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ART ATTACK

Vladislav Artemiev shocks on the Rock

ISSN 0964-6221



The Magnus-ficent Seven - Yochanan Afek reports from Wijk aan Zee, where Carlsen won



The New Wizard - Matthew Sadler & Natasha Regan on the phenomenon that is AlphaZero



Attack and Combine - Craig Pritchett on the life and games of the great attacker Kurt Richter

Chess

Founding Editor: B.H. Wood, OBE. M.Sc †
Executive Editor: Malcolm Pein
Editors: Richard Palliser, Matt Read
Associate Editor: John Saunders
Subscriptions Manager: Paul Harrington

Twitter: @CHESS_Magazine
Twitter: @TelegraphChess – Malcolm Pein
Website: www.chess.co.uk

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Find the Winning Moves

24 puzzles to test your tactical ability, with, as ever, the positions grouped in rough order of difficulty. The games come from various recent events, such as the 4NCL, although we do revisit that feast that was the London Chess Classic. Don't forget that whilst sometimes the key move will force mate or the win of material, other times it will just win a pawn.

Solutions on page 53.



Warm-up Puzzles



(1) E.Paetz-S.White
4NCL, Daventry 2018
White to Play



(2) J.Burnett-J.Carpenter
4NCL, Doncaster 2019
White to Play



(3) B.Hymer-M.Bramson
4NCL, Doncaster 2019
White to Play



(4) D.Kjartansson-S.Bergsson
Reykjavik 2019
White to Play



(5) M.Adams-S.Williams
British Knockout Ch., London 2018
White to Play



(6) J.McKenna-M.Leanse
Surrey vs Middlesex, London 2019
Black to Play

The New Wizard

Matthew Sadler and Natasha Regan worked with the phenomena that is *AlphaZero* ahead of their new book, *Game Changer*. Here they share some of their experiences

One of the most enjoyable aspects of working with *AlphaZero* and analysing its games has been the dual feeling of familiarity and originality. Much of *AlphaZero*'s play echoes the best practices built up in hundreds of years of human play, but *AlphaZero* often implements these ideas with a special twist. A fundament of *AlphaZero*'s play is a keen awareness of the relative safety of both kings. *AlphaZero* tries – with great success in the match against *Stockfish* – to manoeuvre its opponent into a situation in which the opponent's king is exposed while *AlphaZero*'s own king is completely safe, often at the cost of the sacrifice of a couple of pawns.

One way in which *AlphaZero* achieves this goal is via what we have called 'The March of the Rook's pawn', in which typically *AlphaZero* launches its h-pawn against the opponent's kingside, aiming to push it all the way to h6 (as White). Whether this advance is met with ...g6 or ...gxh6, Black's kingside is weakened and offers less of a haven for the king. In our book we also look extensively at games in which *Stockfish* tries to block the h-pawn at an earlier stage with ...h5 or ...h6: *AlphaZero* has a plan for that too.

AlphaZero's play has a human-like rhythm and purpose to it, so it's not surprising that some of *AlphaZero*'s games have striking parallels with great human games of the past. One set of games we show in our book takes place in the French Winawer in which *AlphaZero*'s play echoes a classic game of Garry Kasparov's in a quite uncanny way, as the following extracts from our book show.

Let's start by refreshing our memory of Garry's game:

Historical Parallel: Kasparov's system against the French Winawer

In the 1990's the great Garry Kasparov developed a dangerous system against the French Winawer system (1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♙b4). In this system, Black gives up the dark-squared bishop at an early stage to create and fix pawn weaknesses in White's position (4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♙xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♖g4 ♙f8 8 h4



G.Kasparov-P.Nikolic Paris (rapid) 1994 French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♙b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3
♙xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♘e7 7 ♖g4 ♙f8 8 h4



8...♙c7 9 ♖d1

White retreats the queen to deal with the threat of ...cxd4 and then ...♙c3+, winning the rook on a1. Black takes the opportunity to nick the d-pawn, but this merely signals the start of a powerful assault.

9...cxd4 10 cxd4 ♙c3+ 11 ♙d2 ♙xd4
12 ♘f3 ♙e4+ 13 ♙e2 ♘bc6 14 h5 ♘xe5
15 h6

Black's capture of White's central d4- and e5-pawns has cleared the a1-h8 diagonal for

White's dark-squared bishop and now Kasparov uses his h-pawn to loosen things up even further.

