



October 2021



We're back!

The return of live championship chess

Clubs reuniting

Interview with Callum Kilpatrick

A busy September over-the-board

**Analysis and studies from Michael Adams, Peter Wells,
Keith Arkell, Paul Littlewood, Ian Watson ... and more!**



Welcome to the October edition of ChessMoves. This month we cover the British Chess Championships, played over the board at the University of Hull and Kents Hill Park in Milton Keynes, and we review a busy September as we started to pick up the pieces post-lockdown. We also feature an interview with FM Callum Kilpatrick, along with features on setting up a chess club and a beginner's guide to joining a local club. John Hennessy provides a wonderful insight into how Northenden Chess Club, near Chester, came back on board following lockdown; and Mark Jordan and Paul Conway provide off-the-board observations as op-eds.

Once again we feature top-class analysis, studies and problems from GMs Michael Adams, Keith Arkell and Peter Wells, along with IM Paul Littlewood, Iain Watson and Christopher Jones. Director of Home Chess Nigel Towers' monthly report is packed with news and information. The Leagues are starting up again across the country and there has been a huge take-up of new clubs and Leagues joining the League Management System (LMS) system to run their events.

Our *Junior Moves* section includes a terrific blog on Junior 4NCL by the anonymous writer *Chlivelylemon*, whose quality of writing has left your editor scratching his head and wondering how a junior can churn out such excellent prose (it's a similar vibe that the same editor has endured on many a 4NCL weekend as a youngster sitting on ten cushions sent me packing).

So we're back, with handshakes, disbelief in not being able to convert a winning position, trying to get a decent view of two GMs battling out an endgame and of course meeting up with old friends.

Enjoy your chess.

--- Mark Rivlin



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HOME NEWS

Home Chess

Director of Home Chess **Nigel Towers** writes ...

ECF Online and Eternal September

The surge in online chess continues alongside a big return to over the board play with clubs, leagues and congresses starting up again in force, and the 107th British Championships starting in Hull and Milton Keynes at the start of October.

In case you were wondering Eternal September is a reference to September 1993, when the leading internet forum 'Usenet' saw its heaviest influx of new members. After a while people worked out that the newbies outnumbered the existing users and things were never going to be quite the same - which is very much where we are now with the chess resurgence and so many new players looking to play online or over the board.

Clubs and weekly events

ECF online club memberships continue to increase with over 4,800 in the Chess.com ECF Open Club, 1,500 in the ECF Members Club and 1,300 in the Lichess English Chess Players club. We are continuing with 8 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 seventh Blitz and Rapid events on the first and third Sundays in September, with GM Keith Arkell holding on to first place in both events, followed closely by Peter Finn in the Blitz and David Walker in the Rapid -

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

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

ECF Online Counties Championship

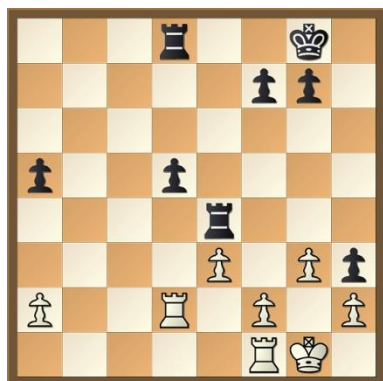
The 2021 Online Counties finals took place on Saturday 18th September with matchups as follows -

Open - Devon v Northumberland

Minor Open - Northumberland v Essex

U1800 - Northumberland v Leicestershire

Board 1 of the Devon v Northumberland Match saw GM Keith Arkell playing against IM Andrew Horton. You can read Keith's account of the game elsewhere in the newsletter. Here is the position after black's move 25 by which point Keith has swapped off into a double rook endgame with a slight edge based on black's pawn weaknesses. Keith explains how he maintains the pressure and converts to a win with patient endgame play in this month's Arkell's endings.



International Series

The English Chess players team continues to play in the regular Mega Team Battles on Friday afternoons, the Bundesliga / Quarantine league on Sunday and Thursday Evenings, the mid-week Champions League on Tuesday evenings and the World Nations Events on Wednesdays. We have settled into division 3 of the main Bundesliga with GMs Keith Arkell and Matthew Sadler as our top scorers in the twice weekly events.

Marathons

This month the English Chess Players teams have joined a number of marathons including the Fischer Random 12 hour marathon series where we have finished in the top 10 in successive 8 hour marathons in a big field of almost 200 teams.

Return to over-the-board

The return to play over the board gathers momentum with events during September including -

- Saturday 4th Sept - Docklands Rapid
- Monday 6th Sept and weekly going forwards - Hendon Under 2200 FIDE Swiss
- Tuesday 7th Sept and weekly - Muswell Hill FIDE Rapid
- Friday Sept 10 – Sunday Sept 12 - 26th 4NCL Congress in Leamington Spa
- Saturday 11th Sept - Golders Green FIDE Rapidplay continuing fortnightly
- Friday Sep 24th Sept – Sunday Sep 26 Sept - 57th Northumberland Chess Weekender
- Junior 4NCL Weekend in Leamington Spa CV32 6RN
- Saturday 25th Sept - Sunday 26th Sept - Cambridgeshire Rapidplay
- Saturday 25th Sept - Peter & Peggy Clarke Memorial, Bude

Over-the-board events 2021

As last month we are continuing with the ECF's programme of over-the-board events for 2021.

English Counties 2021

The Friendly Counties competition completed in September. Regional stages are now underway with the finals scheduled for next year.

British Championships 2021 – 2nd-17th October

The over-the-board British Championships are now underway, starting on Saturday 2nd October and running for two weeks at venues in Hull and Milton Keynes.

The University of Hull venue is hosting the British Open and the British Women's Championship, and Milton Keynes is hosting the British Seniors and Juniors Finals. The events are running daily during the week and weekends, with the junior finals over the weekend of 2nd and 3rd October. We have live boards at all events with commentary from WIM Natasha Regan, GM Matthew Sadler and team on the twitch commentary channel here - https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary. We are also broadcasting games. Photographs by John Stubbs and supplied by organiser Stephen Greep can be seen here - <https://www.britishchesschampionships.co.uk/photography-2/>. The draft schedule is as follows for the various championships ---

BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP [Hull]

Saturday 2nd October to Sunday 10th October

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

BRITISH WOMENS CHAMPIONSHIPS [Hull]

7 rounds - Round 1 (Thursday 14th October at 5-00 pm), rounds 2-7 (Friday 15th October to Sunday 17th October at 10-00 am and 5-00 pm)

BRITISH JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS [Milton Keynes]

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

Sunday 3rd October - 10.00am, and 1.30 pm

UNDER 18/ 16, 14, 12, 10, 8

BRITISH SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS [Milton Keynes]

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

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

First weekend of the 107th British Chess Championships



The Championships saw a mix of GMs, IMs and fast-improving young players, including 11-year-old Freddie Gordon from Scotland. Danny Gormally and Mark Hebden won both their games with Mark finding a neat finish in his Round 1 game against Louise Head.

We join the game after 33.. Qc8. What did Mark play at this point and how did the game finish?

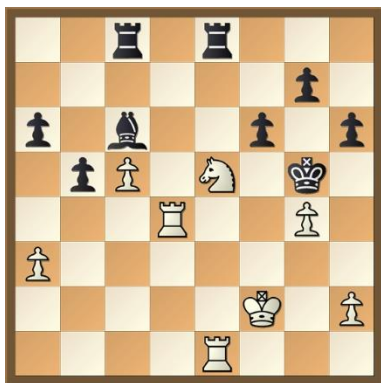


Juniors

Meanwhile the juniors were competing for the British Junior titles in a 2 day competition on 2nd and 3rd October with 7 rounds for the U8s and U10s and 5 rounds for the U12 – U16s.

The U8 and U10 tournaments were relayed to the internet with live boards at the venue with some fantastic chess played. Here are a couple of skilfully played checkmates from the two tournaments.

The first is a critical position from Dildarav Lishoy Gengis Paratazham's Round 3 game against Kushal Jakhria. What move did Dildarav find in this position to trap black's king with mate to follow?



The second is Adithya Vaidyanathan's Round 5 game in the Under 10s. Adithya has managed to force white's king in the centre of the board in another mating net. How did white finish off with some accurate moves from this position?



The rounds completed on Sunday 3rd October and congratulations go to the winners and new junior champions and runners up as follows -

Under 18

- 1 – Timur Kuzhelev RUS 3,0
- 2 – Jonathan McKay SCO 2,5
- 3 – Jake Barry ENG 2,0
- Performance Prize – Yuman Ranjula Gamage Ranasinghe ENG 1,5

Under 16

- 1 – Mohammed Aayan Ismail ENG 5,0
- 2 – Adam Sieczkowski ENG 4,0
- 3 – Frankie Badacsonyi ENG 3,5
- Performance Prize – Edward Jackson ENG 3,0

Under 14

- 1 – Arjun Kolani ENG 4,5
- 2 – Sanjith Madhavan SCO ,0
- 3 & Best Girl – Nina P Pert ENG 3,5
- Performance Prize – Suyash Srikanta Prasad ENG 2,5

Under 12

- 1 – Kenneth Hobson ENG 4,5
- 2 – Zain Patel ENG 3,5
- 3 – Ethan Bingxuan Li ENG 3,5

Best Girls – Anusha Subramanian ENG and Mae C Catabay ENG 2,0
Performance Prize – Avyukt Dasgupta ENG 3,0

Under 10

1 – Jan Murawski ENG 6,5
2 – Emils Steiners LAT 5,0
3 – Kai Hanache ENG 5,0
Best Girl – Ruqayyah Rida ENG 4,0
Performance Prize – Shambavi Hariharan ENG 3,5

Under 8

1 – George Zhao ENG 6,0
2 – Dildarav Lishoy Gengis Paratazham ENG 5,5
3 – Kushal Jakhria ENG 5,0
Best Girl – Zoe Veselow ENG 4,5
Performance Prize – Ayan Pradhan ENG 3,0

We have further details on the Championship and Seniors Championships elsewhere in the newsletter including a summary of the final round in both events and a forward look to the British Women's Championship which takes place between 14th and 17th October.

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 - 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 -

- Bundesliga/ Quarantine League Team Battles
- The British Championships including the main Championships, Junior and Senior events.

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

English leagues and clubs support

The leagues are starting up again across the country and there has been a huge take-up of new clubs and leagues joining the LMS system to run their events.

As we go back to over the board play alongside online, we are looking at a number of priority areas to support clubs across England following on from the clubs survey feedback. You can read more about these on the clubs community page here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/clubs-home-page/>

We are also introducing a new **Clubs Corner** section of the newsletter, with more details from the clubs survey and plans and a report from Chris Skulte on the London Mind Sports Centre which is an exciting initiative to provide a share facility for chess and other mind sports in London. The Chess Centre in Ilkley is also now well established and offering a range of club nights, events and facilities.

British Championships Report - 10th October

British Championships Final Round 9 – Hull

The Open British Championships was a close fought battle with the lead changing hands several times during the course of the week between 2nd and 10th October, and the top ten players at the start of round 9 as follows -

| Rk. | SNo | | Name | FED | Rtg | Club/City | TB1 |
|-----|-----|-----|--------------------------|-----|------|--------------------------|-----|
| 1 | 1 | GM | <u>Pert Nicholas</u> | ENG | 2548 | Sandhurst | 6,0 |
| | 8 | IM | <u>Ledger Andrew I</u> | ENG | 2329 | Sheffield | 6,0 |
| 3 | 3 | FM | <u>Harvey Marcus R</u> | ENG | 2465 | Witney / 4ncl Wood Green | 5,5 |
| | 4 | GM | <u>Hebden Mark L</u> | ENG | 2455 | Syston | 5,5 |
| 5 | 2 | GM | <u>Gormally Daniel W</u> | ENG | 2480 | Blackthorne Russia | 5,0 |
| | 9 | FM | <u>Olson Hamish</u> | SCO | 2273 | Bon Accord | 5,0 |
| 7 | 5 | IM | <u>Mcphillips Joseph</u> | ENG | 2425 | Bolton | 4,5 |
| | 6 | GM | <u>Arkell Keith C</u> | ENG | 2380 | Cheddleton | 4,5 |
| | 13 | WFM | <u>Sucikova Svetlana</u> | SVK | 2175 | White Rose | 4,5 |
| | 16 | | <u>Finn Peter</u> | ENG | 1959 | Wycombe And Hazlemere | 4,5 |

GM Nick Pert and IM Andrew Ledger were out in front with 6 points, followed by FM Marcus Harvey and GM Mark Hebden on 5.5 and GM Danny Gormally and FM Hamish Olson on 5. This meant that there was everything to play for going into the final round with any of the top 4 players in a position to take the title.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|--------------------------|------|----|----|-----|--------------------------|------|----|
| 1 | 3 | FM | <u>Harvey Marcus R</u> | 2465 | 5½ | 6 | GM | <u>Pert Nicholas</u> | 2548 | 1 |
| 2 | 9 | FM | <u>Olson Hamish</u> | 2273 | 5 | 6 | IM | <u>Ledger Andrew I</u> | 2329 | 8 |
| 3 | 6 | GM | <u>Arkell Keith C</u> | 2380 | 4½ | 5½ | GM | <u>Hebden Mark L</u> | 2455 | 4 |
| 4 | 2 | GM | <u>Gormally Daniel W</u> | 2480 | 5 | 4½ | WFM | <u>Sucikova Svetlana</u> | 2175 | 13 |
| 5 | 19 | | <u>Khoury Theo</u> | 1814 | 4 | 4½ | IM | <u>Mcphillips Joseph</u> | 2425 | 5 |
| 6 | 17 | | <u>Willison Steven</u> | 1936 | 2 | 4½ | | <u>Finn Peter</u> | 1959 | 16 |
| 7 | 15 | | <u>Starley Robert</u> | 2057 | 4 | 3 | | <u>Stubbs Oliver</u> | 1925 | 18 |

The final round started at 10.00 am on Sunday morning with commentary from GM Peter Wells and WIM Natasha Regan on the twitch commentary channel here - https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary

Individual games were broadcast on PGN broadcast channels on Chess.com, Chessbomb, Lichess, Chess24 and Followchess.

