

NCA BULLETIN 162



*Magazine of the Year
2019*

**Produced BY and FOR
NORTHUMBERLAND CHESS PLAYERS
(and Friends!)**



**YICHEN ZOLLNER CHAMPION at 12
EUWES SHOCK IN SUMMER KO TRIUMPH
NORTHUMBERLAND ECF COUNTY CHAMPIONS
NORTH BEATS SOUTH AFTER 126 YEAR WAIT
AND MORE MORE MORE – DESPITE LOCKDOWN!!**

**Northumberland Chess Association
November 2020**

£1.50

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Front Page – 2019/20 Zollner Champion Yichen Han. Sadly not yet properly acquainted with the famous trophy, but soon Yichen, soon!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – For contributions to this issue from Ken Neat, Paul Bielby, David Walker, Andy Horton, Tim Wall, Alex McFarlane, Carl Stephens and Richard Symonds. Apologies for any omissions.

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WELCOME TO BULLETIN 162

First off, big apology for the lateness in publication. But whilst the rest of the world was being cowed into submission by Covid-19 the Chess fraternity exploded with an array of online events that had us all busying on every day of the week if we wanted. And the records tumbled.....

- Yichen Han became the youngest ever winner of our Zollner Championship at the age of 12 years and 244 days
- Forest Hall Euwes became the youngest and lowest rated team to win the Summer KO by a country mile
- Northumberland won the ECF County Championship for the first time in our history. This achievement will be reported in a 'County Champions' special edition before Christmas - well, that's the plan!

Not to mention our County U1825 (ECF 150 as was) got to the semi-final of their event, whilst the North beat the South in a rematch of their historic 1894 battle and Gosforth Centurions won the Summer KO Plate. Max Turner was awarded the Vaughan Medal for being Northumberland's most improved player – from ECF 196 (!!) to 219 – the most astonishing effort in my memory. So there's plenty to report alongside other contributions which, whilst perhaps a tad more random than usual I hope catch your interest.

Nothing to add with regard to Over The Board (OTB) league chess. The 2019/20 season has now been curtailed with league winners already known and the format of 2020/21 subject to when Covid-19 subsides or a vaccination is proven. Gosforth and Forest Hall had resumed club nights but following the most recent Government announcements have now gone into suspension pending next developments.

Our September Weekend Congress fell foul of the virus and necessary local lockdown measures just nine days before it was due to happen A shame but compensated heavily by the goodwill and support of all those involved, including North Tyneside Council who went out of their way to help make the event happen until circumstances prevailed. A sad reminder that.....

Covid-19 has not gone away and might not for a while, so as always on behalf of the NCA Exec we hope Bulletin 162 finds you well.

And happy reading – Mick

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS 2019/2020

Organiser David Walker reports – and our thanks for another year's successful event David.

Because of the ongoing uncertainty surrounding resumption of over the board chess, I decided as organiser to conclude this season's county championships without further play. Round 6 games already played in the Zollner and Sell still counted, with all other competitors awarded a half-point bye for round 6. There were no round 6 games played in the Gilroy, so final standings were as at the end of round 5. This means that the county championship winners are as follows:

- Zollner - Yichen Han.
- Sell - Darren Laws and Martin Seeber.
- Gilroy - Jeff Baird.

Congratulations to all of the winners. The complete final standings are as shown below.

Zollner

1 Yichen Han 5 points (from 6 rounds), 2 James Moreby 4, 3-4 David Henderson and Max Turner 3½, 5-8 John Boyd, Roger Coathup, Chris Izod and Andrew Lawson 3, 9-10 Paul Dargan and Andy Trevelyan 2½, 11 Paul Bielby 2 12 Tim Wall ½.

Sell

1= Darren Laws and Martin Seeber 4½ points (from 6 rounds), 3 John Little 3½, 4-6 John Clarke, Ciaran Macdonald and Bob Mitcheson 3, 7-8 John Marsh and Stuart Skelsey 2½, 9 Steve Burnell 2, 10 Andrew Robinson 1½

Gilroy

1 Jeff Baird 4½ (from 5 rounds), 2 Mark McKay 4, 3-7 Kevin Cox, Eddie Czestochowski, Morgan French, David Peardon and Weiming Xu 3½, 8-10 Asa Bayram, Ray Li and Arun Mohindra 3, 11-16 Asanga Gunasekera, Bob Heyman, James McKay, Bill Noble, Paul Richardson and Ian Rook 2½, 17-18 Stan Johnson and Colin McGarty 2 19-22 Sophie Atkinson, Jack Erskine-Pereira, Brendan Glasper an, Joe Miller 1½ 23-25 Rob Appleby, Matthew Jepson and Peter Wells 1

Now a few puzzles based on games played in this season's championships.
Solutions on P35 - 36.

1) White to play and win



3) White to play and win.



2) How does white gain a decisive advantage here?



4) How can black use his lead in development to win material?



5) Adjacent - Black to play and win.



6) Black to play and win.



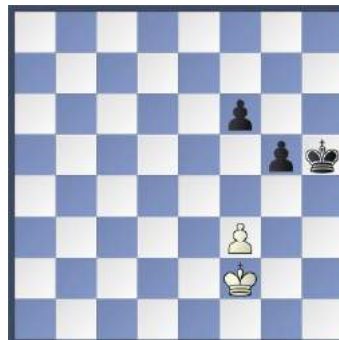
8) What is white's cleanest winning line here?



7) How does black take advantage of the exposed white king?



9) A very tricky endgame - how does black (to play) win?



VAUGHAN MEDAL WINNER 2019-20



It is beyond my comprehension (and ability) to achieve a rating of 196 and within 12 months bump it up to 219. So hats off to Max Turner who has achieved just that and deservedly bagged the Vaughan Medal (as Northumberland's most improved) for 2019 – 20. The game that follows goes some way towards showing us how.

We are in Round 2 of the 23rd 4NCL Congress in South Normanton.

Peter Sowray – Max Turner

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Be7 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bf4 c6 6.e3 Bd6 7.Nge2 Bf5 8.Qb3 b6 9.Rc1 Ne7 10.Bxd6 Qxd6 11.Nf4 0-0 12.Be2 Nd7 13.0-0 Nf6 14.a3 Rfd8 15.Rfd1 Ng6 16.Nxg6 Bxg6 And level. A trait I've realised among the really good players, they don't seem overly bothered that computer evaluations give 'edge' round about move 8 (as in this game say). They back their judgement, understanding and play things out - whereas us 'lessers' might be more easily dissuaded. Look at Dave Mooney or David Walker's games with Black and you'll see what I mean. **17.Qa2 Re8 18.b4 b5 19.Qb3 a5 20.Na2 a4 21.Qc3 Re6 22.Qe1 Rae8 23.Nc3 Bh5 24.Bxh5 Nxh5** And they're not bothered about swapping pieces down **25.Ne2 f5 26.Ng3 Nxg3 27.hxg3 g5 28.Qe2 Rh6 29.Rc5 Qg6 30.Rdc1 Re6** Or how clumsy things might look **31.R1c3** In the context of this game an inaccuracy - 31. Qf3 eying the f5 Pawn is better **31...g4** See diagram next Col **32.Qc2** The culmination of Black's cramping and focused (eye on the King) strategy - 32. f4 was necessary **32...Qh5 33.Kf1 Qh1+ 34.Ke2 Qxg2 35.Qxf5 Rhf6 36.Qxg4+ Kh8 37.Kd3 Rxf2 38.Rc2 Qf1+ 39.Re2 Qd1+ 40.Kc3 Rxe3+ 41.Rxe3 Qc2#** Peter Sowerby is rated 228. How easy did

Max make that look? Scary!



Position after Black's 31. g4

A BRIEF CHUCKLE

"Dad why is my sisters name Rose?"
 "Because your Mother loves roses"
 "Thanks Dad"
 "No Problem Bishop pair"



EUWES DEFY THE ODDS

And in some style! On their way to a fantastic Summer KO Final victory Forest Hall Euwes beat Gosforth Centurions 3.5 - 2, Morpeth A 4.5 - 3 and Gosforth Empire 4.5 - 3. In each of these matches they were out graded by 19, 70 (!!), and 101 (!!!) points per player – with talisman Ray Li (ECF 87) scoring 3/3. Now in the final they would face friends and rivals in Forest Hall Carlsens.

The final itself had a number of interesting features that would get our historians scrambling for their record books –

- 1) It was the first time that two Forest Hall teams had made it to the Final of the Northumberland Knockout
- 2) It may also be the first time a Novice team (with a combined grade of less than 380) had made it to the Final
- 3) It probably featured the biggest age difference between the youngest player (Ray Li, age 12) and the oldest player (John Wall Snr, age 87) - 75 years. They are also playing against each other!
- 4) This was the first time that two women players have played in the Final - they are also playing each other!

In addition the match combined OTB games (for those who preferred) with online and was likely the first (hybrid) of its kind in Britain. The over-the-board games were held at Forest Hall Chess Club's new venue, Forest Hall Social Club, and the other 2 boards were played online on Lichess.org, with the players also on Zoom cameras. And so to the match, Euwes starting with a 2.5 point start against their stronger opponents – a win or two draws on the night would make them winners. On Board 4 Euwes Mrugaya Mulay rated ECF 86 faced Rose Wabuti (Carlsens), 134.

