

Chess Moves

ENGLISH CHESS FEDERATION | MEMBERS NEWSLETTER | November 2013

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Editorial - Christmas Come Early?

Christmas may be just over six weeks away as I write this, but for lovers of great chess the festive season seems to have arrived early, with a succession of top events to follow in the next month.

THE match

The world championship match between defending champion Vishwanathan Anand and young pretender Magnus Carlsen is underway. Although the challenger enjoys a ratings advantage over the champion, Anand's experience of world championship matches - which dates back nearly two decades, let's not forget - may prove important. Most pundits seem to favour the Norwegian superstar, but in a short match of just twelve games anything could happen.

Both players start with the weight of enormous expectations on their shoulders. Most of the chess world seems to be seeing the tide of history sweeping Carlsen to victory in a 'passing of the baton to a younger generation' way, and there is a widespread feeling that Anand is suffering from the reigning champion's traditional reduction in motivation from having achieved the ultimate goal. The match is being held on the champion's home turf, however, and the expectations of the locals for a successful defence by their hero will be just as intense.

If the match starts with a prolonged sequence of draws - and at time of writing, the first two games have been completed, both ending in a repetition of moves at an early stage - the pressure on both players will be enormous, as a single loss could prove decisive.

Readers of Chess Moves will have heard this before, but it is a genuine shame that the game's top honour should be decided over such a short match. Twelve games are woefully few, particularly given the level of anticipation attached to this match.

The dates of the remaining games are as follows:

Game 3: 12 November | Game 4: 13 November | Game 5: 15 November | Game 6: 16 November
Game 7: 18 November | Game 8: 19 November | Game 9: 21 November | Game 10: 22 November
Game 11: 24 November | Game 12: 26 November

If a tiebreak is required, it will take place on 28 November.

England teams in action

While most of the chess world's attention is directed at events in Chennai, England's men and women are in action in the European Team Chess Championship in Warsaw (7th - 18th November).

Pleasingly, England's Open team consists of our top five players:

- GM Michael Adams; GM Luke McShane; GM Nigel Short; GM Gawain Jones; and GM David Howell

The team began with a 3-1 win over Poland, followed by a disappointing 1-3 loss against Greece the next day. Having reached 50% after two rounds, it must have been strange for the England team to find themselves paired against Russia in Round 3. Normally, Russia would be expected to be at or near the top of the table. In the event, a 2-2 result flattered the Russians, who can count themselves lucky to have escaped with a halved match. Gawain Jones notched up an excellent win against Morozevich.

Funding worries had put the women's team's participation in doubt for a time, but a week after the ECF Annual General Meeting, Director of International Chess David Openshaw was delighted to be able to announce that a team would be sent after all. Representing England are:

- IM Dagne Ciuksyte; WIM Sabrina Chevannes; WGM Anya Corke; WFM Meri Grigoryan; and WFM Kanwal Bhatia

At time of writing, it has been a tough struggle for our team, with consecutive 0-4 defeats in the first three rounds (against France, Poland and the Czech Republic).

London's chess festival

Chess appetites not sated by the world championship match and European team championship will not have to wait long for their next tasty treat. On 7th December the 5th London Chess Classic will begin in the Olympia Conference Centre in Kensington, London.

The proximity of the two events already discussed has caused a change in format this year. Instead of the 8- or 9-player elite standard play round-robin event to which we have become accustomed, this year's Classic will be a 16-player rapid play competition, starting on Wednesday, 11th December. The players will be seeded into four groups of four in a double round-robin format. The top two in each group will progress to the quarter-finals of the knockout stages (matches of two games).

All of England's open team will be participating, as well as Michael Sadler, in a very welcome debut in this event. The rest of the field includes world champion Vishy Anand (although of course we may have to put "ex-" in front of the title by the time the Classic begins), former champion Vladimir Kramnik, greatest ever female player Judit Polgar, and super-GMs Fabiano Caruana, Hikaru Nakamura, Boris Gelfand and Peter Svidler.

If you have been paying attention, this makes for a total of thirteen players. The remaining three spots are being held for the two highest scoring players from the first four rounds of the 9-round FIDE Open event, which starts on Saturday, 7th December. The organisers believe that this is the first time such an opportunity has been offered to players in an open event, and it is certain both to boost the quality of the entry and to add spice to the early rounds.

The final place in the 'Super Sixteen' is being held open for the possibility that Magnus Carlsen might be available and willing to play after his exertions in Chennai. An unnamed player is on standby if Carlsen does not take part.

From a spectator's point of view, the switch to a rapid play format in the top event will ensure plenty of exciting viewing, whether on site or online. It will be interesting to see how audiences respond to the change.

Of course, the London Chess Classic is not just about the elite event. As well as the 9-round FIDE Open, there will two weekend tournaments, a 5-round weekday tournament, four 6-round rapid play tournaments and another four 6-round blitz events. On top of this, there are simultaneous displays by Jon Speelman (11 December), Julian Hodgson (12 December) and John Nunn (13 December). Details may be found at the LCC website: www.londonchessclassic.com.

The organisers have taken advantage of the fact that the elite event will only be occupying the auditorium from the middle of the festival to arrange a special conference on the first weekend on the theme of 'Successes and Challenges: Improving School Chess Practice, Research and Strategy'. The list of speakers is impressive. Your editor will be there and will be reporting in the next issue of Chess Moves.

As always, proceeds from ticket sales for the London Chess Classic will go to the Chess in Schools and Communities charity. As a trustee of the charity I can fairly be accused of bias, but it is a very worthy cause.

Player of the Year

Finally, hearty congratulations to Mickey Adams, who scooped the ECF Player of the Year award for 2013. This was a worthy complement to the superb vein of form Mickey showed in Dortmund earlier this year, and he is a very worthy winner.

- *Andrew Farthing*

ECF Annual General Meeting

The 2013 Annual General Meeting of the English Chess Federation was held at the Euston Square Hotel, London on Saturday, 12 October. I was present in several capacities - representing the Midlands Counties Chess Union, Worcestershire Chess Association and Worcester & District Chess League and individually as the Previous Chief Executive. This report is not an official ECF account of the meeting; it is one (I hope, attentive) participant's recollection.

To begin at the end, the meeting confounded expectations and astonished attendees by finishing on time, without even making use of the additional half an hour allowed in the federation's Articles and Bye Laws. Credit for this remarkable achievement must go to outgoing Non-Executive Chairman, Mike Gunn, who coped with a full agenda deftly and even-handedly. That Mike was not carried in triumph from the room on the shoulders of the participants is a shame the rest of us must bear, but it would be remiss of me not to record my sincere appreciation of Mike's service as Chairman. He will be missed.

What follows is not a chronological account of the meeting. For purposes of clarity, my report is split into three sections: election results; decisions taken; and other matters discussed.

ELECTION RESULTS

BOARD

President: **Andrew Paulson** defeated Roger Edwards by 169-106

Chief Executive: **Phil Ehr** defeated Andrew Moore by 257-18

Non-Executive Chairman: No election (position removed - see below)

Director of Finance: **David Eustace** (uncontested)

Non-Executive Directors: **Sean Hewitt** (150 votes) and **Julian Clissold** (145) were elected. Also standing were Angus French (133) and Jack Rudd (111).

Director of Home Chess: **Alex Holowczak** (uncontested)

Director of Junior Chess: **Lawrence Cooper** (uncontested)

Director of International Chess: **David Openshaw** (uncontested)

Director of Membership: **David Thomas** (uncontested)

Commercial Director: New post (see below). Appointment to be made by the Board.

OTHER

(All of the following elections were uncontested.)

FIDE Delegate: **Nigel Short**

Chairman of Finance Committee: **Mike Truran**

Members of Finance Committee: **Ray Clark and Ian Reynolds**

Chairman of Governance Committee: **Chris Majer**

Members of Governance C'ttee: **Mike Gunn, Richard Haddrell and Andrew Leadbetter**. Chris Majer also announced his intention to add David Sedgwick to the committee.

As is traditional, a vote of thanks was passed in appreciation of the work of outgoing officials. The ECF continues to rely to an enormous extent on the willingness of volunteers to give up their time and energy in the service of English chess, and it is important to acknowledge the debt that we owe them. In a similar vein, I am sure that I speak for the vast majority in wishing the new Board well for the coming year, along with the teams of managers and officers, who do so much work for us all.

DECISIONS TAKEN

1. County Championship rules

(a) The NCCU proposal to create an option to field a 12-player team in a 16-player section at the National Stages and to reduce the number of sections from seven to six, with differences of 25 points between each of the grading limited sections was **defeated**.

The Director of Home Chess had presented a counter-proposal, increasing the number of players in the Open section to 20 players and in the U120 section to 16; amending the U160 section to U170; and abolishing the U100 section.

Reflecting the feedback received from my consultations, I tabled an amendment changing the Open section to 16-player teams and the U120 section to 12-player teams. An additional amendment was tabled by another delegate reinstating the U100 section (as a 12-player team event).

Both amendments were passed. The vote on the resulting amended proposal - in practice, the *status quo* with the exception of a change from an U160 section to U170 - was extremely tight but saw the proposal **defeated** on a card vote by 88 votes to 89. The County Championships are, therefore, unchanged.

(b) The SCCU proposal to amend the rule requiring teams to be played in descending order of grade (with a 10-point leeway permitted) so that it simply required that players be in order of "current playing strength" was **defeated**. Once again, therefore, the rules are unchanged.

2. Business Planning

Following the revelation that the Board had removed the requirement to produce an annual Business Plan and to maintain a Strategic Plan from its responsibilities, I tabled a motion requiring these to be reinstated. (I consider that these are essential components in a well-organised and focused organisation.) The motion was **passed**.

3. Board positions

The proposal to abolish the role of Non-Executive Chairman and to create a new role of Commercial Director was **passed**. For obvious reasons, an election could not be held for a role which did not exist until this motion was passed, and the authority to appoint someone to the role now rests with the Board.

4. Membership requirements

A motion amending the wording in respect of membership requirements for competitions was **passed**. It should be noted that the amendment was intended to clarify the existing rule, not to amend its substance.

5. One Member One Vote (OMOV)

Sean Hewitt had tabled a proposal that the Board investigate the viability of Directors being elected directly by individual members, with a view to bringing proposals to the April 2014 Council meeting.

This proposal was amended to broaden it into a review of the balance between the voting powers of direct members (or their representatives) and those of affiliated organisations and full individual members.

The amended proposal was **passed**. To reiterate: the passing of this proposal initiates a review, not - at this stage - any substantive changes.

6. Sanctions against cheating

The SCCU and Chess in Schools and Communities proposal instructing the Board to establish procedures for imposing sanctions in proven cases of cheating was **passed** without objection. It should be noted that the Board had made clear in advance of the AGM that it was already intending to do this.

7. Membership requirements for ECF-organised school team competitions

This subject had been a cause of controversy in the run-up to the AGM. The Board had previously decided to revoke an exemption for the National Schools Championship in respect of the rule requiring ECF membership from all players in events organised and graded by the ECF.

It was argued that requiring membership was a deterrent in particular to schools with weaker, occasional players as well as being an unwelcome administrative burden for teachers.

There was a significant majority in favour on a hand vote, but a card vote was requested (and agreed) on the basis that those voting against included representatives with particularly large numbers of votes. The result of the card vote, however, was still clearly in favour of the proposal, which was duly **passed**.

8. Manager of Senior Chess

The proposal to create the role of Manager of Senior Chess was **passed**.

I raised the concern from my consultations that the proposed reporting line into the Director of International Chess may not be the best choice. An amendment leaving it to the Board to determine the most appropriate reporting line was **passed**.

Two motions tabled prior to the AGM were withdrawn:

- **Complaints Procedure** - It was apparent before the meeting that a procedure which related only to ECF officials below Board level was going to be unacceptable to Council. The Chairman of the Governance Committee, Chris Majer, announced that the proposal was withdrawn and that David Sedgwick would be invited to join the committee in order to draft improved procedures.
- **Redefinition of the “requisitionists”** (i.e. those empowered to place proposals on the Council agenda) - Sean Hewitt announced at the relevant point of the meeting that he accepted that this was a matter which could be postponed to a future meeting and voluntarily withdrew the proposal, to the grateful cheers of those in attendance.

OTHER MATTERS DISCUSSED

- **Charitable Status** - There was no substantive news as such other than a restated ambition by the Board to take this forward. The Chairman announced that it was the Board’s intention to appoint someone - possibly paid - to prepare the necessary paperwork. A formal decision to proceed would require the approval of Council.
- **Home Chess** - This was the first of two Directors’ reports to generate lengthy discussion (25 minutes). In this instance, it related to an incident at the 2013 British Championships which led to a complaint being lodged against one of the Directors. The Board considered the complaint and the (conflicting) accounts of the parties and other witnesses and decided that no action was appropriate. This was perceived as a lack of support by the Manager of the British Championships, who resigned as a consequence.
- **International Chess** - There was considerable discussion (28 minutes) of the Director’s decision not to send a team to compete in the Women’s European Team Championships. The Director, David Openshaw, explained the basis for what had clearly been a difficult and very reluctant choice, namely a shortfall in available funding of some £4,000 and unavailability of a number of players, for various reasons. An e-mail from Jovanka Houska was read to the meeting, setting out her somewhat different perspective on events. It would be fair to say that there was general dismay at the fact that no team would be sent, but I could not claim that there was a clear view among the attendees as to whether the decision had been the correct one.
- **Awards** - It was commented upon that there had been no nominations received for Club, Congress and Website of the Year and that this was probably due to the failure to publicise the wish for nominations on the ECF website. There was a commitment to rectify this in 2014.

It was noted that responses to the Player of the Year vote had been very poor. 7,500 people were e-mailed inviting nominations, from which only 76 responses were received, a number apparently frivolous. This seems to mark a deterioration from previous years, although the cause is unclear.

The next meeting of the ECF Finance Council will be on 12th April 2014 in London. The 2014 AGM will be held in Birmingham on 11th October.

- *Andrew Farthing*

Grandmaster Danny Gormally annotates ...

The FIDE World Cup, which took place in Tromsø, Norway from 9 August to 3 September, proved a disappointment for the English participants. Gawain Jones was edged out in Round 1 by Russian Aleksandr Shimanov after multiple play-off games. Michael Adams lasted one round longer, being eliminated in Round 2 by Ukrainian Yuri Kryvoruchko, also in the play-off games.

Despite this, the World Cup provided a wealth of fighting chess. The format requires strong nerves, but in the end class showed through in the victory of Vladimir Kramnik, who won 9 games and drew 13, culminating in a 2½-1½ win over Dmitry Andreikin in the final.

GM Daniel Gormally has selected three games - all Sicilians! - from the event and annotated them for Chess Moves [picture by John Nunn]



Gata Kamsky (2741) - Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (2775) [B82]
FIDE World Cup 2013, Tromsø (4.1)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.f4 d6 7.Be3 Nf6 8.Qf3!

Kamsky is coming to this game with the most aggressive attitude possible. He is out for blood! In the previous round “Shak” had knocked out a very promising Chinese junior, but now roles were reversed and Kamsky had to fill the part of old stager against rising young gun.

Rather like the gnarled detective Harry Callaghan in the film Magnum Force where he takes on a troupe of upstart young traffic cops, led by Davis, played by David Soul. Like Callaghan, Kamsky is licensed to use ‘lethal force’.

8...a6 9.Bd3 Be7 10.0-0 0-0

I like 10...Bd7! here. The idea is to keep the king in the centre for as long as possible, retaining maximum flexibility. 11.Kh1 (11.g4? h5!) 11...h5! A model demonstration of how it often pays to keep the king in the centre! Now as well as preventing g4 forever, Black has his own attacking ideas, with ...h4 followed by ...Nh5. 12.Rae1 h4 13.Nxc6 Bxc6 14.Qh3 b5 15.a3 Qb7 Black has excellent counter-play, and his king is perfectly safe in the centre. He went on to win in the game Kummerow-Bachmann Schiavo, Bad Wiessee 2008.

11.Kh1 Bd7

11...Nb4 is a solid reply, with the idea of sometimes eliminating the potentially dangerous bishop on d3. After the further moves 12.Rac1 Bd7 13.Be2 d5 14.e5 Ne4 15.Nxe4 dxe4 16.Qxe4 Nxa2 17.Rcd1 Nb4 18.c3 Nc6 Black had more or less equalised, and the game later ended in a draw in Mitkov-Kveinys, Turin 2006.

12.Rae1 b5 13.a3 Rab8 14.Nxc6 Bxc6 15.Qh3!

A typical idea in such positions. e5 is now always in the air.

15...Rfd8

Apparently Korchnoi had already tried 15...Rbd8 here, many years ago. The idea is that if White responds with the obvious 16.e5 dxe5 17.fxe5 Qxe5 18.Rxf6 Black has 18...Rxd3!

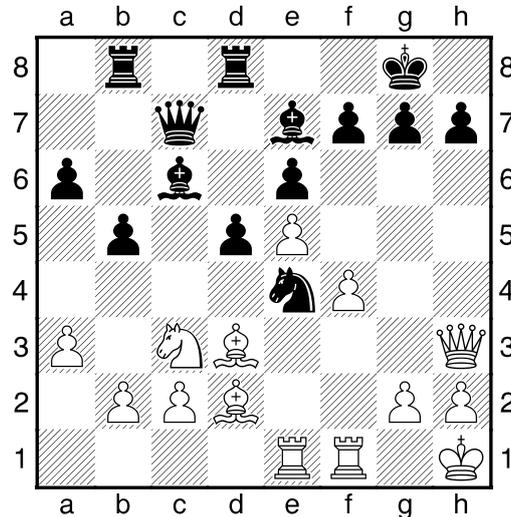
16.Bd2

Black does not fear 16.e5 as the exchange sacrifice 16...dxe5 17.fxe5 Qxe5 18.Bf4 (18.Rxf6? Bxf6 19.Qxh7+ Kf8 and the king is perfectly safe) 18...Qh5 19.Qxh5 Nxh5 20.Bxb8 Rxb8 gives him plenty of compensation for such a small investment.

