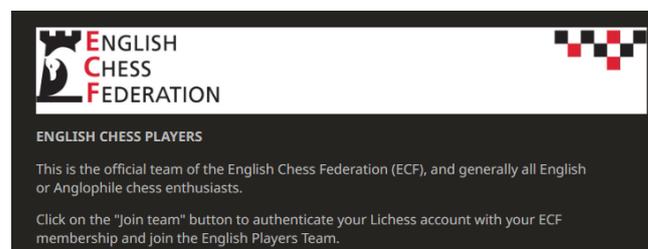
ECF Online Clubs

If you are interested in playing in any of the ECF's online rated events then you need to join one or both of the members clubs on Chess.com and/or Lichess.org. The clubs are open to ECF members or supporters who can join via the links below using their membership ID and PIN (which is an online access code which can be found on your membership profile).

Chess.com – <https://www.chess.com/club/english-chess-federation-members>



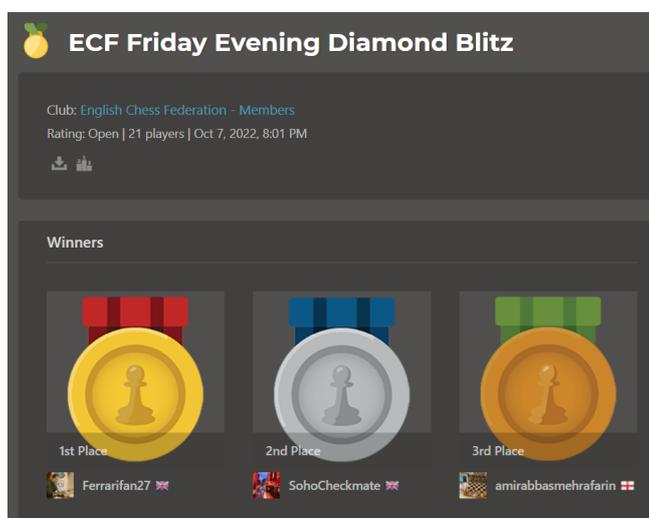
Lichess – <https://lichess.org/team/english-chess-players>



Regular ECF Rated Tournaments

We run weekly rapid and blitz tournaments for members in the ECF clubs which are invariably well attended and are a good opportunity to get an ECF online rating at different time controls.

Weekends - On Fridays we have the ECF Diamond Arena in the ECF Members club on Chess.com – this starts at 8 pm and is a 90-minute Arena tournament at 10|0 blitz time control with a prize of a month's Chess.com Diamond membership each for top placed player and top placed under 1400 player.



There is also a 120 minute rapid Arena on Lichess at 8 pm on Saturday evening at 10|2 rapid time control and a 5 round rapid Swiss event on Chess.com at 8 pm on Sunday evening, also at 10|2 time control.



Weekdays - During the week we have Lichess Swiss tournaments at a mix of 3|2 and 5|2 blitz time controls on Monday and Wednesday afternoon, a Chess.com Tuesday Improvers rapid or blitz event for players under 1700 on Tuesday afternoons, and a Chess.com Thursday afternoon blitz tournament.

Alternate Sundays – We run a four round classical Swiss on alternate Sundays. This is a standardplay event at 50|10 time control with rounds at 10.30 am, 2 pm, 5 pm and 8 pm, and is a good opportunity to get an online rating at the standardplay time control.

Registering for events - ECF online events for the week are published in the weekly online email which is distributed on Fridays and can be found on the online club home pages and on the online website here - <https://englishchessonline.org.uk/upcoming-club-events/>. If you would like to receive the weekly circular then please register at the link here - <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/ecf-online-mailing-list/>

We also publicise online events and results together with chess-related content on the ECF online Twitter account which you can follow here - <https://twitter.com/ECFonlinechess>

OTB and Online Ratings

ECF online ratings are published monthly on the first day of each month and now appear alongside your over the board ratings in the ECF rating system – see below for an example or click here for the [Rating Database](#)

Revised Ratings					
OTB			Online		
Standard	Rapid	Blitz	Standard	Rapid	Blitz
Oct 2022	Oct 2022	Oct 2022	Oct 2022	Oct 2022	Oct 2022
	889K				
1690K			1588P	1651P	
1672K			1666K	1698H	1698H
1487K	1950P		1417A	1502H	1502H
1188K					
1240K	1473K				
			973K	1022K	1020H
1923K					
1533K					
			1239H	1030H	1175H

Online ratings are based on all online events submitted for rating including ECF club events as above together with 4NCL online and other online leagues. Ratings are calculated in the same way as over the board ratings using the same Elo algorithm to calculate the rating change for each game.

The rating system now includes FIDE over the board titles as part of the player record. We also show the ECF

National Master title where this has been achieved - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/master-points-system/>

Players with an over the board title at National Master level or above can register their titles with Chess.com and Lichess and take part in the titled events on the platforms including the well know Titled Tuesday on Chess.com - <https://www.chess.com/article/view/titled-tuesday> and the Lichess Titled Arena - <https://lichess.org/blog/YwiX9xAAALynR5hW/titled-arena-announcements>

Chess.com Internationals

This month saw three matches in the Live Chess World League season 10 and one in the Live Chess European League season 6. These are long-established Chess.com leagues, as the number of seasons suggests. Each division of eight teams is run as a series of seven all-play-all international team matches.

The England team is drawn from players in the ECF Open club. This is the ECF's social chess club open to all online players on Chess.com and comprising over 5,500 members on Chess.com. Club members can register for events from an hour before each fixture, and are allocated to boards depending on their Chess.com rating.

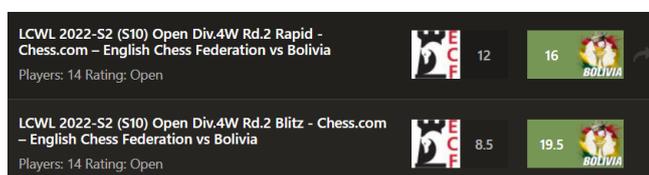


<https://www.Chess.com/club/english-chess-federation>

Matches are generally played on Sundays with times varying depending on the time zone of the opponents. This month's matches were as below, with further details here -

<https://www.Chess.com/clubs/matches/live/english-chess-federation>

LCWL – England v Bolivia – 18 September – 0-2



Following last month's win against Belgium we played our second match against a very strong Bolivian team led by FM Jhoan Rivaldo Mollo Vega. We lost the blitz leg by 8.5-19.5. The rapid leg was closer, but we lost this as well by 12-16.

LCEL England v Denmark – 25 September – 3-0

Our first match in the Live Chess European League was England v Team Denmark led by Danish player Palle Bratholm.

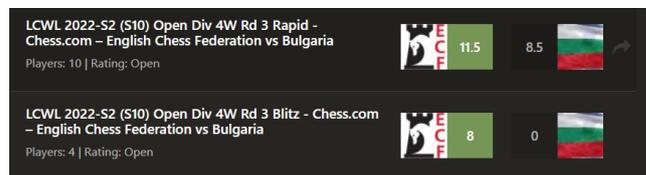
As with other LCEL matches there were separate bullet, blitz and rapid legs with two games against the opposing players at 2|1, 5|2 and 10|2 time controls.

We won all three legs convincingly by 18.5 – 7.5 in the bullet, 14.5 – 5.5 in the blitz, and 14.5 – 5.5 in the rapid.



LCWL S10 England v Bulgaria – 2 October – 2-0

After last month's round 1 win against Team Belgium we took on Team Bulgaria in our round 2 match. This was another win with an 8-0 whitewash in the blitz leg and 11.5 – 8.5 in the rapid leg.



LCWL England v Team Colombia – 9 October - 2-0

We won both legs of the match against Colombia, 14-2 in the blitz and 11.5-0 4.5 in the rapid.



LCEL – England v Team Hungary – 16 October – 1-2

We lost two of the three legs against a small but very strong Hungarian team. Team Hungary were unable to field the requisite number of boards for the blitz, which meant that we won that one on defaults but lost the other two legs.

LCEL 2022-S6 Div.2 Rd.3 Rapid - English Chess Federation v Team Hungary Players: 5 Rating: Open		2	8	
LCEL 2022-S6 Div.2 Rd.3 Blitz - English Chess Federation v Team Hungary Players: 7 Rating: Open		6	8	
LCEL 2022-S6 Div.2 Rd.3 Bullet - English Chess Federation v Team Hungary Players: 5 Rating: Open		2.5	7.5	

Lichess Team Battles

Lichess team battles continue to be very popular with English Chess Players team members. These provide an opportunity to take part in some of the biggest Lichess events with team members paired in Arena format against players from opposing teams. The weekly schedule is currently as follows -

The Mega A Blitz – Alternate Friday afternoons.

The Mega A and B team battles are organised by Lichess for national and large club teams based on time zone. These are the largest team battles on the Lichess platform, with over 170 teams and 20 leaders per team.

The Bundesliga (Lichess Liga)



Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7 pm

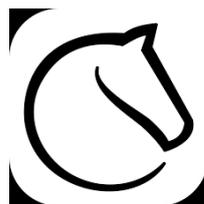
The online Bundesliga started when the main over the board Bundesliga was suspended during lockdown and has continued without a break for the last two years, with regular team events on Thursday and Sunday. We continue in Liga 3 or 4 in one of the most competitive team battles on the platform with England teams generally including GM Keith Arkell.