15...gxh6 16 ♙xh6+ ♔g8 17 ♙b1 ♘7g6
18 ♙b4



Fantastic mobility of the white rooks. Everything is going to participate in the attack.

18...♘xf3+ 19 gxf3 ♙e5 20 f4 ♙c3+
21 ♙f1 f5 22 ♙b3 ♙f6 23 c4 b6 24
cxd5 ♙b7 25 ♙d3 ♙e8 26 ♙g1 b5 27
dxe6 ♙xe6 28 ♙d8+ ♙f7 29 ♙d7+ ♙e7
30 ♙xb7 1-0

A wonderful game that contains the features that we admired in *AlphaZero*'s games: the rapid advance of the rook's pawn, disregard for material equality, sacrificing for open lines and extreme mobility of the pieces.

Having seen Kasparov's game, it was striking to see this game of *AlphaZero's* when forced to open 1 e4 and play against the French Winawer. There is a sense of great minds thinking alike.

The game is from a series in which *AlphaZero's* and *Stockfish's* first two moves were pre-specified. After that, they were on their own!

"Attaquer comme Kasparov!"

A Kasparov-style attack against the French Winawer!

Game themes:

1. Using a rook's pawn to weaken the opponent's king's position (7 h4, 8 h5, 15 h6)
As a note on the opening, *AlphaZero's* preferred way to meet the French Winawer is not the sharp 7 ♖g4 Poisoned Pawn variation – as Kasparov played – but the more positional 7 h4, directly implementing *AlphaZero's* chosen positional goal: the weakening of the black kingside.

AlphaZero-Stockfish 8

London 2018
French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 ♙b4 4 e5 ♗e7
5 a3 ♙xc3+ 6 bxc3 c5 7 h4 ♖c7 8 h5
cxd4 9 cxd4 ♖c3+ 10 ♙d2 ♖xd4
11 ♗f3 ♖e4+ 12 ♙e2 ♗f5 13 ♖b1

A novelty in this position: 13 ♖f1 (looking for ♙d3, targeting the exposed black queen) is the main move. In response, Black has been trying 13...b6 to counter 14 ♙d3 with 14...♙a6. *AlphaZero* avoids this defence by inserting 13 ♖b1 first (threatening ♖b4) and drawing out 13...♗c6. Only then does it play 14 ♖f1 as ...b6 and ...♙a6 is no longer a threat. There is the little matter of the pawn on e5 though...

13...♗c6 14 ♖f1 ♗xe5 15 h6 gxh6



AlphaZero has devised an identical attacking scheme to Kasparov's. Just like Kasparov, *AlphaZero* follows up by mobilising its major pieces. *Stockfish* defends by provoking a crisis, using its temporary activity to interfere with the stability of White's pieces.
16 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 17 ♙d3 ♗g8 18 ♖h5
♖g7 19 ♖f3 ♗d4 20 ♖h3 e5 21 ♖h2 e4
22 c3 exd3 23 cxd4 b6 24 ♖xd5 ♙e6



The authors of *Game Changer*, Matthew Sadler and Natasha Regan. They analyse *AlphaZero's* amazing play and have also released some videos on the YouTube channel *Game Changer*.

25 ♗d6 ♖g4 26 ♖g1 ♖e2 27 d5



It looks winning for White, but *Stockfish* has planned an astounding resource, sacrificing a piece to reach an equal endgame a piece down.

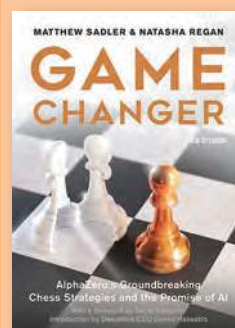
27...♙h3 28 ♖e1 ♖xg2+ 29 ♖xg2
♖xe1+ 30 ♙xe1 ♙xg2 31 ♙xg2 ♖c8
32 ♖c6 ♖xc6 33 dxc6 ♙d8 34 ♖f3 ♖c7
35 ♙e3 ♖xc6



Black is just in time to win the bishop for its queenside pawns and head back before White can capture all of Black's kingside pawns.