Rose Wabuti - Mrugaya,Mulay

1.Nf3 Nc6 2.d4 d5 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 dxc4 5.g3 Nf6 6.Bg2 Bb4 7.0-0 0-0 8.Bg5 Be7 9.e3 Nd5 10.Bxe7 Ncxe7 11.Ne5 f6 12.Nxc4 Nxc3 13.bxc3 c6 Instead 13....Rb8 defends the b Pawn, gets the R off the h1/a8 diagonal and doesn't put a P on the same colour square as the remaining Black B **14.Qb3** Good move. Eyes b7 and e6, keeps

Black pinned down. **14...b5 15.Nd2 Nd5 16.Ne4 a5 17.a4 Ba6** 17....b4 should be preferred but Black needs to develop **18.axb5** See diagram opposite page **Bxb5** Ok but after 18....cxb5 Nc5, threatening Nxe6, White is well on top anyway **19.c4 f5 20.cxb5 fxe4 21.bxc6 Qc7 22.Rfc1 Ra6 23.Qb7 Ra7 24.Qxc7 Rxc7 25.Bxe4 Ra8 26.Bxd5 exd5 27.Ra4** 27....Rc5 is better. Or e4 then d5 - d6



Position after White's 18. axb5

27...Ra6 28.Rc5 Rxc6 29.Rxd5 Kf7 30.Rxa5 Rxa5 31.Rxa5 g6 32.Kg2 Kf6 33.g4 Kg7 34.h4 Rf6 35.Ra7+ Kh8 36.g5 Rf5 37.Re7 Kg8 38.Kg3 Rf7 39.Rxf7 Kxf7 40.Kf4 Ke6 41.Ke4 Kd6 42.d5 Ke7 43.Ke5 Kd7 44.f4 Ke7 45.e4 Kd7 46.f5 Ke7 47.f6+ Kf7 48.d6 Kf8 49.Ke6 Ke8 50.e5 Kf8 51.Kd7 Kf7 52.e6+ Kf8 53.e7+ Kf7 54.e8Q Checkmate and 1–0 Carlsen's pull a point back. 2.5 – 1. Would that vital point be too elusive for Euwes at the last hurdle? On Board 2 –

Ryan Duff (Euwes) - Raj Mohindra (Carlsens)

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Be7 4.d4 d5 5.dxe5 Nxe5 Not good. dxe5 was necessary. This drops a Pawn. **6.Nxe5 dxe5 7.Qh5 g6 8.Qxe5 Nf6 9.Bh6 Qd6** Diagram top next column **10.Qxd6** And here cxd6 was even more necessary. This effectively drops the game



providing Ryan stays calm **10...Bxd6 11.Bg7 Be5 12.Bxh8 Bxb2 13.Bxf6 Bxf6 14.c3** Which he does. White is a whole R up and now just simplifies down, even giving back material, to bag the point for his team **14...c6 15.Kd2 b5 16.Bd3 Bg4 17.f3 Be6 18.Kc2 0–0–0 19.Nd2 b4 20.Ba6+ Kc7 21.cxb4 Bxa1 22.Rxa1 Kb6 23.Bd3 c5 24.Nc4+ Kc6 25.b5+ Kc7** or **25...Kxb5 26.Rb1+ Kc6 27.Na5+ Kc7 28.Rb7+ 26.Rd1 h5 27.a4 Rd4 28.Be2 Rxc4+ or 28...Bxc4 29.Rxd4 Bxe2 30.Rd2 29.Bxc4 Bxc4 30.Kc3 Be6 31.a5 Ba2 32.Rd5 Bxd5 33.exd5 f5 34.h4 Kd6 35.Kc4 f4 36.b6 axb6 37.axb6 1–0** The Duffman triumphs And with two games finished Euwes are taking the trophy home. Well done them But on Boards 1 and 3 there was still pride to play for. On Board 3, 75 years and 44 ECF points separated Li Ray (rated ECF 80, Euwes) and John Wall Snr.

Ray Li – John Wall Snr

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.Nc3
d6 5.Bf4 0–0 6.e4 c5 7.d5 Nbd7
8.Be2 Nh5 9.Be3



9....Ne5 After this Black's position gets messy. And he drops a pawn. Maybe 9....Bxc3 making room for the N on g7 and supporting f5 is a way forward 10.Nxe5 Bxe5 11.Bxh5 gxf5 12.Qxf5 a6 This move only helps if White castles kingside 13.0–0 f5 14.f4 Bxc3 15.bxc3 Qe8 16.Qg5+ Qg6 17.e5 Qxg5 18.fxg5 Bd7 Drops a Pawn by force but what else? 19.exd6 exd6 20.Bf4 Rae8 21.Bxd6 Rf7 22.Bxc5 Re4 23.Bd4 Rfe7 24.Rab1 Bc8 25.h3 Kf7 26.c5 Kg6 27.Rb6+ Kxg5 28.Bf6+ 1–0

Now at 4.5 – 1 the Euwes are running away with it. Could Stuart Skelsey restore some pride for the Carlsens on top board?

Stuart Skelsey - Alexander Johnston

1.c4 e5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 c6 4.d4 e4
5.d5 cxd5 6.cxd5 Qa5+ Looks tempting but Bb4+ is better 7.Nc3 Bb4 8.Bd2 0–0 [8...Bxc3 9.Bxc3 Qxd5 10.Qxd5 Nxd5 11.Bxg7 Rg8 12.Bxe4] 9.a3 Be7 10.Nxe4 Qa6 11.Bc3 Nxe4 12.Bxe4 d6 13.Nf3 Bg4



14.0–0 Missing a chance. 14.Bxh7+ Kxh7 15.Qd4 Bf6 16.Qxg4 or 14.Qd4 Bf6 15.Bxh7+ Kxh7 16.Qxg4 and he's winning 14...Nd7 15.Nd4 Bf6 16.Rc1 Nc5 17.Bg2 After this White's advantage evaporates 17.Bf5 Bxf5 18.Nxf5 Bxc3 19. Rxc3 looks better 17...Rfe8 18.f3 Bd7 19.e4 Na4 Black has battled back and is now level 20. Rf2 Nxc3 21.Rxc3 Qb6 22.Rd3 Rac8 and now tragically Stuart ran out of time! 0–1

Leaving us with the remarkable scoreline Forest Hall Euwes 5.5 Forest Hall Carlson's 1. Well done Euwes on a stunning achievement!



Ray Li, 100% for Forest Hall Euwes – great performance!

The Plate Final featured Gosforth Centurions v Tynedale, the latter starting with a 1.5 point handicap advantage. So said Tynedale were in the region of 40 ECF points a man down and sadly this was no fairy tale ending. Gosforth triumphed 4-0 with wins from Ian Chester, James McKay, Kristian Mills and Luke Fletcher over Jonny Kearney, Steve Larkin, David Scott and John Morgan respectively. The following games was a heart breaker.

David Scott – Kristian Mills

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.Bg5 Bg7 4.e3 Ne4 5.Bd3 Nxd5 6.Nxd5 e6 7.h4 h6 8.Ne4 b6 9.Rh3 9. Nbd2/c3 really. What's the plan here? 9...Bb7 9....d5 the e5 with the R sat on h3 10.Nbc3 f5 11.Qf3 Speculative and brave 11...fxe4 12.Bxe4 Bxe4 12....d5 is necessary

now. White has a good advantage after this **13.Qxe4 Nc6 14.Qxg6+** Indeed winning **14...Kf8 15.Rf3+ Kg8 16.Ne4 Ne7 16...Qe7** was necessary to avoid mate



17.Nf6+ Missing **17.Qf7+** then **Nf6** mate but it's still redeemable
17...Kf8 18.Nxd7+ Kg8 19.Rf8+ Missing the same mate. A shame. Now Black is winning **19...Qxf8 20.Nxf8 Nxd7 21.Nxd7 Kf7** Better **21...Rh7**, this puts things back in the balance **22.Nxh8+ Bxh8 23.0-0-0 h5 24.d5 Be5 25.f4 Bd6 26.c4 Rg8 27.Rg1 Bc5 28.Kd2 Rg3 29.a3** A sad end after a great effort. Probably time shortage **29...Bxe3+** And Black won after a few more moves **30.Ke2 Bxg1 31.a4 Rb3 32.Kf1 Bc5 33.g3 Rxd3 34.Ke2 Rb3 35.Kd2 Rxb2+ 0-1**

In Round 2 of the competition Forest Hall Dubovs say off Forest Hall Alekhines thanks to the following fabulous combination. With White to play....



White sacrificed a queen to promote first one pawn, and then another one: **1 Qxg8! Rxg8 2 e8(=Q)+ Rxe8 3 Rxe8+ Kb7 4 h7!** And White will make a third queen, ending up rook and knight ahead. Despite Zheming (Zhang) fighting hard, he was unable to stop his younger brother (!!) Weiming winning the end game. I'd have enjoyed the dinner table chat afterwards – well done Weiming.

Richard Symonds sportingly posted this top board and interesting game that he lost - from Gosforth Ivy v Morpeth A in Round 1.

