The Gazette

May 2020

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**Supporting Chess Players with Sight Loss.**

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To contact a member of the committee, please see the Braille Chess Association’s website where there is a facility for emailing each officer.

**Note:** The views expressed in the *Gazette* do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of the BCA, nor those of the editor.

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# Editorial

As I handed out copies of the February gazette at the Annual Chess Theme Break in Windermere, some people remarked that I must have written that editorial before the coronavirus news had broken in the west because I’d mentioned a plague in connection with the Chinese Year of the Rat. How right they were and how unfortunate that editorial now appears in retrospect. Three months on and I suspect every single reader, no matter where they live, has had their life changed to some degree or other by the virus and the accompanying restrictions. As I write in mid-April the UK, like countless other countries around the world, is in lockdown and many people are dealing with desperately difficult times, isolated from loved ones.

Yet in parallel, people are finding innovative ways to stay connected, support the vulnerable and raise morale. To misquote Dickens: It is the worst of times, it is the best of times. Many are employing 21st century technology to check on family and friends as well as run businesses remotely. By the time you read this, the BCA committee will have held its first meeting of the year via Skype. In contrast, the town of Belper, Derbyshire, is using a low-tech solution for keeping in touch. Or should that be “lowing” tech? Each evening residents engage in The Belper Moo by making cattle calls to each other across the deserted streets. Similarly, in the United States of America people are taking a moment to join in The Howling, by yelping and yowling into the night like wolves. Sadly, BCA members live too far apart to hear each other calling out. If we were closer, I wonder what our cry would be? Perhaps “J’adoube” to acknowledge all the adjustments we’re making in our lives at this time?

As a “J’adoubing” is a non-starter for our widespread membership, the BCA has been working on another way of bringing members together while keeping at a safe distance. We’re arranging a tournament that people can take part in from their homes and we sincerely hope that as many members as possible will enter as a show of unity and mutual support. The format is as flexible and inclusive as we can make it. You can play by Telephone, Email or Skype. Please see the TESSLa Tournament article in this gazette and waste no time in putting your name down!

Happily, the Annual Chess Theme Break, run for the last time by Peter and Celia Gibbs, took place in Windermere ahead of the lockdown and was once again a huge success. These pages contain a full report as well as Joan Shorrock’s traditional poem about the goings-on during the week! You can also read about the plans we’re putting in place for the 28th Chess Theme Break next year.

In this issue there is a message from our Chairman about the changes we’ve had to make to our 2020 calendar and a report from our Treasurer about the continuing generosity of our sponsors. Our Membership Secretary informs us of more people joining, there is news that one longstanding member is fast approaching a significant birthday and another member has been honoured with a very special award indeed! We also have a uniquely personal article from one of our associate members, who writes about his many family connections with the BCA.

Our Publicity Officer has worked hard on setting up a new BCA email user group. If you haven’t yet joined, I’d advise you to sign up quickly. If you’re lucky you might still catch some examples of opening traps that Gerry Walsh is kindly sharing with us each day! He has thoughtfully sent me a couple of new ones for this issue as well so that members who don’t use email won’t miss out. Our Correspondence Chess Director updates us on various competitions and there are games and news from the 12th BCA Email Tournament too. Owen Phillips sent me his favourite games of 2019 just too late for the February issue but they are in this time. Lastly, this quarter’s puzzle is chosen by a new contributor. I won’t say here who it is, but you can rest assured that he’s “blooming brilliant”!

Please send me your contributions for the August issue by the end of June.

Julie Leonard

# A Note from our Chairman

We are all going through extremely difficult and worrying times with the coronavirus pandemic. It was very disappointing that we had to postpone the AGM weekend and the Chairman’s Cup. Similarly, on the international front, the Six Nations tournament, the Haaksbergen tournament and the IBCA European Individual Championship have all been cancelled or postponed. Our next BCA tournament is the Autumn one which has been scheduled for the end of October this year at the Old Swan Hotel in Harrogate.

A consequence of cancelling the AGM is that we were unable to appoint the new committee. Chris Ross had stood down from his committee post of website coordinator. We would like to thank Chris for all his work in this role over the years. The plan was that Dan Rugman would be standing for the post of website coordinator at the AGM but of course this has not been possible. As a result, Dan will be the acting website coordinator. Dan has also said that he is also happy to continue in his current role of publicity officer. He makes the valid point that there is a great deal of overlap between the two posts and he would aim to enable others to update the website, thereby reducing the work load of the website coordinator. The rest of the committee members will also continue in their current posts until things can be properly resolved.

We look forward to happier times when the pandemic is behind us. In the meantime, I hope you and your families and friends all keep safe and well.

Norman Wragg

# Forthcoming Events

**30th October – 1st November 2020, International Autumn Tournament**

This will take place at The Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate. We are pleased to be returning to this popular hotel with its excellent facilities. The hotel is located close to the town centre, and a short taxi ride from the railway station.

There will be two five round chess tournaments. The Open section is open to all visually impaired chess players and associate members of the BCA. The Challengers is limited to those graded 100 or below. The entry fee for both tournaments is £10. The cost of dinner, bed and breakfast for members and associate members is £45 per person per night for Friday and Saturday nights for those sharing a double/twin room and £47 per person per night in a single room. For members and associate members staying on the Sunday night, the cost will be £60 per person sharing a double/twin room and £69 per person in a single room. For prices for non-members, please contact the organiser. Car drivers need to note please that there is a £10 charge per day for parking.

The closing date for entries is Thursday 10th September 2020. Please send your entry fee and full payment for all accommodation to Gill Smith by this date. Organiser Voldi Gailans. Queries about the tournament should be sent to Voldi.

**Sunday 31st January to Sunday 7th February 2021 – The 28th Chess Theme Break**

The 28th Chess Theme Break will be held at the Marsham Court Hotel in Bournemouth. It is anticipated that the week will closely follow the tried and trusted programme developed by Peter and Celia Gibbs. It will include coaching provided by more experienced BCA members, a tournament and many social events. Please refer to Gary Wickett’s report on the 27th Chess Theme Break in this issue to get a flavour of what the week entails.

The cost of dinner, bed and breakfast for the week is £378 per person sharing a double or twin inland room and £448 per person for single occupancy of a double room. The cost of individual nights for anyone not staying the whole week are £54 per person sharing, with a £10 per night supplement for single occupancy. There is also a supplement of £10 per room per night for a sea view subject to availability and on request.

Please note that the normal BCA booking procedures do not apply to this event. Bookings are to be made directly with the hotel, but we ask that you are patient for a little longer as the booking forms are not yet available. When booking commences it will be announced on the user group and regular attendees who do not subscribe to the user group will be informed. Others who are interested in booking should enquire from June onwards. The hotel will require a non-refundable deposit of £30 per person when booking. The closing date is the 30th of September 2020. Full payment will need to be made to the hotel by 31st December 2020. Under the current arrangements, BCA members who give or receive coaching during the chess theme break will receive a grant of £50.