The Torres de Loule / Liga Ibera



This is an Iberian League which runs on Sunday afternoons at 3.30pm with a two-hour team battle at 3|0. We play in either Division 1 or Division 2 depending on results.

The Champions League



The Champions League takes place on Tuesday evenings at 7.00pm. This is a highly competitive league with a single division and a mix of European and African teams. We normally finish around mid-table but managed 8th place out of 35 on 4 October with top scorer Candidate Master Jonathan Arnott leading the way with an 80% win rate from 15 games.

ECF Online Grand Prix

The Online Grand Prix is run from separate ECF Lichess clubs and take place over ten months from January to October, with entry fees and trophy prizes for the winners across different categories.

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/2022-online-grand-prix-series/>

The Grand Prix events are held at 2 pm on the first Sunday of each month (for the blitz tournaments) and the third Sunday of each month (for the rapid tournaments) from January to October 2022.

This month saw the final events of the season. The leader boards are currently being finalized and we will cover the series in more detail next month together with a selection of best games from the 2022 season.

Online Bullet Chess

As above, our regular club tournaments are at a mix of rapid and blitz.. These are relatively quick time controls

but still too slow for some, and the English Chess players team are planning to join a new series of Bullet team battles at 7 pm on Wednesday evenings organised by @endicraft - <https://Lichess.org/tournament/CEIOis6H>

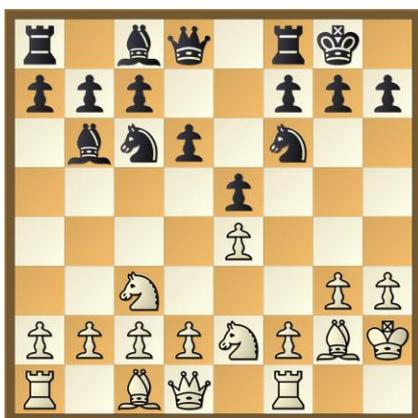
They say bullet isn't real chess - which could be true but that perhaps misses the point. We certainly have some gems of bullet history - the highlight being the 2001 bullet immortal on ICC between GMs Roland Schmaltz and Ronen Har-Zvi -

<https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1553589>

Roland Schmaltz (2546) - Ronen Har-Zvi (2512) [C25]
ICC bullet 1 0 Internet Chess Club, 07.03.2001

1.e4 Nc6 2.Nc3 e5 3.g3 Bc5 4.Bg2 Nf6 5.Nge2 d6 6.h3 Bb6 7.0-0 0-0 8.Kh2

Both sides are safely castled after around 15 seconds with white's king tucked away at h2.



8..Re8 9.f4 Opening up the centre a little early.

9..exf4 10.gxf4



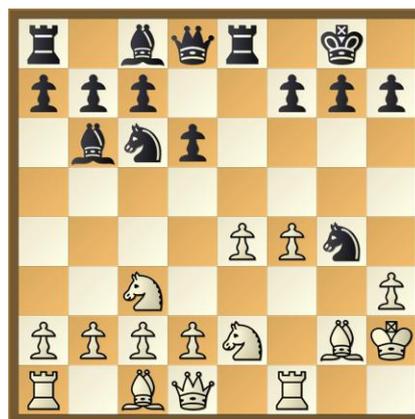
After a quiet opening GM Har-Zvi reaches the above position when the fun starts.

White is lagging in development and Black's pieces are better placed.

Can you see Ronen's spectacular next move and the follow up – and could you see it in a second or two?

Ronen saw it, including the follow up, and proceeded to demolish the unofficial bullet world champion of the day with multiple piece sacs and a forced White king march to the 8th rank accompanied by Black's remaining minor pieces, where the White King was checkmated on move 24.

10...Ng4+!!



The knight cannot be taken because of Qh4+ with mate to follow.

11.Kg3 There's nothing else to be done, and the king starts on its march.

11..Nf2 12.Rxf2



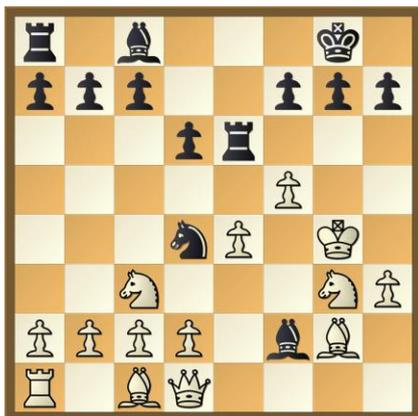
Can you guess Black's spectacular next move?

Qh4+!! 13.Kxh4 Bxf2+ 14.Ng3 Re6

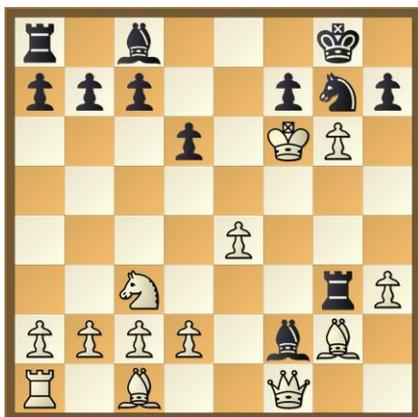
Black plays the rook lift aiming for checkmate.

15. Kg4 Nd4 Preparing a mating net, with the f3 square no longer available to the white king.

16.f5



16...Rg6+! Taking advantage of the pin. 17.Kf4 Rxc3
18.Qf1 g5+ 19.fxc6 Ne6+ 20.Kf5 Ng7+ 21.Kf6



21...Rxc3+ 22.Ke7 Re6+ 23.Kd8 Bb6 24.Nd5 Re8#



0-1

Hikaru Nakamura's key tips for bullet are to play an opening where you are very familiar with the positional ideas so you can get ahead on time, to use lots of small

improving moves, to not assume too much with pre-moves, to use your thinking time well, and of course – to never resign!

<https://www.Chess.com/article/view/7-bullet-chess-tips-by-hikaru>

Bullet is not for everyone, but it's worth giving it a try at least once – in which case why not join the weekly bullet event at 7 pm on Wednesdays in the English Chess Players club on Lichess?

The link for the first match is as below, and also on the club home page -

<https://Lichess.org/tournament/CEIOis6H>

Schools Chess

ECF National Schools Girls' Chess Championships 2022

The Girls' section of the ECF National Schools' Chess Championships is generously sponsored by St Catherine's School in Bramley.



From the Southern semi-final seven teams in each age-group qualified for the final in April 2023. This was a huge event, with 80 teams from 34 schools taking part. It is rare to see 250 girls in one place playing chess. Despite the large numbers, a great atmosphere prevailed.



4th= Beaumont School; Denmark Road; James Allen's Girls' School – 10
SPGS B - 9.5

Entry is still open for the Northern semi-final, to be held at Nottingham High School on 20 November. At present only one qualifying place is available, but if 10 more enter in each section, this will be increased to three places with a larger final.

Teams which did not qualify from the Southern semi-final can try again in the North. Entry is in the usual way via the ECF National Schools webpage - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/NSCC/gi...hips-2022/>

Under 11

1st= Bancroft's School A Woodford Green - winner on tie break; City Junior School A (on tie break); Putney High - 12
4th= Haberdashers' A; North London Collegiate B; Sutton High – 11
7th Latchmere School, Kingston upon Thames - 10.5

National Schools Championships Final



After a gap of two years the National Schools Chess Championships returned, with the finals being played at the new venue of Crowne Plaza Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon. The event was enlarged due to the increased entry of teams in the autumn term and 20 school teams qualified for the finals. Due to a late change of venue one qualifying team unfortunately could not attend.

Another change this year was the introduction of live boards, for which we thank Matthew Carr, who also ably controlled the whole event with the help of Richard Buxton. The games can all be found at <https://chess24.com/en/watch/live-tournaments/english-schools-final-2022/4/1/1>

With 19 teams playing, the finals were played as a five-round Swiss (not, as previously, a knockout) and so drawn matches were allowed, which became important as the event progressed. All the match results can be found at <https://chess-results.com/Tnr638709.aspx?lan=1>



U19

1st North London Collegiate A - 11.5
2nd St. Paul's Girls' School – 11
3rd NLC B - 10.5

Round 1, as expected, produced clear wins for the stronger teams, but with some close individual encounters - none more so than that between Ian Gao (QEH) and Yichen Han (MCS) which lasted 120 moves, which with the Fischer (incremental) time limit slightly delayed the start of Round 2. The top five matches in Round 2 again went with seeding, which meant that Round 3 looked to be the round for some crucial matches. However, with the top three matches all drawn 3-3 (along with two other drawn fixtures) the first day's play ended with five teams still in joint first place, with three more teams just one point behind.

On the second day round 4 had four drawn fixtures, including the top two matches. But Westminster School won and so entered the last round in the lead, with five teams just one point behind. The crucial fixture in round 5 was therefore between Westminster School and the top seeds, Haberdashers' Boys' School. Westminster School proceeded to win this fixture 4 – 2 and therefore are this year's National Champions, the first time they have won the event. Earlier in the season they had defeated the last winners (in 2019), City of London Boys' School.