Richard Symonds – Chris Goodall

1.d4 c5 2.e4 cxd4 3.c3 dxc3 4.Nxc3 Nc6 5.Nf3 d6 6.Bc4 a6 7.Qe2 Nf6 8.0–0 Bg4 9.Rd1 Bxf3 10.gxf3 Queen takes all day for me but let's see where this goes **10...b5** Computer says g5 going straight for White's weakened K **11.Bb3 e5 12.Bg5 Nd4 13.Rxd4** Speculative

but it is a Morra Gambit. Maybe a sign of White's frustration? **13. Qd3** better, but Black is fine **13...exd4 14.e5 dxe5 15.Qxe5+ Be7 16.Bxf6** And here **16. Rd1** or **Nd5 16...gxf6 17.Qh5 Rg8+** 0–0 looks dodgy but is ok **18.Kh1 Rg7** See diagram top next column **19.Nd5** Natural but not best **19.Qh6 Kf8 (19...Bf8 20.Re1+ Kd7** and it's anybody's game) **20.Rg1 19...Kf8 20.Qh6 Kg8 21.Re1 Ra7 22.Nf4 Bf8 23.Qh4 Re7 24.Rd1 Qa5 25.Nd3 Qb6 26.Nf4 Rd7 26. Qc6** looks better



Position after Black's 18....Rg7

but Black is still on top **27.Qh5** More so after this. **Nd5** is stronger **27...d3 28.Qh4 Qc6 29.Qh3 d2 30.Nh5 Rg6 31.Nf4 Rg5 32.Nh5** The surprising **Ne6** is White's best chance but still not enough [**32.Ne6 fxe6 33.Qxe6+ Qxe6 34.Bxe6+ Rf7 35.Rxd2] 32...Rd3 33.Ng3 Qxf3+ 34.Kg1 Rxb3 0–1** A well earned point by Chris but to no avail – as Captain Bob Heyman was to realise. Chris'

inclusion bumped up Ivy's handicap category and they lost the match!

ECF U150 ONLINE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS

The excitement that accompanied our Open team's achievement rather overshadowed our U150s (or U1825 FIDE) reaching the semi-final of their competition before going out to Essex 5.5 – 6.5. On route to the semi we defeated Oxfordshire 10-4 (a warm up match), Norfolk 10.5 – 3.5, Greater Manchester 10-7, Lincolnshire 8-4 and Leicestershire 11-1. A team effort but mention to Phil Eastlake, James McKay and Dave Peardon for outstanding individual scores. Maybe next year then, but for now some games.....

Our first game is from Board 14 of the warm up match against Oxfordshire.

Prachi Arora - Tamal Matilal

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nd7 3.Nf3 g6 4.Bc4 e6

5.0-0 Bg7 6.Bg5 Ne7 7.Nc3 0-0

8.Qe2 c6 9.Rad1 d5 10.exd5 cxd5

Diagram top next Col **11.Bxd5** Good.

If now 11...exd5 the N on e7 drops as will the exchange. **11...Nf6 12.Bb3 h6**

13.Bh4 Nf5 14.Bg3 Nh5 15.d5 1

Nhxg3 16.fxg3 Qb6+ 17.Rf2 Nd4

18.Qd3 e5 19.Na4 Qd8 20.Nxd4

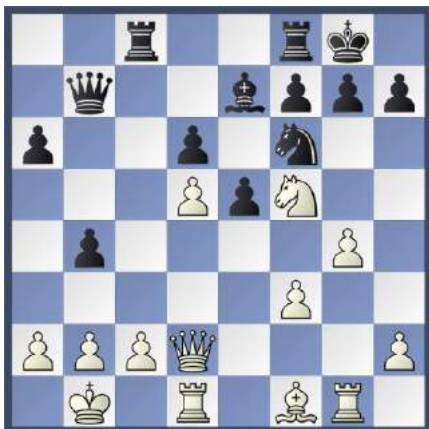


20....exd4 21.Nc5 b6 22.Ne4 f5 23.Nd2 Kh8 24.Nf3 a5 25.Nxd4
Hence the Nd2 - f3 manoeuvre - again impressive **25...Ba6 26.c4 Qd6 27.Ne6 Rf7 28.Nxg7 Kxg7 29.Qd4+ Kh7 30.Re2 Bc8 31.Rde1 Raa7 32.Re8 Rg7 33.Rxc8 Raf7 34.Ree8 g5 35.Rh8+ Kg6 36.Rc6 1-0** A nice game. Not lost by out and out blunders but won by good planning and an eye for tactics. Well done Prachi – who scored a super impressive 8/8 in the ECF games she played this summer!

On board 4 Lewis Self produced this nice effort on the way to our 10-4 victory.

Lewis Self – R Beckett

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.f3 e5 7.Nde2 Be6 8.Be3 Be7 9.Qd2 0-0 10.0-0-0 b5 11.g4 b4 12.Nd5 Bxd5 13.exd5 Qa5 14.Kb1 Nbd7 15.Ng3 Nb6 16.Bxb6 Nf5 first is better I think 16...Qxb6 17.Nf5 Qb7 18.Rg1 Rac8



19.Bxa6 Deflecting the Q from her defence of the B on e7 and winning the exchange **19...Qxa6 20.Nxe7+ Kh8 21.Nxc8 Rxc8 22.Qxb4 Ra8 23.a3 Qa7 24.Qxd6 1–0**

After a traumatic opening round which had to be abandoned after repeated Chess.Com issues we kicked off our official campaign with a resounding 10.5 – 3.5 win over Norfolk. First up is this miniature from Dave Peardon on Board 7.

James Payne – Dave Peardon

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 h6 4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Ne5 6.Bb3 Nf6 7.f4 Nc6 8.e5 Ne4 And now 9.Nf3 or Bd5 but instead....**9.0–0 Nxd4 0–1** if 10. Qxd5 then Bc5 skewers the Queen

Round 2 was a much tighter affair. A 10-7 win over Greater Manchester left us needing a win from our final two group fixtures to qualify for the semi-final. Phil Eastlake led the way on top board

Phil Eastlake – Paul Doherty

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 c6 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Be2 e6 6.0–0 d5 7.e5 Nfd7 8.Bf4 c5 A reasonable line, getting the white squared B outside of the pawn chain then playing as a French **9.dxc5 Bxc5 10.Ng5 Bf5 11.Bd3 Bg6 12.Bxg6 hxg6 13.Re1 a6** But this seems slow and perhaps **13...Qb6** should be preferred. Behind in development Black need to be careful **14.Qf3 Qe7** And here **14... Nc6**



because **15.Nxd5** Phil doesn't miss chances like this. The game is over in a blink **15...exd5** Or Qd8 then 16. Nxf7 and if Kxf7 17. Bg5+ picking up the Q **16.e6 Kf8 17.exf7 1–0** Phil had a great tournament, scoring 90% on top board!

On Board 9 Eddie Czestochowski chipped in with this very nice game.

Eddie Czestochowski – Alex Robinson

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 g6 3.e4 d6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bc4 0-0 6.Be3 Nbd7 7.Qd2 e5 8.0-0-0 Ng4 I'd go 8...exd4 here for a Larsen style Philidor. 9.Bg5 Nxf6 And here Qe8 10.dxe5 dxe5

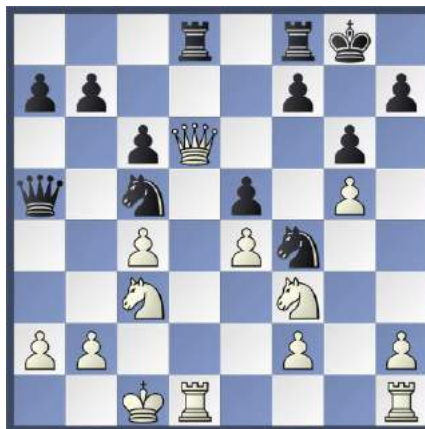


11.Nxe5 And ok, a silly Pawn drop by Black you might say. But watch how White finishes off. Swaps pieces down, grabs the open files, R to the 7th, all textbook. 11...Qe8 12.Nxd7 Nxd7 13.Rhe1 Ne5 14.Bb3 Qc6 15.Nd5 Kh8 16.Ne7 Qc5 17.Nxc8 Raxc8 18.f4 Nc4 19.Bxc4 Qxc4 20.Qd5 Qb4 21.Qb3 Qxb3 22.axb3 h6 23.Bh4 f6 24.Rd7 Rfd8 25.Red1 Rxd7 26.Rxd7 g5 27.fxg5 hxg5 28.Bg3 Bf8 29.Rf7 Bd6 30.Bxd6 cxd6 31.Rxb7 1-0

Next up an 8-4 win over Lincoln saw us through as Group Winners with a match to spare. This was looking good! On Board 7 Simon Matthews played a nice game.

John Grasham – Simon Matthews

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 g6 3.Nf3 Bg7 4.c4 d6 5.Nc3 Nbd7 6.e4 0-0 7.Qd2 c6 8.Be2 Nh5 9.Bh6 e5 10.g4 Nhf6 11.Bxg7 Kxg7 12.g5 Nh5 13.0-0-0 Qa5 Black is slightly behind in development but moving with purpose 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.Nh4 h4 or Kb1 have to be preferred to this 15...Nf4 16.Bg4 Nc5 17.Bxc8 Raxc8 And now White has to watch himself 18.Qd6 Kg8 19.Nf3 The Q needs to retreat pronto 19...Rcd8



20.Qxe5 And a blunder. But it's been coming. Qe7 or f6 are obviously better but White has been drifting and now he pays the price Ncd3+ 21.Rxd3 Nxd3+ 0-1

Our final group game was an 11-1 win over Leicestershire. We had won the group very convincingly and man for man had the beating of any of the semi-finalists. But first, a couple of games from this match.