Julie Leonard

**Booking Conditions and Procedures**

By entering a BCA tournament, a player is deemed to have consented for their name and any special requirements to be passed to the hotel prior to the event. Also, consent is considered to have been given for a player’s name, club, results and possibly also their gender to be sent to the ECF for grading purposes. For juniors, the date of birth is also required if they are to get the age-related grading bonus they are entitled to.

If you have any queries about the hotel or the tournament please contact the organiser. Blind and partially sighted UK residents under the age of 25 receive free entry and free accommodation when playing in BCA events. In appropriate circumstances, free accommodation is also available to a parent or guardian accompanying a junior.

Visually impaired UK residents in their first year of membership receive their first BCA weekend event free or £100 reduction in the cost of a week-long event. They may also be accompanied by a guide or companion who will receive the same concession. For a first event we ask for payment in advance and we then make a refund at the event. You may pay in these ways:

Cheques payable to Braille Chess Association should be sent to Gill Smith, see the front of the Gazette for her address. Online or telephone payments may be made to:

Braille Chess Association, sort code 40 52 40, account number 00082456.

Credit/debit card payments may be made through the BCA website.

If you pay by direct payment then you should inform Gill when the payment has been made. Bookings accepted after the closing date are subject to a £10 late booking penalty for each person. Late bookings and entries are accepted at the discretion of the organiser. Bookings are confirmed when full payment has been received. Payments can only be refunded within the time limit set in the terms and conditions set by the hotels. Members are advised to take out holiday insurance to cover themselves.

When contacting Gill please let her know if you want a single, double or twin room and if you have a preference for a bath or a shower. And remember, if emailing Gill, copy in the tournament organiser.

Also say whether any of the following apply.

1 If you will be bringing a guide dog;

2 If you are on a special diet;

3 If you have mobility problems and would benefit from being located in a room near to a lift;

4 If you are a wheelchair user;

5 If you feel you would have any special difficulties in an emergency such as a fire evacuation;

6 Any other special requirements.

The BCA reserves the right to refuse or cancel any entry or to exclude any person from any event it runs.

# Millennium Club, the BCA’s monthly lottery

To take part in this monthly draw it is just £12 per number per year. You may have as many numbers as you like at £12 each. Every month a lucky winner receives £35. If you wish to enter the draw, send a cheque made payable to "Braille Chess Association" to the treasurer or make an online or telephone payment to the BCA. Or, even better, you could set up a standing order then next year’s subs will not be forgotten.

Recent Millennium Club winners: February: Voldi Gailans, number 16.

March: Gerry Walsh, number 33.

April: Pauline Wragg, number 23.

Gill Smith, Treasurer

# Treasurer’s Report

I was sad to know I would not be meeting up with BCA friends at our AGM and Chairman’s Cup events. Several participants for the events chose not to be refunded but to leave their funds with the BCA to go towards future events. If the BCA holds your funds and you decide at any time that you would like it paid back to you please ask and I will arrange a payment.

As our accountant was retiring and I always worried about putting a year’s worth of financial paperwork in the post it was agreed with the committee that I would find a new service. I have signed up with Dunkleys, an award-winning accountancy firm local to me. The annual independent examination of the accounts has been carried out and they have been accepted. The accounts will be published on our website as usual. If anyone has any questions about the BCA’s finances, or any suggestions, please contact me or anyone else on the committee.

Since Julia Scott’s retirement we have received further grants from her applications totalling £8,020.

Our new fundraiser, Linda, has drawn up a fundraising strategy with input from the committee and has been submitting applications for funding. One such application was about to secure support for our participation in an overseas event. The event has been postponed but she is hopeful that we will receive the grant when the tournament is rescheduled.

In February the BCA received a final cheque from the solicitors who were managing Brian Perham’s estate. In total we received £17,971.90, a very generous legacy.

The Worth Wayneflete Foundation recently gave us £500, which they do every year. They very thoughtfully sent us a cheque earlier in the year than usual because they know that some organisations are struggling to keep going during the current pandemic.

If you are shopping online please remember that at no cost to you there are fundraising initiatives available to raise funds for the BCA. Amazon Smile donates 0.5% of a purchase price and Give as you Live allows you to shop with many different retailers, including holiday firms and utilities companies, and a percentage of the total is given to the BCA.

Gill Smith, Treasurer

# Membership Secretary’s Report

I am extremely pleased that at long last after the advent of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) the opted in membership list has now been circulated to all opted in members in their preferred format. This has been a lengthy process involving contacting all members and then compiling a new membership list. I would especially like to thank our Treasurer Gill Smith and Gazette Editor Julie Leonard who have both been putting the lion’s share of the effort into this time consuming and arduous task. Many thanks for all your hard work.

This quarter we have three new members who have recently joined our association. Two visually impaired members: junior member Ben Stanley from Dudley who is very interested in tapping into the wide range of accessible chess material in our library, and Sue Williams from Tunbridge Wells who plans to learn the game of chess joining as a 5 year member. I am also delighted that Mark Kirkham's Mum, Liz Kirkham, has joined as a life member. Liz is very well known to our members who attend the annual chess theme week and have been entertained by her excellent quizzes. It’s great to have her on board.

**Deceased Member**

I'm very sad to inform members that Hemsley Mallaby a recent member has passed away.

Mark Hague

# FIDE Veterans Awards 2020

Congratulations to our Honorary member, Gerry Walsh, for being named as one of seventeen worldwide honoured recipients of FIDE’s Veterans Awards for 2020! The awards are granted to distinguished players, coaches and organisers and are FIDE's contribution towards giving back a little to those who devoted their entire life to chess.

Gerry is only the second English person to receive this award, with another chess great, Leonard Barden, having been the first in 2014. Gerry is a former President of the English Chess Federation, a leading arbiter and one of the foremost tournament organisers from the North of England. He is well known for staging an impressive series of international events in Teesside in the 1970s, and for being the long-time organiser of the popular Scarborough weekend congress. However, we know him best as a loyal and longstanding supporter of the BCA and as our friend. It’s wonderful that the years he has dedicated to chess are being recognised on the international stage!

# New Email Group

Many readers will be aware that we recently started a new email group. The reason for this is that the old Yahoo platform was becoming increasingly problematic and we felt that we had no choice but to move to a new platform.

The group is open to members, associate members, and employees of the BCA, as well as members of any other association whose main purpose is advancing chess for visually-impaired people. The committee may also invite others to join if we feel it appropriate.

Members can analyse games, discuss tournaments of any kind and setting, seek advice on their own performance in events, announce personal achievements away from the board, and exchange brief personal messages of welcome, congratulations, or sympathy for ill-health or bereavement. You should have already received an email inviting you to join the new group. If not, just send an email to BrailleChess+subscribe@groups.io. If you have any problems just send an email to customerservices@braillechess.org.uk. You can find more information, including the rules of engagement, at [www.braillechess.org.uk/e-group](http://www.braillechess.org.uk/e-group). We look forward to seeing you there.

Dan Rugman

# Correspondence Chess Director’s Report

Critical results in the 45th Championship Premier came in this quarter. The fierce grips of Alec Crombie and Ernie McElroy on the title have been broken. Congratulations go to Guy Whitehouse for an excellent performance to become Premier Champion.