16...d5

Shak stays true to his active style, but perhaps he didn't realise the strength of the approaching storm...

17.e5 Ne4



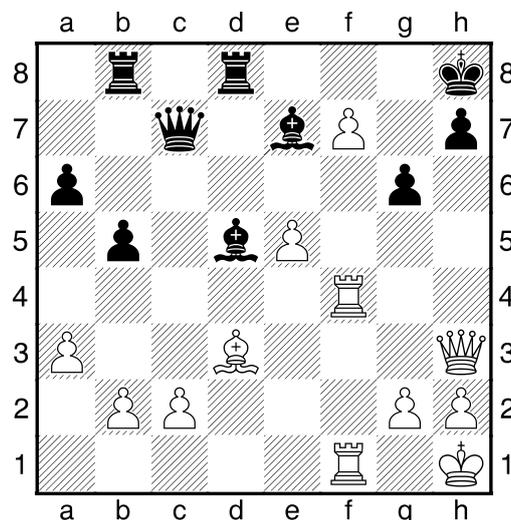
18.f5!!

Very powerful play by Kamsky, going straight for the throat. It's always a worrying sign as a defender when your opponent simply ignores your threats to win material, and blithely continues with his attack. "I know what you're thinking, punk. You're thinking 'Did he fire six shots or only five?' Now to tell you the truth I forgot myself in all this excitement. But being this is a .44 Magnum, the most powerful handgun in the world and will blow your head clean off, you've gotta ask yourself a question: 'Do I feel lucky?' Well, do ya, punk?" (By contrast, 18.Bc1 Nxc3 19.bxc3 g6 would pretty much kill any attacking ambitions white may have had.)

18...Nxd2 19.fxe6 Ne4 20.exf7+ Kh8 21.Nxd5!

Further spicing up the soup.

21...Bxd5 22.Rxe4! g6 23.Ref4



23...Kg7?

Despite the apparent brilliance of the White attack, it's only through this seemingly natural move, protecting against the threat of Bxg6, that sends Black hurtling over the precipice. "Briggs was right. I guess you guys don't have the experience."

It was imperative to defend against White's next with 23...Qc6! which would have kept the game very unclear. 24.Qg3 Kg7 25.h4 though retains very dangerous threats for White. Probably only a computer could cold-bloodedly defend against such an attack - for a human White's threats are just too fearful.

24.e6!

Setting up a huge threat of queening the pawn followed by Rf7, which forces Black's next.

24...Rf8 25.Qe3!

But now the queen joins the attack, and Black is doomed.

25...Bc5

Trying desperately to eliminate one of these monsters with 25...Bxe6 would fail as well: 26.Qd4+ (26.Qxe6 Rb6 27.Qe4 Rf6! allows Black to put up stern resistance) 26...Kh6 27.Rh4+ Bxh4 28.Qxh4+ Kg7 29.Qf6+ Kh6 30.Rf4! Qxf4 31.Qxf4+ Kg7 32.Qd4+ Kxf7 33.Qa7+ Kg8 34.Qxa6 and White will surely win in the long-run.

26.Qe1!

Renewing the threat of a check on the long diagonal.

26...Bd6?

A better defence was offered with 26...Be7 but after 27.c4! bxc4 28.Qc3+ Kh6 29.Qd2 Kg7 30.Bxc4 Bxc4 31.Qc3+ Kh6 32.Rxc4 Qd6 33.Rc6 Qd5 34.b4 it looks horrible for Black - the extra piece is little comfort when you are so positionally dominated.

27.Rh4! Be7 28.Qe3! h5

28...Bxh4 29.Qd4+ Kh6 30.Qxh4+ Kg7 31.Qf6+ Kh6 32.Rf4 is finito.

29.Qd4+ Kh6 30.Rxh5+

The Black king is stripped bare. "A man's GOT to know his limitations."

1-0

(Editor's note: It's all over whichever way the rook is captured. 30...gxh5 leads to mate after 31.Rf6+ Bxf6 32.Qxf6#. If 30...Kxh5, 31.Qxd5+ Kh6 32.Qe4 is devastating.)

Alexander Grischuk (2785) - Dariusz Swiercz (2654) [B90]
FIDE World Cup 2013, Tromsø (2.1)

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.h3

A line that has become very fashionable lately.

8...Be7 9.f4

9.Qf3 is the other option. White intends g4 and a quick treble o, (queenside castling for those not in the know) and has become extremely popular of late.

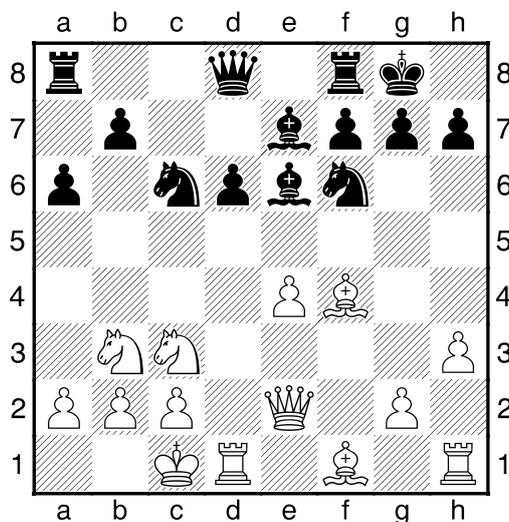
9...exf4 10.Bxf4 Nc6

Black failed to solve all his problems in another recent game: 10...0-0 11.Qf3 Nbd7 12.0-0-0 Rc8 13.g4 h6 14.Kb1 Qc7 15.Qg2 b5 16.g5! hxg5 17.Bxg5 and the open g-file gave White good attacking prospects in the game Kryvoruchko-Areshchenko, Kiev 2013.

11.Qe2 0-0

11...Nd7!? looks very natural. 12.0-0-0 Nde5 13.Kb1 0-0 14.g4 Rc8 15.Qg2 Re8 16.g5 Qb6 17.Nd5 Bxd5 18.exd5 Na5 19.Nxa5 Qxa5 20.h4 Bf8 21.h5! gave White a promising attack in Negi-Cheparinov, Helsingor 2013, although the game later ended in a draw.

12.0-0-0



White's set-up seems to me to be quite promising. Not only does he have useful pressure down the d-file against the weakling on d6, but the plan of g4-g5 followed by eventually h4 h5 and a breakthrough on the kingside, seems quite obvious and strong. But Black's next move rather takes the sting out of this idea, while creating his own play on the queenside.

12...Ne8!

A typical manoeuvre in the Najdorf, to make way for the bishop to come to f6, which in turn will increase Black's control over the e5 square. I first came across this idea in Danny King's excellent book *Winning with the Najdorf*, one of the first chess books I ever studied.

13.Kb1

13.Nd5 Bg5! reveals Black's other positional threat.

13...Bf6 14.Qe3

14.Nd5 can now be met by the sequence 14...Bxd5 15.exd5 Ne5 and I don't see any problems for Black. Later on, he will put the rook on c8, he can play ...g6 and bring the bishop back to g7. His position is a "rock". In such situations, it is favourable to retain as many pieces as possible, so White may be able to take advantage of having slightly more space.

14...Rc8 15.g4 Be5 16.Bxe5 Nxe5 17.g5 b5 18.h4 Qc7 19.Nd4 Qc5 20.Qf4 Nc7 21.h5!?

Although this is played with aggressive intentions, it does give Black certain counter-chances. Not only does White have the option of g6 in my situations, but he also can play h6, forcing the weakening g6 move, and then hope to exploit the mating net around the Black king.

21.Nf5!? b4! 22.Ne7+ (22.Na4 Bxa2+ 23.Kxa2 Qxc2 works out badly for White) 22...Kh8 23.Nxc8 bxc3 24.Nxd6 Rb8! 25.b3 Bxb3! 26.axb3 Qa3 27.Qc1 Rxb3+ 28.cxb3 Qxb3+ 29.Ka1 Qa4+ would have been an elegant way for the game to end in perpetual check.

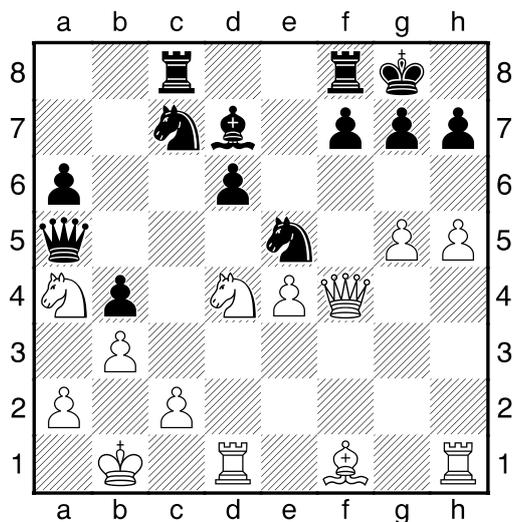
21...b4?!

In the Sicilian time is everything. You can't afford to play slow positional moves, every move must count. But here Black had the choice between two forcing moves, and ends up picking the wrong one. We can hardly blame him though, as the game was exceptionally sharp. 21...Bg4!? is the first choice of the computer, which wants to facilitate the idea of ...Ne6. The line 22.Nb3 Ne6! 23.Qd2 Qa7 24.Be2 Nc4! looks at least playable for Black, who starts to crank up the pressure.

22.Na4 Qa5 23.b3?!

Allowing the ...Bg4 idea again, but still Black refuses to take advantage. 23.h6! g6 24.b3 Bd7 would have transposed into the game.

23...Bd7?



Black misses 23...Bg4! although now White does retain a certain advantage after 24.Rd2 Ne6 25.Qe3 Nxd4 26.Rxd4 Qc7 27.Rd2 f5 28.gxf6 Rxf6 29.h6!

24.h6!

24.Nf5! Bxf5 25.Qxf5 Rcd8 26.h6 was also very strong. 26...g6 27.Qf6 Ne6 28.Rd5 Qc7 29.Bh3 Nd7 30.Qf2 Ne5 31.Qd2 Qe7 32.Qxb4 Qxg5 33.Bxe6 fxe6 34.Rxd6 with a large advantage to White due to the weakened black king.

24...Ne6 25.Qd2 g6

Of course, Black didn't want to open up the h-file, but often in chess we are confronted with a choice between two evils. However, 25...Nxd4 26.hxg7 Kxg7 27.Qh2! Rh8 28.Rxd4 didn't look much fun for Black either.

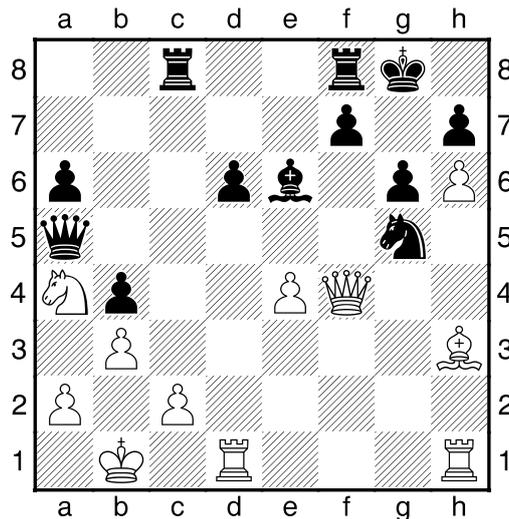
26.Nxe6 Bxe6 27.Bh3?!

Giving Black a slight chance. The direct 27.Qf4! f5 28.gxf6 Qd8 29.Bxa6 Ra8 30.Be2 Rxf6 31.Qd2 offered White a huge advantage.

27...Nf3?

27...Qc7! would have still offered stern resistance.

28.Qf4! Nxe5?



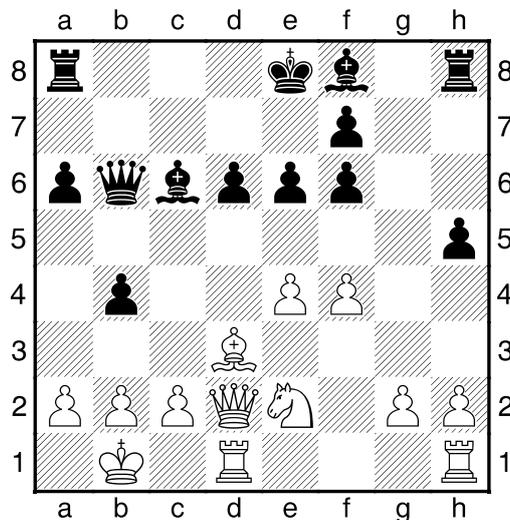
Under the greatest pressure, Black finally collapses. He had to try 28...Bxh3 29.Qxf3 Be6 30.Qf6 Qe5 31.Rxd6 Qxf6 32.gxf6, but defending this miserable ending is no barrel of laughs. In fact, he won't defend it at all, White is simply strategically winning.

29.Rd5!

A killing shot.

29...Bxd5 30.Qf6 1-0

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.Bg5 e6 7.Qd2 a6 8.0-0-0 Bd7 9.f4 b5 10.Bxf6 gxf6 11.Nxc6 Bxc6 12.Bd3 b4 13.Ne2 Qb6 14.Kb1 h5



15.f5?!

I think this is an inaccuracy as it allows the bishop to immediately occupy h6, where it controls some crucial squares.

15.Rhe1 a5 16.Bc4 Bxe4 17.Ng3 Bb7 18.f5 h4 19.Nf1 e5 20.Qe2 Bh6 21.Bd5 Ke7 and it was doubtful if White had enough compensation and Black went on to win in the game Landa-Malakhov, Tomsk 2001.

15.Qe1! was played by Adams. The idea is to re-route the Queen to h4 where it puts pressure on both the h and f pawns. 15...a5 16.Qh4 Be7 17.f5 e5 (Nf4 was threatened, with serious pressure) 18.Ng3 0-0-0 19.Bc4 Rh7 20.Rhe1 Rg8 21.Qh3! With this and the next move White frees up his queen - typically impressive positional manoeuvring from Adams. 21...Qf2 22.Nf1 Qc5 (22...Qxg2 23.Qd3! gives White a deadly attack on the light squares, as Ne3 and Bd5 are coming) 23.b3 Bd8 24.Qf3 Rg4 25.g3 Rhg7 26.Rd3 and White is better due to the light-squared weaknesses in Black's position. It turned into a typical "Mickey massage" and he went on to win in Adams-Kozul, Wijk aan Zee 1991. Ironically the unheralded but very strong Kryvoruchko had knocked Mickey out of the World Cup in the previous round. Perhaps if he had had a little word with him after their match, he might have avoided the fate that befell him in this game?

15...Bh6!

This is the significant difference from the Adams game. There, the bishop was much more passive, posted on e7.

16.Qe1 e5 17.Ng3

17.Qh4 can now simply be met by 17...Bg5.

17...h4 18.Nf1 Ke7

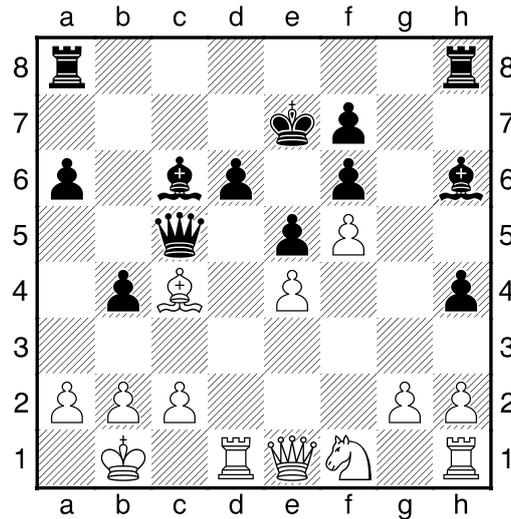
The knight on f1 would dearly love to go to e3, but because of this pesky bishop lasering down from h6, this is of course impossible. Small details, like where you put a minor piece in the opening, in fact can make a huge difference. The question is: can White afford to grab that pawn on h4, which

hangs there temptingly, like some forbidden fruit?

19.Bc4

After 19.Qxh4 Black has a rich choice, of course. White doesn't have any immediate threats so he could go for the queenside attack with 19...a5!? (19...Rag8! looks very strong as there is no easy way to defend the g-pawn without getting into a horrible tangle) 20.Qe1 a4 and Black has the makings of a scary attack, but at least in contrast with the game, White has an extra pawn to comfort him.

19...Qc5



20.Bd3?

This loss of time surely can't be good. Perhaps a sign of nerves?

20.Bd5 would have at least been consistent, but surely Kryvoru feared something. My guess is that he didn't like the look of 20...Rac8! 21.Bxc6 Rxc6 22.Qe2 Qc4, and indeed this looks very good for Black.

20.b3! looked scary, as Black will soon open the a-file after 20...a5 but there is at least some kicking chances after 21.Qxh4 Bg5 22.Qe1 a4 23.h4 axb3 24.Bxb3 Bf4 25.g3, which is unclear.

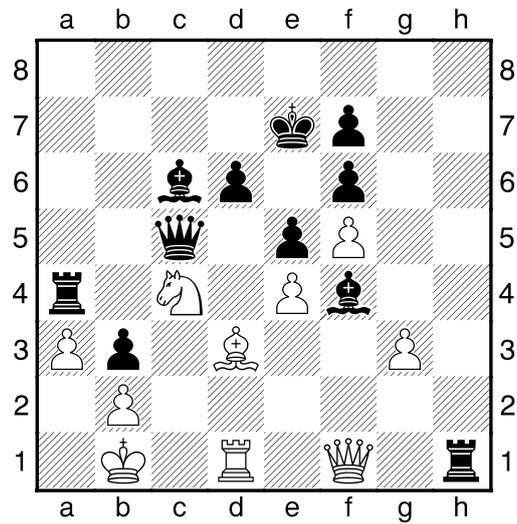
20...a5 21.Nd2 a4 22.Nc4 Bf4 23.Qf1 b3!