Phil Eastlake – Sean McDonald

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3
Nxe4 5.d4 d5 6.Bd3 Bd6 7.0–0 0–0
8.Re1 Re8 9.c4 c6 10.Nc3 Bf5
11.Qc2 Bb4 12.Bf4 Nd7 13.a3
Bxc3 14.bxc3 Ndf6 15.h3 dxc4
16.Bxc4 Nd6 17.Bd3 Bxd3
18.Qxd3 Nd5 19.Rxe8+ Nxe8
20.Bg3 Nec7 21.Re1 Ne6 22.Ne5
Qa5



23.Nxf7 And from out of the calm. White has had a small edge. for a while and bided his time for an opportunity. Not 'winning' but it is very sound **23...Nef4** It's winning now mind. The less than obvious (to me at least) Qxc3 is better, but who looks at c3 when f7 has just dropped off? **24.Qe4** On the money. **24...Nf6** And Black is over stretched **24...Kxf7** **25.Bxf4 Nxf4** **26.Qxf4+ Kg8** **27.Re7** **25.Nh6+ gxf6** **26.Qxf4 Nh5** **27.Qg4+ Qg5** **28.Qe6+ Kg7** **29.Be5+ Kf8** **30.Re3** 1–0 A good example of sound development, good piece deployment then sensing and seizing his chance!

And on Board 3....

Jack Erskine-Pereira – Paul Mottram

1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 c5 4.c3 Nc6
5.Nd2 cxd4 6.exd4 Bf5 7.Qb3 Qd7
8.Ngf3 a6 9.Ne5 Nxe5 10.Bxe5 Ne4
11.Nxe4 Bxe4 12.f3 Bg6 13.Be2 f6
14.Bg3 e6 15.0–0 b5 Why not just
Be7 and 0–0? **16.a4 bxa4** **17.Rxa4**
Bd6



Missing the threat. Kf7 looks necessary **18.Bb5** And White won in a few more moves. Black loses his Rs for a B if he takes and his Q if he doesn't. Some choice!



Top board, top man - Phil Eastlake

And so to the semi-final, where we faced Essex. Essex had come through their group in second place having beaten Oxfordshire 7-5 and Surrey 9-3 but suffered a 9.5 – 3.5 defeat against Middlesex. They averaged 132 over their 12 boards, we 135 – very close to call.

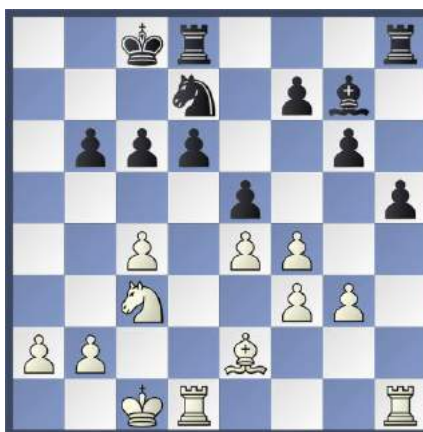
Sadly not to be – not this year at least. A 5.5 – 6.5 reversal saw Essex through to the final where they would go on to beat Lincoln. But there will be a next time. The following games offered some consolation, starting on Board 3

Peter Nickals – Mark McKay

1.Nf3 g6 2.g3 Bg7 3.Bg2 d6 4.c4 c5 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.a3 Nf6 7.Rb1 0–0 8.b4 cxb4 9.axb4 d5 10.c5 d4 11.Nb5 Black is better after this. He probably should go to a4 11...a6 12.Na3 Nd5 13.b5 axb5 14.Nxb5 Qa5 15.Ng5 Ncb4 16.Na3 Qxc5 17.Qb3 Bf5 18.Ne4 Qa5 19.0–0 Rfc8



Just look at the position of each side's pieces. But these games need finishing off **20.Bb2 Qa6 21.d3 e5** An obvious mood and certainly not bad. But Qa4 keeps the pressure on 21...Qa4 22.Qxa4 Rxa4 23.Bf3 Nc3 24.Rbc1 b5 25.Rfe1 Bxe4 26.dxe4 d3 **22.Rfc1 Bf8** Rxc1+ is preferable. That's my point about finishing off. Every move has to be exact in this type of game. **23.Rxc8 Rxc8 24.Rc1** White should go Nc4 and he is roughly equal **24...Rxc1+ 25.Bxc1 Be6 26.Qb2 Nb6** Qa4 improves **27.Nc2 Na2 28.Nd2** And here Bg5 for White. The moves are hard for both sides! **28...Na4 29.Qa1 N4c3 30.Kf1 Qa4 31.Qb2 Ba3 32.Qxb7 32.Qxa3 Qxc2 33.Kg1 Nxe2+ 32...Qxc2 33.Qb8+ Bf8 34.Qb2 Qd1#** A controlled and well played game by Mark. **0–1** On board 12 Steve Larkin (Black) impressed against Mae Cataby. We join the game after Black's 19th...bxc6.



It looks like Black's d6 Pawn is

dropping off – it does....**20.Rxd6 Kc7 21.Rhd1** Looks natural but retreating the d6 Rook is better. It is now short of squares **21...exf4 22.gxf4 Bh6** There's the P back - and a passed h P. **23.Kc2 Bxf4 24.R6d3 Ne5 25.Rxd8 Rxd8 26.Rxd8 Kxd8 27.Nd1 h4** Yep, push, push, push! **28.Nf2 g5 29.Ng4 h3 30.Nf2 h2** And now Steve just needs to work out how to get the N away from protecting h1 **31.Kc3 Bg3 32.Nh1 Be1+ 33.Kd4 Ng6 34.Ke3 Nf4 35.Bf1 Kd7 36.Kd4 Ke6 37.a3 c5+ 38.Ke3 Ke5 39.b3 f6 40.a4 Ne6 41.Be2 Nd4 42.Bd1 f5 43.exf5 Nxf5+ 44.Kd3 Ng3 45.Nxg3 Bxg3 46.f4+ Kxf4 0-1** Very well played Steve.

To conclude coverage of the County U150 with a game from another of our 100 percenters.

James McKay – John Jestico

1.c4 Nf6 2.g3 e6 3.Bg2 d5 4.Nf3 Nc6 5.0-0 Be7 6.b3 Nd7 7.Bb2 Bf6 You can understand why but there's a comfortable response for White after which Black gets himself into a bit of a tangle **8.d4 Ne7** 0-0 should be almost automatic **9.Nbd2 c5 10.e3** A bit too cautious. **10.cxd5** then if **Nxd5 11.Ne4** and if **exd5** then **12.e4 b6 11.Ne5 e4 Bxe5 12.dxe5 Bb7 13.f4 Ng6 14.h4 h5** After this 0-0 loses the h P **15.Bf3** Here **15.cxd5 exd5 (15...Bxd5 16.e4 Bc6 17.Nc4 0-0) 16.Nc4 dxc4 17.Bxb7 Rb8 18.Be4** is good for White **15...Ngf8 16.Bxh5 dxc4 17.Nxc4**



An awful mess. Nd6 attacks b7, e8 and f7. **17...g6 18.Nd6+ Ke7 19.Nxb7 Qc7 20.Bf3 Rb8 21.Qd6+ Qxd6 22.Nxd6** White has picked up his piece, consolidated and went on to win in a few more moves.



James McKay, improving rapidly and 100% in the ECF U150 County Championship!

REGIONAL U100 CHALLENGE

This competition featured teams from the North, South, East and Midlands. We were well represented with nine players from Durham and Northumberland. Results went against us with narrow defeats to East Saxons 7.5 – 8.5, Midland Outlaws 4-6 and The South 7.5 – 8.5

Here is Prachi Arora in action, playing Board 4 against The South.

Inga Jergensone – Prachi Arora
1.d4 c5 2.Nf3 cxd4 3.Nxd4 e5 d5 is better here and then kick the N with e5 **4.Nf3 Nc6 5.e4 Nf6 6.Nc3 Bb4** So said, good development and Black is already preferable! **7.Bd2 0-0 8.a3** Drops a P, Nd5 is better **8...Bxc3 9.Bxc3 Nxe4 10.Qd3 Nxc3 11.Qxc3 d5 12.0-0-0 d4 13.Qc5 Bg4 14.Be2 Rc8 15.Qb5 a6 16.Qxb7 Bxf3 17.Bxf3 Na5 18.Qxa6 Qc7 19.Be4 Nb3+ 20.Kb1 Nc5** Nice play. Black is bossing it **21.Qe2 Rb8 22.Qc4 Rfc8 23.Bf5 Qb6 24.b3** And here Qb4, but the pressure is mounting **24...Rc7**



25.Ka2 Ne4 26.Qb4 White should count the material and then consider **Qxc7 26...Nc3+ 27.Kb2 Nxd1+** Winning still but there's no rush to take the R. **Qa7** for example **28.Rxd1 Qa7 29.Qd6 Qa5 30.Be4 Qc3+ 31.Ka2 Rcb7 32.Bxb7 Rb1** was White's best. Now the game is gone for good **32...Qxc2+ 33.Ka1 Qxd1+ 34.Kb2 Qe2+ 35.Kc1 Qe1+36.Kc2 Qxf2+ 37.Kd3 Qe3+ 38.Kc4 Qc3+ 39.Kb5 Rxb7+ 40.Ka6 Qc8** The B has been picked up and back rank mate avoided. **41.Ka5 Qa8+ 42.Qa6 Ra7** Another well played game **Prachi 0-1**



Seated left Prachi Arora, 11 years old and a fantastic talent.