Hamish Olson had white against joint leader Andrew Ledger with a Queen's Gambit Slav variation played leading to the critical position below after **11 Rc1** (setting up a pin on the c file) .. **Nf6** and **12 Nh4!** with black to move. Hamish's opening play has left black in a difficult position with no easy continuation to avoid the position opening up in the centre to white's advantage. 12..dc is met by 13 Nxf5!

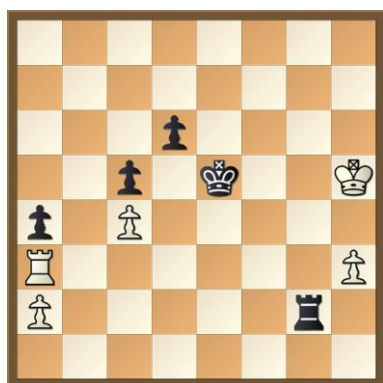


Black played **12..Be4** after which the game continued

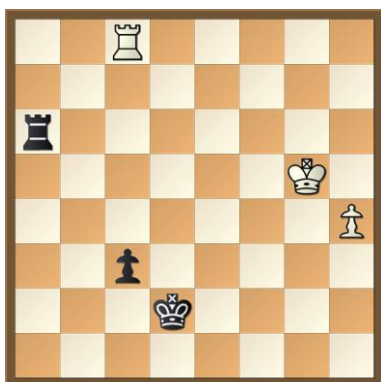
13. cxd5 exd5 14. Bxe4 Nxe4 15. Nxe4 dxe4 16. Nf5 Bf8 17. Bb4 with a strong initiative which Hamish took advantage of to win the game. Hamish's win meant that Andrew finished on 6 points.

Marcus Harvey had white against Nick Pert with a queen's gambit accepted and an early queen exchange leading to a draw after white's 55th move, putting Nick on 6.5 points.

This left Keith Arkell's game against Mark Hebden with Mark needing a win to catch up with Nick and force a playoff. Keith had white in his game against Mark. Mark played a king's indian defence with a series of exchanges leading to the position below in the resulting rook and pawn ending.



Although Mark had the initiative due to the chance of creating a more advanced passed pawn, Keith was able to hold the endgame with a draw agreed in the final position after white's move 81.



The draw agreement meant that Mark finished on 6 points and Nick Pert became the 107th British Champion with 6.5 points out of 7.

Results for round 9 were as below - <https://chess-results.com/tnr581778.aspx>












Pairings/Results

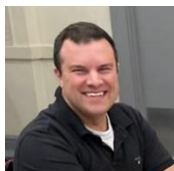
Round 9 on 2021/10/10 at 1000

| Bo. | No. | | Name | Rtg | Pts. | Result | Pts. | | Name | Rtg | | No. |
|-----|-----|---|----------------------|------|------|--------|------|-----|-------------------|------|---|-----|
| 1 | 3 |  | FM Harvey Marcus R | 2465 | 5½ | ½ - ½ | 6 | GM | Pert Nicholas | 2548 |  | 1 |
| 2 | 9 |  | FM Olson Hamish | 2273 | 5 | 1 - 0 | 6 | IM | Ledger Andrew J | 2329 |  | 8 |
| 3 | 6 |  | GM Arkell Keith C | 2380 | 4½ | ½ - ½ | 5½ | GM | Hebden Mark L | 2455 |  | 4 |
| 4 | 2 |  | GM Gormally Daniel W | 2480 | 5 | 1 - 0 | 4½ | WFM | Sucikova Svetlana | 2175 |  | 13 |
| 5 | 19 |  | Khoury Theo | 1814 | 4 | 0 - 1 | 4½ | IM | Mcphillips Joseph | 2425 |  | 5 |
| 6 | 17 |  | Willison Steven | 1936 | 2 | 0 - 1 | 4½ | | Finn Peter | 1959 |  | 16 |
| 7 | 15 |  | Starley Robert | 2057 | 4 | 0 - 1 | 3 | | Stubbs Oliver | 1925 |  | 18 |

with final standings as follows for the top 11 players -

Final Ranking after 9 Rounds

| Rk. | SNo | | Name | FED | Rtg | Club/City | TB1 |
|-----|-----|---|-----------------------|-----|------|--------------------------|-----|
| 1 | 1 |  | GM Pert Nicholas | ENG | 2548 | Sandhurst | 6,5 |
| 2 | 2 |  | GM Gormally Daniel W | ENG | 2480 | Blackthorne Russia | 6,0 |
| 3 | 3 |  | FM Harvey Marcus R | ENG | 2465 | Witney / 4ncl Wood Green | 6,0 |
| 4 | 4 |  | GM Hebden Mark L | ENG | 2455 | Syston | 6,0 |
| 8 | 8 |  | IM Ledger Andrew J | ENG | 2329 | Sheffield | 6,0 |
| 9 | 9 |  | FM Olson Hamish | SCO | 2273 | Bon Accord | 6,0 |
| 7 | 5 |  | IM Mcphillips Joseph | ENG | 2425 | Bolton | 5,5 |
| 16 | 16 |  | Finn Peter | ENG | 1959 | Wycombe And Hazlemere | 5,5 |
| 9 | 6 |  | GM Arkell Keith C | ENG | 2380 | Cheddleton | 5,0 |
| 10 | 13 |  | WFM Sucikova Svetlana | SVK | 2175 | White Rose | 4,5 |
| 14 | 14 |  | WFM Head Louise | ENG | 2090 | Crowthorne | 4,5 |



Well played all in the 107th British Champs and congratulations to the new **British Champion Nick Pert** [left] finishing on 6.5 out of 9, closely followed by Danny Gormally, Marcus Harvey, Mark Hebden, Andrew Ledger & Hamish Olson who all finished on 6 out of 9.






Seniors Round 7 – Milton Keynes

Meanwhile the final round 7 of the Seniors events was also starting at 10.00 am on Sunday morning in Milton Keynes. Again the games were available on Chess.com, Chessbomb and Lichess.

Over 50 Championship

In the Over 50 Championship **FM Mike Waddington** won his final round game against Jeremy Fraser Mitchell, and ended up with 6 points to win the Over 50's title with final standings as follows for the top 5 players - <https://chess-results.com/tnr581886.aspx>





Final Ranking after 7 Rounds

| Rk. | SNo | | Name | FED | Rtg | Club/City | TB1 |
|-----|-----|---|----------------------|-----|------|-------------------|-----|
| 1 | 10 |  | FM Waddington Mike P | ENG | 2047 | Dorchester | 6,0 |
| 2 | 3 |  | Robson Ian A | ENG | 2189 | Wotton Hall | 5,0 |
| 8 | 8 |  | Mason Donald J | ENG | 2062 | Shirley & Wythall | 5,0 |
| 4 | 4 |  | CM Kett Timothy J | WLS | 2156 | 4ncl West Is Best | 4,5 |
| 6 | 6 |  | Crocker Philip J | ENG | 2109 | Chester | 4,5 |

Over 65 Championship

Leader **Roger de Coverly** had been on an unbeaten run with 5.5 out of 6 going into the final round. He lost his round 9 game against Phil Stimpson but was still the clear winner and British Over 65 Champion with final standings as follows - <https://chess-results.com/tnr581888.aspx>

Final Ranking after 7 Rounds

| Rk. | SNo | | Name | FED | Rtg | Club/City | TB1 |
|-----|-----|---|--------------------|-----|------|------------|-----|
| 1 | 15 |  | De Coverly Roger D | ENG | 1863 | Bourne End | 5,5 |
| 2 | 4 |  | Myall Ivan J | ENG | 2011 | Chelmsford | 5,0 |
| 3 | 7 |  | Stimpson Philip M | ENG | 1949 | Guildford | 4,5 |
| 4 | 6 |  | Habershon Paul F | ENG | 1977 | Bedford | 4,5 |

Congratulations go to both of the Seniors British Champions and well played all.

Final Weekend

The final weekend will see the **Women's Championship in Hull** which runs from 14th October to 17th October with an extremely strong field of entrants to date - <https://chess-results.com/tnr581878.aspx>

We will be providing commentary from the event on the ECF commentary channel and look forward to a close fought championship to decide the next British Women's Champion.

We will be providing full reports and games from the various events in next month's newsletter.

Clubs Corner

There is a network of more than 700 local chess clubs across England registered in the ECF's Club Finder here - <https://ecf.justgo.com/clubfinder.htm> - and you will almost certainly be able to find some clubs nearby, many with junior sections ---



We have been running a survey of all clubs over the last few months to understand where clubs are looking for support and to gather feedback on some of the great initiatives in progress across the

country as clubs are restarting following the pandemic. You can read more about the survey and plans to support provide support on the clubs community page - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/clubs-home-page/>

The five priority areas that we are looking at to support chess clubs are -

1. Continuing to raise the profile of the game nationally – via the ECF website, social media, the ECF commentary channel on Twitter and YouTube and various media outlets. We have also messaged English members on Chess.com to make them aware of the network of over 700 local clubs across England via the ECF Club Finder.
2. Providing support for clubs looking to establish a website or social media presence to help attract new members and build a community.
3. Helping leagues and clubs to establish themselves on the ECF's LMS system which now supports different types of club competition as well as league matches, with automatic rating of events held in the system.
4. Continuing to provide guidance and support on COVID safety.
5. Sharing best practice and helping clubs to work together on a regional or national basis to share ideas, initiatives and facilities.

This month the ECF's Bronze Member Rep Chris Skulte provides us with some thoughts on growing your chess club and an update on the Mind Sports Centre in London which is an exciting new venture to provide a dedicated facility in the capital ---

Growing chess clubs

by Christopher Skulte, ECF Bronze Member Rep, Hammersmith Chess Club Committee (>100 members), and part-owner of the London MindSports Centre
September 2021

About

There are many different ways you can grow your chess club. I come from a club that was struggling with about 20 members a number of years ago, and slowly fading, now we have over 100 members. I also notice recently that the ECF club of the year has taken a similar approach, therefore I encourage you to read about both club's stories, to get some greater insight into the journey that is possible.

The Goal

Ultimately, it's about obtaining a digital presence, so when people search for chess in your area, you want them to easily find your club.

Many people have only played online, and giving them a taster for the types of activities you run reduces the barrier to entry for them turning up that first time.

How?

We outline below a dual approach using

- Twitter
- a website that is based on a blog/newsletter

This dual approach is suggested as -

- a) It's fairly easy to set up and maintain.
- b) A lot of the chess community are on Twitter and you will get a lot of engagement, as well as seeing what clubs are up to near and far.
- c) A newsletter/blog based website ensures it is always current news, and provides a distribution list that will receive your club updates.

Twitter

Twitter is a social media platform where you can post messages publicly that anyone can find, and also interact with others on the platform. This is important as it's a very public way to engage with people you may not know, and people you don't know to find you.

More on Twitter here - <https://www.lifewire.com/what-exactly-is-twitter-2483331>

Here are two examples of larger clubs in London which use Twitter. You can click the links to see the types of posts they write ...

- Battersea Twitter - <https://twitter.com/batterseachess>
- Hammersmith Twitter - https://twitter.com/hammer_chess

How do I set up a Twitter account?