In matches 2 and 3 King's College School (Wimbledon) and Wilson's School (Wallington) both won $3\frac{1}{2} - 2\frac{1}{2}$, and so came joint second, with KCS winning on tie-break. KCS did also beat Wilson's School in the regional stage, so this seems a fair result. Wilson's School also demonstrated that, due to the system whereby the best-placed non-finalists compete for a place in the final, teams can still achieve excellent final results even if defeated in the regional stage.

The final trophy to be awarded (in addition to a chess clock to every qualifying team) was the 'Plate' chess board for the highest-placed team which lost their first-round match. Despite Brentwood School losing their first fixture 6 – 0, they kept playing their best chess, winning both fixtures on day 2 by the close margin of $3\frac{1}{2} - 2\frac{1}{2}$ to get a total of six match points to come 4th (equal) and win the Plate trophy.

Team Chess Challenge National Final 2022

Fourteen school teams from all over England met in The Huxley Building at Imperial College, London for the final of the Team Chess Challenge on 14th September 2022. This was unusually late in the year due to uncertainty in 2021, as school chess competitions returned to normal following the pandemic over the last two years. London was also a little busier than usual for a weekday in the middle of September as this was the day that our recently passed Queen, HRH Elizabeth II was taken to Westminster Palace to lie in state, ahead of the funeral

five days later. Appropriately, the final began with a respectful one-minute silence for the late Queen. Then Round 1.



As is often the case, in a Swiss tournament, the first-round pairings were brutal to some teams, then in Rounds 2 and 3 the games were much more even. After three rounds, Wilson's and Queen Elizabeth Hospital were starting to break away from the pack, and when they were paired together in Round 4, they drew. The final round started with Wilson's on 12 game points and Queen Elizabeth Hospital on 11. Q.E.H. won all their games against St. Mary's, but sadly for them, it was not enough – Wilson's managed to score $3\frac{1}{2}$ points from their final games against Tiffin School, winning the competition overall by just half a point.

The final scores (out of 20) are shown below ---

School	Score
Wilson's School	15.5
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	15
Sutton Grammar School	13
Exeter School	12
Nottingham High School	12
Sir Thomas Rich's School	11
Bristol GS	10.5
Tiffin School	10
Bolton School	9.5
St Mary's Catholic School	9
RGS Newcastle	8.5
Highgate School	6.5
Torquay Boys Grammar School	6
Westcliff High School for Boys	1.5

Congratulations to Wilson's School and thank you to everyone involved at every stage in the competition.

Chess at the Geek Retreat



Geek Retreat Ipswich is a friendly and welcoming café and gaming space run by a local Ipswich family.

Casual chess can be played any time, free of charge, with clocks available for those who want them! Kids' chess club takes place every Friday (5pm-7pm) and supports the ECF Certificate of Excellence scheme from Bronze level upwards (<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/certificate-of-excellence/>). Newcomers are always welcome.

The café is open 10.00am-10.00pm Monday-Saturday and 11am-7pm Sundays, 364 days a year.



Owner Rob is often present and always up for playing a game or teaching people how to play. All standards are welcome, from beginners to chess superstars! Please email ipswich.owner@geek-retreat.com or contact us via social media (links on www.ipswichgeek.com) for more info.

News and Views

The Cheating Scandal and What Comes Next

One of the biggest chess stories of the last month has been the cheating scandal which started when world champion GM Magnus Carlsen lost to 19 year old GM Hans Niemann on 4th September and then walked out of the Sinquefeld cup event at the St Louis Chess Club with a 'Jose Mourinho' tweet implying he could not give the reason as if he spoke he would be in big trouble -

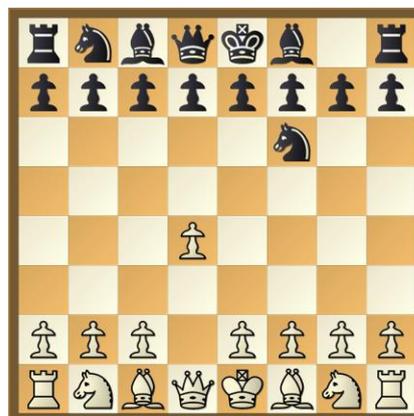
<https://twitter.com/MagnusCarlsen/status/1566848734616555523>



Picture courtesy of Crystal Fuller/Grand Chess Tour

Many observers took this as an insinuation that Hans had been cheating in his game against Magnus despite the anti-cheating mechanisms in place at the event. In a forthright interview following the event Niemann admitted he had previously used computer assistance twice in chess.com online events when he was 12 and 16 years old - but insisted that this had not happened again and never in over the board events.

Two weeks after leaving the Sinquefeld cup Magnus was scheduled to play against Hans in an online event where Magnus played one move and resigned in protest (1 d4 Nf6 Resigns).



Chess.com have now removed Hans' account and have issued various statements and a 72 page report on Hans'

online play alleging that he probably cheated in online events more than he admitted to - <https://www.chess.com/blog/CHESScom/hans-niemann-report> .

Anti-cheating expert Professor Ken Regan was asked by the organisers to check the games following the event with his analysis software and has indicated that the software was not detecting signs of computer assistance. You can find a fascinating interview with Professor Regan here on Youtube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Hf-V4WFq2k>

FIDE have also set up a three-member investigatory panel to examine the allegations and statements which have been made.

The scandal has provoked various theories around how players could cheat in over the board events including having a smartphone available at the event, or gaining external advice from accomplices following the games remotely – including some fairly unusual suggestion for ways of relaying the suggested moves.

Regardless of the events at the Sinquefield cup, the scandal has provoked a huge amount of media and public interest in chess.

Events have not yet run their course and it will be interesting to see the FIDE report when it arrives.

Apart from the general interest the scandal has certainly raised the profile of the risks of cheating in chess and organisers will of course be looking at anti-cheating measures for their events.

The ECF and FIDE have guidance and recommendations for cheat prevention and detection for online and over the board events. These are kept under review and in the short term we will be looking at ECF recommendations for major over the board events including how we deploy scanning technology at major events, and reduce the risk of remote assistance from events being streamed.

England Successes Abroad

Last week's Open at Nova Gorica, Slovenia, was a double success for English talents. Matthew Wadsworth, 22, fresh from his Cambridge MA economics dissertation and now aiming for the grandmaster title, won with 7/9, his third tournament win in a row. Shreyas Royal, 13, scored his second international master norm (of three needed for the title). Royal's recent performances have surged - his tournament rating of 2535 was a personal best, and he is now in contention to break David Howell's 2007 age record as the youngest ever English

GM at 16 years and one month --- <https://chess-results.com/tnr631671.aspx?lan=1&art+1&rd=9&flag=30>

Eugenia Karas

14-year-old Eugenia Karas, who is probably getting in the most European events of any of the female England juniors, has gone over the 2000 mark after a good event in Barcelona. She'll now be able to apply for a WCM title - <https://ratings.fide.com/profile/463485/calculations>

Nigel Short

FIDE have appointed Nigel Short as Director for Chess Development.

Warwick Chess Annual Report

This report is available to view at https://issuu.com/warwickchess/docs/warwick_chess_annual_report_2021_22

Poole Seniors Chess Congress

The Poole Seniors Chess Congress is being run for the first time this year in Poole at the Poole Centenary Hall 22 Wimborne Road, Poole BH15 2BU from Monday 31 October - Friday 4 November.

The venue was recently chosen by Poole Chess Club for their weekly and inter-club matches. It is a modern and spacious social club with good amenities, close to excellent transport links, namely Poole Railway Station, National Express and local bus services.

There were discussions about the possibility of running such an event at Eric Sachs's weekly junior chess school held every Saturday morning at the Elstead Hotel, Bournemouth, when it became apparent that the excellent Exmouth Seniors event was no longer happening. We initially thought to try and resurrect the same event, but in the end decided Poole itself was probably as good a venue as Exmouth as it shares much of the same seaside atmosphere and availability of recreational activities. Take a quick look around Poole and you will find decent accommodation, theatres, sports complexes, some very good pubs and eateries on the quay and, weather permitting, some excursions by sea along the stunning Jurassic Coast.

We decided on the long game, sudden death format for the first year and will seek feedback from the participants as to their future preferences. The time limit will be 40 moves in 120 minutes and then 30 minutes to complete all moves - no increments. Maybe not everybody's cup of tea, but we thought to give this a go and see how it works out.

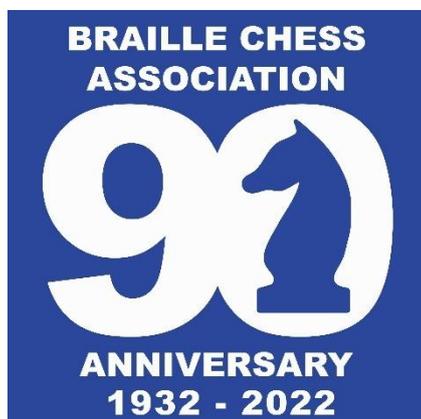
We are also employing the very experienced arbiter Tony Tatum to professionally run the event using Swiss Manager.