**45th BCA CORRESPONDENCE TOURNAMENT 2019-20**

**Premier** - Group Leader Paul Benson

McElroy 0.5 - 0.5 Crombie, Caro-Kann, 38.

Phillips 0.5 - 0.5 Whitehouse, Queen's Pawn, 22.

Whitehouse 1 - 0 McElroy, Sicilian, 37.

**Final scores**: Guy Whitehouse 3-4, Alec Crombie 3, Ernie McElroy 2.5, George Phillips 1.5, Denis Warren 0.

Tie-break: Guy 4.75, Alec 4.25.

Again congratulations to Guy on taking the title of Champion.

**Challengers** - Group Leader Gary Wickett

Greatrex 0 - 1 Mike Hague, King's Pawn, 10.

**Scores:** Mike Hague 4.5-5, Voldi Gailans 4-5, Eric Gallacher 3.5-5, Jim Cuthbert 1-4, Arthur Greatrex 1-4, Eleanor Tew 0-5.

Congratulations to Mike Hague on winning the Challengers group.

**BCA LEAGUE 2020-21**

**Division 1** - Group Leader Guy Whitehouse

Mark Hague 0 - 1 Crombie, Queen's Pawn, 34.

Crombie 1 - 0 Gailans, French, 36.

Gailans 0 - 1 Mark Hague, Dutch, 29.

Scores: Alec Crombie 2-2, Mark Hague 1-2, Ernie McElroy 0-0, Voldi Gailans 0-2.

**Division 2** - Group Leader Voldi Gailans

No results.

Scores: Jim Cuthbert, Eric Gallacher, George Phillips, Denis Warren, all 0-0.

**Division 3** - Group Leader George Phillips

Tew 0 - 1 Flood, Chigorin, 32.

Jones 1 - 0 Tew, French, 31.

Flood 1 - 0 Jones, Philidor, 38.

Scores: Mike Flood 2-2, Malcolm Jones 1-2, Andrew Wood 0-0, Eleanor Tew 0-2.

**FRIENDLY LADDER TABLE**

Anyone wishing to play a friendly game on the Ladder should now contact myself, details as shown in list of Officers. Any friendly games played under correspondence conditions, such as by Braille, cassette, email, Skype, telephone, can qualify as a Friendly Ladder game. Please report such games and let your efforts be reflected in your accumulating score.

Jones 0 - 1 Benson, Dutch, 40.

T. Elbourn 1 - 0 Warren, English Opening, 24.

Jones 0 - 1 Flood, Giuoco Piano, 36.

**Scores:** 7 Jim Cuthbert; 6 Eleanor Tew; 5 Stan Lightowler; 4 Tony Elbourn, Mike Flood, Mark Hague, Dorothy Hodges, Stan Lovell, Denis Warren; 3 Ernie McElroy, Lea Ryan; 2 Paul Benson, Lionel Bryant, Derek Couchman, Jason Pearce, Gill Smith, Bill Tatum; 1 Christopher Huby.

In closing, to those about to start a game: Break a peg!

Paul Benson

# David Hodgkins Memorial Annual Best Game Prize

With all our spring and summer over the board tournaments having been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it seems likely that 2020 will be a great year for correspondence chess! Members in the British Isles are reminded that correspondence games in any BCA event or for a BCA team can be entered for the Best Game competition by sending them to any committee member in whichever format is easiest for you. Peter Gibbs is our judge for this year and he awaits your games!

# 12th BCA Email Tournament

Philip Doyle and Eamonn Casey write:

Our 12th BCA Email Tournament began on the 1st of March. There are 19 participants on this occasion, five down on the initial entries for our previous event. We decided to go with three divisions of five players and four players in division 4. The divisions were based on BCA grades, performance in previous email tournaments where applicable, and where possible, incorporated promotion and relegation. All players in the top 3 divisions have two whites and two blacks, whereas in division 4 two players have two whites, and the other two players have two blacks. Divisions 1 and 3 are controlled by Philip, and Eamonn is responsible for divisions 2 and 4.

The composition of divisions and the results and scores so far are set out below. Division 1 has been won by Rod MacDonald and Division 2 by Philip Doyle. In Division 3, where Gill Smith is performing very strongly, there are still three games outstanding. Tony Lawton and Malcolm Jones are joint winners of Division 4. Congratulations to all the winners but especially Malcolm who is a newcomer to our tournament.

**Division 1**

Peter Gibbs, Rod MacDonald, Malola Prasath, Steve Burnell, Colin Chambers.

Gibbs lost to Chambers

Burnell drew with Chambers

Chambers beat Prasath

Prasath lost to Gibbs

Macdonald beat Chambers

Burnell lost to MacDonald

Prasath beat Burnell

Gibbs beat Burnell

Macdonald beat Prasath

Gibbs drew with MacDonald

**Final scores:** MacDonald 3.5, Gibbs and Chambers 2.5, Prasath 1, Burnell 0.5

**Division 2**

Philip Doyle, Mark Kirkham, Eamonn Casey, Randy Kruzeniski, Voldi Gailans.

Kruzeniski drew with Gailans

Doyle drew with Kruzeniski

Casey drew with Doyle

Kruzeniski drew with Kirkham

Gailans lost to Doyle

Doyle beat Kirkham

Casey drew with Kruzeniski

Kirkham drew with Casey

Gailans beat Casey

Kirkham beat Gailans

**Final scores:** Doyle 3, Kirkham and Kruzeniski 2, Casey and Gailans 1.5

**Division 3**

Steve Thacker, Mark Hague, Tony Elbourn, Michael Flood, Gill Smith.

Flood lost to Hague

Elbourn beat Flood

Flood lost to Smith

Smith beat Thacker

Thacker drew with Hague

Smith beat Elbourn

Elbourn lost to Thacker

**Current scores:** Smith 3/3, Hague 1.5/2, Thacker 1.5/3, Elbourn 1/3, Flood 0/3,

**Division 4**

Denis Warren, Anthony Borg, Tony Lawton, Malcolm Jones.

Borg lost to Jones

Borg lost to Lawton

Warren beat Borg

Jones drew with Lawton

Warren lost to Jones

Lawton beat Warren

**Final scores:** Jones and Lawton 2.5, Warren 1, Borg 0

Here are a couple of games from Division 1.

**Rod Macdonald v Malola Prasath, Nimzovitch Defence**

1. e4 Nc6 2. d4 e5 3. d5 Nce7 4. Nf3 Ng6 5. h4 h5 6. Bg5 Nf6 7. Nc3 Bc5 8. Qd3 d6 9. Nd2 a6 10. g3 Bd7

11. a3 Qb8 12. Bxf6 gxf6 13. Qf3 Ke7 14. Nd1 Qa7 15. Bh3 Nf8 16. Bxd7 Nxd7 17. Nc4 Rag8 18. b4 Bb6

19. Nde3 a5 20. Nf5+ Kd8 21. 0-0 a4 22. Rfc1 Rg4 23. Nxb6 Qxb6 24. c4 Qa7 5. c5 dxc5 26. Rab1 Rhg8

27. Kh2 Re8 28. Qe3 b6 29. Rb2 Rg6 30. Qd3 Rgg8 31. Qb5 Qa8 32. bxc5 bxc5 33. Rxc5 Qa7 34. Rcc2 Qa8

35. Rc6 Black Resigns

**Malola Prasath v Peter Gibbs**

Peter has kindly annotated this game for us because it had many interesting features and showed the complexity of chess for both sides.