To use that delicious cliché, "Black's attack plays itself."

24.cxb3 axb3 25.a3 Ra4

To add to White's growing list of concerns, there is lateral pressure along the fourth rank to worry about as well.

26.g3 hxg3 27.hxg3 Rxh1



28.Qxh1 Rxc4!

Of course, Black could have just taken the pawn, but the elite players are very good at finding the quickest way to the finish line. It doesn't take long for Ivanchuk to finish off the White king with this pawn on b3.

29.gxf4 Rc2

Now Black has a multitude of threats, chiefly ...Qd4 and ...Qf2

30.Ka1 Rf2 31.fxe5 Qxe5 32.Rb1 Rd2 33.Qf1 Qd4 34.Qc1 Qxd3 35.Qxc6 Rd1 36.Rc1 Qc2

After any checks the Black king will find safe encampment on g7, so White threw in the towel.

0-1

Brendan O’Gorman - Chess Images Harry Grieve at Eastleigh 2013

See Brendan’s work at - <https://picasaweb.google.com/bpogorman>



Too many GMs?

Has the grandmaster title been devalued by the plethora of GMs on the current rating list? Is the GM crop too big? Chess Moves opens a can of worms and has a good rummage inside ...

The term “grandmaster” enjoys recognition well beyond the chess world. To the layman, it conveys expertise in (more than this, mastery of) an activity which itself has considerable mystique. Granted, in fiction, the character of the grandmaster may also be entwined with notions of eccentricity or madness, and not infrequently a touch of evil genius, but there is an implied admiration of the qualities conveyed.

Ironically, in the chess world, the grandmaster title has become something of a debased currency. From its origins in the concept of the “grand master” (i.e. the one supreme figure) through a select title granted to a tiny elite of world class players, it has reached the point where there were a staggering **1,416** living grandmasters listed by FIDE in September.

This article presents an overview of the evolution of the grandmaster title, in particular the FIDE title created in 1950 (and still in existence today).

Early history

An excellent account of the early history of the term “grand master”, “grand-master” or “grandmaster” in connection with chess may be found on Edward Winter’s superb Chess History website at <http://www.chesshistory.com/winter/extra/grandmasters.html>.

As identified by the *Oxford Companion to Chess* (1984), the first use of the term appears to be in a letter to *Bell’s Life* on 18 February 1838. Specifically, reference is made to “our past grand master”, namely a single preeminent individual, distinguished by his superiority over his rivals.

Sixteen years later, in 1854, the *Chess Player’s Chronicle* refers to De la Bourdonnais as “the Chess Grand-Master”, again arguably adopting the sense of **the** top player being the person worthy of the epithet.

On the evidence of Winter’s collation of references, it is only with the onset of the 20th century that the term “grandmaster” comes to apply to a (very select) group of players broadly deemed to be what we would term “world class”.

FIDE takes control

Following the Second World War and the death of the world champion, Alexander Alekhine, FIDE was accepted as the world-wide governing body for chess, with responsibility for the organisation of the world championship and the allocation of titles.

In 1950, for the first time, the title of “grandmaster” was formally awarded by the FIDE General Assembly, in conjunction with a Qualification Committee. Chess was a ‘smaller’ game then than now, of course, at least in terms of the numbers of participants globally in its competitive form, but even so, the number of grandmasters (GMs) created was conspicuously small.

In total, 27 GMs were named, of whom 15 received the title on the basis of their current strength - specifically, they included the world champion (Mikhail Botvinnik) and the participants in the 1950 Candidates Tournament. The remaining 12 names represented living players deemed to have been world class at their peak, albeit in the past. Thus, for example, Akiba Rubinstein was officially designated a GM at this point, in recognition of the fact that he had undoubtedly been of the calibre to challenge for the world title (even if the vagaries of the selection of challengers at the time meant

that no such challenge ever took place).

Already, complications emerge. By accepting the notion that the title should be awarded on the basis of past - possibly long past - achievement, FIDE arguably undermined the purity of its title and created difficulties for itself in the future. No one could reasonably argue that the great Rubinstein had not been of a standard worthy of the term 'grandmaster'. It is clear that in 1912, for instance, he was comfortably the strongest active player in the world (Emanuel Lasker did not play in international competition during the years 1911-13, and Capablanca, good as he was, had not yet demonstrated his superiority). By 1950, however, Rubinstein's last public game of chess was nineteen years in the past.

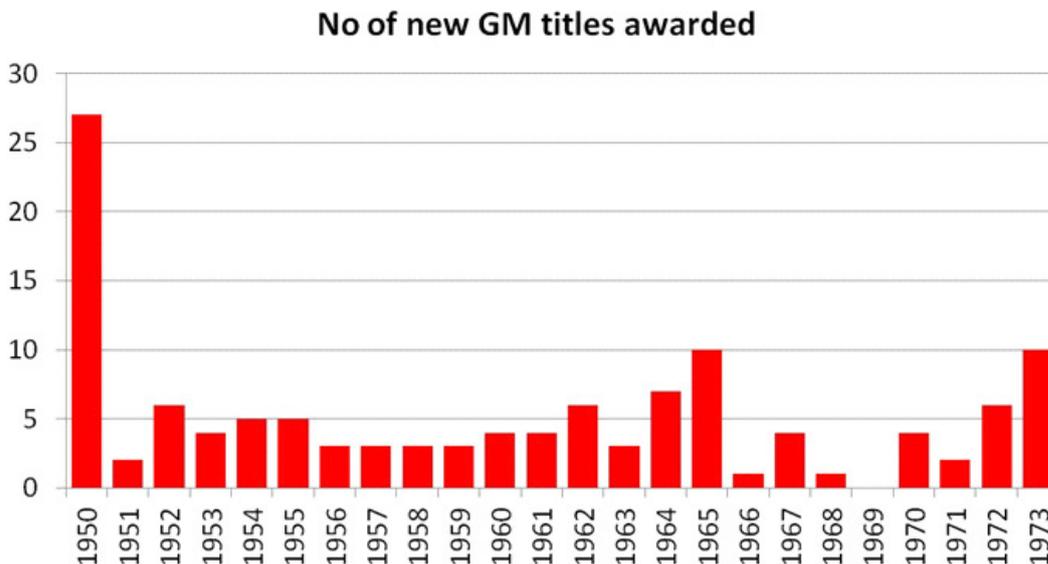
My admiration of Rubinstein's games knows no bounds, and I should be the last to argue that he did not merit the title of grandmaster. Of course he did. FIDE, however, had made a choice which was to have long-term implications, namely the idea that the GM title was for life, not just for the period during which the player achieved the relevant standard. Over the years, as GMs underwent the natural decline in playing strength which tends to come with ageing, the title would become not simply a sign of current strength but a badge of past glories.

This was not necessarily the wrong choice, even if with hindsight it seems slightly arbitrary to award the title to great players of the past due to the fluke of their longevity, while those such as Lasker, Capablanca and Alekhine, who had the misfortune to die before 1950, were not officially GMs in the eyes of FIDE.

With a certain inevitability, politics played a part in the initial selection. A two-time world championship challenger, Efim Bogoljubow, was omitted from the 1950 list despite being very much alive. As an émigré, he was not in favour with the communist countries of the Eastern Bloc and was only awarded the title in 1951 after a relatively close vote.

From 1950 to 1970, GM titles continued to be awarded on the basis of defined standards, such as tenure of the world championship or qualification for the Candidates. In addition, discretion was granted to the Qualification Committee to award titles on the basis of merit. Only in 1965 was the notion of a "GM norm" - a defined level of performance in an international tournament - introduced.

People worried that the title was being awarded too freely. This led to the major changes in the regulations in 1965 (when they coincided with a sharp spike in the number of titles awarded). As the following graph shows, the 1965 regulations did slow down the flow for a while, before the 1970 changes began an acceleration:



Source: List of titleholders in *International Championship Chess* by B M Kaçiaë (Batsford, 1974; pp.308-314)

Having started with the original selection of 27 GMs, FIDE's various regulations had increased the total of GM titles awarded by 1973 to 123, of whom 18 were deceased (including 11 of the 12 'living legends' awarded the title in 1950; Friedrich Sämisch was still alive). In other words, there were 105 living GMs in 1973.

Proliferation

From 1970 on, the critical component in the achievement of the grandmaster title was the "GM norm". This, in turn, reflected the increasingly dominant influence of ratings on the awarding of titles. After all, the average rating of the participants in a tournament determined the number of points required for a norm. If ratings became subject to inflation, the norms would become easier to achieve, and the value of the title would diminish.

For a time, there is little evidence that this was occurring. Taking a simple snapshot of the FIDE rating list shows the following:

Year	Number of GMs	Change
1950	27	
1973	105	+ 78
1981	176	+ 71
1991	320	+144
2013	1,416	+ 1,096

Admittedly, the increase during the eight years from 1973 to 1981 is almost identical to the increase in the preceding 23 years, indicating a tripling of the rate, but this may not be unreasonable in the post-Fischer surge and the growth in international events and prize funds. Chess was changing from a cottage industry to an international sport. That the award rate more or less doubled again in the period from 1981 to 1991 may suggest that standards were reducing, but this is not clear-cut.

What does stand out is the enormous increase during the 22 years from 1991 to 2013. What could be going on?

The current situation and its causes

In simple terms, the current GM title regulations stipulate that the following conditions must be met for the title to be awarded:

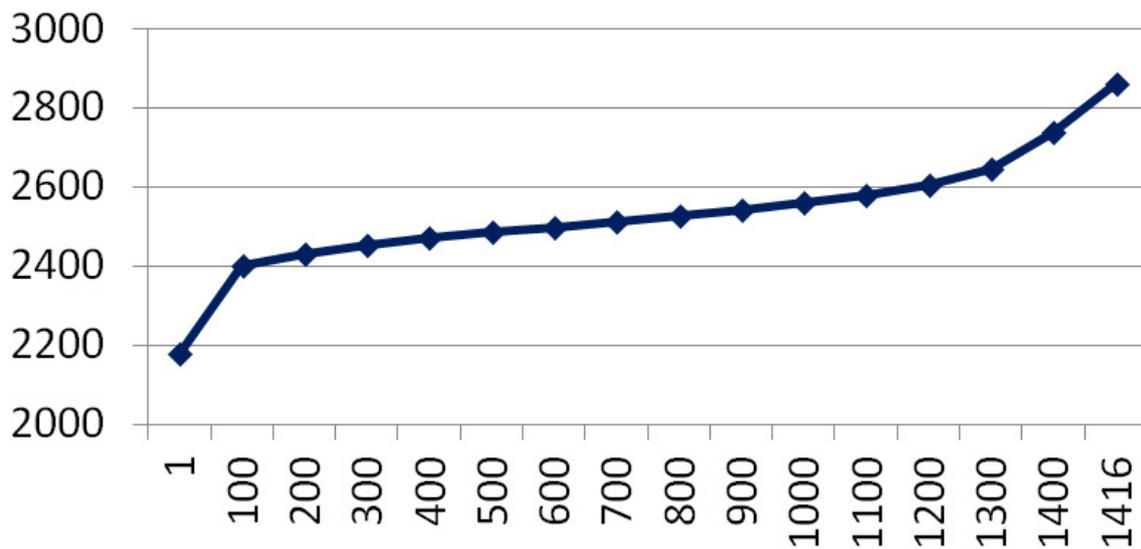
- Achievement of a rating of 2500; and
- Completion of a minimum of two "norms" (broadly equivalent to a performance in an event of 2600 or better).

There are additional possibilities, such as winning the World Seniors Championship, which bring with them the awarding of the title.

1,416 is a lot of GMs. How good are they? Based on the FIDE rating list, the following chart shows the rating of the GM at each interval of one hundred players on the list, in ascending of rating. In other words, each point on the graph represents the rating of the lowest-rated, 100th lowest-rated, 200th lowest-rated, etc.

[see graph on the next page]

Rating of every 100th GM on FIDE rating list (Sept 2013)



The extremes on the graph are represented by 84-year-old Arthur Bisguier, rated 2179, and 23-year-old Magnus Carlsen, rated 2862 (in September). This makes for an impressively wide range of 683 Elo points between top and bottom of the GM range. Drop another 683 rating points from the lowest-rated GM and one arrives at a rating of 1496, equivalent to an ECF grade of 106.

Taking the extremes may be unfair, of course. More significantly, the data show that there are some 590 GMs on the list with ratings below 2500, the minimum rating required in order to be awarded the title. Some players will have dropped below 2500 as their playing strength diminished with age; others will have fallen away due to reduced motivation, i.e. achievement of the GM title was the peak of their ambition.

The proliferation of GMs may be attributed to a number of factors:

1. **Geopolitical changes** - Prior to 1990, players in the then Eastern Bloc had very limited overseas travel opportunities. The Soviet Union, for example, was content for decades to sit on a cache of very strong players, undoubtedly worthy of the FIDE GM title but denied the option because the national federation was content to ration the supply of GMs. Since 1990, travel restrictions for players have been much less of a factor, and this has led to a sharp increase in the number of title holders.

2. **Ratings inflation** - The extent of ratings inflation is the source of endless debate, but the fact of it is almost universally accepted. Causes include changes in the rating rules, such as the regulation stating that a tournament winner could not lose rating points, and one-off adjustments (most notoriously, the 100-point 'gift' to essentially every female player on the rating list except Susan Polgar a quarter of a century ago). There are others.

In a world where there are no fewer than 50 players rated 2700 or higher - a level long associated not just with world championship standard but limited only to the **strongest** world champions - it seems futile to try to argue that ratings have not become inflated. Ratings inflation only matters when historical comparisons are being attempted; otherwise, what counts is the system's effectiveness in measuring **relative** positions at this point in time. It is relevant to the GM title, however, when the basis of the title regulations is pinned to a fixed rating (i.e. minimum 2500 and two 'norms', representing one-off performances at 2600 or higher).

3. **Title regulation changes** - Over the years, concessions have been made which made it easier to achieve a GM norm, e.g. allowing a cut-off in a team or individual event when a 'norm' had been achieved so that bad results in the final rounds had no impact, turning (say) an 11-round event into a 9-round event if the 'norm' had been achieved in the first nine rounds. The days when regulations

were amended to make it **more** difficult to achieve a norm seem to be behind us.

4. World-wide growth in chess - It is reasonable to argue that there are more strong players around today, simply because there are more players in total. The surge of chess interest in countries with vast populations such as China and India, for instance, has clearly swollen the ranks of international chess players.

5. Improved standards and the impact of computers - There are many who argue that the average standard of chess played in today's international competitions is significantly higher than (say) 40-50 years ago. Certainly, the average level of chess knowledge - be it opening theory, typical positions and plans or the play of one's opponents - is much higher. Databases have transformed the capacity of players to acquire and apply knowledge to their chess development, and chess engines are having a similarly transformative effect on players' ways of thinking about their choice of moves. (I am not referring to cheating, but to the shift from the 'general' to the 'specific' in chess thinking.)

It is possible, therefore, to see the arguments for both sides of the 'devaluation of the GM title' debate. On the one hand, there are more strong players active today than ever before, and average playing strength may well be rising. On the other, it seems undeniable that what we mean by a '2500 player' now is somewhat less than the same description would have meant in, say, 1970.

Assessing the weighting of these opposing factors is immensely difficult.

What is the GM title for?

This is an interesting question. I believe that the answer has evolved over time. For most of the 20th century, the term 'grandmaster' represented both an external badge of excellence and a target for the individual. In other words, it held meaning for the outsider, commentator or enthusiast as well as being a useful and potentially achievable goal for the strong player short of becoming world champion.

Now, I would argue, 'grandmaster' is essentially meaningless to anyone looking to place players in terms of historical significance. Let us consider the situation in a few other individual sports:

- **Snooker** - At the professional level, snooker is a much 'smaller' game than chess. A two-year rolling list of rankings is maintained by the game's governing body. At the time of writing, this included only 188 players, of whom just 129 had any ranking points at all. Even within this (relatively) narrow field, commentators and enthusiasts focus on 'Top Sixteen' status, a level which gives automatic qualification to the annual Masters and World Championship tournaments.

- **Tennis** - Again, ranking lists are maintained, in men's and women's singles and doubles. At the time of writing, there were 2,167 players on the men's singles ranking list. Rankings are used to determine entry into tournaments, i.e. whether a player has to attempt to qualify or is entered as of right. In practice, the focus is on the top few ranking positions only. When considering a player's place in the pantheon of tennis greats, ranking and prize money pale into insignificance behind the easy-to-understand concept of Grand Slam wins. Every year, there are four Grand Slams - Wimbledon and the US, French and Australian Opens. The sign of having 'made it' as a star of the game is victory in a Grand Slam - witness the persistent view that Tim Henman was a 'nearly man' of world tennis, because he never quite made it to a Grand Slam title, while Andy Murray's two Grand Slam victories are imbued with enormous importance.

- **Golf** - Like chess, golf enjoys high levels of participation at the professional and amateur level across the world, although 95% of professional golfers make their living from teaching rather than competing. Those who do play professionally do so on one or more of the professional golf tours. In the golf world, these are seen as existing in a hierarchy based on the money involved, with the PGA and European Tour as the top two. In the former, the top 125 money-earners obtain a 'tour card'

allowing participation for the following year without the need to qualify. A win in a tour event grants the player a tour card for two years, while a win in a 'Major' gives a five-year exemption from having to qualify. Twenty four wins gives the player a lifetime exemption, i.e. it is a sign of a genuinely world-class player.

As in tennis, 'greatness' tends to be defined in terms of Majors won. Notice is taken of world rankings, especially the number one spot, and, since golf - like tennis - generates very high financial rewards for its very best players, money earnings are tracked. However, once again, the sport focuses on its four biggest annual events - the 'Majors' - and ranks the place in history of its stars by the number of Majors won. Many-time winner of the European Tour Colin Montgomerie, like Tim Henman in tennis, is seen as having missed out on 'greatness' simply because he failed to win a Major. It may be unfair, but it is a useful shorthand.