36 ♙b4 ♙b5 37 ♖xd3 ♙a4 38 ♖e4 b5
39 ♙f8 a5 40 ♖f5 b4 41 axb4 axb4
42 ♙xh6 ♙a3 43 ♙f8 ♙b3 44 ♖g5 ♙a4
45 ♙g7 ♙a3 46 ♙f8 ♙a4 47 ♙g7 ♙a3
48 f4 b3 49 f5 b2 50 ♙xb2+ ♖xb2
51 ♖h6 ♖c3 52 f6 ♖d4 53 ♖g7 h5
54 ♖xf7 h4 55 ♖g6 h3 56 ♖g5 h2 57 f7
h1 ♖ 58 f8 ♖ and the game was soon drawn.

We hope this little taster of the book interests and intrigues you. In it we examine many more themes and strategies from *AlphaZero's* play, explained through some fantastic annotated games. We also take a deep look at *AlphaZero's* opening play and explain how *AlphaZero* thinks, which provides fascinating insights into its strengths and weaknesses, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of chess engines like *Stockfish*. Last, but not least, there is an interview with former top chess junior and CEO of DeepMind Demis Hassabis, who explains the journey to *AlphaZero* and what the future holds from here on.



Published by New in Chess, *Game Changer: AlphaZero's Groundbreaking Chess Strategies and the Promise of AI* is available from Chess & Bridge for the special price of £17.95 for Subscribers to *CHESS* until March 31st.

23) Jones-Fernandez

White completed an impressive save with **1...♖c8? 2 ♖xd2 ♖h8 3 ♖d7 ♜f5 4 ♜g3 a4 5 ♜f7+ ♜e5** (or 5...♜g6 6 ♖a7 ♖xh7 7 ♖xa4 ♜f5 8 ♖xg4) **6 ♜xg4 a3 7 ♖a7 a2 ½-½** He also draws after **1...♖c7? 2 ♖d4+! ♜xd4 3 h8♖+ ♜d3 4 ♖d8+ ♜e2 5 ♖d4! d1♖ 6 ♖e4+ ♜d2 7 ♖d4+ ♜c2 8 ♖a4+ ♜c1 9 ♖a1+**, as pointed out by Justin Tan in his ChessPublishing column. However, **1...♖c2!** would have won, and if **2 ♜g1** (or **2 ♜g3 ♖c3+ 3 ♜xg4 ♖d3 4 ♖xd3 ♜xd3 5 h8♖ d1♖+** with two extra pawns and a winning queen endgame) **2...♖c7!**, as now **3 ♖d4+ ♜xd4 4 h8♖+ ♜d3 5 ♖d8+ ♜e2** sees Black queen with check.

24) Erdos-Rendle

1...f3!! (a study-like defence, which sees Black clear the c1-h6 diagonal for his bishop; instead, **1...♜g8 2 ♖b3+** saw White's connected passed pawns prove decisive in the game: **2...♜f8 – 2...♜h8 3 ♜f7 ♖b6 4 h5 ♖d4 5 h6!** is the other key line when there's no **...♖e3 – 3 ♜h7 f3 4 g6 ♖f6 5 h5 f2 6 ♖c4 1-0**) **2 ♖xf3** (2 ♜h7 f2 3 ♖e2 ♖f6!? forces White to find 4 g6! a4 5 h5 a3 6 h6 a2 7 g7+ ♜e7 8 g8♖ a1♖ to draw) **2...♜g8 3 ♖d5+ ♜h8 4 ♜f7 ♖b6 5 h5** (5 ♖c6 ♖f2 6 ♖a4 is a little trick, but 6...♖g3 7 h5 ♖f4 8 g6 ♖h6 an easy draw) **5...♖d4 6 h6** (or 6 g6 ♖g7 7 ♖e6 a4 8 ♜f5 when a useful resource to know is 8...a3 9 ♜g5 ♖c3 10 h6 a2! 11 ♖xa2 ♖d2+ 12 ♜h5 ♖xh6! and it's stalemate if 13 ♜xh6) **6...♖e3** halts the pawns just in time, since **7 ♜f6 ♖xg5+ 8 ♜xg5** would leave White with the wrong-coloured rook's pawn for his bishop.

Batsford Competition

In our December issue we published the following position:

M.Carlsen-V.Ivanchuk

Foros 2008



White to Play

The challenge was to find the move that world champion Magnus Carlsen played, while explaining the reasoning behind it. With thanks to Batsford, three readers who will receive a copy of both Thomas Engqvist's *300 Most Important Chess Positions* and the new edition of Paul Keres's *Practical Chess Endings* are James Ayres (Redhill), Bernard De Bruycken (Ghent) and Mike Read (Norwich). All three found the key idea of ♖a1 with the idea of switching the rook to a2.

