

December 2021



Ravi Haria ... GM!

**Inside - Ravi analyses a game
that clinched the GM title**

**Coverage of the World Championship by FM Alex Longson
A new column from Paul Littlewood aimed at improvers
GM Keith Arkell on marathon games with a delayed e4
Plus ... analysis and studies from GM Michael Adams, Ian
Watson, Christopher Jones ... and much more!**



Welcome to the December edition of ChessMoves.

This edition will be my final one as editor after four-and-a-half years in the role. I am working on two publishing projects, and I can't devote the time required to edit ChessMoves. I am delighted that the ECF Manager of Social Media, Danny Rosenbaum, has agreed to take on the editor's role. Danny has vast experience in media and will do a terrific job.

I am pleased to have helped take the monthly eNewsletter to its current status as a serious chess magazine.

I would like to thank the many people who helped me during my time as editor. Malcolm Pein introduced me to Mike Truran in June 2017, and I was delighted to be offered the editor's post. Mike and Nigel Towers deserve a special mention for their unwavering support and many hours of unpaid work to get the magazine out. Andrew Walker in the ECF office has been brilliant in typesetting and designing the magazine, and we are very fortunate to have a team of outstanding contributors providing top-class analysis and content each month. You will know the names by now, but this list of contributors is well worth repeating - GM Michael Adams, GM Peter Wells, GM Keith Arkell, IM Paul Littlewood, FM Alex Longson and Ian Watson.

I would also like to thank the many ECF members who embraced the Creative Writing Initiative for providing great copy, and to Christopher Jones and Gary Lane, who provided chess problems and excellent book reviews. Christopher never missed a beat, providing a problem three weeks before the deadline of every edition I edited, and Gary's reviews are beautifully crafted. Also, to all Directors who regularly send in monthly reports, I greatly respect how much unpaid work you do for ECF, and your dedication to improving the quality of services that ECF provides to members.

During my tenure as editor I have received a lot of feedback from members, mainly positive and sometimes critical. I have learned from all these interactions, and I would like to thank members for engaging with me.

Although this is a farewell as editor, I have been asked to continue doing the monthly interview, which I am happy to do. I look forward to seeing you around the chess circuit and possibly locking horns over the board. In my career, I've been fortunate to work on national newspapers and magazines. Editing ChessMoves has been equally enjoyable and exciting, and I am privileged to have been given the opportunity.

Over to you, Danny!

--- Mark Rivlin



Danny Rosenbaum writes ...



First and foremost, many thanks to Mark, who has done such a terrific job in transforming ChessMoves. He has dedicated himself to making sure that the magazine reached a consistent level of high quality content. Through much hard work, creativity and professionalism Mark has achieved just that, greatly improving ChessMoves.

On a personal note, I want to thank Mark for all his help, guiding me into the ways of ChessMoves, and easing my introduction to this role. Always making himself available for any query I might have, however obtuse.

Still, he's not going far! I'm delighted to say Mark will continue to be involved with ChessMoves conducting regular interviews. In this edition he interviews the ECF's new Director of Women's Chess, Aga Milewska.

Aga was elected unopposed at the recent AGM, and we wish her well in the role.

I am not going to get egotistical here; however it would be wrong not to, at least, mention how honoured I am to be Editor of ChessMoves. I was delighted to take up the role and I welcome any feedback our readers have on what they see as potential improvements we could make.

It's wonderful that in this issue GM Ravi Haria has analysed a vital game on his road to the GM title. It's a terrific achievement by Ravi and we wish him many more successes to come.

Very best wishes for the holiday season!

--- Danny Rosenbaum

A note on the World Championship



As this issue of ChessMoves was being put to bed, the World Championship had just finished with Magnus Carlsen (left) becoming a five-times World Champion, defeating Ian Nepomniachtchi 7.5-3.5.

Many congratulations to Magnus, whose victory didn't look in doubt after his sixth game, the longest game in World Championship history. As Carlsen himself said in the post-match press commentary, 'We should not forget this match turned on the sixth game'.

In this issue we have focussed on that game. GM Keith Arkell celebrates Magnus Carlsen's 136 move 'grind' with three of his own marathon masterpieces, whilst FM Alex Longson has analysed Game 6 and extracted some tactics from the World Championships. His in-depth analysis together with some puzzles based on critical positions has been reproduced from Alex's comprehensive and highly recommended blog on Lichess covering all of the WCC games, and with a 'test your chess' quiz at the end. You'll find the link to the blog in his article.

Look out for next month's issue where GM Peter Wells will look back at the World Championships.



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COVER STORY

Ravi Haria GM

GM Ravi Haria annotates one of his games from the European Team Championships in November.



Ravi had already achieved the GM norms he needed, and now was his chance to meet the crucial rating requirement. Above all, like anyone playing for his/her country in a major event, he wanted to win for his team, but history will record this game as the moment that he clinched the well-earned GM title.

(2) Lodici, Lorenzo (2529) - Haria, Ravi (2497) [C11]

23rd European Teams Terme Catez SLO (3.14), 14.11.2021

Haria, Ravi

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.Nce2 c5 6.c3 Nc6 7.Nf3 Be7 8.a3 0-0 9.Nf4 Qa5 10.Bd3?!



I was struggling to remember my prep, but it quickly became clear that this move was inferior to its alternatives. Surprisingly, it has already been played in a couple of high level games.

10.Ra2 is better, with the idea of meeting 10...Nxd4 11.Nxd4 cxd4 with 12.b4! , now that the white rook won't be hanging on a1 after 12...Qc7.; 10.Be3 is also possible, planning to eventually recapture on d4 with the bishop.

10...Nxd4 11.Nxd4 cxd4 12.Qh5? 12.Nxe6! The only move which keeps White in the game. 12...fxe6 13.Qh5 h6 14.Bxh6 Nc5! 15.Rd1 Rf5! 16.Bxf5 exf5 17.b4 Qa6 18.bxc5 Qxh6 19.Qe8+ Bf8 20.cxd4 f4! ♣ After a weird but forcing line, Black emerges on the better side of a material imbalance, but White is clearly still fighting.

12...f5!? **13.0-0** 13.exf6 Nxf6 14.Qh4 e5-- 0-1 (60) Delgado Ramirez,N (2616)- Bluebaum, M (2670) Tornado INT 2021; 13.Nxe6 was the only line I needed to calculate, but it's obvious that after 13...Nxe5 14.Bxf5 Rxf5 15.Qxf5 White won't be able to retain the e6-knight.

13...Nxe5 14.cxd4 Nxd3?!



This isn't really a mistake according to the engine, but looking at the game after the tournament, it's clear that White's light-squared bishop is a fairly useless piece. Initiating the trade gives my opponent some hope of achieving a lock on the dark-squares.

14...Nc6 is probably more accurate, and was played in the only other game to reach this position. 15.Be3 Bf6 16.Ne2 Qb6 17.Kh1 Bd7-- 0-1 (62) Vitiugov,N (2747)-Van Foreest,J (2644) Wijk aan Zee 2020

15.Nxd3 Bd7 15...Qb6 immediately is more accurate, tying down White's dark-squared bishop to the d4-pawn. 16.Be3 Bd7?

16.Re1 16.Bg5! would have potentially caused me a few problems. 16...Bxg5 17.Qxg5 Bb5+ was my idea, but White has decent drawing chances in the resulting major piece endgame.

16...Qb6 17.Bg5 Bd6 18.Qh4 Rf7?!



I thought this was a very clever move, preventing any possible ideas of Be7. But looking at the game again, I don't really know why I didn't just play 18...Rae8.

18...f4 is what I want to play, but after 19.Be7 Bxe7 20.Qxe7 Rf7 21.Qc5 White doesn't have any problems.

19.Bd2 f4! 20.Bb4 Qxd4 21.Bxd6 Qxd3 22.Rac1?!

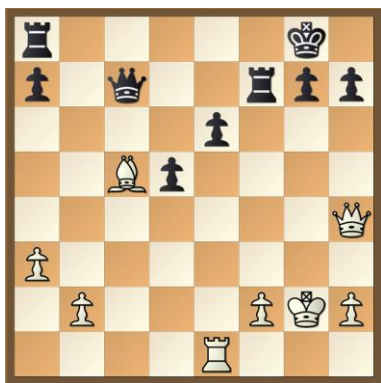


22.Bxf4 is clearly required, but I was happy enough to enter the endgame after 22...Qd4 23.Bg3 Qxh4 24.Bxh4 Rc8

22...f3 23.Rc7

Trying to gain some activity and play for tricks, but it fails for tactical reasons.

23...fxg2 24.Rxb7 Bb5! 25.Rxb5 Qxb5 26.Kxg2 Qd7 27.Bc5 Qc7



0-1

NEWS and VIEWS

Director of Home Chess Report

Nigel Towers writes ...

Return to Over the Board

Some numbers

The return to play over the board play gathered momentum with a further increase in the number of congresses / events during November and the return of the 4NCL National League with round 1 on 20th November.

League and club events are also in progress across the country with over 100 leagues and 80 clubs reporting results in LMS, where the take-up of new clubs and leagues continues.

The ECF's Manager of Rating Brian Valentine reports that November OTB activity has increased again, and we are now at 50% of pre-pandemic figures for standardplay events with 10,000 standardplay half-games rated for November in the December list, compared with 28% activity level from last month) and 55% of pre-pandemic figures for rapid with 9,500 half games rated (which is much the same as last month). These continue to be really encouraging figures and we must hope that the return to over the board can continue over the winter period.

The move towards faster time controls also continues with 1,400 half games being submitted during November from blitz events for rating as well as rapid and standardplay lists. Brian Valentine covers the plans for blitz lists in more detail elsewhere in ChessMoves and we expect to be publishing ECF blitz lists once we have sufficient results to produce a viable national list for over the board events at the faster time control.

Congress Roundup

There were again more congresses played in November compared with the preceding month with an increasing number of events at standard, rapid and blitz time controls.

Date	Event
November 5	1st Ribble FIDE Rapidplay, Leyland, Lancashire
November 6	8th Witney Weekend Congress @ Cokethorpe School, Witney
November 6	Golders Green FIDE Rapidplay @ St Luke's Church, London
November 7	Oxford LJCC Qualifier, Cheney School, Cheney Lane, Oxford
November 11	Hendon FIDE Blitz @ Hendon Chess Club, Hampstead, London
November 12-14	Central London Chess Congress @ Imperial College Union, London
November 13	British Junior Rapid & Blitz Championship @ Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes,
November 16	Muswell Hill FIDE Rapid @ The Clissold Arms, London
November 20	Golders Green FIDE Rapidplay @ St Luke's Church, London
November 20-21	4NCL Weekend 1 Rounds 1-2 - Divisions 1 & 2 Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes; Division 3 South Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes; Division 3 Central Woodland Grange, Leamington Spa; Division 3 North Holiday Inn, Doncaster

November 21	1st Bristol Autumn Rapidplay Tournament @ BGS, University Road, Bristol
November 21	North London Grand Prix 3 LJCC Qualifier @ Bishop Douglass School, London
November 27	Sussex Junior Eastbourne Rapidplay
November 27	Kensington LJCC Qualifier
November 27	Cambridgeshire County Closed Chess Championships
November 27	Yorkshire JCA Grand Prix Event 1
November 27	Docklands Chess Poplar Rapid Tournament @ Langley Hall
November 27	Mill Hill FIDE Congress @ Copthall School
November 28	Hampshire Junior Open Chess Tournament
November 28	6th Annual Lowestoft Rapidplay @ Parkhill Hotel, Oulton
November 30	Muswell Hill FIDE Rapid @ The Clissold Arms, London
November 30	Beckenham FIDE Rated 8 Player RR Closed Invitational

Some congress highlights for the month were as follows -

Cambridgeshire County Closed Chess Championships

The Championships took place on Saturday 27th & Sunday 28th November 2021 in Peterborough. This was a five round Swiss tournament played for the Championship and Challengers (U2000) titles, together with a junior championships.



Top 5 places and champions were as follows:

Championship

Rank	Name	Club	Rating	Total	GP
1	Ileysaa Bin-Suhayl J (pictured above, with organizer and arbiter Francis Bowers)	Peterborough	2286A	4½	2293
2	Mark Lim	Linton	1878A	3½	1897
3	Oliver J Lenton	Ely	1945A	3½	1952
4	Peter N Walker	New England	2005*	3½	2002

5	Andrei Timoshenko	Peterborough	2253D	3½	2240
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As well as winning the championships Ieysaa is also Cambridge Junior Champion as the top scoring junior player. Oliver and Mark were joint winners of the U2000 section.

1st Bristol Autumn Rapidplay

November 21st, Bristol Grammar School



James Sherwin v Peter Chaplin – Round 6 of the Bristol Autumn Rapidplay

The Bristol Rapidplay made a welcome return at Bristol Grammar School on 21st November. This was an U2300 event limited to 40 players. The event was won by International Master James Sherwin with 5 out of 6, followed by Peter Chaplin and Fergus Skillen also on 5 out of 6.

1	1	IM	Sherwin James T	USA	2230	Wiltshire CCA	5,0
	7		Chaplin Peter E	ENG	1998	Clevedon	5,0
	28		Skillen Fergus	SCO	1563	Scotland	5,0

Readers familiar with Bobby Fischer's *My 60 Memorable Games* may recall that game 1 is a game from the New Jersey Open of 1957 between Bobby Fischer with the white pieces and James T Sherwin playing with the black pieces. It's wonderful to see James still going strong 64 years after his memorable game against Fischer.