We have found this good article summarising how to set up a Twitter account -

<https://www.lifewire.com/join-twitter-by-setting-up-account-3486230>

Website

This section gives a light overview of how to setup your own website for the club and make it relevant for chess. This is just a suggestion, and there are many many different platforms out there that you can use.

We suggest building a website on Wordpress - <https://wordpress.com/>

Why?

- a) It has software which makes it as easy as using Microsoft Word.
- b) It gives you really nice looking templates, point & click interface, and thousands of 'plugins' you can download to add functionality.
- c) Your new posts will go out as a newsletter to members, with a simple link to post onto Twitter.
- d) Ultimately it's very versatile and pretty idiot proof! Hence why we like it at Hammersmith 😊

To put chess diagrams and games into your newsletters, we have setup a Lichess account for the club. Lichess also has a very simple interface - <https://lichess.org/>

You can upload PGNs straight to Lichess. Then there's an option to 'embed in your website'. It gives you a snippet of code that you copy and paste on to your web page, and Lichess does the rest. Again, really simple and idiot proof! And the Lichess interface is really intuitive.

Here are two blog/newsletter-based websites to get some ideas from -

Hammersmith Chess Club website - <https://hammerchess.co.uk/>

Battersea Chess Club website - <https://www.batterseachessclub.org.uk/>

Closing

The more your club engages with the community around you, the more people will hear about you. Many clubs put in so much effort and do great things which no-one hears about. Spread the message, not just for yourself, but because it also gives other clubs ideas of things they can run too.

The final suggestion is to engage in the community, partner up with a local charity and help them raise money while playing chess with the community, interact with businesses and clubs in the local area, show the social side of your club too (not just the chess).

I hope the above helps your club on its journey, and if you're struggling with any of the above, do a Twitter post asking for help. We are a community for a reason – the response may surprise you.

The First London MindSports Centre: a journey into the unknown

The idea of a MindSports Centre has been floated a number of times in the past, never making it past the goalposts for various reasons. It has been an exhausting and exciting journey to get to where we are today, and I am happy to share some parts of the journey in this article.

The beginning

You could say the journey started over five years ago, where Hammersmith Chess Club began their complete metamorphosis, deciding that we wanted to do things differently. We were below 20 members, with an average age north of 60 and were definitely not diverse – now we have a membership north of one hundred, a new venue, a thriving junior section, stable finances, an excellent website and social media presence.

The way we saw our role, is that we are only custodians of the club, and it was our job to improve the club, as well as show as many new people as possible our beautiful game, before handing it onwards to the next generation.

This isn't saying that there is a major problem with all chess clubs, but there are many many venues which are cramped, dingy, sometimes smelly, or feel unwelcoming to new faces, making the transition to over the board chess less attractive to women, young players (and their parents) or new people wanting to play chess.

Finding a venue worthy of our mission

Having moved away from our previous hall to the Young Chelsea Bridge Club on our journey to improve our playing conditions, John White and I were approached in June 2020 regarding a similar vision to create an inclusive venue to play for MindSports. We were hooked and jumped on the solution.

Our main option before this point, was to look at increasing fees for a much improved playing venue (which others are already successfully delivering on across the country), this project gave a new vision to work on, a focus to raise money with a decent return, offering reasonable/cheaper rent to Mindsports that want to use the venue.

The challenge became twofold -

- Raising enough capital to purchase the location
- Being commercial enough for the ongoing run costs of the venue.

The more we returned on the investment, the more the venue would cost and the less money that clubs could put towards growth. There was a balance to be found.

After many discussions between Bridge, Go, and Chess folk, we felt we had the right balance on the above to potentially make this happen. Some sports had more potential funders and fewer players, others had more players and fewer initial potential funders.

After a lot of searching for a location, the Salvation Army Hall near Ravenscourt Park was selected as the preferred venue for our needs. This required about £2.1m to purchase and refurbish.



Fundraising and Challenges

John White and I spent more than 100 hours of our time in conversations with every person we knew in the chess world to get feedback and advice on who would like to get involved, we also funded a significant amount of money into the early legal work required. If this didn't work, we would be out of pocket with nothing to show.

We believed in this vision, but it was time to put our money where our mouths were, which is not always the case with these things.

After much discussion, we agreed the following -

- a) The main lease would go to Young Chelsea Bridge Club – a charity which would sublet it to other parties as needed. This also saved on business rates that may have needed to be paid. Another option was having a central management entity, which would rent the space out based on a rate card, and promote all of the clubs.
- b) A 2.5% return was paid to all investors each year. We floated options between 1% & 5%.
- c) The premises would be two floors refurbished from the current layout with the bar at the front door of the building. We also considered a three-floor option, and four floors (building a penthouse at the top). This was going to cost another £1m, which may require a loan and take longer to open. Though selling the penthouse would fund the extra floor, it was decided this could always be done later.

KEY LESSON

Things evolve and change constantly, not always going the way you would hope, as there are so many moving parts. A strong vision is needed to keep everyone moving in the same direction, and be clear on messaging to people.

For chess, we saw this as a new standard for chess clubs, having people see a different way things could operate, hopefully igniting a flame across the country on similar projects.

We pushed forward with our vision for chess, why we felt things needed to change, and ran a number of presentations, along reaching out to other passionate players. On top of this we were lucky enough to get some publicity from a few of the chess publications and on social media. It took a while to get the ball rolling, but we now have a closed group of investors that are passionate about helping improve chess across the country. We hope that this will be one of many initiatives going forward.

The MindSports Centre opens

As of today, the refurbishment works are near completion. The venue will have four playing areas and a fully licensed bar, which will serve reasonably priced food and drinks.

To date three clubs have currently moved into the venue -

Young Chelsea Bridge Club - <https://www.bridgewebs.com/youngchelsea/>
 London Go - <https://gocentre.londongo.club/> & <https://gocentre.londongo.club/>
 Hammersmith Chess Club - <https://hammerchess.co.uk/>

Grandmaster Nigel Short came down for one of our opening night lectures [below], which was an honour for the club.



There are also ongoing discussions with a number of Leagues, and individuals looking to use the centre for various one-off events, with the space. If you feel it may be useful for an event, please feel free to get in touch.

All the best to everyone who is continuing to push chess forward, I have a lot of respect for everyone who is putting in the hours of thankless work to help improve chess in the country. It's a lot of hard work behind the scenes, and every now and again we get the ingredients right to make a step-change. For this, we must continue to support each other as best we can, and magic will continue to happen.

If anyone would like more information, please do get in touch. I'm happy to share any advice to help clubs across the country.

--- Christopher Skulte



The British in Pictures

Brendan O'Gorman, John Stubbs and Stephen Greep capture the mood in Hull -
<https://www.britishchesschampionships.co.uk/photography-2/>

The Interview

Mark Rivlin talks to Callum Kilpatrick

How was it getting back over the board and securing your final IM norm at the recent Northumbria Masters?

Rather intense – with two rounds of 90-mins (+ 30 secs increment) each day, you’d sometimes have less than one hour between games. After such a long period of online-only chess, you forget how stressful it is playing OTB. As it happens, this was actually my fourth IM norm, with my third secured long ago in January 2014. I then proceeded to graduate from university, head into the world of finance and never clear 2400. Northumbria was the next ‘proper’ tournament (bar 4NCL games) I played and I needed to win my last two games to cross this rating barrier, which by coincidence would also nab a fourth IM norm. Not wanting the wait to extend into an eighth year, I adopted a rather gung ho attitude and rode my luck in a wild final game to literally win in the dying seconds. “Rather intense” indeed – honestly it’s hard to describe the euphoria I felt after.

You got your FM title in 2011. Tell us about your chess journey since then.

This was well-timed as it happened just before I enrolled at Durham University. I then managed to play several tournaments during the long summer breaks and made decent progress, picking up two further IM norms and playing in events such as the World U20 Championships in Athens in 2012. I think I was still improving through to 2014, but then after graduating and joining an investment banking job, found little time for chess and largely flatlined at circa 2350 FIDE. I’ve always felt I had unfinished business to not at least achieve the IM title, which the combination of lockdown and post *Queen’s Gambit* mania helped exacerbate. I was then invited to play in the Northumbria Masters a few weeks prior after a late drop-out, which felt too good to turn down.

You earn a living outside of chess. Tell us about your work with Pantheon Ventures.

Pantheon is a global private markets investment firm, which manages over \$70bn. My role is centred around ‘co-investing’, alongside different private equity firms we partner with, into specific companies across pretty much any industry, size or geography. It is interesting to review so many different businesses and see what makes them either tick or toil. Perhaps there are some parallels to chess, often you see similar patterns (or puzzles) arising in situations that ostensibly seem quite different.

With a full-time job, how much time can you devote to chess?

Not much. There are usually free weekends, but two days can quickly get lapped up by other plans. In midweek evenings I’ve generally found it difficult to focus as you’ll be too tired to cram in 1-2 hours of chess study. The other issue is that larger tournaments will often span two weeks and I’ve historically used my holiday days to either relax or explore new places.

You are a regular on the League circuit playing for Guildford 2 in 4NCL and Richmond & Twickenham in the London Chess League. A question rarely asked is whether there is a difference in playing for club and country against individual tournaments? Or in football-manager speak, do you take every game as it comes?

I’d say a big difference. I’ve always preferred individual tournaments, as I find both players have more at stake and usually a greater desire to win. It doesn’t help that I am a slow starter – in three of the four tournaments where I scored IM norms, I had two back-to-back defeats early on – so I usually need the extra games!

Ten years ago you scored a GM norm at the Livigno Open. Tell us about that tournament.

<https://theweekinchess.com/malcolmpein/callum-kilpatrick-scores-gm-norm-in-livigno>

This was certainly unexpected, at the time I was just 2256 FIDE and had not played chess for almost a whole year (following a gap year work scheme and time spent backpacking). I suspect my lower rating helped as my opponents would invariably want to win too, meaning results could go either way. In the final round I faced a strong 2569 GM with black, needing a full point to reach the GM norm. Midway through this encounter, I had a bizarrely powerful feeling that I just knew I would win and soon after I did so in relatively straightforward fashion. The trip back to my apartment, a pleasant downhill stroll in the Italian Alps, was satisfying to say the least. One year later, filled with confidence, I would return to play the Livigno Open again. My nostalgia was short lived and this time round I lost rating points – chess is certainly unforgiving!

You have a standard-play FIDE rating of 2406 and ECF rating of 2453. Now we are back over the board, what are your grading ambitions for this season?

My ultimate ‘chess goal’ (or more accurately ‘chess dream’) would be to one day make GM. However, to even attempt that requires a gargantuan amount of dedication and skill, so for now I’d love to simply keep my FIDE rating above 2400. I last recall my ECF rating being around 220, so keeping that above 2400 would be lovely too.

Online blitz: Good or bad for average club players?

Good overall, but it would be prudent to steer clear of the arcade-like (albeit addictive) 1-minute. You can play a lot of high-quality games even at the 3-minute mark. To truly improve, however, I think individual study is essential – I am still trying to come to terms with this unfortunate reality myself.

There has been a lot of talk about chess becoming cool following the uptake of the game over lockdown and *The Queen’s Gambit*. How can the ECF embrace this?

That certainly did a lot for the game and it is only one year on that my friends, family and colleagues have all finally stopped asking if I’ve watched it. For full disclosure, I have indeed watched it and it is fantastic. From my (biased) perspective, chess has always been a ‘cool’, hugely popular pastime for many, but something people have often later deprioritised for various reasons. I think the ECF could embrace this renaissance by really focusing on grassroots chess and making it accessible to the masses. I recently had the good fortune to volunteer at the ChessFest event hosted in Trafalgar Square by CSC, where circa 6,000 people from all walks of life attended. After an exhausting day (even before the 30C and constant sun), I left feeling a quite profound impact after seeing the passion so many had for the game. For me, this underlined why I fell in love with chess in the first place.

What makes a good chess commentator?

Those that keep it simple. I’m embarrassingly bad at following variations being discussed out loud, or calculating lines when I’m not playing myself. I really enjoy watching streamers like the Chessbrahs, Eric Rosen or the Botez sisters, and think they do a fantastic job in both marketing chess and making it more accessible.

Which online resource or book would you recommend for an ‘advanced beginner’ to get to a level where he or she could play in an U1000 tournament?

There is a relatively old book (published in 2004) called “Learn Chess in 40 Hours” by Rudolf Teschner, which I recall as helpful. Otherwise, nowadays YouTube has a ton of great resources, or

simply using the different tools on chess.com or lichess.org. The best advice I'd give, however, is to play and try your best – you can't beat the feeling of a real-life OTB tournament!

Outside of work and chess, what other interests do you have?