Let's now hand over to Thomas Engqvist to present the solution:

28 ♖a1!

Carlsen believes the rook belongs on a2 where it can prepare a4-a5 and manoeuvre to c2 in some lines. This last mentioned idea, to get out of the firing line of the bishop on the h6-c1 diagonal, stems from a game Petrosian-Gufeld, played in the 1960 Soviet Championship. In that game Petrosian kept clear of the opponent's dark-squared bishop by playing the moves a2-a4, b2-b3, ♖a1-

a2-c2, ♖f1-b1-b2. Notice that by playing on the second rank with the rooks, the last rank is 'removed' and so the board is reduced to seven ranks instead of eight. It's because of such model examples that Carlsen, with his extraordinary memory, can make use of the most important classical ideas from the past.

The game continued:

28...♖h6 29 ♖a2 ♜f6?!

Ivanchuk didn't realise the danger of the c-file because it's important to block it with a timely **...♜c5**.

30 ♜g2 ♜h5?!

30...♜d7 is better.

31 ♜d5! ♜xd5 32 ♖xd5 ♖f4 33 ♖f2 fxe4 34 ♖xe4 ♖g5 35 ♖c2!



35...d5?

35.♖f7 was the best, but White has the incredible beautiful bishop manoeuvre **36 ♖b7!!** with the idea of ♖c8. Note that White exploits the fact that Black has reduced the board to seven ranks. **36 ♖xd5 ♖xg3 37 hxg3 ♜f4+ 38 ♜f1 ♜xd5 39 ♖ce2! ♖f6**

39...♖f5 is answered by 40 g4 or 39...♖e8 by 40 f4.

40 ♖xe5 ♖xf3 41 ♖xf3 ♖xf3+ 42 ♖e2 ♖f5 43 ♖xf5 gxf5 44 ♜d3 c5 45 ♖e5 ♜b4+ 46 ♜d2 1-0

This Month's New Releases

Opening Repertoire: The Sicilian Najdorf

John Doknjas & Joshua Doknjas,

352 pages, Everyman Chess

RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

It is very unusual to encounter a chess book written by a pair of brothers. FM John and IM Joshua have enjoyed a lot of success in Canada and "Have been playing the Najdorf for over eight years; they have analysed and discussed cutting-edge developments, which are shared in this book."

In his introduction, Grandmaster Sutovsky calls this "A book that will be useful for both

club players and grandmasters." It is clear that to play the Najdorf successfully is not an easy task. It is definitely not the sort of opening that can be employed with just a basic knowledge of the theory. It is no accident that Fischer and Kasparov – two of the hardest-working players of all – used the Najdorf extensively. Their work ethic kept them on top of developments and ahead of the game, but club players, with limited study time, have very little chance of keeping up to date with the theory of the main lines. Therefore, a good book on the Najdorf must instruct, but not bombard.



Learning copious amounts of long variations is not an option for most players, yet any lines advocated in a book must be sound and not prone to being overturned by the next game in an elite tournament. The authors are aware of this: "Our book is conscious of providing practical lines that are understandable, as opposed to a labyrinth of variations that require extreme memorization. At the same time, we ensure that Black's position is theoretically sound and contains good opportunities to play for the win." They split the material into three main sections: Sharp Lines, Quieter Systems, and New Developments.

Any would-be Najdorf converts simply must have something serious in mind when facing 1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♖xd4 ♖f6 5 ♖c3 a6 6 ♗g5. The problem is that the Poisoned Pawn variation (6...e6 7 f4 ♗b6) is still the best, from a theoretical point of view, but not from the position of a practical student. This book opts for 6...♖bd7, when “the theoretical workload is much less demanding.” Three features of the knight move are the rapid development of the queenside, more protection for e5, and a delay in the decision of where to place the f8-bishop. White’s main tries are now 7 ♗e2, 7 f4 and 7 ♗c4.

6...♖bd7 has long been considered an old-fashioned approach and somewhat discredited by history. Readers of a certain age may recall Spassky winning a particularly good game in his second title match with Petrosian (Game 19, 1969). The difference now is that after 7 ♗c4 Black is advised to play 7...♗b6 rather than the older 7...♗a5. This has more bite and leaves White wondering whether or not to let go of the b2-pawn, with one point being that compared to the standard Poisoned Pawn lines, ♗xf6 isn’t going to cripple the kingside, because the d7-knight can recapture.