ECF SUBS 2020

Need renewing if you haven't already please. We're not playing OTB granted, but we still need the infrastructure of our game to continue and be ready for when we resume.
<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-membership-2020-21/>

NORTH V SOUTH CHALLENGE 2020

And so to the conclusion of the Summer's festivities with an ultimately 107 board challenge between the North and South. Last played in Birmingham 1894, after which I believe the North decided the South was too strong and discontinued the challenge after the South won 64.5 – 43.5. This time round the North won 60-46 with one game declared null. Worth the wait!

First off – a game from Board 3 of the 1894 challenge.

M Kaizer (North) – D Mills

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nf3 e6 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nf6 6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.e5 Nd5 8.Ne4 f5 9.Ng5 Taking en passant is better **9...Qc7 10.f4** And Nf3 here **10...Bc5 11.Qf3 a5 12.Bd3 Nb4 13.a3 Nxd3+ 14.Qxd3 Qb6 15.b3**



Bf2+ Ba6 first then **Rd8**. The White King is going nowhere fast **16.Ke2 Ba6 17.c4 Bc5 18.Rd1 Ra7 19.Rb1 h6 20.Nf3 0-0 21.Be3 Bxe3 22.Qxe3 Qxe3+ 23.Kxe3 c5 24.Rd6 Rb8 25.Kd2** After some rather nondescript moves White is level. Now he drops himself in the soup **25...Bxc4 26.Kc3 Bd5 27.Rb2 Rab7 28.Nd2 a4 29.g3 axb3 0-1** Well that's what you got for your money back then. Fast forward to 2020.



Oops, not quite what I meant 😊 We are starting with a great game from start to finish. Lots of notes. Get a spare set. Andrew Horton, playing on Board 2, provides the annotations and I hope you find them as instructive and interesting as I did.

Andrew Horton – Bogdan Lalic

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c4 dxc4 4.e3 e6 5.Bxc4 c5 6.0-0 Qe2 and Nc3 are White's other options **6...Nc6 6...a6 7.dxc5 Bxc5 7.dxc5!?** Of course fine for the white side, though white normally waits until a6 has been played before taking on c5, as then

there are at least some queenside dark squares to target. **7...Bxc5 8.a3 8.Qxd8+ Kxd8 9.a3 Ke7 10.b4 Bd6 11.Bb2** was of course another option, with white ever so slightly better due to their space advantage, and the black king potentially slightly vulnerable in the centre. **8...0-0 9.b4 Bd6 10.Bb2 a6 11.Qc2!**? This was an interesting moment. I knew the queen would be potentially exposed to attacks on the open c-file from a black rook on c8, however this move has a concrete idea behind it. I wanted to prevent b5 and Bb7, forcing the black light-squared bishop to d7, where it is more passive. I also realised that my opponent would know these types of positions much better than myself, so something slightly unusual was also a good practical try. 11.Qe2 actually transposes back to some main line stuff. A top-level game went 11...b5 12.Bd3 Bb7 13.Nbd2 Qe7 14.Rac1 Rfd8 Black's play is very logical. 15.Nb3 Ng4 and white has nothing. 16.Be4 Nce5 17.Nxe5 Bxe5 18.Bxe5 Nxe5 19.Bxh7+ Kxh7 20.Qh5+ Kg8 21.Qxe5 Rd5 22.Qc7 Rd7 23.Qc5 Qh4 24.f3 Rd3 25.Na5 Rc8 26.Qe5 Rxc1 27.Rxc1 Bd5 28.e4 Bc4 29.Qb2 Qf4 30.Nxc4 bxc4 31.Re1 Rd2 32.Qc3 Ra2 33.Qe3 Qd6 34.h3 Qg3 0-1 (34) Vidit,S (2721)-Inarkiev,E (2663) Moscow 2019 **11...Qe7 11...b5!? 12.Bxb5!** was the idea. 12...axb5 13.Qxc6 Rb8 where black definitely has some compensation, but this would be new territory for my

opponent.; 11...Bd7 is what I wanted to provoke 12.Nbd2 Rc8 13.Ne4 **12.Rd1 e5** Always a doubled-edged move. Black allows the light-squared bishop to activate itself easily, and creates ideas of e4, gaining even more space. Yet the drawbacks are that the dark-squared bishop could potentially become a bad piece, blocked by the pawn on e5, and black relinquishes some control over the central white squares. **13.Nbd2 Bg4 14.Ne4!** I didn't fear Bxf3, as my king will be perfectly safe, and I will have some ideas involving using the g-file. **14...Bxf3 15.gxf3 Nxe4 16.Qxe4 Kh8** Offers draw, which was rejected as at this point I thought I had a nice edge, and my position was now easier to play. **17.Qf5!** I thought this was a very clever move, preventing the immediate f5, and trying to tempt g7-g6, where the bishop on b2 would become stronger. **17...g6 18.Qh3 Rad8 19.Bd5 a5 20.b5!? 20.Bxc6!** bxc6 21.bxa5 also looked very strong, and perhaps preferable. I regretted not playing this a few moves after, as my play would have been reasonably straightforward. 21...Ra8 22.Bc3 Rfb8 23.Qg4± **20...Na7 21.a4 Nc8 22.Rd3?** I realised this was a mistake after Nb6, as black has a powerful rerouting idea which thankfully he missed. 22.Bb3 was a better move order. **22...Nb6 23.Bb3 f6!?** 23...Nd7! was what I saw, and white has to go backwards a bit to keep the edge.

24.Bc2 Nc5 25.Rd5 This is still pleasant for white. **24.Rad1 Bb4 25.Rxd8 Rxd8 26.Rxd8+ Qxd8 27.Qe6**



At the time I thought this was an incredibly strong move. It seemed to me that black was basically paralysed due to the threat of Qg8, and I could play f4, opening things up. However, black had an incredible resource which somehow keeps the computer evaluation close to equal. **27...Kg7??** My opponent also felt like his position was dangerous and went for a king run to remove the threat of Qg8. 27...Nd7! I thought this was still a big edge for me after say 28.Qd5 followed by f4 after black defends b7, or simply winning a pawn. e.g. 28...b6 (Yet black has the incredibly calm 28...Be7! as if 29.Qxb7 Nc5 30.Qd5 Qxd5 31.Bxd5 Nxa4= is equal.) 29.f4 **28.Qf7+ Kh6 29.Qxb7!** Accurate chess. The problem was, if 29.f4 then black creates strong counterplay with

29...Qd2! which is enough for a draw. 30.Qxb7 Qxb2 31.Bg8 Qc1+ 32.Kg2 exf4 33.Qxb6 f3+ 34.Kxf3 Qh1+ 35.Ke2 Qe1+ 36.Kf3 Qh1+ **29...Qd3** 29...Be1 also had to be calculated, but I found the strong 30.Bc1!+— Again the only move to keep an edge, preventing the black queen's infiltration. 30...f5 31.Kg2 **30.Bg8** Only move to keep the advantage. **30...Nd7 31.Kg2** Sadly the practical looking 31.Qd5 is not so clear cut. 31...Qxd5 32.Bxd5 Kg7± where white still has an solid edge.(32...Nc5 transposes to something similar to the game. 33.b6 Nxa4 34.b7 Bd6 35.Ba3 Bb8) **31...Be1 32.Qe4 Qxe4 32...Qe2 33.Qh4+ Kg7 34.Qxh7+ Kf8 35.Qf7# 33.fxe4 Nc5 34.b6 Bb4 35.f4 Nxa4 36.b7 Bd6 37.Ba3 Bb8 38.Bf8+ Kh5 39.Kf3** the dust has settled and white has a very pleasant position with the two bishops and a vulnerable black king. However, I had less than a minute left at this point (with the 15 second increment), to my opponent's 9 minutes or so. **39...Nb2 40.Bxh7** 40.Be7!! is actually very strong, where white even has some mating ideas. 40...exf4 41.exf4 Nd3 42.Bxf6 Nxf4 43.e5 g5 44.Bf7+ Kh4 45.e6 Nxe6 46.Bxe6+— **40...exf4 41.exf4 Nd3 42.f5 Ne5+ 43.Ke2 gxf5 44.Bxf5 Nc6 45.Kd3?** Forgetting about the h-pawn. **45...a4** thankfully not taken. 45...Bxh2 46.Kc4+— is still very strong. **46.h3 Kg5 47.Ba3 Bf4 48.Bc8 Bb8 49.Bc1+ Kh4 50.Kc4 Kg3 51.Kb5 Nd4+ 52.Kxa4 Kf3** And now the h-pawn runs, and

Black cannot stop it due to white's powerful bishops, and the pawn on f6. **53.h4 Kxe4 54.h5 f5 55.h6 Be5 56.Bd7 Ne2 57.Bb2!** A flashy finish. There is no need to give up the bishop. Black resigned. **1-0**



Above – Andy in 2018, on his way to a second IM Norm at the time.

