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Chess *moves*

July 2021



CHESSFEST

FULL NELSON!

ChessFest takes over Trafalgar Square

Game of the Month - Michael Adams

Arkell's Endings – Keith Arkell

New Junior Moves Section

ECF Writing Initiative - Charlie Hazlerigg

Peter Wells – Why Tactics Matter

Interview - Stephen Moss



Welcome to the July edition of *Chess Moves*, which this month showcases ChessFest – one of the biggest outdoor chess events held in the UK. We also include a tribute to Guildford CC which celebrates its 125th anniversary, an interview with Stephen Moss, *Guardian* columnist and author of *The Rookie*, another excellent submission to the Creative Writing Initiative and the popular analyses and articles from GMs Michael Adams, Peter Wells, Keith Arkell and Ian Watson. We are also delighted to launch a specialist section, *Junior Moves*.

Malcolm Pein writes --- [ChessFest](#), the UK's biggest-ever outdoor chess festival is taking place in Trafalgar Square in central London on Sunday 18th July, from 11am to 6pm. Organised by Chess in Schools and Communities, ChessFest is celebrating the 150th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's children's classic *Alice Through the Looking Glass* and showcasing the game through a raft of activities. These include a giant chessboard with 32 actors, free lessons from professional chess tutors, chess tables for casual games, grandmaster simuls and the chance to play in the Unofficial World Giant Chess Championship. Adding to the fun will be a giant screen Inter-City Chess Challenge between children from London and Liverpool and a match between prodigies Shreyas Royal (London) and Tani Adewumi (New York).

Entry to all events is free and open to everyone. There is no need to pre-register, please just come along on the day. We hope you can bring your family, friends and club mates to enjoy what we are sure will be a great celebration, and a fantastic advertisement for the popularity of chess in London and the UK. We feature an article on ChessFest below and more information here - <https://www.chess-fest.com/>

As we edge nearer to OTB chess, it is important you renew your ECF membership. We outline the renewal offers below.

Enjoy the summer

Mark Rivlin



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NEWS AND VIEWS

Director of Home Chess **Nigel Towers'** writes ---

ECF Online

Clubs and Weekly Events

ECF online club memberships are now around 4,500 in the chess.com ECF Open Club, 1,500 in the ECF Members Club and 1,200 in the lichess English Chess Players club -

<https://englishchessonline.org.uk/upcoming-club-events>. We are continuing with 7 online rated club events per week on Chess.com and Lichess.org

Grand Prix

The ECF Online Blitz and Rapid Grand Prix Series continues with the fourth Blitz and Rapid events on the first and third Sundays in June. GM Keith Arkell retains his position in first place based on the four rounds to date -

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

Club and Grand Prix events are all ECF online rated, together with the growing number of ECF online leagues and a great opportunity to track your rating progress.

Internationals

The English Chess players team continues to play in 3 Lichess Leagues/ Series including the regular Mega Team Battles on Friday afternoon, the Bundesliga / Quarantine League on Sunday and Thursday evenings, and the midweek Champions League on Tuesday evenings. We have now reached Division 3 in the Quarantine League where we are looking for one of the top two spots to reach the main Bundesliga Division 2.

The Chess.com Nations League Season 3 started on 13th June. We have played in four Sunday afternoon/ evening matches to date including a loss against a strong Argentina team, a draw against Jamaica, a win against Poland and a loss against Romania. This puts us in fourth place in the League at the end of Round 3, just behind Romania

	Name	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Total
1	Kyrgyz Republic	W6	W7	W3	3.0
2	United States	L3	W5	W7	2.0
3	Romania	W2	W8	L1	2.0
4	England	L7	D6	W8	1.5
5	Canada	D8	L2	D6	1.0
6	Jamaica	L1	D4	D5	1.0
7	Argentina	W4	L1	L2	1.0
8	Poland	D5	L3	L4	0.5



2021 British Online Championships II - 24 July - 8 August 2021

The BOCC-2 starts on 24 July with a week of qualifiers followed by finals week starting on 30 July. The competition will include Qualifiers and Finals for the 2021 British Online Open, Women, Seniors and Junior Championships. You can find more details of the event here -

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/british-online-chess-championships-2021/>.

There is still time to enter the qualifiers for the championship finals and/or the various festival tournaments - just follow the link here to complete the entry form -

<https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/qpszrlh185mcor/>

BOCC- 2 Qualifiers 1 (24th July - 1st August)

Day	Date	Time	Junior	Women	Senior (50/65)	Championship	Major Open / U1700 / U1100	U2000 / U1400	Weekend Events Open / U1800 / U1500
24th July	SAT	10:00 AM	Standard Play Qual Rd 1		Standard Play Qual Rd 1			Rapidplay	
		1:00 pm		Standard Play Qual Rd 1		Blitz Qualifier 1			
		4:00 pm	Rapidplay Qualifier 1						
		7:00 pm				Standard Play Qual Rd 1		Standard Play Rd 1	
25th July	SUN	10:00 AM	Standard Play Qual Rd 2		Standard Play Qual Rd 2				
		1:00 pm		Standard Play Qual Rd 2		Blitz Qualifier 2			
		4:00 pm	Rapidplay Qualifier 2						
		7:00 pm				Standard Play Qual Rd 2		Standard Play Rd 2	
26th July	MON	10:00 AM	Standard Play Qual Rd 3		Standard Play Qual Rd 3				
		1:00 pm		Standard Play Qual Rd 3		Blitz Qualifier 3			
		4:00 pm	Rapidplay Qualifier 3						
		7:00 pm				Standard Play Qual Rd 3		Standard Play Rd 3	
27th July	TUES	10:00 AM	Standard Play Qual Rd 4		Standard Play Qual Rd 4	Rapidplay Qualifier 1			
		1:00 pm		Standard Play Qual Rd 4					
		4:00 pm	Rapidplay Final						
		7:00 pm				Standard Play Qual Rd 4		Standard Play Rd 4	
28th July	WED	10:00 AM	Standard Play Qual Rd 5		Standard Play Qual Rd 5	Rapidplay Qual 2			
		1:00 pm		Standard Play Qual Rd 5					
		4:00 pm	Blitz Qualifier 1						
		7:00 pm				Standard Play Qual Rd 5		Standard Play Rd 5	
29th July	THURS	10:00 AM				Rapidplay Qualifier 3			
		1:00 pm		Blitz Qualifier					
		4:00 pm	Blitz Qualifier 2		Senior Blitz				
		7:00 pm				Blitz Final		Standard Play Rd 6	
30th July	FRI	10:00 AM				Rapidplay Final			
		1:00 pm		Rapidplay Qualifier					
		4:00 pm	Blitz Qualifier 3						
		7:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 1			Standard play Rd 1
31st July	SAT	10:00 AM			Rapidplay Qualifier	Bullet			Standard play Rd 2
		1:00 pm		Blitz Final					
		4:00 pm	Blitz Final						Standard play Rd 3
		7:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 2			
1st Aug	SUN	10:00 AM	Junior Bullet		Rapidplay Final				Standard play Rd 4
		1:00 pm		Rapidplay Final					

BOCC-2 Finals Week (2nd August - 8th August)

		4:00 pm					Rapidplay Final		Standard play Rd 5
		7:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 3			
2nd Aug	MON	10:00 AM	Standardplay Final Rd 1		Standardplay Final Rd 1				
		1:00 pm		Standardplay Final Rd 1					
		4:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 4	Standard Play Rd 1		
		7:00 pm							
3rd Aug	TUES	10:00 AM	Standardplay Final Rd 2		Standardplay Final Rd 2				
		1:00 pm		Standardplay Final Rd 2					
		4:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 5	Standard Play Rd 2		
		7:00 pm							
4th Aug	WED	10:00 AM	Standardplay Final Rd 3		Standardplay Final Rd 3				
		1:00 pm		Standardplay Final Rd 3					
		4:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 6	Standard Play Rd 3		
		7:00 pm							
5th Aug	THURS	10:00 AM	Standardplay Final Rd 4		Standardplay Final Rd 4				
		1:00 pm		Standardplay Final Rd 4					
		4:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 7	Standard Play Rd 4		
		7:00 pm							
6th Aug	FRI	10:00 AM	Standardplay Final Rd 5		Standardplay Final Rd 5				
		1:00 pm		Standardplay Final Rd 5					
		4:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 8	Standard Play Rd 5		
		7:00 pm							
7th Aug	SAT	10:00 AM	Standardplay Final Rd 6		Standardplay Final Rd 6				
		1:00 pm		Standardplay Final Rd 6					
		4:00 pm				Standardplay Final Rd 9	Standard Play Rd 6		
		7:00 pm							
8th Aug	SUN	10:00 AM	Standardplay Final Rd 7		Standardplay Final Rd 7				
		1:00 pm		Standardplay Final Rd 7					
		4:00 pm			Play Off				

Standardplay	60 mins + 15 secs
Standard Play	45 mins + 15 secs
Rapidplay	10 mins + 5 secs
Blitz	3 mins + 2 secs
Bullet	All moves in 1 min

Counties Online Championships 2021 - June to September 2021

The English Online Counties Championship started in June. There are three Championships - **Open**, **Minor Open 1900** (maximum average team rating) and **U1800** (all players under 1800). The Qualifiers are in progress with matches on Saturday 12th & 19th June, and Saturday 3rd July. Remaining qualifiers will be on 17th July & 21st August with Semi-Finals on 11th September and all Finals on 18th September.

Return to over the board chess

Over the board outdoor and junior events continue with a number of general step 2 rule of 6 events, as we continue through the steps of the Government's HMG Spring Plan and look forward to Step 4 which start from 19th July. We will be issuing a survey shortly to get feedback on how the ECF can support clubs and organisers in the return to over the board events.

Over the board events 2021

We are also planning a number of ECF 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 and with the potential to use some new formats including hybrid team matches, dependant on feedback from 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 starting in September and finals next year.

British Championships 2021 2 October – 10 October

Over the board championships are now scheduled for October with separate venues in Hull and Milton Keynes. The Hull venue will host the British Open and Women's Championship, and Milton Keynes will host the British Seniors and Juniors Finals, with Seniors and Juniors co-located and on different days. The events will run daily during the week and weekends, with the junior finals over the weekend of 2nd and 3rd October. The venues will be linked with the top boards and commentary for the remote venue broadcast at each site along with commentary on the local finals. Qualifications will be based on the 2021 Summer Online competition with those who qualify for a final invited to play. We are expecting to broadcast a full commentary programme on the events. The draft schedule is as follows for the various championships and we will be publishing entry forms shortly on the website.

BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP

This event is open only to exempted or qualified players

Saturday 2 October to Sunday 10 October

9 rounds - Rounds 1-8 (Saturday 2 October - Saturday 9 October) begin each day at 2.30pm; round 9 (Sunday 10 October) begins at 10.00am

BRITISH WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIPS

7 rounds - Rounds 1 (Thursday 7 October at 5 pm), rounds 2-7 (Friday 8 October to Sunday 10 October at 10am and 5pm)

BRITISH SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

65+ (born 1956 or earlier) | 50+ (born 1971 or earlier)

7 rounds – Rounds 1-6 (Monday 4 October - Saturday 9 October) begin each day at 2.30pm; Round 7 (Sunday 10th October) begins at 10.00am

BRITISH JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

5 rounds - Saturday 2nd October – 10 am, 1.30pm, and 5:00 pm
Sunday 3rd October - 10.00am, and 1.30 pm

UNDER 16 (born 2005 or later); UNDER 14 (born 2007 or later); UNDER 12 (born 2009 or later); UNDER 10 (born 2011 or later); UNDER 8 (born 2013 or later)

MAJOR OPEN (OPEN TO ALL PLAYERS) – TO BE CONFIRMED

Saturday 2 October to Sunday 10 October

9 rounds - Rounds 1-8 (Saturday 2 October – Saturday 9 October) begin each day at 2.30pm; round 9 (Sunday 10 October) begins at 10am

The play-off will be held on Sunday 10 October. The regulations can be found on the website prior to the Championships. In the event of any other tournament being tied, the title and any prize money will be shared.

Chess for All - New to Chess, Festival/ Coaching, Marathon, and ECF broadcasts

We continue to look at how we can support new players who are looking to take up the game following *The Queen's Gambit* Netflix series and the huge community of chess improvers mostly coming from online play and interested in trying out over the board events as we get back to normal OTB chess.

