

English Chess Federation

May 2021



Games, sets and matches ...

OTB chess returns!

INSIDE

New this month - Game of the Month by Michael Adams, Endgames by Keith Arkell, Study Corner by Ian Watson

The Interview - Academy player Kenneth Hobson

ECF Writing Initiative - Peter Burgoyne

A comprehensive roundup of online and OTB chess ... and more



Welcome to the May edition of the newsletter. We are continuing with our new hybrid format with the email edition providing a quicker read format and links, and the new long-form magazine-style PDF available on the ECF website at www.englishchess.org.uk

In this edition we feature the promising junior Kenneth Hobson, Tim Wall's op-ed, the problem corner from Christopher Jones along with the usual news, views and upcoming events, and we are now delighted to announce some exciting additions to our roster of contributors with four iconic figures of English chess – GMs Michael Adams, Peter Wells (starting next month) and Keith Arkell - who, along with Ian Watson will provide columns and features. To keep you in the loop we will be launching a monthly Forthcoming Events item with a link to the ECF calendar.

This month's newsletter also includes a superb first submission to the ECF Writing Initiative from Peter Burgoyne of Hackney Chess Club. Please do send in submissions on any aspects of chess direct to me at rivlinmark@gmail.com. Finally, at last, we can show that over-the-board is enticingly close as we feature Sheffield CC's return to the pub (outside, of course) with pints and a live opponent opposite you.

Of course we need to be vigilant and we have the latest Covid-19 guidelines, along with news on the Blitz Marathon to raise funds for the Red Cross, the Festival of Chess and the English Online Blitz tournament.

--- Mark Rivlin



Contents

The Interview – Mark Rivlin interviews ECF Academy player Kenneth Hobson	3
Game of the Month - GM Michael Adams looks at Luke McShane v Gata Kamsky	9
Writing on the Wall - Online chess is too close to home for our op-ed writer Tim Wall	14
ECF Writing Initiative - Part 1 of 'My Life in Chess' by Peter Burgoyne	16
Director of Home Chess Nigel Towers' monthly column	17
Arkell's Endgames – this month, Zugzwang!	22
Key Workers - ECF Manager of Chess in Prisons Carl Portman in the FIDE newsletter	25
Study Corner - Ian Watson on how to solve studies	26
ECF Awards – how to apply for this year's awards from Stephen Greep	29
Finance Council Meeting – from Michael Farthing	33
Problem Corner – from Christopher Jones	35
Games, sets and matches – OTB chess returns to Sheffield	36
Tweet of the Month	37
Syd Kalinsky obituary	37
Chessable ad	39
Study Corner solutions	39

The Interview

Mark Rivlin interviews ECF Academy player Kenneth Hobson

Kenneth, please tell us about your chess journey, how and why you started to play and your rise to prominence with a grade of 1840 at the age of 11.

I learned the rules when I was four or five but only ever played my dad at home. When I was eight, I broke my leg playing football. My team played on Saturday mornings, so I needed to find other things to do for a few months while I was in plaster and on crutches. My mum noticed something in the local paper about a junior chess tournament a few miles away. I'd started to take a bit more interest and played in a cubs' tournament, so I decided to enter. We didn't have a chess club at school and I'd no idea how I would do. I won four games out of six, which was enough to be invited to the county junior squad and from then I was hooked. I started on the lower boards in Oxfordshire's under-nines – there were 20 players in the team – then entered a few more tournaments in the area and began playing against adults. Two years ago, I went to the World Schools event in Turkey and really enjoyed the whole experience. That gave me another push forward and my grade has gone up, gradually.

You were runner up in last year's Under 12 UK Chess Challenge, you are one of the highest rated players in the Academy, and you beat FM Alex Longson in a simul. How well do you react to the pressures of being a successful junior?

I don't go into a game thinking I'm successful because whomever I'm playing against, I'm only one bad move from blundering and losing. You have to concentrate all through every game whether you're expected to win or not. There are tricky periods in every game, I just keep focusing and trying to improve. I don't talk about chess at school or tell my friends or teachers what I've done, so there's no pressure there. I started at secondary school last September and they don't have a chess club either. I think people would be surprised if they knew how much I played.

***The Queens' Gambit* has helped make chess cool during lockdown. Do you see it that way?**

Yes. A lot of my friends who don't play chess have watched it and said it's really good. We don't have Netflix, so I haven't actually seen it, but I saw Beth Harmon on the front of *CHESS* magazine a few months ago and she looks cool. I like Jovanka [Houska] and Kaja [Snare] on the Chess24.com commentaries too. It would be great to have more girls playing. I think Beth Harmon would be a bit too good for me at the moment. Hopefully, people who've taken up chess during lockdown will keep on playing over the board. It will be interesting to see whether we get more boys and girls at juniors' night at my club, Cowley.

Tell us about the coaches and mentors who have had an influence on your progress?

Elliott Kendall was the first. He was manager of the Oxfordshire under-nines when I started. It was funny at the tournaments, some of the other county teams you'd see with big demonstration boards at the front looking very serious. Elliott was great fun, he'd have us roaring like tigers to get our aggression up before games then just say something like 'Oh, by the way, look out for knight forks'. Andrew Varney, Joe Conlon and David Zakarian have all helped with Ojays (the Oxfordshire juniors club). David's son, Dimitrios, is a year older than me and he's my buddy/partner at ECF. He's a really good player and David is 220-plus, or has been. My coach is Zoe Varney, who puts in so much time and effort and I'm really grateful to her. Ola Murawski does a lot of organising in the county, her sons Jan and Pawel have both won tournaments. There are lots of people at Cowley Chess Club too. They play in the Oxfordshire League. Bob Waugh, David Keeling and David Robson have been my captains. Tim Wall was my coach in Turkey – it was great to be able to work with someone of his ability and experience. He saw my mistakes before I'd even made them.

At what point did you realise that you could become a very good player?

That first tournament I mentioned, I was upset to lose two games, but I realised the two players who beat me (Ivan Chetverikov and Jamie Sarisky) were among the top young players in the county, so it wasn't too bad. My first adult tournament was one of Adam Raoof's events at Hampstead and I beat a couple of adults in the under-135 section. They took a bit of interest in me, which I hadn't expected. Then my first grade came out at 122 and I realised I was better than I thought. I didn't know how it was calculated and I thought I'd be about 70. I think it surprised other people as well because, as I said, there was no chess at our school, and I wasn't at a club at the time, so it was like coming from nowhere.

How has your family helped you develop?

Anna, my mum and Richard, my dad take me to wherever I'm playing and keep an eye out for the events. They like going away for weekends so they started to fit them around chess tournaments. I've played in places like Gloucester, Ipswich and Bury St Edmonds so come up against different players, which is really nice, and we go out together in the evenings. Mum and dad set up a chess club at my junior school because they wanted to give other boys and girls a chance. A couple of them have now played in county teams. My dad said he'd play tournaments for a year because he was getting a bit bored waiting for me while my games were on. His first grading was 78 then it went down to 75. He got more annoyed than I did, but it was fun to watch him and try to help. We did once play in the same team for Cowley so that was nice even though we both lost. My mum didn't even know the rules before I started in tournaments – I'm trying to get her to enter some beginners' events.

Outside of chess, what are your other interests?

Football, cricket, Formula 1 and Minecraft, of course. At junior tournaments, I enjoy playing football with some of the participants between rounds.

As a player who is making great progress, what advice can you give to aspiring junior players to get better?

Ignore the gradings. When I was younger, I was a bit intimidated by players ranked higher and I think I might have taken draws against lower players for a while because I thought it would be embarrassing to lose. Get a few solid openings, but don't spend too much time learning loads and loads off by heart because you can get through to the middle game where it's more important to know tactics and positional strategy. Early on, a local player Gareth Stevens suggested learning tactics and endgames, and I think that's good advice. Andrew Varney at Ojays keeps saying that if you want to know openings, learn openings, if you want to know chess, learn endgames.

Do you think that if you were a successful junior player 50 years ago that you could have made the same progress you have made as a young player growing up with engines and positions at the touch of a button?

I suppose nobody would have had them, so we'd all be in the same situation. I do use engines - they give such easy access to so many ideas so quickly. I try to work out where I've played well and badly after a game before switching on the engine. Without computers, what would we have done for chess during lockdown?

What kind of temperament do you need to be a good chess player?

You need to be resilient. I only know what that word means because of chess! It's hard to lose especially after making a blunder or in an important game. A couple of weeks ago I lost my Queen in the semi-final of the Junior 4NCL and we went out on a tie-breaker. My mum and dad keep saying it's only a game, a hobby, and they're right. But I also think it's good to be annoyed about a mistake because that means you care about getting better. I know I'm competitive. I get annoyed when our football team loses as well. The number of times I've said I'm going to give up chess after losing, but it doesn't last. Former England cricket captain Nasser Hussain said that in sport you shouldn't get too high when you win or too low when you lose. The other thing in chess is concentration.

What are your chess aims for the future?

To be titled. That's a long way off but it's something to aim for. And I want to win a major junior tournament. I've been second in the British, the Delancey and the London, to three different players. There are loads of good boys and girls out there my age.

Which chess players past and present do you most admire, and why?

Andrew Tang, who is brilliant at bullet games is great fun to watch. Another one is Hikaru Nakamura. He seems to have so much natural talent. I try to watch his streaming. I like the emotion he shows over the board. And you have to say Magnus Carlsen. It's amazing when he's commentating with other GMs and he sees things even they are missing.

Who is the highest graded player you have been up against in a long-play OTB, and what happened?

It's a long time since OTB and I'm not sure I remember. We had an OTB junior tournament in Oxford recently and the first couple of games felt quite strange. I think the highest graded player I beat was 175. I played a GM for the first time in an online tournament recently, Keith Arkell. He beat me in the endgame. The funny thing was, my dad had bought Keith's book on endgames at Christmas.

How important has the Academy been for your development?