We look forward to hosting 60 competitors for five days, and are already half full and have attracted to date five players over 2000, including one FM. We think we will be in a position to provide more rating prizes, subject to entry levels. Hopefully nobody who wishes to enter will be excluded and we can boost the numbers if required.

People wishing to enter can do so via this link, where they can find details of how to enter - <https://poolechessclub.org.uk/poole-seniors-tournament/>

Braille Chess Association 90th Anniversary



The Braille Chess Association, which encourages and supports the playing of chess at all levels by blind and partially-sighted people, is proudly celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. One of the BCA's talented young associate members has designed a special anniversary logo which you can see above.

The Association grew from a Braille correspondence chess organisation in 1932 to a community of chess players taking part in correspondence chess and over the board tournaments at home and abroad. Membership is open to blind and partially sighted people, while sighted friends and family may join as associate members.

A prominent event in this 90th year is a five-round chess tournament to be held at the end of October at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Solihull. On the Saturday evening, there will be a reception followed by a special dinner. The BCA will be welcoming Nigel Towers, the ECF's Director of Home Chess, who will be joining us on the Saturday.

Like any association, the BCA could not operate or even survive without the dedicated work of various members who are always ready to go the extra mile to help. At the Saturday evening reception the BCA will be honouring some of those members, saying thank you and presenting them with certificates.

Anyone who would like to know more about the Association, or the anniversary weekend should get in touch with the BCA publicity officer, Abi Baker: email publicity@braillechess.org.uk

Website - www.braillechess.org.uk

Andrew Leadbetter RIP

It is with great sadness that we have to announce the death of Andrew Leadbetter following a road traffic accident last Thursday. Andrew was a stalwart of Stafford Chess Club, Staffordshire Chess Association and the MCCU, and was a member of the BCF/ECF Governance Committee for many years. There is an obituary here on the SCA website at <https://www.staffordshirechessassociation.co.uk/2022/09/andrew-leadbetter-1943-2022-rip.html>

Free Chess Training for Ukrainian Refugees

WFM Shohreh Bayat is offering a series of free chess training lessons for Ukrainian refugees.

The lessons are expected to run weekly on Tuesday afternoons from 3.30pm to 5.30pm, starting on 1 November and running with up to eight sessions until Christmas at St. John's Waterloo Church.

The lessons will be aimed at beginners, but all Ukrainian refugees are welcome to join to learn, play and/or socialise.

Lessons are funded by the Meridian International Center as part of the International Visa Leadership Program

(IVLP) Impact Awards Project and will be run by WFM Shohreh Bayat and Peter Mant.

There's more information here -

<https://www.meridian.org/profile/shohreh-bayat/>

If you are a Ukrainian refugee please register your interest by email to shohreh_b1987@yahoo.com. We will then contact you to confirm which sessions you should attend so that we can manage numbers.

Paul Buswell RIP



It was with great sadness that we learned that our colleague and friend Paul Buswell passed away yesterday morning, 18th October 2022, at St. Michael's Hospice, Hastings.

Paul was born in 1950 and later studied at Norwich University. Paul became General Secretary of the BCF and held that post at the St. Leonards office for eleven years. He was a key member of Hastings and St. Leonards Chess Club, becoming Match Captain, Secretary, and Chairman over the years. He was also largely instrumental in changing the status of the club to a Limited Company, with all the benefits that entailed. Paul was on the committee of the Hastings Chess Congress for many years and was Secretary until recently. We will miss his input.

As well as his committee work, Paul will also be remembered for being organiser, together with Marc Bryant, of the Hastings Blitz events which took place during the Congress. Some of the games even appeared in chess magazines and columns, rivalling the Congress events on occasions!

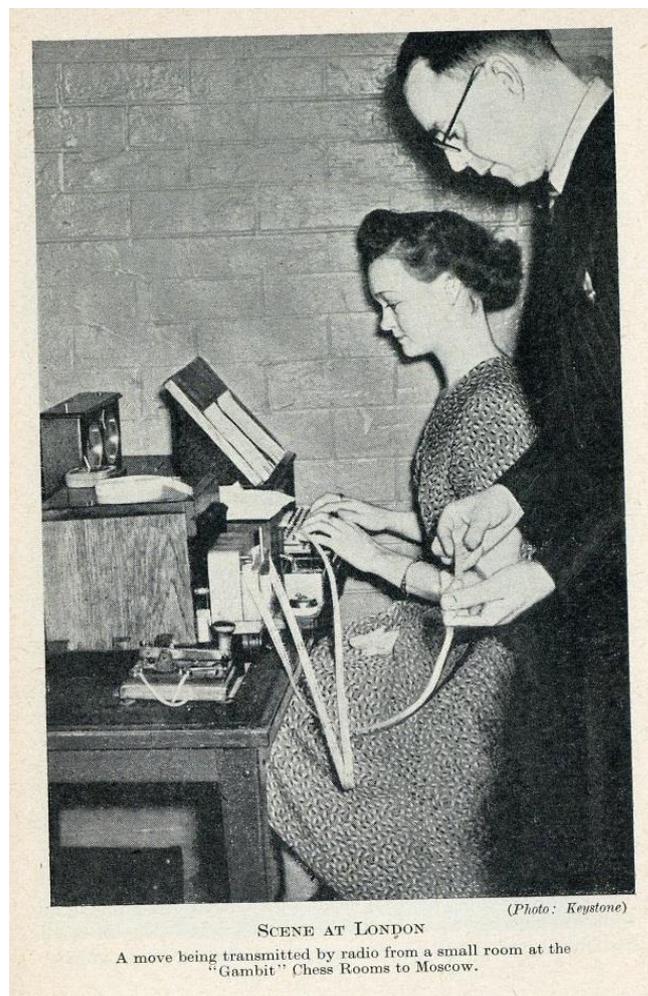
We send our condolences to his family and friends.

[picture of PB courtesy of John Saunders]

Gems from the Library Chess by Radio- Telegraph

by Katharine Short, Special Collections
Manager

The Gem from the Library for this issue is a book from the Ravilious Collection – *The Anglo-Soviet Radio Chess Match* by E. Klein and W. Winter, published in 1947. The slim volume tells the story of a match between the USSR and Great Britain held soon after the end of the Second World War, as the former allies navigated a new political landscape. The Society for Cultural Relations with the USSR was formed to create links between Soviet Russia and Great Britain through 'mutual intellectual interests', and included a branch called the Anglo-Soviet Chess Circle.



The Chess Circle included many of Great Britain's most influential chess players and organisers. They proposed challenging the Soviet masters to a 'match by radio-

telegraph'. The British team knew that they could not win – British chess had suffered during the war, while the Russians were still very strong. Nevertheless they decided to 'at least die with honour'.

Cable and Wireless were approached to assist with transmitting moves back and forth. The venue was the Gambit Chess Rooms in London and teams of 12 were assembled – 10 men and two women players. Amateur players were drafted to act as controllers, tellers and demonstration board operators.



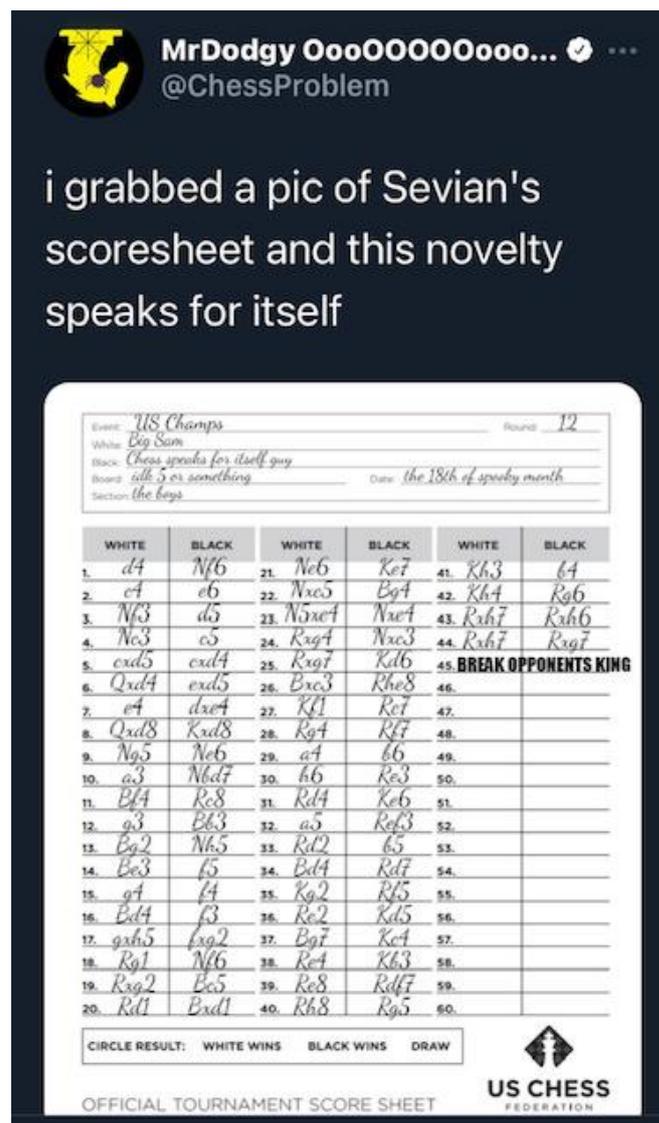
SCENE AT MOSCOW
A poster in front of the Central Art Workers' Club in Moscow, announcing the match.