1. e4 c5 The Sicilian Defence is the most popular reply to White's open games. Moreover, it avoids the dreaded Ruy Lopez.

2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6

5. Nc3 e5 Years ago it was considered a drawback to voluntarily accept a backward pawn on an open file. Today's chess is more wily. This opening is a great favourite of mine which I have played in OTB and correspondence chess. I am not alone since it is favoured by the World Champion and leading grandmasters! Its name is the Sveshnikov Defence. I had already studied the move since I possessed two books 'Grandmaster Repertoire - The Sicilian Sveshnikov' by Vassilios Kotronias and 'The Sicilian Sveshnikov Move by Move' by Cyrus Lakdawala. Coincidentally during the game an admirer (yes I do have them) sent me an 'Opening Repertoire' on it also by Cyrus.

6. Ndb5 d6 7. Bg5 a6 8. Na3 b5

9. Bxf6 This is a very sharp double-edged move. Personally I prefer the positional 9. Nd5.

9. … gxf6 10. Nd5 f5 11. Bd3 Be6

12. Qh5 This may look strong but it puts the Q in a precarious position.

12. … Rg8

13. 0-0 It might be better to castle on the other wing. White is getting into time trouble from now on.

13. … f4 14. c3 Bg4 15. Qxh7 Rg6 16. Rfd1 Rh6 17. Qg8 Be6 18. Bxb5 axb5

19. Nxb5 Kd7 It took a sleepless night for Black to come up with this move.

20. Ndc7 Qxc7 White resigned. If 21 Nxc7, Kxc7 and Black wins that position.

# BCA TESSLa Tournament

Following the sad but unavoidable postponement of our spring and summer over the board events due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are proposing a Telephone Email Skype Summer Ladder tournament - TESSLa for short! We hope this will enable members of all playing strengths to have fun playing as much chess as they want on any mutually convenient platform while remaining safe at home. What a great way to keep in touch with BCA friends and make new ones at this difficult time!

At the start of the event, players' names are placed on the TESSLa in reverse playing strength order i.e. the highest ranking player will be on the bottom rung. The aim is to finish as close to the top of the TESSLa as you can, while accruing as many points as possible. Players ascend the TESSLa by beating a higher placed opponent in a Rung Challenge. Players win points from Rung Challenges and also from Points Only Challenges.

**Rung Challenges**

The controller initially pairs opponents no more than five rungs away from each other. Opponents play two games, reversing colours for the second. When the games are finished the players report the results to the controller. Two points are awarded for a win and one for a draw. Each player also receives 1 point per completed challenge. For example, a player who wins a game and draws the other receives 4 points (2 for the win, 1 for the draw and 1 for the completed challenge) and the opponent receives 2 points (1 for the draw and 1 for the completed challenge). If the player on the lower rung wins both games or wins one and draws one, the players swap position on the TESSLa. In all other cases the players remain on the same rung as before. Players are then free to issue their own Rung Challenge to any available person up to five rungs higher than themselves. The controller advises who is within range and has at least one compatible platform. Players who have Rung Challenge games in progress or who have notified the controller that they are ill may not be challenged. If no players are available, the player waits to receive a Rung Challenge from someone below them or for a higher placed opponent to become available. Players may not decline a Rung Challenge.

**Points Only Challenges**

These are for the benefit of players who would like to take on more than one opponent at the same time. As with Rung Challenges two games are played and points are awarded accordingly, including 1 point each for a completed challenge, however the rung position of the players remains the same regardless of the result. At any time during the event a player can issue a Points Only Challenge to anyone, regardless of relative rung positions. Players are not obliged to accept a Points Only Challenge if they don't want an additional opponent at that time.

Players may take on opponents that they've played before in a Rung Challenge or Points Only Challenge but not consecutively i.e. they should play at least one other person in between.

**Platforms and Time controls:**

In email games players should make at least two moves per challenge in any 24 hour period, though the moves can be spread across two games with the same opponent. If players agree they can play the two games concurrently.

For Skype games each player has 1 hour 15 minutes on the clock. The clock is managed by a time keeper such as the controller or a person designated by the controller. The dates and times of the two games are mutually agreed between the players and their time keeper.

For telephone games the default move rate is the same as for email games. Games may be played concurrently by agreement. Alternatively, the game may be played in one call at a faster move rate by mutual agreement.

Players may agree to play by other means of communication e.g. SMS text message, Freechess, Lichess.

**Defaults:**

For all in one session games e.g. Skype or telephone games to be played in a single call, players must make contact within 15 minutes of the appointed time. For email and other one move per communication games, at least one game should begin within two days of the challenge being issued. If a default occurs, depending on the circumstances the controller may impose a penalty such as deducting a point from the transgressor or awarding the game to the opponent.

**Other conditions:**

The tournament is open to all members of the BCA, including associate and overseas members.

The use of chess engines is not permitted.

By entering this event participants are deemed to have consented for the controller to give their contact details to all other participants.

Participants meet the cost of their phone calls or internet usage themselves.

Members based in the British Isles can enter their games into the David Hodgkins Annual Best Game competition.

Games will not be graded.

Players must be able to use English algebraic chess notation.

If players have multiple platforms in common but different preferences the player on the lower rung chooses.

Games unfinished by the closing date shall be sent for adjudication, provided at least 35 moves have been made or at the discretion of the controller.

The TESSLa positions and current scores will be published on our email user group at regular intervals and those without email can telephone the controller to get latest news.

The deadline for entries is Friday 22nd May. The start date is 23rd May i.e. the Saturday of the UK Spring Bank Holiday weekend. Players may join the event after it has started and anyone doing so will be placed on the bottom rung of the ladder.

The tournament will end on Sunday 20th September. Please note that the start of the 13th BCA Email Tournament has been postponed until the 1st of October so that there won’t be an overlap. The TESSLa winners will be determined as follows:

- The player on the top rung of the ladder.

- The player with the highest number of game points.

- The highest placed player with an ECF grade of 100 or less.

- The player with an ECF grade of 100 or less who has accumulated the highest number of points.

To enter, please contact the controller, Gerry Walsh, and provide the following information:

- Your preferred platform (telephone, email or Skype)

- Contact details for all platforms that you can use. (Please be as flexible as possible so that this event is as inclusive as we can make it! It would normally be expected that people who prefer email would also be able to play by telephone and that people who prefer Skype would be able to use either of the other platforms, though this may not always be so for example in the case of overseas members.)

- Your grade or estimated playing strength.

Participants will probably be able to play on their preferred platform most of the time so please don’t let the possibility of having to play a game or two on another platform deter you from entering. This is all about as many members as possible joining forces to prove we’re not going to let coronavirus deprive us of our chess! It is hoped that players will participate in the spirit of friendship and that opponents will find an amicable resolution to any disagreements. If a dispute that cannot be resolved by the players arises, the controller’s decision will be final. This is an untested format and there will no doubt be unforeseen issues that will have to be dealt with fairly as we go along. The success of this event relies on everybody's common sense and good will, but we know that members have those qualities in abundance. We can do this!