Wow – I followed this in the commentary room hosted by Matthew Sadler and Natasha Regan. Throughout the talk was of Bogdan's fighting spirit and how one slip would turn the tables. I doubt the possibility of not winning crossed Andy's mind from move 28 onwards. There are (even!) fuller notes in the PGN copy of the

game – available on request. A great turn out. Worth noting the N/S divide as we know it e.g. The Tyne Bridge for the match was around the River Thames – so players from Oxford and further North Birmingham Qualified for The North – as was the divide in 1894.



Eight of the top 10 North boards were occupied by Durham and Northumberland players and that mini-match was won 7.5 – 2.5. Here are some extracts of games which stands some of them apart from the rest of us. First off we join James Moreby, White, on Board 4 against Andrew Lewis, after White's **27. Nb6**



27.....**Qe5** Re6 harassing the Q is better. White's tiny edge grows
28.Bd5 Bxd5 Bang goes the B pair
29.Nxd5 Rd8 And here **Qe6**. James now demonstrates an exact understanding of what is required to turn this into a win **30.e4 fxe4**
31.dxe4 Rb8 He should still be trying to trade Qs **32.Rc1 Kh8**
33.Nxc3 Qxa5 34.Nd5 Qd2 35.Ne7 a5 36.Nf5 Rf8 37.Rc2 Qd1+ 38.Kg2 g4 39.Nh4 Rf6 40.Qc4 Kh7 41.e5 Rf8 42.Qe4+ Kg8 43.e6 Re8 44.Nf5 a4 45.Rc7 Qf3+ 46.Qxf3 gxf3+ 47.Kxf3 Bb2 48.Nxh6+ Kh8 49.e7 a3 50.Nf7+ Kg8 51.Nd6 1-0 Looks easy when you know how. Next up we join David Walker with White on Board 6, about to make his 20th move against Chris Davison....



20.Qh5 This position has arisen from an English Opening. **20...Qd7 21.Rd2 Bg4 22.Qh4 Bf5 23.Rfd1 Bxd3 24.Rxd3** And Black should have no concerns. **Nf5** beckons **24...Nd5** Or not. The sac on h6 was screaming out and Black had to

take care. Now.. **25.Bxh6 gxh6 26.Qxh6 Ne7 27.Rg3+ Ng6 28.h4 Qe7 29.h5 Qf8 30.Qe3 Kh7 31.Qe4 Qg7 32.Rdd3 Rh8 33.Rdf3 Kg8 34.hxg6 Qh6 35.gxf7+ Kf8 36.Rg8+ Ke7 37.Rh3 1-0** And in the end a massacre. But go back over from 25. **Bxh6** after which Black never had a sniff. There's the difference in a 200+ player.

Now we move onto Board 10 to see Ken Neat (White) in action against Christof Brixel. Joining after White's **20. Bd3**



Bxd5 Well what would you do? **N** move to f6 or c5 then f5 (**N** takes) drops off and after that the h6 P. Say **20...Nf6 21.Nxf5 Qb6 22.Nxh6+ 21.fxe4 fxe4 22.Be2 Rxf1+ 23.Bxf1 Rf8** So Black has a couple of Ps for his piece and at a glance better prospects than before **24.Ne2 Qe5 25.Qd4 Qf5 26.Ng3 Qf2+ 27.Kh1 c6 28.Be2 Qf6 29.Rf1** Material off when ahead **29...Qxd4 30.Rxf8+ Kxf8 31.exd4** Still some

BEHIND THE PIECES

logistics to sort. This is easy to mess up for many of us **31...Kf7**
32.Kg1 Kf6 33.Nf1 Be6 34.Kf2 a5
35.Ke3 d5 36.b4 axb4 37.axb4 The scope of the B is reduced to passenger **37...Kg6 38.Ng3 Kf6**
39.Bh5 Bd7 40.Ne2 Ke7 41.Nc1 Kf6 42.Nb3 Ke7 43.Nc5 Bf5 44.Kf2 Kd8 45.Kg3 Ke7 46.h3 Kd6 47.Bg4 Bg6 48.h4 Nd7 - e5 is better but White has his plan and sticks to it **48...h5 49.Be2 g4 50.Kf4 Be8 51.Nb3** Now watch him go **51...Ke6 52.Kg5 Bf7 53.Nd2 Ke7 54.Nf1 Ke6 55.Ng3** Again, simple enough when you know how. Ken's calm finishing is a lesson well learned. **1-0**

On Board 67 James McKay (Black and to move) concluded his 'ECF' campaign with a nice finish against Dai Harris.



30....Rd2 31.Kh1 Ne3 32. Qe4 Qxa4 or **Nc6** was necessary but Black's winning here. After Black's next White resigned. Answer on P36

This edition features Paul Bielby. Can't remember why I was visiting but nearly fell over at the number of framed paintings he had. And fell over again when he told me they were all his. They're brilliant, featuring fabulous scenery from pretty well everywhere he's ever visited. When you next see him ask for one, you won't be disappointed. So.....

Rather strangely our editor has asked me to write an article about another non-chess hobby of mine – painting. Well I always do as I'm told, so here it is.

When I took up chess for a hobby I didn't play chess – I waged it. It was war. It was competitive, I needed to win. It was hard work. Now I'm in my dotage that is no longer true - I do play chess - for fun. But I still try to be competitive – ask my opponents in two recent Sell tournaments!

Painting is quite different. I know I'm very much an amateur, competition doesn't come into it, I paint for my own pleasure and relaxation - if somebody else likes one of my pictures that's just a bonus, though a welcome one. I was very chuffed when some of my chess playing friends took paintings off my hands. I was flattered when

John Wheeler even commissioned me to do paintings from some of his holiday photographs.

I only started painting when three things coincided in 1989. I took early retirement from teaching mathematics. My father who had been a keen amateur painter died, leaving a lot of painting materials. I saw a postcard someone had put in our local post office window saying she wished to start an Art Club at Fulwell Community centre more or less on my doorstep. I thought I would try it out, went there and was hooked.

Earlier hobbies of mine had included mountaineering, both in Britain and in the Austrian Alps and photography. I gave up on the mountains, but continued rambling more gently, often in Greece. Now, on holiday, I took water colours with me as well as a camera. I would paint when I could and took photographs to turn into paintings at the Art Club when I got home. Here is an early watercolour I did sitting by the wayside on a sun-warmed rock near Kissamou on Crete (top next column). Little more than a sketch, it remains one of my favourite paintings – largely for the memories it brings back to me. I wouldn't want to part with it

More recently I have started painting in acrylics. Stronger colours and capable of some quite dramatic effects. I still mainly do landscapes and have recently done a whole



Kissamou on Crete – a Classic 'Bielby'

series of mountain pictures based on photographs taken many years ago. Here is an acrylic I did recently from an old photograph taken on Haystacks looking at the Gables in the Lake District with Scafell Pike peeping through the gap in the far distance.



Thank you Paul. This has been our third feature of its kind. I've loved them all and hope you have. But there's more, many more. Please volunteer yours, you know it's only a matter of time before I find out anyway 😊

VARSITY HERO

Another little nugget that this 'job' has thrown up. I'll let David (Walker) speak for himself – that's best eh?

Dr Kenneth Regan is an American academic and International Master who has carried out extensive research into detection of computer aided cheating in chess. Until recently, his name was familiar to chess arbiters and organisers who used his specialised software to detect suspicious chess performances in over the board congresses. However, with the recent growth in online chess activity, his name has become much more widely known and discussed.

Now rewind 36 years to 1984 when Ken Regan was studying for his doctorate at Oxford University. That year I played him (Board 3) in the annual Cambridge v Oxford varsity match, played in the very imposing surroundings of the RAC Club in Pall Mall, London. The match was sponsored by Lloyds Bank and there was a formal dress code at the venue, so this is one of the few games I have played wearing a suit and tie.

David Walker – Kenneth Regan

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.g3 Ba6

5.Qa4 Be7 6.Bg2 0-0 7.0-0 c6

8.Nc3 d5 9.cxd5 b5?! The start of a dubious plan. The IM wants to mix things up against his lower rated opponent, but there is a flaw.

9...cxd5= 10.Qb3 b4?



11.dxe6! This piece sacrifice gives white an advantage. 11...bxc3

12.exf7+ Kh8 13.bxc3 Nbd7 If

13...Bxe2 14.Re1 Bxf3 15.Bxf3 it turns out to be difficult for black to

round up the f7–pawn without running into tactical problems, so instead he seeks to develop quickly and retake f7. 14.Ng5 Rb8 15.Qc2

Qc8 16.Re1 h6 17.Nf3 Rxf7 18.e4 Nh7 19.e5 Ndf8 20.Be3 Bc4 21.Nd2

Bd5 22.Ne4 Qa6 23.Rab1 Rxb1

24.Rxb1 Ne6 25.f4 Bf8 26.a4

Stockfish prefers 26.Rb8 with ideas of Nd6 and advancing the central pawns. However, I assume I was concerned about black taking the a- pawn. 26...g5? Now black is

definitely losing. **27.f5! Rxf5 28.Nd6 Bxg229.Qxf5? 29.Kxg2!** is winning **29...Bd5? 29...Qe2!** gives black counterplay, although white is still better after. **30.Bf2** Maybe we were short of time, I can't remember, but we now traded inaccuracies before I finally managed to win... **30.Rb7 Bg7 31.Nf7+ Kg8 32.Nxh6+ Kh8 33.Qf7 Nc7 34.Qxc7 1-0**

This game was awarded the Lloyds Bank trophy for best Cambridge game, and I still have the trophy on display at home. My thanks to Alex McFarlane for reminding me of this game after consulting what must be his extensive archives.