To mark James' win in the Bristol event we are reproducing his game against Fischer from the 1957 New Jersey Open which is a wonderful example of Fischer's style with an overwhelming king side attack.

(7286) Robert James Fischer - James T Sherwin [A07]

New Jersey Open USA (7), 02.09.1957

[Nigel]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d3 Nc6 4.g3 Nf6 5.Bg2 Be7 6.0-0 0-0 7.Nbd2 Rb8 8.Re1 d6

The 14-year-old Fischer adopts a Kings Indian Attack which was his original weapon against the Sicilian.

9.c3 b6 10.d4 Qc7 11.e5 Thematic and forcing the f6 knight to move.

Nd5 12.exd6 Bxd6 13.Ne4

Starting to apply some pressure on the K side. The position is still about equal.

13...c4 Closing the centre which is more or less forced at this stage. Blacks Q side pressure will be too slow and white's next highlights the awkward placement of the Q and R on the diagonal to b8. White now has an advantage which Fischer quickly builds into a king side attack.

14.Nxd6 Qxd6 15.Ng5 Nce7 16.Qc2 Threatening mate

16...Ng6 17.h4 With the simple threat of h5 winning the knight on g6.

17...Nf6



Attempting to protect the h7 pawn but things are not so straight forward.

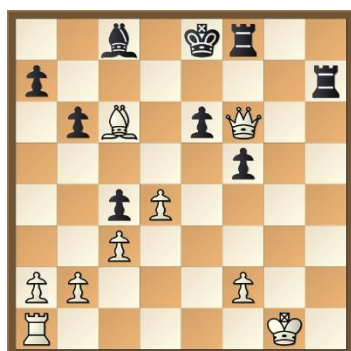
18.Nxh7! Nxh7 19.h5! The point. If the N moves Bf4 wins the rook on b8.

19...Nh4! Setting a trap to save the rook.

20.Bf4 Qd8 21.gxh4

21.Bxb8? Nxg2 22.Kxg2 Bb7+! 23.f3 Forced to avoid Qd5 winning. 23...Qxb8

21...Rb7 22.h6 Qxh4 23.hxg7 Kxg7 24.Re4 Qh5 25.Re3 f5 26.Rh3 Qe8 27.Be5+ Nf6 28.Qd2 Kf7 29.Qg5 Qe7 30.Bxf6 Qxf6 31.Rh7+ Ke8 32.Qxf6 Rxh7 33.Bc6+



1-0

This month also saw the return of the 4NCL over the board and we feature a report from Weekend 1 in Milton Keynes, Leamington Spa and Doncaster elsewhere in the newsletter.

ECF Events Programme

We now have a programme of ECF organised events and national championships for the next year to Autumn 2022, overseen by ECF Director of Events Shohreh Bayat. See the table below ---

November			
Sat 13 November	14 November	British Junior Rapid & Blitz (report in the JuniorMoves section)	

December			
4th December	12 December	English Rapid and Womens Rapid Champs (running as part of the London Chess Classic)	Two-day rapid events across two weekends
2022			
March			
18-21 or Easter (15 - 18 April)	March	English Women's Championship- Qualifier	
18-21 or Easter (15 - 18 April)	March	English Standardplay Championship- Qualifier	
April			
Thurs 7 April	11 April	Women's Norm Event	
Sat 23 April		County Championship Preliminary	Final stages
May			
Thurs 5 May	8 May	English Seniors Championship	7 rounds / 4 days
14 May		County Championship Quarter Final	Final stages
21 May		County Championship Quarter Final	Final stages
21 May	25 May	English Women's Championship- Final	
21 May	25 May	English SP Champs & British Major Open	
June			
11 June		County Championship Semi Final	Final stages
July			
2 July		County Championship Final	Final stages
August			
8 August	21 August	British Championships (including Open and Women's Titles), Senior Championships, and Junior Championships	118th British/ Torquay
13 August	21 August	Major Open and Weekenders	118th British/ Torquay
September			

September	(Date TBC)	UK Open Blitz	Qualifiers at venues across the UK
December	(Dates TBC)	UK Open Blitz Finals	Final

ECF Grand Prix

In addition to the events programme, I am pleased to say that the ECF will be restarting the Over the Board Grand Prix for the 2022/ 2023 season running from 1st July 2022 to 30th June 2023.

The 2022 / 2023 Grand Prix will be a 12-month individual competition based on all ECF rated congresses and restricted to Direct Members of the Federation at Silver, Gold & Platinum levels (Junior included). All open congresses rated by the ECF are included, provided their rating results reach the ECF within one month of the last day of the congress. Leagues, knockouts, invitational events, team competitions, internal club competitions and matches are not included.

Clubs Corner

English leagues and clubs support

There is a network of around 800 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. Many clubs now have Twitter accounts which they use to publicise club events and keep in touch with existing and new members. These are now included in the club finder directory so you should be able to find a club and find their website and social media addresses.



You can read more about clubs across England in our Clubs Community page at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/clubs-home-page/>

ECF support for clubs

We received a great response to the clubs survey earlier in the year. Thank you again to everyone who took the time to reply; the feedback from club secretaries and players has been very helpful to our clubs working group in developing our support plans. The key areas of ECF support are as below and would welcome any further feedback or suggestions. You can also find more details on the ECF Clubs Home Page here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/clubs-home-page/>

Publicising clubs and attracting new members

We have extended the ECF club finder database and web presentation so that you can add a notes section with a summary of your club, opening times and regular events together with your web, social media, venue address and contact details. The club finder is available here -

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/ECF-Club-Finder.html> - and it has details of over 800 clubs across the country. We would encourage club secretaries to take a moment to add or update your club details which you can do via the form here - <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/w1i1j1we007tesu/>

Another good way to publicise your club is via your website and social media accounts. You can find a guide to growing chess clubs prepared by Chris Skulte including setting up a website together with a Twitter or Facebook presence prepared by Chris Skulte here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Growing-chess-clubs.pdf>. If you don't have a website we would be happy to host club web pages with summary details of your club at the link here - <https://englishchessclubs.org.uk>. If this is of interest, please contact Andrew - webmaster@englishchess.org.uk - and we will be pleased to help and offer advice where we can.

We will also be continuing with the regular clubs' corner feature in the ECF newsletter and would welcome contributions and input for that to help publicise local clubs and attract new members.

Club events and competitions

We have an increasing number of leagues and clubs now registered on the ECF's league management system (LMS). The LMS is used by the majority of local leagues and allows for automatic rating of league and club events. Many clubs are also running ECF rated competitions, and you can find guides for setting up leagues, clubs and events on the LMS prepared by Steve Emmerton at the links here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Getting-Started-With-LMS-For-A-League.pdf> and <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Getting-Started-With-LMS-For-A-Club.pdf>. One of the key advantages of using LMS is that events can be auto-rated on a weekly basis following results entry / validation, without the need for a rating officer to prepare a separate submission file. LMS is also set up to handle both over the board and online events and we have several enhancements planned as the system becomes more widely used.

Women's chess and club level participation

The ECF is committed to promoting women's chess and helping to increase female participation at all levels of the game. Please see the website post from my colleague Aga Milewska, Director of Women's Chess with some thoughts on club and league events to help increase participation levels - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/hello-from-the-new-director-of-womens-chess/>

Club equipment

We have a stock of unused DGT 2010 and 3000 digital clocks which we will be offering to clubs to purchase at around 50% of the retail price. If your club is interested please complete the form here with the number of clocks you would be interested in purchasing and we will get back to you to confirm how many we are able to allocate - <https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/ecf-chess-clocks-expression-of-interest/>

New clubs, sharing club initiatives and good practice

Given the number of new start-ups, we will be preparing a guide for clubs setting up for the first time and will be posting the guide on the ECF website once it is available.

Last but not least, we have established a page with details of club initiatives which you have told us about to help share good practice and some of the great initiatives being adopted around the country - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/chess-club-initiatives/>

ECF Online

ECF Club events

The number of Chess.com ECF members and Lichess English chess players continues to grow with ECF online rated club events played each week at rapid and blitz time controls.

ECF Online Internationals

The English Chess players team continues to play in the regular Mega Team Battles which run every fortnight on Friday afternoons, the Bundesliga / Quarantine league on Sunday and Thursday evenings, the Torres de Loule on Sunday afternoons where we play in Division 1, and the mid-week Champions League on Tuesday Evenings. We are currently moving between divisions 3 and 4 (and occasionally 5) of the main Bundesliga with GMs Keith Arkell and Matthew Sadler as our top scorers in the twice weekly events.

The Online Grand Prix

The First ECF Online Blitz and Rapid Grand Prix series have now completed with the ninth Blitz and Rapid events played during November. The winners are as below for the two series. Well played all and congratulations to the winners of the various sections.



Blitz Grand Prix Winners

Open		
1st – Harry Grieve 129	2nd – Keith Arkell 121	3rd – Peter Finn 110
Juniors		
1st – Edward Jackson 125	2nd – Frederick Gordon 76	3rd – Theo Khoury 67
Seniors		
1st – Keith Arkell 143	2nd – David Walker 116	3rd – Julian Tang 96
Women's		
1st – Louise Head 140	2nd – Lindsay Pyun 129	3rd – Mae Catabay 88
Under 2000		
1st – Edward Jackson 133	2nd – Theo Khoury 79	3rd – Frederick Gordon 75
Under 1700		
1st – George Calvert 79	2nd -Lindsay Pyun 76	3rd – Jan Murawski 75
Under 1400		

1st – Brent Frankel 129	2nd – Dylan Wastney 126	3rd – Ushakan Thushyanthan 113
Under 1100		
1st – Jacob Liu 116	2nd – George Zhao 75	3rd – Amelia Fretwell 55

Rapid Grand Prix Winners

Open		
1st – David Walker 123	2nd – Keith Arkell 119	3rd – Tristan Cox 79
Juniors		
1st – Frederick Gordon 105	2nd – Elis Dicen 76	3rd – Harry Zheng 67
Seniors		
1st – David Walker 136	2nd – Keith Arkell 136	3rd – Douglas Vleeshhouwer 82
Women's		
1st – Elis Dicen 143	2nd – Mae Catabay 82	3rd – Lindsay Pyun 75
Under 2000		
1st – Frederick Gordon 109	2nd – Elis Dicen 81	3rd – Harry Zheng 76
Under 1700		
1st – Stanley Badacsonyi 76	2nd – Theo Khoury 71	3rd – Adithya Vaidyanathan 59
Under 1400		
1st – Oleg Verbytski 110	2nd – George Zhao 99	3rd – Balahari Bharat Kumar 79
Under 1100		
1st – Lucian Li 150	2nd – Alex Gao 97	3rd – Idhant Sinha 73

Full details here –

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

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

There was some excellent chess played over the course of the event and we are pleased to feature a game from two of our top junior players -

Bora Aydin (1818) – Edward Jackson (2186) [B13]

ECF Grand Prix Blitz Event 3 Arena lichess.org, 10.11.2021

[Annotated by Edward Jackson]

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.Nf3 Nf6 5.Nc3



A slightly odd development as normally white wants to put a pawn on c3 and the knight will develop via d2.

**5...Nc6 6.Bf4 Bg4 7.Be2 e6 8.h3 Bh5 9.a3 Bd6 10.Bxd6 Qxd6 11.Qd3 Bg6 12.Qd2 a6
13.O-O-O 0-0**



Black achieves a perfect setup.

14.Bd3 b5 15.Bxg6 hxg6 16.g4 b4



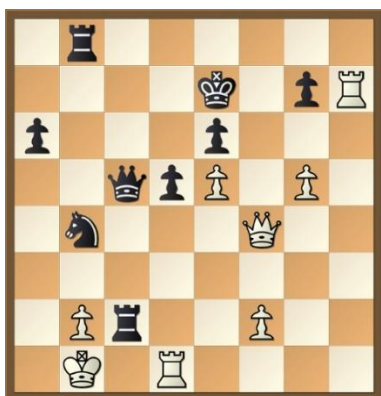
With opposite sides castling both sides are going to go for an attack against the enemy king by launching pawns forward. Black's attack will prove to be faster and stronger.

17.axb4 Nxb4 18.g5 Nd7 19.h4 Rfc8 20.h5 Rab8 21.hxg6 Rxc3



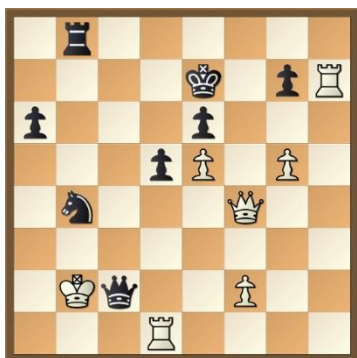
22.gxf7+ 22.Qxc3 Na2+ picks up the white queen; 22.bxc3 Na2# is immediate mate

22...Kxf7 23.Ne5+ Nxe5 24.Qf4+ Ke7 25.dxe5 Rxc2+ 26.Kb1 Qc5 27.Rh7



Black's king looks under fire but white is a move too slow and black crashes through first.

27...Rxb2+ 28.Kxb2 Qc2+



With mate to follow

0-1

ECF Online Grand Prix – 2022

Series 2 will start in January and run for 10 months until October. We will be following the same format with the blitz series running on the first Sunday of each month and the rapid on the third Sunday. You can find further details and an entry form at the link here -

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/2022-online-grand-prix-series/>

ECF Events Calendar

Find the ECF Event Calendar, with all the events across the country that the ECF is aware of, here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/event-calendar/>

The 4NCL returns!