I was really pleased to be invited in the first place. That gave me a lot of encouragement from the off. Alex [Longson] and Sarah [Hegarty] are both very friendly. They have some good coaches, so you listen straight away to someone like GMs David Howell or Gawain Jones. There are small things I've remembered in endgames or opening up lines with pawn sacrifices that have helped in games. The simuls are good fun. What I like best is being with some of the other juniors. I've made friends through chess. It's amazing to think I might be playing against some of the same players in 50 years' time.

Please share your favourite game with annotation.

Dillan Duke v Kenneth Hobson

Winter Cup Finals - 28 Feb 2021 Lichess.org, 28.02.2021

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 [The Vienna game]
2...Nc6 3.g3 d6 4.Bg2 f5!? [



I like this move as it immediately undermines white's centre. It also gains kingside space.]

5.d3 Nf6 6.Nge2 fxe4 7.Nxe4 Bg4 8.Be3 Be7 9.0-0 d5!? [



pushing his pieces back and gaining a big centre.]

**10.Nxf6+ Bxf6 11.h3 Be6 12.Kh2 Qd7 13.a3 h5 [going for an attack.]
14.Rb1 h4 15.g4 d4 16.Bd2 Bd5 17.Rg1 Rf8 18.Be1**



[18.c4 dxc3 19.Nxc3 Bxg2 20.Rxg2 0-0-0±;
18.Bxd5 Qxd5 19.g5 Be7 20.f4 0-0-0±]
[I retain a solid advantage in both lines.]

18...Bg5 19.b4 Qd6 20.Kh1



20...Rf3! [An exchange sacrifice to deliver the final blow. Threatens Rh3 mate.]
21.Bxf3 [21.Ng3! Qf6 22.Ne4 Bxe4 23.dxe4 Rxa3± This is the best defence, but black is better thanks to his better pawn structure and safe king (after he castles.)]

21...Bxf3+ 22.Rg2



[22.Kh2 e4+ 23.Ng3 hxg3+ 24.fxg3 Bxd1]

22...Qd5 23.Kg1 Bxg2 24.c4 Qf3 25.Nxd4



25...Nxd4 [25...Qxh3 26.f3 Qh1+ 27.Kf2 Qf1# mates quicker, but I was fine with taking my time.]

26.Qxf3 Bxf3 27.Rb2 0-0-0 28.b5 Ne6 29.a4 Rxd3 30.a5 Nf4 31.Kh2 Rd1



0-1

Game of the Month



England Number 1 GM Michael Adams looks at the Luke McShane v Gata Kamsky match from the European Club Cup Online 2021

When you delve deeper into online games, even those involving very strong players, with the common 15 minutes + 5 seconds increment time limit, it is often the case that as the clocks run low serious mistakes occur. This one is an exception as the players successfully negotiate the strategic complexities for a long time, Luke keeps on probing artfully throughout, whilst Gata defends stoically. However the mounting pressure, and the psychological difficulties of being on the back foot mean that he finally misjudges the moment to break out and generate counterplay. This slip deep into the endgame allows Luke to liquidate to an instructive winning king and pawn endgame.

Luke McShane - Gata Kamsky European Club Cup Online 2021

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nf6 4.d3 Luke is an expert on the Black side of the Berlin himself, and chooses to sidestep the forcing lines here, aiming for a slow build up.

4...d6 4...Bc5 is a more popular choice, but Kamsky prefers a less theoretical variation.

5.0-0 Bd7 6.c3 g6 Due to White's quiet opening Black can deploy the dark squared bishop more actively than on e7.

7.Re1 Bg7 8.Nbd2 0-0 9.Nf1 Nh5



Gata decides to begin preparing f5, but this desirable advance often falls foul of tactical issues in such positions, sensible improving options such as 9...h6, or 9...Re8 were alternatives.

10.Bg5 Qe8 If 10...f6 11.Be3 is best (11.Bh4 Kh8 12.Ne3 a6 13.Ba4 Qe8 14.Nd5 Rc8 looks alright for Black) 11...f5 12.exf5 gxf5 13.d4 leaves Black's position rather loose. If 13...e4? 14.Bc4+ Kh8 15.Ng5 is an immediate problem 15...Qe8 16.Bf7! Rxf7 17.Qxh5 wins.

11.Ng3 Nxg3 11...Nf4!? 12.Bxf4 exf4 13.Ne2 Bh6 leads to a rather strange position which is not very clear.

12.hxg3 White's kingside structure has lost some flexibility, but the doubled g-pawns are a handy barrier making the White king very secure.

12...h6 The typical tactical idea **12...Nd4!? swaps some pieces 13.Bc4 (13.cxd4 Bxb5) 13...Nxf3+ 14.gxf3** gives White a pleasant position; two captures towards the centre have resulted in good control there, and the half open h-file could well come in handy.

13.Be3



13...a6 Kamsky switches plans, **13...Kh7** intending to follow with **f5** was more consistent, perhaps he didn't like exposing his own king, but after this decision Luke is pressing a bit with little counterplay.

14.Ba4 b5 15.Bb3 There was also a good case for retreating the bishop a bit further: **15.Bc2!** intending **d4** next.

15...Na5 16.Bc2 c5 White's bishop on **e3** is more useful than the one on **g7**, and the Black knight is lacking active options on the queenside. White also has more pawn breaks available.

17.a4! Probing Black's queenside before the Black knight can regroup to **c6**.

17...Qe7 Black would like to play **17...b4** but **18.cxb4 cxb4 19.Qd2!** leaves pawns hanging on both flanks. Gata chooses to improve the position of his queen, **17...Be6** doing the same for his bishop was a worthy alternative.

18.Qd2 Kh7 19.Ra3 Luke prepares to double up before opening the a-line. There was another way to take the initiative on the queenside: **19.b4 cxb4 20.cxb4 Nc6 21.Bb3!** - the point of the advance, White's bishop finds a more productive diagonal. **21...Be6 22.Bxe6 Qxe6 23.Rec1** keeps some pressure.

19...Nc6 20.axb5 axb5 21.Rea1 Rxa3 22.Rxa3 Rb8 White's control of the open file isn't too serious yet due to the lack of entry squares, but it is something to work with. **22...Be6!** was a decent option here as **23.Ra6** can be met by **23...Qb7**.

23.Ra6 Qe8

Preparing to expel the rook 23...Nd8!? was also possible.



24.Bb3! Improving White's bishop.

24...Qc8 24...Ra8? 25.Bxf7 shows that it is never very comfortable to have the White bishop eyeing f7, and Gata hurries to swap it.

25.Ra1 Be6 26.Bxe6 Qxe6 27.Qd1! Bringing another piece towards the open file.

27...Bf8 Kamsky continues to defend patiently, and secures the pawn on c5 with the idea to play d5 at some stage, the more 'active' 27...c4 28.dxc4 bxc4 29.Ra6 Qc8 30.Qa4 rebounds.

28.Ra6 Qc8 Now 28...d5 doesn't work due to 29.Nxe5 Qxe5 30.Rxc6.

29.Qa1 Qc7 It's not easy to relieve the pressure 29...b4 30.Qa4 Nd8 31.cxb4 Rxb4 32.Qe8! Qxa6 33.Qxf8 Ne6 34.Qxf7+ Ng7 35.Bxh6 Kxh6 36.Qf8 Kh7 37.Ng5+ Kh6 38.Qh8+ Kxg5 39.Qh4 mate is a pretty indicative line showing the dangers lurking in the position.

30.g4 Luke gains space on the kingside, there were a couple of other good ideas; 30.Nh2 begins transferring the knight towards the enticing d5 square. This seems a bit slow, but the line 30...b4 31.Bd2 Rb6 32.Ng4 Bg7 33.Ne3 shows that it is a viable concept. 30.Qa2!? is another good move, this diagonal is more commonly occupied by White's bishop, but the queen is also well placed here preventing 30...Rb6? due to 31.Rxb6 Qxb6 32.Qxf7+.

30...Nd8 Rerouting the knight is logical, but loses control of the a7 square. 30...Kg8 securing the pawn on f7 was another idea.

31.g3 Ne6 31...Qc8! 32.g5 h5 fixing the kingside structure limits White's options.

32.Kg2 Rb6 33.Ra2 33.Ra5!? was another good move. If the rook stays high up the board Black continues to offer an exchange: 33.Ra7 Rb7, or 33.Ra8 Rb8.

33...Rb8



34.Qh1 Showing impressive vision Luke switches the attack to the other side of the board 34.b4!? cxb4 35.cxb4 giving the bishop on e3 more scope was another idea.

34...Qb7 35.Qh4! 35.Bxh6 Bxh6 36.g5 Nxg5 37.Nxg5+ Kg7 doesn't lead anywhere, this prepares the reinforcement Ra1–h1, which needs to be prevented.

35...Ra8 Not 35...c4? 36.Ra7.

36.Rxa8 Qxa8 37.Bxh6! Bxh6 38.g5 Qf8 Now 38...Nxg5? loses: 39.Nxg5+ Kg7 40.Nxf7. 38...c4 looks very dangerous after 39.gxh6 cxd3 40.Qe7, but now the unexpected 40...Kxh6! (40...Qxe4 41.Qxf7+ Kxh6 42.Qxe6 d2 43.Qxd6 wins) 41.Qxf7 Ng5! hangs on.

39.gxh6 Although material is reduced the complexities of positions with queens and knights on the board mean that matters remain tense.

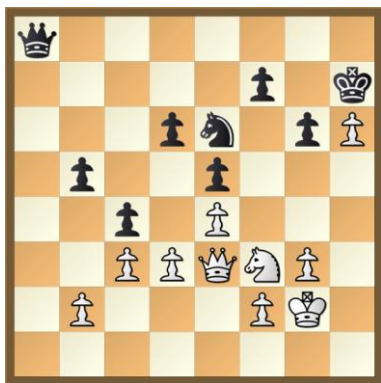
39...Qd8 39...Qxh6 40.Qe7 Qf8 41.Qd7 b4 42.Nd2! heading to c4 leaves Black in deep trouble.

40.Qh1 White must keep queens on to hang onto the extra pawn, 40.Qxd8 Nxd8 leads nowhere.

