



[www.englishchess.org.uk](http://www.englishchess.org.uk)

# Chess *moves*

August 2021



## **There's no place like Holmfirth!** **How to run a chess club in the post-pandemic world**

**Ravi Haria's great win in Sochi**

**Carl Portman Interview**

**ECF Creative Writing Initiative**

**Arkell's Endings**

**Michael Adams' Game of the Month**

**Junior Moves**

**Peter Wells, Paul Littlewood, Ian Watson ... and more!**



Welcome to the August edition of Chess Moves. In this edition we feature the great success of ChessFest, where six thousand chess enthusiasts filled Trafalgar Square on a glorious July Sunday, bringing joy and chess to the capital and beyond. I played a few games of blitz against some excellent club players and people who had taken up chess during lockdown and the future of chess looks promising!

We also have a report on the new home for the ECF Library at De Montfort University, another excellent piece from our Creative Writing Initiative, courtesy of Peter Burgoyne of Hackney Chess Club, and Steve Westmoreland provides an excellent step-by-step account of getting OTB chess going in Holmfirth.

Our monthly pot-pourri of games, analysis, problems and writing includes Michael Adams, Peter Wells, Keith Arkell, Christopher Jones, Ian Watson and the welcome addition of Paul Littlewood, who provides his first regular article in a new monthly feature, 'Littlewood's Choice', in the Junior Moves section. Many of you will recall the 'Littlewood's Choice' articles that John Littlewood used to write in former times, and we're delighted to welcome Paul to Chess Moves to carry on the family tradition. We also welcome IM Ravi Haria, who annotates his excellent win over Vadim Zvjaginsev in the World Cup in Sochi.

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 renew your membership of the ECF so that we have the funding we need for the work that benefits all our members. You can find details of our membership benefits package here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-membership-partners-and-benefits/> - and you can renew your membership here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-membership-rates-and-joining-details/>

Mark Rivlin



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# NEWS AND VIEWS

## **ECF 2021 Awards**

**Stephen Greep**, Awards Committee Chairman reports

The ECF are pleased to announce the winners of the 2021 ECF Awards ...

**Joe Conlon** and **Andy Howie** (President's Award for Services to Chess)

**The UK Braille Chess Association** (Contribution to Accessible Chess)

**Lawrence Cooper** (Contribution to Women's Chess)

**Oliver Brennan** (Contribution to Online Chess)

**Uxbridge Junior Chess Club** (Contribution to Junior Chess)

**Camberley Chess Club** (Club of the Year)

**Cheney Rapidplay** (Congress of the Year)

We would like to thank all the people who sent nominations to the committee reflecting the tremendous work taking place throughout the chess world. Every nomination was carefully considered and evaluated. Copies of all the citations for the awards can be found here -

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ECFAwards2021.pdf>

## **Home Chess**

Director of Home Chess **Nigel Towers** writes

## **ECF Online**

### **Clubs and Weekly Events**

ECF online club memberships continue to increase with over 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. We are continuing with 7 ECF online rated club tournaments per week on Chess.com and Lichess.

### **Grand Prix**

The ECF Online Blitz and Rapid Grand Prix Series continues with the fifth Blitz and Rapid events on the first and third Sundays in July with GM Keith Arkell holding on to first place in both events, based on the five rounds to date, followed closely by Peter Finn in the Blitz and David Walker in the Rapid.

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

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

### **Internationals**

The English Chess players team continues to play in 3 Lichess Leagues / Series including the regular Mega Team Battles on Friday afternoons, the Bundesliga / Quarantine League on Sundays and Thursday evenings, and the midweek Champions League on Tuesday evenings. We have spent most of this month going up and down between Divisions 3 and 5 in the Quarantine League and still looking for the breakthrough to reach Division 2.

The Chess.com Nations League Season 3 completed on 1st August with the England team winning both legs of our final match against Canada. This means that despite a slow start to the season we came through strongly to finish third in the table at the end of the season. Many thanks to the team for supporting the event, including GM Keith Arkell and IM Tom Rendle.

#	Name	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Rd 6	Rd 7	Total
1	Kyrgyz Republic	W5	W7	W2	W4	W6	D3	W8	6.5
2	Romania	W4	W8	L1	W3	W5	W6	W7	6
3	England	L7	D5	W8	L2	W4	D1	W6	4
4	United States	L2	W6	W7	L1	L3	W8	W5	4
5	Jamaica	L1	D3	D6	D8	L2	W7	L4	2.5
6	Canada	D8	L4	D5	W7	L1	L2	L3	2
7	Argentina	W3	L1	L4	L6	X8	L5	L2	2
8	Poland	D6	L2	L3	D5	F7	L4	L1	1

Here is one of Tom's two wins from the final Blitz leg of Round 7 against Canada. This is a nice example of the g5 line against the French Tarrasch which leads to a quick demolition of White's king side position.

### ZachHKL (2003) - Trendle (2678) [C03]

Live Chess Chess.com, 01.08.2021

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 a6 4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.e5 Nfd7 6.c3 c5 7.Bd3 Nc6 8.0-0 g5

[

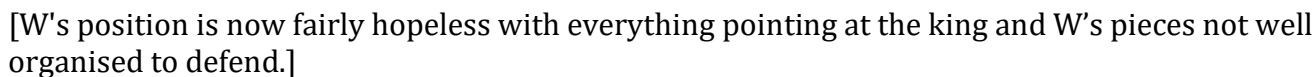


9.h3 [An error from white. Safest is dc to make room for the N on d4. The piece sac Nb3 is also possible with .. c4 met by Nxg5.]

9...h5 10.dxc5? g4 11.Nd4 Ncxe5 12.Be2 gxh3 13.g3 [Trying to hold on.]

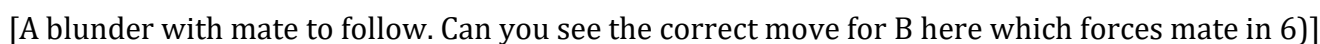


13...Bxc5 14.N2f3 Ng4 15.b4 Bd6 16.Bd3 Qc7 17.Ne2



## 17...h4

**18.Nxh4 Nde5 19.Bf4**



**21...Bxc3** [Still good enough but allows W to struggle on.]

22.f4

22...Qb6+ 23.Kh1 Nf2+ 24.Kh2 Nxd1 25.Raxd1 Bxb4 26.Rb1 Qa5 27.f5 Bd6+ 28.Kxh3 Qd2 29.Rbd1 Qe3+ 30.Kg2 exf5 31.Rf3 Qh6 32.Rh1 Be6 33.Ng1 Kd7 34.Bf1?? [





34...Rg8+ 35.Kf2 Qd2+ 36.Ne2 Bc5+ 37.Re3 [?]

37...Qxe3+ 38.Ke1 [?]

38...Bb4+ 39.Kd1 [?]

39...Qd2#



0-1

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











The BOCC 2 started on 24 July with a week of qualifiers followed by finals week starting on 30 July. The competition includes Qualifiers and Finals for the 2021 British Online Open, Women, Seniors and Junior Championships. You can results to date on chess results at the link here - <http://chess-results.com/tnr569793.aspx?lan=1&art=1&flag=30>

The Rapid, Blitz and Bullet Finals are now complete and congratulations go to our new British Online Champions at the faster time controls as follows -











	<b>Rapid</b>	<b>Blitz</b>	<b>Bullet</b>
Open	IM Brandon Clarke (6/7)	IM Richard Pert (7/9)	Rishi Thariani
Women's	WGM Kata Toma (6.5/7)	WFM Liza Kisteneva (8 / 9)	
Senior	GM Keith Arkell (6/ 7)	GM Keith Arkell (7.5/ 9)	
Junior			Stanley Badacsonyi

We are now in Finals week for the Standardplay events as we go to press for the August Newsletter with some exciting chess played over the last week in all competitions and what looks like a close finish in the making for the various titles. Current standings are as below with the final rounds due over the weekend of 6-8 August.

### British Online Championships (Standardplay)

Rank after Round 6												
Rk.	SNo		Name	FED	Rtg	Pts.	TB1	TB2	TB3	TB4	w-we	
1	3		GM Arkell Keith C	ENG	2480	5,0	0,0	14,5	19,0	21,5	0,38	
2	1		GM Adams Michael	ENG	2756	4,5	0,0	15,5	20,0	23,5	-0,66	
3	13		CM Dargan Paul Ag	ENG	2129	4,5	0,0	14,0	18,5	21,0		
4	5		GM Lalic Bogdan	CRO	2413	4,5	0,0	13,5	18,0	19,5	-0,33	
5	35		Giachos Gerasimos	ENG	0	4,5	0,0	12,0	15,5	17,0		
6	6		FM Han Yichen	NED	2406	4,0	0,0	15,0	19,5	22,0		
7	7		FM Blackburn Jonathan Lb	WLS	2305	4,0	0,0	13,0	16,5	19,0	-0,82	
8	12		Ismail Mohammed Aayan	ENG	2167	3,5	0,0	16,0	20,5	22,5	1,26	
9	10		Brooks Phil J	ENG	2245	3,5	0,0	15,0	19,5	21,0	0,41	
10	14		CM Pein Jonathan	ENG	2118	3,5	0,0	14,5	19,0	20,0		

### British Online Womens Championships (Standardplay)

Rank after Round 4												
Rk.	SNo		Name	FED	Rtg	Pts.	TB1	TB2	TB3	TB4	w-we	
1	1		GM Arakhamia-Grant Ketevan E	SCO	2370	3,5	0,5	5,5	9,0	11,0	-0,21	
2	2		FM Kalaiyalahan Akshaya	ENG	2213	3,5	0,5	5,0	8,5	10,5	0,29	
3	3		WFM Vine Elzbieta	POL	2044	3,0	0,0	4,0	7,5	8,5		
4	18		Subramanian Anusha	ENG	1532	3,0	0,0	4,0	6,5	7,5		
5	7		Dicen Imogen	ENG	1824	2,5	0,0	5,5	9,0	10,5		
6	13		Dicen Elis Denele	ENG	1657	2,5	0,0	3,5	6,5	7,0		
7	11		Headlong Georgia	ENG	1749	2,5	0,0	3,0	6,5	7,5		
8	21		Jithendra Raina	ENG	0	2,5	0,0	2,5	6,0	7,0		
9	14		Rida Ruqayyah	ENG	1649	2,5	0,0	2,5	4,5	5,0		
10	6		Pert Nina P	ENG	1871	2,0	0,0	5,5	9,0	9,5	-0,08	

You can follow the final rounds on the ECF's Commentary Channel with WIM Natasha Regan, GM Matthew Sadler, and colleagues. The broadcast will be live on the commentary channel here - [https://www.twitch.tv/ecf\\_commentary](https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary)

### Return to Over the Board

The return to play continues as we moved into Step 4 of HMG's plan.