New to Chess

The latest version of our New to Chess Page includes general advice, web and coaching/ educational resources and links to recent broadcast streams and can be found here -

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

Commentary and Broadcast

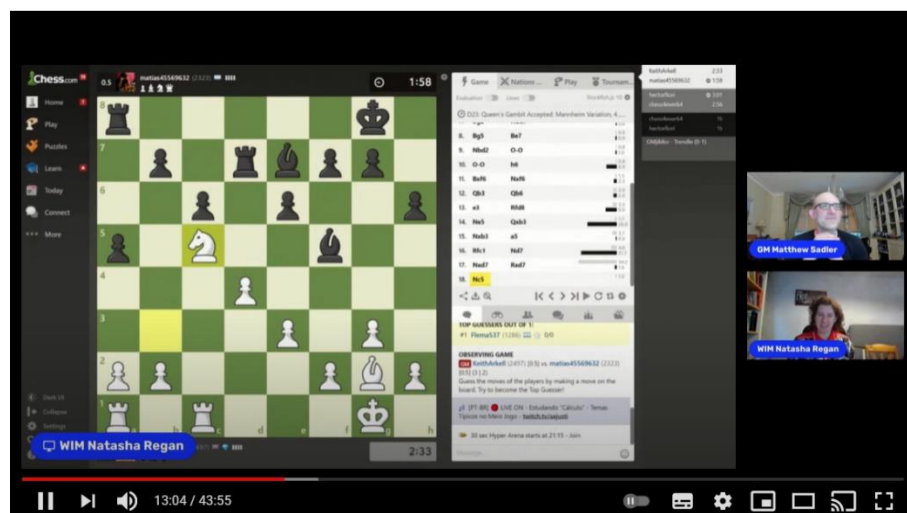
WIM Natasha Regan has done a great job of building an ECF Twitch stream and broadcast channel which can be found here - https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary, with some excellent commentary on recent online events from Natasha, GM Matthew Sadler and numerous other commentators. You can find a full set of recent broadcasts on the ECF's YouTube channel here -

<https://www.youtube.com/c/EnglishChessFederation/videos>

Highlights from the last month include -

- England v Turkey Friendly Internationals
- Champions League Events
- Bundesliga/ Quarantine League Team Battles

Do try and catch up on some of the recent events, which include recordings of the online internationals and team battles.



Chess is Coming Home – to an Alice-themed Wonderland

Tim Wall sets the scene for a great outdoor chess event ...

As [ChessFest](#) comes to Trafalgar Square on Sunday 18th July, **Tim Wall** writes about the festival's activities and how the chess-themed 'Alice: Through the Looking Glass' still inspires children and adults alike, 150 years on ...

There have been some fantastic settings for chess events in history. In the 18th century, the great and the good in the chess world gathered at Café de la Regence in Paris, while the 19th century masters played their swashbuckling gambits at Simpson's in the Strand in London. Perhaps the 20th century's most iconic chess location was on a stage in Reykjavik, Iceland, where America's Bobby Fischer beat Soviet World Champion Boris Spassky in the dramatic 1972 Match of the Century.

For more than a year, chess players and fans the world over have had to make do with a rather more modest kind of chess venue – playing and watching online, from their own homes. But now, with the growing success of Covid-19 vaccines, there is some hope around the corner, and reason to celebrate: On **Sunday 18th July, from 11am-6pm**, chess is coming home to London – just a Mad Hatter's hop, skip and a jump from the oldtime chess mecca, Simpson's.

Commemorating a much-loved children's classic

And what could be a more magnificent setting for the return of over-the-board chess than London's favourite open space, Trafalgar Square? Overlooked by the statue of Admiral Nelson himself, and guarded by the square's famous four lions, a whole new audience of budding chess players can enjoy the game how it was meant to be played: over a board, with friends and friendly banter.

[ChessFest](#), organised by Chess in Schools and Communities, is commemorating one of the best-loved characters in children's literature, Lewis Carroll's 'Alice', who starred in a chess game of her own in the classic '*Through the Looking Glass, and What Alice Found There*' – first published 150 years ago, in 1871. An 'Alice'-themed chess game will be re-enacted on Trafalgar Square on a giant chess board, with 32 professional actors each playing the part of a chess piece. Down the generations, the 'Alice' story, depicting life as a game of chess, has inspired writers, filmmakers and artists as diverse as Jorge Luis Borges, Tim Burton and Ralph Steadman.

As part of ChessFest, Chess in Schools and Communities will be taking 120 children on guided tours of a ground-breaking new exhibition running at London's V&A Museum, entitled '[Alice: Curiouser and Curiouser](#)'.

Chess as a Game-Changer

There will be a mesmerising range of other chess activities for visitors to Trafalgar Square. As well as casual games for the public and simultaneous displays by Grandmasters, there will be free lessons from professional chess tutors for everyone from absolute beginner up – all free for everyone who wants to come along. The event will also link up with chess players in other cities via a live video link-up as a team of children from London take on a team of children from Liverpool in an Inter-City Chess Challenge, and a 'Battle of the Prodigies' takes place between London's Shreyas Royal and New York's Tani Adewumi. Chess has been a game-changer for Shreyas (helping to save him from deportation from the UK) and for Tani (whose family fled religious persecution in Nigeria). ChessFest also aims to encourage positive change by bringing the benefits of chess to a wider audience.

In Carroll's '*Through the Looking Glass*,' the story is set on a magical chessboard, where Red and White Queens, plus bizarre and colourful characters like Tweedledum and Tweedledee, Humpty Dumpty, the Carpenter and the Walrus, and the Lion and the Unicorn, all fight for the supremacy of the kindgom.

Among all the strangeness, a young Alice tries to make sense of this confusing, topsy-turvy world, eventually progressing from being a humble pawn to become a powerful queen in her own right.

This theme, of a young person becoming empowered through the dreamlike game of chess, is not dissimilar to the story of Beth Harmon in the Netflix TV series 'The Queen's Gambit,' where she saw chess games on the ceiling in her dreams. Just as Carroll sought to inspire young people in the Victorian age, so his fantastical tales remain in some ways the perfect analogy for chess as a potential game-changer in young people's lives today.

After what seems to many of us like a far-too-long break from OTB chess, ChessFest could also be just the 'shot in the arm' that we all need to get out there and play some chess again. It certainly looks set to be a great day out and a giant advertisement for our game. If you are interested in taking part, feel free to just turn up – no pre-registration is required. Come with your friends, and enjoy chess's very own 'fan zone'. The twin magic of Lewis Carroll's world and the dreamlike mysteries of chess await.

For more information about ChessFest go to <https://www.chess-fest.com/>, <https://twitter.com/ChessFest2021> or write to info@chessinschools.co.uk



ECF MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS OFFER – Your Federation Needs You!

Your current ECF membership expires on 31st August 2021. It's starting to look as if we will slowly be getting back to normal, as over the board events start to run again after a difficult time for everyone. We very much hope that you will rejoin the ECF so that we have the funding we need for the work that benefits all our members. There are two big reasons why you should rejoin ---

Great membership benefits at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-membership-partners-and-benefits/>. To name just three of these - GoMembership discounts which can save you thousands a year for just a small fee; big discounts on chess products from major chess suppliers; and Chess Moves, a monthly 40-plus pages magazine covering all the news across English chess, and including regular articles and annotations from GMs Michael Adams, Keith Arkell and Peter Wells, as well as many other contributors.

A regularly-updated monthly rating, reflecting your very latest results whether you play over the board or online (or both!)

As an added incentive to renew, membership rates remain unchanged from last year! To add the GoMembership benefit when you renew your membership in Azolve, simply click on the menu [top left], select the Rewards tile, and add to your membership profile. Please note that different membership levels give different benefit and rating service levels. More details here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-membership-rates-and-joining-details/>.

The easiest way to renew or upgrade your membership is online, by card or by direct debit. You will need your username (usually your membership number – Mexxxxxx - or your email address). Here's the link to rejoin - <https://ecf.azolve.com/>. If you need assistance, the ECF office is open from 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday. Please email or call, and a member of the office staff will be able to help. We understand that these are difficult times for our members and whatever category of membership you choose, we would like to thank you in advance for your support.

- the ECF Admin Team Email: membership@englishchess.org.uk Tel: 01424 775222

National U1400 is BACK!

ECF County Chess Controller **Mark Murrell** writes --- Building on the impromptu introduction of the National 100 last summer and the Chess For All Festival, this event on Chess.com provides a team competition for those who prefer a longer time control (G60/15). It brings county chess to those who have had little opportunity to play in the counties programme.

Players will be assigned to a notional region according to county allegiance with the four regions competing against each other on the three 6.30pm Saturday matchdays of 21 August, 11 September and 18 September. Look out for the online entry form on the Online County Championships page where you will be able to select your qualifying county and provide availability for each set date ---

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/online-counties-championships-2021/>

If you have an OTB rating U1400 this event is for you. Unrated players will have a competition rating assigned by the Controller having regard to their online performances.

OTB Inter-County competition returns this August

With two seasons of the ECF Counties Championships lost to Covid-19, a summer warm-up event starts next month to ready players and county associations for the return of over-the-board chess and the restart of the next 100 years of the Counties Championship.

Whilst your clubs and leagues consider their plans for the future, here is your chance to play real chess and represent your county ...

The County Challenge will see teams of 8 compete against others within their assigned region on set matchdays of Saturdays 14 August and 4 & 25 September. There will be average team rating Major 2000 and Minor 1600 competitions bringing players of most playing strengths into consideration for selection. A more detailed synopsis can be found here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/ECF-OTB-Pre-season-County-Competition.pdf>. Please note – a minimum of ECF Bronze membership is required.

As the country enters a new phase of personal and community responsibility against rising infection rates, the playing of chess indoors, particularly for non-blitz chess, will continue to present challenges for chess organisers for the coming season. Being considerate of others will be the mantra going forwards, and this will be reflected in the competition regulations and conditions of entry for the County Challenge, which will be published on the Counties Championship 2021/22 webpage once official guidance has been considered.

Counties Championship 2021 – English Chess Federation

With the Counties Championships restarting in the autumn, chess unions will also be considering how to encourage as many players as possible to return to team chess in a safe, reassuring and comfortable way. There will need to be flexibility too as circumstances change. The 2021/22 season brings with it new wider rating-limited sections, the new monthly rating lists for board orders and eligibility set by reference to the 1 September Official Original List.

COVID 19 – The Rematch

Danny Rosenbaum writes ---

Elsewhere in this newsletter we have the fine report from CHESS magazine on our 24-hour chess marathon in aid of The British Red Cross, *Checkmate Covid - The Rematch* (which features an interview with the winner GM Keith Arkell). The event is also featured in GM Michael Adams's regular column for us. There are couple of things we would like to add.

Firstly, you can get a report on the event, with thanks to the commentators, donors and others, at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/checkmate-covid-19-the-rematch-results/>

The team of commentators was exceptional both in terms of quantity and quality, with all 24 hours covered! We are grateful to all of them, and in particular to WIM Natasha Regan who spent so much time organising the commentary line-up. Please do follow the ECF channel on Twitch https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary and you will get an email each time we go on air. You can watch back all the videos of the marathon and other great content at <https://www.youtube.com/c/EnglishChessFederation/videos>

A few other notable mentions --- GM David Norwood made a variety of generous donations including £200 to the top female, which was won by WFM Louise Head; Chess.com donated \$500 as well as providing several prizes; Julio Calcina streamed for all 24 hours!

Congratulations to the top three - GM Keith Arkell, CM Shreyas Royal, and Nathanael Paul. You can find an entertaining game from the latter in which he took on GM Simon Williams at <https://www.chess.com/game/live/16655154367>. You can find all the games and the final standings at <https://www.chess.com/tournament/live/arena/checkmate-covid---the-rematch-1187013>



4NCL 25th Congress

The 4NCL's 25th Congress over the weekend of 9-11 July at Woodland Grange in Leamington Spa was the biggest over the board congress played under Covid restrictions in the UK so far and was a great success, with no fewer than 130 players attending. It was particularly pleasing to see our young players doing so well, with Jonah Willow and Aaravamudhan Balaji sharing first place in the Open section, Daniel Gomez winning the Major and Daniel Shek winning the Minor.