40...Qa8 Kamsky takes control of the a-file and lines his queen up on the long diagonal towards the White monarch, thinking that the pawn on h6 provides cover for the Black knight, and seems likely to drop off sooner or later. However, later on he might have regretted not playing the more direct 40...Qf8, 41.Qa1 Kxh6 42.Qa6 (42.Qa7 Qe8) 42...Qb8 is passive but holding.

41.Qc1 c4 The unexpected 41...f5! 42.Ng5+ (42.exf5 gxf5 leaves the White knight pinned, or 42.Qe3 f4 is annoying) 42...Nxg5 43.Qxg5 fxe4 equalises.

42.Qe3! A very strong move, keeping all White options open.



42...cxd3 Black faces a tricky choice 42...Qb7 43.dxc4 bxc4 44.Nd2! f5! (44...Qxb2 45.Nxc4 Qb8 46.Qd2) 45.Nxc4 f4 was the best hope. 42...Qc6 is met by the thematic advance 43.d4! a move that has lost nothing in strength by the amount of time taken to play it. 42...Qa2? 43.Qb6 shows the vulnerability of the Black king 43...Qxb2 (43...cxd3 44.Qxd6 Qxb2 45.Qe7) 44.Qb7.

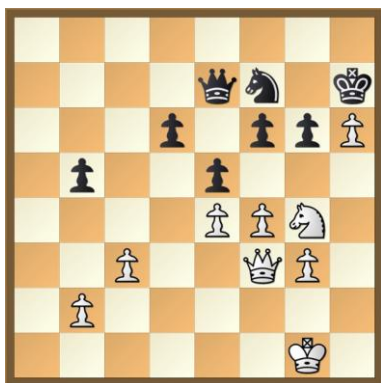
43.Qxd3 Qc6 44.Qe3 The unexpected 44.Qd5! is strong 44...Qxd5 (44...Qb6 45.Qa8) 45.exd5 Nd8 the knight is forced onto a bad circuit due to 45...Nc7 46.Ng5+. Then 46.Nd2 Kxh6 47.Nb1 and White will pick off the pawn on b5.

44...Qb7 45.Kg1 f6 Covering the g5 square to free the black knight.

46.Nh2! A better direction than 46.Nd2 b4 47.c4 Nc5.

46...Ng5 47.Ng4 Qe7 48.f4 Nf7 49.Qf3

49.f5! Ng5 leaves White with an edge although there is still plenty to play for.



49...Nxb6? Gata misses his chance, and makes a fatal slip falling in with White's plans, 49...f5! forces White's knight backwards and gets Black right back into the game. 50.exf5 gxf5 51.Qd3 e4 52.Qd4 Nxb6 is alright.

50.Qh1 The pinned knight gives Luke the option to liquidate all the pieces at the moment of his choosing, heading towards a winning king and pawn endgame.

50...Qg7 51.Qh4! g5 51...f5!? was a bit trickier but 52.Nf6+ Kh8 53.g4 fxg4 (53...exf4 54.g5) 54.Nxg4 Kh7 55.fxe5 dxe5 56.Kg2 g5 57.Qxh6+ Qxh6 58.Nxb6 Kxh6 59.Kg3 leaves Black with a familiar problem - a remote passed pawn on the queenside will

distract the Black king decisively: 59...Kh5 60.b3 g4 61.c4 bxc4 62.bxc4 Kg5 63.c5 Kf6 64.Kxg4.

52.fxg5 fxg5 53.Qh5 53.Qxh6+ comes to the same.

53...Qg6 54.Qxh6+ Qxh6 55.Nxh6 Kxh6 56.Kf2 Kg6 56...Kh5 57.Kf3 g4+ closes the kingside, but doesn't help 58.Ke3 Kg6 59.Kd3 Kf6 60.c4 bxc4+ 61.Kxc4 Ke6 62.b4 Kd7 63.Kd5 Kc7 64.b5

57.Kf3 Kh5 58.b4! White will eventually create a passed pawn with c4 to decide the game.

58...Kg6 58...g4+ 59.Ke3 Kg6 60.Kd3 prepares c4.

59.c4 It's still possible to go wrong: 59.Kg4? Kf6 and White is already lost! 60.Kh5 (60.Kf3 Ke7! A neat triangulation 61.Kg4 (61.Ke3 Ke6) 61...d5! 62.exd5 (62.Kf5 d4) 62...e4 63.Kh3 Kd6) 60...d5 61.exd5 e4 62.Kg4 Ke5. The simple 59.Ke3 Kf6 (59...Kh5 60.c4) 60.Kd3 Ke6 61.c4 is also good enough.

59...Kf6 After 59...bxc4 60.b5 c3 61.Ke2 d5 62.b6 dxe4 63.b7 the Black pawns are too slow.

60.cxb5 Ke6 61.Kg4 61.Ke2 Kd7 62.Kd3 Kc7 63.Kc4 Kb6 64.Kd5 also works.

61...d5 62.exd5+ Kxd5 63.b6 Kc6 64.Kxg5

Black resigned, 64...Kxb6 65.Kf5 removes his last pawn and all hope.



Writing on the Wall

Online chess is too close to home for our op-ed writer Tim Wall ...

Grandad Banter Blitz

We've all heard the phrase, 'Dance like no one's watching'. Well, in the [North East Online League](#), my Dad engages in 'Grandad Banter Blitz' like no one's listening.

How do I know this? Because my Dad, John Wall (Snr), plays in the same room with me when we play for Forest Hall in the local online league. In the most recent game, I blundered my rook after what felt like an hour and a half of incessant Grandad Banter Blitz.

Some typical and all too real examples -

'Tim, how do I challenge again?'

'Where is my opponent? Where has he gone?'

'What colour do I have again?'

'Oh no, that's nonsense!' (after blundering a pawn with check.)

'Why did I do that?'

'I should resign.'

'Why am I Black now? I can't move my pieces' (he has switched away from the game window and become a spectator in his own game.)

'Oh, I have a passed pawn! Hahahaha! I'm winning!'

'Nooooo! Why did I do that?'

'This is hopeless! I should resign...'

'I keep trying to resign, but it won't let me!'

'What's this machine doing? Why won't it let me resign?'

'Where do I press? Tim, can you help me?'

Now my dear old dad is a very decent chess player, and his playing strength (currently just over 1600) has hardly changed since he started playing in the early 1950s. His fondest chess memory is of playing friendly games against the great Sir George Thomas at the British in Chester, 1952. This actually makes dad a member of the very exclusive Morphy No. 3 Club – people who played someone (Sir George) who played someone (American diplomat James Mortimer) who played Paul Morphy.

But – at the grand old age of 88 – it's fair to say dad also struggles a tad with technology. I usually have to help him log on to Lichess for a League game and also to click the right places for him to challenge an opponent, resign or offer a draw.

As we usually chat about each other's League games afterwards, it is perhaps natural that he would want to talk about his game.

But perhaps because he has been watching too many Agadmator or Simon Williams YouTube videos in lockdown, he now thinks it is socially acceptable to provide a running commentary on all his online games – in real time.

Dad, it is not!

Especially when I am trying to play my own game (and captain our teams, and run the League...)

Now I am all in favour of a friendly bit of banter – but there's a time and place. Not when I have 5 minutes on the clock in a League game that I take seriously.

So, I'm not quite sure what I can do for the next match. Perhaps if I can cunningly arrange a clash with *Antiques Roadshow*, *Touch of Frost*, a royal funeral or a snooker final, he may, ahem, sadly become unavailable to play.

And then, of course, I can blunder my rooks in peace (without any convenient excuses).

Tim Wall is a FIDE Trainer and freelance journalist. The views expressed here are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the ECF.



ECF Writing Initiative

Peter Burgoyne with Part 1 of his trilogy 'My Life in Chess'

My Life in Chess – Openings

Openings is the first part of a trilogy *My life in Chess* with *Middle Game* and *Endgame* to follow. I enjoy writing humorous pieces, which I regularly inflict on my Spanish teacher and fellow students. In order to write well it is important to read well. My favourite comic writer is Flann O'Brien, who wrote brilliant satirical articles in the *Irish Times*. My favourite piece of writing about a chess game is the *Gossage Vardebedian Papers* by Woody Allen (it's worth checking out this correspondence match). My favourite comment about a chess game was made by a local radio reporter in The Philippines who was asked how the match was going. With no knowledge of chess, and not wishing to disappoint the listeners, the reporter came up with, "Well, Mr Korchnoi is in the lead as he has played 32 moves and Mr Karpov has only played 31." If only things were this simple.

It is 1960 and I'm rolling the dice. I am nine years old and there is a lot of dice-rolling going on. We have moved on from Ludo to tackle Monopoly, Totopoly, Cluedo, Careers and Risk. Risk is about world domination and Careers, making as much money as possible. Our parents were putting in place the building blocks for our future. We also play draughts and there is a wooden box containing chess pieces, to which I am instantly attracted. I still feel the same attraction today. A wooden chess set is a thing of beauty. Somehow we learn the moves but unfortunately my brothers are reluctant to play. I have to content myself with Leonard Barden's daily puzzle in the *Evening Standard*. Soon I'm at secondary school and am the proud owner of a pocket chess set. While travelling to school by train, I've located a weak spot for black on f7 and am homing in on it with Queen and Bishop. Quite frankly the train opposition is extremely weak and if my Queen can't deliver a quick mate she usually enjoys herself by hoovering up unprotected pieces. Most of my pieces remain on their starting squares.

I join the school chess club and play some games – my strategy becomes more sophisticated and I'm of the belief that I play a pretty good game. At university I discover that this is not the case when I'm regularly trounced by a former Yorkshire junior champion. I enjoy the game but have no knowledge of the openings and little grasp of the basic principles. It is the year of Bobby Fischer against Boris Spassky and chess is making front- page news.

In 1974 I start teaching in a primary school in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It's pre-National Curriculum and the schools have football, cricket, netball and rounders with teachers spending a lot of their time on after-school activities. I start a chess club and am very pleased with how quickly and enthusiastically the children pick up the game. Michael, a happy-go-lucky soul impresses me by giving a team talk to his pieces. Short and to the point, it's delivered with a big smile, "Come on my men let's get a checkmate."