The players sat with tellers who transmitted their moves over the radio using 'Udeman Code', which had been used in an earlier radio tournament between the USA and USSR. The tournament lasted for four days, each of 10 hours of consecutive play. While Great Britain got the first win, as expected their success didn't last and the USSR won by 18 to 6.

The tournament was declared a great success, with all arrangements going smoothly. The book authors (who had played at the tournament) noted that it was 'in its small way, an undoubted contribution to the better understanding which is so essential to the future of the world'.

Tweet of the Month

--- from Mr Dodgy



JUNIOR MOVES

Littlewood's Choice



Youngsters have certainly been taking centre stage over the summer months, with the young teams of Uzbekistan and India dominating the Olympiad in Chennai, whilst on the home front Harry Grieve won the British Championship, coming ahead of several more seasoned

Grandmasters.

Today, however, I want to focus on Harry's last-round opponent at the British – Matthew Wadsworth. He has made great strides over the last couple of years and any player would find him a redoubtable opponent.

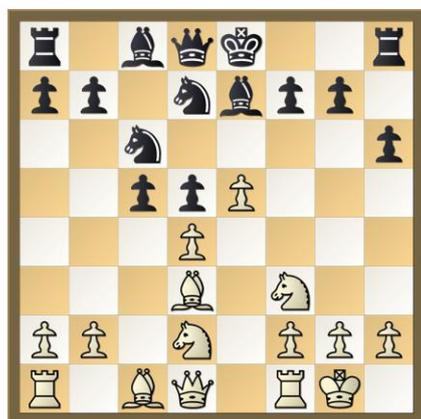
One of his best games at the Championship was against the English Grandmaster John Emms.

John Emms vs Matthew Wadsworth

British Championship 2022 Round 7

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 h6?! This unusual move has been played before, notably by Vereslav Eingorn, but I do find it difficult to understand what the point is!

4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nfd7 6.c4 Be7 7.Bd3 c5 8.0-0 Nc6 9. cxd5 exd5



The first critical position has now arisen. White could have taken advantage of 3...h6 by playing the sharp 10.e6! fxe6 11.Bg6+ Kf8 12.Re1 Kg8 13.dxc5 when the position is complex, although my computer reckons that White has an advantage. However, this is the kind of line which John doesn't like as it is rather messy, so I am not surprised that he avoided it.

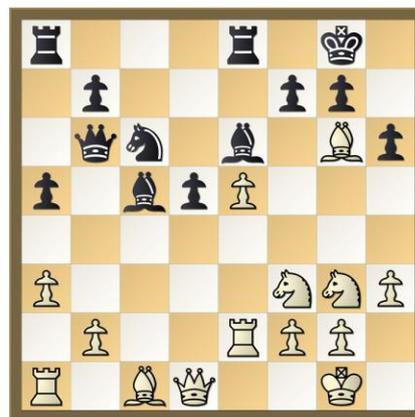
10. Re1 0-0 11. Bb1 Re8 12. dxc5 Nf8?!

Simpler was 12...Nxc5 13. h3 a5 14.Qc2 g6 15.Nb3 Ne4, when Black has a decent position. No doubt Matthew wanted to provide some cover to his king, but it is a tad passive. Best was now 13.h3, with a slight advantage to White.

13.a3?! a5 14.Nf1 Bxc5 15.h3 Qb6

Black has now got a decent initiative and White has to be careful not to slip into an inferior position. Perhaps he should now have opted for the sharp 16.Be3 d4 17.Bf4 Qxb2, when White has compensation for the pawn sacrifice.

16.Re2?! Be6 17.Ng3 Ng6 18.Bxg6?



However, this is now a serious mistake. Although Black's pawn structure is weakened, he has ample compensation in the two bishops and White is now definitely worse. Better was 18.Nh5 d4 19.Nf4 when the position remains unclear, although perhaps still slightly better for Black.

18....fxg6 19.Qd3 Bf7?!

19...Kh7 would cement the advantage whereas now Black is only slightly better. However White now plays another poor move.

20.h4?! Rac8 21. Bf4 Nd4 22.Nxd4 Bxd4 23.Rae1 Rc4

Black's initiative has increased, and White has to be very careful. Best would be 24.Bd2 a4 25.Bc3 Bxc3 26.bxc3 Qc6, when Black has a slight advantage. However, he makes a blunder, so I suspect time pressure was starting to play a role.

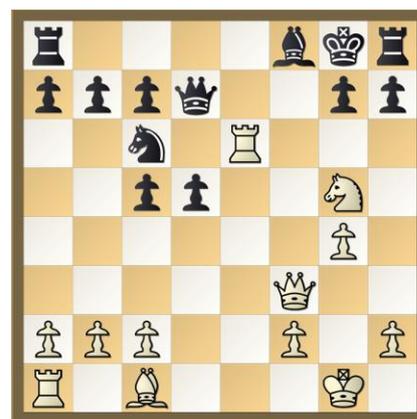
24.Bc1? Rxe5! 25.Rxe5 Bxe5 26.h5 gxh5 27.Nf5 Qf6 28.Bd2 b6 29.b3 Rc7 30.Ne3 d4 31.Nc4

IMPROVERS

Paul Littlewood on Tactics

Cutting the enemy's line of communications is an important manoeuvre in any battle. It can lead to all sorts of chaos, and therefore great gains for the perpetrator.

A similar tactic can be adopted in chess. Consider the following position ...

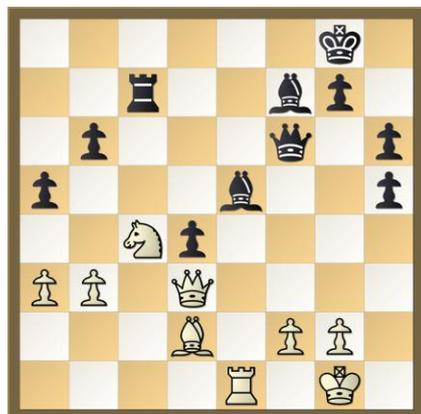
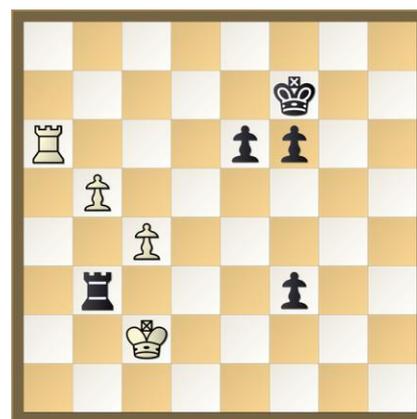


Maroczy – Vidmar

Ljubljana 1922

Black's queen on d7 has to guard f7 (against Qf7 mate) and d5 (against Qxd5+). At the moment it is easily able to do this, but the interference **1.Re7!** throws a real spanner in the works. White threatens 2.Qf7 mate and 1...N or Bxe7 do not stop this. However, 1...Qxe7 allows 2.Qxd5+ with mate next move. Therefore, Black resigned.

Interference is often associated with pawn promotion. Consider the next example -



Black is now two pawns up and clearly winning. With the time control looming, he just needs to ensure he does not make any serious errors. In fact, the simplest line is now 31...Bxc4! 32.bxc4 Rf7 33. f3 h4 with a very powerful position. Understandably, Matthew does not want to give up his powerful white-squared bishop and so preferred...

31...Bf4 32.Bxf4 Qxf4 33.a4 Qf6 34.Rd1?!

34.Ne5 was better and may have made Matthew regret having not taken the knight on move 31. In fact Black is still winning, but it could easily become rather messy.

34...Rd7 35.Nd2 Bg6 36.Qb5 Rd8 37.Nf3 Kh7 38.Ne5 Be4 39.Nc4 Qg6 40.g3 Qg4 41.Re1 Qf3 42.Rxe4 Qxe4 0-1

The time control has been reached, and of course White's position is now hopeless.

A very mature game from Matthew and hopefully a sign of better things to come!

Meanwhile, if you have played any exciting games as a youngster that you would like to have published in my column then please send them to me at plittl@hotmail.com. I cannot promise that they will appear, but I will give them every consideration.

--- Paul Littlewood

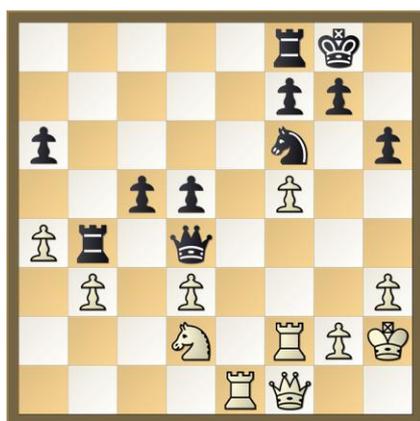
Oms – Karls

Bremen 1929

If Black plays an immediate 1...f2, then 2.Ra1 stops the pawn. Therefore Black first of all plays **1...Rb1!** and now, after **2.Kxb1 f2**, the black pawn cannot be prevented from promoting.