Placing	Title	Open	Points
1st=	FM	Jonah B Willow	4½
	CM	Aaravamudhan Balaji	4½
3rd	GM	Keith C Arkell	4
4th=	GM	Nigel R Davies	3½
		John Merriman	3½
	FM	Peter J Sowray	3½
		Steven A Jones	3½
	FM	Tim P Wall	3½
Rating		Savas Marin Stoica	3

Placing	Title	Major	Points
1st		Daniel Gomez	5
2nd=		Julia Volovich	4

		Jude Shearsby	4
		George Hollands	4
		Lewis Turner	4
Rating		Avyukt Dasgupta	3

Placing	Title	Minor	Points
1st		Daniel Shek	4½
2nd=		Anurai Sainbayar	4
		Alan Llewellyn	4
		Trevor Blower	4
Rating		Zain Patel	3½

--- Mike Truran



European Individual Chess Championship

Regulations here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/european-individual-chess-championship-2021/>



European Senior Chess Championship 2021

More here - <https://www.europechess.org/european-senior-chess-championship-2021-official-regulations/>



Team England, World and European Daily Chess Champions

ECF Manager for Daily Chess Andrew Caswell writes ---

ECF 2020 Daily Chess tournament

Round 3 of the tournament has now started. The original 99 entrants have been reduced to just 9 who are competing in 3 groups of 3 to decide which 3 players will play the in the final round for the title of 2020 Champion.

ECF 2021 Daily Championships

149 players entered the 3 tournament sections (Open, U1750, U1400 as per Chess.com ratings). There is some way to go in all of these but the U1400 and U1750 tournaments are into their second rounds.

World and European Leagues on Chess.com

Team England have been crowned both World and European Champions for 2020 with a 100% record in both competitions after recording a narrow victory over Russia in a 665 board match (the match can be found here - <https://www.chess.com/club/matches/team-england/1120658>). Team England have continued that form into 2021 and remain unbeaten after 6 rounds this year with healthy leads against other title contenders Russia and Holland, but with third placed Spain still to play.

Happy Birthday, Guildford!

Nigel Povah chronicles Guildford Chess Club's glorious 125 years ---



Alice Through the Looking Glass in the grounds of Guildford Castle

Guildford Chess Club was founded on Friday 10th April 1896 at the Guildford Institute, as the 'Guildford and Working Men's Institute (GWMI) Chess Club'. The minutes reported that Charles Dodgson (aka Lewis Carroll) who lived in Guildford for a period until his death in 1898, occasionally visited the Club.

On the Club's third anniversary on 10th April 1899, GWMI amalgamated with the original Guildford Chess Club, which had been in existence since at least 1887 although unfortunately no minutes appear to exist for that Club, so little is known about its background. It was decided to adopt the latter's name and to make the Guildford Institute their home venue, which it has remained to this day. The minutes note, 'The object of the

Guildford Chess Club is to play, promote and teach the game of Chess'.

In 1899 the newly formed Club immediately registered its first ever league success, by winning the Surrey League's Beaumont Cup, which had only been inaugurated in 1895. The Club continued with its activities which included playing league chess, friendly matches and running internal tournaments and this was the case for many years, although inter-club competition completely ceased during the Great War, with the minute book reporting "... some of our keenest and best players have joined his Majesty's forces to help checkmate the German Emperor." Interestingly the Club saw its first lady member join in 1918!



José Capablanca

The Club celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1920 with an invitation to the legendary José Capablanca to give a 42-board simultaneous display, which he graciously accepted and unsurprisingly won every game!

The Club demonstrated its commitment to its original object of promoting and teaching chess by creating a junior section, which saw some very promising young talent coming through from the Royal Grammar School based in Guildford and this strong association between the Club and the School is still evident today. Amongst this talent were two very promising players, B.C. Gould and A.W.J. Down, both of whom went on to win British Boys Championships between 1929 and 1933.

In 1934, in keeping with its mandate, the Club invited E. Znosko-Borovsky, the noted Russian Chess master to give a lecture on 'General Principles'.

Guildford's reputation as a thriving club was further evidenced by an invitation to the reigning British Champion, Sir George Thomas, to give a 25-board Simultaneous display at the Royal Grammar School on 13th December 1935. Sir George met strong resistance, winning 17, drawing 6 and losing 2 – a fine result for Guildford members.



Sir George Thomas

After the Second World War, the Club resumed its winning ways by securing the Surrey Waechter shield in the 1946/47 season, the first time it had been contested since Guildford's last victory in the 1937/38 season. On 5th February 1947 the Club also played an unusual 12-board match against a team of German Prisoners of War from the local POW camp, with Guildford winning 10-2. There was a return fixture on 1st July, which Guildford also won by 9½-2½.

The post-war years were quite uneventful for the Club who continued to enjoy its share of success in the various local league competitions and it wasn't until the 1990s that the Club started to make some major strides forward.

1993/4 was a particularly successful season for the Club with it winning the Surrey Trophy for only the second time, as well as winning the Surrey Border League 1st division. The Club also achieved its best ever performance in the National Club championship by reaching the Final where it sadly lost 4-2 to a strong Paisley YMCA team.

In the 1995/96 season the Club celebrated its centenary by organising a series of events, which included a 12-board match against the Surrey Border League, which the Club won 8-4, the restoration of an open-air chess board in the Castle grounds, staging the first Masnou tournament in the UK and holding a Centenary dinner with IM William Hartston as the keynote speaker.

In September 1995 the Club was nominated as one of the Clubs to represent England in the European Club Championship played at the Barbican. The Club managed to win one of its three matches. The Club repeated this feat of representing England the following year in the 12th European Club Cup in September 1996, as was reported in the judges' recommendation when it awarded the Club with the title of the British Chess Federation's 'Club of the Year' in 1996/97.

The 2000s saw Guildford becoming a serious competitor in the 4NCL, with the team initially managed by Nigel Povah and later by Roger Emerson after Nigel had to step back due to ill health. Guildford managed to win the 4NCL a total of 10 times between 2003/4 and 2018/19 making it by far the most successful Club in the history of the 4NCL.

2019-20 saw the temporary demise of OTB chess due to the Covid pandemic, so Guildford turned its attention to playing in the 4NCL Online League. Guildford fielded a team called 'Guildford Young Guns' and it achieved a very creditable result being the losing finalists in a strong competition.

2020-21 saw the same outcome for the Guildford Young Guns. However, Roger and Nigel decided to sponsor a Guildford-4NCL entry in the European Online Club Championship and the five-board squad comprised of England's top four: Mickey Adams, David Howell, Luke McShane and Gawain Jones plus Bulgarian GM Ivan Cheparinov, all of whom had played for Guildford in the 4NCL over the last two-three seasons. The team were seeded third from over 90 entries and it easily qualified for the final stage of the tournament with the top ten best teams. However, it unfortunately failed to live up to its seeding at this point and ended up in a disappointing seventh place.

So it has been an interesting 125 years for the Club, which has been based at the same venue for its entire existence, but I think it is fair to say that during this time, thanks to the Club's various achievements, it has evolved to become one of the most successful chess clubs in the country.

Finally, the Club is due to celebrate its 125th anniversary by hosting a 125-board open-air Simultaneous display on Guildford High Street on Saturday 11th September. The display will be given by a selection of players, all of whom have played for Guildford over the years, headed up by GMs Gawain Jones and Nick Pert and supported by IMs Andrew Martin, Matthew Wadsworth and Nigel



FEATURES, WRITING, ANALYSIS, STUDIES AND PROBLEMS

MICHAEL ADAMS' GAME of the MONTH



I wasn't sure if I could find an appropriate game from the ECF Marathon, blitz games are great fun to play, but not always amenable to detailed analysis afterwards, although perhaps yours were a bit better than mine!

Anyway, we should not judge this game between the top two finishers too harshly, besides the demanding time limit the playing duration required to win the event was even more of a handicap to overcome. Considering these provisos the level of play is pretty impressive.

In some ways this features typical blitz game themes: a series of good moves when a natural plan emerges, some shaky ones when the momentum switches in the opposing direction, a tendency to force matters when on reflection a quiet move might have been more useful, and lots of dirty tactical tricks which ultimately decide matters.

S. Royal – K. Arkell

Checkmate Covid Rematch 2021

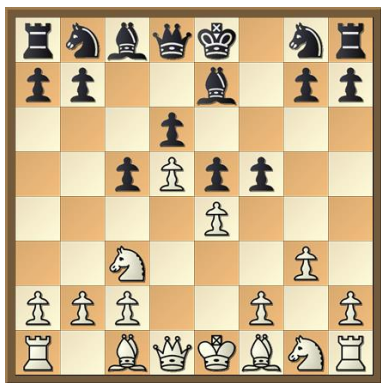
1.d4 c5 2.d5 e5 3.Nc3 d6



If you play all night after a while every opening looks viable! According to my trusty edition of Nunn's Chess Openings this is called the Semi-Benoni, a good choice if you are concerned the Czech Benoni is a bit too promising!

4.e4 Be7 5.g3 White has a number of decent alternatives such as 5.Nf3, 5.Bb5+, or 5.a4.

5...f5 Objectively dubious, but well suited to a blitz game. Keith must have also considered swapping his bad bishop with 5...Bg5 6.Bxg5 Qxg5 7.Nf3, although this does leave White's lead in development looking a bit worrying.



6.Bg2 Having prepared a fianchetto, it was unlikely Shreyas would consider deploying that piece on the other side of the board, but 6.Bb5+! would have required Black to move his king, or lose the pawn on f5 after blocking the check.

6...Nf6 7.Nge2 0-0 8.0-0 fxe4 9.Nxe4 Nxe4 10.Bxe4 Nd7



Black should be careful, 10...Bg5 11.f4! wouldn't work out well, but now all his pieces are mobilising smoothly, and the lack of space is not a significant factor.

11.Nc3 Nf6 12.Bf3 12.Bg2 was better although Black has a pleasant choice between 12...Bg4, or 12...Qe8 with ideas on both sides of the board, to play b5 or Qg6.

12...Bh3 13.Re1 Qd7

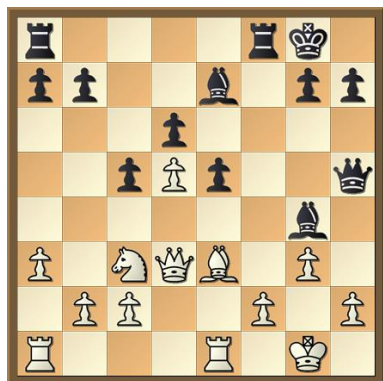


14.a3 When things aren't going well in a blitz game it is hard to reverse the flow, but this is not urgent enough.

14...Qf5 A good move, 14...Ng4 was also strong.

15.Be3 Ng4 16.Bxg4 A regrettable necessity - without a light squared bishop the White king will never be far from a mating net, but against determined defence this will not be so simple to achieve at the quick time limit.

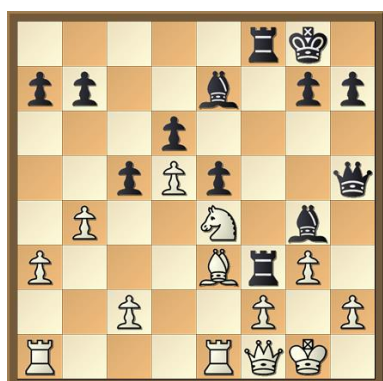
16...Bxg4 17.Qd3 Qh5



18.Qf1 18.Ne4 with the idea that Bf3 can be met by Nd2 in some lines also made sense.

18...Rf3 Doubling rooks looks impressive, but it will take a useful square away from the Black bishop or queen, and **18...Bf3** immediately certainly had its points.

19.Ne4 Raf8 20.b4!



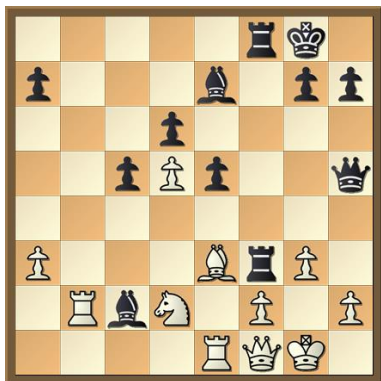
Shreyas begins fighting back, White has to try to hold things together on the kingside, and create some queenside play.

20...b6 21.bxc5 bxc5 22.Rab1! The rook can't do that much damage on its own, but it will be an annoying distraction from Black's aggressive ideas.