It is still not always easy to avoid a transposition back to the main lines and nimble footwork is required at various junctures, such as this one: **1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♖xd4 ♖f6 5 ♖c3 a6 6 ♗g5 ♖bd7 7 f4 ♗c7 8 ♗f3 b5 9 0-0-0 ♖b7 10 ♗d3.**



Now in Antipov-Ragger, European Championship, Gjakova 2016, Black played 10 ...g6!?, which definitely avoids heading back to the theoretical highways with 10...e6. The game ended in a fighting draw.

Against 6 ♗e2 the authors recommend Fischer’s favourite, 6...e5, and this is typical of the ‘straight bat’ Najdorf approach of the book. It does, however, leave the “Model Najdorf Game” of the introduction, in which Kasparov meets Adams’ 6 ♗e3 with 6...e6, transposing to his favourite Scheveningen, looking an odd choice with which to open the book. Sometimes the authors do indeed steer away from 6...e5, such as against the Sozin, when 6 ♗c4 is met by 6...e6, and 6 a4, which is met by 6...g6, “since this is an opportunity for Black to play the formidable Dragon structure without having to worry about

White castling long (since his pawn on a4 will give Black too much play against the king).”

This is a decent book and a good attempt to offer something fresh on the ever-popular Najdorf. The prose explanations work well and the illustrative games include several examples from 2017-8, which means the lines should be up to date and fully serviceable for club and tournament players.

Sean Marsh



The Grandmaster: Magnus Carlsen and the Match that made Chess Great Again

Brin-Jonathan Butler, 212 pages

Simon & Schuster

RRP £12.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £11.69**

New York, 2016. Trump has been the President-elect for two days. But it is not just politics that is drawing the world’s attention to the Big Apple. The chess world is also in town.

Carlsen-Karjakin gets underway, following an opening ceremony at a hotel Trump had once owned, before it went bankrupt. Brin-Jonathan Butler was there to follow the action. His brief threefold: to explore why (in his view) Carlsen was not a household name, to understand the secret of his greatness, and to consider how long Carlsen could stay at the top without going mad. Butler treads some rich, if familiar ground, along the way: Fischer, women in chess, computers, chess and sanity, the Marshall Club, prodigies, hustling and hustlers.

Butler is at his best when writing about the match itself. His description of Carlsen’s defeat in game eight is extremely well done. Perhaps this is the moment where he forges his closest connection with the world champion. As Karjakin bears down on Carlsen, Butler writes: “His defeat was inevitable and I’ve never seen a lonelier looking human being [...] trying to decide in what order to abandon his identity and his life.” In the desperate attempt to stave off the inevitable, Butler captures the essence of what it means for all of us, even the brilliant like Carlsen, to be mortal. “As his time wore dangerously down, it was obvious, just this once, that his inability to let go of a defeated battlefield wasn’t what made him a unique genius. Instead it laid bare the fragility and vulnerability of his universal humanity that tied all of us watching to him.”

Butler gives some interesting insights into Fischer from conversations with those who knew him. “Don’t ever ask me about losing” was apparently Fischer’s reply when once asked about the subject. Butler’s story of his own chess is a little less convincing. How many players would really lose the first game they ever played via Fool’s mate? The story felt a little pat, Scholar’s mate more plausible. The passage on Butler as a bullet chess player

in cafes also lacks a certain something. However, whatever minor quibbles I have with Butler as a chessplayer, his authenticity and talent as a writer are not in doubt. His childhood experiences of playing chess in Hungary with drunken relatives are both hilarious and terrifying.

The main problem Butler faces, which does impact on the book, is that he simply cannot get any direct access to Carlsen, Karjakin or their respective camps. This is the speculative portrait of an outsider looking in. Perhaps for this reason he never fully answers the question he poses. His ultimate conclusions, while interesting (and I won’t spoil by sharing here), are not necessarily fully wedded to the narrative that precedes them. Yet this may be something we have to put on chess’s charge sheet rather than Butler’s. As he highlights, this is a game where no more than 30 or so people can make a full-time living just from playing. Perhaps it is incumbent on all those in a position to do so, to be more open, to make a greater effort to let the world in.