Always a tough interview question. I enjoy a range of things, for instance travelling, cooking and either playing or watching sports. Most recently the latter included an interesting two-week trip around Russia for the 2018 World Cup and seeing England's epic Euro 2020 run end in penalties heartbreak from the Wembley stands.



Barnes stormer

Lara Barnes was appointed Chief Arbiter of the Women's World Team Championship 2021 in Sitges, Spain. More here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/lara-barnes-chief-arbiter-of-the-womens-world-team-championship-2021/>



ECF Book of the Year

Sergey Voronkov edges Nigel Short - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-book-of-the-year-2021/>



English Chess Federation AGM October 2021

This year's AGM takes place on Saturday October 16th starting at 1.30pm at the Hellenic Centre, 16-18 Paddington Street, Marylebone, London W1U 5AS; also with access for ECF Council members via Zoom.



Luke lively

GM Luke McShane's Spectator Column on winning the Manx Liberty Masters can be found here - <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/the-manx-liberty-masters>



Great, Britain!

Leonard Barden and David Sedgwick on the online Olympiad - <https://www.ecforum.org.uk/viewtopic.php?f=31&t=12036>



Well done Richard!

King's Head player Richard McMichael is awarded FIDE Master title at the age of 60 - <https://www.ecforum.org.uk/viewtopic.php?f=31&t=11924>

Uppsala Young Champions

More on this tournament for players born 2001 or later with a minimum grade of 1900 here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/8th-uppsala-young-champions/>



The 4th FIDE World Chess Championship for People with Disabilities

From November 4th to the 14th 2021 in Dresden, Germany. The Tournament Regulations can be found here --- <https://fide.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=6d944e993248d15fc2b046696&id=a60a7a6aee&e=5ee69772a8>



Guildford online

Having just celebrated its 125th birthday, Guildford Chess Club is providing instructive training videos for juniors. Check out this gem from Andrew Martin - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFnxXfs2snA>



Congratulations Terry Chapman

Terry Chapman finished second in the European Seniors! Final cross-table here - <https://chess-results.com/tnr569457.aspx?lan=1&art=4&turdet=YES&flag=30>



Academy news

Alex Longson writes ...

Congratulations to the following Academy students who placed in the top ten in the recently completed 2021 British Championships ---

Under 8s - Kushal Jakhria (3rd), George Chen (5th), Zoe Veselow (7th) and Bodhana Sivanandan (8th)

Under 10s - Kameron Grose (4th), Harry Bryant (7th), Ruqayyah Rida (8th)

Under 12s - Kenneth Hobson (1st), Zain Patel (2nd), Stanley Badacsonyi (8th)

Under 14s - Shivam Agarwal (5th)

Under 18s - Edward Jackson (4th), Timur Kuzhelev (5th)

Great to see hard work paying off! October's thematic topic is 'Evaluating the Position' which, alongside calculation, is perhaps the most important and difficult skill in chess. As ever, practice makes perfect and the best way to improve this skill is to attempt to evaluate many positions and get feedback either from a coach, engine or another stronger player [for a sample PDF - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/October-21-Evaluating-the-Position-Chess-Moves-preview.pdf>



Book Reviews

IM Gary Lane on *Winning* by Nigel Short and *The Exhilarating Elephant Gambit* by Jakob Aabling-Thomsen and Michael Agermose Jensen ... <https://chess.business/blog/>

Forthcoming events

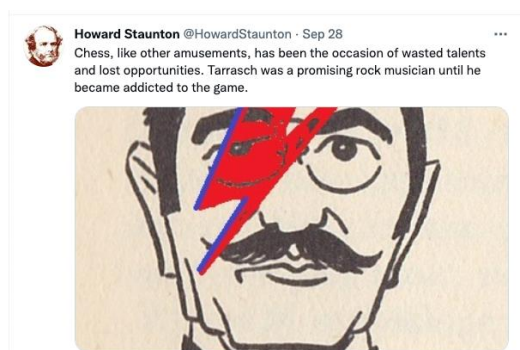
All the events we know of are on the ECF events calendar, and the calendar is sortable by category and by tag, both at the top of the calendar - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/event-calendar/>
If you want to see just over-the-board events coming up click this rather long link - https://www.englishchess.org.uk/event-calendar/action~agenda/request_format~html/cat_ids~354/
or this link on the ECF website ...

Find events to play in with these quick links — [All Events](#) | [Over-The-Board Events](#) | [Online Events](#)



Tweet of the Month

Howard Staunton takes a Bowie ...



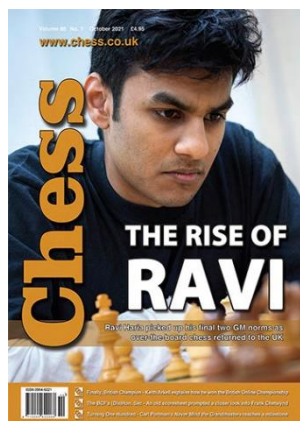
Club Insurance

More on your options here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/clubs-congress-insurance-2021-22/>



Silence has never sounded so good

John Hennessy from Northenden Chess Club writes ---
<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/silence-has-never-sounded-so-good/>



CHESS MAGAZINE

This month's taster is here -
<https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0478/2876/2775/files/chess-magazine-october-2021-sample.pdf?v=1633101113>

To purchase and/or subscribe, go to <https://chess.co.uk/collections/new-chess-products/products/chess-magazine-october-2021>

Obituary – Colin Russ

Christopher Jones writes --- Colin, always genial, amusing and engaging, was for decades a pillar of the British Chess Problem Society, and for many years its Secretary. A considerable composer of problems, he also published a number of books on the subject.

David Sedgwick writes --- I got to know Colin at the Hastings International Chess Congress of 1991-1992, where he was present as a player. In those days he was of good club standard, around 160-170. He remained active until 2015, although his strength dropped off somewhat in the later years. One of the players in the Hastings Premier 1991-1992 was Russian GM Alexei Suetin, who spoke German but not English. Colin spoke German well and he proved invaluable as a translator. During that Hastings Premier we arranged to have a ceremonial first move made each day by a 'name'. Colin was delighted to be chosen for this honour and he was introduced to the players and the audience as the Secretary of the BCPS.



JUNIOR MOVES

A busy month for junior competitive chess

Director of Junior Chess Alex Holwczak writes ...

UK Chess Challenge Terafinal Challengers 18th-19th September

Under 8 winner - **Junyi Zhang**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr578933.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=9>

Under 10 winner - **Soham Kumar**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr578934.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=9>

Under 12 winner - **Denis Dupuis**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr578935.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=9>

Under 14 winner - **Savin Dias**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr578936.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=9>

Under 18 winner - **Edward Jackson**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr578937.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=9>

Junior 4NCL Weekend 1 25th-26th September

Division 1 winner - **Ojays A**

<http://www.4nclresults.co.uk/2021-22/media/jncl/we1/prog-div1.html>

Division 2 winner - **3s Charmanders**

<http://www.4nclresults.co.uk/2021-22/media/jncl/we1/prog-div2.html>

British Junior Championship 2nd-3rd October

Under 8 winner - **George Zhao**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr581885.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=7&flag=30>

Under 10 winner - **Jan Murawski**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr581883.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=7&flag=30>

Under 12 winner - **Kenneth Hobson**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr581882.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=5&flag=30>

Under 14 winner - **Arjun Kolani**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr581881.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=5&flag=30>

Under 16 winner - **Mohammed Aayan Ismail**; Under 18 winner - **Timur Kuzhelev**

<http://chess-results.com/tnr581879.aspx?lan=1&art=1&rd=5&flag=30>



International Children and Youth Festival

More on this FIDE event in Riga here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/international-children-and-youth-festival/>



Junior 4NCL blog

CHlivelylemon is the handle of a superb blogger on Lichess ---

<https://lichess.org/@/CHlivelylemon/blog/j4ncl-2122-we-1-event-report-leafington-spa-woodland-grange-hotel/mmkLvKZP>

<https://lichess.org/@/CHlivelylemon/blog/a-little-chess-poem-road-to-a-book/z7BxEne7>



Littlewood's Choice

The UK Chess Challenge Terafinal Challengers took place recently, and the following game caught my eye ...

Luca Buanne vs Dimitrios Zakarian

U14 Section

1.e4 c5 2. Nf3 e6 3. b3 a6 4. Bb2 d6



White has adopted an unusual formation but the game starts to look more normal again when he continues

5.d4 cxd4 6.Nxd4 Nf6 7.Bd3 Qc7 8.0-0 Nbd7 9.c4 b6 10.Qe2 Bb7 11.Nc3 Be7



Black has adopted a hedgehog-like defensive set-up and this gives White a comfortable advantage. Personally I would play f4, intending a frontal assault on the Black King, but Luca adopts a slower but nevertheless quite sensible approach.

12.Rad1 0-0 13.Bb1 Rfe8 14.Kh1 Rac8 15.Nc2 Nc5 16.f3 Qb8 17.Ne3



Eyeing the d5 and f5 squares and looking to take advantage of the absence of the Black Queen from the K-Side.

17...Qa8 18. Qf2 Rcd8 19.Qg3 Bc6 20.Ncd5 !



This must have come as a bit of a shock to Black as White's attack suddenly springs into action. If 20....exd5 then 21.Nf5 Nh5 22.Qg4 g6 23.exd5 Bd7 24.Nxe7+ Rxe7 25.Qh4 with a vicious attack. Nevertheless Black should have tried this because his choice in the game gives him no material compensation for his bad position.

20....Bxd5 21.cxd5 e5 22.Nf5 g6 23.Nxe7+ Rxe7 24.Qh4



White now dominates the Black squares and this gives him a winning advantage.

24.... Kg7 25.f4 Ncd7 26.fxe5 dxe5 27.Bc1 Ng8 28.Bh6+!



Another clever move, Black should have tried 28.....Nxb6 but after 29.Qxe7 White is clearly winning.

28....Kh8 29.Rd3?!

Not the best, 29.d6 would have won immediately as if 29...Re6 then 30.Rxf7 is a killer. However White's position is so strong that this only delays matters.

29....f6 30.Bc1 Nf8 31.Rxf6! Rc7 32.Bb2 Nxf6 33.Qxf6+ Kg8 34. Qxe5 Ra7 35. Rf3 !



...and mate follows shortly.

It is difficult to believe that the two players in this game are under fourteen years old. Luca's mature play was particularly impressive !

--- Paul Littlewood



FEATURES, WRITING, ANALYSIS, STUDIES AND PROBLEMS

GM Michael Adams' Game of the Month



Etienne Bacrot had a good run in the World Cup, before encountering Magnus Carlsen in the quarterfinals. Like many other players, Nigel Short has been less active of late, so he does an excellent job of negotiating this very complex first round game without showing signs of rust. He is rewarded with the full point when the Frenchman loses his bearings deep in the endgame.

N. Short – E. Bacrot

Sigeman & Co, Malmo 2021

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 Nc6 6.f3 A good practical choice - Nigel avoids sharp theoretical developments he focuses on less these days.

6...e5 The main move, but it does allow White an outpost on d5.



7.Nb3 Be6 8.Nd5 Be7 If **8...Bxd5 9.exd5** forces Black to lose time moving the knight again, so Bacrot continues developing.

9.Be3 0-0 10.c4 a5

11.Bb6 Nigel continues to play ambitiously, if White could complete development he would be doing well, but it's not easy to find the time without allowing activity. **11.Be2 a4 12.Nd2 Nd4** gives Black counterplay.

11...Qd7



12.a4 Consolidating the knight on b3, but the b4 square is weakened.

12...Rfc8 13.Be2 Bd8 14.Bf2 Nb4 15.Nxb4 Exchanging the strong knight on d5 feels wrong, 15.0-0 looks a better option here.

15...axb4 16.Nd2 Qc6 Preparing to swap the passive bishop.

17.b3 Bb6



18.Nf1! 18.0-0 Bc5 is comfortable for Black, so Nigel sends the other knight towards d5 via e3.

18...Nd7 18...Bxf2+ 19.Kxf2 Nd7 20.Ne3 is quite convenient for White, who is ready for Qd2 and Rhd1, but 18...Nh5 19.g3 f5 was an interesting alternative.

19.Bd3 19.Ne3 Bd4 isn't convenient. This move discourages f5, and the bishop could secure the pawn on b3 from c2 later.

19...Bc5 19...g6!? was a useful waiting move; the more committal 19...Nc5 20.Ne3 would suit White.

20.Ne3 Bd4 The bishop moves again, but this causes White considerable disruption.

21.Ra2 After 21.Rb1 the visual 21...b5! is still possible 22.axb5 (22.cxb5? Qb6 23.Qe2 Rc3 leaves the queenside collapsing.) 22...Qb6 23.Qe2 Bc3+ 24.Kf1 Nc5 with good compensation.