In the light of this brief detour into other sports, it is interesting to revisit the definition of grandmaster which prevailed in chess for the first fifteen years of FIDE's involvement. Although there was room for exceptions, the title was essentially awarded to world champions and those who qualified for the Candidates. Numerically, this is quite comparable with Grand Slam and Major winners in tennis and gold respectively.

Where chess has shot itself in the foot, so to speak, is in its incessant tinkering with the world championship cycle, with the result that there is no consistency in the definition of what it means in practice to be a 'Candidate'. Indeed, in the years when the FIDE world championship was switched to a knockout format, the concept disappeared entirely.

Similarly, chess has not succeeded in establishing long-running 'majors' like the four Grand Slams in tennis, backed by a system of qualification for those insufficiently high-ranked to be granted automatic entry. The closest the game came was the short-lived World Cup in 1988-89. At various times, there have been annual tournaments which might well have been considered as significant as a 'Major' - Linares, for example - but the concept has never caught on.

Where does this leave us? The GM title fails to narrow down the field to anything like the extent needed. Ratings allow for a satisfactory system of world rankings, which we can and do track, even if inflation has made anything other than snapshot comparisons meaningful. Financial rewards in chess are complicated and not formally tracked, so there is no analogy to the 'money lists' produced in other sports.

From time to time, the creation of a new title, such as Super-Grandmaster, has been suggested. As best I can tell, this is intended to bring us back to the notion of 'world championship candidate' strength or thereabouts. In present-day terms, a FIDE rating of 2750 might fit the bill. In November 2013, this would encompass fourteen players, down to Michael Adams at 2752. There are, of course, players who have been of this standard below 2750 in the current ratings, most notably Ivanchuk, but the fact that, for the moment, he lies below the threshold does not invalidate the concept.

Motivation

It is undeniable that the GM title acts as a motivator for players. For those for whom the world championship or a top 20 ranking is never going to be a possibility, it is a title which carries weight within the chess world and (some) meaning to outsiders. In this sense, the title has value. It is almost inconceivable that a player who qualified for the title would fail to apply for it, and for IMs on the cusp, it must stir them to greater efforts in order to score the requisite norms and reach the 2500 threshold.

Nevertheless, the current situation is far from ideal, for the following reasons:

1. **The bar is set too low.** As we have seen, the volume of players qualifying for the title has rendered it practically meaningless as a benchmark for chess excellence. Ratings inflation has played its part in this. In the latest issue of Chess, GM Daniel Gormally writes about the chances of earning a living as a professional player. He concludes that a GM rated below 2600 simply cannot expect to make a living playing chess. Even between 2600 and 2650, it is becoming questionable.

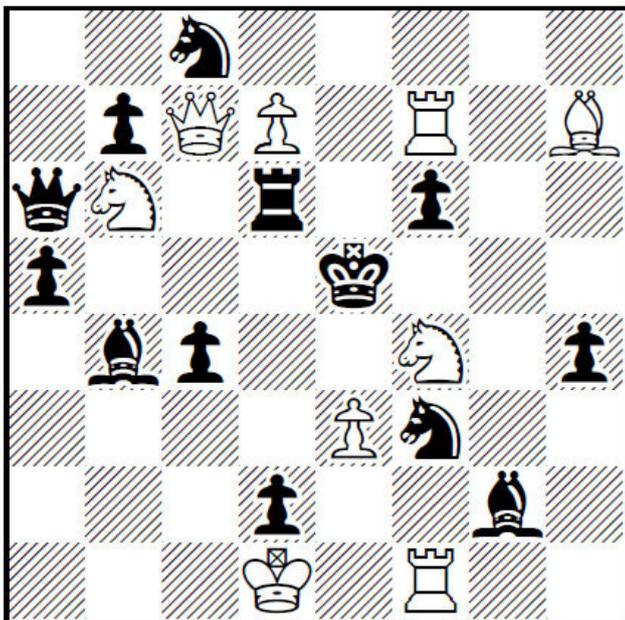
2. **The motivation doesn't last.** If FIDE wants the GM title to motivate players to strive towards the highest possible standards, creating as much high-class competition as possible, a title which is granted for life regardless of subsequent performance makes little sense. Look again at the comparison with the professional golf tours. Players have to battle every year to maintain their standing as a card-carrying member of the tour, albeit with scope for the very best players to extend their rights via defined levels of achievement. It's ruthless, but it makes for terrific sport and high standards.

I admire grandmasters. Their grasp of the game, even among the 'weakest' of the 1400 GMs, far exceeds anything I shall ever achieve, and it is laudable that a title exists to motivate players to reach a certain level and then to recognise their achievement. What bothers me is the lack of discrimination in defining the very best. For a game with such a rich history as chess, we owe it to ourselves to do better.

- Andrew Farthing



BATSFORD Chess Competition



Well done to the September/October winner -
James R Nicolson, Manchester

The correct answer was - 1. Rf5

Here's the next problem ...

W. J. Swords

The Problemist, 1963

White to play and mate in 2 --

Please send your answer (just the first move is sufficient) on a postcard or by email to the ECF Office, The Watch Oak, Chain Lane, Battle, East Sussex TN33 0YD (office@englishchess.org.uk). The first correct entry drawn on 10th January 2014 will win a Batsford voucher for any book on their current list!

Time Trouble Tales

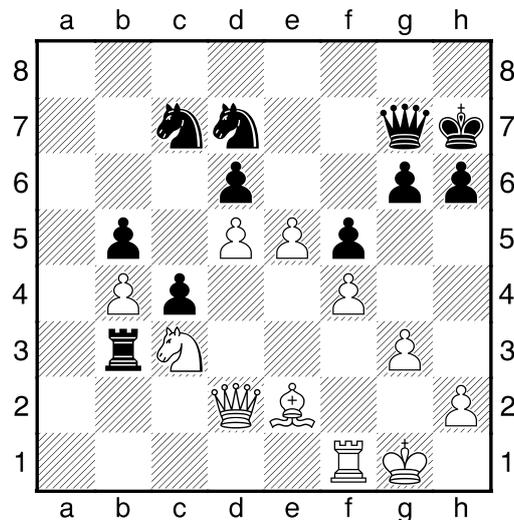
With digital clocks and incremental time controls rapidly becoming the norm, *Chess Moves* begins a series of short articles celebrating - if this is the right word - some of those occasions when, in the battle between human mind and analogue clock, the brain went on strike ...

(1) Reshevsky - Matulovic, Palma de Mallorca 1970

How could we possibly begin this series without an example from the late great Sammy Reshevsky? One of chess history's most notorious time trouble addicts, Reshevsky maintained a position in the world's elite for three decades. In an amazing number of instances, the American grandmaster was able successfully to navigate hair-raising complications with seconds on the clock, a testament to his fantastic instinct for the game. Occasionally, however, the maestro stumbled...

It is Round 15 of the 1970 Interzonal tournament. Reshevsky is not having the happiest of tournaments, starting the round with just 5½ points. He is up against Yugoslavian GM Milan Matulovic, a controversial figure most famous for taking back a move against Bilek at the previous Interzonal in Sousse with a brazen "Ich spreche J'adoube". Nicknamed "J'adoubovic" as a result, Matulovic's involvement in the following has a certain irony.

We pick up the game at White's 31st move. Both players are short of time, and Black has just played the weak 30...Ra3-b3. The ever-alert Reshevsky, unfazed by the lack of thinking time, spots a tactic:



31.Nxb5! c3

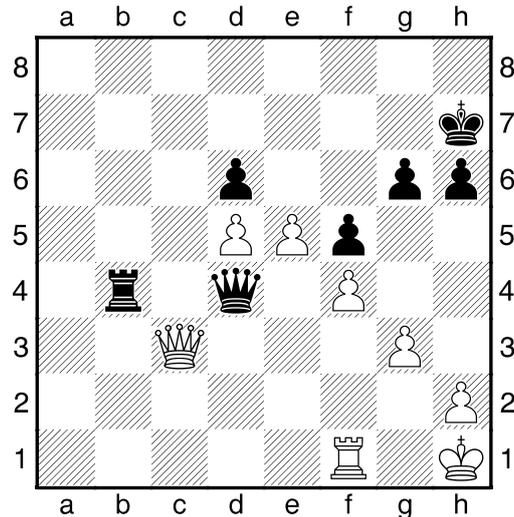
If 31...Nxb5, 32.Bxc4 wins easily. Matulovic finds the best try, but White is winning now.

32.Qc2 Nxb5 33.Bxb5

There was nothing wrong with 33.Qxb3, but Reshevsky's choice should still win.

33...Rxb4 34.Bxd7 Qxd7 35.Qxc3 Qa7+ 36.Kh1 Qd4

Here it comes... what would you play now?



At this point, I shall hand over to the tournament book edited by R.G. Wade and L.S. Blackstock (published by The Chess Player):

“Reshevsky now played **37.Qc8(??)** thinking that he was giving check to the black king. Matulovic looked a little in awe and then continued rightly and legally, **37...Qxd5+** and pressed the clock button. Reshevsky, thinking the move illegal, instantly pressed his button to put Matulovic’s clock in motion, and started to say, ‘You’re in ch...’. One could watch Reshevsky’s eyes follow from his queen along the rank, the incredulous look when he realised that white queen and black king were not on the same rank. He straight away picked up his queen and put it on c7 & switched to saying, ‘The queen went to here...’. But Reshevsky was up against a seasoned, unflappable Matulovic, who, having less than a minute on his clock, very quickly pressed his own clock and got the white queen back to c8.

“The whole incident took only five or six seconds. Reshevsky slumped in his chair. It was quite obvious that he was not trying to pull a ‘fast one’. The players accepted the correct state of affairs very amicably. Reshevsky’s queen had no legal move so no sanction could be applied.”

With sanity (of a sort) re-established, the game continued. Sadly for Reshevsky, his winning chances had evaporated with his over-enthusiastic shove of the queen.

38.Kg1 Qd4+ 39.Kg2 Qd5+ 40.Kh3 Rb7 41.exd6 Rb2 (sealed) ½-½

Reshevsky went on to finish in the bottom half of the table with 9½ out of 23 (! - they made tournaments big in those days).

Matulovic finished half a point below him, thanks to a deeply suspicious loss in the final round against Mark Taimanov (who needed a win to qualify for the Candidates Matches and, as it turned out, the dubious honour of being the first of Fischer’s 6-0 victims). It is widely assumed that Matuloviæ sold the point. One of the ‘giveaways’ was the “sensationally fast pace” at which he played such an important game (after arriving fifteen minutes late, only to spend time browsing through the bulletin from the previous round). Strange - if he had played at his usual slow pace and made a blunder in time trouble, it would have seemed plausibly like business as usual.

- *Andrew Farthing*

Grand Prix 2013/14 Leader Boards 6 November 2013

We present the first leader boards of the new season. The Grand Prix 2013-14 runs from 1st July 2013 to 30th June 2014. Remember, there will always be results in the pipeline. Players shown in **RED** are counting the maximum number of events.

180+						
	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	252763H	Harvey, Marcus R	Bicester	227	JG4440	505
2	241589G	Jaunooby, Ali Reza	Denton	204	G4139	504
3	119904D	Surtees, Mike J	Bolton	202	G17950	498
4	224790C	Villiers, Thomas	Muswell Hill	190	G17811	448
5	174940H	Bonafont, Philip R	Hemel Hempstead	194	G4017	440
6	113457H	Jackson, Oliver A	Cheshire/N.Wales *	188	G4741	411
7	121366A	Wells, Jonathan C	North Norfolk	180	G14103	401
8	105817E	Arkell, Keith CC	4NCL Cheddleton	237	G15972	386
9	119460E	Sowray, Peter J	Wood Green	216	G3668	379
10	245324B	Fernandez, Daniel H	Marple	216	P5857	370
11	273236B	Oyama, Akito	Cambridge City	190	JG17242	367
12	263810B	Wadsworth, Matthew J	Maidenhead	206	JG4383	360
13	112455K	Hebden, Mark L	4NCL Guildford	247	G4157	308
14	275891L	Abbas, Daniel	3Cs	181	JG5863	301
15	246394F	Payne, Matthew J	Worthing	184	JG5511	292

160-179						
	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	242398E	Hjort, Helge	Hendon	177	G3467	510
2	104852B	Whitehead, Mark A	Rochdale	165	G15489	475
3	162291C	Jackson, Paul G	Coulsdon CF	160	G4609	410
4	290163J	Shaw, Meyrick	Exmouth	173	G17941	402
5	113348C	Ilett, Raymond J	Peterborough	166	G4176	389
6	260784A	Allison, Conrad	Petts Wd & Orp'ton	163	JG17006	386
7	116801A	Patrick, David A	Courier Halifax	161	G5137	377
8	267990F	Landau, Jonathan	Hendon	175	G22677	372
9	118171D	Rogers, Tim L	Hendon	179	G6485	352
10	119124L	Slinger, AJ (Tony)	Undercliffe	172	G6481	343
11	113402E	Isherwood, Paul	Widnes	167	G6802	326
12	267281K	Fenwick, Hugh F	Mushrooms	170	G4785	314
13	125474B	Newton, Robert A	Rochdale	176	G5917	312
14	109533L	Dean, Robert A	Pudsey	160	G9164	310
15	270877C	Hayward, Alan	Streatham	176	G5803	300

140-159						
	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	140662A	Pride, Stephen C	Cambridge City	150	G3453	497
2	118873C	Shepherd, Graham C	Church Stretton	146	P6197	485
3	116382G	O'Gorman, Brendan	DHSS	154	G4320	462
4	112248E	Hartley, Dean M	Amber Valley	144	G4789	435
5	109622K	Desmedt, Richard E	Wombwell	153	G3411	433
6	108722J	Connor, Michael I	Great Lever	146	S15540	428
7	128713J	Wilson, Matthew R	Wigston	146	G17805	421
8	288301G	Sloan, Cecil	Watford	140	S6981	396
9	114423G	Lim, Yu-Chin (Peter)	Harrow *	141	G23561	370
10	117410B	Price, Andrew	Leamington	156	P2613	347
11	230106E	Clegg, Robert	Huddersfield	147	G3088	343
12	113949G	Joslin, Tim M	Lloyds TSB	148	G23798	335
13	118154D	Rogers, David R	Exmouth	149	S17987	317
14	283243E	Mitchell, Robert S	New Zealand	142	G17014	310
15	270505K	Miu, Marinell	Hounslow	147	S19995	306

120-139						
	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	259148A	Foley, Phil T	Upminster	137	G4414	594
2	283350F	Bullock, Lee	London *	123	G18801	525
3	123333G	Gilbert, David J	DHSS	121	G3430	504

4	264336E	Crouch, Timothy J	Kings Head	122	P5843	499
5	156972H	Wiggins, Andrew S	Redditch	132	G5594	407
6	248020H	Stone, Mark R	Petts Wd & Orp'ton	132	G4972	384
7	122817B	Horlock, Peter J	Godalming	138	G3991	365
8	220688C	Papier, Alan R	Bristol & Clifton	139	G6187	364
9	274379G	Macdonald, John R	Kings Head	124	G6972	348
10	258473G	Rowan, Daniel	Banbury	123	G22083	313
11	284700A	Ross, Stuart	Shifnal & Telford	133	G6695	292
12	120413A	Tidy, Norman F	Teignmouth	123	S17892	288
13	276572L	Egan, William J	Scunthorpe	122	G6039	274
14	154244J	McKeon, John E	Milton Keynes	121	G6326	271
15	123783E	Oliver, Bruce R	Bridlington	128	S3990	254

U120

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	140257C	Fraser, Alan R	Beck'nm & Bromley	108	G2908	551
2	258940A	Allen, Timothy S	Battersea	117	G4415	524
3	279615G	Crockett, Stephen J	Redditch	116	G6367	469
4	274725L	Fraser, Chris A	West Bridgford	100	S19796	396
5	111052E	Gardiner, Colin J	Falmouth	113	G1469	389
6	111361G	Goldsmith, Jennifer	Harrow	101	G6876	372
7	181078K	Robson, Caroline J	Barnet Elizabeth	104	G4002	341
8	256834C	Glover, Gordon L	Crusaders	114	S17628	337
9	180180G	De Santos, Andrew R	Preston	98	S15092	309
10	276212C	Mahony, Jonathan	Leeds	119	S18433	296
11	110369G	Everitt, David	St Francis & HHth	104	P102	270
12	113051B	Housden, Peter T	Bedford	102	G5516	269
12	261765B	Waddington, James	Bolton	101	G6639	269
14	279187A	Camp, Andrew R	Colwyn Bay	95	S17239	264
15	136890E	Broderick, Paul G	Shifnal & Telford	112	G20480	248

Women's Prix

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	111361G	Goldsmith, Jennifer	Harrow	101	G6876	372
2	181078K	Robson, Caroline J	Barnet Elizabeth	104	G4002	341
3	291359J	Johnson, Elizabeth	Surrey Congresses	73	JG17874	313
4	291487G	Dwarakanathan, Srinidhi	Barnet *	89	JG20426	305
5	286375D	Daniel, Sharon	Gtr Manchester *	105	JG6815	301
6	288605E	Raghavendra, Mahima G	Atherton	115	JG6900	289
7	275645G	Sit, Victoria	Coulsdon CF	129	JG6719	286
7	284928J	Ramaiya, Arushi	Surrey Juniors	85	JG6987	286
9	279664J	Ivanov, Elizabeth	Heathside Prep	121	JG6541	284
10	285553H	Davidson, Laura J	Sandhurst	97	JP6792	267
11	290760E	Vaseekaran, Vishnuja	Middlesex Juniors	51	G19408	242
12	291209A	Rahulan, Thivyaa	Cheddleton & Leek	73	JS17341	239
13	280020C	Kalaiyalahan, Akshaya	Richmond Juniors	178	JG6425	238
14	279461F	Wen, Jessica	Petts Wd & Orp'n	144	JG23681	223
15	279398C	Purvis, Anna	Surrey Juniors	124	JG25080	210