The World Championships may have been on but Mr Dodgy knows a good thing when he sees one!



Return of the 4NCL

Alex McFarlane writes ...

The 4NCL is back and, as with most sequels, many of the cast members have changed. This is also a transitional season, so the format is different from previous times too.

The structural changes were planned before Covid struck last year and have finally been put into operation. In future we will be having divisions of twelve teams for all all-play-all divisions, including the regional leagues as appropriate. Therefore, to establish which teams will be playing where next season a transitional season is in progress. For one year only Divisions 1 and 2 have been combined. Division 3 Central has also been added to the mix.

With some players still understandably reluctant to return to over the board chess entries are, as expected, somewhat down on previous years, but we're delighted at the number of teams (83) that have entered despite the present difficulties.

The combined Div 1 and 2 has 28 teams, so the fight this year is not just for the Championship but also to see which teams will be joining the new Divisions 1 and 2 and which teams will find themselves in the regional divisions. The first weekend was seeded based on a mixture of initial squad listing and previous positions. Despite this there were a number of hard fought first round matches and even closer second round matches.

The first round produced some one-sided matches, as might be expected in a seeded Swiss tournament; however, six of the matches were decided by the result of one board. Cheddleton was the only team to win all of its round 1 games, but Guildford Young Guns had the highest winning margin as King's Head was penalised for two known defaults and a no-show, due to illness causing late withdrawals.

In general the round 2 games were much more closely fought, with three of the top four matches finishing with $4\frac{1}{2}$ - $3\frac{1}{2}$ score lines.

It should also be mentioned that there was a new home federation represented at the 4NCL. FIDE has recognised the Isle of Man as a separate entity, and many of the Chess.com Manx Liberty squad have transferred their allegiance to IOM. Should we now be called the 5NCL?!

After the first weekend there are seven teams on full points - Cheddleton, Guildford Young Guns, The Sharks, Chess.com Manx Liberty, Barbican, Wood Green and Oxford.

The new Division 3 Central has proved reasonably popular but Division 3 North has only attracted eight teams, so the division has been restructured to a seven round all-play-all over three weekends. Division 3 South has again proved to be very popular, with 32 teams entered.

In Division 3 North the two teams on 100% after the first weekend are Spirit of Atticus and Bradford DCA Knights A. Special thanks are due to Chessable White Rose who were persuaded late on to enter a team and ensure that a reasonable format could be achieved for this division.

Of the 15 teams in Division 3 Central only three survived the first weekend on maximum points. These are West is Best 2 & 3 and Rhyfelwyr Essyllwg (apparently this is an anagram of 'Welsh wryly fry legs' but I'm fairly sure that isn't why it was chosen! Google tells me it actually means 'the inhabitants of Gwent').

Division 3 South has six teams on full points - Cambridge University, CSC, MK Phoenix Wessex Some Stars, Icenis and Celtic Tigers.

Full league tables can be found on the 4NCL website - <https://www.4ncl.co.uk/>

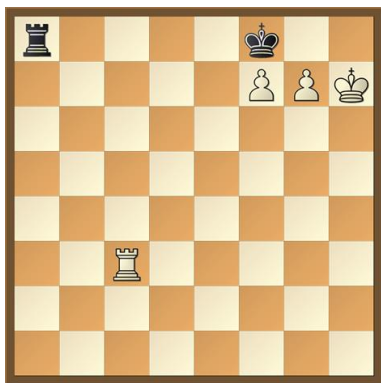
In addition to the usual player title norms that the 4NCL produces, this year a conscious effort is also being made to obtain arbiter norms. We're hoping that as many as six or seven of these will be obtained.

Finally, here's a small selection of games from the first weekend, kindly recommended by long-term 4NCL supporter IM Richard Palliser ...

Bates, Richard (2360) - Harvey, Marcus R (2468) [E16]

4NCL 2021-22 England ENG (2.12), 28.11.2021

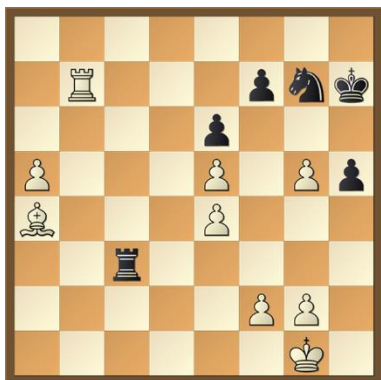
1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.g3 Bb4+ 5.Bd2 Bxd2+ 6.Qxd2 Bb7 7.Bg2 0-0 8.0-0 d6 9.Nc3 Ne4 10.Qc2 Nxc3 11.Qxc3 Nd7 12.Rfd1 a5 13.Rac1 Re8 14.b3 Qe7 15.a3 e5 16.dxe5 Nxe5 17.Nh4 Bxg2 18.Nxg2 Ng4 19.Nf4 Nf6 20.Nd5 Nxd5 21.cxd5 Rac8 22.e3 Qe5 23.Rd4 Re7 24.Qd3 g6 25.Rdc4 Qb2 26.a4 Kg7 27.R4c3 Re5 28.R3c2 Qa3 29.Kg2 Re7 30.Qc3+ Kg8 31.Ra1 Qb4 32.Qxb4 axb4 33.Rc4 Re5 34.Rd1 c5 35.dxc6 Rc5 36.Rxb4 R8xc6 37.Rbd4 Rc3 38.b4 b5 39.axb5 Rb6 40.Rxd6 Rxb5 41.Rb1 Rc8 42.Rd4 Rc2 43.h4 h6 44.g4 Kg7 45.Kg3 Rc6 46.f4 Rc8 47.g5 Rcb8 48.Kf3 R5b7 49.Ke2 Kh7 50.Kd3 Kg7 51.Rb2 Kh7 52.e4 Kg7 53.Kc3 hxg5 54.hxg5 Kf8 55.Rd5 Re8 56.Kd4 Ra8 57.Rb3 Ra1 58.b5 Ra4+ 59.Kd3 Ke7 60.Rc5 Kd7 61.Ke3 Ra1 62.Kd4 Ra4+ 63.Ke5 Rb6 64.f5 gxf5 65.exf5 Ke8 66.Rc6 Rb8 67.Kf6 Kf8 68.Rbc3 Raa8 69.Rc7 Kg8 70.Rxf7 Rxb5 71.g6 Rb6+ 72.Kg5 Rb1 73.Rfc7 Rbb8 74.f6 Rd8 75.Kh6 Ra6 76.Rc8 Rad6 77.Rxd8+ Rxd8 78.f7+ Kf8 79.Kh7 Ra8 80.g7+ 1-0



Parligras, M (2576) - Horton, Andrew P (2375) [E34]

4NCL 2021-22 England ENG (2.22), 28.11.2021

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 d5 5.cxd5 Qxd5 6.e3 c5 7.a3 Bxc3+ 8.bxc3 Nc6 9.Bb2 Qd6 10.Nf3 0-0 11.c4 Rd8 12.Rd1 Qe7 13.Bd3 h6 14.0-0 b6 15.Ne5 Nxe5 16.dxe5 Ne8 17.Bh7+ Kf8 18.Rxd8 Qxd8 19.Be4 Rb8 20.Bc6 g6 21.Rd1 Qe7 22.e4 Qc7 23.Ba4 a6 24.Qd2 g5 25.h4 b5 26.cxb5 axb5 27.Bc2 Qe7 28.Bc1 Ra8 29.Qe2 Ng7 30.hxg5 h5 31.Qxb5 Ba6 32.Qc6 Bb7 33.Qb6 Kg8 34.Be3 Rc8 35.a4 Kh7 36.a5 Rc6 37.Qd8 Qxd8 38.Rxd8 Ra6 39.Bd2 c4 40.Rd7 c3 41.Bxc3 Rc6 42.Rxb7 Rxc3 43.Ba4 1-0



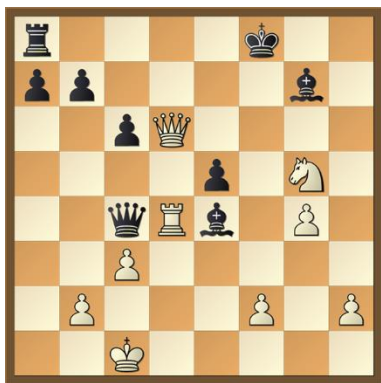
Zulfic, F (2164) - Wall, G (2325) [A83]

4NCL 2021-22 England ENG (2.82), 28.11.2021

1.d4 f5 2.e4 fxe4 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Nc6 5.d5 Ne5 6.Qe2 c6 7.0-0-0 Nxd5 8.Nxd5 Nf7 9.Nf4 Nxg5 10.Qh5+ Nf7 11.Bc4 g6 12.Bxf7+ Kxf7 13.Nxg6



13...hxg6 14.Qxh8 Qa5 15.Nh3 Bg7 16.Qh4 Qxa2 17.Ng5+ Kf8 18.c3 d6 19.Qf4+ Kg8 20.g4 Qc4 21.Rhe1 e5 22.Qg3 d5 23.Qh4 d4 24.Rxe4 Be6 25.Qh7+ Kf8 26.Qxg6 Bd5 27.Rdxd4 27...Bxe4 28.Qd6+ 1-0



And there's more 4NCL coming soon ...

The 27th 4NCL FIDE Rated Congress takes place 21-23 January 2022. There are three sections - Open, Under 2000, and Under 1700. More information and entry form at https://4ncl.co.uk/fide/information_27.htm



Rating update

ECF Manager of Rating Brian Valentine writes ...

Over the Board Blitz

Effective 1st November, we announced the collection of OTB Blitz results for the future start of a new ECF list. There has been a solid start: we have 717 results from 167 players. This level of activity is similar to that of Online Standard and Online Blitz for November. We will need more players and the joining of isolated result 'islands' before we initiate the list, but a promising start.

Categories

Those interested in rating categories may remember that during Covid we increased all time periods by a year. We have been considering how to unwind this decision and concluded that a complete revision was required. The old categories fitted in with the old grading averaging periods and don't reflect how the Elo system works.

Under Elo the contribution of each monthly performance on future ratings slowly decays and so there are no natural time breaks. The one natural break is which rating algorithm is used. The first nine results recorded by a new or returning player are averaged using the p-rating formula. Thereafter we use the k-rating formula. Details on K and P rating methods can be found here - https://www.ecfrating.org.uk/v2/help/help_rating.php. We decided to keep the A category for most active players and there is also an H-istorical category that will be explained below.

The following categories will apply to each list separately

Category A

A player who has played 30 or more games in the previous 12 months

Category H

For OTB players who inherited a rating on 1st July 2020, but who had played less than 9 games in the 60 months prior to 1st July 2020 and has not played since; For Online a player with a rating inherited on 1st September 2021 and has not played since. When a player with an H rating subsequently plays, their rating will convert to a K-rating.

Category K

All ratings of other players with active ratings that will be updated by the K-method.

Category P

All ratings of other players with active ratings that will be updated by the P-method.

These categories will become effective on 1st February 2022, after the first six months of any league should have submitted results.

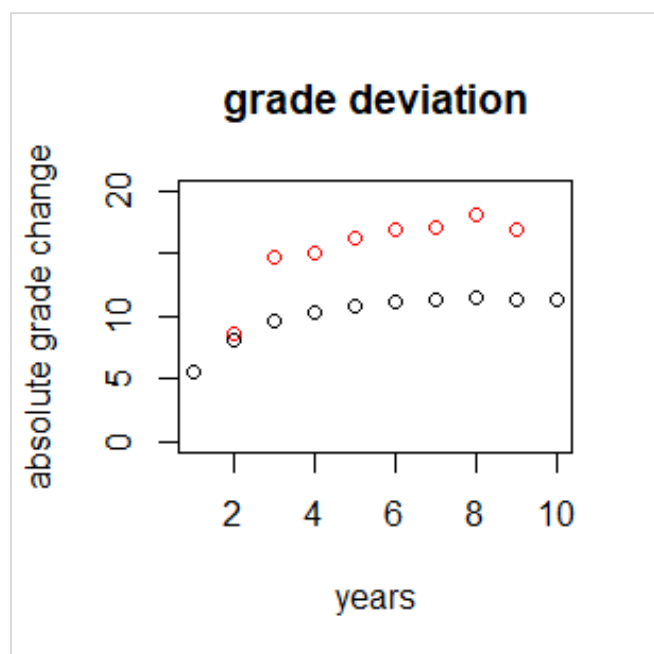
The rating team regard all K and A category ratings as dependable, with P ratings (similar to old “F grades”) as more for information. Please see our rating categories FAQ page for more at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/new-categories-faq/>

Use it or lose it

Deciding whether a rating is dependable or not under Elo is fairly arbitrary and this brings us to ratings that fall into a grey area. These are those falling in the H category above. On transition from the old grading system for OTB where recent history was scant, and from the online system, where we were unable to capture all the records, we have difficulty setting out a robust rule. In this narrow range outlined in category H, the rule will be that all players who play a game in that list before 1st September 2022 will keep their rating using the K methodology otherwise the player will revert to a new player.

Maintaining a rating

Under the old grading system a grade was lost if a player did not play in the preceding 12 months. However if they returned then we would include results up for up to 3 years. In moving to monthly rating, a rating was maintained for five years. As part of this exercise we decided to look at the data and used the August lists from 2009 to 2019.



Our interest was how much, on average, a grade (use 7x or 8x to convert to ratings) changed, either +/-, as time elapsed. There are two situations: the black dots- those with a grade at the beginning and end year and, the red dots- those who did not have a grade in any of the intervening lists. The surprising implication is that there is a tipping point at three years with little change thereafter.