21...Qc5 22.Re2



22...b5! This square looked pretty well covered, but now Black's pieces get very active whichever way White captures.

23.axb5 Not 23.cxb5? Qc3+ 24.Kf1 Bxb3.

23...Bc3+ 24.Kf1 Ra1 25.Bb1 Qd4 26.Qc2 White's pieces are tied up, and time is required to get his king to a comfortable spot, but the extra protected passed pawn on b5 won't be reclaimed soon, creating a dynamic balance.



26...Nc5 27.g4! 27.Nf5? Qd3 forces Black where he wants to go.

27...Nxb3 28.Kg2! White needs to get the king out of the back rank pin: 28.Nf5 Qxc4 29.Ne7+ Kf8 30.Nxc8 Nd2+.



28...Nc5 The razor sharp nature of the position is shown by 28...Bxc4? 29.Nf5 when Black can resign.

29.Nd5 29.Nf5 Qxc4 30.Ne7+ transposes to the game. The alternative 30.Nxd6 b3 31.Nxc4 bxc2 32.Rxc2 Nd3! is around equal, but not here 33.Rxc3? Nf4+ 34.Kg3 Ne2+.

29...Qxc4 30.Ne7+ Kf8 31.Nxc8 Bxc8 32.Ba2! Qxb5 Now White gets to unravel, 32...Rxa2! was required, 33.Qxa2 b3! (33...Qxb5 looks dangerous, but is not that clear.) 34.Qa8 Qxe2 35.Qxc8+ Ke7 36.Qc7+ Ke8 and White should settle for perpetual. 37.b6? Bd4 38.Rf1 b2 39.b7 Qxf1+ 40.Kxf1 b1Q+ rebounds.

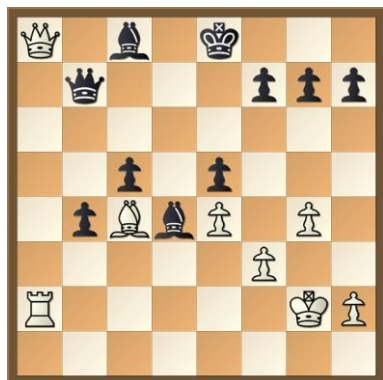
33.Rxa1 Bxa1 34.Bc4! White takes control of the position, and grabs the initiative.

34...Qb6 34...Qb8 35.Qd1! is good as 35...Bc3? is not possible due to 36.Bxc5 dxc5 37.Qd8 mate.



35.Bxc5 The subtle withdrawal 35.Qd1! was best. 35...Bc3 36.Qd5! White's queen settles on a more powerful central post compared to the game. 36...Be6 (36...Qc7 37.Bxc5 dxc5 38.Qa8 Ke7 39.Ra2 Bb7 40.Qg8!) 37.Qa8+ Ke7 38.Bxe6 fxe6 39.Ra2.

35...dxc5 36.Qa2 Bd4 37.Qa8 Qb7 38.Ra2 Ke8! The only try, as 38...g6 39.Ra7 wins.



39.Bxf7+! Stronger than 39.Ra7 Qxa8 40.Rxa8 Kd7.

39...Kxf7 40.Ra7 Qd7! Etienne keeps on fighting, although White has won the Black queen, the two connected queenside passers supported by the bishop pair, especially the one handily anchored on d4 mean that conversion is far from simple.

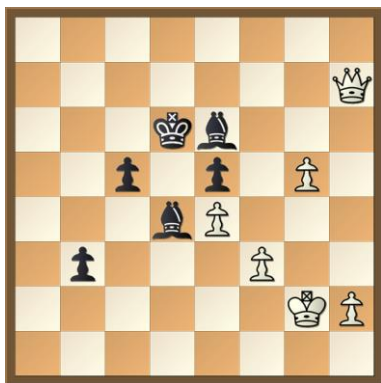
41.Qd5+ Forcing moves are always tempting, but 41.h4! was a clever idea. As Black's queenside pawns can only be held up, White should look to clean up Black's kingside pawns, and then advance his own pawns on that flank. Therefore advancing the pawns whilst Black doesn't have a very useful move gains valuable time: 41...Ke7 (41...b3 42.Qd5+ Ke7 43.Rxd7+ Bxd7 44.Qxb3) 42.Rxd7+ Bxd7 43.Qg8 Be6 44.Qxh7 b3 45.Qxg7+ Kd6 46.h5 b2 47.Qb7 leaves White much quicker than in the game.

41...Ke7 42.Rxd7+ Bxd7 43.Qg8 Kd6 44.g5! 44.Qxg7 b3 is simpler for Black.

44...Be6 45.Qxg7

The position should now be equal, but in practice it is normally easier to play with a queen than without one. Even if there is objectively sufficient compensation, the number of checks needed to be calculated often result in errors.

45...b3 46.Qxh7

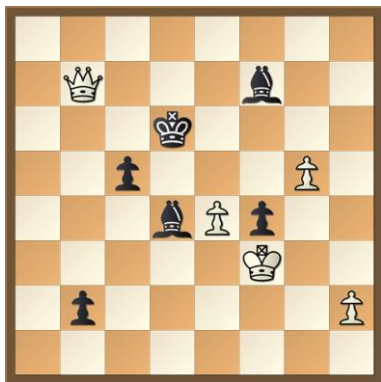


46...b2 It's normal to advance the pawn which is furthest forward, but after 46...c4! there are two runners for White to keep an eye on. 47.g6 c3 48.g7 b2 49.g8Q Bxg8 50.Qxg8 b1Q 51.Qd8+ Kc6 52.Qc8+ Kd6 ends in perpetual.

47.Qb7 Bf7 It was more practical to push the pawns and pray; 47...c4 48.g6 c3 49.g7 c2 50.Qb4+ Kd7 51.Qa4+ Ke7 52.Qxc2 Kf6 is far from easy to convert, if it is even possible after 53.Kg3 Kxg7 54.Qb1 Kf6 55.h4 Bc4.

48.f4! exf4 The capture removes handy support from the bishop on d4, but 48...c4? 49.f5! c3 50.g6 isn't possible.

49.Kf3



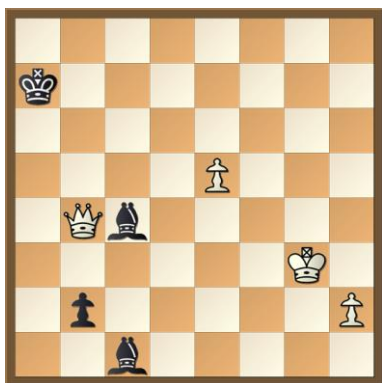
49...Bc4? The final error. The more natural 49...c4! is still far from clear 50.g6 Be6! (50...Bxg6 51.e5+! Kxe5 (51...Bxe5 52.Qb6+) 52.Qe7+ Kf5 53.Qe4+ Kg5 54.Qxf4+ Kh5 55.h4! setting up mate is a funny computer line.) 51.Qb4+ Kc6 52.Kxf4 c3 53.Qxd4 b1Q 54.Qxc3+ Kd7 and Black should survive.

50.g6 Bd3 51.g7 Bc4 Clearly Bacrot had miscalculated something, perhaps he missed 51...Bxg7 52.Qd5+, as 51...b1Q 52.Qxb1 Bxb1 53.g8Q is hopeless. The loss of several tempi with the bishop is unsurprisingly disastrous.

52.Qb6+ Kd7 53.Kxf4 Bxg7 54.e5 Bh6+ 55.Kg3 Bc1 Black has saved the pawn, but it will never get to promote with the Black king wide open.

56.Qd6+ Kc8 56...Ke8 57.e6 decides 57...b1Q (57...Bb5 58.Qb8+) 58.Qd7+ Kf8 59.Qf7 mate.

57.Qxc5+ Kb7 58.Qb4+ Ka7

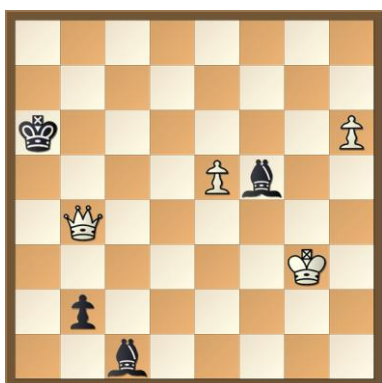


59.h4! White doesn't need to hurry, just gradually edge his pawns forward.

59...Be6 The light squared bishop can't find a safe spot: 59...Ba2 60.Qa4+ Kb7 61.Qxa2; 59...Bd3 60.Qd4+.

60.h5 Ka6 There is no hope: 60...Bf5 61.Qe7+! Kb8 (61...Kb6 62.Qf6+) 62.Qf8+ Bc8 63.Qb4+ Kc7 64.h6.

61.h6 Bf5



62.h7!

Black resigned, as 62...Bxh7 63.Qd6+! sets up a fatal check next: 63...Ka5 64.Qc7+, 63...Ka7 64.Qc7+, 63...Kb7 64.Qd7+ or 63...Kb5 64.Qd7+ Kb4 65.Qxh7 Kb3 66.Qb1 kills all hope.

To play this game through in your web browser, go to <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-61-october-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>



New and creative pastures? The wider lessons of an extraordinary miniature



GM Peter Wells writes --- So far in these columns I have deliberately focused on games played over-the-board rather than online or hybrid, on non-elite games which might otherwise fall under the radar, and on ones which were heavily contested rather than one-sided. Occasionally though, something catches your eye which undermines the best laid plans and who better to produce it than Magnus Carlsen.

I suspect many of you will have already seen the World Champion's astonishing 18-move victory over Jan-Krzysztof Duda, a player who had dealt Magnus a deeply unpleasant blow in the FIDE World Cup less than a couple of months previously. However, I have reflected on this miniature at some length - certainly for much longer than Duda was able to ponder his rapidly imploding position - and I think it tells us things both about Magnus and about the state of modern chess which are worth considering here.

First - the game. I had the pleasure of watching the drama unfold in real time and whilst Magnus's first offer of his c-pawn seemed to fall within the realm of known ideas, the second offer - together with the implications for his own king - felt like something extraordinary and quite fresh. I was entirely with David Howell's commentary at this point: this was a pawn sacrifice which simply had to be accepted. In fact I still believe that - theoretically at least - this was the right choice. However, what came next was simply astonishing.

Magnus Carlsen - Jan Duda

Meltwater Tour Final Rapid 2021

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.Nf3 c5 6.e3 cxd4 7.exd4 Nxc3!?

This feels right in principle. There is some similarity with the more familiar Panov Attack in the Caro-Kann where, after 1 e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 Nf6 5.Nc3 e6 White sensibly plays 6.Nf3 before exchanging on d5 which denies Black this possibility. After all, it can't be wrong to attack c3 when White has no very convenient way to defend it - can it?

8.bxc3 Qc7 9.Rb1!?

Already unusual, but it isn't hard to see that 9...Qxc3+ 10 Bd2 will generate a significant initiative for the pawn while Black's more restrained next move appears to force White to deal with the threat before continuing with his desired development. 9 Rb1 - by preventing a check on b4 - could look like an innocent preparation for 10 c4 and Duda probably rightly realised that this would not have been especially threatening. So...

9...Nd7



10.Bd3!?

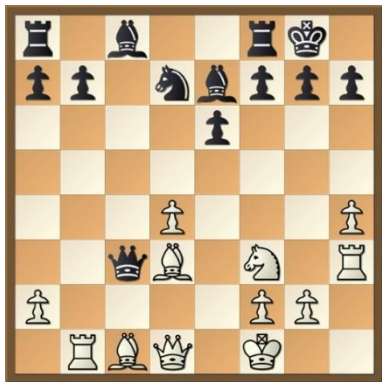
A real shock to me, to David Howell commentating as previously mentioned and (in spite of his impressive efforts to maintain a poker face) most likely to Duda as well. It is easy enough to envisage the compensation for a pawn if White's development flows naturally, but surely the whole point of Black's play is that now the White king will be displaced, which must impact upon his ability to press his initiative. Of course, I am not party to Magnus's analysis here, but from what I can see I suspect that this may be a 'single-use' idea. However, as a practical weapon in a fast game it turns out to be fearsome, forcing Black to make tricky decisions from very early in the game.

10...Qxc3+ 11.Kf1 Be7?!

That this - the most natural development of the bishop in the majority of isolated queen's pawn positions - turns out to be a serious step in the wrong direction, is testimony to the force of Magnus's concept. During the game, I expected 11...Qc7 - despite being mindful of Znosko-Borovsky's dictum that when you are behind in development from having grabbed a pawn with your queen in the heart of your opponent's position, you should usually maintain the queen's advanced position to try and hinder your opponent's pieces! As Duda's position went rapidly downhill, I began to wonder if this represented a counter-example. In fact Black's move is just a case of 'right piece, wrong square.'