Butler does not really give any context as to why this was the match that made chess great again. Beyond speculation that Fischer would have been a Trump supporter, there is also little on the sociological context of chess, in a rapidly changing world. That said, this is an important book. The stories of our world champions and their matches will be told for as long as chess is played. Butler makes an important contribution to the canon of chess writing and his book is worth reading.

Ben Graff



The Longest Game: The Five Karpov-Kasparov Matches

Jan Timman, 368 Pages

New in Chess

RRP £27.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £25.15**

World championship matches aren’t what they used to be. 12 games are simply not enough and a match lasting less than one month must be seen as lightweight when compared to former times. 24 was the norm for many years, but even that number pales in comparison to the first Karpov-Kasparov match: 48 games and still no result. This would explain the title of Timman’s new book on its own, but the unfinished business stretched to an unprecedented five matches and 144 games. All the way from Moscow to Lyon, from 1984 to 1990, Karpov and Kasparov were locked in a seemingly perpetual battle for the chess crown.

Kasparov was eventually triumphant, but it was never an easy ride for him. Why the renewed interest in a contest that reached its conclusion in 1990? Timman was given the idea to write this book by New in Chess

supremo Allard Hoogland, who wanted to read about the “money, madness, brilliancies and blunders”, in addition to the stories of the best games from the matches.

There are 50 games with excellent annotations and an additional 17 game fragments. The annotations are deeper than those found in the books released shortly after each match, but lighter than those in Kasparov's own books, which is a good thing. As the author puts it, “In his analyses, Kasparov often loses his way in a forest of variations. A slightly lighter form of annotations might make the games more accessible.” Timman is right. I don't know anyone who ever plays through the long, branching thickets of deep analysis to be found in some chess books. Timman's notes – thankfully – rely heavily on prose explanations instead of endless variations, thus making them very accessible to club and tournament players.

Timman knows both players very well and has played against them more times than most. Therefore he is ideally placed to give serious insights into the characters of Karpov and Kasparov. He notes the level of Karpov's preparation, which at various moments outshone that of Kasparov's camp, despite history judging the latter as the most prepared of all players. The quality of Karpov's seconds had a lot to do with this. “No chess player has ever had such prominent seconds as Karpov did: Geller, Polugaevsky, Tal, and now Portisch; one World Champion and three top grandmasters, each one of whom had gone far in the World Championship cycle himself.”

Karpov's excellent preparation fuelled Kasparov's paranoia and he burned significant time and energy on the potential issue of a mole in his camp. Vladimirov was ejected from it towards the end of the third match as Kasparov sought to understand how he could lose three consecutive games, this allowing Karpov to level the scores in unlikely fashion.

One story from the time of the London leg of the 1986 match serves as a reminder of the tight leash held by certain authorities. “That night, we attended the musical *Chess* in the Prince Edward Theatre together with Karpov. The Soviet authorities had forbidden other members of Karpov's delegation to visit the musical, since it was supposed to contain anti-Soviet elements.”

Fischer famously said all the games were fixed; not just the results but “every move of every game.” He said he would write a book to expand on his theory, but of course it never appeared. As much as we choose to reject Fischer's theories on a whole range of other subjects, his thoughts on chess usually command more respect. It is very difficult to see how the games could be fixed to such an extent and certainly any conspiracy theory must take into account the circus of the abandoned first match. Why draw attention to something with such an unusual aspect?

Normally the matter would close, to be filed under Fischer's bitterness. Yet Spassky enters the story too. This was all before he was reunited with Fischer in 1992, which makes the observations more interesting.

A.Karpov-G.Kasparov World Championship (Game 19), Lyons 1990



Kasparov played **38...Kc1** and “offered a draw, which Karpov accepted without hesitation.” Spassky exclaimed “Scandal! The result has been agreed by the players!” He then wanted nothing more to do with the match and explained: “The logic is very simple. If you decided to make a draw at move 39, it means you are afraid to adjourn the game and analyse. Because the analysis might show that you have a simply winning position. If you have a simply winning position you must win and that means that you are to break the agreement, if you agreed that this game would be drawn.” Timman doesn't believe the conspiracy theories (but others do, including Hort), yet covers them, to add even more colour to the remarkable story.

This book is one of the must-buys of 2019, for sure. It can be enjoyed on several different levels: the games are brought back to life due to Timman's new analysis and highly pertinent observations; the personal stories will be new to most readers; the background to each match is never less than fascinating, instructive and entertaining.