22...Bf5 I doubt Keith intended to trap his own rook, although Black is still better afterwards. The retreat **22...R3f7** with the idea of **Bf3** was better.

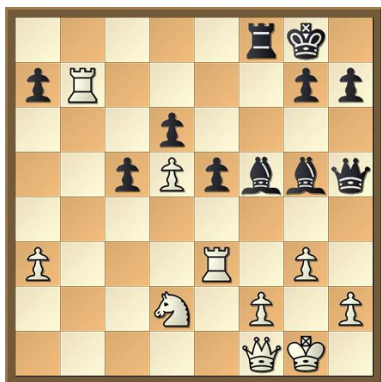
23.Nd2 Bxc2 24.Rb2



24...Rxe3 A mistake - Black should make White give up the knight, as it is one of the few pieces that can cover the sensitive light squares. If you think about the quality of the pieces remaining on the board, **24...Bg6!** was wiser.

25.Rxe3 Bf5 26.Rb7? Forcing moves are always hard to resist when the clock ticks down, but this drives his opponent's pieces to their best locations. Now would have been a good moment to improve the position of the White knight with **26.Ne4!**

26...Bg5 Both Black bishops are working together to control all the key diagonals.



27.f4 Continuing to look for activity and a decent practical try as **27.Re2 Bd3**, or **27.Qe2 Bg4 28.Qe1** don't look inspiring.

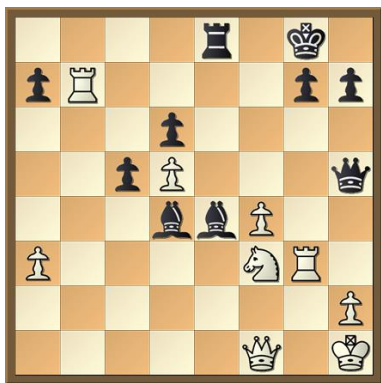
27...exf4 28.gxf4 Bf6 The unexpected withdrawal **28...Bc8!** attacks the loose rook, and prepares **Bxf4**. However Keith's consolidating move looks ideal, defending **g7**, and preparing to land the bishop on **d4**.

29.Rg3 Bd4+ 30.Kh1 Re8 30...Bg6 Putting another barrier on the g-line, and attacking **d5** was a good idea.

31.Nf3 Missing **31.Rg5!** which forces Black to swap queens with **31...Qh3**.

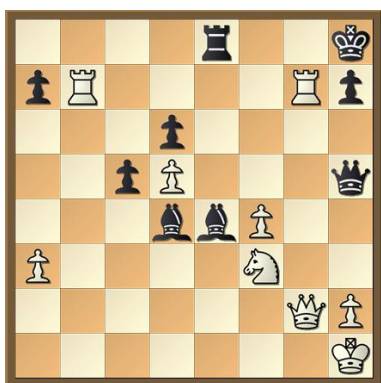
31...Be4

An impressive bishop pair!



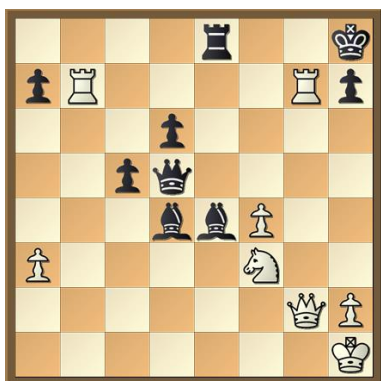
32.Qg2 Kh8 The simplest way to win was 32...g6! closing down White's threats, then 33.Rh3 Qxd5 34.Rhxh7 Bxf3 leaves White out of ideas. The alternative 32...Bxf3 33.Rxf3! leaves White on the edge, but pushing him over is not so simple.

33.Rgxg7



33...Qxd5! This calm decision, navigating some icebergs decides the game.

It's not too difficult to work out that 33...Bxf3? 34.Rxh7+ Qxh7 35.Rxh7+ Kxh7 36.Qxf3 doesn't work, but 33...Qxf3? 34.Rxh7+ Bxh7 with the idea of 35.Qxf3? Be4 is more tempting. However 35.Rxh7+! changes the picture 35...Kxh7 36.Qxf3 and White is winning.



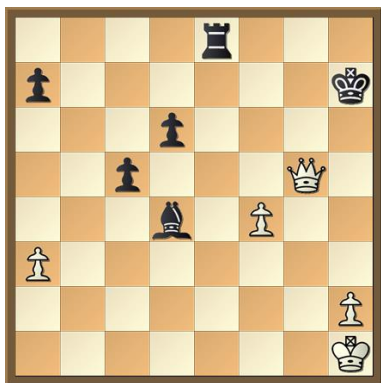
34.Rxh7+? This instigates a forcing sequence with a sting in the tail.

There were a number of better alternatives, which are objectively good for Black, but might well have created considerable confusion over the board. 34.Rbe7 Rb8! 35.h4 Black's next two moves are extremely difficult 35...Bf6! 36.Rc7 Qe6! defending the back rank, and freeing the Black rook for aggressive action.

Moving the other rook to e7; 34.Rge7 Rg8 35.Qxg8+ Qxg8 36.Rxe4 Bf6 is better for Black but leaves plenty to play for.

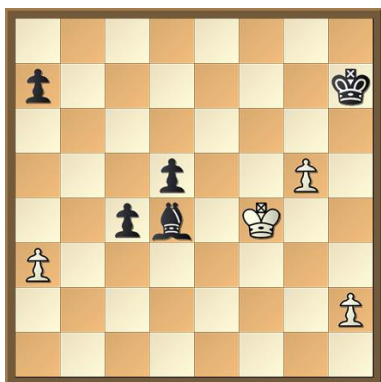
Giving the White king some air with 34.h4 is also sensible 34...Qxb7 35.Rxb7 Bxb7 36.Kh2 Re3 leaves Black with a lot of material for the queen. The best try 37.Qa2! Bxf3 38.Qf7 is not too easy to spot.

34...Bxh7 35.Rxh7+ Kxh7 36.Ng5+ Qxg5 37.Qxg5 All these moves were fairly forced, but Shreyas had missed the next two that matter.



37...Re1+ 38.Kg2 Rg1+ 39.Kf3 Rxe5 40.fxe5 d5 Black is just a piece up, and Shreyas swiftly throws in the towel to move onto the next game!

41.Kf4 c4



0-1

To play this game through in your web browser, go to <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-58-july-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>



Precious Time

Charlie Hazlerigg combines chess and parenting in this excellent creative writing submission ...

Last year was a little different for all of us – Brexit happened, Donald Trump got impeached (again), oh and Covid-19 arrived without invitation and much like the last drinker propping up the bar at the end of the night is refusing to leave (if only there was a fellow virus to take it home). My wife and I also had a significant change on the home front, with the birth of our first child in lockdown last year (quick shout-out to all NHS staff – their support has been fantastic).

Whilst it wasn't the thought that first came to my mind on her arrival, at some point I needed to work out how to find the time to enjoy my chess in this new time-poor life that I had desired for so long. I had become a regular at my local club, Durham City, over the last two years and had every intention of continuing my commitment when the season restarted in the Autumn of 2020. But I was continually

tired and believed there wasn't enough coffee in the country that could recover my cognitive function for a game like chess. So, what to do?

New babies do actually sleep quite a lot, it is just they do it in short naps throughout the entire 24-hour period which is entirely incompatible to the circadian rhythms of an adult. Therefore, whilst I wasn't that *compos mentis* when I had time, time and therefore opportunity was available, but only in short bursts. So, when I held my daughter for her naps, whilst on parental leave I could switch on a chess streamer in the background (quietly) and absorb chess mastery.

I became a fan of IM John Bartholomew and an (unendorsed) plug: I am happy to recommend his videos and calm, informative instruction if you are looking for some new content. More recently, in line with developing my more aggressive playing style (see later), I have also moved on to NM James Canty III for a wild ride through his games. On the other hand, my goal of getting through all 400-plus pages of *Fundamental Chess Openings* has had to be put on the backburner as I had no hands or brain cells free. It is all about doing what you can with what you have.

In practicality, trying to ask my Queen for four-plus hours to travel to play chess matches around the North East may have been met with, if not a lack of humour, certainly enough of a glare that I would have felt guilty for fleeing the home for what is on a fundamental basis, a hobby (my wife and I do have slight differences in philosophy over what takes precedence, work or play, but that's for another day).

However, online Leagues, like a backwards Knight move, came to my rescue! I could cut a match time in half without the need to travel and though my wife was holding the fort, I could still provide childcare support mid-game if needed. I have ended up playing 13 League matches and eight club championship matches to date, with almost all requiring me to leave my clock running whilst I put nappies on to wash, bottle feeding or a bit of swaying to get her to sleep. These are not the usual mid-game tactics you see in all the chess books and needless to say, my clock management would make any chess coach weep.

I was in danger of nursing my clock management quirks from an inconvenience into a full-blown leviathan threatening to sink my rating. I wanted to keep playing (I love the game) and I needed to be a parent of a young child (I love spending time with her) so I needed to find a solution and it came in the form of ... bullet chess.

Before any purists sacrifice me like a flawed gambit line, I can say that I am one of you and have always disliked bullet chess. However, in my current predicament it was perfect. The benefit was two-fold. Firstly, I could execute rapid decisions for League matches when I had put myself under time pressure. Secondly, it also allowed me to do at least some degree of practice, as whiling away continuous hours for classical games was like a Covid-19 vaccination centre slot in Newcastle – often unavailable.

I became a convert to two-minute games on Lichess. Finding tactical sequences (occasionally) and best moves (rare!) were often joys of games past and I frequently had to content myself with the less satisfying outcome of winning on time, having frantically evaded trades in a losing position. I tried to perfect being an awkward player to face – playing dynamic lines to make things tricky and Pawn sacrifices became routine. I'm the first to admit that my approach may often be tactically unsound, but it made it easy for my opponents to make mistakes at my modest grading and led to truly enjoyable games. (In the most part anyway as I recall in one match I misplayed the fantasy variation against the Caro-Kann that resulted in a slow lingering torturous loss).

It also meant that even when a piece down, I always had optimism that I could somehow get back into the game. In one memorable encounter I recovered to a draw late on against a stronger opponent having been behind from the early moves. Generally, though, I have found the approach to be quite

successful (and joyful) and I can only apologise and ask forbearance of my teammates who regularly had to deal with my swings in fortune whilst trying to get a favourable match result.

As for my fellow new parents, I can only encourage you to keep playing and await the day that you can share your passion with your child. Enjoy the game and if on occasion your play suffers in the short-term, give yourself a break and perhaps forego the computer analysis!



ARKELL'S ENDINGS - The Need for Precision

'Fast is fine, but accuracy is everything' – Wyatt Earp

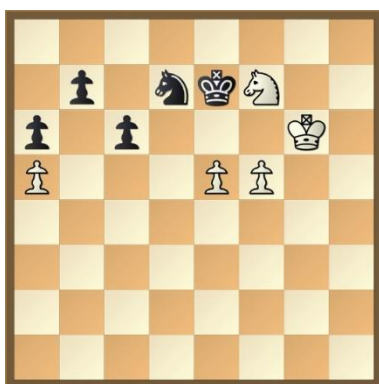


(2880) Arkell,Keith - Franklin,Sam [E62]

4NCL 2018–19 England ENG, 17.03.2019

[Keith Arkell]

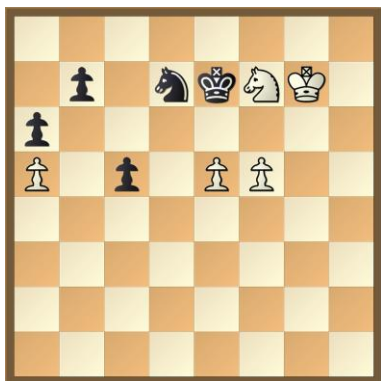
1.Nf3 Nf6 2.d4 g6 3.c4 Bg7 4.Nc3 0-0 5.g3 d6 6.Bg2 Nc6 7.0-0 Rb8 8.Bf4 a6 9.a4 h6 10.a5 g5 11.Bc1 e5 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.Be3 Be6 14.Qa4 Qe7 15.Rfd1 Rfd8 16.h3 Rxd1+ 17.Rxd1 Rd8 18.Rxd8+ Qxd8 19.Nd2 Bd7 20.Qa1 Qe7 21.Nb3 Qb4 22.Qa4 Bf8 23.Qxb4 Bxb4 24.Na2 Be7 25.g4 Kf8 26.Kf1 Ke8 27.Ke1 Nb4 28.Nxb4 Bxb4+ 29.Bd2 Bxd2+ 30.Kxd2 Bc8 31.Nc5 c6 32.Nd3 Nd7 33.Be4 Nf6 34.Bg2 h5 35.gxh5 Nxh5 36.Nxe5 Nf4 37.Bf1 Bxh3 38.Bxh3 Nxh3 39.Nd3 Kd7 40.Nc5+ Kc7 41.Ke3 Nf4 42.Kf3 f5 43.e3 Ng6 44.Ne6+ Kd6 45.Nxg5 Ne5+ 46.Kf4 Nxc4 47.Kxf5 Nxb2 48.Ne4+ Kd5 49.Nd2 Kd6 50.e4 Ke7 51.e5 Nd3 52.f4 Nc5 53.Nc4 Kf7 54.Nd6+ Ke7 55.Kg6 Ke6 56.Nf7 Ke7 57.f5 Nd7



Of the various ways to classify endgames the most obvious is by material balance, but another is to draw a distinction between those in which you can slowly improve your position and carry out long term plans and those in which absolute precision is required. The following endgame fits the latter category. Starting from this position, each one of my next eleven moves was absolutely forced if I were to win the game. Who else can join me on 11/11?