Top, the treasured Lloyds Bank Best Game award. Bottom, from 1983, David celebrating his first Zollner championship win.

THREE KINGS (GAMBITS)

Another contribution from Paul (Bielby) focusing on his most favourite of all chess openings.

In my '50 years ago' article in last issue I included a successful King's Gambit game from the 1969 British Championship. The King's Gambit is an old opening, probably not particularly 'sound' according to modern analysis, but it leads to lively open games of the sort I enjoy.

I was checking old scorebooks from that period and discovered some 20-30 games where I had King's Gambit wins, some against some formidable opponents, and thought three might make a subject for an article here. Two quickies against well known tournament players and a wild and woolly win against a Scottish IM. The first is from the Yorkshire County Championship in 1972 against a person I'd rather not refer to by name – but who that year won the British Championship.

Paul Bielby – Persona Non Grata

1. e4 e5 2. f4 exf4 3. Nf3 I played the Knight's Gambit regularly in the last century, but nowadays prefer the Bishop's Gambit with **3. Bc4 3... d6 4. Bc4 h6 5. h4 Nf6 6. Nc3 Bg4 7. d4 Nh5** A knight on the rim..... This move is bad for black, it has to be retracted on move 11 and loses two fatal tempi.



8. Ne5 Note that if 8. ... Bxd1 then 9. Bxf7+ and 10. Nd5 is the Legall mate. This move must have shocked Black because his play from here on is not the best. **8... dxe5 9. Qxg4 Nf6 10. Qf5 exd4 11. Nd5 Qd7** Better 11. ... Nbd7 though White still has the initiative **12. Qe5 Kd8 13. Nxf6 Nc6 14. Nxd7 Nxe5 15. Nxe5 Bb4 16. Bd2** Black resigns.

Moving on now to the 1989 Scarborough Congress - Oliver Jackson still is a very dangerous guy over the chess board.

1.e4 e5 2. f4 d5 The Falkbeer Counter-gambit designed to take a lot of the sting out of White's attack. But, of course, Black doesn't win the gambit pawn. **3. exd5 Bc5 4. d4 Bxd4 5. Nf3 Bg4 6. c3 Bb6 7. fxe5 Ne7 8. Bc4 O-O 9. Bg5 Qe8** White plans to exchange on e7 anyway, so this move simply loses a tempo.

10. Bxe7 Qxe7 11. Nbd2 Nd7 12. Qe2 Rfe8 13. O-O-O Nxe5 Black wins back his pawn but allows White to take control of the e-file. **14. Rde1 Qd6 15. h3 Bh5 16. g4 Bg6 17. Nxe5 f6**



18. Nxg6?! A speculative Q sacrifice - White has seen that he can force his QP to d7, but the outcome is unclear. **18... Rxe2 19. Rxe2 hxg6 20. Re6 Qf4 21. d6+ Kh7 22. Rf1 Qh6** The losing move. **22. ... Qg5** is good for Black. **23. d7 Rh8 24. Re8 c6 25. Rfe1 Qxh3 26. g5 fxg5** If **26. ... f5** then **27. Rc8 Bd8 Re8! 27. Ne4 Qh4 28. Nf6** Black resigns

And to conclude – this gigantic tussle from the Marymass Chess Congress – circa late 90s. Steve Mannion is an IM with immense fighting spirit and tactical awareness.

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Paul Bielby – Steve Mannion

1. e4 e5 2. f4 exf4 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. Nc3 d5 5. e5?? Much better 5. exd5 5... Nh5 6. d4 c6 7. Ne2 g5 8. g3 g4 9. Nh4 f3 10. Nf4 Nxf4 11. Bxf4 Be7 12. Qd2 Bxh4 13. gxh4 Qxh4 Surely White is lost here - two pawns down and that mighty passed pawn on f3. But Black's pawns get in each other's way, his Q-side is undeveloped and White has wriggle room. 14. Bg3 Qh5 15. O-O-O Be6 16. Bd3 Nd7 17. Rdf1 O-O-O 18. b3 Rdf8 19. Kb2 Kb8 20. a4 Ka8 21. a5 Bf5 22. a6 If in doubt, move a pawn. Black is still ahead, but White is doing the attacking. 22... b6 23. Qc3 Rc8 24. h3 Be6 25. hxg4 Qxg4 26. Bf2 Qg5 27. Bxh7 f5 28. exf6 Qxf6 29. Qe3 Rce8 30. Rh6. The tables are turned. White switches his attack to the K-side.....



30... Qf7 31. Bg6 Qf6 32. Bh4 Qf8 33. Bg5 Bf7 34. Qc3and back to

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the Q-side putting Black's N out of play. 34... Nb8 35. Rxh8 The game is effectively over. White wins material and the rest is mopping up. 35... Qxh8 36. Bxf7 Rf8 37. Qxf3 Qxd4 38. Kb1 Qg7 39. Be7 Rh8 40. Bf6 Qxf7 41. Bxh8 Qxf3 42. Rxf3 Nxa6 43. Rf7 Nb4 44. Bc3 Na6 45. Be5 Nb4 46. Bd6 c5 47. c3 Nc6 48. Kc2 d4 49. Rc7 Na5 50. b4 Nc4 51. bxc5 52. Bxc5 Kb8 53. Rxa7 dxc3 54. Kxc3 Nd6 55. Rh7 Black resigns 1:0

MEMORABLE GAMES

Of British Chess. A print on demand book by Neil Hickman – an enthusiastic amateur. And this has to do with what? Well, skip to game 81 and you will find Wall – Ippolito, from 1998, sandwiched between GMs Gallagher and Adams. And a Kings Gambit to boot! It's some game.

Tim Wall – Dean Ippolito

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.Nc3 Qh4+ 4.Ke2 d6 5.Nf3 Bg4 6.d4 g5 7.Nd5 Kd8 8.Kd3 c6 Here Qh5 is recommended but c6 looks ok and White looks stretched **9.Qd2** White Q unpinned. Black Q en prise. **9...Bxf3 10.Qa5+ b6 10...Kd7 11.Qc7+ Ke6 12.Qc8+ Nd7 13.Nc7+ then Qxa8** with an edge (!) for White **11.Nxb6 Bxe4+ 12.Kxe4 axb6 13.Qxa8 Qe1+ d5+** was necessary here. But that might have spoiled the show **14.Kd3 Kc8**



15.Bxf4 Qxa1 The Q needs to retreat to h4 now, but the 1998 TPW model will get him anyway **16.Be2 Qxh1** Mate is now forced **17.Bg4+ f5** **18.Bxf5+ Kc7** **19.Qa7+ Kd8** **20.Qxb8+ Ke7** **21.Qxd6+ Kf7** **22.Qe6+ Kg7** **23.Be5+**

A great game deserving its place in an entertaining and very readable book.

And now a contribution from regular favourite Ken Neat, who starred in this Summer's online event.

MALTA MEMORIES

Nearly 40 years ago, in November 1980, the World Chess Olympiad was held in Valletta, the capital of Malta. Gerry Walsh, the at times controversial chess organiser from Cleveland, was given the task of coordinating the event, and he appealed in this country for volunteers, who were promised free accommodation and meals, plus

reimbursement for flights to and from the UK. As it happened, the latter didn't materialise, however.... I went out with my good friend Jim Steedman, along with, among others, Peter Cartman, who was employed for his experience as an arbiter.



Peter Cartman at the rocky coast, north of Valletta.

I found myself doing two jobs. One was helping in the bulletin office, which was run by Bob Wade. It should be remembered that in those days there were no computers, sensory boards or internet. About a dozen of us worked in pairs – Nigel Davies and I made quite a good team. Using the two score sheets from a game, one of us would make the moves on a chess board and call them out, and the other would type them up on an old-fashioned typewriter. The worst score sheets were invariably produced by the Czech top board Vlastimil Hort –

they were completely unreadable. We could only manage a few dozen games from the top matches, which were photocopied and appeared in the next day's bulletin. I wonder how many gems went unrecorded?

My other job was to help with the demonstration boards. The playing venue was a long narrow gallery, with the boards along one side and a few seats for spectators on the other. Some distance away there was an area with a few demo boards where the top matches were displayed. I worked with Jim Steedman. He would watch the top couple of matches, record the moves, and from time to time pass these to me, and I would make them on the demo boards. For the USSR v. USA match Jim arrived in good time and took up a seat opposite the top boards. Shortly afterwards the Soviet delegation arrived (about half a dozen of them, led by Viktor Baturinsky), and sat down alongside Jim. Then Pal Benko (the USA captain) arrived, and he went along the line shaking hands with all the Soviet delegation – as well as Jim! But on the top board Anatoly Karpov refused to shake hands with Lev Alburt, who had defected from the USSR the previous year, and he defeated him very convincingly (I've (MR) added some cheeky notes in blue here).