Timman's Titans, the Dutch Grandmaster's previous book on world champions, won the coveted ECF Book of the Year award in 2017. *The Longest Game* is another work of exceptional quality and must already represent a very serious candidate for 2019's award.

Sean Marsh

Game Changer

Matthew Sadler & Natasha Regan,
416 pages, paperback

RRP £19.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.95**

The story of how *AlphaZero* taught itself chess and within just a few hours was the strongest chess player in the world. Sadler and Regan not only explain all about Demis Hassabis, DeepMind and AI, but by examining 2,000 of *AlphaZero*'s games are able to present a number of important lessons which we might all learn from it. There are chapters on such topics as Attacking the king: the march of the rook's pawn and *AlphaZero*'s opening repertoire. For more on this book, do see pages 32–33 of this issue.



Learn from Michal Krasenkow

Michal Krasenkow, 408 pages, paperback
RRP £29.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.99**

In this new work for Thinkers Publishing, leading Polish Grandmaster Michal Krasenkow presents many highlights from his long career. Krasenkow was born in Moscow in 1963, later becoming Georgian Champion ahead of emigrating to Poland in 1992. He has played in a great number of successful teams over the years, as quickly becomes clear from a look at this collection of well annotated games. Krasenkow groups his best and most instructive games via themes, so there are chapters on defence and dynamic play, as well as attacking chess, while the book closes with a great number of fascinating endgames.



Man vs Machine:

Challenging Human Supremacy at Chess

Karsten Müller & Jonathan Schaeffer,
480 pages, paperback

RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

The man versus machine battle in chess is, of course, an important one for the history of technology. It's only 13 years ago that Vladimir Kramnik sensationally overlooked that mate in two from *Deep Fritz*. Kramnik himself contributes a foreword to this story of how computers gradually became stronger and stronger at chess. Müller and Schaeffer, a Professor of Computer Science, do not, however, neglect the human side of the story, so the reader finds out plenty about the chess players as well as the computer programmers involved in the rise of the machine.



My Magic Years with Topalov

Romain Edouard, 312 pages, paperback
RRP £27.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £25.19**

From 2010 until 2014 Romain Edouard worked for Veselin Topalov as a second, a period which saw Topalov win the FIDE Grand Prix of 2012–13. Edouard presents some of Topalov's best games from the period, as well as many of the ‘magic’ ideas which they came up with together. He is unafraid to explain in detail all about the duties of a second, while

offering plenty of useful insights into how he and Topalov studied openings and prepared for games.

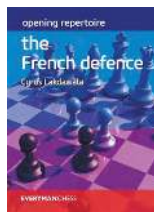
Please note that if you'd prefer a hardback version of this new work from Thinkers Publishing, that too is available from Chess & Bridge for £31.99 (Subscribers – £28.79).



Oleg Pervakov's Industrial Strength Endgame Studies

Sergei Tkachenko, 248 pages, paperback
RRP £15.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £14.39**

Oleg Pervakov is widely recognised as Russia's greatest living chess composer. In this work for Elk & Ruby, Ukrainian solving expert Tkachenko presents 100 of Pervakov's greatest compositions, ranging from elegant and short to some quite complex and detailed positions. As such, unlike Pervakov's earlier books, this one is not pocket-sized, but will certainly supply a stern test of your endgame ability, if also a beautiful journey for the diligent reader.



Opening Repertoire: The French Defence

Cyrus Lakdawala, 368 pages, paperback
RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

The French has long been one of the bedrocks of Lakdawala's repertoire and here he presents some of his favourite lines. With the exception of the Tarrasch, which is met by 3...c4 4 exd5 ♖xd5, the lines presented tend to be more strategic than forcing in nature, such as 3 ♖c3 ♗b4 4 e5 ♗d7, while throughout Lakdawala is his usual lucid self and particularly strong on explaining the key motifs Black should remember.

Openings: Sicilian Defense

Jerzy Konikowski & Uwe Bekemann,
170 pages, paperback

RRP £17.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £16.19**

Many club players are afraid of playing the Sicilian Defence; it involves learning a lot of theory and the resulting middlegames can appear rather irrational. Step forward Konikowski and Bekemann, who assume no prior knowledge of the Sicilian. Their focus is not just to present some basic theory in the many lines of the Sicilian, but especially to explain the key concepts and plans for both sides in each variation.