Junior Prix

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	252763H	Harvey, Marcus R	Bicester	227	JG4440	505
2	276302D	Higgs, Joshua	Sussex Juniors	178	JG6319	493
3	279727G	Balouka-Myers, Gabriel	Garden Suburb S	140	JG17131	492
4	277139B	Haridas, Girinath	Kent Jr Congresses	158	JG6693	485
5	282399J	Kalavannan, Koby	Surbiton *	159	JG6614	457
6	279726E	Balouka-Myers, Reuben	Garden Suburb S	120	JG6875	441
7	282441D	Verma, Aditya	Essex *	149	JG6670	433
8	280218B	Headlong, Benjamin	Wiltshire *	119	JG17125	423
9	279888J	Zhu, Richard	Camberley	162	JG6638	400
10	280161K	Lewis, Timothy	Middlesex Juniors	83	JG18940	396
11	282398G	Liang, Jake Z	Surbiton	169	JG6416	395
12	287093K	Akeya-Price, Robert A	Coulsdon CF	75	JG17030	394
13	273236B	Oyama, Akito	Cambridge City	190	JG17242	367
14	289709L	Balaji, Aaravamudhan	Middlesex Juniors	88	JS19423	362
15	291535C	Peck, Silas	Ipswich	162	JG19469	361

Grand Prix 2012/13 - final leader boards

180+

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	112455K	Hebden, Mark L	Braunstone	243	G4157	672
2	174270L	Hawkins, Jonathan	Consett	249	G3165	662
3	105817E	Arkell, Keith CC	4NCL Cheddleton	238	G15972	658
4	241589G	Jaunooby, Ali Reza	Denton	202	G4139	647
5	242398E	Hjort, Helge	Hendon	188	G3467	640
6	119904D	Surtees, Mike J	Bolton	195	G17950	618
7	126824H	Willmoth, Robert F	Hendon	194	G6495	604
8	175386B	Ghasi, Ameet K	4NCL e2e4.org.uk	244	G6779	592
9	156101H	Burnett, Jim	Worksop	197	G9194	590
10	261299K	Sarakauskas, Gediminas	4NCL Guildford	217	B19655	586

160-179

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	109622K	Desmedt, Richard E	Wombwell	162	G3411	605
2	270877C	Hayward, Alan	Streatham	176	G5803	563
3	266464B	Pink, Joshua	Colwyn Bay	169	G4601	559
4	162291C	Jackson, Paul G	Coulsdon CF	165	G4609	557
5	111565A	Greatorex, Roger	Llangollen	166	G5701	549
6	107574D	Bryant, Richard BE	Chester	174	P2289	546
7	116801A	Patrick, David A	Courier Halifax	168	G5137	529
8	247688F	Porter, Sam J	Trinity School	161	G21994	527
9	111035E	Gamble, Raymond J	Spondon	167	P383	526
10	283870K	Othman, Mustapha	Brighton & Hove	165	B20498	520

140-159

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	234765K	McDonagh, Michael	Capenhurst	153	S18605	589
2	116382G	O'Gorman, Brendan	DHSS	155	G4320	563
3	282176L	Hilton, Tim	3Cs	154	G18703	555
4	283075K	Bovtramovic, Vladimir	Russia	156	G18255	535
5	247342C	Alexander, Ken RD	Tiverton	143	S6705	527
6	230106E	Clegg, Robert	Huddersfield	159	G3088	522
7	109533L	Dean, Robert A	Pudsey	151	G9164	520
8	128713J	Wilson, Matthew R	Wigston	154	G17805	518
9	279757E	Stewart, T Noel	York RI	140	S21968	513
10	111388E	Goodfellow, Russell R	Tunbridge Wells	159	G5615	512

120-139

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	111052E	Gardiner, Colin J	Falmouth	120	S1469	601
2	259148A	Foley, Phil T	Upminster	129	G4414	589
3	264336E	Crouch, Timothy J	Kings Head	127	P5843	572
4	187467G	Gibbs, John	Wombwell	129	S6234	572
5	274379G	Macdonald, John R	Kings Head	130	G6972	561
6	114423G	Lim, Yu-Chin (Peter)	Harrow *	121	G23561	553

7	258940A	Allen, Timothy S	Battersea	135	G4415	542
8	122344G	Macreamoinn, Brian	Salisbury	134	S19230	533
9	276572L	Egan, William J	Scunthorpe	124	G6039	511
10	154244J	McKeon, John E	Milton Keynes	127	G6326	501

U120

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	279615G	Crockett, Stephen J	Redditch	117	G6367	658
2	283350F	Bullock, Lee	London *	118	G18801	624
3	187281D	Summerland, David	Leeds	117	G9005	579
4	140257C	Fraser, Alan R	Becken'm & B'mly	104	P2908	555
5	275787E	Oyama, Harunobu	Cambridge City	115	G17382	539
6	276212C	Mahony, Jonathan	Leeds	118	G18433	533
7	258473G	Rowan, Daniel	Banbury	115	G22083	532
8	113222C	Humphry, Phil S	Harrow	115	S17583	516
9	111361G	Goldsmith, Jennifer	Harrow	102	G6876	491
10	261765B	Waddington, James	Bolton	95	G6639	475

Women's Prix

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	273523E	Dean, Angelica	3Cs	130	JG6742	558
2	291537G	Sucikova, Svetlana	Hertford	163	JS20260	552
3	263175B	Milson, Amy F	Louth	146	JG17148	510
4	268368E	Giles, Yasmin	Kent Jr Congresses	171	JG17490	508
5	290588H	Somton, Anita	Bury Knights	59	JG6955	499
6	284508J	Sheremetyeva, Elizaveta	Oxfordshire Jrs	99	JG6692	495
7	111361G	Goldsmith, Jennifer	Harrow	102	G6876	491
8	285553H	Davidson, Laura J	Sandhurst	99	JP6792	490
9	279461F	Wen, Jessica	Petts Wd & Orp'n	127	JG23681	471
10	280020C	Kalaiyalahan, Akshaya	Richmond Juniors	167	JG6425	464

Junior Prix

	Ref	Name	Club/Area	Grade	Mem No	Pts
1	282399J	Kalavannan, Koby	Surbiton *	156	JG6614	615
2	277139B	Haridas, Girinath	Kent Jr Congresses	153	JG6693	614
3	283609K	Moreby, James E	RGS Newcastle	132	JG8495	603
4	275719K	Klingher, Dominic	Barnet Schools	124	JG6722	574
5	282441D	Verma, Aditya	Essex *	134	JG6670	572
6	273236B	Oyama, Akito	Cambridge City	183	JG17242	572
7	283656H	Golding, Alex	Coulsdon CF	127	P6814	570
8	275426F	Anilkumar, Anantha (jr)	Coulsdon CF	150	JG17157	567
9	277163K	Boswell, Jacob Connor	Cheddleton & Leek	130	JG6421	567
10	284222B	Huang, Dion	Essex Juniors	143	JG6749	567

Q&A - STEVE CROCKETT



The clear winner of the U120 section of the 2012/13 Grand Prix was congress stalwart Steve Crockett, from Redditch. One of the most active players in England, he clocked up an impressive 180 standard play and 94 rapid play games in the twelve months to 30 June 2013. Steve's cheerful and friendly nature has made him a popular figure on the weekend congress circuit. Chess Moves caught up with him to find out more ...

[Photo courtesy of Brendan O'Gorman]

Tell us a little about your background.

SC: I've been playing regularly on the UK chess circuit for several years now on weekends in tournaments and also in the Birmingham and Worcester chess leagues and for Worcestershire. I'm in the top 5 most active players in the UK and really enjoy travelling to new towns and venues, meeting & socialising with lots of people on the circuit and pitting my wits against other regular tournament players. I've been fortunate enough to have won 24 chess tournaments over the past 4 years, including a share of the British Minor chess

championship in 2012 and have also won 2 ECF Grand Prix titles. I also work full time in the civil service when I'm not playing chess.

How long have you been playing chess?

SC: I played as a kid then gave up for a long time before starting out again when I was 33 online then over the board and now I'm hooked again!

What attracts you to the game?

SC: It's a good way to totally take your mind off other things and focus on something totally different for a while and I guess I enjoy solving problems and learning new skills and there's always so much to learn with chess!

How important to you is improving your chess, and how do you go about it?

SC: It used to be very important and in the past I've had lessons, spent ages on DVDs, books, practicing etc but I've been playing long enough now to know I'm realistically never going to get massively better than I am while working full time etc so I largely play to enjoy the game and I enjoy competing.

What is your favourite chess book and/or DVD, and why?

SC: I like a wide range of chess books and DVDs, but a book I particularly enjoyed recently was 'Amateur to IM' by Jon Hawkins - had some really nice, varied material and he explained it in a way that was easy to understand and read through - plus as a regular congress player myself, I'm always interested to read anything from the top regular players on the UK scene like Hawkins, Arkell, Williams and Hebden.

Who is your favourite player, and why?

SC: Of the top GMs I'd say Nigel Short, as his success in getting to a world championship final really inspired me to play more when I was younger and had such a positive impact on the game in this

country. On a more day to day level, I'd say Alan Fraser of Beckenham and Bromley, as he's the most active player in Britain and has been for years. He shows no sign of letting up and has so much dedication to competitive chess, even after playing for decades and he can still play some wonderful stuff. I hope I'm still as active and passionate about my hobbies when I get to his age.

What are you looking for in a chess congress, and do you have a favourite?

SC: I love the e2e4 congresses run by Sean Hewitt, which combine excellent playing conditions with good accommodation on site if needed and a consistently good quality of opponents, but have many favourites for different reasons, from having a good record at the congress (Preston/Warwickshire) to wonderful all round destinations & weekend trips (South Lakes, Scarborough).

Do you have a most memorable or favourite game?

SC: I play so much that this is a particularly tricky question, but I would say a really hard-fought endgame win against Peter Wood in the last round of the Preston Intermediate chess congress in 2011 was especially memorable as it meant I won a chess tournament outright for the first time and it was a very tough tournament for me too with a lot of good players so it was a surprise to win but a very nice and hard-earned one!

Here is a more recent example of Steve's winning ways:

**Steve Crockett (116) - David Howes (111) [A01]
British U120 (3), 07.08.2013**

1.b3 d5 2.Bb2 c5 3.e3 Nc6 4.Bb5 Bd7 5.Nf3 f6?! 6.0-0 a6 7.Bxc6 Bxc6 8.d3 Qc7 9.Qe2 0-0-0 10.d4 e6 11.Nbd2 Bd6 12.dxc5 Bxc5 13.Nd4 Bd7 14.c4 Kb8 15.Rfc1 Qd6 16.cxd5 exd5 17.a3 Nh6 18.b4 Ba7 19.N2b3 Nf5 20.Nc5 Nxd4 21.Bxd4 Bb5 22.Qg4 Rdg8 23.a4 Bc6 24.b5 axb5 25.axb5 Bxb5 26.Nd7+ Qxd7 27.Qf4+ Ka8 28.Rxa7#



CHESS HOLIDAYS in the Lake District

A relaxed, informal 5-night holiday at this well-known Country House hotel, including a 7-round Swiss competition and tutorials on chess tactics. Suitable for the inexperienced as well as local club players ...

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Congratulations to Akshaya

Congratulations to Akshaya Kalaiyalahan, 4th in the U12 girls at the EYCC 2013!

Godalming Open Junior Chess Tournament 2013

The 13th Godalming Open tournament was held at Aldro School in Shackleford on Saturday 31st August. The event was organised by members of Godalming Chess Club. Eighty three players from all over the south east took part and the standard of play was particularly good this year. Many of the players had been playing during the holidays in a variety of tournaments including the British Championships held in Torquay. We had refreshments provided by the Aldro parents and raised just over £150 for the school charities.



The winners and runners up in each section are as follows -

U18 1st Anshu Ramaiya (132) 2nd=Daniel D'Souza -Eva (131), Gwilym Price (146) and AlexGolding (158)
U13 1st= Girinath Haridas (154) and James Golding (142), 3rd= David Phillips (123)and Andrew Smailes (116)

U11 Lucy Bennet-Stevens (104)2nd Paul Northcott

U10 Matthew Gray (97) 2nd= Manoj Chandar (53) and Luke Prisk (28)

U9 Tim Sel (136), 2nd= Aiden Gajadhar (76), Dev Atara (74), William Golding (80), Atticus Fear (36) and Ranesh Ratnesan.

EU Youth 2013 final report

- by Chris Howell, Head of England Delegation [below, l-r - Matthew, Oliver and Boris]



The England team had another unbeaten round to finish the EUYCC 2013 tournament, with all 3 members of the team completing their first FIDE partial ratings, and receiving medals at the closing ceremony.

Matthew Howell (Sussex Juniors) finished on 3.5/9 to finish in 16th place in the U14 boys, giving him an 8-game partial rating of 1520; a fine performance as he was the bottom seed in the tournament.

His brother Oliver (also Sussex) made the best score of 4.5/9, having played against many of the top seeds in the tournament, and he finished 9th= (11th on tiebreak) in the U10 boys with a partial rating of 1488 from his 6 rated games.

Boris Pastukhov, like Matthew representing England in an individual tournament for the first time, scored a creditable 4/9 to finish 14th in the U10 boys, with a 1371 7-game partial rating achieved.

Overall this new tournament was superbly organised by International Organiser Zdenek Fiala and the Czech Federation, with their President IM Petr Pisk a constant presence helping with all aspects of the tournament. There were good prizes, many activities and trips organised outside the chess itself, and all games were instantly available on-line as they were played. The tournament will be held again in the Czech Republic next year, and is a fine addition to the range of junior International events now available for our young players; it deserves to expand from the 107 players from 15 federations taking part this year.

My thanks to the players for their excellent effort both during the games and in preparation, to our wonderful translator/photographer Natalia Pastukhova, and to all at the ECF office and in the junior hierarchy who helped make this trip a success.

Eton College Rapidplay - results

- 1 Hampton School A 24.5
- 2 Reading School 21.5
- 3-4 Wilson's School A, Winchester College 21
- 5 RGS Guildford 20.5
- 6 Wilson's School B 18.5
- 7-8 Hampton School B, Westminster Under School 17.5
- 9 Eton College A 16
- 10-11 Dulwich College, The Abbey School Reading 15.5
- 12-13 Bristol Grammar School, Wilson's School C 14.5



- 14 King's School Grantham A 14
- 15 The King's School Canterbury 13.5
- 16-17 Worth School, Hampton School C 13
- 18-20 Eton College B, Dame Alice Owen's School, Wilson's School D 12.5
- 21 Vandyke Upper 12
- 22 St Paul's Girls' School 11.5
- 23 Radley College 11
- 24 Piggott School 10.5
- 25 Meden School 8.5
- 26 King's School Grantham B 7.5

NYCA U14 & U18 championships

The National Youth Chess Association U14 & U18 County Championships were held in Northampton on Sunday. Counties from all over the country competed for these two prestigious titles. The U18s have to field a team of eight players and the U14s a team of 12 players.

Three rounds of closely fought Rapidplay saw Berkshire win the U18s with an impressive score of 21.5/24. Sussex won the U14s with 30.5/36, only losing a single game. Many thanks to IA Peter Purland and Kevin Staveley, who ran the tournament.

European Youth Chess Championships 2013

Final results for the team are -

Player	Section	Total
Akshaya Kalaiyalahan	Girls U12	7
Matthew Wadsworth	Boys U14	6.5
Ravi Haria	Boys U14	5.5
Akito Oyama	Boys U14	5
Anita Somton	Girls U10	5
Brian Tarhon	Boys U12	5
Charlie McLaren	Boys U12	5
Cosima Keen	Girls U14	5
Sacha Brozel	Boys U10	5
Adam A Taylor	Boys U16	4.5
Amy Hoare	Girls U18	4.5
Laura Davidson	Girls U10	4.5
William Claridge-Hansen	Boys U14	4.5
Adam C Taylor	Boys U16	4
Alex Golding	Boys U10	4
Oskar Anton Hackner	Boys U18	4
Peter Andreev	Boys U16	4
Peter Batchelor	Boys U18	4
Harry Grieve	Boys U12	3.5
John Fraser	Boys U16	3.5
Rufus Duff	Boys U18	3.5
David Redman	Boys U16	3
Jude Lenier	Boys U18	2.5

Congratulations to Akshaya for coming 4th in her section!

A big thank you to everyone for their hard work in making this event happen - the organisers at home and here, the hotel staff, coaches, parents and the players.



Clockwise from top left ---
Setting up (Alex Golding, foreground); after-game
analysis with Coach D'Costa; GM Nick Pert dispenses
wisdom; the team in Budva; William Claridge-Hansen



Making the Grade

With the publication of the July 2013 grading list, Chess Moves takes a look at what it tells us about the English chess scene.

Love them or loathe them, there is no getting away from grades. From time to time, we come across a player who claims to be immune to their lure, even to be ignorant of his or her own grade, but do we ever entirely believe them?

There is an undeniable fascination in these numbers, so significant to the vast majority of us in the 'competitive' chess world and so utterly meaningless to outsiders. Speak to a non-player about your grade, and you will soon find yourself abandoning the numbers and reverting to more understandable words or phrases such as 'weak club player', 'average', 'county player' or - we can but dream - 'grandmaster'.

Like many, I pretend not to care overmuch what my own grade is, while eagerly watching out every six months for the news of the new grading list's appearance. I am sufficiently numerate and rational to understand perfectly well that a movement of a point or three is statistically insignificant, and yet the publication of the July 2013 list saw me failing miserably to mask my disappointment that my grade rose to 'only' 149. Somehow, reaching 150 for the first time had become imbued with importance which - bizarrely - seems missing from a grade just one point lower.