### Chessfest

CSC's outdoor festival took place over the weekend of Friday 16 - Sunday 18 July at various locations in central London. This was a three-day programme of chess related events culminating in a day of chess activities open to the public in Trafalgar Square with a further event put on by CSC Merseyside

in Chavasse Park in Liverpool. The events were a huge success and included an ECF and FIDE rated Rapidplay competition in Manchester Square Gardens on Saturday 17th July.

## 25th 4NCL Congress

Major OTB events in July included the 4NCL's 25 Congress with the standings as follows after Round 5 of the Open section.

Final Ranking after 5 Rounds										
Rk.	SNo		Name	FED	Rtg	Club/City	TB1	w-we	K	rtg +/-
1	3		FM Willow Jonah B	ENG	2463	West Nottingham	4,5	0,50	20	10,0
	14		CM Balaji Aaravamudhan	ENG	2260	None	4,5	1,68	40	67,2
3	2		GM Arkell Keith C	ENG	2463	Cheddleton	4,0	0,08	10	0,8
4	1		GM Davies Nigel R	WLS	2483	Tiger Chess	3,5	-0,88	10	-8,8
	6		Merriman John	ENG	2328	Orpington	3,5	-0,05	20	-1,0
	10		FM Sowray Peter J	ENG	2290	Barbican	3,5	0,07	20	1,4
	12		Jones Steven A	ENG	2283	Basingstoke	3,5	0,76	20	15,2
	13		FM Wall Tim P	ENG	2260	Forest Hall	3,5	0,68	20	13,6

Congratulations to FM Jonah Willow who won the event just ahead of CM Aaravamudhan Balaji on tie-break and third placed GM Keith Arkell. The open section final round was broadcast on Chess.com and Chess24 using liveboards and you can catch up with the final round action on the ECF's YouTube channel here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1bMuNo58U7Q>  
We also feature games from Jonah and Aaravamudhan elsewhere in the newsletter.

## English Clubs Support

We have just issued the working group survey to English club contacts to get feedback on how the ECF can support clubs and organisers over the next few months in the return to over the board events. Please do take a look at our Clubs' community page and feel free to access the survey if you would like to provide input on behalf of your club. The survey is here - <https://forms.gle/vbwmJpMLQFW27Ab47> - and the Clubs page here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/clubs-home-page/>

## Over the Board Events 2021

We are also planning a number of ECF over the board events for 2021.

## English Counties 2021

The friendly Counties event Round 1 starts on 14 August and continues for two further weeks in September 2021. 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 (2-10 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 by mid-August.



## **BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP**

**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 WOMENS CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**7 rounds** - Rounds 1 (Thursday 7 October at 5pm), 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 10<sup>th</sup> October) begins at 10am

## **BRITISH JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**5 rounds** - Saturday 2 October 10am, 1.30pm, and 5pm

Sunday 3 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)

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**

### **Commentary and Broadcast**

WIM Natasha Regan continues to develop the ECF Twitch stream and broadcast channel which can be found here - [https://www.twitch.tv/ecf\\_commentary](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 -

- 4NCL OTB Congress
- Champions League Events
- Bundesliga/ Quarantine League Team Battles
- British Online Championships 2021

Do try and catch up on some of the recent events including the 25th 4NCL OTB congress and the various online tournaments.



## **ChessFest – Chess in Wonderland**

Malcolm Pein reports

Despite searing heat, over 30 degrees Celsius, the pandemic, the ‘pingdemic’ and some bureaucratic nightmares that literally gave me sleepless nights, ChessFest was staged by Chess in Schools and Communities in Trafalgar Square – and how!

My overwhelming emotion is: we must do this again. Six thousand people came to enjoy casual games, the teaching zone – which was packed out all day – giant chess, blitz, simulms given by Mickey Adams, Gawain Jones, Katarzyna Toma, Louise Head, Akshaya Kalaiyalahan, our Editor and Tim Wall.

There was Puzzle Rush on the big screen, challenge matches between both London and NYC and London and Liverpool, and the centrepiece, literally, 32 performers on a giant board acting out the Immortal Game and in keeping with the *Alice Through the Looking Glass* theme, a slightly doctored 19th century game, also a King’s Gambit, in which a pawn promotion enables Alice to become a queen.

The actors, from the Bearded Kitten creative agency, were all dressed in costume depicting characters from Carroll’s books. Alice was Alice, the white bishops were Tweedledee and Tweedledum, the white pawns were all dressed as White Rabbits while the Red Queen looked suitably threatening and the red bishops were dressed as the Jabberwocky.

Covid restrictions were still in force. This was the last day of them, so we were limited to 750 people in the square at any one time and we were deprived of some space due to roadworks on the North Terrace of the square outside the National Gallery.

At some points in the day there were queues to get in and I’m confident that without any restrictions, if this time next year we are in a better place and with the whole of the North Terrace available, we can get 10,000 people to Trafalgar Square for ChessFest 2022.

ChessFest was a great celebration of the game as an activity that crosses all boundaries and is for everyone, and all thanks to our commercial sponsors XTX Markets, an algorithmic trading company. Thanks are also due to the Greater London Authority for their assistance and we were honoured to have official ‘Supported by Mayor of London’ status for the event.

Reproduced with kind permission from *CHESS* magazine. More here at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/chessfest-6000-chess-fans-on-traffic-jam-in-traffic-jam/>



## **ECF Library**

Katharine Short, Special Collections Manager, Directorate of Library and Learning Services at De Montford University, reports

After many lockdown related delays, we were able to take in the library and archive of the English Chess Federation – nearly 200 crates of books! The Library is a fantastic resource for anyone interested in the history of chess or looking to pick up some tips for their own game. The books and journals will be catalogued in due course, but for now the collection can be browsed on the open shelves - just make an appointment via [archives@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:archives@dmu.ac.uk) and see more here - <https://library.dmu.ac.uk/archivesblog/home/New-Chess-Arrival>

## FM Title

Congratulations to Richard McMichael of King's Head Chess Club who has been awarded the FIDE Master title.



## Covid guidance update

Here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/covid-guidance-step-4/>



## Regional County Challenge

Get back over-the-board with this pre-season regional challenge! More here -

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/county-entry-open-for-the-ecfs-pre-season-regional-county-challenge/>



## European Senior Chess Championship

Details here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Seniors/european-senior-chess-championship-2021/>



## Live board set-up workshop

Here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/live-board-setup-workshop/>



## FIDE trainers seminar (EJCOA and FIDE with the support of the ECF)

Here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/fide-trainers-seminar-3/>



## 4NCL

### 25th 4NCL Congress at Woodland Grange, Leamington Spa

The biggest OTB event since Covid restrictions began with 130 players and wins for England juniors in all three sections. More here - [https://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/prizewinners\\_25.htm](https://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/prizewinners_25.htm)

### 4NCL Online and Junior 4NCL Online leagues

These are now open for entries at <https://form.jotform.com/212001999013347> and <https://form.jotform.com/212003441122332>

### 10th 4NCL Online Congress

13-15 August – details here - [https://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/online/arrangements\\_10.htm](https://www.4ncl.co.uk/fide/online/arrangements_10.htm)



## Silver Service

Congratulations to John Reyes and Tim Wall who were voted in as ECF Silver Member representatives. Results of the vote are here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/direct-members-representatives-elections/>

## Northumbria Masters 26-30 August

There is still time to enter this tournament with Masters, Challengers, Major and Minor sections. More here - <https://northumbriamasters.com/>

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## Support to the Chair of Council

The ECF are looking for a volunteer to provide support to the Chair of Council, and in particular to take the Council minutes. If you are interested please email Michael Farthing at [council.chair@englishchess.org.uk](mailto:council.chair@englishchess.org.uk)

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## Online National 1400

Mark Murrell writes --- Player entry open for the Online National 1400!

[Entry Form](#) | [Competition information](#)

Following on from the Chess For All Festival, the National 1400 returns for its second season of online slow play chess (60 + 15). The event is open to ECF members or supporters rated 1400 or below who will be allocated to a regional team for a series of matches played on Chess.com by individual matchcard challenges. Matchdays are 6:30pm on Saturdays 21 August, 11 September & 18 September, coinciding with the closing stages of the Online County Championships.

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## Forthcoming events

All the events we know of are on the ECF events calendar, and the calendar is sortable by category and by tag, both at the top of the calendar - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/event-calendar/>

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## Tweet of the Month

Tom Kington, Italy correspondent for *The Times* on a famous pawn star ...



# FEATURES, WRITING, ANALYSIS, STUDIES AND PROBLEMS

## The Interview – Jailhouse Rook

Mark Rivlin meets Carl Portman

Your latest book *Chess Crusader, confessions of an amateur chess player* is now available on Amazon and Chess & Bridge. Tell us about the book and how you came to write it.

*I wanted to use lockdown productively, and I have for a while been considering writing my chess memoirs. I specifically wanted to tell a story about how chess influenced my life in a positive way. I contacted The Conrad Press and James Essinger who knows a thing or two about chess himself, and he supported my idea. It is the case for all of us that chess takes us to places, introduces us to new people and indeed asks us to reach within ourselves to find out who we really are. The book tells my story, but it is about more than chess. There is violence, alcohol addiction, love, loss and more. Yet chess always prevails.*

You are a strong club player just south of the magical 2000 grade. What's your advice for players hovering around 1600-plus to get closer to the 'two grand' mark?

*I really believe that Garry Kasparov's remark that 'hard work is a talent' rings true. If you introduce a programme – even a limited one – for some study and play you will improve. Above that I must name drop. I interviewed Vassily Ivanchuk once and asked him a similar question. His advice was to get a coach. A human one – not a computer! The computer does not tell you why positions are good, bad or indifferent in the same way that a good coach can.*

Through your regular column in *CHESS* magazine, you have become the voice of the club player. Tell us about the feedback you get for this column.

*I do receive feedback and only last week I received three emails from people saying that whilst the grandmaster chess is interesting, people can relate to my column because it is aimed at the amateur level – people just like me. Tales of losses snatched from the jaws of victory, tournament experiences and the trials and tribulations of playing in freezing venues after a day at work seem to resonate. Personally I like to read stories where I say to myself 'Yes, that happens to me too.' We need to meet triumph and disaster just the same. Above all I hope my love of the game shines through.*

You have had a successful and fulfilling career in the Ministry of Defence and your own management consultancy. Tell us about your professional life.

*I consider myself semi-retired now. I do some chess coaching and writing and I lecture on (of all things) natural history with particular regard to the rainforest and the arachnids and reptiles that dwell there. Oddly, I have been called upon to do some motivational speaking as well. I do some consultancy with the Ministry of Defence but largely those days are behind me. I loved my 30 years with the MOD, especially living and working in Germany. The chess was fantastic over there and I learned a new language.*

You are well known in ECF circles for your groundbreaking work to promote chess in prisons and your 2017 book *Chess Behind Bars* got very good reviews. How and why did you get involved in working with prisoners?