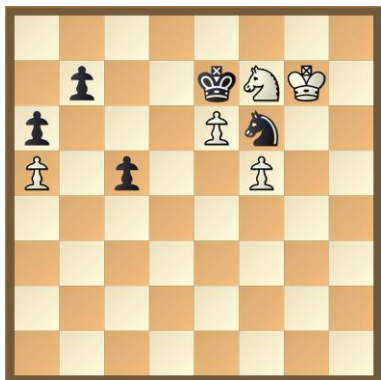
58.Kg7 [If you found 58 Kg7 you are on 1/1. Other moves fail to bring home the point, for example 58 f6+? grinds to a halt after 58...Ke6, and 58 e6 allows the strong piece sacrifice 58...Nf8+ followed by 59...Nxe6.]

58...c5



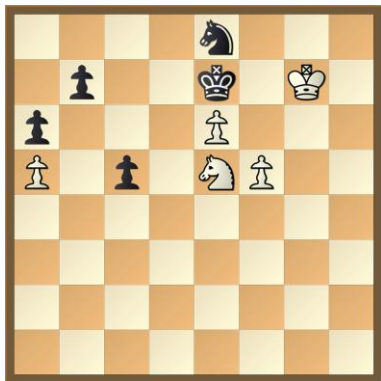
59.e6 Again there is no other move. White must act fast! 2/2

59...Nf6



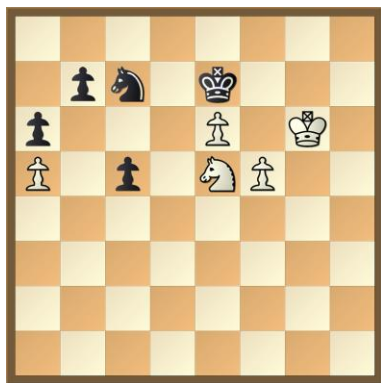
60.Ne5 You shouldn't be considering any other move here. 3/3

60...Ne8+



61.Kg6 Again clearly the only move. 4/4.

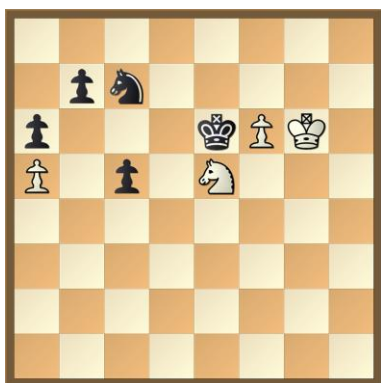
61...Nc7



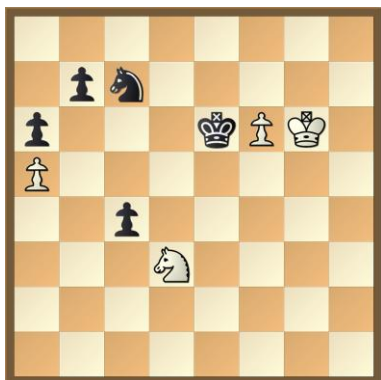
62.f6+

{5/5, but you really only deserve a point if you have seen the follow-up. I don't need my e-pawn - it's his colleague who is destined for greater things.}

62.. Kxe6



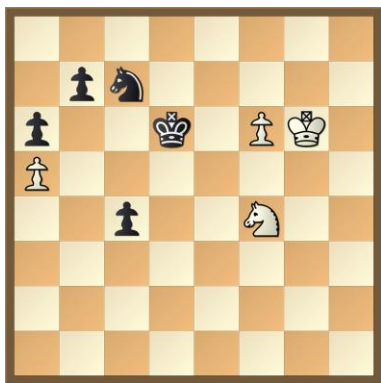
63.Nd3 {6/6.} 63...c4



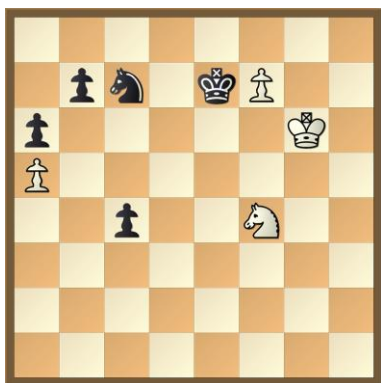
{If 63...Kd7 64 f7 Ne6 65 Nxc5+, or here 64...Ke7 65 Nxc5 Kf8 (65...Ne8 66 Nd7!) 66 Nd7+}

64.Nf4+ {Did you play this because you saw that 64 Nc5+ fails (64...Kd6 65 f7 Ke7 66 Kg7 Ne8+!) or did you regard the two moves as being of equal value? Either way, 7/7.}

64...Kd6



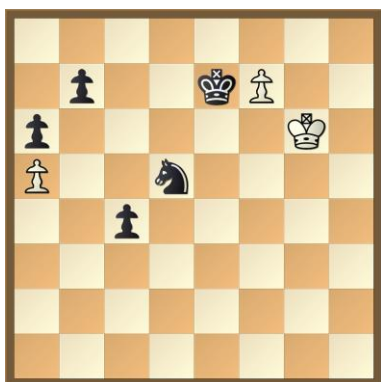
65.f7 {8/8.} 65...Ke7



66.Nd5+

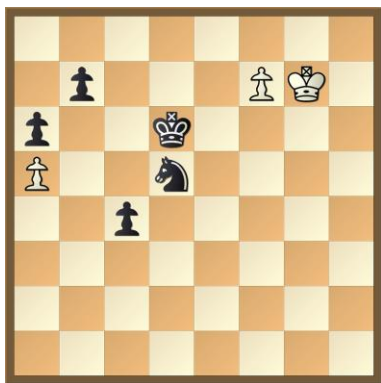
{If you are on 9/9 you probably saw this move a long way off. It is, of course, fundamental to the whole sequence.}

66...Nxd5



67.Kg7 {10/10.}

67...Kd6



68.f8Q+ {And if you have got this far you won't slip up here. Congratulations if you made it to 11/11!
The game concluded:}

**68...Kc6 69.Qc8+ Nc7 70.Qf5 Nd5 71.Kf7 b6 72.axb6 Nxb6 73.Qa5 Nd5 74.Ke6 Nc7+ 75.Ke5 Nb5
76.Qb4 c3 77.Qc4+ Kb6 78.Kd5 Nc7+ 79.Kd4 Nb5+ 80.Kd3 a5 81.Qa4 Ka6 82.Kc4**

1-0

To play these games through in your web browser, go to

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-58-july-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>



Didactic Tactic

How we talk about tactics and why it matters by Peter Wells

I have been thinking lately about the ways in which we describe chess tactics. We tend to begin with a range of easily defined devices - forks, pins, skewers, double attacks etc. - and it is clearly important that we do. We need to be speaking a common language on these and there are numerous books and other resources which neatly classify them in this way. Indeed, it is often only late in the day that the admission is made - perhaps by means of a final chapter on 'mixed themes' - that in practice, the most interesting tactics often involve a blending of these different elements.

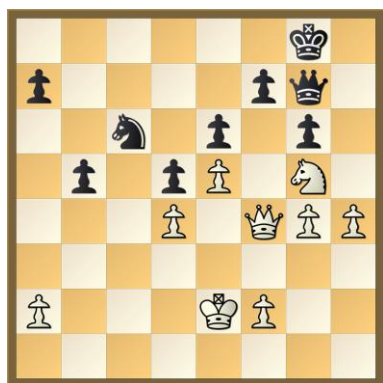
Beyond these basics we are liable to find a further set of schemes such as 'removal of the defender', or 'overworked piece'. These are not fundamentally different, but they perhaps require more reflection on the position as a whole. After all, to remove a key defender we need first to establish which pieces are performing vital defensive tasks and this is unlikely to jump out at us as quickly as, say, a standard pin or fork.

There is a further set of important elements which work especially well as prompts. These include 'loose pieces', tension on the files and diagonals, potentially trapped pieces and so on. Whereas you will often hear coaches asking players to ensure that they 'consider all checks and captures before making a move', you don't hear them suggesting that they should routinely check for all forks, skewers and so on. This could easily become unmanageable. However, the more general advice to be on the lookout for loose pieces, or pieces short of safe squares (whether one's own as a precaution, or one's opponent's as an opportunity) is wise and should be absolutely standard practice. This is one step towards addressing the difference between solving problems and playing games which I alluded to in *Chess Improvement: It's all in the mindset*. When playing a game we (hopefully) have no one tapping on our shoulder telling us that this is a moment of tactical opportunity. We have to use whatever resources we can find to alert ourselves and apportion more time accordingly to checking all tactical possibilities. The prompts I have described are pivotal to this process.

Some great tactics can be well described using these elements. The following appeals to me as an example of a position involving mixed themes which can nonetheless be defined in very straightforward terms. I also find it exceptionally beautiful.

Milan Matulovic – Alexandar Tsvetkov

Varna, 1965



From the diagram White played **32.Qc1!!** with the delightful point that **32...Nxd4+** (32...Na5 33. Qc7 Nc4 34.Qxa7 would lose just a pawn, but shouldn't hold out much hope for the defence.) **33.Kd3 Qxe5** can be met by **34.Qc8+!** (34.Qc3?! Qe2+ 35.Kxd4 Qxf2 is fine for Black) **34...Kg7 35.Qh8+!! Kxh8 36.Nxf7+ Kg7 37.Nxe5** and the black knight is trapped. There are only two motifs in play here – fork and trapped piece – and 35.Qh8+, whilst spectacular, may be quite familiar due to (amongst others) the well-known game from the Spassky-Petrosian match played just a year or so later. Still, I am fairly confident in asserting that the aesthetic force comes from the efficiency with which the one theme enables the other and the way this jars with our expectations. OK, the trapped piece theme does come to mind at the start, since after 33.Kd3 the knight has no safe squares. However, not only does 2...Qxe5 appear to deal with this problem, but we would also suppose at first sight that exchanging the queens in the course of the tactic will solve the knight's issues. The fact that the combination results in the white knight landing on just the square – e5 – which ensures its counterpart's misery looks like the stuff of compositions, not practical play.

By contrast, some tactics are much harder to describe. Sincere apologies to David Howell for the following example, tactlessly drawing attention to a combinational possibility which his opponent missed in the course of David's otherwise stellar performance for Guildford at the recent European Online Club Championships. It does, however, offer an instance of a fascinating tactic which poses a real challenge in trying to capture what is going on.

Robert Svane – David Howell

European Online CC Final March 2021



Here in what I assume was mutual time pressure, White overlooked the delightful but not tremendously difficult possibility **24.Rxf7! Rxf7 25.Rd7!** which wins significant material on the spot.

Black's least materially damaging response is arguably 25...Rxd7 26.Nxa5+ Kh7 27.Nxb7 c6 which traps the knight but leaves his position utterly wrecked.