A local tournament is coming up and there is something I must teach the students before they have a go at it. I've left the en passant rule until last. For some reason Michael is fascinated by this move and is eager to do it in various positions and with Bishops as well as Pawns. I hear reports back from his games, "Sir, he's doing his en passants again." I decide he is more or less tournament ready and he joins our team to take part in a local competition. What could possibly go wrong?

After the first round there is no sign of him. He lost the game and has disappeared. We can't find him anywhere in the school. He's probably run home. I speak with his mum. He isn't there. "Mister Burgoyne", she says somewhat reproachfully, "you haven't lost Michael, have you?" There is no time to blame myself, or the chess God Cassia, I rush back to the tournament. In the playground there is a large concrete train engine and that's where I find him, brooding, 50 minutes after he lost his game.

Ah the pain of defeat. You don't introduce chess to children with the warning *this is probably going to hurt*. Forward a few years to a junior tournament. A future IM is in trouble. His position looks hopeless. He has gone under the table and the controller is trying to cajole him to come out. Exasperated he says, "Do I take this as a resignation?" Forward many more years to the Citadines Hotel and London League Secretary, Brian Smith, is giving his pre-match talk. "Folks it's very crowded in here tonight, so if you are going to resign please do not do so by going under the table." Losing is something that adults also can find to be shattering.

We learn to control our emotions (at least most of us do). A match in the Middlesex League and one of the players has been having a hard time winning excellent positions. She has messed up again, tears up her scoresheet and stomps out of the room. As she descends the stairs an anguished cry floats back, "I was winning!"



Director of Home Chess **Nigel Towers'** monthly column reports on ECF Online, including the Saturday Masters, the ECF Online Grand Prix and the British Online Championships, as well as the return to over-the-board chess, the British Championships and how the ECF is helping new to chess players ...

ECF Online

ECF online club memberships continue to increase on chess.com and lichess with the latest events schedule available here - <https://englishchessonline.org.uk/upcoming-club-events/>

We continue with 6 online rated club events per week and a series of Lichess internationals including the regular Mega Team Battle on Friday afternoon, the Saturday Masters, the Intercontinental on Sunday, and the mid-week Champions League and Russia Team Battles. Many of the international events are now streamed on the Youtube Game Changer and/ or ECF Twitch Channels at the links here - [Youtube Game Changer Chess](#) - and here - https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary - with some excellent commentary from GM Matthew Sadler, WIM Natasha Regan and guest presenters.



Saturday Masters

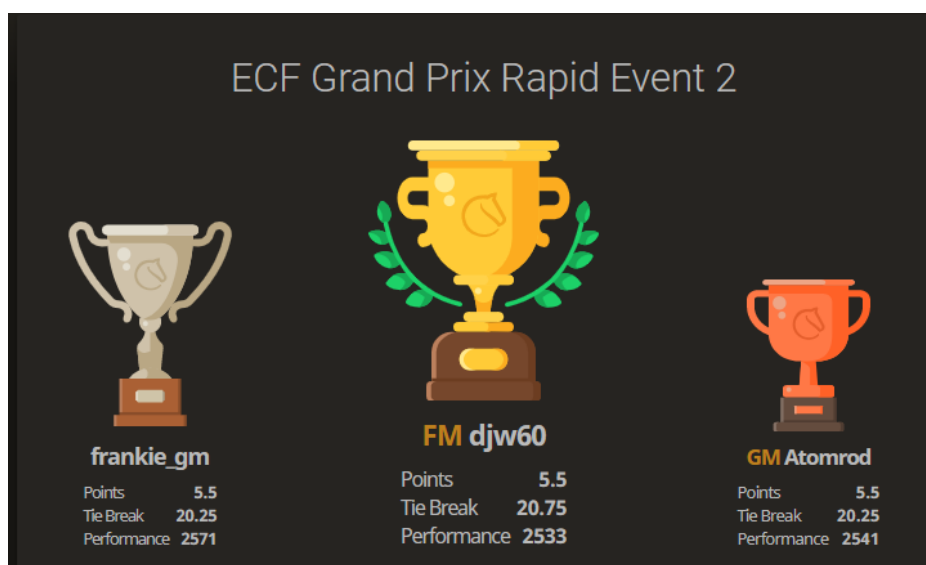
The Saturday Masters is becoming increasingly popular and competitive, with another well subscribed set of events in April. We came first in the event at the beginning of April which was a fantastic result. These are now increasingly large team battles with 800 – 900 players and 50 international teams taking part on Saturday afternoons.

2021 Saturday Masters Team Battle		
1	English Chess Players	Fearless_Finlay 47 + 37 + 37 + 36 + 35 + 35 + 34 + 32 + 31 + 30 354
2	Guillon chess	samovich 41 + 38 + 36 + 36 + 36 + 34 + 34 + 34 + 32 + 30 351
3	VIT United	IM swimmerchess 75 + 57 + 33 + 26 + 24 + 24 + 23 + 22 + 22 + 21 327
4	ILOILO FRIENDLY CHESS	ivana1234 39 + 36 + 35 + 33 + 33 + 28 + 28 + 27 + 25 + 22 306
5	FEDERATA E SHAHUT E KOSOVËS	kadribudrika 47 + 40 + 33 + 32 + 25 + 24 + 24 + 23 + 21 + 21 290
6	ESPANA CHESS CLUB -PH INTERNATIONAL	jonyhabla_79 47 + 41 + 37 + 27 + 25 + 22 + 22 + 20 + 18 + 16 275
7	Maestro Chess	Kuan1981 39 + 35 + 34 + 28 + 24 + 24 + 22 + 17 + 17 + 17 257
8	Nkwe School of Chess	Schwarz1220 30 + 26 + 25 + 25 + 22 + 22 + 22 + 21 + 21 + 19 233
9	شاه مات افریاجان	amin1369 30 + 28 + 27 + 24 + 20 + 20 + 20 + 17 + 17 + 17 220
10	Dajak	LJJEVCE 37 + 33 + 25 + 21 + 20 + 19 + 17 + 15 + 10 + 10 207
View all 50 teams		

English Chess Players	
Players	46
Average rating	2052
Average performance	2072
Average score	18
Team page	
1	👑 Fearless_Finlay 2416 47
2	👑 deenan2008 2411 37
3	👑 nazriz 2227 37
4	👑 GM gmmms2694 2640 36
5	👑 IM BigAl1 2430 35
6	👑 Woodpusher1971 2367 35
7	👑 NM fakenews1-0 2374 34
8	👑 DavidWilson1980 2232 32
9	👑 MouseSlip64 2242 31
10	👑 Wilsonia 2281 30
11	Checkmatealot 2342 30
12	moonmaker 1929 28
13	Henny_Penny 2006 27
14	iamletmethink 2231 26
15	natpaul 2239 25
16	boardinflame 2104 24
17	WriteOn 2111 22
18	smartcraft 1845 22
19	MartinBurrows 2188 20
20	howardst 2058 20

ECF Online Grand Prix

The ECF Online Blitz and Rapid Grand Prix Series continues with the second round of the Rapid and Blitz having been held on the first and third Sundays in April.



This is a series of weekend Blitz and Rapid events over 9 months from March to November with further details here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/2021-online-grand-prix-series/> We are publishing a leader board which is updated following each event, with prizes for the winners in eight categories at the end of each series including Open, Women's, Senior, Junior, U2000 U1700, U1400, and U1100. GM Keith Arkell (Atomrod) is currently leading the pack on both events followed closely by FM Harry Grieve in the blitz, and Freddie Gordon and FM David Walker in the rapid.

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/2021-online-grand-prix-series-blitz-leaderboards/>

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/2021-online-grand-prix-series-rapid-leaderboards/>

Please see the links here to enter either of the series -

Online Blitz Grand Prix at <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/m1umalxs00wt7hj/>

Rapid Grand Prix at <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/mn0wucv0iq3nkv/>

Online Events 2021

We plan to continue with some major online events over the coming months. These can be found in the summary ECF Online calendar here -

<https://englishchessonline.org.uk/ecf-national-events/ecf-online-national-events-calendar-2021/>

Two events of particular note are as below ---

ECF Chess for All

The English Chess Federation is launching a Chess for All Festival to take place on Chess.com from Sunday 30th May – Friday 4th June. This is an event targeted at players who are new to chess and/or improving their playing strength, with the event including coaching sessions, tournaments, simuls and streaming. More details from organiser Danny Rosenbaum elsewhere in the newsletter.

2021 British Online Championships II – 24th July – 8th August 2021

We are taking entries for the BOCC-2 which will follow much the same format as BOCC-1 over Christmas 2020, and will include Qualifiers and Finals for the 2021 British Online Open, Women, Seniors and Junior Championships. We will also be running Major Open and Rating Limited online competitions over the same period. The entry form will be available shortly.

Return to Over the Board

There have been a number of over the board events starting up as we continue through the steps of the Government's HMG Spring plan. These include -

- Watford Juniors Chess in the Park
- Sheffield Chess Millowners Arms outdoor event
- Various schools-based events, which are covered elsewhere in the newsletter

These have mostly been submitted for rating and it's great to see outdoor and schools based over the board events starting to appear in the rating lists once again. The working group continues to look at supporting clubs and organisers in the wider return to over the board events, including publication of a set of precautions on the ECF website, together with updated ECF tournament regulations including potential use of hybrid events and conditions under which these can be rated.

Over the Board Events 2021

We are also planning a number of ECF organised Over the Board Events for 2021.

English Counties 2021

We are looking to schedule some friendly counties events for August and September 2021 which will be open to all counties, with the potential to use some new formats including hybrid team matches, dependant on feedback from county associations and the progress of the opening-up process. All being well, we are planning for the 2021/2022 OTB Counties season to start in earnest, with regional stages in September 2021 and finals next year.

British Championships 2021 2nd October – 10th October

The over-the-board Championships are now scheduled for 2nd to 10th October with separate venues in Hull and Milton Keynes. The Hull venue will host the British Open and Women's Championships, and Milton Keynes will host the British Seniors and Juniors Finals, with the juniors on the first weekend followed by the Seniors. The events will run daily during the week and weekends, with the junior finals over the opening weekend of 2nd and 3rd October. The venues will be linked via an internet connection with commentary from the top boards in the Championship and Women's Championship.