*There comes a point in many people's lives when they appreciate that giving is receiving. As my new book explains, chess is a force for good and I wanted to help a community that struggled to reach out beyond the walls of a cell. I wondered if chess could be the key for some people to change their lives and not return to crime. I now know that this happens, and I receive a lot of mail from prisoners telling their*



*chess stories. It is heart-warming. As for my book, I am proud to have written it and that it has been used in setting up prison programmes in the UK and abroad, especially Canada and Norway. When a prisoner writes that only through chess did they once again build a relationship with their father, or because of chess they won't return to crime but instead join a chess club and take up the game, you know the game has worked its magic. I am no softie. If you do the crime you should do the time, but I want to help those who want to change their lives around – and chess really does have an influence.*

Having done a few chess sessions in a Young Offenders Institute (YOI) I can see how and why prisoners enjoy learning and playing chess. Did you discover any talented players and have you done research on following up their chess journeys post release?

*I am laughing aloud. Yes, there are some talented players. I give simulms in prisons (up to 30 but I did 40 once!) and inevitably there are one or two really strong players. I once played a simul and a tiny man in a flat cap with bottle-jar spectacles was playing like a demon and he was the last player to finish. We drew a very tough but fascinating game. He never spoke or looked at me all game. At the end, I asked him where he was from. In a thick Russian accent he told me he was from the old country and learned to play over there. There are surprises everywhere in prisons.*

*I don't do much work with prisoners upon their release. I have enough of a challenge getting to the men, women and youngsters still incarcerated, but I do get letters from people who have been released, thanking me for helping them whilst they were 'banged up.'*

What have been your major achievements in working with prisoners?

*I would say this – the greatest reward, above everything else is the feeling I get every time I drive home after visiting a prison. I know I have made a difference and know I have left something wonderful behind. Smiling faces, prizes, achievement, recognition and of course the idea that you are never alone with chess in your life.*

*On a practical level, being approached by FIDE and asked to speak at their inaugural chess for freedom conference with the likes of Anatoly Karpov and Arkady Dvorkovich was an honour. It was an opportunity to reach out globally and share experiences with others doing similar work. Judit Polgar asked me to speak at her Global festival which was also a privilege.*

How have you taken to enforced online chess? Have you played much online?

*I have played a bit, but to be honest I do not derive nearly as much enjoyment from it as I do OTB chess, which is what I was born for. Cheating has sadly become an issue, and whilst my default position is to trust everyone I know in some games that there is skullduggery afoot. When a 1200 player smashes me, playing every (computer like) move instantly I know it isn't just good play. It just turns me off. I have played for Newport chess club in Shropshire but that's about it.*

Which people helped you in your chess career?

*John Lenton. My teacher at school, as mentioned in my new book. Other than that no-one really. There were no coaches, computers or the like back then. My father left before I could even walk, and my mum wasn't interested. There was no support. I did though live in the same small Shropshire Village as IM John Cox, and he was always kind to me, helping me with some studies. I looked up to people like David Everington in Shropshire but I pretty much sat down and taught myself to improve, little by little.*

What is your preference, Standard, Rapid or Blitz? And why?

*I play unrated games on lichess. These are always three-minute blitz. I love this time limit because I can get a quick chess buzz between doing other things and it means I get to play chess almost every day. Okay, there is no mental nourishment in it, in terms of improvement but I know this when I play it. I*

*simply want to play. And I am as excited at the start of a new game today as I was when I first learned the game at 12 years of age.*

What are the essential qualities that make a good chess coach?

*That is a fantastic question. Think about Sir Alex Ferguson and Arsene Wenger. They were brilliant coaches but in many ways only average players. The first point to understand is that you don't have to be a great player to be a great coach. Some people are simply unable to impart what is in their head to a student. That's no crime, it is just a fact.*

*In my experience working with juniors and adults, a good coach needs to be adaptable. He/she needs to be able to tailor the program to the students' needs and in some ways let them set the pace. You need patience and a clear idea of what it is you can do for the student. Never set goals that are unrealistic – and always be honest with them and their parents.*

*Finally, people learn more when they have fun. I have worn Viking helmets, battle dress and used any number of 'silly props' to reinforce a point. Love the game, and show it. Make chess fun. Set yourself on fire with enthusiasm, and people will come from miles around to watch you burn.*

Please select and provide a link to one of your favourite games, with annotation, if possible.

*Well I won't choose one of my games, but the game that had the greatest impression on me as a kid was Capablanca-Treybal from Carlsbad in 1929. It absolutely blew me away. The idea of playing on both wings, switching suddenly from one to the other, of using your pawn formation in a way that totally constricts the opposition yet will still give you chances, of waiting patiently for the exact moment to attack. It was amazing. After 39.b6 I just looked at the board, at that squadron of white pawns, the flying V as I called it. Wow! And then the denouement, the final irresistible breakthrough destroying all resistance. Incidentally, it also gave me some ideas about how to play against someone who is only playing for a draw. I learned so much from that game and I use it in coaching sessions.*

<https://www.chessgames.com/perl/chessgame?gid=1066825>

Carl's book 'Chess Crusader – confessions of an amateur chess player' is available from Chess and Bridge, Amazon or the author direct at [carl.portman@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:carl.portman@hotmail.co.uk)



### **Ravia Haria - World Cup Game**

The FIDE World Cup has been running as a 206-player knockout from July 12 to August 6 in Krasnaya Polyana, near Sochi in Russia. IM Ravi Haria takes us through one of his games from the event

**Haria, R. (2440) - Zvjaginsev, V. (2608) [C11] [Annotations by Ravi Haria]**

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 c5 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Be3 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5 9.Qd2 a6 10.Qf2!?**

[Having been surprised by a French, I wanted to avoid theory and so played this rare move.]



[10.0-0 0-0 is far more common, after which Black launches a queenside attack with ...Nxd4 followed by ...b7-b5.]

**10...Nxd4 11.Bxd4 Bxd4**



[Objectively this move is completely fine, but I feel like it gives White an easy game.]

[11...Qb6 12.0-0-0 Bxd4 13.Rxd4 Nb8! would have been more to the point.]

**12.Qxd4 Qb6 13.Qxb6 Nxb6 14.Bd3**



[Both sides have their plans - White wants to implement a knight on d4 before expanding on either the kingside or queenside, whereas Black will finish development before breaking with ...f7-f6 and attempting to target the weak e5-pawn.]

**14...Bd7 15.Ne2 f6 16.Nd4 fxe5 17.fxe5 Ke7 18.Kd2!?**



[18.0-0 seems like the obvious move, but I thought my king would stand better on d2 in future positions.]

**18...Be8!** [The point of Black's previous move - clearing the d7-square for the knight, and attempting to trade light-squared bishops with ...Bg6.]

**19.Rhf1 Bg6 20.Rf3 Raf8** [20...Nd7 21.Rg3! was the point. 21...Nxe5 22.Re1 Kf6 23.Rge3]

**21.Raf1 Rxf3?**



[I think Zvjaginsev underestimated my next move. The change in pawn structure heavily favours White.]

[21...Nd7 22.Rxf8 Rxf8 23.Rxf8 Nxf8= This ending seems pretty dead.]

**22.gxf3!**

[A future f3-f4 effectively supports the e5-pawn, while the g-file is now open for my rook to utilise.]

**22...Nd7 23.f4 Rf8 24.Rf3?!**



[Preventing the cheeky threat of ...Nxe5. However, I missed Black's next possibility.]

[24.Be2! is best, retaining the light-squared bishops.]

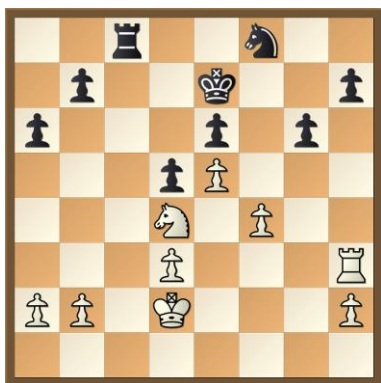
**24...Bxd3?** [24...Be4! We both missed this strong possibility. Black is close to equalising here. 25.Bxe4 dxe4 26.Rb3 Rxf4 27.Rxb7 Rh4= There is still some chess to be played, but Black has excellent counterplay.]

**25.cxd3!** [Now White is in complete control.]



**25...g6 26.Ke3** [Protecting the f4–pawn, enabling the f3–rook to relocate to a more active square.]

**26...Rc8 27.Rh3 Nf8 28.Kd2!**



[Preventing any counterplay on the c-file. Having forced Black's knight to f8, the c8–rook can't attack the f4–pawn anymore.]

**28...Rc7 29.Rg3 Ke8 30.Rg1 Ke7 31.b4!**

[The best thing about White's position is the ability to play on both sides of the board - Black has to just sit and wait.]

**31...Rc8 32.a4 Nd7** [32...Kf7 was more resilient. 33.h4 h5 34.a5! A queenside breakthrough will be very effective.]

**33.h4!**



[Having diverted Black's f8–knight to d7, he can no longer meet h2–h4 with ...h7–h5.]



**33...Kf7 34.h5 gxh5 35.Rg5 h6 36.Rxh5 Kg6 37.Rh1 Nf8 38.Rg1+ Kf7 39.a5! Ng6** [39...h5 40.Rg5! h4 41.Rg4! Ng6 42.Nxe6 Kxe6 43.Rxg6+ Kf5 44.Rf6+ Kg4 45.Ke3 Rh8 46.Rg6+ Kf5 47.Rg5+ Ke6 48.Kd4 h3 49.f5+ Kd7 50.Rg1+–]

**40.b5** [After opening the kingside, this queenside break is now decisive.]

**40...axb5 41.Nxb5 Kg7 42.Nd6 Ra8 43.Nxb7** [43.f5! was even cleaner. 43...exf5 44.Nxf5+ Kh7 45.e6!+–]

**43...h5 44.Ke3 Kh6 45.Nc5 Ne7 46.Ra1 Nf5+ 47.Kf2 h4 48.a6 Ra7 49.Nxe6 Kh5 50.Kf3 h3 51.Rg1?!**



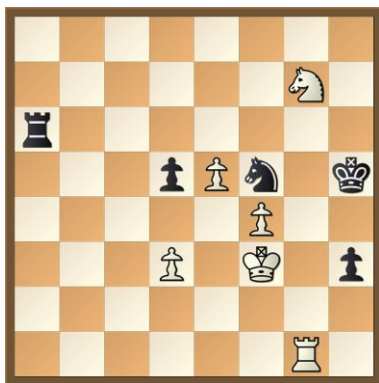
[The easiest win for White is extremely instructive.]