As a result, we have decided that current ratings in any list will be lost if a player does not have a result in 36 months and they will return with a P category. Older qualifying ratings will still be displayed in the player profile in their rating history.

A word from the Director of Membership Rob Willmoth

ECF Director of Membership Rob Willmoth writes ...

Ever wondered how to turn £94 in £100 just like that, as Tommy Cooper would have said. Members of the ECF who have added the tie-in with GoMembership get numerous discounts for example 6% off from John Lewis so you can buy £100 of vouchers there for £94. 10% off Apple 5% off M&S – and hundreds more discounts are available. The sign-up is a tiered supplement – Gold £5, Silver £10, Bronze £15 etc.

At this point last year I saved £32.50 on La Mer face cream for my wife. I also heard of a couple of people who bought Xmas present computers saving between £130 and £200 from Apple. I am hoping to receive many more messages from members this year. These are just one off Xmas savings. Imagine the savings you could make if you used it all year round. My wife uses the GoM more than myself. She has saved over £2000 over the year mainly on daily grocery shopping discounts. I saved £480, but could have saved more if I remembered to use it every time.

So before you go shopping for presents get your discount first!

Details at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/new-gomembership-scheme-launch/>



Obituary

Jonathan Penrose, who won the British Chess Championship a record ten times, has died aged 88. You can read Leonard Barden's fine obituary published in The Guardian at

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2021/dec/02/jonathan-penrose-obituary>





The London Chess Classic

There was a variety of events at the London Chess Classic this year. You can find background on all of them at <https://www.londonchessclassic.com/>

A few highlights - congratulations to Lan Yao who won the English Women's Rapidplay; and congratulations to GM Gawain Jones who won the playoff against GM Luke McShane to win the English Rapidplay ---

Final Ranking after 9 Rounds

Rk.	SNo		Name	FED	Rtg	TB1
1	5		GM Mcshane Luke J	ENG	2698	7,0
2	3		GM Jones Gawain C B	ENG	2604	7,0
3	9		GM Speelman Jon S	ENG	2523	5,5
4	6		GM Adams Michael	ENG	2670	5,5
5	10		IM Ghasi Ameet K	ENG	2539	5,0
6	1		FM Harvey Marcus R	ENG	2443	4,5
7	4		IM Trent Lawrence	ENG	2440	3,0
8	2		IM Horton Andrew P	ENG	2298	2,5
9	7		GM Gormally Daniel W	ENG	2534	2,5
10	8		IM Haria Ravi	ENG	2337	2,5

The English Women's Rapidplay result is at <http://chess-results.com/tnr595544.aspx?lan=1&art=1&flag=30>

The English Rapidplay result is at <http://chess-results.com/tnr595542.aspx?lan=1&art=1&flag=30>

The English team of GMs Michael Adams, Luke McShane and Gawain Jones narrowly lost to the Rest of the World in the shape of GMs Boris Gelfand, Nikita Vitiugov, and Maxime Lagarde. The match was played over three boards with each player on one team playing each player on the other team twice. The time control was 100 mins for 40 moves + 30 mins for rest of game + 30 sec increment from move 1. You can play through the games at <https://www.chess.com/events/london-chess-classic-england-rest-of-the-world-2021>



Caplin Hastings International Chess Congress - cancellation

It is with great regret that the Chairman, sponsors Caplin Systems and Hastings Borough Council, and the organisers of the Caplin 96th Hastings International Chess Congress have decided that the event should be cancelled. The decision has been taken on the grounds that the new Covid variant is spreading rapidly, and that it would be negligent to allow a large number of people to mix together in a confined space for ten or more days. Other events have already cancelled.

Further information will be posted on the HICC website – <https://hastingschess.com/> - and we will be contacting entrants individually where possible. Refunds of entry fees will be dealt with in due course.



European Team Chess Championship 12th – 21st November

In this issue we have GM Michael Adams on a great game by WGM Katarzyna Toma in the European Team Championships Women's section and GM Ravia Haria on his own game in the European Team Championships Open. For the full team results visit ----

<http://chess-results.com/tnr583987.aspx?lan=1&art=20&fed=ENG&turdet=YES&flag=30> and

<http://chess-results.com/tnr583986.aspx?lan=1&art=20&fed=ENG&turdet=YES&flag=30>

GM Gawain Jones was listed alongside GM Jonas Bjerre and Jorden Van Foreest as the best Board 3 individual players – more at <https://www.euroteamchess2021.eu/the-best-individual-players-per-boards/>



Another cancellation - the London Junior Chess Championships Finals

LJCC have just reluctantly announced that they are cancelling the LJCC Finals and other events and moving the junior-only events online - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ljcc-moves-online/>



David Howell's Remarkable Performance

In November GM David Howell put in a terrific performance in the 2021 FIDE Chess.com Grand Swiss at Riga with 7 / 11. At one point David was joint top alongside Super GMs Fabiano Caruana and Alireza Firouzja in an 108-player field. You can read the FIDE report at

<https://www.fide.com/news/1425> and Leonard Barden's column in The Guardian with the tournament well under way - <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2021/nov/05/chess-alireza-firouzja-leads-in-riga-as-he-campaigns-for-carlsens-crown>



Fancy having the final say?

Arbiter - a person who settles a dispute or has ultimate authority in a matter.

We will be holding a Level 1 Arbiter course in February 2022, running over five Monday evenings from 7.00pm to 9.00pm – 7th February; 14th February; 21st February; 28th February; 7th March,

with a course fee of £40. For more information and online entry visit
<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/level-1-arbiter-course-february-2022/>

Chess Development Study

How do intelligence, practice, motivation, personality, and emotion come together to influence chess development? Take a 35 to 45-minute survey to help researchers gain an insight into this fascinating topic. The study is an international collaboration between the universities in the UK (Sheffield University and Northumbria University) and Austria (University of Graz). You can access the English version at <https://chess-study.uni-graz.at/en/>

The researchers offer individual feedback on the scores of those taking the study.

Education Education Education!

Guildford Chess Club have released a number of instructional videos by IM Andrew Martin aimed at juniors which you can access along with some of their other videos at their YouTube channel - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4hLvAFqhh84_p3qF5nhYmw/videos

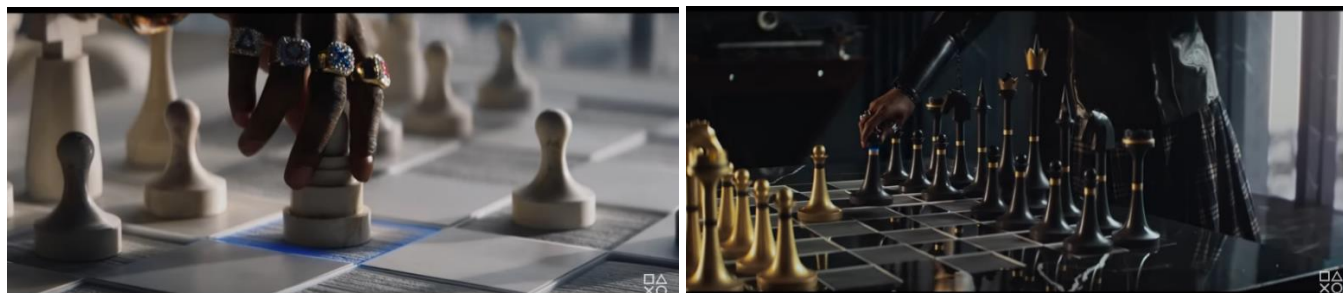
Andrew was also behind the free booklets designed for children, which you are able to download as PDFs or read online in your browser via our New To Chess page - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/new-to-chess/> - a joint project between the ECF and St Catherine's School in Bramley.

Woman's Hour

It was great to hear the ECF's new Director of Women's Chess Aga Milewska and IM Jovanka Houska on BBC Radio Four's Woman's Hour. You can find the link and the start timecode at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/aga-milewska-and-jovanka-houska-on-womans-hour/> Aga is also featured in this issue, interviewed by Mark Rivlin.

Play Has No Limits

PlayStation have been running a remarkable ad revolving around chess. Those who haven't seen it can take a look at <https://youtu.be/4yuEnY9ItqA>



Book Review by Gary Lane

High praise for *Caruana's Ruy Lopez* – 'An easy way to transform the level you play the Ruy Lopez' - <https://chess.business/blog/>

Tweet of the Month



Zoe Varney @Zoe_chess · Nov 12

Amused that my name tag at Europeans mistakenly calls me a WGM. Fingers crossed I'll get the title for real in the future 😊



Gems from the ECF Library

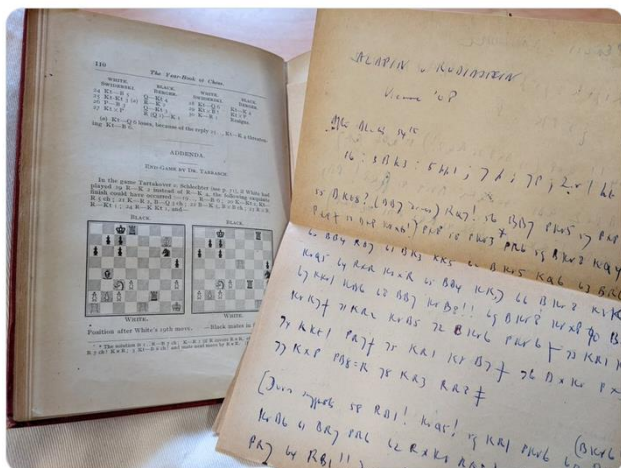
A while back the ECF arranged for its book collection to be housed in Leicester at De Montfort University. From time to time they have tweeted highlights from the collection and we will follow suit by reproducing the occasional Tweet in these pages ---



DMUArchives&RareBooks
@DMUSpecialColls

...

The 1909 Year Book of Chess, with inserted sheets noting moves during Alapin vs Rubinstein. From the collection of Sir Richard Clarke, part of the [@ecfchess](#) library. [#ChessTuesday](#)



CHESS Magazine taster



Click here for this month's taster -

<https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0478/2876/2775/files/chess-magazine-december-2021-sample.pdf>

Click here to purchase / subscribe - <https://chess.co.uk/collections/new-chess-products/products/chess-magazine-december-2021>



Letter to the Editor

From a special correspondent ...

Dear Sir,

There are few chess players more surprised and delighted than me by the so-called 'Chess Boom' that our game is currently enjoying. I have, of course, become used to much of the responsibility for this chess explosion being laid at my door ever since the airing of my biographical series.

For instance, as an avid reader of the ECF's ChessMoves, in the last edition alone I read about young master Ted Filby taking the game up after watching my recent series ('From Lockdown to Winner's Podium!'), or Steve Westmorland's piece ('Chess, it's a lifestyle') in which he compliments my style (how I blushed). I was particularly touched to see that my work has been of use to the Aylsham Chess Club when they noted that *The Queen's Gambit* had helped bring new members to their Club.

But whilst such increased enthusiasm for chess can only be celebrated, I felt it only right to set the record straight on one incredibly important point. Despite being an American chess prodigy, winning the US Championship and the Moscow Invitational, I only ever had one ultimate aim: to play for the Surrey U140s.

This may strike some readers as surprising. Some, no doubt, are sceptical that this is true at all. But mid-grade County Chess is, in my opinion, the crown jewel of chess play, surpassing all GM-led and international chess play. A moment's reflection shows why:

- The world-class venues. I've played in Las Vegas, New York, Paris and even Moscow. But none of these venues pass muster when compared to the iconic chess venues like the Coulsdon Chess Fellowship, the Cheam Parochial Rooms, and – what must be the most majestic venue of them all - Kent's Mick Jagger Community Centre in Dartford. Truly inspirational.
- The diversity of the players. Chess has been criticised in the past for its lack of diversity amongst its players. Not so in county chess! Here you can find middle-aged balding men with beards, as well as middle-aged balding men without beards. Some of the middle-aged men don't identify in beard/non-beard binary forms, and some are just facial-hair curious. It goes to show that county chess is open to all and no one type is the norm.
- The cutting-edge chess theory. Now, I know my theory. I had 74 lines of the Sicilian down before I left the orphanage. But I'm constantly amazed by the opening innovations I see in the U140s. Rarely does a game follow established opening theory for more than six moves, such is the creative energy of these opening theorists. The same in the middlegame, where one can observe a series of bold piece sacrifices that may to the untrained eye look like simple blunders but I'm sure must be the result of

deep positional calculation. More still in the endgame - see how the U140s are willing to abandon established endgame theory to explore hitherto uncharted drawish lines in what should be simple won positions.

So let the record show that, whilst I may have conquered all that the chess world had to offer, for me there is simply no greater distinction for any chess player than to be called up for U140 county chess glory. As I have so often remarked in my press and PR appearances, it was my 48-move draw in the 1978 Surrey v Kent U140s match that will forever stand as my magnum opus.

Yours sincerely,

Ms B. Harmon
Lexington, Kentucky

JUNIOR MOVES

British Junior Rapid and Blitz Championships

The British Junior Rapid & Blitz Championship 2021 took place 13th-14th November at Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes. Congratulations to all the winners including Mohammed Aayan Ismail (see below) who won the 2021 British Junior Rapid & Blitz Championship Rapid Under 18 & 16 with 8.5 out of 9.

You can find all the results and the games via the links at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/follow-the-games-live/>

There were many proud players, families, and coaches. Amongst them, understandably was Paul Lam of Coventry Chess Academy!