As with most of the themes we have examined, the main defence to interference is preventative. It is important to try and avoid situations such as a poorly defended back rank or an overloaded piece, as these can often be exploited by interference.

Consider the following position from one of my own games -



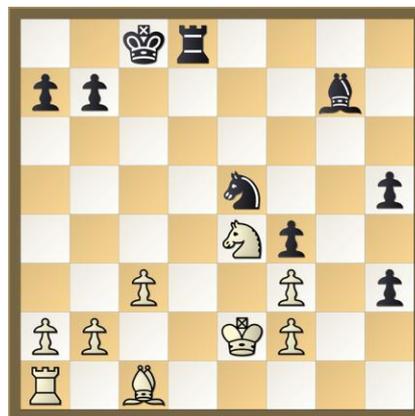
Hynes – Littlewood

Bolton 1982

White has a difficult position because of his weak pawns on b3 and d3. However, with careful defence he has a very good chance of survival because he has control of the only fully open file. What he must avoid at all costs is an accident, and with this in mind he should have played 1.Rf3, followed by 2.Re3 when possible, to consolidate his hold on the open file.

His actual move **1.Re7** was exactly the sort of move he should have avoided as the 'active' rook achieves nothing and could well become exposed. Black replied **1...Qh4!** threatening 2...Ng4+ forking the rook on f2 and discovering an attack on the rook at e7. White played **2.Rfe2**, which is the only move to defend both threats but then the interference **2...Ne4!** forced the win of the exchange and the game shortly afterwards.

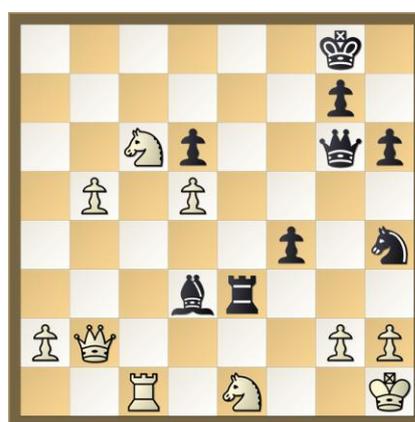
Here are two examples to solve yourself, with the answers at the end of the article:



Kataev – Markov

USSR 1977

If Black plays 1...h2, then White stops the pawn with his rook by playing 2.Bxf4. How can Black interfere with this process and win material?



Ilyin-Zhenevsky - Kubbel

Leningrad 1925

How did Black win by beautifully interfering with the co-ordination of White's pieces?

Answers

Kataev – Markov

Black wins by 1...Rd1 2.Kxd1 h2, and the pawn cannot be prevented from promoting.

Ilyin-Zhenevsky – Kubbel

Black wins by the remarkable move 1...Bc2! This threatens 2...Rxe1+ 3.Rxe1 Qxg2 mate, and whichever way White captures the bishop he loses - 2.Nxc2 Qxg2 mate, 2.Rxc2 Rxe1 mate, and finally 2.Qxc2 Rxe1+ 3.Rxe1 Qxc2 winning.

--- Paul Littlewood Email: plittl@hotmail.com

Gormally's Improvers

2. Strengthening moves and the proper preparation for an attack



Korobov, Anton (2672) - Carlsen, Magnus (2856)
37th European Club Cup 07.10.2022

The European Teams Championships recently took place at a mountain resort in Austria. This was a source of regret for me as my team Blackthorne were playing and due to my fear of flying I couldn't join them. It was a representation of how much I've lost, how my chess career has become stunted. The high mountains probably would have triggered me as well, so maybe it's just as well I didn't make the trip. Some did, including current world chess champion Magnus Carlsen. Despite announcing plans to vacate his title, Carlsen still retains his great strength. He demolished many players with the excellence of his technical play.

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.e3 a6 4.b3 Bf5 Playing the bishop to f5 is almost always a good positional move. In this position it belongs on ... f5 as Black will inevitably play ... e6, in which case the bishop will be shut behind the pawn structure.

5.Ba3 Slightly unusual and when Korobov played this I thought he was aiming for a draw.

5...e6 Magnus is not afraid of exchanging pieces. I might have delayed this (or avoided playing it altogether) because I would be afraid that exchanges bring the game closer to a draw, but Magnus's endgame skills are such that he is never afraid of entering a technical position.

I might have opted for 5...Nbd7 6.Bd3 Bxd3 7.Qxd3 c5, entering murky waters, but there is no need to gamble like this. 8.Bxc5 Nxc5 9.dxc5 e6 10.b4 a5 11.c3 axb4 12.cxb4 b6? 13.Qb5+ Qd7 14.Qxb6+

6.Bxf8 Kxf8 7.Be2



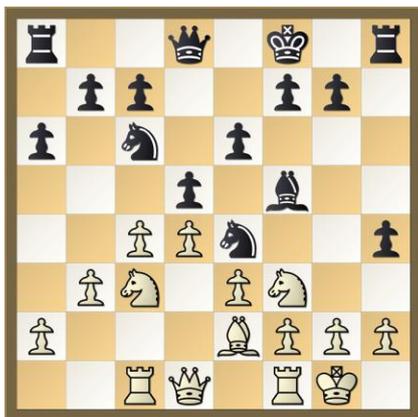
7...Nc6! it turns out this square is more effective than ... Nbd7, although both moves are playable. On c6 the knight often threatens to dart into b4, causing tactical issues for White, and we eventually see this in the game. It also reminds me of a note that Korchnoi once made in a game where he played ... Nf6 in the opening. He said that he could have played ... Ne7, but why bother when the knight was slightly better placed on f6 than on e7? This follows the same logic.

7...Nbd7 8.0-0 c5 9.c4 Qa5?! might have been my choice - probably why I'm not 2800. I don't 'build' quite as well as Magnus and often go for pseudo-activity early in the game. 10.cxd5! Nxd5 (10...exd5 11.dxc5 and the pawn on d5 is isolated. This is not such a big problem because such positions are often playable. Here though Black suffers from the loss of the dark-squared Bishop, as normally the prospect of launching a kingside counterattack can offset any strategic issues that the presence of such a weak pawn can cause.) 11.Nbd2 with the threat of e4. I think with his great strategic sense Magnus would have been reluctant to play ... c5, as this would have caused more lines to open - slightly exposing the king on f8, which is slightly more vulnerable than its counterpart on g1.

8.0-0 h5! Magnus plays in AlphaZero fashion, and he already admitted the games of that particular entity had influenced his style in recent years. This move is not just the prelude to an attack, it also gives the black bishop on f5 some space in case White should play h3 and g4, or Nh4.

9.c4 If White had been concerned about a later kingside attack he could have considered 9.h4, but this looks ugly and anti-positional. And you don't want to make anti-positional moves against Magnus. In that case Black could have played ... Ne4 and ... Bg3, forcing White to play g3, further weakening the kingside.

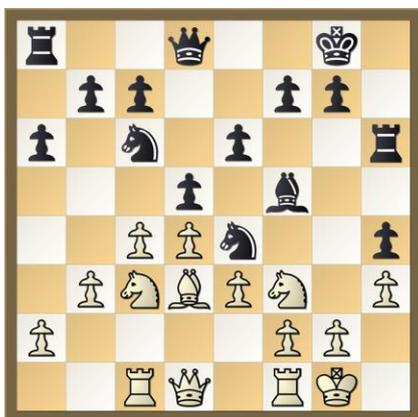
9...h4 10.Nc3 Ne4 11.Rc1



11...Rh6 Black is calmly and assuredly building the attack, and the situation for White already looks quite ominous. The rook on h6 is poised for the attack and a plan of ... g5-g4 seems rather natural. In such a situation, when facing the world champion, even a player as experienced as Korobov must have been tempted to panic a bit and play something reactive.

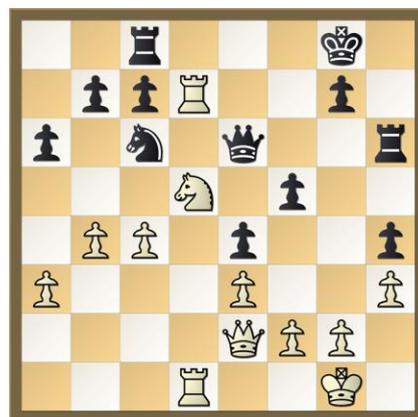
12.cxd5?! Understandably, with the rook on c1, White wants to open the c-file. However, this clarification of the pawn structure might have been something of a mistake. This is an interesting point because taking on d5 is so automatic you wonder how it can be a mistake. Except that in chess sometimes you have to think in a non-routine way.