[51.Ra4! Kh4 (51...h2 52.Kg2+–) 52.Ra2! Kh5 53.Nc7! The rook is optimally placed on a2. 53...Rxc7 54.a7+–]

**51...Rxa6** [Setting up a small trap.]

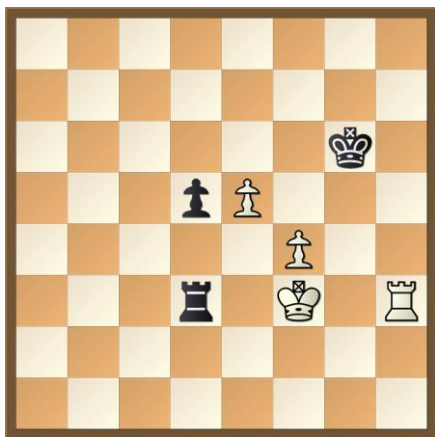
[51...h2 would have continued the game for a while, although White is still winning. 52.Rh1 Nh4+ 53.Kg3 Nf5+ 54.Kf2 Rxa6 55.Rxh2+ Kg6 56.Rg2+ Kf7 57.Ng5++–]

**52.Ng7+!** [The simplest.]



[52.Rg5+ Kh4 53.Rxf5 was my initial idea, but Black has an incredible way to draw. (53.Rg4+! Kh5 54.Ng7+ is obviously still winning.) 53...h2 54.Kg2 Ra2+ 55.Kh1 Kg3 56.Rg5+ Kh3 57.Rh5+ Kg3=]

**52...Nxg7 53.Rxg7 Ra3 54.Rh7+ Kg6 55.Rxh3 Rxd3+**



1-0

To play this game through in your web browser, go to <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-59-august-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>



### **No Place Like Holmfirth**

Steve Westmoreland on getting OTB chess during in a pandemic

Holmfirth Chess Club is relatively new and a response to the ever-shrinking number of Clubs in the Huddersfield League. I was Club Secretary at Huddersfield Chess Club when we decided to go for it and create a new club from scratch. The idea had been in my head since 2016 and with numbers, the time was right.

[below - 19th December 2018 Huddersfield Christmas Blitz at Lindley Liberal Club. It was time to start repairing the league]



The 2019-2020 season was our first proper season, with a huge internal focus on developing our new members and, at one point, rehoming the team after a loss of venue. The excellent Stumble Inn offered to host us for free, in their large but unused restaurant area.

In our first full season we competed well in the scratch league and almost won the Examiner Handicap league. When I say almost, we were winning it. This then happened - COVID-19 crashed us to an inglorious halt and ripped my selection pool to bits.

We started to lose members quite quickly, with those elderly or suffering from underlying health conditions isolating. Now the sole Committee member left, I had made a decision to keep things running as long as possible suspecting that once a stay at home order came in, it would be for a long time.

## **‘Three weeks to flatten the curve’ – Boris Johnson**

With great reluctance we shut the Chess Club Monday 16th March. This included the popular Junior section, much to the disappointment of my daughter who had proved excellent in training the younger ones.

[below - Inspired by my purchase of David Smerson's *The Complete Chess Swindler*, Olivia did a brief session on escaping lost positions]



We all became very busy with home schooling and working full time. Members did not want to lose contact, so we moved club nights online.

## **‘All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us’ - Gandalf**

Using Skype, Chess.com (then Lichess) and screen sharing, we moved online for Huddersfield, Honley and Holmfirth, with the odd invite for Hull to join us. Numbers were very limited, with many not comfortable going online or the fast nature of play. Junior groups did not have great attendance, which was understandable with the home learning going on and pressure on parents.

## **‘Spinning around, spinning around. I'm spinning around, move out of my way’ – Kylie Minogue**

Three weeks turned to three months, with various restrictions still in place. The moment these relaxed I stood up the chess club. A few changes had to come in, such as not handshaking, hand sanitiser, track & trace and the 1m+ rule. I was to spend time measuring up tables and distance.

We came back to chess using two boards –



[above - Kyle and Dan are in deep concentration]

I was not kidding about the tape measure, much to the player's amusement. As time passed, we tried different ways of playing, using one board but only touching one colour of pieces (which everyone

moved to) and as more was known about the virus, we went back to one board. People can still request two boards if they want. Masks are optional.

Numbers were small but with the only open venue, players came through from Huddersfield and Honley.

What followed was a very stressful time as local restriction were introduced and various rules invented, locally and nationally. I was to spend a lot of time reading and reviewing. Sadly, the Club had to shut again on the 27th July courtesy of Kirklees Council. This lasted until the start of September. We had a plan for competitive play though.

### POD Chess

3 team chess was introduced to operate with the limited club player pool. This allowed us to maximise space and where players wanted, to use two boards. The Stumble Inn management were great, allowing us to run games on a Monday, which was very useful in navigating the rules on people numbers and then the 'Rule of Six'.

Teams entered from Huddersfield, Honley, Wakefield and Belgrave (Halifax).

[below - Nick (Holmfirth) vs Steve (Belgrave) with Dave observing. This was pre-Scotch eggs]



We lasted until 12th of October when Kirklees shut us down again, despite my appeals to the local Council and MP.

**'Everything comes to he who waits ... and I have waited so very long for this moment' – Skeletor**

There was no let up this time from the local Council and local restrictions were replaced by national ones. Expecting a long lay off, I quit chess for four months. The excellent Queen's Gambit series changed that, as queries started to come through on joining clubs in Huddersfield and Holmfirth. Online play resumed to keep these prospective new members. This was followed up by a recruitment drive on the local community Facebook site ahead of the latest relaunch.

9th June we returned on the same lines as before, until Monday 19th July when facemasks, distancing and me having set up everything, was no longer required. More players started to return and new players joined. Training is occurring every week now, especially with the excellent Andrew Drabble attending club nights to coach.





In the end we came out of the pandemic with an expanded Club and a history of close collaboration with others. We had a one-off match against Bradford Chess Centre in Ilkley and can put expanded teams into all leagues and enter the Yorkshire Saturday Silver Rooks league. With the return of most of the Senior team to Holmfirth, we were able to divvy roles around and now welcome Rob Mitchell as our new Club Secretary.

Bar Kirklees and the Government imposing yet more restrictions and lockdowns, the new season looks rosy.

### **Attitude to the pandemic**

The virus is better understood and mass vaccination has occurred. In terms of risk, we are in a much better place. Holmfirth Chess Club remains open and if people want to take individual precautions they can do so and be welcome. Our increasing numbers suggest people have a good understanding of risk post vaccine and are happy to return.

*Steve Westmoreland, Holmfirth Chess Club*



### **MICHAEL ADAMS' GAME of the MONTH**



In a first for this column, I am annotating a game played in person. The 4NCL congress provided a welcome return to over the board play. The brisk schedule, Covid restrictions, and lack of recent practice can't have made things easy for the participants.

However, apart from a serious mutual oversight around move 22, this challenging game is negotiated pretty well by both players. Jonah, who shared first place with another youthful talent Aaravamudhan Balaji, finishes the game emphatically with some brutal blows.



1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 e5



Taking the game in a different direction than the more common 3...Nf6 4.Bxc4 e6.

**4.Bxc4** The tricky line 4.Nf3!? exd4 5.Bxc4 Nf6? (5...Bb4+! gives Black time to get castled.) 6.Qb3! Qe7 7.0-0 was the shocking end to the Mamedyarov-Kasparov blitz game in Zagreb recently. Black resigned here, due to the potent threat of Ng5 his king is a sitting duck in the centre.

**4...exd4 5.exd4 Bd6 6.Nf3 Nf6 7.0-0 0-0 8.h3** This position looks alright for Black, but the extra space due to the IQP, and the actively placed light squared bishop does give White chances to build an attack. Peter chooses to rule out Bg4 ideas permanently, he could have continued developing: 8.Nc3 Bg4 9.h3 Bh5, and now 10.g4! Bg6 11.Ne5 possibly followed by f4 gives White considerable forward momentum.



**8...h6** Black follows suit, but 8...Nc6 9.Bg5 h6 10.Bh4 g5! 11.Bg3 g4! doesn't look that clear.

**9.Nc3 9.Ne5!?** certainly has some merits too.

**9...Nc6 10.Qc2!** A good practical choice, preventing Bf5 and teeing up Bxh6 ideas, which are never comfortable to have to calculate with confidence over the board.



**10...Na5** After 10...Nb4 11.Qb1 c6 planning to drop the knight back to d5, 12.Bxh6 gxh6 13.Qg6+ Kh8 14.Qxh6+ Nh7 15.Ne4 looks extremely scary. 10...Ne7 appears logical, but again allows 11.Ne5!

The game move driving White's bishop back makes sense, but leaves the Black knight idling on the edge of the board.

**11.Be2** 11.Bd3 Be6 12.Re1 Bc4 13.Bxc4 Nxc4 14.Ne5 was another option, in the game White plans to redeploy the bishop on f3 later.

**11...Be6 12.Ne5 c5** Challenging the knight immediately with 12...Re8 can be met by 13.Bf4.



**13.Be3 Nd5?!** Swapping an important defender allows Peter to whip up a kingside initiative, 13...Rc8! activating the rook was stronger after 14.Rfd1 Nd5! now makes more sense due to 15.Nxd5 cxd4!

**14.Nxd5 Bxd5 15.Qf5** The alternative 15.Rfd1!? c4 16.Bf3 Bxf3 17.Nxf3 b5 18.d5 leaves Black's knight stranded, and Nd4 in the air.

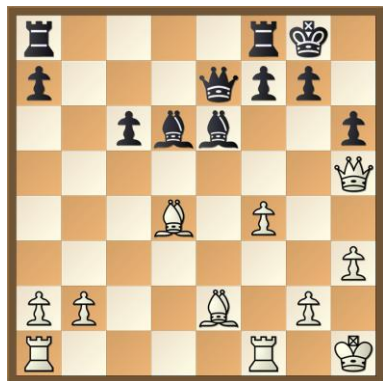
**15...Be6 16.Qh5 Qf6** Simplifying with 16...cxd4! 17.Bxd4 Qg5 was more practical.



**17.f4! cxd4 18.Bxd4 Qe7 18...Qf5** looks more natural, but after **19.Qf3** planning **Bd3** Black needs to be precise **19...Bxe5! 20.Bxe5 Bc4! 21.Bxc4 Nxc4 22.Bxg7! Kxg7 23.Qc3+ wins a pawn**. However **22...Qc5+ 23.Kh2 Kxg7 24.Qc3+ Kh7 25.b3 b5**, or **22...Nd2 23.Qe2 Rfd8** should be survivable.

**19.Kh1 19.Ng4!? Bxg4 20.Qxg4** is also good - Black will have to weaken his kingside.

**19...Nc6 20.Nxc6 bxc6**



**21.f5** Tempting, but Jonah's bishop will prove very influential when it is forced to the strong outpost on d5. **21.Bd3!** aiming another piece at the kingside was interesting **21...f5 22.Rf3 Qf7!** (**22...Bc5 23.Be5 Bd6 24.Re1 Bxe5 25.Rxe5** is no fun for Black) **23.Rg3!** an enterprising continuation **23...Qxh5 24.Rxg7+ Kh8 25.Rxa7+ (25.Rg5+ Kh7 26.Rxh5 Rad8** is less convincing) **25...Rf6 (25...Kg8 26.Rg7+ Kh8 27.Rg5+ Kh7 28.Rxh5) 26.Bxf6+ Kg8 27.Rxa8+ Kf7 28.Bd4 Bd5 29.Ra7+ Kf8 30.Kg1 Qh4 31.Bxf5** leaves White on top, but this razor sharp line holds multiple hazards for both sides.