Committee and Tournament Sub-committee

# 27th Chess Theme Break - Windermere 2020

Gary Wickett writes:

Every January since 1994, Peter and Celia Gibbs have faithfully run what is known as the Chess Theme Break (CTB). This is a wonderful concept where stronger players holiday together alongside beginners and weaker players to pass on their chess pearls in coaching sessions; culminating in a mini tournament. This particular year was a very special event, not only was it 25 years since the CTB had moved from Teignmouth to Windermere, but it was also tinged with some sadness as Peter and Celia had decided it was time to take a well earned rest and step down from organising this much loved event. May I take this opportunity to thank Peter and Celia for their wonderful dedication and hard work in organising what has become for many their favourite week of the year. Indeed, I can name at least two people who on several occasions have travelled all the way from Canada to attend. I am sure the future of the CTB will feature in other pages of this Gazette, so I shall now move on to do my best to give a brief account of this year’s event.

This year’s Chess Theme Break was held from Saturday 25 January to Saturday 1 February. Although not everybody came for the whole week, in all I think there were 28 of us who attended; this figure includes non chess playing partners and those who came simply due to the fact that it is such an enjoyable week and the CTB would not be the same without them.

In total there were 14 involved in the chess this year. This figure includes seven coaches: Peter Gibbs, Norman Andrews, Stan Lovell, Gerry Walsh, Mark Kirkham, Colin Chambers and Olle Engström; Olle had travelled all the way from Sweden. The coaches spent Sunday and Monday in one to one sessions with their students.

From Monday onwards, each day there were trips organised by the hotel for the non chess players. The Windermere area has many places of interest. It was the home of Beatrix Potter and William Wordsworth and way before their time it was ruled by Saint Oswald whose church still stands. If history doesn’t float your boat, there were plenty of nice walks, which I’m sure the guide dogs appreciated, and a plethora of coffee shops and other retailers to help lighten your purse, and of course there was a trip on Lake Windermere which I’m relieved to say did float people’s boat!

Monday night was quiz night, where Celia put us through our paces. The team I was in once again came last. I do try to warn people but they never listen! Liz Kirkham’s team, which also comprised both Marks, Martyn and Richard, came first winning the chocolates.

Tuesday was a chess free day with a trip to Grasmere in the morning and a boat trip on Lake Windermere in the afternoon. Despite the inclement weather, I believe everyone had a great time. Antoine certainly had a good time during Celia’s bingo on Tuesday evening as he won several times.

Wednesday morning was back to the chess and the start of the tournament, which was what is known as a quick play handicap tournament, each game being no more than an hour. The players are divided into categories: A, B and C according to strength. The portion of the hour allotted to each player is dependent upon their category and the category of their opponent. So if you are a category A player you may get as little as 20 minutes on your clock, and if you are a Category C player you may get as much as 40 minutes. Although the games of course were not graded, all players were eager to have their name engraved on the illustrious trophy; so everything to play for.

Each round was an all play all. In the first round the players were divided into two groups, which for this report I will call Group 1 and Group 2. The winner/winners of each group would then qualify for the final round.

In Group 1 we had Mark Hague, Jim Cuthbert, Tony Lawton and Richard Harrington. Mark beat both Jim and Richard and then taking the black pieces went on to draw with Tony. Tony also beat Jim and Richard. Richard beat Jim. Scores for Group 1: Mark and Tony 2.5; Richard 1; Jim 0.

In Group 2 we had Gary Wickett, Lea Ryan and Abi Baker. Abi drew against Gary and then went on to beat Lea. Gary also beat Lea. Scores for Group 2: Abi and Gary 1.5; Lea 0.

(Lea and Jim may have finished on 0 but both of them had beaten me two Windermeres ago.)

Wednesday evening we were once again entertained by the dulcet tones of Fiona Shaw or was it Karen Carpenter or Dusty Springfield, the likeness was mind blowing!

Returning to the chess, in the final round, we had Mark, Tony, Abi and yours truly. I had taken the black pieces in my game against Mark and things were looking good as I had managed to win a piece quite early on in the game. However, Mark kept his cool and fought on ferociously. He offered me a second piece, this one a Trojan horse. I saw the danger in taking the knight but thought I could ride the storm and it would mean I was two pieces up. Greed is often heavily punished by chess and Mark went on to win. I had better success in my games against Tony and Abi and finished on 2 points.

Mark went on to win his game against Abi, ensuring he would either be joint winner or outright winner of the cup. Abi beat Tony, leaving one game remaining; Mark v Tony. I took a particular interest in this game as if Tony managed to beat Mark then it would mean that Mark and I would be joint winners. Mark only needed a draw to be the outright winner. I of course joined the various spectators and had promised Tony I would buy him any drink of his choice if he managed to win.

Mark played white with his usual D4. It was a very entertaining game, with Tony castling queenside and Mark castling kingside. My heart leapt for joy when Tony announced “Bishop takes h3”; with Tony’s rook on g8, Mark’s G pawn was pinned to his king. Tony then executed a wonderful attack. But alas, Mark has been playing for many years and experience can too often trump position and Mark managed to turn the position around and finally won on time. Final scores: Mark 3, Gary 2, Abi 1, and Tony 0.

No seven day chess event would be the same without Joan’s Soirée. So with attention switched to mad last minute rehearsals, chess was for the moment put aside. After dinner we enjoyed a very pleasant evening of poetry and song and of course music. Together with all the wonderful songs and poems performed by all the budding stars of the BCA, it has become a tradition now to have a Windermere group song but this year we had three chess theme songs; starting with January where there were almost as many people in the group as in the audience! We then had the delights of the classic ABBA song “Mamma Mia” re-written as “Winder Mia” and performed by Julie who sang and played guitar, accompanied by her friend Pip on violin. The soirée closed with what has become the Windermere house band performing an adapted version of the Scaffold song, “Thank You Very Much”.

Friday afternoon was back to the chess. Mark Kirkham, Mark Hague, Tony Lawton, Richard Harrington and yours truly, five in all, had volunteered to play Peter Gibbs in a simultaneous display. The room too quickly began to empty as heads began to roll. I don’t think the clock had struck 4 when there were only two of us left; myself and Mark Kirkham. I had decided to play the Petroff’s defence, which I don’t know well but has recently become my preferred response to e4. I unfortunately had nothing to record the game on. But I remember that Peter played some moves I had not seen before. Rather than trying to win back the pawn straight away, Peter developed his bishop onto c4 and his knight onto c3. I don’t remember the order but I exchanged knights and Peter re-captured with the d pawn. He then scared the living daylights or was it the living knight lights out of me by playing Ng4. It seemed that Be6 was my only option which would cost me my f pawn; my sole comfort was that I still hadn’t moved the king and could look at castling queenside, which is exactly what I did. It’s all a bit of a blur but I do remember that Peter went a pawn up and I eventually managed to win his h pawn. There was an exchange of queens and Peter eventually launched an attack on my king and sent a pawn thundering down the a file. I kept my cool and manoeuvred my knight and rook in order to eventually capture said pawn. At this point Peter offered me a draw; my very words were: “You are Peter Gibbs! I am not going to turn down the offer of a draw!” and I hastily shook his hand before he had time to change his mind! Peter then went on to beat Mark Kirkham. So Peter came away undefeated with 4 wins and a draw and I came away very happy too.