12.h3 Kg8 13.Bd3



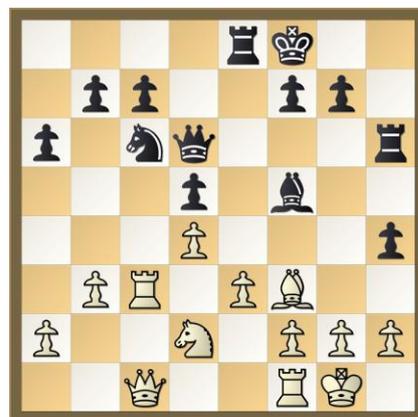
This seems critical. I decided to play a game against an engine from here. I chose the lichess default engine and set up the position. This can be a useful tool if you find a position that intrigues you, or if like me you are too lazy to do some serious analysis and investigate all the various twists and turns in any detail. First rule of chess - when lazy, turn on the engine! 13...Bg6 14.a3 (preventing any ... Nb4 annoyance) 14...Ne7 (14...Nxc3

15.Rxc3 Bxd3 16.Qxd3 and White threatens to gain the initiative in the centre with e4, and, if Black plays ... f5 himself, then White will take on d5 and Black will be obliged to take back with the queen - otherwise the pawn on f5 will be hanging.) 15.Bxe4 dxe4 16.Ne5 Bh5 17.Ng4 (more direct than moving the queen, which could have been met with ... f6, in any case forcing White to play Ng4.) 17...Bxg4 18.Qxg4 f5 19.Qe2 Qd6 20.b4. You can see how patiently the engine plays. It doesn't bother to go for c5, as that would give Black access to the d5 square. It is more about limiting the play. When you look at the games of Magnus he very rarely even comes under an attack, let alone loses a game. That's because his prophylactic game is so strong. He always anticipates what his opponent is up to and prevents it. And engines are very good at that as well. 20...e5 21.Rfd1 exd4 22.Rxd4 Qe6 23.Rcd1 Nc6 24.Rd7 Rc8 25.Nd5!



and I resigned, yet again succumbing to a superior force. White is threatening to take on c7 and if Black takes on d7, then Nf6+ will pick up the queen.

12...exd5 13.Nd2 Nxc3 14.Rxc3 Qd6 15.Qc1 Re8 16.Bf3



16...Re7! This was the star move of the game. Many would have been tempted to throw their pawns forward in caveman style. Instead of this Magnus

calmly defends the c7 pawn which creates more options: 1. Black will move the knight to d8 or b4 (or in some cases a7, which can then aim at c8 or b5); 2. Once the knight moves, Black can then consolidate the structure with ... c6, and then White is struggling for a plan. The only useful break is e4, but this weakens the d4 pawn.

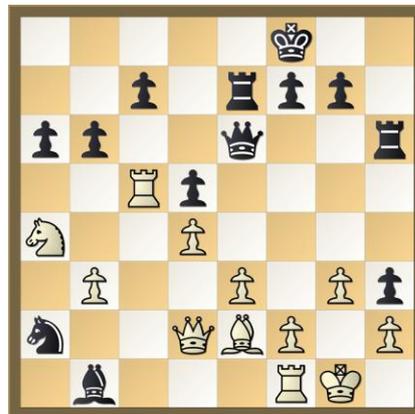
17.Rc5? walking into an ambush.

It was possible to prevent the sortie that occurred in the game with the quiet move 17.a3 - also strengthening, as White has visions of playing b4. 17...g5 (17...Nd8 seems most consistent, and this is probably what Magnus would have played. 18.Re1 Ne6 19.Be2 Ng5. The storm clouds are gathering and ... Rg6 may be coming next: 17...Rg6 18.Re1 h3 19.g3 Rge6 lines up ideas of taking on d4; 17...Na7!? is also possible with the threat of ... Nb5, picking up a pawn. 18.Be2 Nb5 19.Bxb5 axb5) 18.h3 Rg6 19.Qd1 Be6!? Black wants to play ... f5 and ... g4, and the engine says that White is fine, but over the board this looks quite scary. 20.Bh5 Rg7 21.f4? (21.b4 would leave the situation very unclear. White may in some cases play Nb3-c5, distracting Black from the kingside attack.) 21...gxf4 22.Rxf4 Bxh3.

17...Nb4! Magnus gets labelled as a positional grinder, but that is to forget that he has an amazing tactical eye as well. Nobody reaching the levels he has reached could do without it. It's quite possible that Korobov overlooked this because he had this image of Magnus as a 2800 grinder, politely winning long endgames and that's about it. But sometimes the brutal caveman comes out, the one who isn't afraid or ashamed to play for crude tricks or swindle the opponent.

18.Nc4 18.Qa3 b6 19.Rcc1 Rg6 20.Kh1 h3 21.g3 c5 further opening up the position, while threatening ... Nd3.

18...Qe6 19.Nb2 h3 20.g3 Nxa2 21.Qd2 Be4 22.Be2 b6 23.Na4 Bh7 Magnus said after the game that he thought for 15 minutes desperately trying to make the beautiful if flawed 23...Bb1!? work.



Flawed perhaps, because this is no better than the move that Black played in the game. I find this admission revealing because it shows that winning the game is not enough. Even better if you can win in style. It's also intriguing that Magnus is willing to spend 15 minutes calculating one rather obscure move, especially when you consider that he probably sees more in 15 minutes than I see in an entire game (or tournament.) Going deep on one move can probably help your calculation in the long run. Even if you have the time to calculate other variations, you go deep enough in your investigations for certain truths about the position to be revealed to you. 24.Rc3 (24.Rxb1 Qe4 25.Bf1 Qxb1 26.Rc2 Nb4! 27.Rb2 Qa1 28.Qxb4 Rc6 and Black will get ... Rc1 and will win the game.) 24...Nxc3 25.Nxc3 Be4 26.b4+

24.Re1 Qe4 25.f3 Qxe3+ 26.Qxe3 Rxe3 27.Rxc7 Rhe6 28.Kf2 Bd3 29.Bxd3 Rxe1 30.g4 Nb4 31.Bf5 R1e2+ 32.Kg3 Rd6 33.Rb7 g6 34.Bd7 g5 Black didn't really gain an attack in this game, it is true, but the mere threat of an attack caused White to psychologically collapse. 0-1

STUDIES AND PROBLEMS

PROBLEM CORNER

Christopher Jones with his monthly conundrum

In the last issue I left you with this problem -

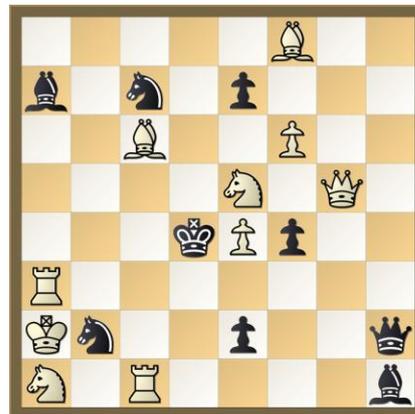


Mate in 2

Franz Pachl and Dieter Berlin
Die Schwalbe 1988

As I said last time, there are some tempting tries in this one. 1.Re2? threatens 2.Nf5 because then, although the g6-e4 line has been closed, the e2-e4 line has been opened. However, 1...Nc4! successfully defends, as we see, by continuing 2.Nf5 Kd3! – both lines of guard on d3, from a6 and from g6, have been closed. 1.Rg3?, threatening 2.Nc2, provides for 1...Nc4 (as the threatened move opens the line g3-d3) but now Black has 1...Bb4! and after 2.Nc2 Kxc5!, because both lines of guard on c5, from c1 and a3, have been closed. The key move is 1.Rxg4!, threatening 2.fxe5, and now we have 1...e4 2.Nf5; 1...Nc3 2.Nc2; 1...Nd3 2.Qxd3; 1...Nxc5+ 2.Bxc5; and 1...exf4 2.Rxf4. Note how the mates that we unsuccessfully threatened now return successfully after Black has been induced obligingly to block a flight square.

You may have noticed in that and other problems we've been showing in this column the richness of play that can be generated in 2-movers based upon the effects of opening and closing lines of white and black 'line pieces' (Q, R and B). Have a look at this one:



Mate in 2

Gustav Jonsson
2nd Prize, *Die Schwalbe* 1954

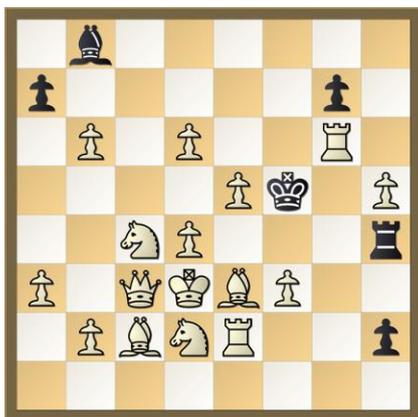
It's worth examining the set play - moves that if Black were to play in the diagram would be met by a mating response. If 1...exf6, then the opening of the line f8-c5 means that we can close the line c1-c5 by playing 2.Nc2#. If 1...f3, then the effect of opening g5-e3 is that we can close a3-e3 with 2.Nb3#. Note also 1...Nc4 2.Rxc4# and 1...Nd3 2.Rxd3#. But of course, White, to play, must find the right way to threaten a mate. A random move by the e5N threatens 2.Qe5#, but 1...Nd3 now defends successfully as we can no longer reply 2.Rxd3#. So how about 1.Ng4, when e3 is guarded and so 1...Nd3, blocking the square d3, means that the a3R is free of its guard duties and 2.Nb3# works? There is a well-concealed refutation, based upon another line closure – 1...Qh5!. Previously, 1...Qh5 allowed 2.Qg1#, but the g5-g1 line has been closed by 1.Ng4.