**21...Bd5 22.Bxg7?** The modest **22.Bf3** was correct keeping a small edge by swapping Black's best piece.



**22...Qe4** Surprisingly **22...Qe3** also wins, the main point being **23.Bxf8 (23.Qg4 h5!) 23...Bxg2+! 24.Kxg2 Qg3+ 25.Kh1 Qh2** mate.

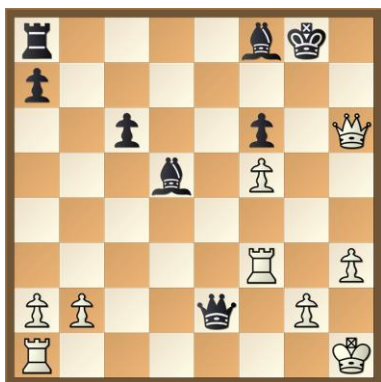
**23.Rf3** The obvious **23.Bf3** fails to **23...Qf4!** menacing **Qh2** mate.



**23...Qxe2?** The players both made a serious oversight here the obvious capture 23...Kxg7! was winning - Black shouldn't be afraid of ghosts 24.f6+ (24.Bd3 Qe5 25.f6+ transposes) 24...Kg8! 25.Bd3 (25.Qxh6 Qg6!) 25...Qe5 26.Qg4+ Qg5 and again the Black queen blocks the g-file, and extinguishes the attack.

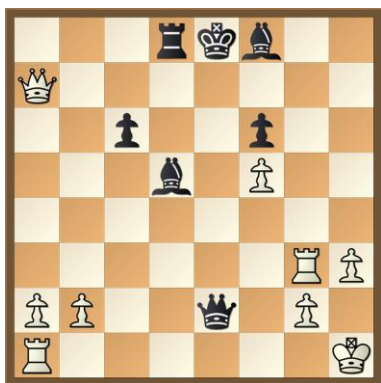
**24.Qxh6** Hard to resist, but the other capture was better 24.Bxh6! Qxb2! 25.Rg1! Qf6 (25...Qe5? 26.Rf4! is not so simple to spot) 26.Qg4+ Kh7 27.Bg5 Qh8 28.f6 Be6 29.Qd4 Rfd8 30.Bf4! giving the White rook access to g3 leaves Black's king in deep strife.

**24...f6 25.Bxf8 Bxf8**



**26.Rg3+?** This drives Black's king towards the centre where it gets room to breathe. 26.Qg6+! Bg7 27.Rg3 Qe7 28.Rd1 was better planning Rd4, importantly the bishop on g7 is now passively placed, and the g2 point well defended.

**26...Kf7 27.Qh7+ Ke8 28.Qb7 Rd8 29.Qxa7** Grabbing another pawn and also threatening Re3+, but the healthy material count is less important than the activity of Black's pieces, and the all powerful bishops. Realising this at the board before beginning the checking sequence would be far from simple though.

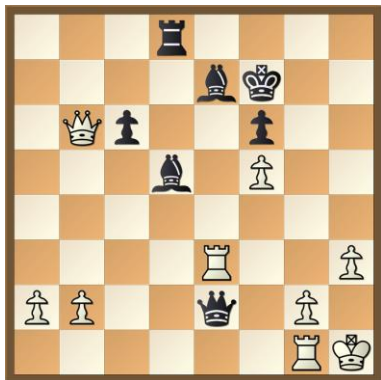


**29...Be7** This looks very sensible to me, but the computer likes 29...c5 30.Qa4+ Rd7 when White is out of checks.

**30.Rg1** 30.Qe3 Bxg2+! 31.Kh2 Qxe3 32.Rxe3 Bd5 33.Rae1 Rd7 34.a3 Kf7 prepares Bd6+.

**30...Rd7 31.Qb8+ Rd8 32.Qb6** White should have offered a repetition with 32.Qa7 Kf7 33.Re3 Rd7! 34.Rxe2 Rxa7 35.b3 Bd6 36.Rd1 Be5 shows how powerful the bishop pair are anchored in the centre, White is fighting for a draw despite the pawn count.

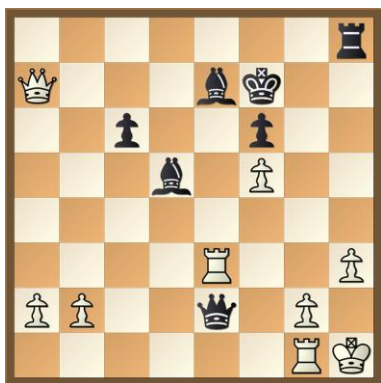
**32...Kf7 33.Re3**



**33...Rh8!** Jonah picks up the pace and finishes the game in great style from here on.

Not 33...Qf2? 34.Rxe7+ Kxe7 35.Qxf2, the simple 33...Qd2 34.Qa7 Rd7! was also good enough though.

**34.Qa7!** Peter keeps on fighting, not 34.Rxe2 Rxh3 mate.



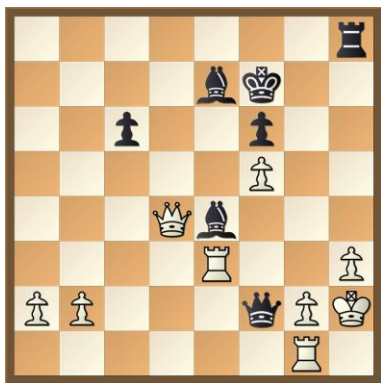
**34...Be4!** The only move, but now White is running out of ideas.

**35.Kh2** Avoiding 35.Rxe2 Rxh3 mate.

**35...Qf2!** The most clinical pinning the rook on e3.

**36.Qd4** 36.b4 Rg8 is one winning option.





**36...Qf4+! 37.Rg3**

Unfortunately forced due to 37.Kh1 Bxg2+! 38.Rxg2 Qxd4.

**37...Bd6! 38.Qa7+ Bc7! Ending the debate.**

**39.Qa3**



**39...Rxh3+!**

There were other ways to win like 39...Rg8 40.Qb3+ Bd5, but again Jonah finds the most precise way. White resigned, 40.Kxh3 Bxf5+ 41.Kh2 Qh4 mate is a fitting finish.

To play this game through in your web browser, go to <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-59-august-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>

## ARKELL'S ENDINGS



### **The Hierarchy of Pawns.**

*'Every seeming equality conceals a hierarchy'* – Mason Cooley

This month I'd like to demonstrate an important principle for improving your position when there is apparently not much going on.

In my book 'Arkell's Endings' I often spoke about my 'Hierarchy of Pawns', and how, in positions where both players have castled Kingside, I value each pawn slightly higher as you move across from the a to the f - file.

And I gave examples of typical opening plans which indicate that the Hierarchy has been recognised even though it is rarely spelled out.

In the first twenty moves of this game there are three transitions, each one favourable for White according to the Hierarchy. Later on, when I exchanged my h - pawn for my opponent's f - pawn, the traditionally recognised advantage of capturing towards the centre resulted in an unstoppable phalanx of pawns. Before looking at my notes, and without the use of an engine, I'd like to invite you to decide when Black first stood clearly worse, and at which point his position was no longer saveable. It's not easy!

**Arkell, Keith C - Verma, Aditya [D23]**

25th 4NCL Congress Leamington Spa, (5), 11.07.2021

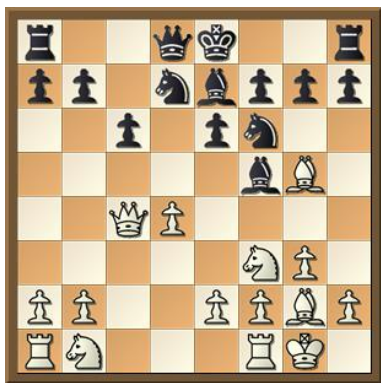
**1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.Qc2**



[The position is only equal after this, but my opponent will now have to start thinking for himself as there are no long book variations associated with the move.]

**4...dxc4 5.Qxc4** [The first small gain: a d - pawn is slightly more valuable than a c - pawn. This is understood, for example, by players on both sides of the Open Sicilian, and is the reason why Bent Larsen didn't like to play White in such positions. Of course there are many other compensating dynamics going on there.]

**5...Bf5 6.g3 e6 7.Bg2 Nbd7 8.0-0 Be7 9.Bg5**



[Objectively not a great move, but I have difficulty finding a happy home for the Bishop in this line.]

**9...h6 10.Bxf6 Nxf6 11.Nbd2 Ne4 12.Rfd1 0-0 13.Ne5 Nxd2 14.Rxd2**



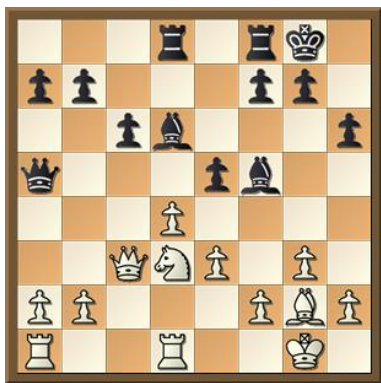
[The beauty here is that the normal freeing move ...c5 will only enhance the scope of my g2 Bishop.]

**14...Qa5 15.Rdd1 Rad8 16.e3 Bd6 17.Nd3 e5**



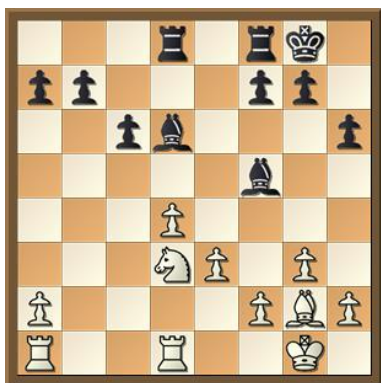
[White has only the tiniest of advantages, if any, because the two Bishops ought to offset my slightly better pawn structure.]

**18.Qc3!**



[With the double attack on e5 and a5 I force another favourable exchange as my b - pawn becomes a c - pawn.]

**18...Qxc3 19.bxc3 exd4 20.cxd4**



[And this time I've swapped my c for Verma's e - pawn. Definitely a gain! However, there should still be enough dynamism in the position for Black to be okay. The problems really begin when his valuable Bishops disappear.]

**20...Rfe8 21.Rac1 Re7 22.Rc3 a6 23.Rdc1 Be4?!**



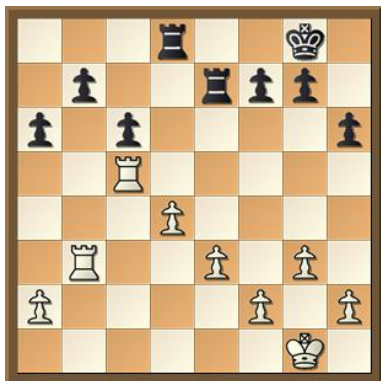
[Understandable as my Bishop appears to be better than Black's, but a step in the wrong direction as minor piece exchanges leave him without counterplay against my structural bind.]