Qualifications for the Open, Women's and Junior events will be based on the 2021 Summer British Online competition (BOCC-2) with those who qualify for a final invited to play. The senior finals will be open to any player in the 50+ and/ or 65+ age groups. There may also be a Major Open and Rating Limited competitions at an additional venue alongside the other events, or possibly in February 2022, and dependent on player feedback and level of interest.

New to Chess

We are also looking at how we can support new players who are looking to take up the game following the Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit* and making online and over-the-board events more widely publicised and available. The latest version of our New to Chess Page now includes general advice, web and coaching/ educational resources and links to recent broadcast streams and can be found at

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/new-to-chess/>

Arbiters

We have another arbiters course scheduled for June covering over-the-board and online arbiting, and have published the new set of ECF Online Arbiter duties and levels which you can find on the web site here -

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/arbiters/ecf-arbiters/>

Registered Coaches

Last but not least, the ECF Registered Coaches Scheme is continuing to progress thanks to IM Andrew Martin and his supporting team, and is proving very popular, with an increasing number of coaches now registered and listed on the ECF website. You can find further details here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/list-of-ecf-registered-coaches/>

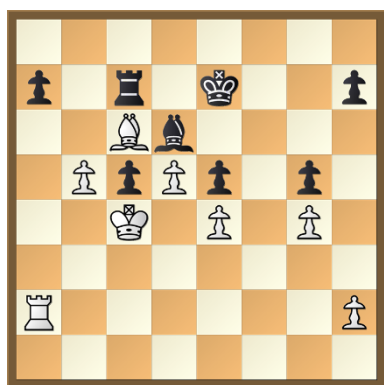
Arkell's Endgames



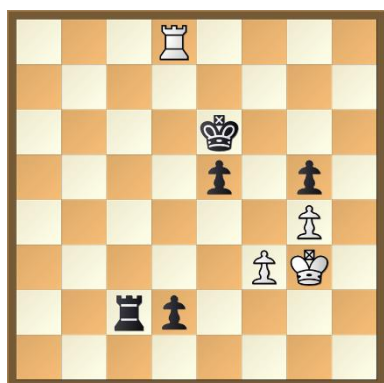
The first in a monthly series of endgame articles from GM Keith Arkell

When the ECF Director of Home Chess Nigel Towers approached me to write a regular column based around my endgames, I was only too happy to oblige. I would like to begin with the theme of Zugzwang. A very common aid to making progress in positions with reduced material is your

opponent's obligation to make a move - from simple K+P v K positions, when they must give way when facing the opposition, to more complex situations. After a quick scan of my games I was surprised how often Zugzwang has come to the rescue. Here are four examples; in each case the key move is made by a rook –



Against GM Pia Cramling, in a French team match in 1999, I played **48 Ra6**. If Black were now allowed to pass I would have problems making progress, but instead she must either move the Rook and drop the a pawn, or move the King and leave the Bishop undefended. The game concluded **48...Kd8 49 Bb7** (exploiting the attack on the loose Bishop to win the a pawn.) **49...Rd7 50 Rxa7 Bb8 51 b6 Rf7 52 Kxc5 Rd7 53 Kc6 Rd6+ 54 Kb5 1-0**

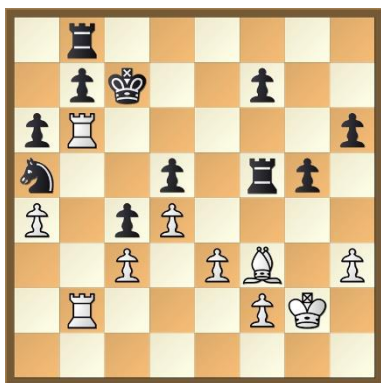


This position, against FM Francis Rayner at the 2008 Liverpool British Championship, would be a draw without Zugzwang. After **65...Rb2**, however, he is obliged to play either **66 Rd3** or **66 Kh3**. Against **66 Rd3** I have a neat little trick, viz: **66 ...e4! 67 dxe4 Rb3!** exploiting the lateral pin to promote my pawn. In the game he chose **66 Kh3**, after which, with his King now forced away from the action, I was nonetheless able to break

through with **66...e4 67 dxe4 Ke5 0-1**

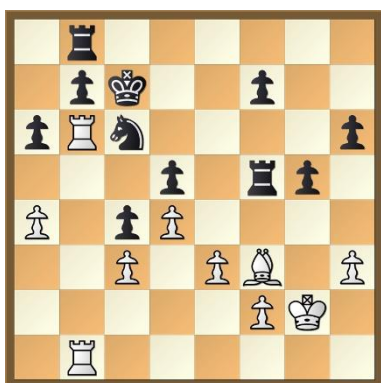


I already had a winning position v GM Hichem Hamdouchi in the French team Championship of 1995, but 57 Ra7 terminated the game immediately. He clearly can't move a pawn; if he moves his Knight he drops a Rook; if he moves his Rook he loses a lot of material; if he moves his King then Rxc7 wins, so that just leaves the Queen: **57...Qg7 58 Bxd5! 1-0**. The queen no longer defends d5 so after 58...Nxd5 59 Ra5 Qd7 60 Rxd5+ and when he recaptures I can take the loose Rook on e7.



In the fourth case the Zugzwang didn't happen over the board but only in my head.

Against FM David Zakarian in the 2014 4NCL I am attacking the h6 pawn which he can't defend with either 35...f6 or 35...Rh8 because I trap his Rook with 36 Bg4. In the game he just gave up the pawn with **35...Nb3**, and I soon went on to win. If he tries to save the pawn he must play 35...Nc6 when I was ready with 36 R2b1! Amazingly Black would then be in Zugzwang even though there are still 21 pieces on the board!



I will let you work out for yourself precisely why Black is in Zugzwang here ...

Director of International Chess Malcom Pein writes ...

Our international players have had very few opportunities to play other than online, but a step in the right direction will be the European Individual Championships which will be staged in a hybrid format. This involves every country setting up their own venue for players to play online in the same room, socially distanced and under arbiter supervision. The tournament will qualify 36 players to the FIDE World Cup to be held in Sochi in July. The event will be run as a knockout with 36 groups of eight players. The format is the same as the World Cup, with two games of classical chess and then play-offs. I'm delighted to have Shohreh Bayat as our main arbiter and the venue will be Hilton DoubleTree in Elstree, Hertfordshire (unfortunately, no spectators allowed). This event is happening because the European Individual scheduled for Reykjavik in March/April was cancelled, although just recently they were announced again to take place in August. The next event scheduled for the England teams is the European Teams Championship which will be held in Slovenia in November



Covid-19

The latest guidelines for OTB and hybrid chess are here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/covid-precautions/>



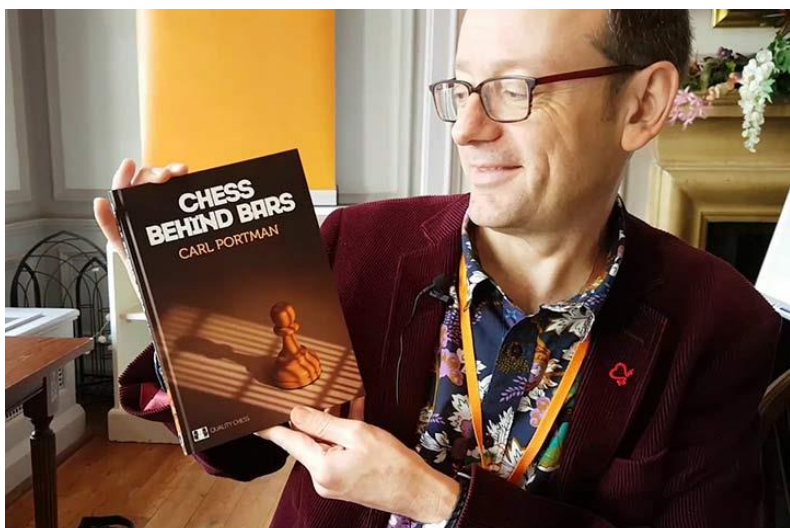
Director of Membership Rob Willmoth reports ...



Exciting news! The first ChessKid UK national championships will take place on Saturday, June 5th. This will be a huge event and it is advisable to enter early. England number one player GM Mickey Adams will be doing a free training camp for early registrants. This is a unique opportunity to learn from a great player. The tournament is in age

group sections and there are prizes in each section. You do not need a ChessKid account to play in the event (this will be provided). The entry fee for the event is £35 with early birds registering before May 24 receiving a £10 discount. Closing date for entries is May 31st. More here - <https://www.chesskid.com/article/view/coming-soon-chesskid-uk-championship>. Also, with the ECF's new programme with ChessKid, you can get a further £5.00 discount by entering the code UKECF. Registration here - https://www.events4chess.com/events/?event_ID=1373

Key workers



ECF Manager of Chess in Prisons Carl Portman is the subject of a piece in the FIDE newsletter – now read on ...

Only a few hours after releasing this newsletter, the 'Chess for Freedom' online conference and demonstration tournament will kick off simultaneously in Moscow, Yerevan, Caceres and Chicago. The goal of this congress is to share some case studies and expert

opinions with members of the administration and the media, to raise awareness about the potential of these 'chess in prison' initiatives.

One of these experts is our colleague Carl Portman, from Birmingham. Carl lived what we could describe as a rough childhood, and he often says that chess changed his life. He goes as far as to say that he could well have found himself in a prison, had chess not helped him to deviate from the wrong path. "It diverted my attention from any nefarious activities and made me use my time more productively (...). Truly, chess opened a happy world for me". Thanks to chess, he received something that he had never experienced before, encouragement from the adults around him.

After serving for 30 years in the Ministry of Defence (he represented the UK in the NATO Championships in France 2012), he co-founded, with his wife Susan, the limited company Caissa Consulting. He plays, organizes events, and teaches chess in schools.