Also recently arrived at Chess & Bridge is *Openings: Open Games*, also by Konikowski and Bekemann. This does exactly the same as

Openings: Sicilian Defense, except for teaching the basic ideas behind the many different openings after 1 e4 e5, while running to 160 pages and also retailing at £17.99, or £16.19 for Subscribers.

The Bombastic Bird's

Lawrence Trent, PC-DVD;

running time: 6 hours, 21 minutes

RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

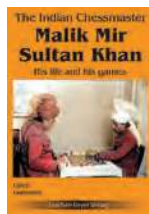
Subtitled 'An energetic and exciting repertoire after 1.f4', the popular presenter certainly believes in the Bird's, which he is quick to demonstrate is fully sound. Trent maps out a comprehensive repertoire with 1 f4, beginning by revealing how to gain the advantage against such sidelines as 1...f5 and 1...g5. The From Gambit, 1...e5, receives plenty of coverage, with both there and in his coverage of the Reversed Leningrad, Trent presenting a surprising amount of theory and several significant new ideas for White.



The Chelyabinsk Meteorite: Selected Games of Igor Kurnosov

Elk & Ruby, 210 pages, paperback
RRP £15.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £14.39**

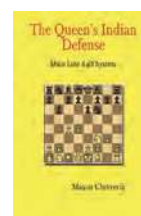
Russian publisher Elk & Ruby deserve credit for this tribute to the Russian Grandmaster Igor Kurnosov (1985–2013), who was tragically hit and killed by a car. Kurnosov's friends and opponents present a number of impressive games which clearly demonstrate his steady progression as a player. Kurnosov was especially noted for his analytical ability, attacking prowess and endgame skill. Contributors include Kurnosov's grandmaster colleagues Dmitry Bocharov, Ernesto Inarkiev and Kateryna Lagno.



The Indian Chessmaster: Malik Mir Sultan Khan

Ulrich Geilmann, 220 pages, paperback
RRP £17.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £16.19**

Mir Sultan Khan remains a magical, almost mythical figure in British chess history. He famously arrived in England in 1929, dazzled the world with his victories over some of the best players of the day, and then returned to India in 1933, never to be seen at the chess board again. Geilmann does his best to shed light on Mir Sultan Khan's life and both those unfamiliar and familiar with Khan's amazing story during his chess years in England should find plenty of interest.



The Queen's Indian Defense: Main Line 4.g3 System

Maxim Chetverik, 420 pages, paperback
RRP £23.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.59**

Elk & Ruby continue to evolve as a chess publisher, moving from on historical works and those devoted to studies to now also covering the openings. Russian IM Chetverik is certainly something of an expert on the main line Queen's Indian, 1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗f3 b6 4 g3, having played over 100 games in it. He supplies the latest state of play in all the key variations as he presents some 181 illustrative games. While theoretical in places, Chetverik most certainly does not write without the club player in mind, making good use throughout of 'land-mines', transposition alerts and key tips.



World Chess Championship 2016: Sergey Karjakin vs. Magnus Carlsen

Jerzy Konikowski & Uwe Bekemann,
144 pages, paperback

RRP £17.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £16.19**

Last month we listed *World Chess Championship 2018: Fabiano Caruana vs. Magnus Carlsen*. The same authors had earlier penned this account of Carlsen's previous match, which was, of course, another rather close encounter. The build-up of the tension can definitely be felt by the reader, who also gets to enjoy the fairly well annotated games.

Also make welcome recent appearances in English from German publisher Joachim Beyer Verlag are:

The French Defense: Properly Played by French legend Wolfgang Uhlmann (188 pages, RRP £17.99, Subscribers – £16.19);

The King's Indian Attack: Properly Played, Jerzy Konikowski and Robert Ullrich (300 pages, RRP £19.99, Subscribers – £17.99);

The London System: Properly Played, Marcus Schmucker (184 pages, RRP £17.99, Subscribers – £16.19);

The Sicilian Wing Gambit, Marcus Schmucker (136 pages, RRP £17.99, Subs' – £16.19);

Better Late Than Never: The Tennison Gambit, Uwe Bekemann (112 pages, RRP £17.99, Subscribers – £16.19);

Chess Phenomenon Paul Morphy, Otto Dietze (152 pages, RRP £17.99, Subscribers – £16.19);

Increase your Chess: Talent is Overrated, Patrick Karcher (188 pages, RRP £17.99, Subscribers – £16.19).