Friday night was the presentation. When Mark Hague last won the trophy he was joint winner with the late great Michael Meaney. It was Mark’s turn now to have his name engraved as overall Champion.

Since time was a lad, Joan has faithfully written a comic poem about the Chess Theme Break. It’s a tradition and treat so woven into the fabric of our chess events that they have become an integral part. This year of course was no exception and we all waited eagerly to see if any of our misdemeanours would feature in the poem. I shall say no more about the poem as it will no doubt speak for itself elsewhere in this Gazette.

Next was Peter and Celia’s turn to be surprised. Julie had collected money from us all and had bought a Herdwick bag, which had been packed with local produce. This was presented to Peter and Celia by Richard who had faithfully attended every Chess Theme Break since year one. Stan then followed this with a short speech of thanks and a brief history of the event. The informal ceremony then culminated in a short speech by Peter and Celia.

The tears were then quickly brushed away for what I like to call the Liz Quiz. Fifty cryptic questions about animals devised by Liz Kirkham. Once again it was a week to remember and whoever takes up the baton for the Chess Theme Break will have a tough act to follow. Thank you once again to Peter and Celia and all the coaches, Joan and everyone else who has been instrumental in making the CTB another wonderful week to remember.

# Windermere Chess Theme Break 2020 Poem

Joan has penned another of her excellent poems!

Here we are again at Windermere

The weather is not good I fear

Rain and sunshine, sunshine and rain

Dark clouds appear, it’s wet again.

Tanvi and Gary are usually quiet!

Not known for causing a riot

At the manor on arriving soon

Began to vandalise the room.

Monday Hawkshead. It stopped raining

So with everyone no complaining

But in the car park they got wet through

It rained and hailed, so what’s new.

Barbara and Julie saw a shop they could not miss

They wouldn’t send a dog out on a day like this

No dog so they sent Colin out instead

Who stood singing “Raindrops keep falling on my head!”

Celia’s quiz, had she forgot

Brains of Britain we are not!

Those questions, did she ever

Think that we were all that clever.

Tuesday Grasmere, then sail to Ambleside

Then Peter (not our Peter) Antoine’s guide

Told us facts that were so handy

Then coffee, chocolate, rum and brandy.

Bingo was a lot of fun

Quite a lot of people won

Twice with Antoine, he was ecstatic

And whose reaction was quite dramatic!

Wednesday Hayes and heaven knows

Where Tanvi puts all her clothes.

Instead of one jumper she got three!

It is a mystery to me.

In Keswick Thuy was mystified

At getting lost despite a guide.

How come I heard? I didn’t go.

I have my spies, that’s how I know!

The soirée was so very good you see

Then I knew it always would be

Music and poetry second to none

A really good night when all’s said and done.

Joan lost her key, she was quite frantic

The staff were searching in a panic

Joan cried ‘Help me someone, please’

Norman was on his hands and knees.

Back up to her room, did she lock it?

Then they turned up in Julie’s pocket!

Julie said “Who put them there?

I really was not aware”. (I don’t believe her.)

Despite that Julie is so good

Helped anyone when she could

Besides editing the magazines

She does so much behind the scenes.

Oh dear what a “to do”

Richard and Martyn couldn’t go to the loo

Martyn supports him and Richard plays chess

Then they were not flushed with success

But back to chess, that’s why we’re here

Congratulations Mark, champion this year.

But whether you lose or win

Well done to all for joining in.

So Peter and Celia are calling it a day

And running a rest home for the BCA.

Maurice too in the partnership

Running outings at tuppence per person per trip.

Thanks Peter and Celia for all you’ve done.

Over the years, it’s been such fun,

Not just organising chess

But coping with us lot must cause stress.

So put your feet up but not too high.

We’ll see you much more in the by and by

Thanks again for all you do

Peter and Celia, here’s to you!

But we’ll all meet again

Don’t know where, don’t know when

We’ll meet again sone sunny (or rainy) day

Keeping alive theme break and BCA!

# Three of Owen’s Favourite Games from 2019

By Owen Phillips.

Game 1: Internet 15 mins per player:

Owen v. a German Arena GM: I liked this one for the opening and endgame. Both were rather interesting and the endgame, in many ways, was a natural progression from the opening.

1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. b3 I quite like this move against French specialists

3. … dxe4 4. Nc3 Nf6 5. Nge2 Bb4 6. Bb2 Nd5 7. a3 Bxc3+ 8. Nxc3 Nxc3 9. Bxc3 c5 10. dxc5 Qc7

11. Bxg7 Rg8 12. Bd4 e5 13. Be3 f5 14. Qh5+ Qf7 15. Qxf7+ Kxf7 16. Bc4+ Be6 17. Bxe6+ Kxe6

18. g3 Nc6 19. O-O-O Rad8 20. Rxd8 Rxd8 21. Rd1 Nd4 22. Kb2 Rd5 23. c3 Nc6 24. Rxd5 Kxd5

25. c4+ Ke6 26. b4 Nd4 27. b5 Ke7 28. h3 h5 29. a4 Kd7 30. Kc3 Ne6 31. c6+ bxc6 32. Bxa7 Kc7

33. a5 Kb7 34. Be3 f4 35. a6+ Ka8 36. Bb6 c5 37. g4 hxg4 38.hxg4 e3 39. fxe3 f3 40. Kd3 Black resigns 1-0

The second one was an internet game too. This time 10 minutes per player with increments. I had black against a Russian Arena IM. I like it because it is seat of your pants stuff starting from a partially accepted From Gambit.

1. f4 e5 The From Gambit!

2. fxe5 d6 3. Nf3 g5 4. h3 dxe5 5. e4 Nc6 6. Bc4 Bc5 7. d3 h6 8. Nc3 a6 9. Rf1 Rh7 10. Nd5 g4

11. hxg4 Bxg4 12. c3 Nf6 13. Be3 Nxd5 14. exd5

I thought 14. Bxc5 was a better option for White despite 14. … Nf4 when I thought Black would only have a slight edge after 15. g3 b5 16. gxf4 bxc4 17. dxc4 Qxd1+ 18. Rxd1 exf4. The game continuation was better for me as after 19.0-0-0 I was winning the endgame even if he had avoided his c4 error! Back to the game:

14. ... Bxe3 15. dxc6 b5 16. Qe2 Bf4 17. Bb3 Qd6 18. Qe4 f5 19. Qd5 O-O-O 20. c4 Ooops!

20. … Qb4+ 21. White resigns. 1-0 If White had played 20. Qxd6 Rxd6 he would have had a winning endgame.