When the ECF announced a vacancy for the position of Manager of Chess in Prisons, he took it without hesitating. The famous book *The Grass Arena*, written by an ex-convict, had made a profound impact on him, and he "wanted to give something back" after chess had done so much for him.

The first prison he visited was HMP Coldingley in Surrey, in the South East of England. In some of the initial visits, he was accompanied by IM Malcolm Pein. "Prison staff were amazed at how the inmates were so completely focused for three hours non-stop. No one wanted us to leave," recalls Malcolm.

Shortly afterwards, in 2015, Carl was awarded the ECF President's Award for Services to Chess. In 2018, after four years in which he had voluntarily visited 25 prisons up and down the country, he published *Chess Behind Bars* (Quality Chess, 2018), a book that charts his experiences.

Chess Behind Bars is a beautiful tribute to chess, and it goes well beyond the topic of chess in prisons, bringing us many other examples of the transformative power of the

game. Carl brings many examples of what he calls “the joys and redemptive qualities of chess”.

“The game makes a difference because it is a fantastic metaphor for life. We must think before making our move and accept that our decisions have consequences. It also teaches us to learn from our mistakes and to develop a more disciplined approach to problem solving. Perhaps most importantly of all, it is a constructive use of time and helps to forge friendships. Chess makes us consider the other person’s point of view”, says the book. “Learning how to channel aggression and lose gracefully are key benefits of the game”, he adds.

“To me, *Chess Behind Bars* is saying that every time a prisoner pushes a pawn, they are doing much more than playing a chess game. They are taking part in a rehearsal for life,” said John Healy, a former prisoner and the author of the book *The Grass Arena*, which inspired Carl. “Portman has enlightened the society of criminals with the best of humanity,” wrote Dominic Lawson of the Daily Mail.

You can listen to Carl, and all the other experts, at the conference that starts on Tuesday, May 11th, at 15:30 CET. The conference will be broadcast live on the FIDE YouTube channel.

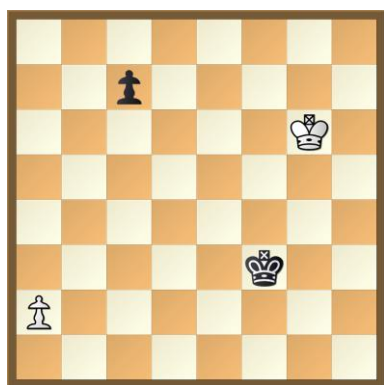
The demonstration tournament between penitentiary centres from Russia, USA, Spain and Armenia, will also be broadcast live, with commentary by GM Alejandro Ramírez, who will interview a variety of guests -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=35hRstpeO3c>



Study Corner

Ian Watson on how to solve studies



White to play and win

Suppose you’re presented with this position and told it’s a composed endgame study – how would you try to solve it? I’m going to go through it with you, and tell you some ‘tricks of the solving trade’. Then, I’ll give you another study that you can try to solve yourself.

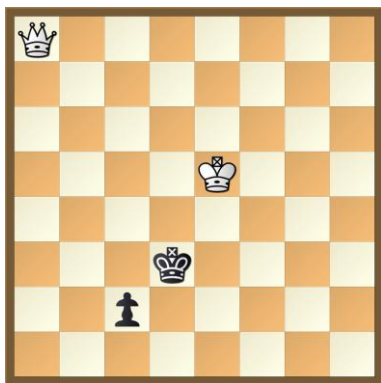
This first study is a famous one, composed by Nikolai Grigoriev, and published in Shakhmaty v SSSR in 1932. Many composers have produced pawn endgame studies, but there are two who are generally acknowledged as the greatest masters of the pawn study art, Grigoriev, and Zinar, who composed the study I'll give you to solve.

So, you know it's a composed study and that gives you a lot of useful information. It tells you that there will be a main line in which each of White's moves is unique, meaning is the only one that wins. Also unlike in a game, you know what the correct result is: it's written below the diagram. You know too that the play will be both elegant and surprising. It might, for example, end with an unusual mate, or an underpromotion, or there might be stalemate tricks. There will often be a strong theme to the study; for example, two or more manoeuvres that echo each other.

Anyway, your first task is to do what you'd do with an over-the-board position. Count up the pieces to see who's ahead; give the position a quick look to see if one of the players seems to be easily winning; see if one of the kings is in danger; see if any of the pieces are under attack; and have a glance at any forcing lines, such as checks. Sadly, in this particular study, most of that doesn't help hugely, but it's a good habit to get into! It does help in one way: you'll notice that the Black king is 'in the square' of White's a-pawn, so just pushing the a-pawn won't do the job.

So, next, try a move to see what happens. In this study, knowing that 1.a4 doesn't work, the only reasonable move is to bring your king over. Move it to f5, so it stays in range of the Black pawn, so if that pawn is pushed, you'll walk over and snaffle it. Black will do the same. So we've got **1.Kf5 Ke3** and you continue your plan with **2.Ke5**. Now you see the variation 2...Kd3 3.Kd5 Kc3 4.Kc5 and White will then push his pawn (5.a4) and win. Maybe you paused for a moment and looked at 3...c6+ and noticed that 4.Kc5 wins then too. Job done? Except... it was way too easy for a composed study, so you've definitely missed something. You go back through all that and try various obviously hopeless moves, and finally realise you've missed Black's clever defence **2...c6**. Now you pretty much know you're finding the correct solution, because that's a real study-like move. You notice that 3.Kd6 Kd4 4.a4 c5 will be a draw, so you continue with confidence, and decide that the solution goes **1.Kf5 Ke3 2.Ke5 c6 3.a4 Kd3 4.a5 c5 5.a6 c4 6.a7 c3 7.a8=Q c2**. You're sure that must all be correct (and indeed it is), but what now? Stop and assess. If you know your queen against pawn theory, you know that when Black has a bishop's pawn he has a stalemate trick; in a position with Black king b1 and pawn c2, if White plays Qb3+, then Black plays Ka1. So, to win you need to keep the Black king on the other side of the pawn, or have your own king very near, so you can mate, or be able to get your queen to c1 to definitely stop the pawn.

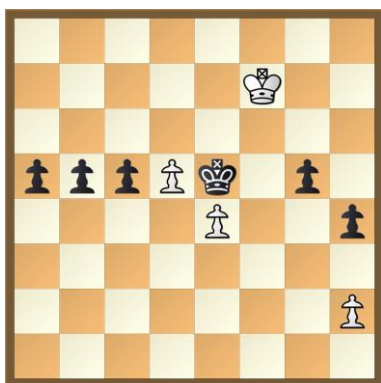
Here's the position after 7...c2:



White has lots of options here, and I won't work through them all, but only 8.Qd5+ works. If Black now plays 8...Kc3, you have 9.Qd4+ Kb3 10.Qa1 and your queen will get to c1. If Black plays 8...Ke3 you have the wonderful move 9.Qg2; that move is followed either by a skewer if Black promotes (9...c1Q 10.Qg5+), or by 9...Kd3 10.Qg5 and wins, as the queen will get to c1. 9.Qg2 is *really* hard to foresee. If, however, you do succeed in seeing those lines, you regain your confidence – this **MUST** be the right solution – and so you look for an answer to 8...Ke2. Eventually, you find 9.Qa2. The final moves of the study are **8.Qd5+ Ke2 9.Qa2 Kd2 10.Kd4** and 10...Kd1 11.Kc3 (or 11.Ke3, but not 11.Kd3 c1=N+ oops!) c1Q+ 12.Kd3 and wins.

A splendid composition; with only two pawns, in a totally natural position, Grigoriev included multiple surprise moves, and even had an underpromotion as a trap.

Solving that would be a challenge to even the best solvers in the world. *Your* solving task is the next study, which isn't so hard:



White to play and win

This was published in L'Italia Scacchistica in 1982. It's by Mikhail Zinar, who died this year; he was the second of our duo of the greatest composers of pawn studies. Most studies have only one main line, but this one has five Black defences that all have the same thematic finish – once you've found one, it shouldn't be tough to find the others.

The solution is given on the last page of the newsletter ...

Ian Watson Email: ian@irwatson.uk

Director of Junior Chess Alex Holowczak writes ...

ECF Online Schools Championships results - Under 19 1st Hampton School, 2nd Wilson's School, 3rd Reading School. Under 11 1st King's College Junior School, 2nd Westminster Under School, 3rd Brentwood Primary School



ECF Chess for All Festival

Danny Rosenbaum writes ... As Muhammad Ali once said, “Even the greatest was once a beginner.” The Queen’s Gambit and Covid-19 have combined to inspire many people to take up chess for the first time or perhaps revisit it, having lapsed.

We welcome everyone to join our Chess for All Festival where we will be holding a week of training and tournaments aimed at beginners and improvers (both juniors and adults). The term tournaments should not be daunting. The idea behind them is to provide a range of games with people of similar strength to try out and practise their chess. All elements of the week are optional.

We are pleased to announce that IM Lorin D’Costa will be coaching the improvers and Lateefah Messam-Sparks will be coaching the beginners. For only £15, entrants can get four training sessions as well as access to the tournaments, plus early joiners will be given the ability to play in a simultaneous game (one of which will be conducted by GM Keith Arkell).

In addition, we will be giving free ECF Supporter membership for all entrants to the end of the membership season. This will allow anybody that signs up to play in all ECF online tournaments to the end of August. The Festival will run from Sunday 30th May to Friday 4th June. More details and the schedule here -

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/chess-for-all-festival-checkmate-covid-the-rematch/>
- and registration form here - <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/q1foayuu0jdqeh/>



ECF Awards 2021

Stephen Greep writes ... Details of how to apply for this year’s ECF awards have been released. There have been changes to the committee structure and there are new awards for the top ECF priorities of Contributions to Community Chess, Junior Chess, Women’s Chess and Accessible Chess, together with existing awards of Club of the Year, Small Club of the Year, Online Chess Contribution, Congress of the Year, and the President’s Awards for Services to Chess. Entries for this year’s awards close at the end of June. More can be found on the ECF website.