Anatoly Karpov – Lev Alburt 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6 4.Nf3

Bg4 5.Be2 Nc6 6.c4 Nb6 7.exd6 exd6 8.d5 Bxf3 9.Bxf3 Ne5 10.Be2 Qh4 **Ambitious.** Be7 is sounder 11.0–0 h5 **And again.** Meanwhile Karpov continues with solid, safe developing moves 12.Nd2 g6 13.f4 Ng4 14.Nf3 Qf6 15.Re1 0–0–0 16.a4 a5 17.Qd2 Bg7 18.h3 Rde8 19.Bf1 Nh6 20.Qxa5 Nf5 21.Rd1 Kb8 **Against Karpov the game is gone anyway.** But now most of us could work out a winning plan, Q to b file, push a Pawn and checkmate won't be far away 22.Ra3 Re4 23.Qb5 Nc8 24.Rb3 b6 25.a5 Qe7 26.Qa6 Re8



27.c5 dxc5 28.Bb5 c6 29.Bxc6 dxc6 **is quicker** 29...Bd4+ 30.Nxd4 Nxd4 31.axb6 Nf3+ 32.Rxf3 Re1+ 33.Rxe1 1–0 **Nice game by Karpov but it's almost as if Alburt expected to lose I thought.**

As it happened, I had to meet up with Karpov to discuss some issues in a book I was translating. A few days later, when I was waiting for a bus to

take me back to where I was staying, a car drove past and screeched to a halt. To the surprise of the others waiting at the bus stop, Karpov poked his head out and asked if I would like a lift. As the World Champion he evidently had his own chauffeur-driven car. Making his Olympiad debut for the USSR team on bottom board (second reserve) was Garry Kasparov, and he devotes more than a dozen pages to the event in Part I of *Garry Kasparov on Garry Kasparov*, including his version of an unfortunate incident with the Bulgarian player Krum Georgiev.

Two of the USSR team, Mikhail Tal and Lev Polugaevsky, were in poor form, and were not selected for the last few matches. As a result, they were run very close by the Hungarians, whose top board, Lajos Portisch, carried with him a small piece of carpet, which he would place under his chair, perhaps to stop it slipping.

In the end the two teams finished equal first on match points, but the USSR won on the better Buckholz score. At the closing ceremony the Hungarians were given a thunderous ovation, far louder than that for the USSR.

Next Col - The Grand Harbour, Valletta. Thanks again Ken for sharing, though forgive some of us for being a bit envious!



And now Alex McFarlane gives us an insight into the role of the arbiter in online chess.

INTERNET CHESS AND THE ARBITER

With no over the board tournaments taking place in Britain (and many other countries) chess has moved to the Internet.

With the platforms (eg Chess.com, Lichess, etc) doing the organising there has been reduced need for arbiter intervention.

Although always a part of the arbiter's duties, anti-cheating measures had become a significant part of the job with the advent of smart phones and chess engines. A favoured tool in the arbiter's armoury was the software developed by Professor Ken Regan (who is mentioned elsewhere – see Mick doesn't just throw this together!)

which indicated the level of correlation with computer moves.

The Regan software produced three levels of result: no cheating; watch this player closely; and catch this cheat. The task for the arbiter was to produce concrete evidence that the player was cheating. With the proliferation of online events and it being impossible to use physical evidence to 'convict' a cheat concerns grew about the accuracy of accusations.

The platforms have developed their own detection methods but these have remained a closely guarded secret. This led to concerns that there were a number of players being falsely accused of cheating. Whilst it is certain that there have been a number of false positives that number seems to be less than originally feared. Although platforms continue to ban players (and allow them to reregister), the better tournaments are also applying their own methods. Although a tournament can do little if a player is banned by the platform, it is now much less common for organisers/arbiters to act solely on platform bans. Only when that is also supported by evidence from the Regan testing do events apply penalties other than the platform banning of the individual.

This dual method of testing, though far from perfect, has seen a reduction in those failing the

security measures. There is another reason why the numbers caught cheating seems to have fallen. In the early days of the pandemic, few thought that online chess was going to be a significant item in the months ahead. It was therefore not regarded as being too serious an activity by some players. It was really just a diversion for a few months until the real thing started again. Since then times have changed substantially and online chess will be with us for some time to come. It is even possible that some events such as the 4NCL online league will continue even after 'normal' chess returns. Online chess is now regarded as a much more serious activity and players are treating it in that way. The inclination to cheat has therefore diminished in those who regarded it as part of the online norm, where some games even allow participants to buy 'cheats' that give them an advantage.

One of the problems with the online platforms used is that they were not designed to stage tournaments. They are very good at allowing you to log on and challenge another player. However, the format was not good for structured tournaments. A new platform, Tornelo, has been established specifically to cater for the tournament player. It allows a greater arbiter involvement. It is still being developed but I was fortunate, along with Matt Carr the ECF rating officer, to have a

personal two hour Zoom meeting with the developer of Tornelo, David Cordover. During that time we were shown some of the advantages this system has over the longer founded platforms. As well as insisting that players must use their real names there is much more arbiter involvement. For example the arbiter can pause the clock and alter its settings. The arbiter can also determine automatic draw settings. What is meant by this is that currently the platform will stop a game even though a mate is theoretically possible in contravention of the Laws of Chess. Tornelo does not do that. It also allows the arbiter to determine if a draw by repetition has to be claimed after 3 times or 5 times. The platform's pairing system is still being tweaked but FIDE approval is to be sought shortly. When achieved this will simplify the organisation of an event for both arbiter and player.

Online chess means a different role for the arbiter, it has not replaced the arbiter completely.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES P5-6

(1) Andrew Robinson – Stuart Skelsey **34.Rxc6!** Black resigned. If 34...Rxc6 35.Ne7+ Kf7 36.Nxc6

(2) Kevin Cox – Stan Johnson
40.Nxc4! Rxa1 41.Rxa1 dxc4

42.Bxb7 Black's pawns on c4 and b3 are doomed, and white won easily.

(3) Andrew Robinson – John Clarke
34.Qf8+! (White actually played 34.Kg1) **34...Rxf8 35.Rxf8+ Kh7 36.Bg8+ Kg6 37.Bf7+ Kh7 38.Bxh5** winning for white.

(4) Weiming Xu – Bill Noble
15...Bxf2+ 16.Kh1 (If 16.Rxf2?? Rd1+ 17.Ne1 Rxe1#) **16...Be3** Black's two bishops and lead in development give him a big advantage, although the game was later drawn.

(5) Tim Wall – James Moreby
17...Bxc3+ 18.Kf1 (if 18.bxc3 Qxc3+ 19.Ke2 Qb2+ wins) **18...Bxb2 19.Rb1 a6** white resigned. After the bishop moves, Bc3 nets the a-pawn with a simple win.

(6) Bill Noble – Asa Bayram
22...Nxf3! 23.Bxf3 Ne4 24.Rh3 (If 24.Bxe4 then 24...Rf2+ 25.Kg1 (25.Kh3 Qh5#) 25...Qxg3+) **24...Rxf3 25.Qe5 Ng5 26.Rh2 Rf2+** white resigned.

(7) Max Turner – Chris Izod
20...Qh1+ 31.Ke2 Rxf2+! (Black actually played 31...Rxc3 and the game was later drawn.) **32.Kxf2 Rf8+ 33.Ke2 Qf1#**

(8) Eddie Czestochowski – Ian Rook
27.Bb7! (In the game, white missed this and played 27.Qc1) **27...Qd7** (27...Qxb7 28.Qxd8+; 27...Rxd2 28.Bxc8 wins the exchange since both d2 and e6 are attacked.)
28.Qxd7 Rxd7 (28...Bxd7 29.Rd1 followed by Bc7) **29.Bc8** winning.

9) Steve Burnell – Andrew Robinson
56...Kh4! Quickest, although 56...Kg6 also keeps the win in hand. In the game, black played 56...f5? after which the position is drawn. The game concluded 57.Kg3 Kg6 58.Kf2 f4 59.Kg2 Kf6 60.Kf1 Ke5 61.Ke2 Kf5 62.Kf2 g4 63.fxg4+ Kxg4 64.Kg2 f3+ 65.Kf2 Kf4 66.Kf1 Ke3 67.Ke1 draw **57.Kg2 g4!** This is the key winning idea - black forces a position in which his king is on one of the so-called "key squares" for his pawn.) **58.Kf2 Kh3 59.fxg4 Kxg4** with a won position, for example... **60.Kg2 Kf4 61.Kf2 f5 62.Kg2 Ke3 63.Kf1** if 63.Kg1 Ke2 **63...f4 64.Ke1 f3 65.Kf1 f2** etc.

And from Harris – Mackay P25 we have **32...Qxc5**, winning a piece and game The Q is immune, 33.Rxc5 Rd1#

AND FINALLY

The Tim Wall King's Gambit game featured on P30 can be viewed on Daniel King's Power Play show. Highly recommended viewing.....

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1ptMYyGI-s&feature=youtu.be>

You are probably aware Tim wasn't successful in his bid to become Home Director for the ECF recently. Their loss our gain as he has bounced straight back with the launch of a new North East online chess league. The inaugural event will complete before Christmas with Durham City A currently leading Division 1, Durham City B leading Division 2 and Tynedale and Forest Hall D leading Divisions 3A and B respectively. All with two rounds to go, full report in January's edition.

If you like your irony then the winning point in ECF North v South match was scored by Nick 'London', playing on Board 52.

Those of you with Netflix might want to take a look at 'Queens Gambit' a seven-part series of a girl chess prodigy set in the mid-1960s USA.

So, time to go. Sorry this edition has taken so long, I'm in catch up mode now 😊 Stay safe and hope to see you soon – Mick