(On the other hand, I consoled myself with the achievement of a new personal best. 149 is a whole point higher than my previous peak of 148, and - again - that single point feels far more significant than it really is.)

The purpose of this article is to take a broader look at the latest grading list and to see what, if anything, it tells us about the English chess scene. Do not expect earth-shattering revelations, but if you set the bar at 'quite interesting', I shall try to deliver.

The ECF grading list covers both Standard Play (SP) and Rapid Play (RP). Only players who played at least one graded game in one of these categories during the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013 appear on the list.

Number of graded players

There are 11,827 players named on the July 2013 list. This represents a fall of 554 (about 4.5%) from the figure in the ECF's 2011/12 Achievement Report. On the other hand, it is very similar to the figure from the previous year and indeed most of the preceding five years.

Demographics

About a quarter (2,709, i.e. 23%) of the players listed are identifiable as **juniors**.

There are 632 players (5%) identified as **female** in the July 2013 list. This is a little (3.4%) down on the previous year but still well ahead of any of the five years before that. It remains, of course, far too low.

A comparison with the FIDE rating list indicates that just over 11% of rated players globally are female. This is still nothing to shout about, but it shows how lamentable the situation is here.

Of the female players on the list, two-thirds (66%) are identifiable as juniors. By contrast, 20% of the male players on the list are juniors. In other words, outside of junior chess - where boys 'only' outnumber girls by 5½:1 - the ratio of male to female players is a staggering **42:1!**

It will not come as any surprise that a greater proportion of males stick with chess past their childhood (or come to the game in adulthood), but the extent to which the sexes differ may raise a few eyebrows. Competitive chess in England is utterly unattractive to the female of the species past school age, and the game is all the worse for it.

Rate of play

Unsurprisingly, Rapid Play is a game for the young. Over half of the juniors on the list (1,497; 55%) do not have a SP grade. 1,238 juniors (46%) did not play a single SP game in the last year.

Of the 4,279 players with a current RP grade, more than half (2,243; 52%) are juniors. Whereas 83% of juniors have a RP grade, the equivalent figure for adults is just 22%. Only 220 adults have a RP grade but no SP grade, i.e. only about 2% of adult players focus exclusively on the quicker forms of the game.

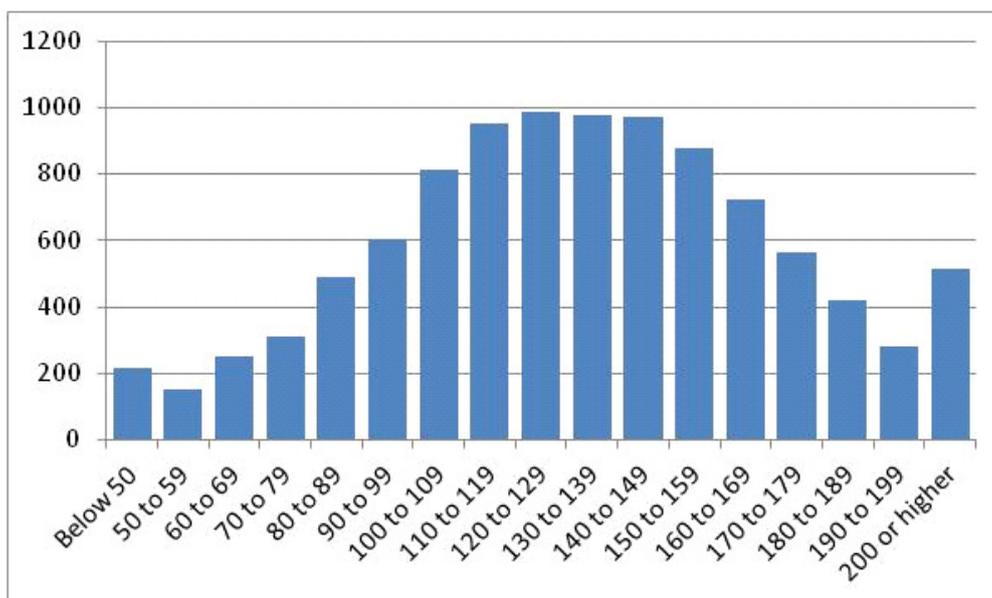
Playing strength

Much as the grades themselves absorb our attention, the numbers have value in the comparative rather than the absolute. What we want to know is how we compare: with the chess-playing population as a whole, our opponent, our club mates and our own past performances.

On a purely mathematical basis, I can reveal that the average SP grade is **133** (median 132). The average RP grade is much lower at **105** (median 107). A quick glance suggests that the difference is due to the presence of a large number of grades of 0 (as opposed to the lack of a grade) in the RP list, whereas there is just a small handful of 0 grades in SP. This seems natural; RP is the arena in which players who are new to the game, especially juniors, tend to exercise their competitive chess muscles. Inevitably, a proportion will fail to register positive results against graded players.

It should be emphasised that the ECF grading list is not restricted to English players. There is some distortion due to the presence of players not registered for England, particularly at the higher end of the grading spectrum. For example, the list of the top 120 English-registered players given on the ECF website drops down as far as those graded 210. The grading list as a whole includes 344 players graded 210 or above, i.e. it is inflated by the presence of such stars of the English chess scene as Magnus Carlsen and Vladimir Kramnik (an eye-watering 290 and 288 grade respectively) whose games in the London Chess Classic were both FIDE-rated and ECF-graded.

Bearing this in mind, let us look at the distribution of players by SP grade band. The following chart shows the distribution of the 10,110 players with a SP grade in each 10-point grade band (the sub-50 and 200-plus grade bands have been shown as single populations at the two extremes):



Unsurprisingly, most of us (55%) sit somewhere in the middle, in the range from a grade of 100 to 159.

Number of games played

The grading database includes a record of the number of graded results in the last year. For the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013, this shows the following:

Standard Play	211,123
Rapid Play	71,610
Total	282,733

This figure is lower than the 308,600 cited in the 2011/12 ECF Achievement Report, but the earlier figure covers a 13-month period, due to the change in the end of the grading year from 31 May to 30 June in 2011. Adjusting for this - assuming that each of the 13 months had similar levels of activity - suggests a fall of about 2,000 in the total number of results in 2012/13. (The latest total is, however, very slightly up on the 2010/11 figure.)

As is often the case, ensuring that one is comparing like with like is not easy. For example, the change in the ECF's policy on accepting the results of games played by ECF members in a number of Yorkshire leagues not otherwise graded will have reduced the latest total a little.

On average, each of us plays **20** SP games a year. The average is significantly affected by the existence of some astonishing individuals who play much, much more than the average. The champion in this regard is the indefatigable Alan Fraser, who chalked up an impressive **269** SP games in 2012/13. 75 players completed a century or more of SP games, and 673 players surpassed the half-century.

As a result of this, it may be more sensible to consider the median number of SP games played, i.e. the number of games played by the person located in the middle of the list when ranked in order of activity. In this instance, the figure is 15 games.

Adding the RP games into the mix creates an average number of games played (SP and RP) of **24**, and a median value of **17**.

It will be important to track how these figures change, if at all, over the coming years as the ECF's membership scheme settles down.

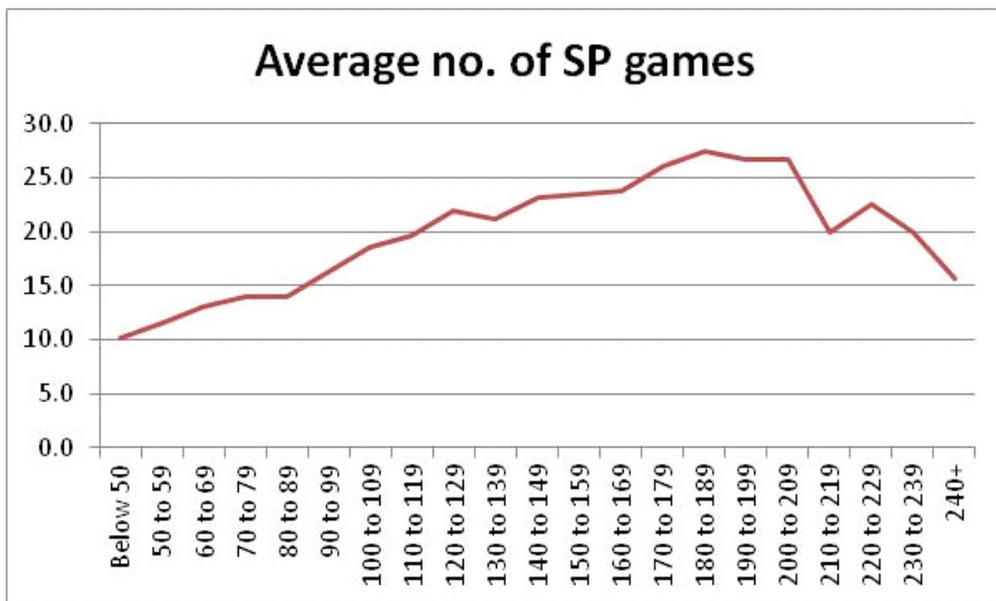
Setting the boundaries for graded sections in congresses

The preceding sections are all very well, you may say, but of what use is this information? If you are a congress organiser, I'd argue that it is quite important.

Deciding on the boundaries for the graded sections in congresses (and other events) is never easy, and organisers know all too well that they can never satisfy everyone. For each player delighted with the prospect of being one of the top seeds and in with a good chance - theoretically, anyway! - of a prize, there will be another bemoaning the fact that he or she is facing the prospect of an entire section of higher graded players. More significantly, players in the latter camp may choose not to enter the event, so striking the right balance is crucial for maximising entry numbers.

Who are the players most likely to play more graded games and, therefore, typically more likely to compete in congresses?

The following graph shows the average number of SP games (y axis) in the last year by players in various grade bands (x axis):



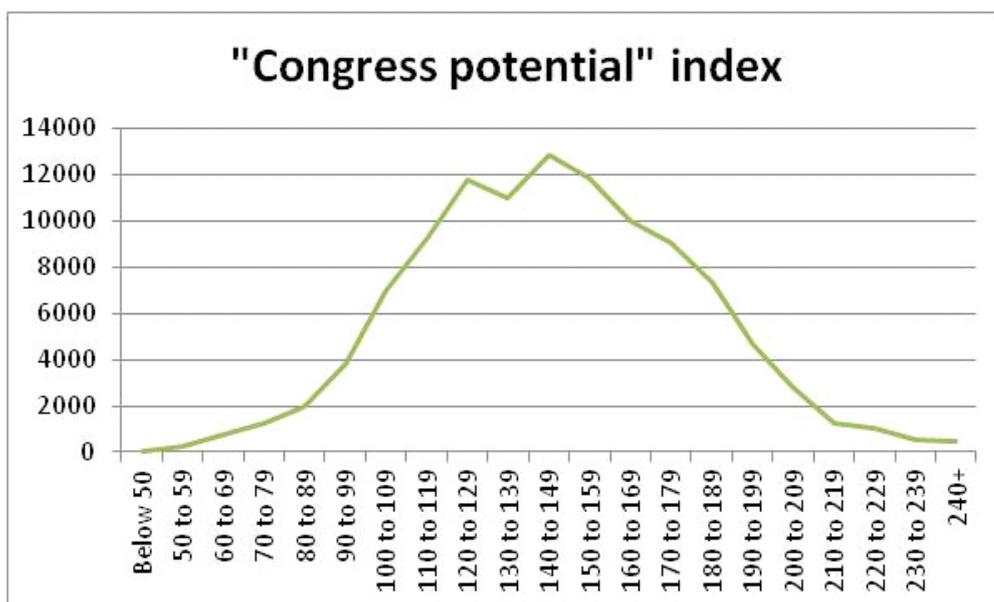
The steady rise in the average number of graded SP games played as the grade of the player increases is very noticeable. It reaches a plateau in the 170-209 range (the core 4NCL population perhaps?) before starting to fall away, possibly because some of the players in the higher grade bands are more likely to compete in overseas events and, as a consequence, are not necessarily captured in the ECF's grading data.

Just as a bit of fun, I constructed a very crude "Congress potential" index in an attempt to show the approximate size and shape of the current market for congress organisers in England to tap into. The result is classic "back of a fag packet" analysis, but I present it for what it may be worth.

The 'index' is calculated as follows:

$$(Av. no. of SP games \text{ LESS } Est. no. of League/Club games) \times (No. of players in grading band)$$

For the purposes of this exercise, the estimate for the average number of club and league games to be deducted is 10. Whether this is accurate is largely immaterial, as it is the pattern that emerges which is of interest:



Compared with the first graph in this article, which showed a simple distribution of players into grade bands, the above chart shows a much more pronounced bunching in the middle grade bands.

Each of the ten-point grading bands in the range 140 to 189 shows significantly greater 'congress

potential' than would be suggested simply by its share of the population of players. In the range 20 points to either side of this (i.e. 120-139 and 190-209), the market potential is also good, but about half as attractive as the central range from 140 to 189.

By contrast, the potential for players in the 0-99 range to wish to compete in SP congresses is conspicuously lower than would be suggested by their proportion of the player population.

Naturally, other factors come into play when organisers are defining their graded sections. At one extreme, the prestige of even one or two very strong players (i.e. GMs) is more than enough reason to run an Open section rather than, say, a "stars barred" under-210 event. In the lower grades, I am sure that many organisers wish to encourage as wide participation as possible from inexperienced players or those who have previously steered clear of congress chess.

There are no 'correct' solutions. Nevertheless, I believe that there is food for thought here. The choice of boundaries in the critical 120-209 range - and even more so in the narrower 140-189 range - has the potential to affect entry numbers considerably.

For example, the figures suggest that a section set at under-180, with the next section down starting at 140 or 145, is embracing a very large proportion of the subset of players most likely to be interested in entering a congress. In my experience, many players start to feel wary of entering grade-restricted sections when the upper limit is 20-25 points or more above their own grade (for some, the threshold might be as low as 15 points), i.e. the tournament experience risks shifting from 'enjoyment' into 'masochism'. The question is: how big is the potential market being deterred at the lower end of the grade band?

A similar point applies in an Open, where the critical point is the setting of the boundary of the section immediately below. Pitch it too low, and the potential number of players who will be put off by the prospect of being 'beaten up' by players graded 185+ starts to rise rapidly.

Ultimately, every organiser rightly sees it as a matter of choice, and - I repeat - there are no absolute right or wrong solutions. Much of what has been presented here will come as no surprise to the majority of players and organisers, but - if they are anything like me - they may not have appreciated the extent to which some of the variations emerge. No statistical analysis could or should dictate how organisers construct their events, but I hope that this article helps to inform their deliberations.

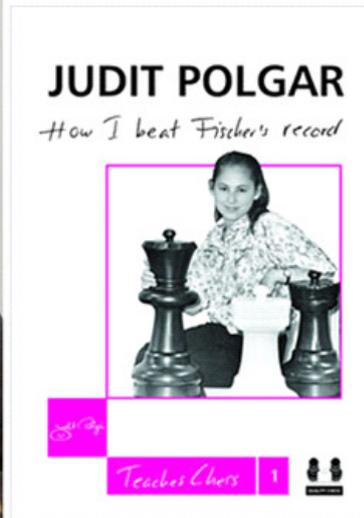
- *Andrew Farthing*



Chess Moves Bookshelf “And the Winner is ...”

The winner of the 2013 ECF Book of the Year award was announced on the Federation’s website early in October ...

The winning book this year combines three subjects (autobiography, lessons and best games) into one volume which together tell the story of the early years of the strongest woman player in chess history.



Judit Polgar ‘How I beat Fischer’s record’ is the main title, but the cover also features ‘Judit Polgar Teaches Chess 1’ and this reflects how the book is constructed. The period covered is from Judit’s first chess lessons to the age of 15 years, 4 months and 28 days when she broke Fischer’s record of the youngest ever grandmaster. Using her training notes from the early days to the grandmaster, the first 12 chapters cover her learning curve (chapter 1, Tricks; chapter 12, Attacking without Queens). She then moves onto Decisive Games; Memorable Games; and finally Amsterdam 1989 OHRA Tournament Diary, where she more than holds her own in a strong grandmaster tournament.

The examples are well chosen and written from Polgar’s experiences over the board. Her tactical and attacking abilities were apparent at an early age as well as her confidence and determination. But what stands out is the enthusiasm, enjoyment and youthful exuberance of the young teenage girl, which makes the book a joy to read.

Polgar’s upbringing was of course unusual with exceptional focus on chess with 2 elder sisters who both became grandmasters. The amount of chess work that she and her sisters went through at an early age was immense; but it seems to have been a happy childhood, with none of the difficulties one often sees with prodigies.

Lastly, a tribute should be paid to the publishers, Quality Chess. The hardback book is well laid out and beautifully produced. Numerous photographs of the Polgar family, places visited, chess players and people met on the way flesh out the story. At £19.95 for 383 pages the book is also good value. All in all, this is an exceptional insight into the early years of one of the most remarkable personalities in the chess world today. The next two volumes of the trilogy are eagerly awaited.

- Ray Edwards | Julian Farrand | David Friedgood | 4th October 2013

“I’d like to thank ...”

Debating the merits of award winners and the taste of the judges is an entertaining pastime, but on this occasion, Messrs Edwards, Farrand and Friedgood made an excellent choice. *How I Beat Fischer’s Record* is a splendid book - consistently readable as well as instructive, with a charm all its own.

That the book should be of high quality in chess terms comes as no surprise, given its pedigree. The primary contributor is not only the greatest female player of all time but also one of the most effective ambassadors for the game of our age. Judit Polgar clearly understands - and accepts with apparent pleasure - the responsibility of top players to promote chess and, in particular, to inspire others with her love of the game. The structure of this volume is, I believe, particularly well chosen in this respect, and it is refreshing to see an autobiographical games collection that functions so well as a book of instruction.