Enquiries and nominations to the Award committee Chairman Stephen Greep at sjgreep@gmail.com and more details here at

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/nominations-invited-for-this-years-ecf-awards/>
[PDF]

Forthcoming Events

See the ECF events calendar [here](#)



ECF Academy

Alex Longson reports ... The theme for April was Calculation and Board Visualisation. Some feedback we have had during lockdown is that children are struggling to calculate when solving a position set up on the board – perhaps a knock-on effect of a diet of online blitz and easy tactical drills? So we thought it would be interesting to set some visualisation challenges. Some examples -

Studying a position on paper and then trying to set up on a board from memory
Does a Bishop on g4 cover the square b7?

How many moves would it take a knight to travel from e1 to c8?

The 'Czech Chess IQ Test' - readers, please take the challenge here -

<http://www.cypresschess.com/p/chessiq.html>

Another thing we have really decided to concentrate on is accuracy instead of speed. Lichess continues to release some great new features and one that we really like is [Puzzle Streak](#) where the player is challenged to solve as many puzzles in a row as they can, with no timer. Generally speaking, to beat a strong player you need to make a lot of good moves in a row and a single mistake can be costly – so why not introduce that into your training?

May's theme is Endgame Technique where we will test the notion that juniors play the endgame badly!



Marathon for the British Red Cross

Danny Rosenbaum writes ... Doing good by playing chess, what could be better? Last year, thanks to the hundreds of people who played, donated, and streamed (including numerous GMs) we raised over £12000 for the British Red Cross.

The second charity 24-hour marathon tournament is fast approaching, taking place on the weekend of June 5-6 with 24 hours of blitz chess and players of all strengths taking part. Last year we had great feedback from players who loved the opportunity to lock horns with grandmasters as well as players of their own level.

Please tell your friends, colleagues, and all and sundry about the event and get them to join in. You do not need to be a member of the ECF to play. To enter, simply join our open club free of charge at <https://www.chess.com/club/english-chess-federation> and register for the event at <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/qtlj19e1rs4q16/>. On the form there is an option to donate to the British Red Cross - please join the hundreds who did so last year and make this year another successful fundraiser. Only those who

have donated £5 or more before the event starts are eligible for prizes. We are hoping that like last year, the chess community will come together to support this great cause and donate even if they don't think they will be in the running for prizes. We are very grateful for the support from prize donors which this year include chess.com, Chess & Bridge, Elk and Ruby, Forward Chess, DecodeChess, as well as chess book authors like Ben Graff and Carl Portman.



Twitch and shout

Danny Rosenbaum writes ... The ECF is delighted to announce our dedicated Twitch channel at https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary. Twitch has become an increasingly popular platform for chess broadcasters and we intend our content to appeal to a broad range of players. The channel was set up by WIM Natasha Regan and GM Matthew Sadler who have written award-winning books and their excellent videos are available on the GameChanger and Chess for Life YouTube channels. Much of their content is live commentary of events and they will also be commentating on events for the ECF Twitch channel. Additionally, we will have regular guests including WFM Louise Head, GM John Emms, IM Malcolm Pein, FM Peter Sowray, and Phil Crocker and Colm Buckley of Chester Chess Club.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will be reading about our charity marathon for the British Red Cross. We have already lined up several guests including British Champion GM Michael Adams to appear on https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary

Please follow the channel by scrolling down to the heart icon and clicking on it. This means that you will get notifications (if you want them) about any time we go on air.

We're not overambitious but please help us overtake Hikaru Nakamura (only 1.2 million to go). If you've missed a video you can watch it back on Twitch – some will also be available on our YouTube channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/c/EnglishChessFederation/> so please also consider subscribing there as well.



Alternate Director of Women's Chess Aga Milewska writes ...

I'm delighted to invite girls and women chess players to join our official English Chess Federation (ECF) women's team on Lichess.org. The squad is open to women and girls of all abilities. We host an arena tournament every day between 6.00 and 7.00pm, apart from the days when we have team matches Thursdays, Sundays and occasionally on Mondays. Remember to include your name and ECF membership number when you apply to join the team. We have important upcoming tournaments so please do join our squad!

More here at www.englishchessonline.org.uk/england-womens-team/

ChessKid FIDE Challenge

More here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/intercontinental-chesskid-fide-challenge-2/>



David Howell, sixth of the best

Hikaru Nakamura won the chess.com Titled Tuesday blitz on May 4, his third win in three showings. David Howell had an excellent 9/11 performance to finish sixth. More here - <https://www.chess.com/news/view/nakamura-wins-may-4-titled-tuesday>



Arbiter Regulations

David Sedgwick writes ... The new FIDE Regulations for Arbiters, approved by the FIDE Council on Monday 19th April, have now been published at arbiters.fide.com/news/6041. My earlier fears that they might come into force at little or no notice have proved to be unfounded. The effective date is Thursday 1st July.



ECF Yearbook

The print version of the ECF Yearbook 2021 is now available and ECF President Dominic Lawson sent us this message ---

The ECF Yearbook is beautifully produced, with an especially stunning cover. Congratulations to all responsible, and especially to Andrew Walker for his immense efforts (from a very impressed former magazine and newspaper editor)

John Upham's review is well worth a read as well ---

<https://britishchessnews.com/2021/04/17/ecf-official-chess-yearbook-2021/?fbclid=IwAR1tQHagrdjOrpakRrNrwlNrdRonBcXjptevhzSxCVjj8TO3MElivrc8tsQ>

More here on ordering a printed copy - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-yearbook-2021/>



Stop the clocks!

Lara Barnes and Alex McFarlane celebrate their civil partnership - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/lara-alex/>

Around the world with Gawain

Gawain Jones won the Bob Wade Memorial in New Zealand with an impressive five-and-a-half-from-six. More here at <https://www.times.co.nz/news/grandmaster-takes-honours-in-howick-memorial-chess-tournament/>. Gawain then took on the best in the world in the New In Chess Classic rapidplay event (won by Magnus Carlsen) and despite not making the cut for the knockout stage, Gawain said on Twitter, 'My own result was disappointing, but I really enjoyed the challenge and am very grateful to have the opportunity. I feel I learnt a lot and am looking forward to battling again soon'.



Finance Council meeting

The ECF Council met on Saturday 24 April, this meeting being termed the 'Finance' Council and has the particular responsibility to approve the Board's budget for the year ahead as well as dealing with any other business brought to it or raised by members of the Council. It is made up of local representatives of counties, unions, leagues and congresses and direct members as well as the directors of the ECF and some other officers.

This year the financial side of things was unusually free of controversy with a decision to freeze membership fees and with a careful budget designed to allow support for a comeback of chess but with an eye on the difficult financial situation the last year has presented. The only issue of debate was a resolution making the Board free to vary the budget in the light of changing circumstances, though such changes would have to be brought before a further Council meeting. In the end, however, this motion was passed with overwhelming support, perhaps reflecting the recognition by Council that the Board really does need some wriggle room in these uncertain times.

Another block of business centred around constitutional issues, probably of little interest to the bulk of members but, of course, considered vital and essential by the political side of the chess world! One special motion effectively froze for a year the Council's own voting register which determines how many votes members of Council carry and in normal times depends essentially on the number of chess games they have organised. Another issue was whether directors of the ECF should be allowed to stay in office if regularly re-elected or if, like American Presidents, they should be limited in the number of terms they could serve. A variety of options on terms of service were offered but in the end Council decided that there should be no limits. Of perhaps slightly more interest was a motion to include 'rating' as we must now call 'grading' of online games and blitz games as worthy of being included in the criteria for representation on Council. This narrowly, but clearly, reached the 75% in favour that is required for constitutional changes of this sort.

And finally, and at least of interest to a few hundred of the membership, was a motion to change the rating boundaries in the County Council championship. This was inspired by the need once again to move to rating and a belief that advertising something like an "under 1642" competition as a translation of a grade of "under 140" was somehow unsatisfactory. I didn't personally see it mattered that much: after all we all cope quite happily with cans containing 454 grams! No, seriously it needed to be done, but was

surprisingly controversial. Those that organise these teams were worried that certain of the new ranges would prevent some teams being fielded at all and that other players would find themselves unused for want of a section of appropriate standard. Sadly, after all the other business had been completed little time was left for discussion. However, it was agreed that those with knowledge of the problems (principally the county and union reps or their proxies) should meet again separately with Nigel Towers, the ECF Director responsible, and Mark Murrell, the County Championship controller, with the brief to hammer out the matter in a smaller and slightly more informal Zoom meeting. I'm delighted to say that these good people have indeed met after the main meeting and achieved success in their endeavours. The 2021-22 County Championship is set to roll!

--- *Michael Farthing, Chair of Council*



Brought to book

Gary Lane provides an enticing pot-pourri of book reviews this month with the following ---

Chess Scribe - A 50-year Anthology by David Le Moir

Terry Shaw, Australian Chess Ironman, Games and Writings by Ian Rogers and Ralph Shaw

Chess for Educators by Karel Van Delft

Carlsen's Neo-Moller by Ionannis Simeonidis

The Lasker Method To Improve In Chess by Gerard Welling and Steve Giddens

More here - <https://chess.business/blog/>



4NCL News

Return to OTB 25th 4NCL Congress announced! Mike Truran writes ... I'm very pleased to say that we've booked the four-star conference centre hotel Woodland Grange in Leamington Spa for our 25th 4NCL Congress on 9-11 July 2021. This will be our first OTB 4NCL congress since the start of 2020, if restrictions are indeed lifted on 21 June as we all hope. Although we are not publishing entry forms just yet, our friends at Guaranteed Events are happy to field early accommodation enquiries. As usual with 4NCL congresses, no money is taken until after arrival at the venue, so there is no financial risk to players booking accommodation early should a Covid-19 resurgence require the congress to be postponed or cancelled. Please do NOT try to book accommodation direct with the hotel as you will not get the preferential 4NCL arrangements.

As the proverb has it, 'There's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip', but on the (possibly heroic) assumption that restrictions will ease as HM Government hopes over the next few months we'll be publishing information, entry forms etc on the 4NCL website once

we have our organisational ducks in a row.