It is easy to say with hindsight that 11...Bd6! would have been more logical, since it covers the g3 square - a destination of choice for White's king's rook. However, it was far from self-evident that this was White's intention. He has other ideas such as d5 followed by Bb2 and whilst these appear, on examination, to be found wanting, 11...Bd6 rather than 11...Be7 undeniably adds to their force. I offer just a few lines to illustrate White's possible ideas, but they suggest that White can find some compensation and a role for his king's rook in many lines, even without access to the g3 square, after 12.Qe2!? Qc7 (now 12...b6?! 13 d5! would be problematic. 12...0-0 is interesting, but this is always a cue to begin the same king-side assault, and here 13.h4 Qc7 14.Rh3 b6 [14...e5!?!] 15.Ng5!? Nf6 is met strongly with 16.Rf3! - a new role for the white rook.) 13.Bd2 0-0 14.Rc1 Qd8 15.h4 with reasonable attacking prospects since after 15...Nf6 16.Ne5, for example, White will follow with Bg5 and this bishop will be difficult to drive away.

12.h4! 0-0 13.Rh3



13...Nf6

It is not so hard to see that the position of Black's queen is starting to play a role - White was threatening 14.Bxh7+ followed by 15.Ng5+. However, my feeling at the time - that this was probably taking Znosko-Borovsky's advice a bit too far - was probably correct. Enabling the white knight to land so easily on e5 affords White's attacking pieces an astonishingly venomous harmony. Still, Duda is treading very dangerously anyway as 13...Qc7 14.Qe2!? b6? 15.Bg5! confirms since after 14...Nf6 15.Bxf6 Bxf6 16.Qe4 g6 17.Qxa8 the queen can escape via a7 and b6. Perhaps 14...Rd8 is the best

chance, since it is worth noting that any Greek gifts must always reckon with the unusual defence of h7 along the diagonal by ...Qc2, but still White clearly has dangerous compensation for a pawn.

14.Ne5 Qa5 15.Rg3 Kh8 16.Bg5 h6

To call this a 'move Black would rather not have to play' would be an understatement. Unfortunately, there was no longer a decent defence against the straightforward threat of Bxf6 and Qh5.



17.Bxh6! gxh6 18.Qf3!

The fact that Magnus has time to approach the h6 pawn in the optimal manner via f4 is testimony to his domination. It is also extremely elegant in that after 18...Qd2 19.Rd1 the black queen can only hinder this by giving herself up, whilst there is no reasonable way to prepare to meet 19 Qf4 with 19...Ng8 that doesn't allow 20 Qxf7! It is not surprising that Black decided he had seen enough.

1-0

A breathtaking annihilation of a world-class player which prompts a few thoughts. Firstly, on an optimistic note, it could remind us that the ever increasing and oft-lamented depth of opening preparation in the modern elite game not only closes off creative avenues, but opens them up as well. Yes, the engine has essentially 'solved' some very sharp lines which can now be used as little more than memory tests. Furthermore, the pivotal role engines now play has certainly led some players either to eschew heavy preparation altogether in favour of solid and less concrete lines – witness the rise of the London System – or, in the case of creative forces such as Jobava, to work on bringing a new twist to these.

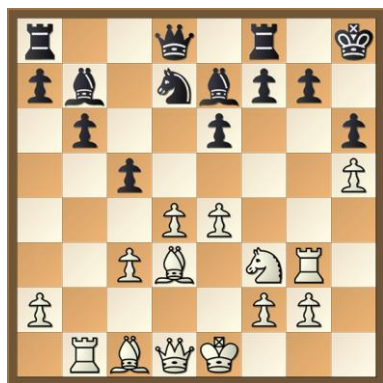
However, others have persisted with sharp theoretical variations, exploring them in greater depth, often examining the engines' 2nd or even 3rd choice moves where these seem plausible and have discovered that beneath their apparently innocuous theoretical status lie considerable possibilities in practical play. Not all of this work unearths new and exciting terrain, but a fair portion does and players are sometimes examining and playing ideas which ten or twenty years ago would scarcely even have been considered.

For sure the increasingly ambitious use of king-side pawns pre-dates this, but the renewed focus on the possibilities of an early h4 probably have much to do with computers. Matthew Sadler and Natasha Regan offer us an extraordinary statistic in their fascinating book *Game Changer*, which supports this. "As White, when left to choose its own opening, AlphaZero pushed its h-pawn to h4 before the 25th move in 48% of its games in our sample". 48%! OK, we were accustomed enough to seeing this in the French Defence and fianchetto openings (even before the recent craze for 3 h4 as an anti-Grünfeld/King's Indian weapon). However, this feels like something more. As a further example, take a look at the brutal directness of White's approach in the following opening.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 c5 7.Rb1 Be7 8.Nf3 0-0 9.h4

OK, so this move already has the stamp of approval of Giri and Aronian, amongst others. Still, the single-mindedness of White's aggression over the coming moves commanded my attention.

9...b6 10.h5 h6 11.Rh3!? Kh8 12.Rg3 Bb7 13.Bd3 Nd7

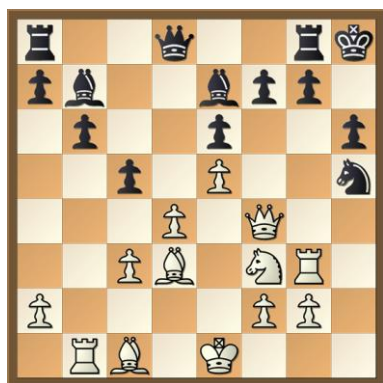


14.Qd2!? Rg8

Routine moves (including 14...Nf6) already succumb to a devastating sacrifice on g7 here. Rakotomaharo's caution is well-advised, although 14...e5!? might have been an interesting bid for some activity too.

15.Qf4

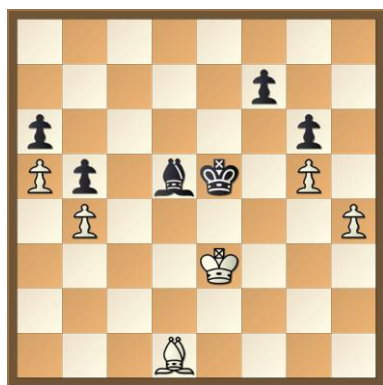
That f4 square again! Now, in the game Black again reacted prudently with **15...Qf8**. However, as an illustration of the potential of White's set-up, I can't resist sharing the wonderful and quite well disguised horrors which lay in store for an incautious 15...Nf6? 16.e5 Nxh5...



when White could unleash 17.Rxg7!! Rxg7 18.Qxh6+ Kg8 19.Qxh5 cxd4 20.Bh6 Rxg2 21.cxd4 Bxf3 (21...Qd5 runs into another rook lift 22.Rb3! which holds his position together well enough to keep a powerful attack) 22.Qxf3 Qd5 23.Be4 Rg1+ 24.Ke2 Qxa2+ 25.Ke3 Rg7 (since 25...Rg5 allows a devastating 26 Bh7+!) and now Black might be escaping, but for the beautiful 26.Qh1!! defending and attacking together with awesome efficiency.

As for Magnus, it is worth reflecting too on the fact that he is definitely not known as one of those players most determined to ensure that his openings pack the maximum punch, but rather as one supremely self-confident in his ability to play simple positions and grind out even minimal

advantages. Indeed, as if we needed any evidence on this point he had won the following seemingly dry endgame less than two weeks before.



It is indeed arguably in this area that his ascendancy is most easily observed. It is beyond our scope here, but his win from the diagram position against Firouza in Norway Chess 2021 is well worth checking out.

So where does Magnus's super-direct approach in the opening against Duda fit in? Well, one appropriate reaction is to marvel at his versatility – the kind of 'universality' which so many players value highly, even though they personally may find it elusive. Magnus can certainly lay claim to this coveted quality.

At the same time, though, I think there is a real sense in which these two facets of his play are by no means at opposite ends of a spectrum. Whether he is setting original problems in a very sharp opening (theoretically watertight or not) or playing to squeeze every last drop out of a position in which winning chances appear severely limited, I think the key to Magnus's strength lies in his tremendous appreciation of the difficulties which his opponent will be encountering. Of course, all chess played by humans is imperfect and all of us are aware of the possibility that our opponents will make some mistakes. However, I think this is much more central to Magnus's psyche. This is really what we mean by a 'practical' approach – the realisation that the objective merits of a position may not be all important and that an objectively drawn or even a slightly better position for the opponent may nonetheless not be easy for them to handle under pressure.

Of course, the route to putting the least pressure on the opponent is to decide that a draw offer is the correct response to their having gradually achieved objective equality! It is surprising indeed to reflect on how many games essentially went like this in former times and sometimes still do. However, even if this is obvious, the decision to squeeze every last possible ounce of life out of a position requires not just technique, but also tremendous determination and patience. This, I believe is a huge component of Magnus's strength. Moreover, World Champions have a tendency to lead by example, with whatever degree of intent. It is a paradox for which we can be thankful that, in the era in which the theory of the game is being explored in hitherto unimaginable depth, players have probably never been so aware of the practical side of chess - of chess as a struggle between technically proficient, but ultimately fallible human beings.

To play these games through in your web browser, go to
<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/enewsletter-no-61-october-2021-games-studies-and-problems/>
[photo of Peter courtesy of British Chess Magazine]

Arkell's Endings



'Pressure is when you play for five dollars a hole with only two in your pocket'

- Lee Trevino

Have you noticed how the decisive error by a player who has been under constant pressure is often fairly basic - even in games between the very strongest? The implication is that you shouldn't worry too much whether you are winning by force. Most of the time you won't be, but if you can keep hammering away over a sustained period, they may go wrong when you least expect it.

Here is the top board encounter from the recent final of the Online Counties Championship between Devon and Northumberland. My opponent became an IM 3 years ago, at 19, and has the talent to go on to become a GM.

GM Keith Arkell - IM Andrew Horton

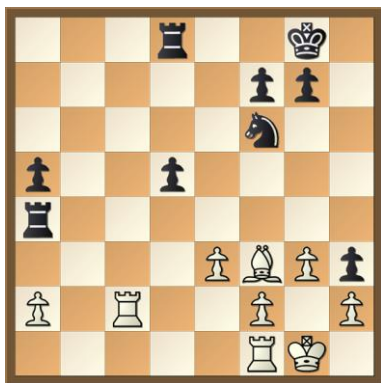
Counties Championship final – Devon v Northumberland, Board 1 Chess.com, 18.09.2021

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 Bb4+ 4.Bd2 a5 5.g3 0-0 6.Bg2 d5 7.Qc2 c5 8.cxd5 cxd4 9.Nxd4 Qb6 10.e3 exd5 11.Nc3 Nc6 12.Nxc6 bxc6 13.0-0 Rb8 14.Rac1



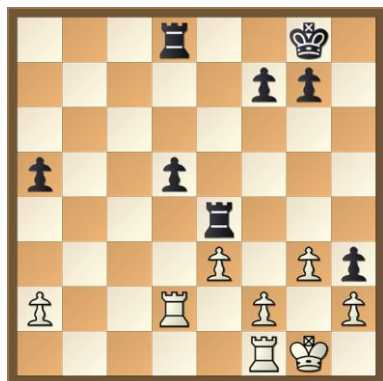
14...h5 An awkward move to deal with. In both the Middle game and the Endgame a Black pawn on h3 will keep me on my toes.

15.Na4 Qd8 16.Bxb4 Rxb4 17.b3 h4 18.Qxc6 Bd7 19.Qc7 h3 20.Qxd8 Rxd8 21.Bf3 Bxa4 22.bxa4 Rxa4 23.Rc2



After a logical sequence of moves we have arrived at an ending in which my opponent's active pieces should neutralise the slight vulnerability of his pawns. Although the h3 pawn is a long-term target, it is doing a good job for the moment in restraining my natural plan of expanding in that area.

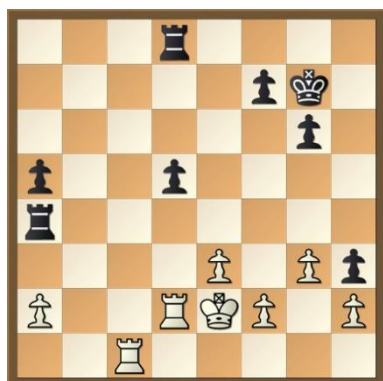
23...Rc4 24.Rd2 Ne4 25.Bxe4 Rxe4



A Rook and pawn Endgame after just 25 moves is hardly a new experience for me, and although it would doubtless be a draw with best play, I have just enough to work with to continue the struggle.