The title page includes the words, “with invaluable help from Mihail Marin”. Possessors of Marin’s other books, including the ECF Book of the Year nominated *Learn from the Legends - Chess Champions at their Best* (Quality Chess; 2004), will need no further encouragement. The Romanian grandmaster is one of the best writers in chess, and his diligence and experience as an author was undoubtedly an important factor in the success of the finished product.

“It’s an honour just to be nominated...”

Judit Polgar’s three rivals for the 2013 Book of the Year award were an interesting mixed bag:

- *Study Chess with Matthew Sadler* by Matthew Sadler (Everyman)
- *The Magic Tactics of Mikhail Tal* by Karsten Müller and Raymund Stolze (New in Chess)
- *Modern Chess Preparation* by Vladimir Tukmakov (New in Chess)

Sadler’s book is quite slight at 140 pages, but it has an originality of approach which distinguishes it from the crowd. I suspect that amateur players will have been particularly interested in the insights of a very strong grandmaster who has made the successful transition from professional chess player to combining a full-time non-chess job with occasional - and still impressive - appearances at the chessboard. He seems “one of us” in this sense, and this makes what he has to say about studying the game more relevant.

The premise of the Müller/Stolze book, which originally appeared in a German language edition in 2010, is that former world champion Mikhail Tal’s games would make for a testing and instructive book of tactical exercises. Anyone remotely familiar with Tal’s style will have no trouble accepting that his games should be an abundant source of tactics. Perhaps of more concern to the average player will be the thought that Tal’s particular brand of chess wizardry was so dazzling that a set of puzzles based on his games might prove daunting. Speaking from my own experience, this fear has some justification, but the book remains a splendid production, with deep analysis and copious ‘colour’ in the form of background to the specific positions chosen and reflections on Tal by some fifteen players who knew and played him.

For me, the strangest choice on the shortlist was Tukmakov’s *Modern Chess Preparation*, which struck me as something of a pot-boiler when I read it. I would argue that not only was it not one of the best books of the year, it was not even the best book by Vladimir Tukmakov published that year. This would be the autobiographical games collection, *Profession: Chessplayer* (Russell Enterprises), a relatively conventional book, but a good and interesting one.

Choosing just four books from a year’s output is an unenviable task, and it is hardly shocking that differences of taste emerge. I happen to like biographical games collections and tournament books, so it is natural for me to wonder whether the long-awaited English language publication of Najdorf’s book on the 1953 Candidates Tournament (*Zürich 1953*, published by Russell Enterprises) or Walter Browne’s *The Stress of Chess* (New in Chess) should not have been preferred. As someone with an increasing interest in the history of the game, I would also have made a case for Tim Harding’s utterly wonderful *Eminent Victorian Chess Players* (McFarland), the only book - in my opinion - to be a serious challenge to the judges’ choice of the Polgar book for overall book of the year.

“I feel humble to join the list of past winners...”

Looking back at the roster of winners and shortlisted books from 2000 on, one has to say that the judging panel has done a consistently good job.

Biographical games collections dominate, with 4 wins and another 14 nominations. Along with other games collections (1 win, 6 nominations) and tournament or match books (2 wins and 1 nomination), this adds up to a weighty 7 award-winning and 21 nominated collections of annotated games - probably the most enduring genre of chess book and the least likely to date.

Unsurprisingly, openings books have rarely appeared in the lists, the exceptions being Matthew Sadler's slim but highly-praised volume on the *Queen's Gambit Declined* (Everyman; 2000), and two rather eccentric choices: Karsten Müller's and Rainer Knaak's *222 Opening Traps* (Edition Olms; 2008) and John Cox's 2009 book on *The Berlin Wall* (Quality Chess) - a better-than-average openings book, but an unusual selection as a potential book of the year.

Timing can be tricky. An understandable wave of enthusiasm carried the first volume of Garry Kasparov's *My Great Predecessors* (Everyman; 2003) to the Book of the Year award. There were many of us that year who were dazzled by the smart large-format red hardback with its impressively detailed annotations. Time and distance have taken some of the gloss off this first volume, as the extent of its carelessness with regard to historical accuracy and some less than rigorous annotations have marked out Part I as by far the weakest of the series. However, Kasparov has hardly been neglected by the judges since: Parts II and V of *My Great Predecessors* were shortlisted, along with *Revolution in the 70s* and *Kasparov on Kasparov Part I*, and *My Great Predecessors Part IV* (on Fischer) and *Kasparov v Karpov 1975-85* won in 2005 and 2009 respectively.

If I had to name the year with the most impressive shortlist (in terms of weight, if nothing else!), it would have to be 2004. The winner was *Pal Benko: My Life, Games and Compositions* by Benko himself, Jeremy Silman and John Watson (Siles Press). At 668 pages, you would have thought that this was the biggest as well as the best, but shortlisted rival *Amos Burn: A Chess Biography* by Richard Forster (McFarland) trumped it easily in terms of length (972 pages) and, in my humble opinion, quality. Besides these, Part II of Kasparov's *My Great Predecessors* looks rather average at 480 pages, and the fourth book on the shortlist, Tibor Károlyi's *Judit Polgar: The Princess of Chess* (Batsford) seems positively anorexic at 282 smaller-format pages.

“And now let's take a look at the winning entry...”

Mention of Károlyi's book on Judit Polgar brings us neatly back to the latest Book of the Year. The 2004 collection provides an interesting contrast with Polgar's own work. The earlier book is focused very much on the games themselves, with very little in the way of biographical narrative. Judit tends to provide verbal explanations in her notes, with only relatively brief analytical variations where necessary to support her point. This is a style particularly well suited to books for the average player. Tibor Károlyi did not have access to his subject's own recollections of her thought processes and compensates for this with detailed analysis on top of the verbal explanations. Frequently, the resulting variations are so detailed as to be off-putting to the average reader, although potentially of more interest to the stronger player.

[There are signs that Károlyi adapts his annotations to the playing style of his subjects. His two volumes on Kasparov have dense thickets of variations, making the books almost unreadable to this reader, but his two-volume collection of *Karpov's Strategic Wins* (Quality Chess; 2011) are much more digestible and, as a consequence, much better books. Indeed, the omission of the books on Karpov from the 2011 Book of the Year shortlist is the major surprise of that year.]

Returning to Judit Polgar's *How I Beat Fischer's Record*, what do we find in its 384 pages?

We find some unique ways of explaining aspects of chess to the developing player. I cannot recall

ever before seeing the concept of *Zwischenzug* explained in terms of shopping for shoes, but Polgar uses the following anecdote on page 64 to illustrate her point:

“A few days ago, I felt like treating myself with a nice pair of shoes. I entered a nice shoe shop and started comparing models, colours and prices. I knew that I would get the desired result after a couple of hours of ‘work’, but then by chance I looked through the window and noticed that there was a huge sale on hats next door. I immediately adjusted my initial plan and five minutes later I was on my way back home in a very happy mood with three superb hats. The basic plan of the day was accomplished, although not in the way I initially anticipated.

“Looking back, I must confess that I have tried to keep this kind of open-minded approach throughout the entire process of working on the present book. There was more than one *zwischenzug* on the way, and I did not hesitate to change the structure if sudden inspiration revealed that things could be improved.”

It is debatable whether this works well as an illustration of the technical point, although to be fair to the author, she is making the point that a *Zwischenzug* is a deviation from the “intuitively natural course of events”, so it is relevant to dwell on the value of mental flexibility. The slight clunkiness of the analogy appeals to me; it helps the author’s personal voice to emerge and lends the book character.

On page 269, the author recounts how she noticed an unusually large security presence in the middle of a tournament at a hotel in New Delhi in 1990. It turns out that this was due to the arrival of “famous singer Samantha Fox”. Samantha Fox was a famous singer - who knew?

Enough trivialities; let me conclude with some chess. The final chapter of *How I Beat Fischer’s Record* is an account of the 1989 OHRA tournament in Amsterdam, one of Judit’s striking early successes (equal third in the Reserve Group with Boris Gelfand on 6/9). Each of her games from the event is analysed - a nice touch which allows the reader to gain a more realistic picture of her play at the time than a more conventional selection of one or two ‘best’ games would provide.

In round 1, our young heroine found herself facing Dutch GM Hans Ree. Judit records that her opponent allegedly joked before the game, “In case I get the option to take a pawn en passant, I think I will not do so, even if it is good for me. I guess she is too young to know that rule!” I think we all know what was coming...

(Annotations by Judit Polgar from How I Beat Fischer’s Record. Selected notes only are included, to give a flavour of the author’s style. The full set of notes occupies 5½ pages of the book.)

Judit Polgar - Hans Ree
OHRA-B Amsterdam, 1989

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6 6.Be2 Be7 7.0-0 0-0 8.Be3 a6 9.f4 Qc7 10.g4!? Re8!?

This is a useful and flexible move, clearing the f8-square for either the bishop or the knight, preparing to consolidate e6 and eventually to react with ...e5. Its only drawback is that it delays the development of the queenside. I assume that Ree chose it because he wanted to avoid the preparation of his baby-opponent. There is nothing wrong with the last move, though; the mistake arrived a few moves later.

11.g5 Nfd7

I was out of my preparation, but I knew that I needed to increase the force of my attack with some active moves. After nine minutes, I came up with:

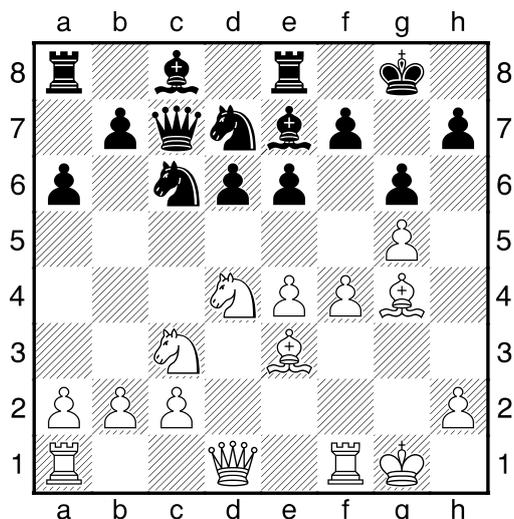
12.Bh5!

I immediately put pressure on the f7- and e6-squares, which had been slightly weakened by Black's last two moves. Apart from Nd4xe6, there is the more complex threat of Bxf7+ ...Kxf7, Nxe6 with a strong attack.

12...g6 13.Bg4! Nc6?

The decisive mistake, played almost without thinking. Black tries to catch up in development at the least advisable moment, ignoring the tactical threats on the light squares or perhaps simply underestimating his opponent.

It was essential to over-defend the e6-pawn with 13...Bf8, which also prepares to reactivate the bishop with ...Bg7. This is precisely how Polugaevsky reacted against me two years later, in Aruba. I played 14.a4 but did not achieve anything.



14.Nxe6!

This sacrifice and the whole attacking sequence is rather natural, and I assume that I spent most of the eight minutes I used before playing it just calming myself down.

14...fxe6 15.Bxe6+

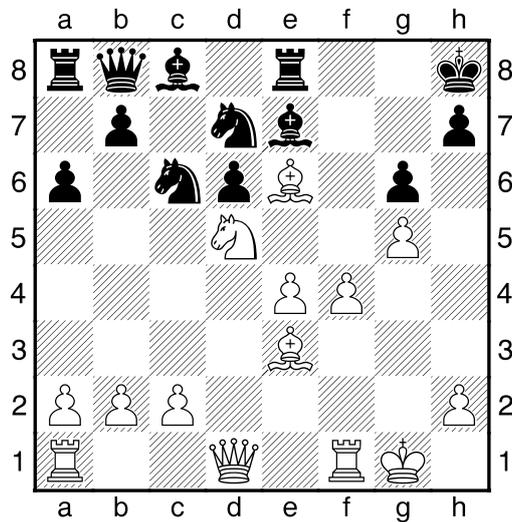
The point of provoking ...g6 is clear now; the king has no adequate way of hiding from my bishops.

15...Kh8 16.Nd5

It is interesting that even though Bd4+ was essential for my attack, I had the patience to prepare it by activating my position to the maximum with gain of time.

By now, my opponent understood that he was in big trouble, and he took 15 minutes before answering. Unfortunately for him, there is no adequate defence.

16...Qb8



17.Bf7!

I spent 17 minutes on this move, my longest think in the game.

I had initially relied on 17.Bd4+, but then was not entirely satisfied by the variation: 17...Nde5 18.Bxc8 Qxc8 19.fxe5 dxe5 20.Be3 with advantage to White.

True, I am a pawn up and have a dominating position, but there is no immediate win. Although I managed to find an improvement, it is worth mentioning that this line had served me well as a “safety net” when deciding upon 14.Nxe6!

The main merit of my last move is that it avoids exchanging the bishop, which will remain a dangerous attacking piece.

17...Rf8

17...Rd8 would leave the rook hanging after 18.Nxe7 Nxe7 19.Bd4+ Ne5 20.fxe5 dxe5, allowing the discovered attack 21.Bxe5+.

18.Bd4+ Nde5 19.Nxe7 Nxe7 20.fxe5 dxe5 21.Bc5 Kg7 22.Bxe7 Qa7+ 23.Kh1 Bh3 24.Qf3

I had the feeling that my opponent resigned with great pain; he probably did not expect such a result against a 13-year-old girl!

1-0

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How I Beat Fischer's Record is a very enjoyable and instructive addition to the great tradition of autobiographical games collections. It fully justifies its standing as ECF Book of the Year, and the fact that there are (at least) two further volumes to come in the series is a thought to warm the heart as we approach the long winter evenings.

- Andrew Farthing

Book Reviews - by Gary Lane

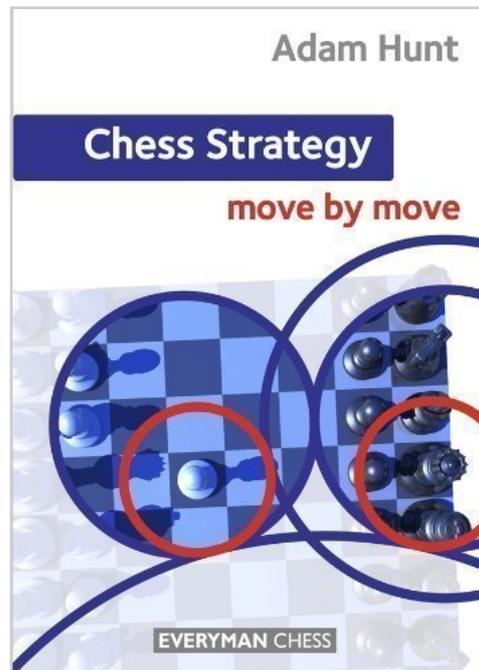
Chess Strategy: Move by Move

by Adam Hunt

Published by Everyman Chess, 416 pages £19.95

The classic question when you have an understanding of the opening is to try and figure out what to do in the middlegame. This is where Englishman Adam Hunt steps in by presenting a series of examples where he discusses how to improve the position. There are very few variations to wade through and plenty of words to guide you, which makes it perfect for juniors or improving players. This target audience is understandable as Hunt has an excellent reputation as a chess coach. There are some very well known games such as Morphy's game at the Paris Opera and Nigel Short's attacking king walk versus Timman that can annoy purists. However, I tend to think that as the book is aimed at players new to the game then it is very possible that these brilliant examples will be a pleasant surprise. The rest of the 415 pages contain illuminating games that can help decision making and the process that leads to choosing a successful strategy.

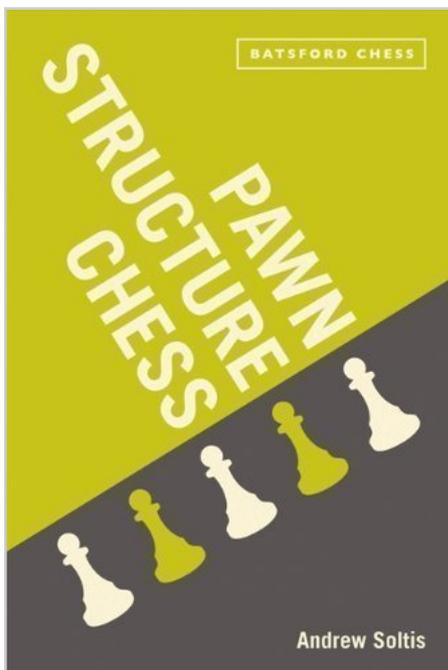
A thoughtful way to rapidly improve your play.



Pawn Structure Chess

by Andrew Soltis

Published by Batsford Chess, 286 pages £15.99



This is dubbed a classic because it has passed the test of being repeatedly being published since the first issue in 1976 with a new edition being released in 1995 and now the latest instalment. It starts off with an entertaining introduction by trying to convince the reader that their chess will be revolutionised if only they paid more attention to their pawns. Once again, Nigel Short's classic king attack against Timman is put on display but this time apparently it was only made possible by the move 18 b3 and it certainly makes you ponder for a while. It is a difficult subject to make entertaining without sounding pretentious but Soltis does a good job of making the subject very easy to follow for the keen weekend tournament player. The solution is to have a series of chapters to link pawn structures to the openings, so for instance there is plenty of discussion when it comes to the Lopez formation, Stonewall and the Slav. The idea of teaching where pieces are best placed in connection with pawns seems to be a dry subject but time and time again the American makes it an entertaining read.

A great way to absorb practical chess advice and instruction.