Mohammed Aayan Ismail reports on his critical round 8 game in the U16/18 British Rapidplay Championship at Kent's Park, Milton Keynes



After playing so many online events and winning the U16 British Online Chess Championships in Standard and Rapid, I was happy to play over the board again.

It felt more special winning the OTB British Junior Chess Championships and this game was from round 8 in the Rapidplay Championships in November 2021 - with 6.5 points I needed a win to go into the last round with a lead of 1 point or more.

I had played my opponent a few times online, so this was the first time I was playing against him over the board, and I felt relaxed before the game.

Frankie Badacsonyi - Mohammed Aayan Ismail [D02]

British Junior Rapidplay U16/18 lichess.org (8), 03.12.2021

[Mohammed Ismail]

1. d4 d5 2. Bf4 Nf6 3. Nf3

My opponent went for the London System

c5 4. e3 Nc6 5. Nbd2 Bg4



I avoided playing 5...Qb6 because after 6.dxc5 Qxb2 7.Rb1 white gets some active play

6. c3 e6 7. Bd3 Bd6 8. Bg3 O-O 9. O-O Bxg3 10. hxg3



11. e5 Here I took the chance to break open the centre

11. dxe5 Nxe5 12. Be2 Nc6 13. Nb3!?



This seems like an awkward square for the knight, I thought playing 13.c4 would have been better

Qb6 14. c4 Rad8 15. cxd5 Rxd5 16. Qc1 Rfd8 17. Bc4



This move allowed me to swing my rook to the h-file, creating future checkmate possibilities. 17. Rd1 would have stopped this, forcing me to trade rooks

17... Rh5 Not playing 17...R5d7, allowing the tactic 18.Nxc5 and then the knight can't be taken or else there would have been a discovered check Bxf7+ winning my queen

18. Rd1 Rxd1+ 19. Qxd1 Ne4



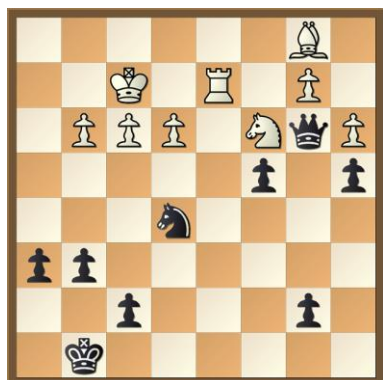
Setting up a huge threat

20. Bd5? My opponent completely missed my idea. 20.Qc2 or 20.Qb1 would have avoided it

20..Rh1+ 21. Kxh1 Nxf2+ 22. Kg1 Nxd1 23. Rxd1 h6

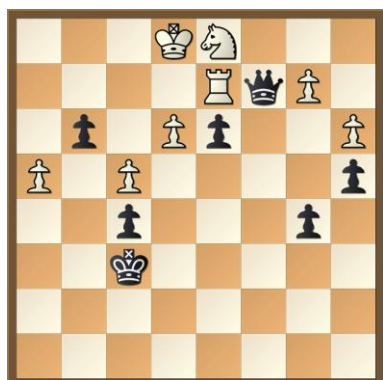
With this move I was making sure there was no chance of me being back-rank mated

24. Kf2 a5 25. Rd2 a4 26. Nc1 Qa5 27. Re2 Qb5 28. Rd2 c4 29. Ne2 Bxf3 30. gxf3 Ne5 31. Be4 g6 32. Nc3 Qb4 33. a3 Qb3 34. Bb1



Here I had to be careful and not fall for 34...b5?? because then there would have been 35.Ba2 trapping my queen, and suddenly white is winning

34..Nd3+ 35. Bxd3 cxd3 36. f4 b5 37. Nd1 Qc2 38. Ke1 Qb1 39. Rf2 f5 40. Rd2 Kf7 41. Kf2 Kf6 42. Ke1 g5 43. Kf2 g4 44. Ke1 h5 45. Kf2 h4 46. gxh4 g3+ 47. Ke1 Qc2 0-1



My opponent resigned because there was no way to stop my passed g-pawn from queening. He played very well, but just missed a tactic on move 20.



Lichess Junior Masters Online Series

The very successful Lichess Junior Masters Series completed during November. Angela Eyton and GM Jonathan Hawkins provide us with a summary of the event, with a game from the Winter Cup stage earlier in the year.

From January to November, children competed across five age groups and 105 tournaments in the inaugural Junior Master Series on Lichess. The event proved popular, with 350 children competing and succeeded in its goal of providing competitive online rated chess to children during the pandemic.

Finally, the most successful players throughout the year competed in the final 'showdown' in November to determine the overall champions.

Under 7: bodhanas

Under 9: newmagicchip

Under 11: Jai11

Under 13: krrish112233

Under 18: Jai11

Here is a game from the Winter Cup Finals in February annotated by GM Jonathan Hawkins -

AlexanderRoyle12 – wanttobesupergm

Winter Cup Finals – 28/2/21

Annotated by J Hawkins

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 e6 5. Nc3 Nf6 6. Be3



Starting the 'English Attack' system with Be3 f3 Qd2 0-0-0. Black however, has one of the best setups to counter this.

6...Bb4 7. f3 d5! White is already under some pressure.

8. Nxc6 bxc6 9. e5 Nd7 10. f4 c5 11. Bd2 0-0 12. Nb5 White will establish his Knight on the d6 outpost, but it doesn't trouble Black too much.

12...Bxd2+ 13.Qxd2 Ba6 14. Nd6 Bxf1 15. Rxf1 Qb6



Even stronger would be to undermine the centre with 15...f6! White's position would be crumbling.

16. 0-0-O!? A very brave but perhaps correct decision, White castles into an attack.

16...Rab8 17.b3 c4 18. Rf3 Sensibly the Rook helps to defend the Queenside. 18.Nxc4 winning a pawn was possible, although after 18...dxc4 19.Qxd7 Rfc8 Black would still have a dangerous attack.

18...Nc5 19. Rh3



White correctly recognises he needs to create some counterplay, but 19.f5! was a better way to do this, with ideas of f5-f6/Qg5 etc.

19...cxb3 20.axb3 Qc6 Threatening to capture on b3.

21. Kb2 Na4+ 22. Ka3

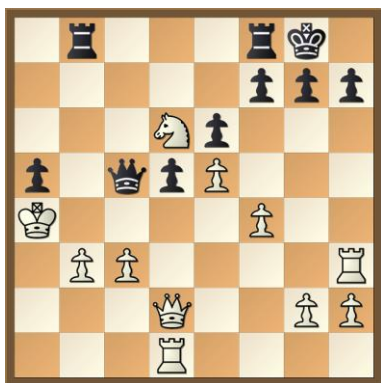


Qc5+? Technically a mistake, but one that works out very well for Black.

23. Kxa4? The correct defence was 23.b4! Qc6 24.b5 Qc5+ and only now to capture 25.Kxa4. With the White pawn on b5 shielding the King, Black would be in trouble.

23...a5! Preparing Rb4+.

24. c3 An understandable move trying to cover b4. The last chance was 24.Rd3! Rb4+ 25.Ka3 and Black doesn't have a deadly discovered check yet.



24...Rb4+! 25. cxb4 25.Ka3 is no better, 25...Rd4+ winning the White Queen.

25...axb4 There is no defence against Ra8+.

26. Qxb4 Ra8+ 27. Qa5 Rxa5# 0-1



Littlewood's Choice



As a teenager I always wanted to play swashbuckling chess involving sacrifices and combinations. Consider the following game from the Hoylake Open in 1972.

P. E. Littlewood - P. C. Griffiths

Round 4

1.e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bc4

This aggressive choice favoured by Fischer was right up my street as it gave White exciting attacking possibilities.



6....e6 7.Bb3 Be7 8. 0-0 0-0 9.f4 Qc7 10.Kh1 b5 11.a3 Bb7 12.Qf3 Nbd7 13.f5 e5 14.Nde2 Nc5



Black has played the opening quite sensibly and has equalised. The best choice for White is now 15.Ng3 but after 15....Nxb3 16.cxb3 Black is doing fine. I chose another option, hoping to set Black some problems, but in fact it should be inferior if Black counters correctly.

15.Nd5 Bxd5 16.Bxd5 Nxd5 17.exd5 Nd7 18.Nc3 Rab8 ?!



This is rather slow... a better choice would be 18...Qb7 putting pressure on the d-pawn. White's attack now gathers some momentum.

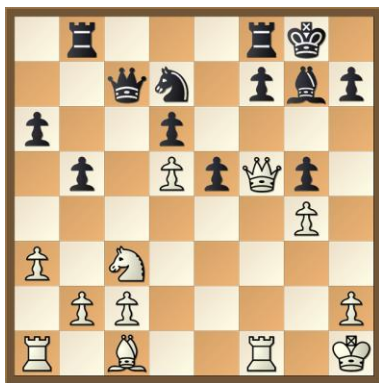
19.g4

This threatens g5 with dangerous threats but Black should have countered with the solid 19...f6 when he should be able to hold the balance. However White does have the initiative after 20.Rg1. Worried by this, Black now plays an inferior move and White is then clearly better.

19....g5? 20.f6! Bxf6 21.Qf5

Black has underestimated the response 20.f6 and is clearly worse.

21...Bg7



22.Ne4?!

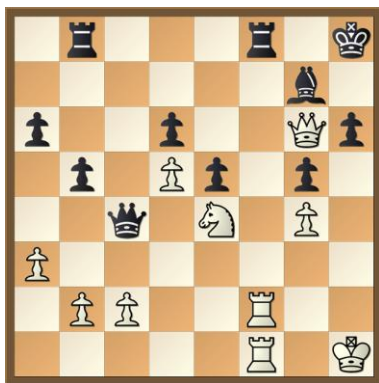
Typical of my style at the time ... however the simple 22.Bxg5, as pointed out by my Dad, was much stronger.

22.....h6 23.h4 f6 24.Be3 Kh8 25.Rf2 Nb6 26.Bxb6 Rxb6 27.Raf1



White has lots of threats and it might have been sensible for Black to bail out now with 27....Qc8, however the ending after 28.hxg5 Qxf5 29.Rxf5 hxg5 30.Nxg5 fxe5 31.Rxf8+ Bxf8 32.Rxf8+ Kg7 33.Rd8 is much better for White.

27....Rbb8 28. Qg6 Qc4 29.hxg5 fxg5



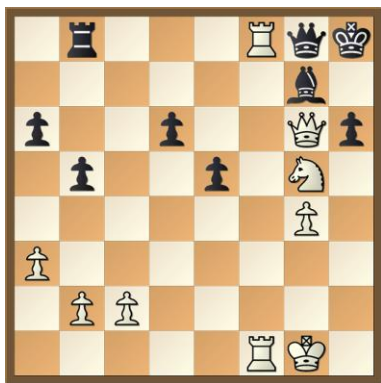
30.Nxg5!

and Black is now lost as if 30...hxg5 31.Rh2 + and mate follows.

30...Qxd5+

30...Qxf1+ 31.Rxf1 Rxf1+ 32. Kg2 hxg5 33. Kxf1 is also winning for White.

31. Kg1 Qg8 32. Rxf8



Resigns

because if 32....Rxf8 33.Rxf8 Bxf8 34.Nf7+ wins

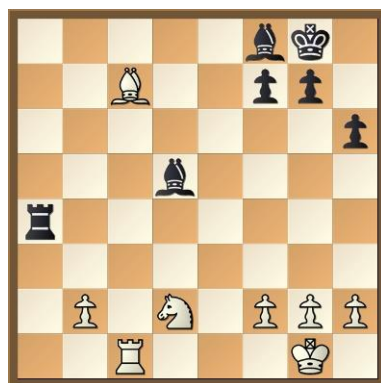
If you have played any exciting games as a youngster that you would like to have published in my column then please send them to me at plittl@hotmail.com. I cannot promise that they will appear but I will give them every consideration.

--- Paul Littlewood



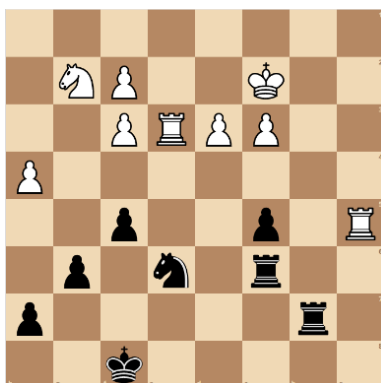
Exercises from the World Championship

Here are some positions from the World Championships to test your chess understanding and calculation skills. These can be found in Alex Longson's blog as exercises 21, 19, 24 and 45. You can see all the exercises – and the answers - at <https://lichess.org/@/rowrulz/blog/world-chess-championship-carlsen-v-nepomniachtchi-2021/gleMLLhp>



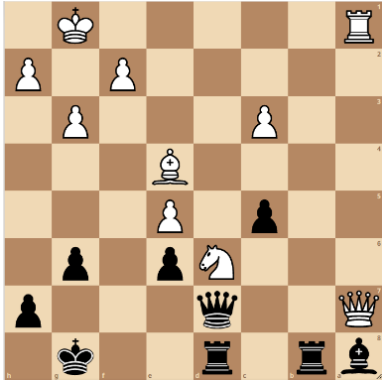
Exercise 21/ Game 3

How would you rate white (Nepo)'s winning chances here?



Exercise 19/ Game 1 variation

Find the best move for black (Carlsen)



Exercise 24/ Game 2 variation
Black (Nepo) to play and win



Exercise 45/ Game 7
What should white (Nepo) play in this position?