See here - https://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/online/arrangements_8.htm

Seventh 4NCL Online Congress results at

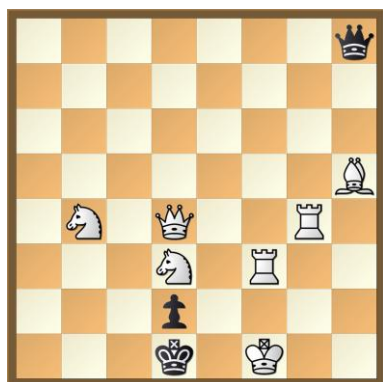
https://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/online/winners_7.htm



Just one more move

Christopher Jones with another Lt. Columbo-style chess problem ...

In the last Newsletter I left you with this problem -



Mate in 2

Zivota Tanic - Commendation, *Schweizerische Arbeiter Schachzeitung* 1971

As I said last time, “we want to move one of the Rs to allow a discovered checkmate when the second of them moves. The bQ, which has to keep an eye on the a1 square also, will be overloaded. But it turns out that it is tricky to find the unique move that succeeds”.

If you delved into all the possibilities here you will have found that 1.Rf6?, threatening 2.Qa1, fails to 1...Qc8!; the other lines of play make no threats, but attempt to create Zugzwang. If 1...Rf8? 1...Qe5! defends. If 1.Re4?, the defence is 1...Qg7!. Or try 1.Rg5?; the defence this time is 1...Qa8!. Eventually you should have alighted on 1.Rf5! (1...Qa8,Qe5 2.Re4; 1...Qxh5 2.Qa1) – well done if you did!

I haven't given you a longer problem for a while, so here is one –



Mate in 4

Adolf Bayersdorfer - 3rd Prize, Chess Monthly 1895

You may find this one tricky to solve, though if you're imaginative and think quite spectacular you may well get there. Of course if you want to try (at least initially) to solve it without any further hints do feel free to ignore the rest of this paragraph! If White didn't have a Bishop at c6 then 1.Nc6, with the threat of 2.Ne7, would win out of hand. At first it appears that we can get it out of the way with check, but after 1.Bd7+ Ne6 Black has made the square g7 available for his King, so defends 2.Nc6 with 2...Kg6. But otherwise what? The composer presumably had a positive purpose in mind for the c6B, and also for the out-of-play white Queen...

I'll give the solution next time. If you don't solve it and want to see the solution before then, I wonder whether chess playing programs make light work of this one? (I'd be quite interested to know. Do feel free to email me about this or any other point arising from this article.)

Christopher Jones Email: cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk



Games, sets and matches



Geoff Brown, General Secretary of Sheffield & District Chess Association writes ... We've returned to playing OTB in Sheffield! Now that pub beer gardens (back yards) are open to groups of six, we are running a Grand Prix style monthly series of multi-venue events. We started on 25th April with eight players split into two groups of four. And then the players played a round robin within their groups. The events are to be Covid aware and as safe as we can make them with equipment being cleaned

after each game and players wearing masks whilst sitting at the board.

Our next event is planned for Sunday 23rd May when it is hoped we will have five venues and about two dozen entrants. Playing the games out in the open meant that we attracted some interest from the general public which was very pleasing. For further information then either email gd_brown@sky.com or call me on 07931 563787

Tweet of the Month

Mum's the word for Vishy Anand in this game from 1980



Obituary

Syd Kalinsky - Danny Wright remembers a major figure in English chess

It is sad to report the passing of Syd Kalinsky, a major force in Essex and London chess, on 7th April 2021 after a short bout of ill health.

Syd was born into a poor East End Jewish family and, as his father was unable to work, due to TB, he had to leave school at the age of 14 to support the family. His first job in a sweat shop was short lived as Syd had little co-ordination and tailoring was not part of his repertoire. A stint at Stanley Gibbons, the postage stamp collectors' shop, followed but he had to leave when he also caught TB, a killer disease at the time. His luck was in as he became one of the first people to benefit from a new experimental course of treatment at a sanatorium in Switzerland, funded by the recently formed NHS.

He spent his time there playing correspondence chess and taking a correspondence course to become a qualified accountant. When he passed his final exams, the Board of the accountancy body at first refused to award the qualification as he held no passes in what is now the GCSE, a requirement at the time. However, the Secretary of the Institute persuaded the Board otherwise, as Syd had obtained the highest marks in the country for those accountancy exams.

He joined a firm in the West End, became a partner, and in time became the Senior Partner of London-based King & King.

Syd contacted me in January 1968 and offered me employment as he knew I was working as an agency accountant. However I soon discovered that his interest in me was more to do with my chess results with the Islington and North London Chess Club

(a very strong club at that time). King & King had a team in the London Commercial Chess League and were soon to have their annual crunch match against IBM. The team needed beefing up! Over the years Syd employed many strong chess players in the firm including Ken and Ron Harman, Philip Rossiter, Paul Hutchison, Tim Wickens, Neal Cutler, Jim Howson and Richard O'Brien. Luckily for the other teams in the League, they did not all play at the same time. There was also a strong bridge team for a while consisting of staff and clients which won a national rubber bridge competition.

Syd was a regular Essex County player and a member of a very strong East Ham Chess Club in the London League. Members included Dr. Stefan Fazekas and Bob Wade – both IMs and British Champions in their time along with Peter Clarke, a stalwart of the English team. This eventually became the Cavendish Chess Club, named after the King & King office near Cavendish Square. Syd was President and a regular London League player, until Covid-19 stopped over-the-board chess. Cavendish won the London Chess League twice in the 1970s. Syd was also President of the venerable Ilford Chess Club for which he played in the Essex Leagues. Syd was also a prolific correspondence player. His highest grade was 183 in 1994.

I should also mention his running. He actually survived three bouts of TB during his lifetime with damage to his lungs. His solution was to very gradually build up his stamina for running which culminated in participation in a dozen London Marathons, all completed, and the raising of tens of thousands of pounds for the children's charity Dreams Come True.

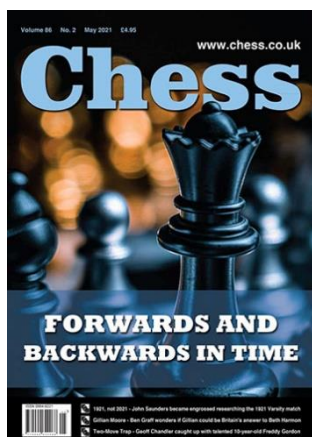
He certainly made his mark on Essex and London chess and I leave you with a vision of Syd playing for Cavendish at the Essex team lightning tournament with pieces flying, the chess clock being banged, tea spilled and shouts of J'adoube reverberating around the hall. He leaves a devoted wife Sheila, four children and many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

--- Danny Wright 12.4.2021

More about Syd here from Tom Barton - <https://ilfordchessclub.com/syd-kalinsky/>

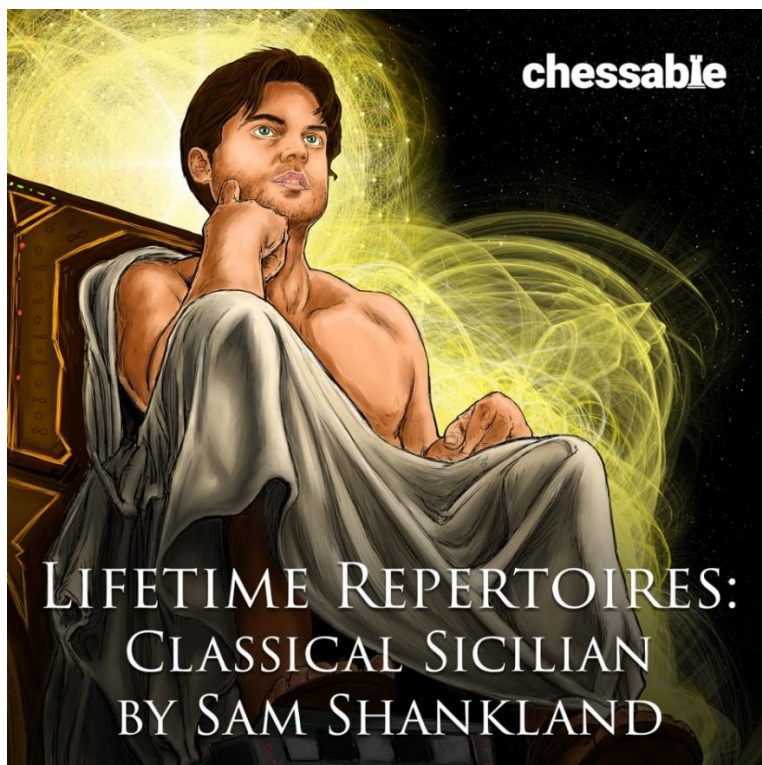


Chess Magazine



This month's taster is [here](#)
To purchase and/or subscribe, [click here](#)

A message from Chessable, sponsors of the ECF eNewsletter ...



The Smart Player's Move-By-Move Guide To Winning Against 1.e4

If you'd love to fearlessly play and WIN against 1.e4... without having to put life on hold so you can study pages of opening theory, then we invite you to join Grandmaster Sam Shankland ... <https://www.chessable.com/lifetime-repertoires-classical-sicilian/course/68589/>



Study Corner – solution

(Zinar) **1.Ke7** and then... remember that skewer in the Gregoriev study? In this Zinar study, there are five ways in which White can skewer the new Black queen diagonally:

1...a4 2.d6 a3 3.d7 a2 4.d8Q a1Q 5.Qh8+

1...b4 2.d6 b3 3.d7 b2 4.d8Q b1Q 5.Qd6+ Kxe4 6.Qg6+

1...c4 2.d6 c3 3.d7 c2 4.d8Q c1Q 5.Qd5+ Kf4 6.Qf5+ Ke3 7.Qxg5+

1...g4 2.d6 g3 3.d7 gxh2 4.d8Q h1Q 5.Qd6+ Kxe4 6.Qc6+ and

(1...g4 2.d6 g3 3.d7) g2 4.d8Q g1Q 5.Qd5+ Kf4 6.Qf5+ Ke3 7.Qxc5+