26.Rc1 I saw little point in 26 Rfd1 Ra4 27 f3 f5 when I have no really convincing plan. I place a high value on long term strategy in the Endgame and will always strive for a position which has the potential for gradual improvement of the pieces. As a first step I envisaged placing my Rooks on d2 and d4

26...Ra4 27.Kf1 g6 28.Ke2 Kg7



29.Rcc2 I have to do this very carefully, as the immediate 29 Rc3 allows 29...d4 30 Rcd3 dxe3 with a draw.

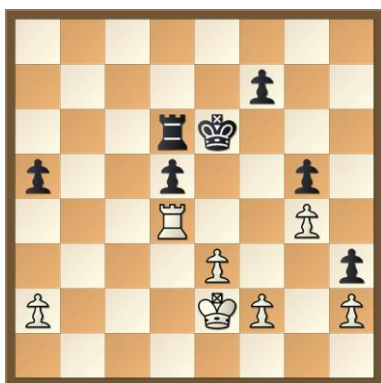
29...Rd6 30.Rd3 g5 Andrew would like to play...g4 to frustrate my intended plan of Kf3, g4, Kg3 and Kxh3.

31.Rcd2 Kf6



If 31...g4 32 Rd4 Rxd4 33 Rxd4 f5 34 f3 when there are plenty of pawn weaknesses to target.

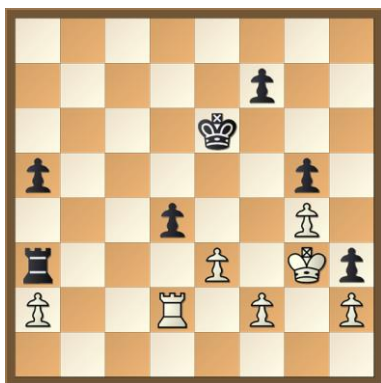
32.Rd4 Rxd4 33.Rxd4 Ke6 34.g4



34...Rb6 Black must of course defend actively.

35.Kf3 Rb4 36.Rd3 I didn't like 36 Rd2 a4, with the idea of ...a3 and ...Rb2.

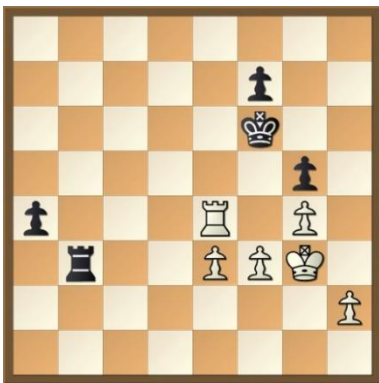
36...Ra4 37.Rd2 Ra3 38.Kg3 d4



There was no way of avoiding this transition after which Black, although a pawn down, should still hold with accurate play.

39.Rxd4 Rxa2 40.f3 Ra3 I like this move. It is important for Black to break up my flexible pawn structure before it becomes free to advance.

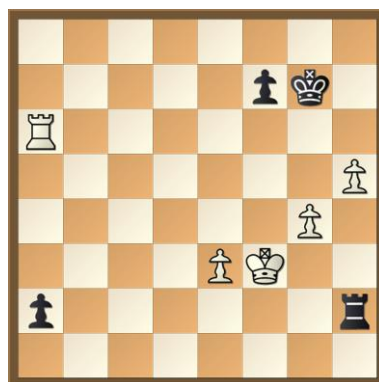
41.Re4+ Kf6 42.Kxh3 a4 43.Kg3 Rb3



44.f4 Played reluctantly, but there is no time for 44 h4 gxh4+ 45 Kxh4 a3 when the a pawn will interfere with the defence of my important e and f pawns. Of course I can instead play 44 Rxa4 Rxe3, but, while I have won countless endings with 4 v 3 or 3 v 2 on the Kingside, they still remain the option of last resort.

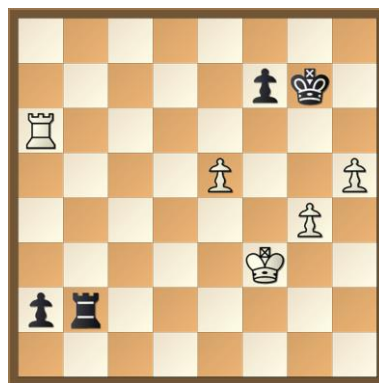
44...a3 45.fxg5+ Kxg5 46.h4+ Kg6 47.Kf3 While it seemed unlikely that I would be winning this, I was curious to explore what kind of problems I could set my opponent. Incidentally, 47 Kf4?? a2 48 Ra4 Rb4+ wouldn't be too clever. Always be vigilant!

47...a2 48.Ra4 Rb2 49.Ra6+ Kg7 50.h5 Rh2



51.e4 I'll never tire of saying that this important chess move shouldn't be rushed into!

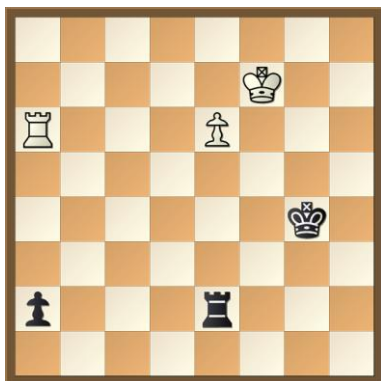
51...Rb2 52.e5 Although I can't possibly be winning by force, my best practical chance involves playing e6 at some point, then trying to achieve something with the resulting passed pawns.



52...Rh2 53. Kf4 Re2 54.Kf5 I knew that 53 e6 fxe6 54 Kg3 Rb2 55 g5 Rb3+ 56 Kf4 Rb4+ 57 Ke3Rh4 58 Ra7+ Kg8 59 h6 Rg4 was a draw, so I wanted to play around a bit first before committing to anything.

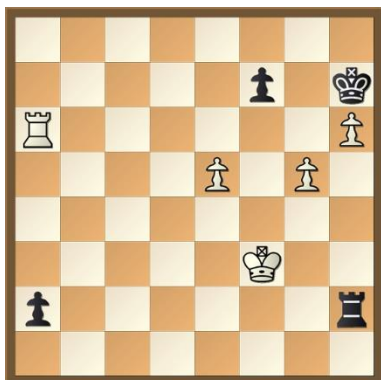
54...Rf2+ 55. Kg5 Re2 56.Kf4

I had a good look at 56 h6+ Kh7 57 Kf6 Rf2+ 58 Ke7 a1=Q+ 59 Rxa1 Kxh6 60 Ra6+ Kg5! (not 60...Kg7 61 Rf6 winning). 61 Rf6 Re2 62 Rf5+ Kxg4 63 Kf6 Re1 when I can't possibly hope to win. During a brief chat after the game Andy pointed out that in this line he need not jettison his a pawn as he can also draw with 57...Kxh6 58 Kxf7+ Kg5 59 e6 Rf2+! His idea is to keep either checking or attacking my e pawn as my Rook isn't free to intervene. There is a beautiful winning line if instead of 59...Rf2+! Black plays 59...Kxg4?



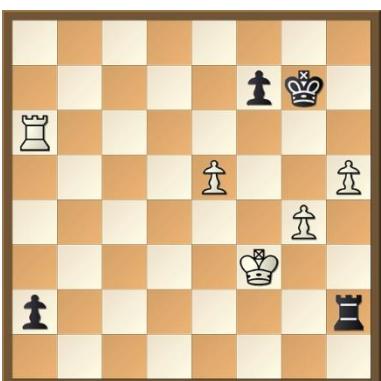
when 60 e7 Rf2+ 61 Kg6 Re2 62 Ra4+ Kg3 63 Kf6, threatening Rxa2, and therefore forcing 63...Rf2+ 64 Kg5 Re2 65 Ra3+ Kf2 66 Rxa2 brings about Queen v Rook. There is something about this sequence which mocks Tarrasch's quip (or was it Tartakower?) that 'All Rook Endings are drawn'.

56...Rf2+ 57.Ke3 Rh2 58.Kf3



Black is in a minor Zugzwang as currently he has everything ideally placed.

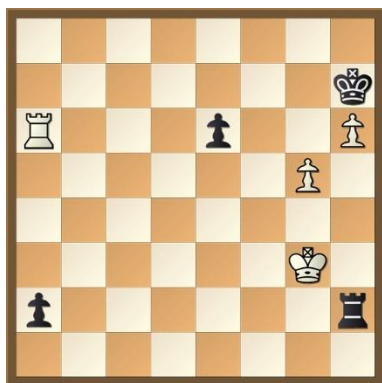
58...Rb2 59.g5 Rh2 60.h6+ Kh7



61.e6 There is nothing else worth trying.

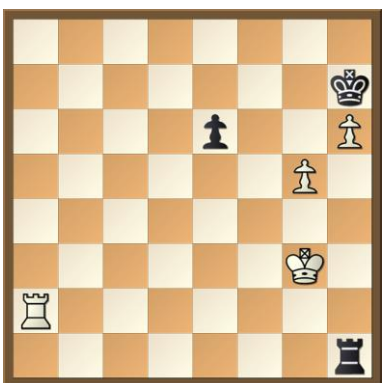
61...fxe6

62.Kg3



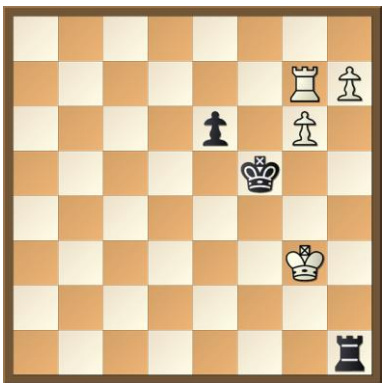
62...Rh1 ?! 'This is not the losing move, but it does require greater precision from Black. There was no need to keep my pawns under such restraint as after 62...Rb2 I can use neither my King nor Rook to escort them home. I'll leave you to verify this for yourself.

63.Rxa2



63...Rb1?? I didn't ask Andrew but I think he panicked when he saw 63...Kg6 64 Rh2, but Black can still save himself with 64..Rg1+! 65 Kf3 (or 65 Kf2 Ra1 66 h7 Ra2+ followed by ...Rxh2 and...Kxh7) 65...Rf1+! and the Rook comes back to f7. The position would then be a fortress even without the e6 pawn. In what has been for the most part an accurately played game by both of us I am now winning by force for the first time.

64.Ra7+ Kg6 65.Rg7+ Kf5 66.h7 Rh1 67.g6



1-0

Problem Corner

Christopher Jones with his monthly conundrum

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



Mate in 2

G.Heathcote

1st Prize, *Revue d'Echecs*, 1904

The key is 1.Qa6!, threatening 2.Rd1. Now we see all the set cross-checking lines come into operation – 1...Rb7+ 2.Bb6; 1...d5+ 2.Bc5; and 1...Re4+ 2.Bd4. Additionally we have the double-check 2.Rf3 after promotions of the e2P and 2.Qa1 after 1...Ke1.

Here is another, perhaps rather more complex, 2-mover for you to consider –



Mate in 2

Milan Velimirovic

1st Prize, *StrateGems* 2000

In solving this you might consider the rather out-of-the-way officers at a8 and b8. True, if the g5R were to move off the 5th rank they would support the wQ in giving mate at b5 or d5 (though it would be anathema to the composer to have both these mates available – an unpleasant *dual*); but a solver who has seen this configuration of white pieces before will be expecting to find a key move by the wQ after which it will be possible for the a8B and b8R to play a more active role. It would be visually appealing if the move were down one of the thematic lines: either the long diagonal or the b-file. Let's consider 1.Qf3. This threatens 2.Qd3; and if Black defends with 1...Rg3 then there is a mate in which it is the a8B (not the wQ) that goes to d5: 2.Bd5 – so that suggests we are on the right track. Another defence on g3, 1...Bg3, also fails, this time to 2.Qc3; and we see also 1...c6 2.Nxd6 (but not 2.Nb6, when the bK could flee to the b-file). This all looks good, but unfortunately we run up against the successful defence 1...Rb5!, preparing a flight square on b4 for the black King.

So we consider the other thematic possibility – 1.Qb1 again threatens 2.Qd3, and we find that there is a defence after which the b8R enjoys its new freedom: 1...Bg3 2.Rb4. And this is indeed the key move. If 1...Rg3 the response is this time 2.Qb5; if 1...c6, the response (which previously had to be Nxd6) now has to be instead 2.Nb6 (guarding d5); and against a new defensive possibility that has arisen, 1.Nc2, we have 2.Qa2.