FEATURES, WRITING, ANALYSIS, STUDIES AND PROBLEMS

GM Michael Adams' Game of the Month



An excellent attacking game from the Women's European Team Championships where Katarzyna did a fine job on board 1, inspiring the three-game winning streak the English team concluded the event with.

We discussed our game in the last round of the Chessfest Rapidplay, where I scored a very lucky win. Recalling the moves wasn't simple, but during the European event between us we reconstructed the early stages, I was Black.

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Qe2 b5 7.Bb3 0-0 8.c3 d5 9.d3 Re8 10.Rd1 Be6 11.Nbd2 h6 12.Nf1 Bd6 13.Ng3 a5 14.exd5 Nxd5 15.Qe4 Nce7 16.Nxe5 Nf6? (Black would be in decent shape after 16...a4!)



17.Bxe6! (I only considered 17.Qe2?) 17...fxe6 (Sad necessity 17...Nxe4 18.Nxf7 Qb8 19.Nxd6+ Kh8 20.Ndxe4 leaves White with way too much material for the queen) 18.Qe2 Nf5 19.d4 b4 20.Nxf5 exf5 21.Qc4+ Kh7



Now Katarzyna picked up her bishop and played 22.Bf4, but then realised moving it further down the diagonal: 22.Bxh6! decides. In the game after 22...Qe7 aided by my healthy clock position, I eventually overcame the missing pawn and won.

Katarzyna Toma - Ena Cvitan

European Team Championships Women Terme Catez 2021

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.h3 Bh5 The main move is 4...Bxf3 conceding the bishop pair, but now White gains some momentum.

5.exd5 cxd5 6.Bb5+ Nc6 7.g4 Bg6 8.Ne5 Rc8 9.d4 Black's kingside pieces will take awhile to emerge and the pin is awkward.

9...e6 10.Bxc6+ Cutting out lines like 10.Qe2 Nge7.

10...bxc6 11.Qe2 Qb6 11...Bb4 is well met by 12.h4 but this queen deployment doesn't work out well.



12.f4! White has to use the initiative before Black catches up in development.

12...Ne7 12...Qxd4 13.f5 Bd6 14.Nd3 wins a piece.

13.0-0! Qxd4+ Black is short of alternatives, as 13...c5 14.Na4 Qb4 15.Nxc5 Qxd4+ 16.Be3 is far from ideal, but the capture allows Katarzyna to gain more time.

14.Be3 Qb4



15.f5! Opening lines is much more impressive than 15.Bxa7 Qxb2. Now the Black king is marooned in the centre for some time.

15...exf5 15...d4 16.fxg6 breaks through.

16.Nd3! A handy backwards knight move, preparing to bring the heavy mob down the e-file, and gaining more time by attacking Black's hapless queen.

16...Qd6 A mistake, 16...Qb8! threatening Qg3+ was better; 17.Bf4 Qb6+ 18.Rf2 fxg4 19.hxg4 Bxd3 20.cxd3 h5 gives some hope for Black's pieces to emerge.

17.Bf4! Qd8 17...Qe6 18.Qf2 fxg4 19.Rae1 g3! was more disruptive 20.Qg2! (20.Qxg3 Be4 is less clear) 20...Qd7 21.Nc5 Qd8 22.Qxg3 and White is back in total control.



18.g5 Another thematic decision, leaving the bishop on g6 resembling a large pawn. This is simpler than the tempting 18.Rae1 fxg4 19.Nc5 gxh3 20.Nb5.

18...f6 18...h6! was a better try to force some pieces out before it is too late; 19.gxh6 gxh6 20.Rae1 Bg7.

19.Rae1 Bf7 Opening lines with 19...fxg5 20.Bxg5 h6 21.Bf4 Bf7 22.Ne5 suits White: 22...g5 23.Nxf7 Kxf7 24.Qe6+ Ke8 25.Be5 Rh7 26.Rxf5 Qd7 27.Rxf8+ Kxf8 28.Qxd7.

20.gxf6 20.Na4 was also good but the open g-file isn't very dangerous.

20...gxf6



21.Nc5 21.Na4 was another option to make use of the c5 outpost, there is no direct way to win, but White's pieces gradually creep forward creating new threats.

21...Rg8+ 22.Kh2 Rb8



23.Na6! Black was dreaming of 23.Bxb8? Qxb8+, but it was never going to happen.

23...Rb6 After 23...Rb7 24.Na4, or 23...Rc8 24.Na4 it will be the turn of the other knight to use the c5 outpost.

24.Na4 24.Nc7+ Kd7 25.Ne6 Qc8 26.Na4 is also a nightmare.

24...Kd7



25.Bc7! The simplest - it is time to cash in, 25.N4c5+ Kc8 26.Bc7 Qe8 27.Rxf5, or 25.N6c5+ Kc8 26.Ne6 Bxe6 27.Qxe6+ Qd7 are more complicated.

25...Rxa6 25...Qc8 26.Bxb6 is simple, 25...Qe8 26.Bxb6 axb6 27.Nxb6+ Kd8 28.Qf2 prepares Qf4 next.

26.Bxd8 Rxa4 27.Bxe7 Re4 Black will collect a second bishop, but with her king open and pawns dropping off, converting won't be too difficult.

28.Qf3 Bxe7 29.Qxf5+ Be6 30.Qxh7 f5 31.Rxe4 fxe4



32.Rg1! Good technique - swapping material will make it easy to run the pawns up the board.

32...Re8 32...Rf8 33.Rg7, or 32...Rxc1 33.Kxc1 Kd6 34.h4 are also straightforward.

33.Rg7 Kd8 34.Qh6 Bd7 34...Bd6+ 35.Kg2 doesn't help.

35.Kg2 e3 35...d4 36.Qd2 threatens the pawn and Qa5+.

36.Qxe3! Bf6 37.Rxd7+! Kxd7 38.Qxa7+ Giving back the exchange has resulted in two remote passed pawns.

38...Kd6 39.Qf7 Re6 40.Qf8+ Kd7 41.b3 Be7 42.Qf5 Kd6 43.a4 Rf6 44.Qd3 Rf8 45.a5 Rg8+ 46.Kf1 Rf8+ 47.Ke2 Bh4 48.Qg6+ Rf6 49.Qg4 Bf2 50.a6

Black resigned, 50...Bb6 51.Qg3+ Ke6 52.h4 begins moving the other pawn forward, or 52.Qb8 Bc5 53.a7 wins the bishop.

Arkell's Endings



You can't cheat the grind, it knows how much you've invested, it won't give you nothing you haven't worked for - Eric Thomas.

Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet - Aristotle.

In celebration of Magnus Carlsen's epic 136 move grind in game 6 of the World Championship, and because I have always enjoyed such encounters, this month I will give three of my own. Don't expect much in the way of analysis, but instead just play through the games if you also enjoy this kind of thing. I have often joked about how I save the valuable e4 thrust (...e5 with Black) until late in the game, so to commemorate Carlsen playing it as late as move 110, I have selected grinds in which that pawn only makes it to the 4th rank very late in each game.

Arkell, Keith - Berry, Neil

Hinkley 7/5/12

[Result "1-0"]

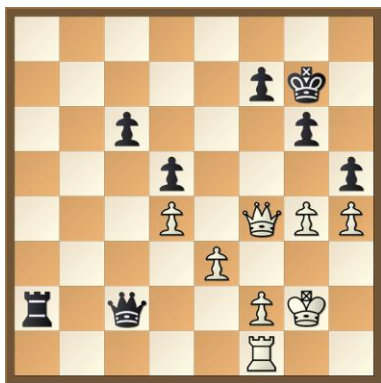
In the first game my advantage is only miniscule pretty much the whole time, but it can be very wearisome defending such positions for hour after hour after hour.

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nc3 d5 4. d4 Be7 5. cxd5 exd5 6. Bg5 c6 7. e3 Bf5 8. Bxf6 Bxf6 9. Bd3 Bxd3 10. Qxd3 O-O 11. b4 a6 12. O-O Nd7 13. a4 Nb6 14. Rfc1 Be7 15. b5 axb5 16. axb5 Nc4 17. Nd2 Nxd2 18. Qxd2 Rxa1 19. Rxa1 Bb4 20. Qb2 Bxc3 21. Qxc3 Qd7 22. Qb4 h5 23. h3 Rc8 24. bxc6 bxc6 25. Qc5



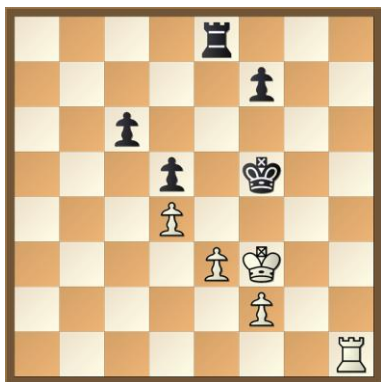
Chess engines don't think much of minority attacks because they can usually be successfully resisted with best play. However, a human must be very patient and take great care when defending the pawn weaknesses.

25.. Qf5 26. Rc1 Qe6 27. Qb6 g6 28. Qa6 Rc7 29. Rb1 Qc8 30. Qa5 Kg7 31. Rc1 Kg8 32. Qa4 Qd7 33. Rc5 Kg7 34. Qc2 Qe6 35. Ra5 Rc8 36. Ra6 Qd6 37. h4 Kg8 38. g3 Kg7 39. Qb3 Kg8 40. Rb6 Ra8 41. Qc3 Rc8 42. Qa5 Qe6 43. Rb7 Qf5 44. Qa3 Re8 45. Qa4 Rc8 46. Qa3 Re8 47. Qa6 Rc8 48. Rb6 Qd7 49. Rb1 Qe8 50. Qb7 Kg7 51. Rc1 Kg8 52. Qa6 Kg7 53. Qa4 Kg8 54. Qc2 Kg7 55. Rb1 Qe6 56. Rb7 Kg8 57. Qc5 Ra8 58. Rb1 Qf5 59. Rf1 Ra6 60. Qe7 Ra8 61. Qd6 Qc2 62. Qf6 Rb8 63. Kg2 Ra8 64. Re1 Qe4+ 65. Kg1 Qc2 66. Qe5 Ra2 67. Rf1 Kh7 68. Qf4 Kg7 69. Qe5+ Kh7 70. Qf4 Kg7 71. Qe5+ Kh7 72. Qf6 Kg8 73. Qg5 Kg7 74. Kh2 Qe2 75. Kg2 Qc2 76. Qe5+ Kh7 77. Qf4 Kg7 78. g4



My problem has been that defending against just one weakness is generally quite easy, so with g4, my favourite chess move, I try to create something else for Black to worry about.

78.. hxg4 79. Qxg4 Ra8 80. h5 Re8 81. hxg6 Qxg6 82. Qxg6+ Kxg6 83. Kf3 Kf5 84. Rh1



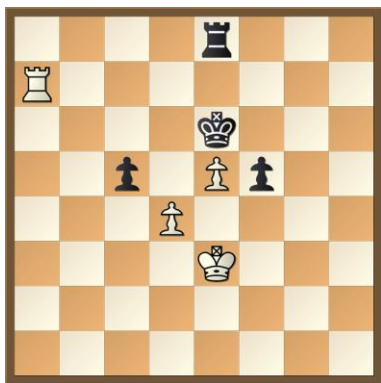
My advantage is still only slight but at least there are now two weaknesses to manoeuvre against - c6 and f7.

84.. Re6 85. Rh8 Rf6 86. Re8 Re6 87. Rf8 Rf6 88. Re8 Re6 89. Rc8 Rf6 90. Ke2 Re6 91. Rc7 f6 92. Kd3 Kg4 93. Ke2 Kf5 94. f3 Rd6 95. Kd3 Re6 96. Rc8 Kg5 97. Rg8+ Kf5 98. Rg1 Rd6 99. Rh1 Ke6 100. Rc1 Kd7 101. e4



And at last, on move 101, comes e4!

101..Re6 102. Ra1 Re8 103. Ke3 dxe4 104. fxe4 f5 105. Ra7+ Ke6 106. e5 c5



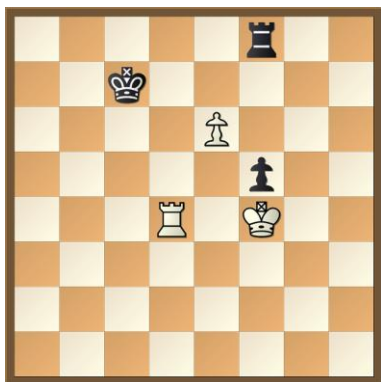
If Neil doesn't play this move the torture will continue as I plan Rc7 or King round to c5.

107. Ra6+ Kd7 108. Rd6+ Kc7 109. Kf4 cxd4 110. Rxd4 Rf8

To draw the game he had to play 110...Rd8, perhaps easy to find when fresh but less so after such a gruelling session. Here I can win with 111 e6 Rd8 112 Ra4 Kd6 113 Ra6+ Ke7 114 Ke5 , when Black's natural defence of 114...Rd1 fails against 115 Ra7+ Ke8 116 Kf6 and the f5 pawn gets in the way of what would otherwise be an easy draw by 116...Rf1+.

I have lost my own copy of the game, but Chessbase gives the finish as 111 Kg5 Rd8 112 Rc4+ 1-0 which doesn't make any sense, so let's just go with 111 e6.