Finally we alight upon the key move 1.Nc4!. Now we have 1...exf6 2.Qxf6 (and not, now, 2.Nc2, as we've closed the c1-c4 line, thus permitting 2...Kxc4); 1...f3 2.Qe3 (and no longer 2.Nb3, closing the a3-d3 line and permitting 2...Kd3); 1...Nxc4 2.Nc2# and 1...Nd3 2.Nb3#.

The particular satisfaction in seeing so many responses to specific black defences changed between 'set play' and 'actual play' is here enhanced by the complementary effect whereby specific white moves deliver mate after different black defences. (See the transfers of 2.Nc2 and 2.Nb3.) We are getting into the realm of a very tricky and difficult-to-set theme: 'Rukhlis' transfers (named after one of its pioneers). These transfers are of great interest to specialists in this field of the mate in 2 problem, but their inherent

attractiveness commends them to 'generalists' who have no wish to involve themselves in learning such nomenclature!

Here is another problem by the same composer which you may like to solve –



Mate in 2

Gustav Jonsson
Stella Polaris 1970

You have to contend with a very strong potential defence 1...Rxf5. So the task is to find a move that threatens mate and also unblocks one of the squares adjacent to the white king, so as to be able to meet 1...Rxf5 by a mating discovery move by the white king. As you might expect, there are a number of candidate white moves – your assignment is to find the only one that forces mate! Solution next time. If you have any queries about this problem or anything else problem-related don't hesitate to contact me at the email address below.

--- Christopher Jones Email: cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk

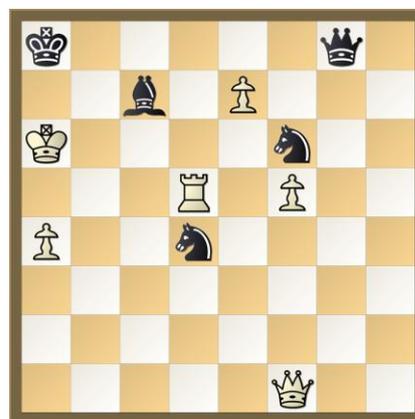
HOW TO SOLVE A STUDY

by Ian Watson

More Magic ...

... from the new World Champion of study composition, Steffen Slumstrup Nielsen. Last month, I told you about the World Championship, and showed two of Nielsen's studies. Here are two more; the first I'll go through and the second is for you to solve.

Our first study took part in a World Championship too, the one for national teams. The WCCT (World Championship in Composing for Teams) is held, like the individual Championship, over several years. This study was in the 10th WCCT which ran from 2016 to 2018; I was one of the judges for the endgame studies, and when I'm a judge I try first to solve the studies I'm judging. I'll try to recall what I thought while I was solving it.



White to play and draw

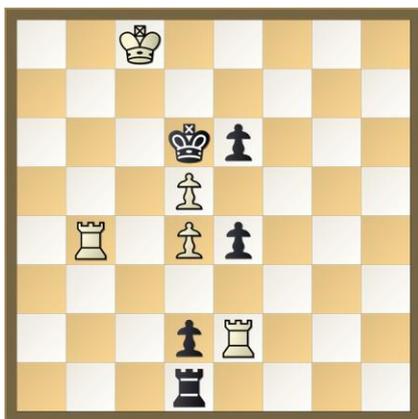
First, one notices that the white king is threatened by 1...Qc8+, so a move like 1.Rxd4 isn't going to work. In any case, it's prosaic, hardly a move that a composer would begin his composition with, especially an entry in a World Championship. Instead, 1.Rd8+ is the 'obvious' start. So, let's explore that: 1...Bxd8 and now what? Simple: sac your queen: 2.Qg2+ must be the intention, and will be met by 2...Nd5. Now the other thing I noticed at the start is relevant; White's king is boxed in, which also means that stalemate is a serious possibility. We can't move the white queen off the diagonal because of ...Nb4 mate, but that a-pawn is crying out to be pushed to complete the potential stalemate. It looks as if we're on the right track: 3.a5,

and what can Black do? He's in Zugzwang, amazingly, on an open board. 3...Kb8 then, and we get 4.exd8Q+ Qxd8 5.Qb2+ Kc7 6.Qxd4 Nb4+ 7.Qxb4 Qa8+ 8.Kb5 Qc6 mate - whoops. That all looks right... except for the small detail of being mated... I'm not sure, several years on, but I think I wasted a lot of time going over all that line from 2.Qg2+, before I noticed that 2.Qh1+ was also an option. 'Not all queen sacrifices have to be played.' - not even in composed positions. Then I must have realised that the position after 2.Qh1+ Nd5 3.Qg2 is *mutual* zugzwang. So, the queen *does* have to be sacrificed, just not immediately.

Then it's straightforward. All the same moves, except for pushing the a-pawn. 3...Kb8 4.exd8Q+ Qxd8 5.Qb2+ Kc7 6.Qxd4 Nb4+ 7.Qxb4 Qa8+ 8.Kb5 Qc6+ 9.Ka5 and White isn't mated and so draws. The only difference between the two final positions is that pesky pawn that I pushed. Not annoying, however, because I felt that I'd been very cleverly conned; and I had (eventually) found the composer's crafty intermezzo. Sometimes, it's a treat to be tricked.

The full solution goes **1.Rd8+ Bxd8 2.Qh1+ Nd5 3.Qg2 Kb8 4.exd8Q+ Qxd8 5.Qb2+ Kc7 6.Qxd4 Nb4+ 7.Qxb4 Qa8+ 8.Kb5 Qc6+ 9.Ka5** draws. This was a theme tourney, and the theme required the studies to have a try and a solution resulting in positions that are *almost* identical; Nielsen's study did that in superb style.

Your study for solving is a rook ending. Yawn? Nope, the top composers can find surprises in apparently tedious positions. This was published in 2016 (and was in, I think, a tourney in memory of Ukrainian composer Nikolai Rezvov). No clues, because the solution is only six moves long. When you've solved it, you might like to count the number of surprise moves.



White to play and win

There's a new set of study-solving tourneys at www.netchex.club - visit the home page and click on 'October Study Tourney'.

The solution to Nielsen's 2016 study is given below.

How to Solve a Study – solution

(Nielsen 2016)

1.Kd8 e3 2.Rxe3 Re1 3.Re5 Rxe5 4.Rb7 Kxd5 5.Rd7+ Ke4 6.dxe5 wins. I count at least four surprise moves in a short solution. So much for rook endings being boring.

You probably don't need them but, anyway, a few notes:

1.Kd8 prevents ...Rc1, being check, so Black has to protect his d-pawn.

Alternatives in the main line include: 1...Kxd5 2.Rb3 Kxd4 3.Ra3; 2...Rh1 3.Rxe6+ Kxd5 4.Re5+ Kc6 5.Rc5+ Kd6 6.Rb6 mate; and 4.dxe5+? Kxd5 5.Rb1 Kxe5.

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Event Calendar

for details on all the events listed below visit <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/event-calendar/>

October 22 - 23	4NCL Rounds 1 and 2
October 22	Wilson's School FIDE Blitz
October 22	Berkshire Open Tournament
October 22 - 26	Half-term Oxted FIDE Standard All-Play-All
October 22	Half-term Oxted FIDE Standard Tournaments
October 22 - 23	Mill Hill Congress
October 22	Poplar Rapid Tournament
October 23	St Albans LJCC
October 23	Chelmsford Autumn Junior Chess Tournament
October 23	KJCA GPI & LJCC Qualifier
October 24 - 28	4th EJCOA International
October 25	4NCL Online Season 6 Round 4
October 28 - 30	Scarborough Chess Congress
October 29	Newham Junior Grand Prix
October 29	National Youth Chess Association Jamboree
October 31 - November 4	Poole Seniors Congress
November 2	2022/23 Birmingham League Blitz Grand Prix Event 3
November 3	Junior 4NCL Online Season 6 Round 5
November 3	Hendon FIDE Blitz
November 4 - 6	Central London Chess Congress
November 4 - 6	Hampshire Congress
November 5 - 6	4NCL Rounds 1 and 2
November 5	Horwich Rapid Chess
November 5 - 6	9th Witney Weekend Congress
November 8	4NCL Online Season 6 Round 5
November 9	Beckenham FIDE
November 11 - 13	World Chess League Live 2022-2023
November 11	53rd West Wales Congress
November 12	Bexhill Rapid 2022
November 12 - 13	Oxted Standard FIDE Rating November Tournament
November 12	20th Claires Court School PTA Chess Festival
November 12	Golder Green FIDE Rapidplay
November 13	Hampshire Junior Open Congress
November 13	North London Grand Prix 3 - LJCC Qualifying Event
November 13	Nottinghamshire County Championships 2022
November 15	Muswell Hill FIDE Rapid
November 17	Junior 4NCL Online Season 6 Round 6
November 18	1st Hammersmith Friday Evening FIDE Rapidplay
November 18 - 20	Torbay Congress
November 19 - 20	2022 Birmingham Open
November 19	3rd Brentwood School FIDE Invitational Weekend
November 19	Sussex Junior Eastbourne Rapidplay
November 19 - 20	Ealing FIDE Congress
November 19	Forest Hall Rapidplay Grand Prix 2022-23
November 19	GS London Junior Qualifier
November 19 - 20	Mill Hill Congress