**24.Bxe4 Rxe4 25.Rb3 Re7 26.Nc5 Bxc5**

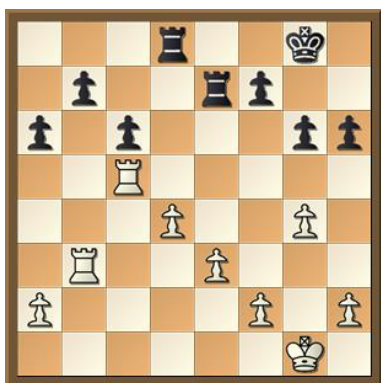
[Probably necessary at some point as it won't be much fun having everything tied to the defence of b7. This Rook Endgame highlights the difference between human and computer chess. The engine says White is only slightly better, but from a practical point of view Black's position is very unpleasant. He has no pawn breaks and I have a straightforward plan of advancing my Kingside along with the King

himself. All the earlier favourable exchanges have resulted in my strong and flexible centre pawns v my opponent's ineffectual Queenside.]

**27.Rxc5**

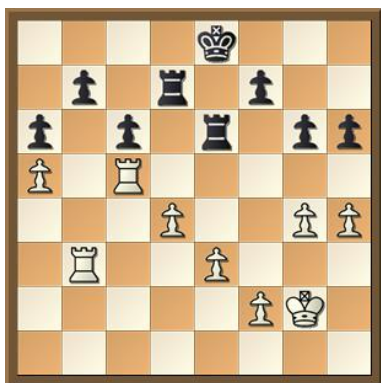


**27...g6 28.g4!**



[My favourite chess move! After ...h5 his position would be a lot more comfortable.]

**28...Kg7 29.Kg2 Rdd7 30.h4 Re6 31.a4 Kf8 32.a5 Ke8**

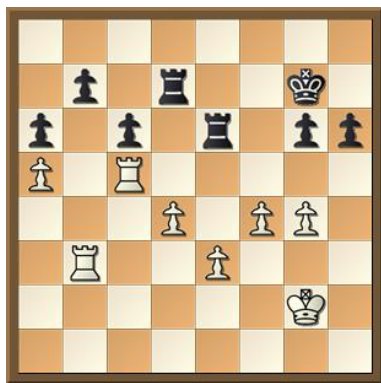


**33.f4** [The decision to make this counter - intuitive move was far from straightforward. I wouldn't normally damage the harmonious f2–e3–d4 setup so nonchalantly, but I can easily cover e3 with my King and one Rook and meanwhile I have further structural gains in mind.]

**33...Kf8 34.h5** [Further undermining Black's influence in the centre and creating more weaknesses.]

**34...Kg7 35.hxg6 fxg6**

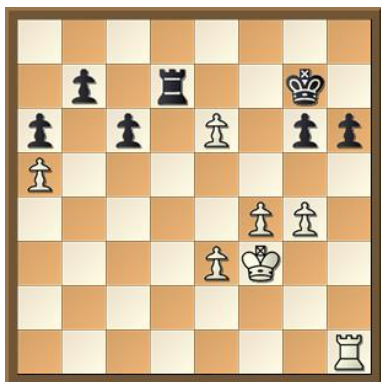




[It's natural that the talented junior Aditya Verma wants to keep his pawns connected, but now the inexorable march of my e and f pawns is hanging over his head. As ugly as 35...Rxc6 looks, it may have been his best chance, though the lack of space and any active plan while lumbered with 3 isolated pawns didn't appeal to him.]

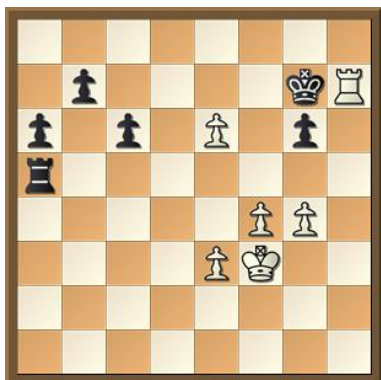
**36.Kf3 Kf6 37.Rb1 Rde7 38.Re5 Rd7 39.Rh1 Rxe5** [On 39...Rh7 40 g5+ is curtains.]

**40.dxe5+ Kg7 41.e6**



[Obviously the straightforward 41 f5 wins, and powerfully supports the whole concept of the Hierarchy of Pawns, but I saw a neat tactical idea, so went for that instead.]

**41...Rd5 42.Rxh6! Rxa5 43.Rh7+!**



[After the forced 43...Kf8 44 Rxb7 with e4 and f5 soon to follow.]

**1-0**

## A return to over-the-board chess – and its perils...

GM Peter Wells writes about the 25th 4NCL Over the Board congress which took place in July, including a critical game between the congress winner FM Jonah Willow and Peter Sowray

Although a few of my colleagues have managed to track down some over-the-board chess during the past 16 months, for the majority of us it has been a very lengthy period of enforced inactivity. I never doubted that I would miss the special atmosphere of playing competitive chess in person, but having previously navigated breaks of 6 months or more with relative ease, I was surprised by how much I craved the opportunity to play again this time. For this reason - especially amongst those of us for whom online chess will always be very much second best - the prospect of a 4NCL OTB Congress in July has been the focus of a good deal of anticipation for several months. The problem with building such expectations, of course, is that the reality might not quite match up...

I should hasten to add that the responsibility for any disappointment I felt was very definitely mine alone. In terms of organisation I have nothing but praise for the efforts made by all concerned. The venue in Leamington Spa is excellent – the first UK chess venue to my knowledge, where it has been possible to enjoy a campfire in the grounds on the Saturday night – and the organisers implemented what sounded on paper like some rather stringent rules with common sense and good humour. Playing in a face mask is not ideal, but it feels like a small price to pay for a substantial step along the road back to ‘normality.’ No, the problems lay entirely with the quality of my moves. I was tentative, nervy and quite obviously out of practice. Following this sort of bruising, I guess I have to look for some positives amongst the doom and gloom.

The first one – for me, whether or not for anyone else – is that I emerged determined to keep playing, to work harder and to learn from this experience. Some players have chess styles which age relatively painlessly, but those who tend to seek sharp positions and choose critical moves will feel more acutely the need to keep working and keep researching. Quite simply, they rely heavily on faculties which are more liable to decline with age. I am sure that I fall into this category and I believe that so does Peter Sowray, who was, incidentally, generous in response when I indicated my desire to annotate the painful Sunday morning loss that follows.

The second positive I think, is just to be reminded how much more difficult it can be to have to work things out in the heat of the moment at a chessboard, than when enjoying the relative comfort of watching or analysing chess at home. If nothing else, I hope the jolt which I received in this respect will make for an empathetic commentary. There were some significant mistakes in this game, but they took place in the context of considerable complexity, generated by the admirable creativity and fighting spirit of both players.

**Sowray, Peter - Willow, Jonah**

4NCL Open Leamington Spa, Round 4

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3**

This will often end up transposing to the more popular 3 Nf3 and 4 e3. However it can be irritating to those players who are keen to play set-ups involving ...Bg4 in the main line and amongst these, take-up of the interesting option of defending an isolated queen pawn position with a fully open e-file is likely to be especially high.

**3...e5 4.Bxc4 exd4 5.exd4 Bd6 6.Nf3 Nf6 7.0-0 0-0**



### 8.h3

To prevent ...Bg4 and thereby help to secure the d4 pawn certainly, but also presaging a more ambitious strategy of trying to deny the c8 bishop any attractive options. In general, when studying an opening, I think it is a useful reaction to any prophylactic pawn moves to ask whether they were necessary. Given that Black replied with a precautionary move of the h-pawn as well, it therefore makes sense to check whether White might have pre-empted this with 8 Bg5!?. This seems logical enough to me, given that Black has selected d6 rather than e7 for his bishop. In any case, I am fairly sure that Jonah would have had an improvement ready over A. Maly – J. Willow, Titled Tuesday (blitz) 2020, which continued 8.Bg5 h6 9.Bh4 Nc6 10.h3 Bf5 11.Nc3 Re8 12.Qb3 Qd7 13.Bxf6 gxf6 14.Rfe1!? Na5 15.Bxf7+ Qxf7 16.Qb5 Bxh3 17.gxh3 Nc4 18.Kh1 c6 19.Qf5 when Black's light-square weaknesses on the kingside make for a difficult defence.

### 8...h6 9.Nc3 Nc6 10.Qc2!?



An interesting approach. Peter wants to complicate the task of developing the c8 bishop by controlling f5.

### 10...Na5

This makes sense. An argument could be made for the disruptive qualities of 10...Nb4 given that 11 Qb3 Bf5 would prove a bit awkward. However, if White remains consistent and realises that after 11 Qb1! his queen can easily emerge from her temporary misplacement, I think he keeps an edge.

### 11.Be2!?

White is obliged to cede the a2-g8 diagonal to his opponent's bishop, but it is not so clear where he wants his own. It is arguably more natural to go to d3 which has been a much more common choice here and in similar positions. However, there are arguments for e2. Firstly it clears the way for a more effective defence of d4 by a rook which might then enable the knight to play to e5 too. Also, as we shall see, whilst d3 looks like the square to 'team up' with White's queen, from there the bishop does also block the queen's progress along the diagonal.

### 11...Be6 12.Ne5 c5!?

This doesn't feel like a pawn break which naturally forms part of Black's plan, but as a specific attempt at undermining White's knight it makes sense. It also invites a clearance of all the centre pawns, a scenario in which the activity of the pieces and their security become of overwhelming importance.

### 13.Be3 Nd5?!

I don't really like this, partly because it lines minor pieces up on a file which is soon to be opened, but also because it somewhat deserts the king-side. On the other hand, this exchange does ultimately enable Black's bishop to settle on d5 where it proves of huge worth to both attack and defence. So a different narrative could no doubt be constructed. Still, 13...Rc8! seems much more logical since after 14.Rad1 Black could then try 14...Nd5 with the neat intermezzo 15 Nxd5 cxd4! in mind.

### 14.Nxd5 Bxd5 15.Qf5!? Be6 16.Qh5 Qf6



White's king-side initiative is building nicely, which is (I guess) why the engine now wants to head for 16...cxd4 17 Bxd4 Qg5. Objectively this feels right, but it would have been a lot less exciting. It is part of the strength of 4NCL open tournaments with just 5 rounds that both players are often playing for a win even when a fair degree of risk is involved.