We have quite a mixture here. Pins are certainly at the heart of this. It is not just the pin on the c7-pawn which ensures that 25...Raf8 is no solution to Black's problems, but also that the initial 'removal of the defender' with 24 Rxf7! is really all about how vital this bishop's pin is to the defence. There are also discovered checks and even double checks (since 25...Qc6 is refuted by 26 Rxf7 Kxf7 27 Ne5+! first and foremost) and we could talk about the queen on b7 as a loose piece if that helps as well.

Most of the time we are not attempting a scientific description of tactics. We are rather approaching them as players and coaches trying to guide ourselves or others to improvement. For this purpose the best description is simply the one that works, the one that gives the greatest likelihood that we will exploit similar opportunities the next time they are available. With this tactic though, I find it easiest to explain simply why I find it so attractive. I think it is the paradox of giving up material to replace an invading rook which is in no danger, with one which is under attack. There should be otherwise no difference in the attacking qualities of the first rook on d7 and the second. Yet in fact they are entirely different, precisely because far from endangering our second d7 invasion, replacing the effective bishop on f7 with a hapless rook actually liberates all the supporting troops to transform the rook's experience.

I suspect that many players are busy practising so many tactics these days, that they often forget to pause and contemplate them in a way which brings out their magic. For those describing tactics, it is worth trying to express what makes them so attractive. Not a bad idea in terms of trying to get others to share our enthusiasm either – for it is worthwhile spreading the message that shuffling these (preferably) wooden pieces around a board can generate real aesthetic pleasure to as many people as are willing to listen.



Problem Corner

Christopher Jones with his monthly conundrum

In the last Newsletter I left you with this problem –



Mate in 3

Franz Dittrich

3rd Prize, *Cesky spolek sachovni* 1898

As I said last time, it is worrying that the black King could head for safety by going to f5 if we don't prevent this. So maybe the key move, 1.f5!, isn't all that subtle. On the other hand, it does make the e5 square available to the King, so it is what problemists call a 'give and take key'. The threat is 2.Qf3+ and 3.Nc6#. As I hinted in the last Newsletter, the two black Rooks are artfully placed to supply parallel defences. Either of them by capturing the b7N would prepare a bolthole for the King at d6, but

each of them in thus capturing would give up a vital defensive capability. If 1...Raxb7, then 2.g3 produces an unanswerable threat of 3.Qf4#, since Black no longer has the resource 2...Ra2; and if 1...Rgxb7, then 2.Kg3 similarly forces 3.Qf4# because 2...Rxb6+ is no longer possible. There are other defences, including two nice ones in which Black unwittingly blocks a square that would otherwise have been a bolthole for his King – 1...Nd4 2.Nd6+ Ke5 3.Qg3# and 1...c3 2.Qf3+ Kd4 3.Qf4#. Note also 1...Ke5 2.Nc6+ Kd5 (or Ke4) 3.Qf3#.

In this 'Problem Corner' I don't usually delve into the murky world of helpmates, but I do know that a form of chess puzzle that has a wide appeal is the *series-helpmate* – a position in which Black makes an uninterrupted sequence of a specified number of moves in order to reach a position in which White can administer mate on the move. By way of illustration, here is one, complete with solution –



Series-helpmate in 5 – 2 solutions

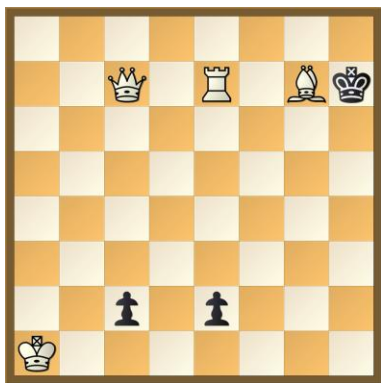
Viktor Bene

8th Honourable Mention, *Probleemblad* 1999

In solving this, you make a number of assumptions. It's likely that the black Pawns will move. As we can expect there to be an attractive, close relationship between the two solutions, and as White won't need all four officers to construct a mating position (bearing in mind that problem composers don't like to have white officers left as 'spare parts' in any of the solutions) it's a fair bet that one solution will begin with bxc4 and the other with cxd4. And this is indeed the case – the solutions are 1.cxb4 2.c3 3.c2 4.cxb1=R 5.Rb4 Ra1 and 1.cxd4 ... 4.dxe1=B 5.Bb4 Bc2. I think you'll agree that this is a very neat pairing of solutions.

I saw this problem in a recent issue of The Problemist Supplement, part of *The Problemist*, the two-monthly publication of The British Chess Problem Society (for more details – and for more problems on which to test your solving prowess – go to www.theproblemist.org/), and from the same article here is another series-helpmate by the same composer. It's perhaps a little bit trickier, but you can again assume that both black Pawns will be significant in both solutions – as indeed will all the white officers (with the proviso that artistic standards won't be infringed if a white officer is captured in the course of either of the solutions). It is another very neat and economically achieved solution by the very talented Viktor Bene (1947-2010), in which even the placing of the white King is relevant. (It would not be permissible to include in mid-solution a move that would put the white King in check.)

In this case, we reach the position for the second solution by replacing the white Rook in the diagram with a white Knight. Clearly, this makes quite a difference! – the Bishop at g7 is no longer protected (though two other squares next to the black King *are* now protected).



Series-helpmate in 4 (b)e7=white Knight

Viktor Bene

Dedicated to Christer Jonsson – 50

Springaren 1997

Solution next time! In the meantime, if you have any queries or comments don't hesitate to email me at cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk



The Interview

Mark Rivlin interviews Stephen Moss

A lot of ECF members will know you through your excellent 2016 book *The Rookie*. Please tell us about the history behind the book and why you wrote it.

Thank you for your kind words Mark. For a long time I had wanted to write a book about the history and culture of sport. I even took a contract to do one, but the subject was too big for me and I pulled out. But I was still interested in the idea of a game that stands for something bigger, so I turned my attention to chess. I was fascinated by men – and it was always men – I met in club chess who clearly struggled with what we foolishly call "the real world" but who found themselves over the chessboard. They couldn't quite cope with the messiness of life, but the beauty and logic of chess made sense to them. That was my starting point and it grew from there. Journalists, which I vaguely am, often struggle with bigger, more textured structures like books, so I hit on the wheeze of writing a book in eight chapters (or files), each broken down into eight units: I saw it as the world, history, culture and meaning of chess described in 64 squares, alternating between white squares, signifying light (where I met great players or described the geniuses of the past) and black squares, signifying darkness (where I described my own desperate performances in tournaments and recounted my generally shambolic, error-strewn games). Once I had this structure, everything flowed from that. I hope it's a book that will always find a home, as a portrait of chess generally and a snapshot of how the game was played around the world (I played in the UK, Russia, the US, and the Netherlands) in the 2010s.

How much did you know about chess before Nigel Short took on coaching you?

Quite a lot. I learned chess at about the age of 11 and played at secondary school – this was Fischer boom time. I also played at university, but then (not untypically) stopped playing almost completely for about 25 years. I drifted back into it around 2005, when I started playing against some work colleagues, joined a chess club (Surbiton and, later, Kingston) and played a few one-day tournaments. I need to give a shoutout to Paul Durrant at Surbiton: one of the most inspiring people in chess. He made sure that once I arrived at the Surbiton club, I was fully engaged. He has almost singlehandedly turned Surbiton into a large and very strong club – just by being attentive to the different needs of people who come through the door. Other, less successful clubs please take note.

How did Nigel take you to a club-level player? And how did you keep your grade rising after you finished the coaching with him?

To be honest, I don't think he did. I was already weakish club player level when we met, and I think I stayed that way while I was with him. We used to meet at his home in Greece, and our training sessions were very unstructured. He was wonderful and funny and knew everything, but he was way too far above me to be able to impart that knowledge. I went looking for material for witty columns rather than self-improvement, and I think *The Guardian* realised it was a bit of a jolly, because they replaced us after a while with a much more instructive column by Daniel King and chess-loving novelist and screenwriter Ronan Bennett. Nigel is a wonderful writer on chess and has been a great ally to me – he supplied a nice blurb for my book – and I very much look forward to reading his new book, *Winning*. His column in the *Sunday Telegraph* was fantastic, and he had a standalone column in *The Guardian* for a while. It's a great shame no paper is employing him at the moment – someone needs to give that man a column. Yes, he can be provocative, but he calls it as he sees it and is willing to argue the point. Nigel never holds back, which is what makes him such a good chess player – the refusal to take prisoners. But on the basis of our meetings over the years, I reckon his bark is worse than his bite: there is great warmth and humanity beneath that unforgiving surface.

You now have a very respectable grade of 1725. How much competitive chess do you play in a typical season?

"Respectable" – damned with faint praise. I guess that's what I am, though. I tried to make a virtue of that in the book, saying that my pre-revamp ECF grade – which usually hovered between 130 and 150 – was that of the archetypal club player. So the conceit was: could this bog-standard player become an expert in three or four years? Some people were disappointed when the answer proved to be no, but Dominic Lawson, who wrote a lovely review of the book in the *Daily Mail*, thought that was the book's strength. "It is precisely because it is all too difficult for Moss to realise his ambition to become an expert-standard chess player that his book is so engrossing," Lawson wrote. "There are countless volumes that recount the narrators' onward and upwards march to pre-eminence. This is a book about learning to accept one's own mediocrity." Lawson's wonderfully counter-intuitive review made the effort of writing the book worthwhile. As to how much I play in a season: in 2019 I played 34 "classical" graded games and also played in a couple of rapidplays. I have no idea how much I will play post-pandemic. Players in their mid-60s do not tend to get better or find it less stressful to play the game. I will carry on playing out of a sense of duty for Kingston, a club that struggles for members and direction. And I might play some weekenders – the form of chess I like most, where you see a tournament unfolding and get a sense of your rivals. I played in one of those all-play-all sections of 10 players in the amateur at Wijk aan Zee, and that was really joyous. Though in the end also incredible painful, as you will discover if you read the Dutch section of my book.

You have enjoyed a successful career in journalism and writing. You are a feature writer and former literary editor at *The Guardian*, editor of *The Wisden Anthology 1978-2006: Cricket's Age of Revolution*, and in 2010 you were a candidate to be Professor of Poetry at the University of Oxford. How did you get into writing and what are your upcoming projects?

Again that is very kind of you to say so, but you could turn that on its head and say I have been an almost total failure. What constitutes success in journalism: becoming editor of *The Guardian*; producing a scoop that brings down a health secretary? I have done neither: I have taken the obscure middle road, rarely venturing out of my comfort zone. I would say that I am essentially a comic writer who stumbled into journalism. Think William Boot in *Scoop*, though I do think I can do pathos as well as humour. I want to make readers either laugh or cry. Informing them or trying to pin down the facts of a situation I find less interesting. Facts are bloody difficult and dangerous things. Journalists are great egoists, but I sometimes think that masks self-loathing. We want to be writers, artists, but we know that most of what we produce is ephemeral. I started a PhD in history and would like to have been an academic, but I wrote too quickly, thought too expansively (in a very superficial way) and had

panic attacks if I stayed in a library for more than a couple of hours, so I became a journalist instead. The candidacy for the Professor of Poetry was a joke by the way, though I did get 81 votes and came eighth out of 11 candidates. I was serious about my poetry until the age of about 24, when a friend of mine with a first-class degree in English literature told me it was the worst poetry he'd ever read. As for the future: I should write another book, but probably not about chess. The world does not need another book by me about chess!

Do you like playing in the League and Tournament circuits?

Is it probably heretical to say this, but I think evening league chess – in London at least – should be scrapped. Those dreary evenings where you spend more time travelling than actually playing, and end up stuck in a traffic jam or marooned on a late-night train. Let's attend our local clubs for social chess, talks, seminars etc on weekday evenings, and play inter-club chess and tournaments at weekends. The whole playing structure and league system in the UK needs to be looked at afresh. It was designed in about 1932 for civil servants and accountants (almost all male) working a regular 9am to 5pm day who were happy to take the 6.32pm from Clapham to Dorking after their substantial suburban tea. We don't work in that way any more, and we shouldn't play chess that way either. Back to the drawing board.

Please show one of your games that you particularly enjoyed.

This is a game I featured in my book. I played it against Christopher Kreuzer in the PM Open at Torquay in August 2013, when I was foolishly starting to believe I could play chess. I played 10 intense games in five days in that British championship bubble, and it was actually starting to make sense. I'm White and I'm afraid you'll have to do your own analysis, though in my book you will find comments by my friend, coach and mentor John Saunders, without whom *The Rookie* would not have seen the light of day.