111 e6 1-0

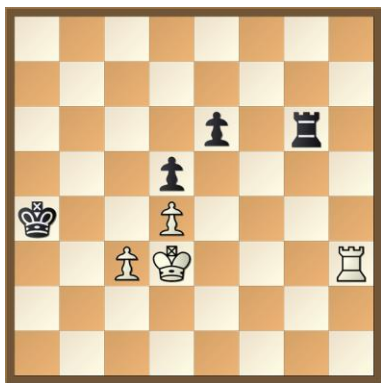


In the second game I ground down an IM strength player by exploiting his impatience.

Ashton, Adam - Arkell, Keith

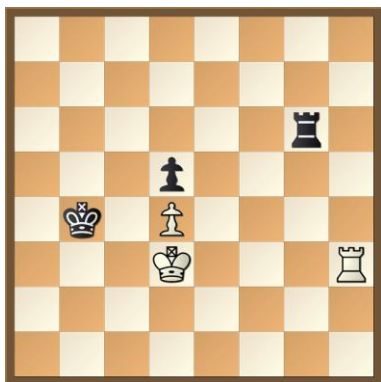
Heywood Open 22/6/02

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Nd7 5. Bc4 Ngf6 6. Nxf6+ Nxf6 7. c3 Qc7
8. Qb3 e6 9. Nf3 Bd6 10. O-O O-O 11. Re1 b6 12. Bg5 Nd5 13. Bh4 Bb7 14. Bxd5
cxd5 15. Bg3 Bxg3 16. hxc3 Rae8 17. Re3 h6 18. Rae1 Re7 19. Ne5 Bc6 20. Qd1 Be8
21. Nd3 Qc4 22. a3 Ba4 23. Qd2 Qb3 24. Ne5 Qc2 25. Qxc2 Bxc2 26. R1e2 Bh7 27.
f3 Rc8 28. Kf2 f6 29. Nd3 Bxd3 30. Rxd3 h5 31. Rde3 Kf7 32. f4 b5 33. Kf3 a5 \$6
34. g4 hxg4+ 35. Kxg4 b4 36. axb4 axb4 37. Kf3 bxc3 38. bxc3 f5 39. g4 fxg4+
40. Kxg4 Kf6 41. Ra2 Rc6 42. Rf3 g6 43. Re3 Rh7 44. Ra8 Rh1 45. Rf8+ Ke7 46.
Ra8 Rg1+ 47. Kf3 Rb6 48. Ra2 Kf6 49. Rae2 Rf1+ 50. Kg4 Rc1 \$6 51. Re1 Rc2 52.
R1e2 Rxe2 53. Rxe2 Rb1 54. Re3 Rg1+ 55. Kf3 Rf1+ 56. Kg4 Ke7 57. Kg3 Kd7 58.
Kg4 Ra1 59. Kg3 Ra8 60. Kg4 Ra1 61. Kg3 Ke7 62. Kg4 Kf6 63. Kg3 Rh1 64. Kg4 Rh5
65. Kg3 Ke7 66. Kg4 Kf7 67. Kg3 Kf6 68. Kg4 Rf5 69. Kg3 Ke7 70. Kg4 Kd7 71. Kg3
g5 72. fxg5 Rxc5+ 73. Kf3 Rg6 74. Ke2 Kc6 75. Kd3 Kb5 76. Rh3 Ka4



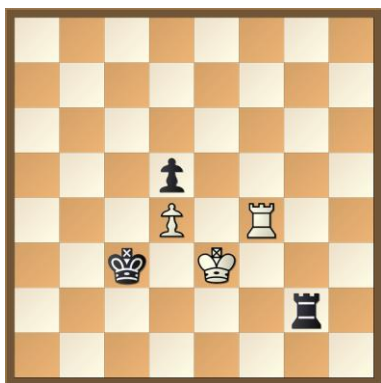
For the whole game Adam has not put a foot wrong, and he was justifiably upset with himself for losing it. However, his next move gives me a glimmer of hope. He should just sit tight and do nothing.

77. c4 Kb4 78. cxd5 exd5



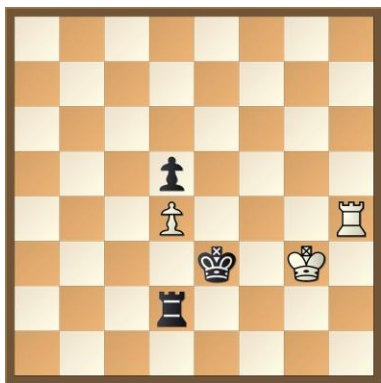
And this time on move 78, though not in the standard way, my e pawn makes it to the 4th rank!

79. Rh4 Rg3+ 80. Kd2 Kc4 81. Ke2 Kc3 82. Rf4 Rg2+ 83. Ke3



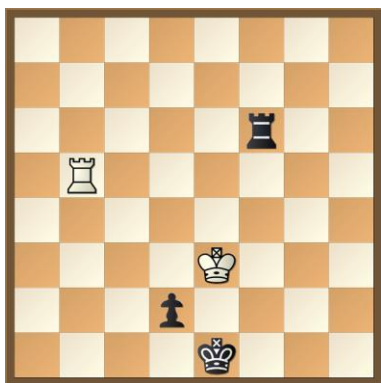
Although we are still within the bounds of a draw, this non-standard position is a little awkward for White.

83.. Rh2 84. Rg4 Rh8 85. Ke2 Re8+ 86. Kf2 Kd3 87. Rh4 Re2+ 88. Kf1 Re7 89. Kf2 Re8 90. Kf1 Ra8 91. Kf2 Ra2+ 92. Ke1 Ra1+ 93. Kf2 Rd1 94. Rg4 Rh1 95. Kg2 Re1 96. Kf2 Re2+ 97. Kf1 Re7 98. Kf2 Kd2 99. Rg5 Rf7+ 100. Kg2 Rd7 101. Rg4 Ke3 102. Kf1 Ra7 103. Rh4 Ra1+ 104. Kg2 Rd1 105. Rh3+ Ke2 106. Rh4 Rd2 107. Kg3 Ke3



I am winning now and duly converted in the blitz finish typical of those days. There are no more moves on my scoresheet, but I've tacked onto the end the way Black would win against the best defence.

108. Rf4 Rxd4 109. Rf3+ Kd2 110. Rf5 Kc2 111. Kf3 Rd3+ 112. Kf4 Rd1 113. Ke3 d4+ 114. Ke4 d3 115. Rc5+ Kd2 116. Ra5 Rh1 117. Ra2+ Kc3 118. Ra3+ Kc2 119. Ra2+ Kb3 120. Rd2 Kc4 121. Ke3 Rh6 122. Ra2 Re6+ 123. Kf2 Kb3 124. Ra5 d2 125. Rd5 Kc2 126. Rc5+ Kd1 127. Rb5 Rf6+ 128. Ke3 Ke1



My challenge to the reader is to identify where White went wrong. So after which of his first 107 moves was he first losing by force? It isn't easy!

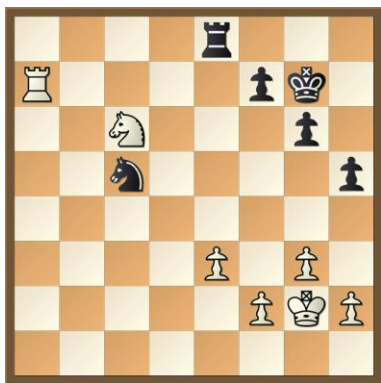
0-1

Those of you who have read my books will recognise the 3rd grind, but I have included it as a bit of whimsy because of the lateness of e4!

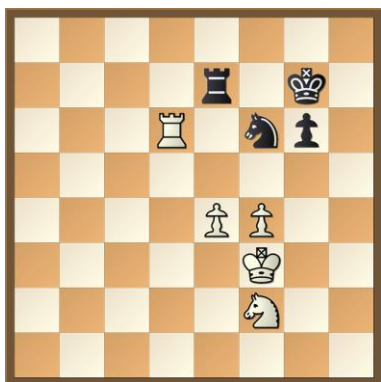
Arkell, Keith - Ledger, Andrew

Eastbourne 1990

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 c6 3. b3 g6 4. Bb2 Bg7 5. e3 O-O 6. Be2 d5 7. O-O Re8 8. Qc2 a5 9. d3 Na6 10. a3 Bf5 11. Nbd2 Rc8 12. Rfd1 Qb6 13. Bd4 Qc7 14. Rac1 e5 15. Ba1 e4 16. Nd4 exd3 17. Bxd3 Bxd3 18. Qxd3 Ng4 19. g3 Ne5 20. Qe2 dxc4 21. Nxc4 Nxc4 22. Qxc4 Rcd8 23. b4 axb4 24. axb4 Qb6 25. Rb1 Nc7 26. Qc5 Qa6 27. Qa5 Qxa5 28. bxa5 Na6 29. Rdc1 Rd7 30. Rb6 Ra8 31. Kg2 Ra7 32. Bb2 Nc7 33. Rb3 Ne8 34. Bc3 Nd6 35. Ra1 Ne4 36. Bb2 Nd2 37. Rc3 Ne4 38. Rc2 Rd5 39. a6 Rxa6 40. Rxa6 bxa6 41. Rxc6 Rd8 42. Rxa6 Nc5 43. Ra7 h5 44. Nc6 Re8 45. Bxg7 Kxg7

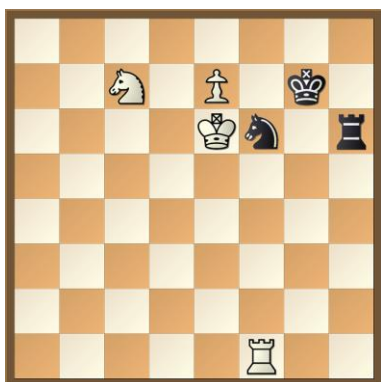


46. h3 Kf6 47. Ra5 Ne6 48. f4 Rc8 49. Ne5 Rc7 50. Kf3 Rc3 51. Ra6 Rc7 52. Nd3 Rc3 53. Nf2 Kg7 54. Ra4 Rc1 55. g4 hxg4+ 56. hxg4 Rf1 57. Ke2 Rg1 58. g5 Rc1 59. Ra7 Rc7 60. Ra8 f6 61. gxf6+ Kxf6 62. Ng4+ Kg7 63. Ra6 Re7 64. Kf3 Nf8 65. Kg3 Ne6 66. Kf3 Nf8 67. Nf2 Nd7 68. Rd6 Nf6 69. e4

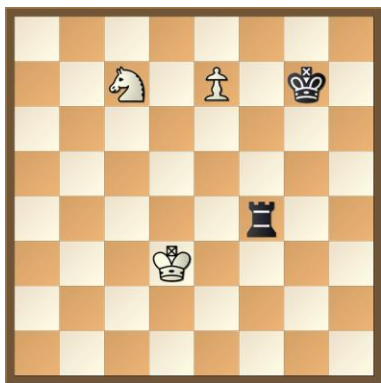


And there it is!

69..Ra7 70. e5 Nd7 71. Kg4 Nf8 72. Ne4 Ra1 73. Ng5 Rg1+ 74. Kf3 Rf1+ 75. Kg3 Rg1+ 76. Kf2 Ra1 77. Rc6 Ra7 78. Kf3 Kg8 79. Kg4 Re7 80. Kf3 Kg7 81. Ke4 Kg8 82. e6 Kg7 83. Ke5 Ra7 84. Kd6 Kf6 85. Ne4+ Kf5 86. Nc5 Nh7 87. Nd7 Ra8 88. e7 g5 89. fxg5 Kxg5 90. Nb6 Rh8 91. Nd5 Kg6 92. Rc1 Kg7 93. Rg1+ Kf7 94. Rf1+ Kg7 95. Nc7 Nf6 96. Ke6 Rh6



97. Rxf6! Rxf6+ 98. Kd5 Rf5+ 99. Kd4 Rf4+ 100. Kd3



If 100...Rf8 101 Ne6+ is curtains, while 100...Rf3+ 101 Ke2 is no better.

1-0



The Interview

Mark Rivlin meets Agnieszka Milewska

Congratulations on your new post of Director of Women's Chess. Why did you decide to stand for this position?

Instead of waiting for English women's chess to improve, I thought I would have a go myself. Chris Fegan has done a great job as Director, now it's time for a woman to step up and take on the mantle.

Tell us about your chess background as a player, arbiter and now ECF Director.

I have been playing chess since I was five years old. My father taught me; he was a good player in his native Poland too. Since I can't seem to get enough of chess, I decided to also become a chess arbiter! I have trained and qualified as an ECF and FIDE Arbiter, and I work full time for Chess in Schools and Communities just to make sure I get enough chess in my life.

What are your priorities in the first year as Director of Women's Chess?

Very simple – to get the number of participants up. The current participation rate of women in English chess is pretty woeful. Countries like Armenia and Georgia have far superior engagements, so it can be done. I think the best way to encourage the casual female chess player is to build on the popularity of *The Queen's Gambit* and subsequent uptake of chess by women during the pandemic. We should aim at players who are curious and eager to continue the game but are perhaps unaware of what support and collaboration there might be available.

What are your long-term goals for the post?

Achieve parity for women in chess, including involvement, enjoyment and representation in our national teams.

How can the ECF encourage more girls to take up chess?

Good question. I think organise more events for girls only so that they can socialise with other girls and women playing chess in a more sisterly environment. Examples of this include the 4NCL Women's League.

You are a strong club player (1810 ECF). Which team(s) do you play for?

And still getting stronger I hope! I play for Ealing Chess Club. I have also played for West London. There are some great leagues and clubs around London.

You recently became a FIDE Arbiter. Tell us about your journey as an arbiter and what your aims are for the future in this role.