### 17.f4 cxd4 18.Bxd4 Qe7 19.Kh1

An extremely natural move, designed to prevent a trade of the dark-squared bishops. However, the king proves to be very vulnerable here in the critical sequence that follows and it is at least notable that the much less obvious 19 Rf2!? – which also prevents 19...Bc5 due to the neat tactic 20 Nc6! – would be virtually winning if Black responded as in the game. It is also notable that if Black meets 19 Rf2 with 19...Qc7!, White's attack is strong enough for deflecting the bishop with 20 b4! to seriously test the defences although the complicated 20...Bxb4 21 f5 f6! does keep him very much alive.

### 19...Nc6



In fact this is the only move, but I passed the game at this point and assumed that Jonah was in grave danger. In fact, neither of the lines I thought about give an advantage - the one played in the game should lose - and the coming moves are anyway heavily influenced by time pressure, especially Black's.

**20.Nxc6 bxc6 21.f5?!**



I think it is very difficult to resist making this move, since it looks as though Black's king-side will be broken up, whereas delaying would allow a move of Black's f-pawn to limit the damage. In fact the bishop on d5 will be a terrific piece for the remainder of the game and Black has sufficient resources to meet all of Peter's critical tries.

**21...Bd5 22.Bxg7?**

This looks natural, but should actually lose. 22 f6!? does less damage, but Black can exchange queens with 22...Qe4! forcing 23 Qg4, or even go for 22...Bxg2+ 23 Kxg2 Qe4+ and even with queens on, it is not clear his king is in a worse state than White's.

**22...Qe4! 23.Rf3**

I think it was here that Peter realised that after 23 Bf3 Qf4!, it is Black's attack which lands first. Incidentally the counter-attack rests on the fact that the g7 bishop is blocking the g-file, which is why 24 g3 Qxg3 25 Be5 must be captured with the queen, rather than 25...Bxe5?? 26 Rg1 Bxf3+ 27 Qxf3!



**23...Qxe2?**

Wow – a massive let off which triggers another fascinating and complex phase. Black could simply take on g7 here since the f6 advance which is so pivotal to White's mating threats at once allows his opponent's queen to defend along the fourth rank, so 23...Kxg7! 24 Bd3 (if 24 f6+ Kg8 25 Qxh6 then 25...Qg6 covers everything) 24...Qe5! defends, since there is no mate with 25 f6+ Kg8 26 Qg4+ due to 26...Qg5 and otherwise White threatens himself.



## 24.Qxh6?!

Again very natural, but not the best. I guess Peter saw that 24 Bxh6! threatens both a mating invasion on g7 and the queen by a discovered attack, but thought that 24...Qb2! (uniquely) covers both. However, after continuing energetically with 25 Rg1! Qf6 26 Qg4+ Kh7 27 Bg5 for example, it becomes clear that the ongoing attack here is more meaningful than the material which he is able to recoup in the game.

## 24...f6 25.Bxf8 Bxf8 26.Rg3+?!

The wrong decision with, I suspect, an interesting psychological dimension underlying it. Especially in mutual time trouble, I think many of us enjoy the sensation that we are driving our opponent's king into the perils of the middle of the board and are prone to overlook that it may actually be safer there than where it started. The key here is to keep the king on g8, when the engine confirms that the direct and readily comprehensible plan of swinging the rooks into the attack is strong enough, at least to hold the balance. A sample line after 26.Qg6+ Bg7 27.Rg3 Qe7 28.Rd1 Rb8 29.Rd4 Rb7 30.Rdg4 Kf8 31.h4 indicates that Black cannot easily free himself and will have to proceed carefully. Instead of this, immediately challenging the queen with 28...Qf7! 29.Qh6 Qc7! looks more accurate, when it is possible that 30 Qg6 Qf7 repeating, is 'best play' – although it should be noted this was not really in keeping with the aims of either side.

## 26...Kf7 27.Qh7+ Ke8 28.Qb7 Rd8 29.Qxa7



Interestingly, Peter still thought that White should be doing fine here, a misjudgement which clearly contributed to his error on move 28. I must say, my feeling was that the bishop on d5 is such a monster -forcing one of White's rooks into a miserable role defending g2, whilst at the same time keeping the g8 square from the other one - that I would definitely rather be black. Still, I am also surprised at the leeway Black enjoys here. For example the engine suggests that Jonah could have preferred 29...c5!?, followed by playing his bishop to d6 instead of 29...Be7 next move, which to the human eye definitely smacks of overambition.

## 29...Be7 30.Rg1 Rd7 31.Qb8+ Rd8 32.Qb6

Afterwards Peter suggested that he could have repeated here with 32. Qa7 and it is an interesting question whether Jonah would have already realised that in this case he should play on with 32...Rd7 38 Qb8+ Bd8! My guess is that he may well have, since he had very sound practical reasons for repeating once in any case.

## 32...Kf7 33.Re3 Rh8!?

A cute tactic, but absolutely not a necessary one 33...Qd2! intending to meet 34 Qa7 with 34...Rd7 is arguably rather simpler.

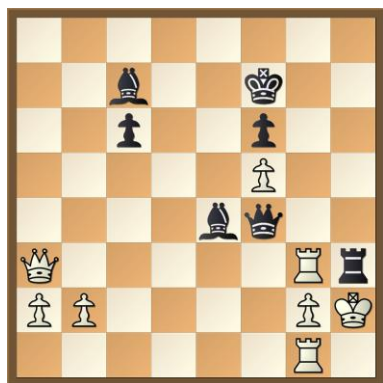
### 34.Qa7 Be4

The only move, but you (hopefully) only play 33...Rh8 if you have this follow-up covered!

### 35.Kh2?!

35 Qd4 would have forced 35...Rh4 and kept the last vestiges of hope alive since after 36 Kh2 Qf2 White can give the exchange to exchange queens with 37 Rxe4 Qxd4 38 Rxd4 Rxd4. However, the piece should outweigh the pawns here, not least because White's king remains uncomfortable. Now it is all over.

**35...Qf2 36.Qd4 Qf4+ 37.Rg3 Bd6 38.Qa7+ Bc7 39.Qa3 Rxh3+!**



**0-1**

Mistakes, yes, but also great fighting chess and instructive moments. Certainly for me, this stood out as the most interesting game of the weekend.

To play this game through in your web browser, go to <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-59-august-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>



## **My Beautiful Laundrette**

Peter Burgoyne's second part of his chess journey, which includes a cameo of a colleague on his way to the laundrette who is hijacked to play in 4NCL!

It is 1976 and I've started a chess club at Redlands Primary School in Stepney, east London. The children compete against local schools for individual and team titles. The schools get together to form the Tower Hamlets team. Realising that our coaching skills lack a certain expertise in the finer points of the game we hire Nigel Povah to do some training sessions. Nigel is excellent and we learn a lot about piece development, tactics and endgame strategy. I'm beginning to have a much better understanding of the game and decide to put my new-found knowledge to the test by entering the Islington Congress. It is a huge event. Tony Miles, John Nunn, Mark Hebden, Jonathan Mestel and Jon Speelman are playing, but fortunately, not in the Minor Section in which I score 4/6 and an estimated grade of I think 99.

I've moved on to teach at Virginia Primary School in Shoreditch and join the Metropolitan Chess Club which is based near Liverpool Street Station. Nigel Povah has moved on and we engage the services of Malcolm Pein. Malcolm is very enthusiastic and a great communicator and can see that a number of the players have huge potential. On the demo board at times it's a game of football out there. Develop your pieces, control the midfield, go for the King, back of the net, one-nil.

I'm teaching in the Infants department and some of the children start to play at age six. This turns out to be very beneficial for team success as they will have five more years at the school. Alal was the joint British Under 9 champion at Swansea and he and his brother Basa played for the England Primary Schools team. Virginia School were twice Under 9 National Primary Schools champions and once Under 11 winners. Children from Mayflower school in Tower Hamlets also won national titles. The children they competed against include Matthew Sadler, Richard Bates and Miroslav Houska.

In search of, how shall I put it, a more beer and blitz vibe, I join my local club, Hackney. The club has GM status in the beer and blitz ranks and there is a thriving Saturday night scene in Stoke Newington's Rochester Castle pub (it's a Wetherspoons not a castle). There are quite a few blitz addicts, people who would happily play all night marathon sessions. It is also possible to learn from the stronger players and to present your games for analysis. As we know in chess the devil is in the detail and the first team players might spend an hour going over variations from one position.

Back in the day we had quite a few players who were excellent at organising the pieces but useless at organising themselves. Captaining a team could be frustrating. We are at Golden Lane at 7pm and I phone an absent player.

'Where are you?'

'You said Wednesday.'

'It is Wednesday.'

Things are much smoother now and the days of being a player short heading to the Midlands for the 4NCL are thankfully long gone. On one occasion we were a man down driving to the M1 and scooped up club member Dylan who was on his way to the Laundrette. And from the back of the car came the most used line in English club chess: 'Phone Dave Thomas'.

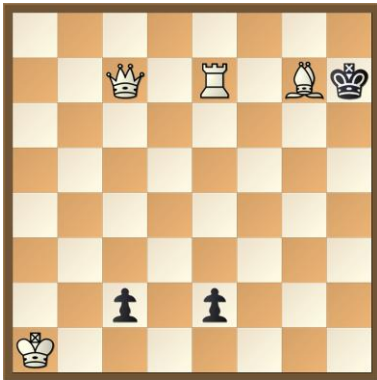
And in 2016 Hackney Chess Club were awarded the coveted ECF Club of the Year title. The Roch was bouncing that Saturday night. Even the regular pre-clubbing hipsters were impressed.

The final part of this trilogy will explore my experiences of playing chess abroad.

## Problem Corner

Christopher Jones with his monthly conundrum

In the last Chess Moves I left you with this problem –



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

Viktor Bene

Dedicated to Christer Jonsson – 50

*Springaren* 1997

In the diagram position the solution is 1.c1=B 2.e1=Q 3.Qe6 4.Qg8 Qc2#. In (b) (with the officer at e7 now a white *Knight*) the solution is 1.c1=N 2.e1=R 3.Rg1 4.Rxg7 Qh2#. As I mentioned, the placing of the white King is relevant. Black has to promote at c1 in order for the promotion at e1 not to give check (which would not be allowed), and he has to promote to the piece that will not provide a guard against the coming mating move. As a result we see all four possible promotions (known by problem aficionados by the German term *Allumwandlung*, often shortened to 'AUW').

Have you ever considered entering the competitive world of chess problem solving? You may have seen the starter problem for the British Solving Championships in a magazine or newspaper and wondered what would be in store for you if you entered such an event. In fact, Brian Cook, and various helpers from the British chess problem community, have set up a number of competitive solving events, spurred on by the desire to provide those interested in the possibility of competitive solving the opportunity to do so online. The pandemic was the catalyst for this, but it's clear that regardless of the pandemic this is a very convenient and easy intro to chess problem solving. You can try your hand at sample chess problem solving tests at [www.netchex.club](http://www.netchex.club) (as I've found, you may have to add 'chess' to avoid the blandishments of an American organization of the same name offering to help you with payroll management!).