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 e6 3. c4 Bb4+ 4. Nc3 c5 5. e3 Ne4 6. Qc2 d5 7. Bd3 Qa5 8. Bd2 Nxd2 9. Nxd2 cxd4 10. exd4 dxc4 11. Nxc4 Qg5 12. O-O Bxc3 13. bxc3 Nc6 14. f4 Qd8 15. f5 h6 16. Rae1 O-O 17. f6 g5 18. Qe2 Nxd4 19. Qh5 1-0

Can I also offer one more that hasn't appeared before. This is me, again playing White, against Jeremy Hudson in the Hastings Weekend Minor in January 2015. Some of the themes are similar to the previous game – cracking open the kingside and thinking sacrificially. This is fairly typical of the way I like to play: I need the initiative, I need to attack, to have clear and, ideally, vibrant ideas. I find positional games where I have to make subtle moves tricky. Subtlety is not my forte.

1.e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. exd5 cxd5 4. Nf3 Nf6 5. c4 e6 6. Nc3 Nbd7 7. Bd3 dxc4 8. Bxc4 Nb6 9. Bb5+ Bd7 10. O-O Bxb5 11. Nxb5 a6 12. Nc3 Be7 13. Qb3 Bd6 14. Bg5 O-O 15. Ne4 Bc7 16. Nxf6+ gxf6 17. Bh6 Re8 18. Rac1 Rb8 19. Rxc7 Qxc7 20. Ne5 Kh8 21. Qg3 Rg8 22. Ng6+ Rxg6 23. Qxc7 Rbg8 24. Qxb6 Rxg2+ 25. Kh1 1-0

Lockdown and *The Queen's Gambit* have brought a huge spike of interest in chess throughout the world. Chess platforms are heaving under the weight of subscribers. Is the online game the Twenty20 of chess?

Has there been a huge spike in interest? Do we really have the data? I'm always a bit suspicious of these bold claims, though we did get one new player who came along to the Kingston club just on the basis of watching *The Queen's Gambit*. I used to play a ridiculous amount online – sometimes, like a Japanese teenager, for three days at a go, stopping only for a brief sleep. It makes you ill. Have a brisk walk instead. I play very little online now, and try not to get into those cycles where you can't stop playing because you are obsessing about your online rating and chasing entirely arbitrary targets. I

also hate what I become online – accusing weak players of using engines if they have the temerity to make a good move. It creates monsters – and bad chess players.

What is your preference – standard, rapidplay or blitz?

I prefer standard play – let's call it classical chess. I don't even like quickplay finishes. I like to think and get absorbed in the game, even though my thinking is very inefficient. I had a few zen moments in my chess journey where I really did feel in touch with the music of the chess spheres.

Aside from Nigel Short, which other players or coaches have influenced you?

John Saunders thought I was uncoachable, but if I owe anything to anyone it's to him. He really tried his damndest.

Do you like watching online tournaments with commentary?

In theory yes – Peter Svidler is wonderful, Jan Gustafsson very funny – but I'm not very organised about finding them. I wish there was a one-stop shop for chess which had everything. I just don't have the time (or perhaps the will) to hunt for commentaries and coverage.

Chess is a meritocracy so how do you account for a predominance of white males over 40 years of age in a typical league or tournament setting?

A very good question that would require another book to answer properly. I refer you to my earlier statement that a certain type of man who struggles with life finds joy and meaning in chess. Of course, not everyone is like that, but you have to be pretty unhinged to travel from Kingston to South Norwood to play a two-and-a-half hour game of chess in a slightly down-at-heel community centre on a wet Thursday in November.

You have described chess as an "extreme sport". Many ECF members see it as sport, but why do you think it is extreme?

I think I said that in the context of some middle-aged players dying of heart attacks at the board. It can be incredibly stressful. Isn't there evidence that GMs lose several pounds in weight in the course of a particularly arduous game? At Wijk, I saw a Dutch player who had mate in one. The problem was he couldn't quite believe it and was frozen with fear, unable to deliver the coup de grâce. In the end, his opponent got tired of waiting and made the move for him. I thought that was very funny.

Do you think chess can only be coached by strong players? Or can we learn anything from Sir Alex Ferguson, who was a journeyman player but one of the all-time great managers?

On the contrary, it is very unwise for very strong players to teach chess. Gawain Jones told me that strong players didn't make weak players strong; weak players made their strong mentors weak. The Soviet system was brilliant at identifying those who should play and those who should coach. The requirements of the superstrong player – aggression, egoism, selfishness, the desire to humiliate and crush, the Darwinian will to kill rather than be killed – are exactly what you don't want in a coach. Also, it's essential that very strong players should want to coach; they shouldn't do it just because making a living as a player is so hard. There are other ways to earn an honest crust.

Stephen Moss writes for The Guardian. His book, *The Rookie: An Odyssey through Chess (and Life)*, is published by Bloomsbury and is available through Amazon and Chess & Bridge.

Let's do it (Let's play some chess) by Tim Wall

*'Daniil Dubov and Wei Yi do it,
Even stars on Norwegian TV do it,
Let's do it, let's play some chess.*

*At First Saturday Budapest, Abhi Mishra did it,
Lithuanians and Letts do it,
Let's do it, let's play chess (the OG way).*

*If Dutch masters in Wijk aan Zee can do it,
And German veterans in Altenkirchen do it,
Why not your club on a Tuesday night, too?*

*On Gibraltar, Women's Grand Prix participants do it,
People say 115 percent of the Rock's jabbed-up residents have done it,
(Even the macaques are learning with Play Magnus, I've heard).*

*In New York parks, vaccinated hustlers do it,
Anya Taylor-Joy (coached by Gazza & Pandolfini) does it,
Even bored ex-presidents try (but fail) to do it - they won't play Black.*

*Up North, norm seekers at the Northumbria Masters will do it,
In Leamington Spa, masked-up 4NCLers do it,
Let's do it – let's fall in love (again) with chess.*

*On Trafalgar Square this July, ChessFest fans will do it,
Alice, the Red Queen & the Mad Hatter will host the party,
We'll all invited, so let's do it – let's play some chess!'*

'Let's Do It,' as performed by Noel Coward at the 1935 Hastings Congress afterparty

Chess is Coming Home

This summer could be the summer of love. Or at least, the summer of falling back in love with chess. Some of us may not have pushed a pawn (or mis-clicked a mouse) in anger in the last 15 months. It's been a long, frustrating winter, with most of our chess enjoyment strangely provided by watching other people do it online. But now, chess is coming home. And hopefully we'll all be able to venture out and play.

Major OTB Congresses: 4NCL & Northumbria Masters

There are two major over-the-board congresses – the [4NCL's socially-distanced weekender in Leamington Spa on July 9-11](#) and the [Northumbria Masters](#) in Gateshead over August Bank Holiday weekend, 26-30 August, hopefully without social-distancing measures required, progress on Covid-19 vaccinations permitting. Alongside the usual tournaments at the Northumbria Masters will be two all-play-all tournaments, sponsored by Chess in Schools and Communities, aimed at producing GM and IM norm opportunities for promising young players.

The Grandmaster norm tournament will feature GMs Danny Gormally, Matt Turner and Tamas Fodor, plus norm seekers Ravi Haria, Marcus Harvey, Matthew Wadsworth, Lawrence Trent, David Eggleston, Conor Murphy and Tarun Kanyamarala. The International Master norm tournament will include IMs David Fitzsimons, Peter Large and Andrew Muir, plus norm seekers Jonah Willow, Bornha Derakhshani, Harry Grieve, James Moreby, Yichen Han, Iain Gourlay and one more player, to be announced.

Other all-play-all tournaments are also being organised by Adam Raoof in London ([Muswell Hill International](#) 9-13 August) and by Lawrence Cooper in Stafford ([Wood Green Invitational](#) 19-23 August), so who knows? Maybe we could see some new English titled players emerging this summer.

Online British

Online (for those people who haven't had enough of online chess over the last year and still need their fix of sitting in a darkened room, playing on a computer screen) there are the various [British Online Championships](#) organised by the ECF and scheduled to take place from July 24 to August 8.

Local 'Chess in the Park' events

As we emerge from months of social distancing, it would of course be understandable if many players simply wished to go along to smaller local events. The good news here is that many chess clubs up and down the country are already organising OTB club nights and rapidplays at their indoor venues, carefully observing Covid safety rules.

There are also a growing number of local outdoor chess events organised at a grassroots level, such as my own club [Forest Hall's 'Chess in the Park'](#) at the Rising Sun Countryside Centre in Wallsend each Sunday afternoon. To find out what outdoors chess is going on in your area, check out the [clubs map](#) on the ECF website. If you are organising a local 'Chess in the Park' event and would like to publicise it further, please send the info to the [ECF Calendar](#) and also drop me a line at timpeterwall@gmail.com. I will help you get the word out.

Above all, please do get out this summer and enjoy some chess! It's been too long, and we're all anxious to see if we remember a) how the horsies move, and b) whether we can recall all that Chessable theory we learned during lockdown.

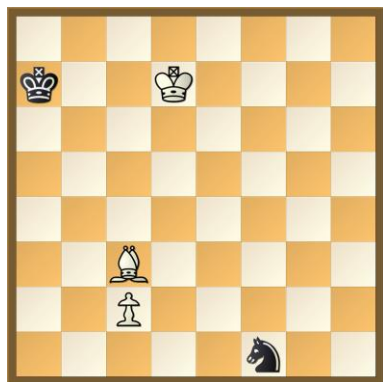
Taking a few positive steps now to get chess going again will make it much easier for us all to restart clubs, league matches and congresses as we go into the next chess season starting in September. Let's do it – let's play some chess!

Tim Wall is the organiser of the [Northumbria Masters](#). The views expressed here are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of the ECF.



How to Solve a Study

Ian Watson



White to play and win

Seems to be a trivially simple position? Well, if so, you don't need me to give you the solution ...

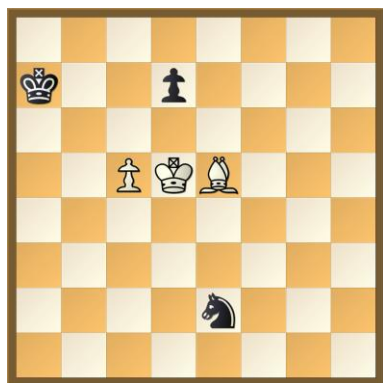
But of course, you know it isn't trivial, because it's a composed study. So let's set about solving it in a methodical manner. Knight against bishop and pawn is likely to be a draw if the pawn isn't reasonably far advanced, so the first move could well be 1.Bd4+ freeing the c-pawn without wasting time. It's not clear which is the best way for the Black king to go in reply, but White's second move is very likely to be 2.c4 to get it as far up the board as possible so the knight can't block its advance. Then the knight has to choose which way to go, but g3 will result in it getting shut out by the White king and bishop, so it probably has to be d2. So, 1.Bd4+ K to, er... a6 or a8, probably, to evade later checks, and 2.c4 Nd2 3.c5 looks plausible. Maybe then 3...Nb3 is right? So try it: 3...Nb3 4.c6 and that looks terminal for Black.

Here's where you have to think like a study-solver rather than like a player. There has to be some clever conclusion to all this, so Black should have some sneaky defence. What crafty cons are likely in this type of position? Stalemate maybe. Could be, but if it's going to have a stalemate, I probably want the Black king to be confined, so let's suppose it went to a8 on move one. Okay, I'll place it there on my board, and see if I can construct a stalemate. That will need the knight to be captured or pinned. Hey, if it were on b8 and White queened, that would be stalemate! Eureka! 4...Na5 5.c7 Nc6 and 6.c8Q+ Nb8+ and stalemate follows. And there's even 6.Kxc6 stalemate too – two stalemates in the same 'simple' study. Job done. Oh, but it's White to play and **win**, not White to play and give stalemate. Doh. Ummm, I need a trick to defeat a trick... yehhh, I could make a rook! Got it now –

1.Bd4+ Ka8 2.c4 Nd2 3.c5 Nb3 4.c6 Na5 5.c7 Nc6 6.c8R+ wins.