This fine problem was quoted in an article, appearing in the May 2021 issue of The Problemist Supplement (published six times a year by the British Chess Problem Society; for details see www.theproblemist.org/) which explored this motif in which a white line-piece moves down one of its lines, to be followed by one of its colleagues (usually, one sees white Rooks and Bishops leading the way for the more powerful white Queen to follow, so these ‘clearances’ [known as *Bristol* clearances after an influential very early example in a composing tourney in that fine city] in which it is the Queen that makes the ‘clearing’ move are quite unusual and somewhat paradoxical); and that article sparked a problem with some similarities that appeared in the July 2021 issue –



Mate in 2

Israel Schiffmann, *La Strategie* 1929

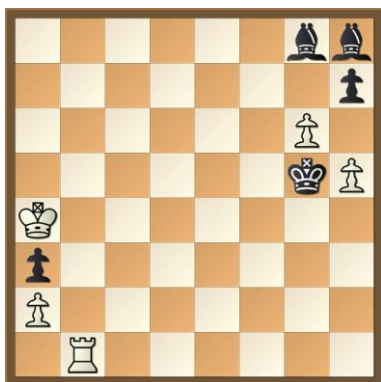
Version by David Shire, The Problemist Supplement 2021

I'll leave this one to you to solve. I'll give the solution in the next issue (and no doubt your computer will give you the solution much earlier if your attempts to solve it are stymied!).

As ever, if you have any queries or comments don't hesitate to email me - Christopher Jones Email: cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk



How to Solve a Study



White to play and win

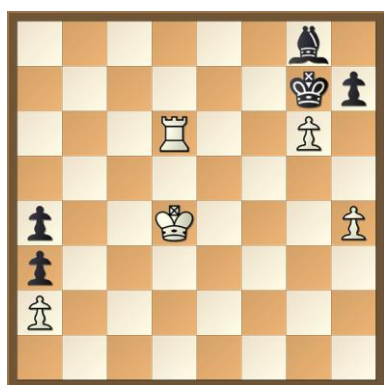
This 1954 study by Kuznetsov and Sakharov ends in a truly extraordinary mate. But, of course, you don't know that when you sit down to solve it. Here's what you could do:

You notice immediately that White can win a bishop, by 1.Rb8. Looks promising, but it's a composed position, so better see what else White can do. There are two checks; 1.Rg1+ lets Black keep both his bishops by 1...Kh6. 1.Rb5+ Kh6 2.Rb8 doesn't seem to improve on going to b8 straight away, although White still wins a bishop after 1...Kh6 2.Rb8 Kg7 3.h6+. Anyway, let's look first at 1.Rb8. Black grabs the a-pawn and play goes 1.Rb8 Bxa2 2.Rxh8 hxc6. That doesn't look hopeful; White could go 3.h6, but 3...Bb1 4.Kxa3 Bf5 seems to stabilise. That line isn't clear, though – Black will have to reorganise his pieces while the White king marches across; probably he'll play ...Bg4, ...Kh5, and ...g5, and that feels like it should draw. Maybe. It can't be the composer's intention, though; no sacs, no excitement, and it doesn't seem like there's a series of 'only moves' by White.

So you go back to 1.Rb5+ to see if it's more like a composed sequence of moves. So 1.Rb5+ Kh6 2.Rb8 Kg7; oh, wait, Black could go 2...Bxa2 – he's going to lose a bishop anyway, so maybe setting up a passer is a good idea. Okay, but let's look at 2...Kg7 first. 3.h6+ Kxh6 4.Rxg8 and two defences: ...Bb2 and ...Bg7. If 4...Bb2 5.gxh7 Kxh7 6.Rg3 and 7.Rxa3 does the job. What if 4...Bg7 by Black? Ah! 5.Rxg7 Kxg7 6.gxh7 Kxh7 7.Kxa3 and White's king will fend off the Black king, so the a-pawn promotes. You could've made a mistake in that, but you don't think so – looks reasonably clear. Back to 2...Bxa2 then. 2...Bxa2 3.Rxh8 and mops up the a-pawn with the king and the h-pawn with the rook. Damn, can't be right – where are the thrills in any of that? Hang about.... no, what? 3...Bg8 – surely not? Now, *that's* a study-like move. It *must* be right. And knowing you're right so far, makes finding the rest easy: 4.Kxa3 Kg7 and traps the rook, but 5.h6+ Kxh8 6.g7 mate. Wow. Sit and look at that final position. Yes, you've done the task, solved the study... but take time out to gawp. What a mate!

When he saw that study, Jan Timman wasn't satisfied. Almost anyone else would be, but Timman believed he could improve on it. And he did. So your task is to solve the enhanced version that Timman composed in 2010.

Yes, by the way, that is *the* Jan Timman, the over-the-board GM who was for many years one of the world's very best players. He's been a study composer throughout his chess career, but even more so in recent years.



White to play and win

That's the Timman position. The solution to it is given at the end of the newsletter

Ian Watson Email: ian@irwatson.uk

For the perfect chess night out, go clubbing!

Mark Jordan gives sound advice to beginners who are looking to play over the board ...

You've started playing chess over the last couple of years, perhaps inspired by The Queen's Gambit miniseries or with all these lockdowns you have plenty of time to fill. Maybe you had never played chess before, learned it as a child and gave up, or played at school before other distractions put your interest on the back burner. You play plenty of chess online and you're enjoying it. But you hear that if you want to really get better, it's best to play over-the-board at chess clubs. So you are left with one option, to join the places where serious players play. It's great fun and you will quickly get better.

There are plenty of clubs in the UK and all welcome new members (more information here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/clubs-home-page/>). Many towns and villages have at least one chess club and most large cities have numerous clubs to choose from. They vary from those that cater for players who simply enjoy playing casual games with their chess friends to the serious clubs that organise internal tournaments, take part in local and national Leagues, and will in some cases boast members with high ratings and even FIDE titles.

All chess clubs will have a range of current playing strengths, including beginners, so don't be intimidated by the unexpected appearance of a Grandmaster as you'll also find opponents who correspond to your current playing strength.

Typically, a club will ascertain your previous chess experience and find you a compatible opponent to test your current strength, or you can just challenge anyone who is available. When I walked into my first serious chess club at the age of 12 I unknowingly challenged a former Scottish international – and I lost! Once you have played against a few opponents you'll find your current playing strength and you'll get to play some interesting games.

Chess clubs are generally quiet places with conversation kept to a minimum when you're actually playing, but some chatting while playing an off-hand game is perfectly fine as long as it's polite and isn't an attempt to distract your opponent. If there's a League match or an internal tournament taking place then chat is discouraged.

In all but the most informal of chess clubs, no-one announces 'check', and proclaiming mate in a loud voice is considered rude. Club players do not need such things announced.

Never comment on a game to the players while it is being played, even an off-hand game. Not only do players like to think for themselves, but such interventions are a distraction and would be against the rules in a competitive game.

Use a chess clock for your games if you want to get better. While some members will play without a clock, you need to play against stronger opposition who are used to playing with a clock. Beginners should stay clear of Blitz chess (five or three minutes per player) because it won't help your confidence if you keep blundering pieces because of time stress. At the outset, stick to longer time limits, perhaps setting a lower limit of 15 minute games as you get time to think about where you went right and wrong.

If you play in competition then you'll need to get used to writing down the moves. This is a distraction at first, but you'll soon get used to it and it gives you the opportunity to analyse your games afterwards.

If you want to get better, play in the internal tournaments and make yourself available for team matches.

Certainly, get to know your club mates. While a chess game is between individuals, a club is also a social hub, so off the board and in the pub afterwards you get to meet new friends who share your interest and you'll often have the opportunity to learn from the stronger players.

Online chess is fun and has brought many new players to the game, but the local club is at the heart of chess and is the place where you'll give yourself the opportunity to become a better player. If you haven't already, I urge you to give a chess club a go.



My Chess Journey

Paul Conway's Chess Journey Part 2

My mother was browsing the chess books on my shelf. There were a few Batsfords, an Informator, *Modern Chess Openings*, Bobby Fischer's *My 60 Memorable Games*, *Counter Gambits* by Tim Harding and some magazines. After a while she paused, puzzled. 'Think Like a Grandmother', she said, 'why would anyone want to do that?'

I had started playing in a few congresses, local ones like the Minor section of the Manchester congress at the university's Owens Park site, the U-16 Manchester Juniors and also further afield such as at the Islington Congress held each year just before Christmas.

I was also invited to Liverpool to play in my first Leonard Barden training tournament for promising juniors. I already knew Malcom Pein, now I met his parents as well and thought his father looked the spitting image of Tigran Petrosian. Between rounds there were coaching sessions from the noted tactician John Littlewood. Having played him, the American GM Arthur Bisguier famously asked: What do you feed this guy on, raw meat? I was placed in my section and was awarded a copy of *Sacrifices in the Sicilian* by David Levy. Two years ago I had the pleasure of talking to David at a Hackney-Hendon match and he said that out of all his books, this was the one he had enjoyed writing the most.

Club life continued at South Manchester's Nissen hut. Some members were strong players, and I got to know and rub shoulders with the likes of Manny (Emmanuel) Rayner and his brother Francis, Chris Beaumont (now an IM living in the west country) and Paul Lamford who went on to edit Batsford chess books in the 1980s. Visitors for county matches included Julian Farrand with his son Tom, and a nine year old Nigel Short who could just about see over the pieces.

There was a stage at the club between the main playing area and the analysis room. This is where Paul Lamford kept his bar football table. As well as being a very sharp chess player, he was a bar football demon who could beat you 10-0 just using his goalkeeper and you wouldn't even see the ball.

Also in the football line, the club was near Manchester City's ground (then at Maine Road). When City had a home game I used to man the car-park and earn some useful extra pin money for books with my teammate Colin Gentile. I've noticed that Colin has now started playing for Lewisham but 40 years on, our paths have yet to cross.

One time I was due to play Paul in the club championship (chess, not bar football). I was going to be white and knew that he favoured the Albin Counter Gambit, 1. d4 d5 2. c4 e5, so I mugged up on a line in Tim Harding's *Counter Gambits*. Needless to say, I was comprehensively destroyed and in the post mortem he was critical of the line. My repertoire is different these days, but if I could go back and advise my younger self I might suggest playing 2. Nf3 first, before going into a Queen's Gambit.

Manchester libraries were pretty good about ordering new books in those days. I couldn't afford all the Batsfords I wanted to read, and they accepted my request for *The Marshall Attack* by RG Wade and TD Harding, which had just been published. I wheeled out the Herman Steiner variation in a club

fixture where I was facing Allan Beardsworth. The work paid off and I won the game. Allan still plays for Stockport, and I doubt I'd beat him now – he's rated about 210 in old money.

Mr. Nicolson carried on running the club. Everyone I've spoken to over the years about those days has nodded and said, ah yes, Jim Nicolson's club. He was an accomplished positional player, but could also produce fire. I'm grateful to my friend Alan Smith for finding this game from earlier in Jim's career. Alan is a few years my senior, went to the same school as me, played at South Manchester and we are still in touch now. He will be known to some readers as the writer of the Quotes and Queries column in British Chess Magazine.

J.R.Nicolson - O.H.Hardy

Whitby Open 1961

1.d4 e6 2.c4 f5 3.g4 Bb4+ 4.Nc3 Nf6 5.gxf5 exf5 6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 c5 8.Nf3 Qa5 9.e3 Ne4 10.Bb2 cxd4 11.Qxd4 0-0 12.Rg1 Nf6 13.c5 Nc6 14.Bc4+ Kh8 15.Qd6 Re8 16.Ng5 Ne5 17.Bf7 Qb5 18.Bxe8 Qxb2 19.Qf8+ Ng8 20.Nf7+ 1-0



Nicolson-Hardy final position. Black can collect both rooks but mate on g8 is going to be inevitable after 20...Nxf7 21. Bxf7. I never once saw him eat raw meat.



How to Solve a Study – solution

1.h5 Kh6 2.Rd8 Bxa2 3.Rh8 Bg8 4.Kc3 a2 5.Kb2 a3+ 6.Ka1 Kg7 7.h6+ Kxh8 8.g7 mate. WOW.

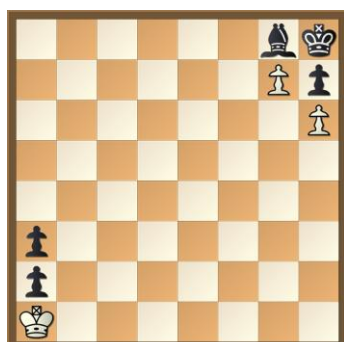
The sidelines:

1.gxh7? Bxa2

1...hxc6 2.Rxc6+ Kh7 3.Rg2.

2.g7+? Kxg7 3.h6+ Kh8 and the stalemate issues prevent White winning.

3...Kxh5 4.g7 wins because Black will have to surrender his bishop and then the White rook and king mop up. In the final position White is stalemated, but Black is mated. And, in Timman's words, "As if by a magnet, both kings have been drawn to the corner squares."



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