As well as using sample tests, you can have a go at solving problems that have been used in recent online solving competitions. A recent solving tourney used the following problem by one of Britain's leading composers, Don Smedley, who, very sadly, died earlier this year –



Mate in 3  
Don Smedley  
*The Problemist* 2006

One of the skills in selecting problems for such competitions is that they have to have very clearcut solutions, because they have to be accommodated within a very exact marking system. In this case, a full solution would net solvers 5 points. The 1<sup>st</sup> point is for finding the key move and saying what its threat is. (You only need to say what the threatened 2<sup>nd</sup> move is – you don’t have to take it further and include the 3<sup>rd</sup>, mating move.) You will find (and the computer has verified) that there are precisely 4 black replies that will thwart the threat. For each of these there is a unique white 2<sup>nd</sup> move that forces mate next move. Again, you have only to give the 2<sup>nd</sup> white move in each case – you are not required to go further, to the mating move. You will find that most of the defences arise from the logic of the strategy you will find in this problem, but one of the lines is by way of ‘mopping up’: a less interesting line of play that the composer had to include in order to make the problem work as a sound problem and which the competitive solver has to include to get up to the full tally of 5 points.

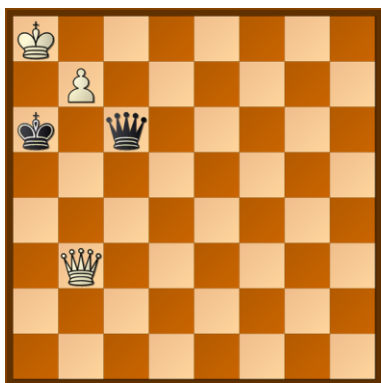
Organizers of solving tourneys do try to find problems that are not only clearcut but also pleasing to solve, so I hope that you may enjoy this example of Don Smedley’s craft. I’ll give the solution next time, though if you want to see it before then then you can do so on [www.netchex.club](http://www.netchex.club), where you’ll find a lot of other problems for solving; and you’ll also find details of forthcoming Netchex online solving events (BOOM events, where “BOOM” = British Open Online Masters solving!) in August, September and December.

As ever, if you have any queries or comments don’t hesitate to email me.

Christopher Jones Email: [mcjajones1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mcjajones1@yahoo.co.uk)



## **How to Solve a Study**



White to play and win



Queen and pawn against queen – in a game, your heart sinks, because you expect it to take countless moves and the checking sequences to be tedious and unfathomably computery. This isn't. It's a study with a short and spectacular solution. It's one of the first great studies; it was published in 1888. Composed by Louis van Vliet, and published in the Deutsche Schachzeitung.

Right, formalities over. Now, how will you go about solving it? There are all sorts of options for White: checks, waiting moves, creeping forward moves, etc. So you can't solve it by examining all the options, there are too many. In which case, as in over-the-board chess, you need a plan, a strategic aim. How on earth can you unpin the pawn? Black will keep his king close by and maintain his queen on the diagonal. Even if you get your king to a7, say, Black's queen will simply check it back and then resume the pinning duties. So you need an inspiration – and those aren't just random luck, you can help to generate them by understanding what's going on in a position.

Black needs to keep his queen on that diagonal, so suppose you could deflect the Black queen. Somehow. Even at the cost of your own queen maybe? Now it feels like you are on to a good idea. If the Black queen can be deflected, while the Black king is on the b-file, then you can promote your pawn with check. YESSS, there might be a skewer. So try it. You realise that the Black queen will need to be further down the board, so you need to zugzwang Black so he'll have to move it. Then you'll need to force Black's king to the b-file. See if it works. It does. 1.Qb4 and if Black plays 1...Qf3 you have 2.Qa4+ Kb6 3.Qb3+ Qxb3 4.b8Q+. Very nice. But Black doesn't have to go to f3. Okay, what about 1...Qg2? The same skewer trick works. 2.Qa3+ Kb6 3.Qb2+. So you are confident this must be the composer's solution, but there's also 1...Qh1. Now you know what you need to do and you immediately find 2.Qa3+ Kb6 3.Qb2+ Kc7 4.Qh2+.

You still need to make sure Black doesn't have any other defences, but it doesn't take long to find that if 1...Qh1 2.Qa3+ Kb5/6 3.Qb2+ Kc4/5 you have 4.Qc2+ Kd4 and can get your king out with 5.Ka7 Qa1+ 6.Kb6.

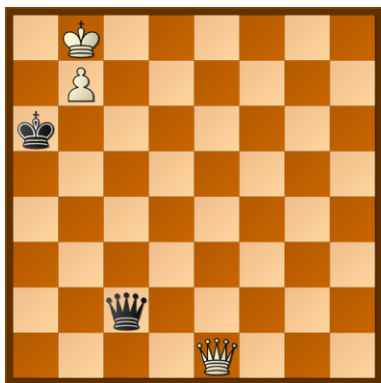
So the solution, which has three lines, is:

**1.Qb4 Qf3 2.Qa4+ Kb6 3.Qb3+**

**1...Qg2 2.Qa3+ Kb6 3.Qb2+**

**1...Qh1 2.Qa3+ Kb6 3.Qb2+ Kc7 4.Qh2+**

In the year 2000, Richard Becker found a way to extend this study, by adding an introduction. Your task is to solve his version:



White to play and win

Ian Watson Email: [ian@irwatson.uk](mailto:ian@irwatson.uk)

See the end of the newsletter for the solution. To play this game through in your web browser, go to <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-59-august-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>

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## **GARY LANE BOOK REVIEWS**

IM Gary Lane looks at *The Scandinavian for Club Players* by Thomas Willemze, *The London System in 12 Practical Steps* by Oscar De Prado and *Chess Board Options* by Larry Kaufman - <https://chess.business/blog/>

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## **JUNIOR MOVES**

### **Junior News**

Director of Home Chess **Alex Holowczak** writes

#### **Glorney Cup 2021**

The annual junior internationals against the rest of the British Isles took place online again. England won three of the four sections, plus the pre-tournament blitz, and were second by half a gamepoint in the other section. GM Matthew Sadler and WFM Natasha Regan streamed commentary on the final round games, which included our decisive 4-1 victory against Ireland in the final round of the Under 18. More here - <http://chess-results.com/tnr569577.aspx?lan=1&art=0&flag=30>

#### **World Youth Rapid Online Cup 2021**

England has entered a large team of juniors for this event - <https://chess-results.com/tnr565786.aspx?lan=1&art=25&fedb=ENG&flag=30>

#### **British Junior Rapid & Blitz Championship 2021**

This over-the-board event in Milton Keynes on 13-14 November has been launched. Entries can be made here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/juniors/british-junior-rapid-blitz-championship-2021/>

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### **Littlewood's Choice**

If further proof is needed that chess is a young man's game, then 15 year old Aaravamudhan Balaji provided it recently by coming joint first in the 25th 4NCL Congress and spearheading England's win in the Glorney Cup.

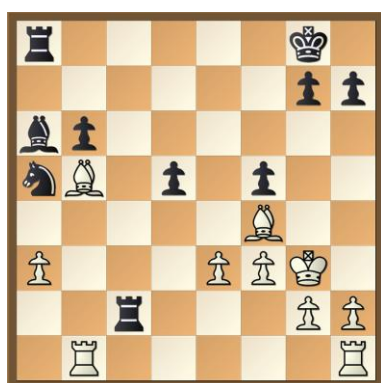
He is a real competitor who is not afraid to go into an ending if he thinks that is objectively the best course.

Consider the following position which he reached against Peter Wells as White in the 4NCL Congress.



(Diagram after 15....Nxa5)

White has a slightly better ending but against a player of Peter's class it should prove hard to win. However Aaramahudhan played well and reached the following position where he still holds a small advantage :



(Diagram after 21.Kg3)

Here Peter should have continued 21....Bxb5 22. Rxb5 Nc4 with chances of equalizing but instead he made a mistake, playing 21...Nc6? and after 22.Ba4! he was in trouble. The game continued 22...Rc4 23. Bb3 Na5 24. Ba2! b5 25. Rhd1 Rd8 26. Bxc4 and White went on to win.

In the final round of the Glorney Cup, Aaramahudhan needed to win to secure England's victory and again he outclassed his opponent in an ending.



(Diagram after 13...Bc5)

The immediate win of a pawn by 14.Nxd5 Nxd5 15.Bxd5 Bxd5 16. Rxd5+ Ke6 leaves Black's pieces well placed and he has at least equal chances. However he played 14.Na4! Bb4 15.Bg5 Rc2 16.a3 Be7 17.Bxf6 Bxf6 18. Bxd5 Bxd5 19.Rxd5+ Ke6 20.e4 and his extra pawn was sufficient to win.

If necessary, though, he can fight like a tiger when under pressure. A key game in the 4NCL Congress was against Keith Arkell. He was under the cosh for most of the game and in the following position he is only a few moves away from defeat.



(Diagram after 29.Rc1)

However 29....f4! put a spanner in the works and although Keith played reasonably well he missed a few opportunities to finish his young opponent off and allowed Aaramahudhan to escape with a draw. The simplest way to continue for White after 29...f4 is 30.Bd4 ! ...and in a short while Black's position will crumble. Instead Keith played 30.gxf4 and this gave Black some counterchances, which he took full advantage of.

*Paul Littlewood, August 2021*

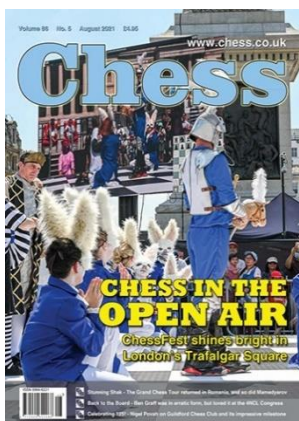


## **ECF Academy**

The thematic topic for August is – **Tactics**

Tactics are a hugely important element of the game and one that can be trained very easily as there are lots of examples and puzzles out there to try. Please have a go at the sample puzzles from this month's Academy materials and please email us if you want the solutions at [admin@ukchess.co.uk](mailto:admin@ukchess.co.uk)

Click this link - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Chess-Tactics-Academy.pdf>



## **CHESS MAGAZINE**

This month's taster is [here](#)

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## How to Solve a Study – solution

(Becker) **1.Ka8 Qa4 2.Qb1 Qc6**, and we have arrived at van Vliet's position, so you know the rest. However, you need to have justified those first two moves: both to show that White has no alternative methods and to show that White can deal with Black's alternatives. Fortunately, there aren't very many to look at, because you are going to have to play Ka8, if not at once, then very soon. A neat trick that is easy to overlook is: 1.Qb4? Qh2+ 2.Ka8 Qb8+ and stalemates.

In the solution line, after 1.Ka8, 1...Qa2 2.Qb4 wins.

I hope you found 1...Qa4. If not, you probably played 1...Qc6, which goes immediately into the van Vliet position, but if you did that you should have said to yourself that it's too simple and there ought to be somewhat more to the introductory play than that.



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