My third game was my loss from Round 1 in the 2019 Olympia Classic Fide Chess Open:

White was Rhys Cumming ECF 224

As black, I decided that against such a strong player I would try a very rare response if White played his favourite Tarrasch Variation in response to my French. I had worked out in my mind that even if White chose his best continuation after my unusual third move then l might well get sufficient counter play with my opponent a lot down on the clock, particularly as I know Rhys has a reputation for playing very slowly and correctly. This happened and as the game went on I only lost out on a draw or even a win when I made my classic error of playing one move too hastily when my opponent was down to just his increments! But the game fascinated a lot of very strong IM and GM players who came to watch.

1.e4..e6 2.d4..d5 3.Nd2..e5!?

My thinking was that Nd2 although regular, blocks his Bishop and so my lost tempo with e6 and then e5 is not quite so bad. Indeed even with best play KOMODO tells me that I come out less than half a pawn down-with lots of issues for my opponent to solve over the board and probably taking him completely out of his opening book and therefore comfort zone! Interestingly those Master level and above games which I had found on Chess Base had resulted on a strong plus score for black! I thought with such a huge gap in our grades why not? In some ways it is a bit like the Keith Arkell variation in the Caro Khan where Black essays 1.c6 and then 3..c5!

4. dxe5 Probably best for him, sadly! He had another major alternative to consider in 4. exd5 exd4 when I had planned 5. Ngf3 Nf6 6. Bc4 Nxd5 7. Ne4 Bb4+ 8. c3 dxc3 9. O-O c6 when KOMODO at home had evaluated the position as almost level despite his pair of bishops! Being a 224 he had chosen correctly! I continued with:

4... dxe4 Actually Nc6 is also playable.

5. Qe2 Qd5 Again 5... Nc6 is surprisingly playable according to my work in advance with KOMODO i.e. 6. Nxe4 Bf5 7. Nf3 Qe7 8.Ng3 Bg4 9. Bg5 Bxf3 10. Bxe7 Bxe2 11. Bxf8 Kxf8 12. Bxe2 Nxe5 13. Ne4 Rd8 after which White's position and apparent advantage tends to dissipate, but I preferred keeping things a little simpler.

6. Qxe4. Qxe4+ 7. Nxe4 Nc6 8. Bf4 By now White had already got 25 mins down on the clock! There were many issues to consider and a long struggle ensued with White getting deeper into his time trouble.

We join the game again after with my threat of 37... NxBf3+!!

At this stage White had already played eight moves on his thirty second increments and had twice reached two seconds before replying! From the following position I want you to guess how I mucked up in his time trouble.

White: Kg1, Bh2,Bf3, Re4, Rc5 with pawns on g2, b2, a2, h3, f4, c4 and e5

Black: Ka6, Be6, Rh6, Rg8, Nd4, and pawns on a7, c7, f7, g7, and h4.

The solution is on the last page of the gazette. Take care all of you BCA friends!

# Family Stories and BCA Coincidences

Associate member Ben Graff writes:

It is always a real treat when I come home from work to find an envelope on the mat containing the latest edition of *The Gazette.* I very much enjoy reading the stories, playing through the games and catching up on the latest news. I am not as active in the BCA as I would like to be, but I care deeply about everything the organisation represents.

For those who don’t know me, I am a novelist and chess journalist. I have been hooked on the game we all love since childhood, but my connection with sight loss even pre-dates me taking up chess. Julie very kindly said I could share my family’s story and a little about my chess and writing. As you will see, where my connections with the BCA are concerned, the world abounds with extraordinary coincidences!

It all started back in 1982, when I was seven and my family moved from the suburbs of Aldershot to the depths of the countryside. A handful of years later, my mother Mary, got a job as an English teacher at the Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford. She taught there until a year before her death in 2008 and the college meant so much to her. My father Colin also worked as a fund-raiser at the college after his retirement and was an equally passionate supporter of the RNCB.

The college was certainly a big part of all our lives growing up. I played my first “proper,” chess tournament in its cigarette smoke filled dining room, as it was the home of the Hereford Open for a long time – the smoking ban was still a long way off! There was always something so exciting about being in such a gladiatorial environment. Later, when I was older, I would often wander over from Hereford 6th form, to get a lift home with mum. I got to know many of her students well, but there was one person she mentioned who I didn’t get to meet – at least not then.

My mum had told me about this lovely student of hers, called David. “He’s the only person I’ve ever met who likes chess as much as you do,” she would say. The stars did not align, but many years later I joined Leamington Chess Club. Who should I meet but David Hodgkins! We were in the same team and I would often give him a lift to matches. David’s enthusiasm and talent for chess always shone through. He was hugely respected and liked by all at the club. I always very much enjoyed his company. David was so wise and funny as well as being incredibly modest. Like all of us, I miss him greatly.

Steve and Hazel Burnell both lived in Leamington at this time. I have had lots of interesting battles over the board with Steve. We also played together in many matches for Leamington over the years. Steve and Hazel introduced me to the BCA, and I did once play in a BCA tournament in Solihull, which I enjoyed immensely.

There is another link I also wanted to share. When I met my wife, Katharine Faulkner, I soon learnt that her mother was a teacher at Tapton Mount – and had taught many of the same students as my mother. Anne Faulkner also knows Norman Wragg (who I have been lucky enough to meet) so it really is a small world!

These days, I probably spend as much time writing as I do playing chess. When my father died in 2014, I wrote my first book, *Find Another Place.* I wanted to share some family stories I feared would eventually be lost, if someone did not write them down. It wasn’t a chess book, but it did have a few chess based chapters, including my experiences in simuls against Korchnoi, Short and Nunn. The publisher showed *Chess Magazine* a copy and they kindly ran a piece on it. I now write fairly regular articles for them – mainly on my personal chess experiences, book reviews and historical pieces. Something I very much enjoy doing.

Even so, I had always wanted to write a full-length chess-based novel. For years, a simple idea had nagged at me. What would happen if someone attempted to storm a world chess championship match? Why might they do this? Could such an act appear perfectly logical to the protagonist? I was lucky enough to write about the Carlsen-Caruana contest for *Chess Magazine* and this was the catalyst for *The Greenbecker Gambit*. My novel tells the story of Tennessee Greenbecker, as he sets out with brave optimism to claim what he sees as rightfully his – the title of world chess champion. But who is he really? Is he destined to be remembered as chess champion or fire-starter? Either way, might this finally be his moment? It has been an interesting project!

I will be very proud to see this piece in *The Gazette.* I’ve often reflected on some of the coincidences that have connected me to the BCA. It is wonderful to finally share them, along with memories that mean a lot to me. Chess certainly has a remarkable power to bring people together.

*Editor’s note: I’m sure we all wish Ben the best of luck with his new book. The Greenbecker Gambit is published by The Conrad Press and is available from Amazon or on order from all good bookshops. If you buy from Amazon don’t forget to pick the BCA as your charity for Amazon Smile! Ben is investigating the possibility of making an audio version in due course.*

# Trapped!

With members far and wide staying at home to help prevent the spread of the virus and perhaps feeling a little trapped, Gerry Walsh has taken the initiative and been delighting members of the new user group with daily examples of chess opening traps! He has kindly sent in a couple of them exclusively for the gazette so that everyone can enjoy them. They incorporate the added challenge of being written in English Descriptive notation!