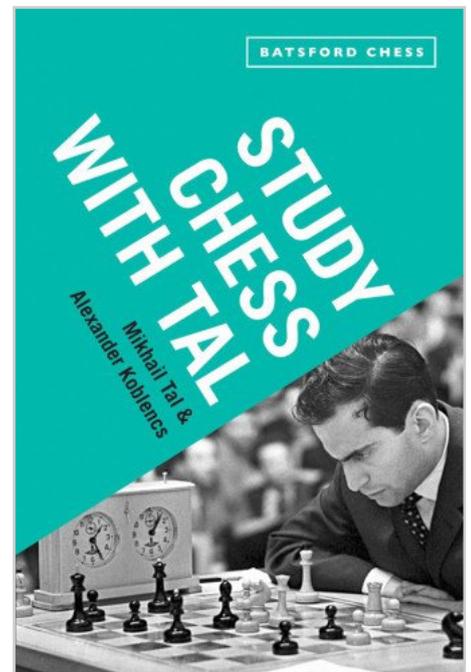
Study Chess with Tal

Mikhail Tal & Alexander Koblencs

Published by Batsford Chess, 270 pages £15.99

Can you name all of the World Champions? I asked this question at a recent junior coaching session with the only answers being Anand and Kasparov but perhaps when you are aged 12 the history of chess is not so important. However, if you want to use your computer database well it is important otherwise you can end up following the games from Ilford chess club rather than the USSR Championship. A timely reminder of Mikhail Tal's amazing attacking ability is this welcome reprint from the 1980s. There are 46 games by Tal played between 1956-76 which are explained by the Latvian trainer Koblencs. There are 3 other games by notable players of the past which as usual are examined in an easy to read manner and there are 92 questions posed about the games which are answered mainly in words rather than endless variations.

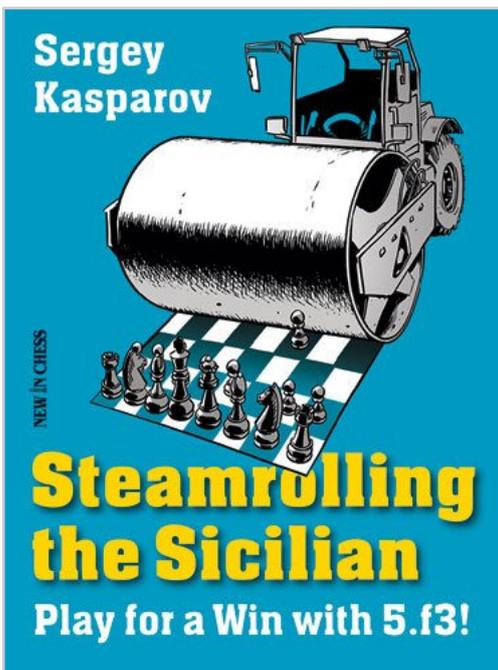
A good way to inspire anyone to attack with style.



Steamrolling the Sicilian - Play for a Win with 5.f3!

by Sergey Kasparov

Published by New In Chess, 240 pages £19.95



The advertising on the back cover and in various magazines makes this sound like the ultimate book on the openings because you "...avoid all of Black's main lines and steamroll his Sicilian". A huge problem is that this is simply wrong and must have been written by someone who had not actually read the manuscript. There is nothing against the Sveshnikov, Taimanov, and the Kan which are considered main lines but what it does propose is to follow the Prins Variation: 1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 f3. I guess a title saying how to avoid the Classical, Dragon and the Najdorf might be more accurate and the system certainly has a lot going for it. If you think a brilliant, aggressive attack will be necessary it is worth pointing out that Kasparov regards a steamroller in chess as the ability to exert just a little pressure on Black's position. Indeed, he goes on to make clear that the material will appeal to those "...who wish to struggle in quiet, positional games..." If you happen to go to a pub trivia night during the Hastings tournament it is worth remembering that the author is not related to Garry but he is a fine writer. There are plenty of games demonstrating how White can extract a slight edge against

popular lines and if you are not sure whom the players are then the elo ratings will help. There are also various photos to help the reader to put a face to the star name, which is a welcome addition.

A nice Sicilian repertoire to avoid some of the main lines!



ECF English Tournament Calendar

LEGEND -

- # British Championships qualifying tournament
- @ FIDE rated
- * ECF Grand Prix
- ~ ECF graded event
- Y Juniors only event

All congresses graded by the ECF are part of the official Grand Prix. For a more comprehensive calendar, updated constantly, visit the ECF website - www.englishchess.org.uk

~@ **23 Nov FIDE London Rapidplay**, Isleworth & Syon School, Ridgeway Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 5LJ Contact: Sainbayar Tserendorj Email: londonrapidplay@gmail.com Website: www.london-rapidplay.co.uk

~ **23 Nov Junior London Rapidplay**, Isleworth & Syon School, Ridgeway Road, Isleworth, Middlesex TW7 5LJ Contact: Sainbayar Tserendorj Email: londonrapidplay@gmail.com Website: www.london-rapidplay.co.uk - designed for beginners and juniors graded U80. Sections: U8, U10, U12 and U14. Each section winner will win a trophy and in each section there is a Best Girl prize!

~ **23 Nov Southampton Rapidplay 2013**, St Denys Community Centre, Priory Road, Southampton SO17 2JZ Contact: Robin Williams Email: williams.rj8@gmail.com Website: <http://www.hampshirechess.co.uk/clubs/southampton/rapidplay/> - starts 10:00AM ends 6:00PM. Six-round ECF graded Rapidplay tournament, with a time control of 30 minutes per player.

~* **23-24 Nov British Rapidplay Chess Championships**, Leeds Contact: Brent Kitson Email: br.kitson@sky.com Website: www.british-rapidplay.org.uk - the UK's premier weekend rapidplay since 1986

~*@ **23-24 Nov Hampstead Under 2200 Weekend Congress**, Henderson Court Resource Centre, 102 Fitzjohns Avenue (junction with Prince Arthur Road), London NW3 6NS (use NW3 6NS in your satnav) Contact: Adam Raoof Email: adamraoof@gmail.com Website: <http://www.hampsteadchess.blogspot.co.uk/> - five rounds, games are FIDE rated and graded by the ECF for the national grading database. Maximum 60 players, limited to players rated Under 2200. Unrated players should be Under 190 ECF, or the national equivalent. Swiss format tournaments. PRIZES - 1st £200, 2nd £100 plus a minimum of two rating prizes of £80.00. Rating bands to be announced before round two.

~ **24 Nov 2013 Wiltshire Team Rapidplay Tournament**, Nationwide Head Office, Pipers Way, Swindon, Wiltshire Contact: Tony Ransom Email: chesssalsa@aol.com - the format of the tournament will be as follows: teams of 3 players (you may choose to have a squad of more players and swap people in and out of different rounds); 30 minutes per player per game; the entry fee is £12 per team (CASH ONLY, NO CHEQUES). All the entry fees will be returned as prizes for 1st and 2nd in the team and individual categories, and there will also be a trophy for the winning team. All Wiltshire players must be an ECF bronze or higher level registered member. Non-Wiltshire players must be an ECF silver or higher level registered member.

~*Y **24 Nov 3rd Shenley Junior Chess Congress**, Manor Lodge School, Rectory Lane, Ridge Hill, Shenley, Herts. WD7 9BG Contact: Tony Niccoli Email: tony1n@yahoo.com - starts 9:30AM ends 5:45PM. Under 8, Under 10 and Under 12 sections. 6 rounds, 30 mins each rapidplay. This is a qualifier to the London Junior Chess Championships

~*#@ **29 Nov-1 Dec Leicester Chess Congress (H E Atkins Memorial)**, Regent College, Regent Road, Leicester LE1 7LW Contact: Sean Hewitt Email: sean@leicesterchess.co.uk Website: <http://www.leicesterchess.co.uk> - starts 7:00PM ends 7:00PM. 5 round Swiss with three sections. The Open is FIDE rated and a British Championship Qualifier.

30 Nov Birmingham U18 Schools Tournament, King Edward's School Contact: Richard Simpson Email: rick@lagonda.org.uk

~ **30 Nov Oxford University Rapidplay**, St Hugh's College, St Margaret's Rd, Oxford OX2 6LE Contact: Michael Hopkins Email: rapidplayoxford2013@outlook.com Website: <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~chess/#rapidplay> - starts 10:00AM ends 7:00PM. 6 round rapidplay, 30 min-

utes per player. U150 and Open categories. Discount for students / under-18s.

Y 30 Nov All Surrey Girls Chess Championships, Hinchley Wood Secondary School, Claygate Lane, Hinchley Wood, Surrey KT10 0AQ Contact: Mike Basman Email: marie.gledhill@tesco.net - starts 9:45AM ends 4:30. This event is open to all girls, from beginners to advanced players. The event is also open to all girls regardless of where they live. The age sections are under 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 18. The scoring system is 3 points for a win, 2 for a draw and 1 for a loss. Rosettes awarded to girls scoring 11 points or more and trophies for all section winners. There is also a girls schools competition with the top three schools winning trophies

~Y+ 30 Nov English Girls' Championships, Nottingham High School, Waverley Mount, Nottingham NG7 4ED MAP Contact: Julian Clissold Email: j_clissold@btinternet.com Web:

<http://englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/girls/english-girls-championship/> - starts 10am ends 5pm. This event is open to all girls. Sections - U8, U10, U12, U14, U16, U18. Winners of each age group receive the title of 'English Girls Champion 2013' and a chance to be nominated to represent England in World Schools or European Schools Championships. Eligibility rules apply for titles. Please see web page for rules and online entry. English Youth Grand Prix event for 7 and 8 year old players only

~ 1 Dec 10th South Hams Rapidplay, The Regal Club, Church Street, Kingsbridge, Devon TQ7 1DD Contact: Ben Wilkinson Email: brwilkinson@me.com Website: <http://www.southhamschessclub.com> - starts 10:00AM ends 6:15PM. A small friendly one day rapidplay, in a comfortable venue, with refreshments available throughout the day. For full details please visit the club's website, or contact Ben Wilkinson

@ 5 Dec Hendon 'First Thursday' Blitz, Golders Green Unitarians Church, 31½ Hoop Lane, Golders Green, London NW11 8BS Contact: Adam Raooof Email: adamraooof@gmail.com Website: www.hendonchessclub.com - a six round Swiss open

Y 7 Dec East Midlands Junior Grand Prix 2013/2014, Dovecote School, Greencroft, Clifton, Nottingham NG11 8EY Contact: John Crawley Email: crawlj6@aol.com Website: <http://www.npsca.co.uk> - starts 9:30AM ends 5:00PM

~*#@ 7-15 Dec 5th London Chess Classic, Olympia Conference Centre, Hammersmith Road, Kensington, London W14 8UX Contact: Sean Hewitt Email: festival@londonchessclassic.com Website: <http://www.londonchessclassic.com> - starts 9:30am ends 7:00pm. FIDE Open (9 round Swiss) - Saturday 7 to Sunday 15 December Schedule: 1 round per day offering GM and IM norm opportunities. FIDE Rated Weekday Classic: U2000 & U135 - Monday 9 to Friday 13 December Schedule: 1 round per day Weekend Classic A - Saturday 7 to Sunday 8 December: 4 sections: Open, U170, U145, U120. Weekend Classic B (FIDE rated) - Friday 13 to Sunday 15 December: 4 sections: Open, U2000, U1800 (All FIDE rated), ECF U120. Classic Rapid A (FIDE rated) - Saturday 7 December : Open | U170 | U145 | U120. Classic Rapid B (FIDE rated) - Sunday 8 December : Open | U170 | U145 | U120. Classic Rapid C (FIDE rated) - Sunday 15 December : Open | U165 | U140 | U115

~* 8 Dec Bury (Manchester) Rapidplay, Elton Vale Sports Club, Elton Vale Road, Bury BL8 2RZ Contact: Anthony Lee Tel: 0161 764 2243 (before 10 pm please) Email: anthonymlee@btinternet.com - starts 10:00:00 AM ends 6:15:00 PM. Six round Rapidplay, 30 mins per person per game. Three Sections - Open, Major, Minor. Food and refreshments available. MCCU Grand Prix & ECF Grand Prix

14 Dec National Prep School Rapidplay, Aldro School, Shackleford, Godalming, Surrey GU8 6AS Contact: David Archer Email: archerd@aldro.org - starts 10:00AM ends 5:00AM. Team and individual tournament with sections for U13, U12, U11, U10 and U9 players. Team trophies for the top 3 schools. Individual trophies for top players in each age group and medals for players scoring 3 points or more.

~*Y 14-15 Dec London Junior Chess Championships, University of Westminster, Harrow Campus, Northwick Park, Harrow HA1 3TP Contact: Nathanael Lutton Email: entry@ljcc.co.uk Website: <http://www.ljcc.co.uk> - starts 9:45AM ends 6:00PM. Under 10 and Under 14 Major Championship and Minor events. Qualification required for Under 10 events.

~* 14-15 Dec 6th Northwick Park Chess Congress, University of Westminster, Harrow Campus, Northwick Park, Harrow HA1 3TP Contact: Nathanael Lutton Email: entry@ljcc.co.uk Website: <http://www.ljcc.co.uk> - starts 9:45AM ends 6:30:00 PM Open, Major U155 and Minor U115 sections.

~@ 15 Dec Oxfordshire Sunday League R2, Ducklington Village Hall, Standlake Road, Ducklington

OX29 7UX Contact: Mike Truran Email: mike@truranfamily.co.uk Website:

<http://www.witneychess.co.uk/>

~***@ 21-22 Dec Hampstead Under 2200 Weekend Congress**, Henderson Court Resource Centre, 102 Fitzjohns Avenue (junction with Prince Arthur Road), London NW3 6NS (use NW3 6NS in your satnav) Contact: Adam Raoof Email: adamraoof@gmail.com Website:

<http://www.hampsteadchess.blogspot.co.uk/> - five rounds, games are FIDE rated and graded by the ECF for the national grading database. Maximum 60 players, limited to players rated Under 2200. Unrated players should be Under 190 ECF, or the national equivalent. Swiss format tournaments. PRIZES - 1st £200, 2nd £100 plus a minimum of two rating prizes of £80.00. Rating bands to be announced before round two.

~***#@ 21-22 Dec CCF Christmas Congress**, 84-90 Chipstead Valley Road, Coulsdon, Surrey CR5 3BA Contact: Coulsdon Chess Fellowship Email: chess@ccfworld.com Website:

http://www.ccfworld.com/Chess/Adult%20Competitions/Longplays_Christmas.htm - starts 9:30AM ends 10:30PM. 5 rounds - FIDE and non-FIDE sections. Number of sections dependent on entries.

~***@# 28-30 Dec London Junior Chess Championships**, University of Westminster, Harrow Campus, Northwick Park, Harrow HA1 3TP Contact: Nathanael Lutton Email: entry@ljcc.co.uk Website: <http://www.ljcc.co.uk> - starts 9:45AM ends 8:00PM. Under 8, Under 12, FIDE Rated Under 16 and FIDE Rated Under 18/21. Qualification required for Under 8 and Under 12.

~***@ 28-30 Dec London Christmas Chess Congress**, University of Westminster, Harrow Campus, Northwick Park, Harrow HA1 3TP Contact: Nathanael Lutton Email: entry@ljcc.co.uk Website: <http://www.ljcc.co.uk> - starts 9:45AM ends 8:30PM. FIDE rated Open, Major Under 165, Minor Under 125

~**@ 28 Dec-5 Jan 89th Hastings International Chess Congress**, Horntye Park, Hastings, East Sussex Contact: Pam Thomas Email: pae123@aol.com Tel: 01424 445348

2014

@ 3-5 Jan South Wales New Year Congress, Heronston Hotel, Bridgend CF35 5AW Contact: Kevin Staveley Email: kevin.staveley@btinternet.com - 5 round Swiss, Open FIDE Rated

~* **3-5 Jan 2nd Winchester Congress**, Holiday Inn, Telegraph Way, Winchester SO1 1HZ Contact: Tony Corfe Email: tony@tcs-chess.demon.co.uk Website: www.castlechess.co.uk - Open including Premier U180, Major U160 including Intermediate U140, Minor U120 including Challengers U100

~***@ 4 Jan London Rapidplay**, Millennium Hall, Parish Centre, St. Mary's Church, Osterley Road, Isleworth TW7 4PW Contact: Sainbayar Tserendorj Email: londonrapidplay@gmail.com Website: <http://www.londonrapidplay.co.uk> - starts 10:00AM ends 5:10PM. 6 round Swiss, FIDE rated sections: Open, U2000, U1700. Total prize fund £450

~***Y+ 4 Jan Get Your First Chess Grade**, Millennium Hall, Parish Centre, St. Mary's Church, Osterley Road, Isleworth TW7 4PW Contact: Amu Sainbayar Email: londonrapidplay@gmail.com Website: <http://www.londonrapidplay.co.uk> - starts 10.00am ends 5:10pm. 6 round Swiss, sections: U7, U8, U9, U10, U11 & U14. Players graded under 80 ECF. Winner will receive a trophy in each age category, Best Girl medal in each section. Special prize for players scoring 4.5 or more

~* **4-5 Jan Shropshire Chess Congress 2014**, Wrekin Housing Trust, Telford TF3 4AW Contact: Steve Rooney Email: steve.rooney@busandcoach.com Website: <http://www.shropshirechess.org> - starts 9:30AM. Open, U160 and U125 sections. Great venue, outstanding food, professional bookstall, total prize fund increased to more than £2,000.

~ **5 Jan 8th Chess Coaching Services Tournament and Training Day**, John Keble Church, Church Close, Edgware HA8 9NS Contact: Rob Willmoth Email: robwillmoth@hotmail.co.uk Website: <http://chesscoachingservices.co.uk> - starts 12:30AM ends 6:00PM. The only junior event of its kind in the UK. Training split into 4 different ability groups. Training plan determined beforehand so that parents can see what their child will be taught before the event. This is supplemented by an ECF rapidplay tournament in between the 4 training sessions.

~**@ 11-12 Jan 4NCL Rounds 3 and 4 | Weekend 2**, Hinckley Island Hotel, Daventry Court Hotel, Shrigley Hall Contact: Mike Truran Tel: 01993 708645 Email: mike@truranfamily.co.uk

~* **11-12 Jan Junior 4NCL**, Puma Daventry Court Hotel Contact: Mike Truran Tel: 01993 708645 Email: mike@truranfamily.co.uk