You can be almost certain that is the correct solution, but strictly speaking you ought to go back and consider alternatives. Fortunately, there aren't so many in this composition, so even if you are as sceptical as I am and like to verify everything, it doesn't take long. Doing that also helps you appreciate the study - seeing why White's moves work and why his alternatives don't. It also shows you features that you probably overlooked during the rush to solve. For example, notice here that White sacrificed his bishop and Black declined to capture it. If Black had captured it, then the stalemate mechanisms wouldn't work, because the Black king would have the square a7 available. Also, if White had played a bishop move such as 6.Bc5, instead of promoting, then Black would get to a draw with 6...Nb8+. Finally, there is another aspect to this study, a feature called an 'Excelsior'. That means a pawn advances all the way from its starting square to promotion during the solution.

That was composed by the English study expert Hugh Blandford and published in 'Springaren' in 1949. I think Blandford must have seen the following Kubbel study, and modified it to make his own version. Leonid Kubbel published his in 1928, in 'Shakhmatny Listok'. He was one of the greatest endgame study composers. Blandford's version is a splendid homage to Kubbel's, both adding the 'Excelsior' and reducing the piece count, but Kubbel's was a fine work too. Your task is to solve it.



White to play and win

Ian Watson Email: ian@irwatson.uk

See the end of the newsletter for the solution. To play this puzzle through in your web browser, go to <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-58-july-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>



GARY LANE BOOK REVIEWS

Gary Lane looks at *Edgard Colle: Caissa's Wounded Warrior* by Taylor Kingston and *The Unstoppable American, Bobby Fischer's Road to Reykjavik* by Jan Timman here - <https://chess.business/blog/>



Tweet(s) of the Month



GM Nigel Davies
@GMNigelDavies

I sense that a chess 'kultturkampf' is brewing with digital Bongcloudistas vs cantankerous traditionalists. Battle lines are currently being drawn with just an occasional skirmish at present...

9:00 AM · Jul 4, 2021 · Twitter Web App

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Abhimanyu.mishra.chess (Youngest GM in the world)
@ChessMishra

Finally checkmated the biggest opponent (ongoing pandemic) which stopped me for 14 months. Thanks everybody for all your love and support.
Looking forward for World cup.



JUNIOR MOVES

Director of Home Chess Alex Holowczak writes --- The British Junior Rapid & Blitz Championship will take place on 13th-14th November at Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes. In addition to the titles of British Junior Rapid & Blitz Champion in each age group, English juniors can also win 'invited player' status at an international junior tournament in 2022. Entries will go live later in the summer. More here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/british-junior-rapid-blitz-championship-2021/>



Glorney Cup

17-23 July 2021, and England is entering the annual junior internationals against Ireland, Scotland and Wales. They will be played on [Chess.com](https://www.chess.com). Coverage will appear on the ECF website later this week.



FIDE Online Cadets & Youth Rapid World Cup 2021

England has selected players for this event, being held in 10 sections during August - <https://youth-worldcup.fide.com/>



Junior News

Youngest GM ever!

Some good news this month with Abhimanyu Mishra, a 12-year-old player from New Jersey, USA, achieving his 3rd GM norm to become the youngest grandmaster ever, beating Segey Karjakin's previous record.

To become a Grandmaster you need to have a rating of over 2500 and beat other grandmasters in at least three separate 'GM norm' tournaments with a tournament performance of 2600 or higher.

Here is Abhi Mishra's game against GM Leon Luke Mendonca. This was played at a tournament in Budapest on 30th June, where Abhi's win earned him the GM title and a place in history.

(4515) Mendonca, Leon Luke (2549) - Mishra, Abhimanyu (2485) [D92]

Vezerkepzo GM Mix 2021 Chess.com (9), 30.06.2021

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 [Mishra plays the Grunfeld looking for a sharp position with winning chance for the norm he needs to become a GM]

4.Bf4 [A safe continuation avoiding the complexities of the exchange Grunfeld. White will aim for a queen side initiative rather than the big pawn centre of the exchange variation with e4.]



4...Bg7 5.e3 0-0 6.Rc1 c5 7.dxc5 Be6 8.Nf3 Nc6 9.Be2 Qa5 10.Ng5 Nd8



[An opening novelty from Mishra protecting the bishop on e6. Alternatives which have been seen before are 10..R(a)d8 or R(f)d8]

11.Bg3 dxc4 12.Nxe6 Nxe6 13.Qa4 Qxc5 [Refusing the queen trade and picking up the pawn on c5.]

14.Bxc4 Qb6 15.Qb3 Qxb3 16.Bxb3 [The position is around even at this point]

16..Nc5 17.Ke2 [Mendonca decides to allow the B for N exchange and doubled pawns on the Q side. The main alternative is Bc2.]

17...Nxb3 18.axb3 Rfd8 19.Rhd1 Ne8 20.Rxd8 Rxd8 21.Rd1 Rxd1 22.Kxd1



[[#] Black is marginally better here but white has good drawing chances.]

22...Nf6 23.Kc2 Nd7 24.b4 f5 25.Nb5 a6 26.Nc7 Kf7 27.b5 a5 28.Nd5 Nc5 29.Bc7 a4 30.f3 Ke6 31.Nc3



Bxc3 [Black decides to exchange off the strong dark square bishop to go into a N v B ending.

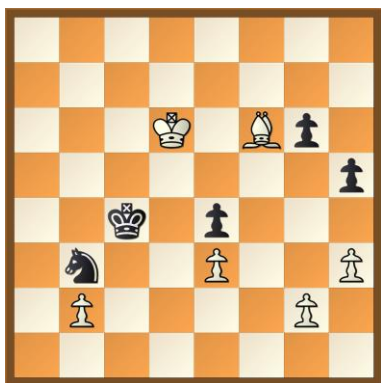
32.Kxc3 Kd5 33.Bd8 e5 34.Be7 Nb3 35.h3 e4 36.fxe4+ fxe4

[B puts all his pawns on light squares and is looking to prove that the N is stronger than the dark squared bishop.]

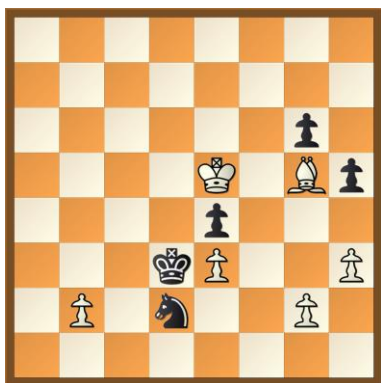
37.Kb4 Nd2 38.Bf6 h5

[38.. h5 is too slow – better is 38..Nc5 and white's king now becomes very active.]

39.Kxa4 Kc4 40.Ka5 Nb3+ 41.Kb6 Nc5 42.Bd4 Nb3 43.Bf6 Kb4 44.Kxb7 Kxb5 45.Kc7 Kc4 46.Kd6



Kd3 47.Bg5 Nd2 48.Ke5



[We reach a critical position in the N v B ending. Mishra is a pawn down but can pick up the b or e pawns with a N fork. He finds a critical continuation which allowed his opponent to go wrong and earned him the GM title. Can you see the best move in this position with Black to play?]

48...Nf3+!

49.gxf3? [The losing move which allows the B pawn to promote.]

[49.Kf4 Kf4 is the best move here which leads to a drawn position after the b and e pawns promote.
49...Nxg5 50.Kxg5 Kxe3 51.b4 Kd2 52.b5 e3 53.b6 e2 54.b7 e1Q 55.b8Q]

49...exf3 50.Bh4 g5 51.Bf2 Ke2 52.b4 Kxf2 53.b5 Kxe3 54.b6 f2 55.b7 f1Q

[b8+ fails to the Q skewer on f4.]

0-1

Abhi's tweet after the game reads ---

"Finally checkmated the biggest opponent (ongoing pandemic) which stopped me for 14 months.
Thanks everybody for all your love and support. Looking forward for World cup."

Play through this game here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-58-july-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>



ECF Academy

The ECF Academy is our flagship junior training programme that is structured around a monthly chess topic. At the start of each month students receive course materials including an overview of the topic and a suggested training plan with weekly exercises divided into ability levels.

In addition to the course materials the Academy hosts a number of live sessions during the month including training sessions, revision of the material and the popular Q&A sessions with leading British players and coaches.

From August we are beginning a new initiative in the junior section ChessMoves providing free samples of previous months' materials for the benefit of the ECF's junior members (and adult improvers)! This will include a selection of instructional material, puzzles and other exercises which students can either read for pleasure or use as monthly structured training material. There will also be a free monthly video drop-in session for ECF members to participate in and to ask questions about the full programme.

If you enjoy these and want to access the full library and to participate in the live video training sessions you can sign up for the Academy in one of two ways. You can either sign up for an annual plan (with a healthy discount), or try a monthly plan to begin with if you prefer to test the waters first.

Coaches and junior associations who are interested in their students getting involved in the Academy should get in touch to discuss options and group discounts at director.juniorchess@englishchess.org.uk | Click here for the [Academy registration link](#)

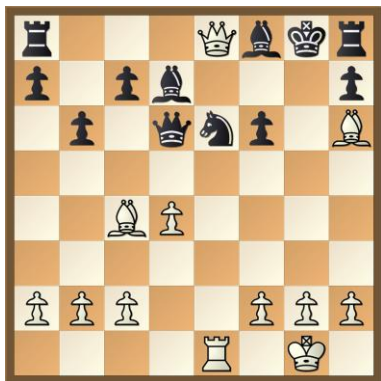
To whet your appetite here are some puzzles from our January theme of 'Attacking the King' – taken from the little known gem Najdorf-Gliksberg, Lodz 1929.



White to play – increase the pressure



Black to play – white is threatening to win with Re1, how can black defend?



White to play and win

To play through these positions - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-58-july-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>

Solutions next month ... or if you can't wait until then, email us at academy@ukchess.co.uk



UK Chess Challenge

Alex Longson writes --- More than 2200 players joined the Megafinals hoping to win a place at the over the board Terafinales in October held at Blenheim Palace. Many of the top players in the UK are taking part including Grandmaster-slaying Scot, Frederick Gordon, and reigning champions Emils Steiners, Dimitrios Zakarian and Rajat Makkar.

New for 2021 is the school and club team leaderboards which ensure every point scored by a player

counts towards their team's score – regardless of whether they qualify or not. Full results can be found at the [UKCC website](http://www.ukcc.org.uk)

Shreyas Royal

England's youngest FIDE Master Shreyas Royal continues to build his playing strength with some impressive results. He recently played in three OTB tournaments in Hungary, including his first win against a GM, to send his rating >2300. Shreyas will be taking part in the 'Battle of the Prodigies' at Chessfest on Sunday 18th July, playing against Tanitoluwa Adewumi (US). Shreyas will be making his moves from Trafalgar Square and Tani from New York. Good luck Shreyas, and congratulations on a great achievement with your recent wins!

British Junior Rapid & Blitz

Alex Holowczak writes --- The British Junior Rapid & Blitz Championship will take place on 13th-14th November at Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes. In addition to the titles of British Junior Rapid & Blitz Champion in each age group, English juniors can also win 'invited player' status at an international junior tournament in 2022. Entries will go live later in the summer. More here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/british-junior-rapid-blitz-championship-2021/>

Junior Coaching

Rob Willmoth writes ---The English Junior Coaches and Organisers Association (EJCOA) together with ChessPlus.net organised an online training course for 34 chess coaches. All participants successfully completed the European Chess Union's 'The SMART Way to Teach Chess 101' course, which focuses on practical teaching techniques for chess teachers in schools and junior chess clubs. Lecturers for the course, held over two days on 15-16 May, were Swedish International Master Jesper Hall, Chair of the ECU's Education Commission, and John Foley of ChessPlus.net

EJCOA plans to organise further training seminars for junior coaches in September and later in the year. Please see the group's website - <https://ejoguide.co.uk> - for more details.



CHESS MAGAZINE

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

How to Solve a Study – solution

(Kubbel) **1.Kd6 Nc1 2.Bd4 Ka8 3.Kxd7** and now the play is the same as in the Blandford version, so **3...Nb3 4.c6 Na5 5.c7 Nc6 6.c8R+** and wins. You can find White's early moves by considering Black's threats: if Black gets his king to c8 you will never be able to win, so the first White move is clear. After 1...Nc1, Black will continue ...Nd3 if you capture the d-pawn at once, and then he will have a fork, so the second White move is clear too.

Kubbel died relatively young, from starvation during the Second World War siege of Leningrad, in 1942, some seven years before Blandford published his version. Blandford would have known that, and probably intended his version as a tribute to one of the greats of study composition.

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



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