Game 1 Ruy Lopez

1. P-K4 P-K4 2. N-KB3 N-QB3 3. B-N5 P-QR3 4. B-R4 N-B3

5. O-O P-Q3 More usual is 5. … NxP or 5. … B-K2 the latter leading to close positions.

6. R-K1 P-QN4 7. B-N3 N-QR4

8. P-Q4 PxP Carelessly permitting a stronger attack. More prudent is 8. … NxB 9. RPxN N-Q2, 10. PxP NxP.

So with White to play the king file can be opened with disastrous results for Black. How many moves can you foresee of the winning combination?

9. P-K5 PxP 10. NxKP With the immediate threat of winning Black’s queen by discovered check.

10. … B-K3 11. NxP KxN Black must accept the knight.

12. BxBch K-N3 If 12. … K-K1, 13. B-Q5ch wins at least the exchange.

13. Q-Q3ch N-K5 After 13. … K-R4 the win is forced by 14. Q-R3ch and Q-B5 is mate.

14. QxNch K-B3 15. Q-R4ch K-N3 16. Q-N4ch K-B3 17. Q-N5 Mate.

Game 2 Ruy Lopez

1. P-K4 P-K4 2. N- KB3 N-QB3 3. B-N5 P-QR3 4. B-R4 N-B3 5. O-O NxP 6. P-Q4 P-QN4 7. B-N3 P-Q4

8. PxP B-K3 9. P-B3 B-K2 10. R-K1 O-O 11. N-Q4 NxKP

12. NxB The correct line is 12. P-B3 B-Q3, 13. PxN B-KN5, which leads to a complicated game with Black having a strong attack for the sacrificed pawn.

12. … PxN 13. P-B3 White expects to win a piece but he forgets the danger to his king. It looks as though White will win one of the knights, fortunately for Black there is a counter-thrust which turns the tables neatly.

13. … B-B4ch 14. B-K3

There is nothing better. If 14. K-B1 (14. K-R1 allows 14. … N-B7ch) Q-R5, 15. Q(or R)-K2 N-N6ch, 16. PxN Q-R8 is mate. Nor does 14. K-B1 Q-R5, 15. Q-B2 NxKBP 16. PxN RxPch, followed by 17. … R-B7ch yield any better results, for White’s game is torn to shreds.

14. … Q-N4 15. BxB NxPch 16. QxN If 16. K-R1 N-N6ch, 17. PxN Q-R4 mate.

16. … RxQ and Black wins

# Solution to February Puzzle Selected by Chris

**February Puzzle**

Serafimovic 2018

FEN: 1N1b1r2/3R1PB1/4k1P1/4N2R/8/1n2n3/6b1/5QK1

White king g1, queen f1, rooks d7 & h5, bishop g7, knights b8 & e5, pawns g6 & f7

Black king e6, rook f8, bishops d8 & g2, knights b3 and e3

White to play and mate in two.

Solution: 1. Nf3 A: 1. … Bg5 2. Nxg5#

B: 1. … Bf6 2. Qa6#

C: 1. … Ng4 or Nc4 2. Qc4#

D: 1. … other black moves 2. Re5#

Chris Ross

*Editor’s note: After many years of selecting puzzles for the gazette, Chris has decided to make this his last one. On behalf of us all, I would like to thank Chris for being such a regular contributor to the gazette.*

*Another of our former champions, Graham “Gray” Lilley has kindly taken on the task of providing brainteasers to baffle and bewilder! See the very next article for this quarter’s conundrum.*

# Gray Matter Test

**May 2020 Puzzle**

I selected this puzzle because it has a pretty finish.

I. Gersits, 1930

FEN: 8/3b4/8/3N4/8/1QNkP3/8/4K3

White: King e1, Queen b3, Knights c3 and d5, Pawn e3

Black: king d3, bishop d7

White to play and mate in two.

The solution will appear in the August gazette.

Graham Lilley

# Celebrating Chess Success!

BCA Members have already been performing well in various events this year!

Congratulations to Paul Benson who came first in the 26th Skype tournament run at open-aurec.com. Stan Lovell, Stephen Hilton, Eamonn Casey, Ed Pourtahmasbi and Abi Baker also did us proud!

Tony Elbourn, Dan Rugman and Gary Wickett played in the Minor section of the 16th Castle Chess tournament in Fareham 28th February to 1st March. It was a six round event. Gary scored 2; Tony scored 4 to finish in joint 3rd and win a grading prize; Dan scored 4.5 to finish in 2nd place. Well done to all of them!

# Personalia

The chess world is accustomed to people being Masters, but the newest Master in the BCA didn’t move a single piece to earn his title! Instead, he answered some tricky questions on a BBC Radio 2 music quiz on 27th February and was declared Pop Master for that day. So many congratulations to Antoine Reeves and thank you very much for mentioning the Braille Chess Association on national radio when you were giving your friends a shout out!

May brings a milestone birthday for a highly respected member who joined the association back in 1964. In 1972 he began a long run of Olympiad and other international appearances and has enjoyed a great deal of success over the years. He is friendly and popular, having welcomed many newcomers during his spell on the committee in the 1980s. His strong sense of camaraderie makes him an ideal teammate. He enjoys helping others and has coached at numerous Chess Theme Breaks. He’s modest and never mentions unless prompted that he beat the reigning IBCA World Champion, Sergei Krylov, at a tournament in Vienna in 1981. In short, he’s totally brilliant in every imaginable way, and if you think this article is biased you’re absolutely right because the gentleman in question is none other than my Dad. Yes, Colin Chambers will turn 80 on the 12th of May! BCA user group subscribers will be familiar with Colin’s brainchild, “Radio Cheltenham”, a pretend station on which he announces news of members by email instead of over the airwaves. Good humour and kindness radiate from every broadcast! Being an unassuming sort of chap though, I strongly suspect that he will seek to keep news of his own big birthday quiet. Furthermore, like so many other get togethers, our family celebration in honour of his birthday is postponed due to the pandemic. Therefore, it seems more important than ever to take this opportunity to send our best wishes to Colin in the gazette so please join me in congratulating him and wishing him many happy returns!

Do let me know if you have any news for the next issue.

Julie Leonard

# How Owen “Mucked Up”!

I had almost eight minutes to play my move so shouldn't have fallen for the idea of centralisation of my g Rook. After everything I’ve relayed to BCA pupils about concentrating on checks and attacking moves first!

You’ve guessed it! I played 37... Rd8. After all, where could that Bishop go?

Well of course I was met with the immediate riposte: 38. Rxd4 and now I am completely lost because I cannot get rid of his killer Bishop and Rook combining! I resigned.

Yet the simple 37..NxBg3+ would have resulted in Rhys having to play 38. gxf3 when my planned 38. :.. Rg6+ would have been hard to meet on his increments. The most White could hope for would be a draw even after the extra 20 mins kicked in on move 40.

Ouch! Phillips never learns not to play too quickly in his opponent's time trouble!

Lesson to learn: Consider “Best Principles” but apply them in the correct order depending on the position!

It was so nearly a good result and start to Olympia! I went on to score 4/9 and finish equal 91st out of the 166 starters.