I think it was simply a natural next step. I'm sure as chess players we have all talked about a hypothetical 'what if?' chess issue with other players or have been on the receiving end of an arbiter's decision which may seem illogical. I thought it would be good to educate myself – it's another way to help chess to have more arbiters around. My personal goal is to keep going in learning new things and become a fully qualified arbiter. My dream is to be an arbiter at a World Championship.

Your day job is at Chess in Schools and Communities. Tell us about your work there.

My job is my dream job. I'm working in the CSC Head Office with Malcolm Pein and Chris Fegan. I look after the office and schools in west London. It's good to work for an organisation that is working for the public good, as I personally love helping people. Every year we organise the London Chess Classic which is a leading event in UK chess.

Outside of chess, what are your interests and hobbies?

I love to play basketball with my 10-year-old son, and because my brother is a footballer, I'm a fan. I saw a game in the King Power Stadium recently.

Please provide a link and some words from one of your favourite games that you have played.

An exchange sacrifice, and mate on the board. What more could you want from a game?

Robertson, Jim (1604) - Milewska, Agnieszka (1778) [D00]

GBR-ch Major 105th, 28.07.2018

1.d4 d5 2.e3 e6 3.Bd3 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.f4 Nf6 6.Nf3 c4 7.Bc2 b5 8.Nbd2 Bd6 9.0-0 0-0 10.Ne5 Bb7 11.Qf3 h6 12.e4 Ne7 13.Ng4 Nxg4 14.Qxg4 dxe4 15.Qe2 f5 16.a4 a6 17.b3 cxb3 18.Bxb3 Nd5 19.Nb1 bxa4 20.Rxa4 Qc7 21.g3 Rf6 22.c4 Nb6 23.Ra1 Bb4 24.Bd2 Bxd2 25.Nxd2 Rd8 26.c5 Nd5 27.Nc4 Nb4 28.Nd6 Rxd6 29.cxd6 Qxd6 30.Qe3 Nd3 31.Rfb1 Qc6 32.Ra5 Kh7 33.d5 exd5 34.Bxd5 Qc3 35.Rxb7 Qxa5 36.Qa7 Qe1+ 37.Kg2 Qe2+ 38.Kg1 Qe1+ 39.Kg2 Nxf4+ 40.gxf4 Rg6+ 41.Kh3 Qf1+ 42.Kh4 Rg4+ 43.Kh5 Qh3#

0-1

Tell us about promising English girl chess players who are showing promise.

Abandon all hope, ye who play against them! Watch out for... Nadia Jaufarally, Anum Sheikh, Niamh Bridgeman, Julia Volovich, Nina Pert, and Ellis Dicen.



Alex Longson on the World Championships

The World Championship, November / December 2021 – extracts from FM Alex Longson's blog.

FM Alex Longson has been providing an excellent live blog on the Championship games, which you can find here on Lichess - <https://lichess.org/@/rowrulz/blog/world-chess-championship-carlsen-v-nepomniachtchi-2021/gleMLLhp>.

We have included Alex's summary and annotations for the epic game 6 where Magnus took the lead after drawing each of the first five games. Elsewhere in this issue GM Keith Arkell has taken this game as his inspiration to analyse a few of his own fascinating marathon games.

Game 6

Summary - One of the great World Championship games! Carlsen breaks the deadlock and takes the lead after a record breaking 136 moves and nearly 8 hours of play. This game can be broken into seven distinct phases -

Part 1: Opening Gambit (Moves 1-15). Nepo declined Carlsen's new gambit and played bravely and accurately (11...b5!) to reach an equal position.

Part 2: Quiet early middlegame (moves 15-24). Moves 15-24 were very quiet with approximate equality until Nepo invited complications with 25...Rac8!?

Part 3: Material imbalance / time scramble (moves 25-40). The resulting Q v 2 rooks material imbalance led to a sharp battle with the advantage swinging between the two players in a mutual time scramble to reach move 40. Nepo missed a chance for an advantage (36...Bxb4) but Carlsen missed two bigger chances for a near decisive advantage (33.Rcc2 and 40.Rdc2!) Fortress (moves 40-52).

Part 4: Move 40-52 saw Nepo setup what looked to be a fortress type position from what initially looked a tricky situation. His passed pawn on a3 tying up the white pieces. But inexplicably he allowed Carlsen to transform the situation after 52...Qe4?

Part 5: On the brink (moves 52-80). Moves 52-80 saw a tense struggle with Nepo seemingly on the brink but preventing Carlsen from making progress due to the exposed nature of the white king. Finally Carlsen found a way to transform the situation again on move 80 with 80.Rxf7+

Part 6: Technical endgame part 1 (moves 80-115). Rook + knight + 3 pawns versus Queen + one pawn. The position should probably be technically drawn but it is clear this will be a torture for black. To make progress Carlsen must find a way to push e4 but he wants to do so without exposing his king too much. He finally manages this by move 100.e4

Part 7: Technical endgame part 2 (moves 115-136). Rook + knight + 2 pawns versus Queen. By now the tablebase tables tell us that the position is a theoretical draw. But after 7 half hours of play and basically playing on increment it is impossible to play such a strange endgame perfectly.

Carlsen finds a dangerous configuration of his pieces and the "decisive mistake" (according to tablebases) came on move 130...Qa6? Carlsen showed no mercy after this!

Carlsen - Nepomniachtchi [D02]

Carlsen v Nepomniachtchi - World Champs Lichess.org, 03.12.2021

[<https://lichess.org/@/rowrulz>]

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.g3 Carlsen signals that he just wants to get a game! This move gives black quite a lot of choice - 3...c5, 3...g6 with a Grunfeld, 3...Bf5 or...

3...e6

Nepo sticks to his match repertoire inviting a 51transposition back to a Catalan ala game 2.

4.Bg2 Be7 5.0-0



5.c4 Caruana pointed out that the following line has been quite popular at a high level 5...0-0 6.b3 dxc4 7.bxc4 c5 8.0-0 cxd4 9.Nxd4 and though white's queenside structure is compromised he has compensation in the form of a very active light square bishop.

5...0-0 6.b3 c5 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.c4 A novelty.

8...dxc4 9.Qc2 Qe7



10.Nbd2!? True to form Carlsen offers a sacrifice of a pawn.

10.Qxc4 is the safe way to play - but here it seems black can solve his queenside development problems with ...Bd7 10...Bd7.

10...Nc6 Nepo makes a sensible practical decision.

10...cxb3 11.Nxb3 Bd6 White has obvious compensation - particularly the wide open diagonals for his bishops.

11.Nxc4



11...b5! 11...e5 12.Bb2 e4 13.Bxf6 gxf6 14.Nh4 is also suggested by the engine but this looks positionally risky.

12.Nce5 12.Nfe5? Nd4 13.Qd1 Bb7 is nice for black.

12...Nb4! 12...Nxe5 just loses 13.Nxe5 Rb8 14.Nc6

13.Qb2



Looks a bit strange here but the bishop can come to g5.

13.Qb1 Bb7 the queen is vulnerable to ...Be4 here.

13...Bb7 Black of course challenges for control of the long diagonal.

13...Rd8?? 14.a3 Nbd5 15.Nc6

14.a3

14.Bg5!? h6 15.Bh4 is risky of course but seems playable 15...g5 leads to some very interesting complications 16.Nxg5 Objectively dubious but leads to some wild lines - here is a computer generated variation (16...gxh4 17.axb4 Bxb4 18.Nxh4 Bxg2 19.Nxg2 looks slightly easier for white to play due to the somewhat exposed black king) 17.Nxg5 hxg5 18.Bxg5 is very dangerous for black) 16...Bxg2 17.Ngxf7 (17.Kxg2 hxg5 18.Bxg5 Qb7+ stepping out of the pin with tempo is the problem) 17...Bxf1 18.Nxh6+ Kg7 19.Qb1 Bxf2+! (19...Qe8 20.Nhf7) 20.Kxf1 Qe8 21.Nhf7 Rxf7 22.Qg6+ Kf8 23.Bxf6 Be3 24.Kg2 Nd5 25.Rf1 Nxf6 26.Nxf7 Bd4

14...Nc6 Was the recommendation of the chess.com commentary team - looking to make some exchanges.

14...Nbd5 15.Nd3

15.Nd3 Bb6



Nepo must have been very satisfied with the opening. He has completed his development and has no real weaknesses. The position is equal.

16.Bg5 Rfd8 There is no need to force matters with ...h6. Black puts the rook on the most natural square.

16...h6 17.Bxf6 Qxf6 18.Qxf6 gxf6 is a worse version than in the game.

17.Bxf6 played anyway!

17...gxf6!?



An interesting decision - Nepo chooses to retain queens. I wonder what the reasoning was - did Nepo just want to avoid an endgame versus Carlsen or was he feeling the initiative might be passing to him and he wanted to try his chances.

17...Qxf6 The endgame also looks fine for black **18.Qxf6 gxf6 19.Rac1 Rac8 20.Nc5? Bxc5 21.Rxc5 Nd4 22.Rxc8 Nxe2+ ♖** this intermediate move wins a pawn.

18.Rac1 Nd4 19.Nxd4 Bxd4 20.Qa2 A strange square for the queen but white had to defend a3.

20...Bxg2 21.Kxg2 Qb7+ 22.Kg1 Qe4 natural centralisation of the queen.

23.Qc2 Carlsen centralises the queen and prepares a queen exchange (by moving the knight next).

23...a5 23...Rac8!? **24.Qxc8 Rxc8 25.Rxc8+ Kg7 26.Nf4** is unclear; **23...Kg7 24.Nf4 Qxc2 25.Rxc2 Rac8 26.Rfc1 Rxc2 27.Rxc2** Is the sort of endgame that white may have been hoping for with some small opportunities to outplay the opponent.

24.Rfd1 Kg7



25.Rd2 Carlsen spent 22 minutes on this move which seemed like a poor practical decision as he soon found himself in time trouble in a complicated endgame.

25.e3 followed by **Qe2** seemed very natural.

25...Rac8!?



A very committal decision.

25...f5 26.Nc5

26.Qxc8 Rxc8 27.Rxc8 Qd5 27...h5

28.b4 a4 Leaving the a-pawns on the board - perhaps black can round up the a3 pawn later. Nepo showing his aggressive intentions.

29.e3 Played with just 9 minutes to make another 11 moves - remember no increment until move 61.

29.Rcc2 was discussed by Caruana 29...Qb3 30.Ra2 looks very passive but black cannot easily make progress and white can continue with Nc5, e3 etc.

29...Be5 29...Bb2 30.Rc5 Qd6 keeping the pin on the knight 31.Rxb2 Qxd3 32.Rbc2 only move 32...Qxa3 33.Rxb5 Qb3 and white should be able to round up the a-pawn and perpetual check is the most likely result; 29...Ba1 30.Rcc2 Qb3 31.Ra2 Bc3 32.Nc1 Qb1

30.h4 h5 Nepo puts the ball back in Carlsen's court.

31.Kh2



Now with just 9 minutes to make 9 moves. Nepo had around 20 minutes. But things are getting quite sharp now with some very forcing lines to calculate. Kh2 actually sets up some mating ideas down the line by getting the white king out of the way. * Now all hell breaks loose in mutual time trouble!

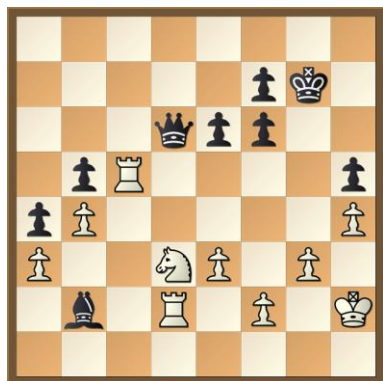
31.Rc5 Initiating forcing play 31...Qb3 32.Nxe5 fxe5 33.Rd7 Qxa3 34.Rcc7 Qxb4 35.Rxf7+ Kg6 (35...Kh6?? 36.Rf6#) 36.Rg7+ Kh6! looks to be a draw (36...Kf5 risky 37.g4+! (37.f3 here this doesn't work as black has perpetual 37...Qe1+ 38.Kg2 Qe2+ 39.Kh3 Qf1+ draw) 37...Ke4 (37...hgx4?? 38.Rcf7+ Ke4 39.Rxg4+) 38.gxh5 Kf3)

31...Bb2 31...Qb3 looks natural and tempting but leaves black on the edge of the abyss! 32.Nxe5 fxe5 33.Rd7 Qxa3 black cannot defend passively so may as well create a dangerous passed a-pawn, but now he needs to show tremendous accuracy to survive 34.Rcc7 Qxb4? (34...Kg6 or 34...Qb2 35.Rxf7+ Kg6 transposing 35.Rxf7 Qb2! 36.e4 a3? (36...Qe2!! 37.g4 hxg4 38.Kg3 Qxe4 and black survives.

(38...Qd3+? 39.f3 gxf3 40.Rg7+ Kh6 41.Rh7+ Kg6 42.h5+ Kf6 43.Rcf7+ Kg5 44.Rfg7+ Kf6 45.Rg6#)) 37.g4!
 (37.Rf3 is also dangerous but not immediately decisive due to 37...Qd6...Qd8) 37...hxg4 38.Kg3! very pretty!
 38...a2 39.Rg7+ Kh6 40.Rh7+ Kg6 41.h5+ Kf6 42.Rcf7+ Kg5 43.Rfg7+ Kf6 44.Rg6#) 35.Rxf7+ Kg6 36.Rg7+ Kh6 (36...Kf5 37.f3! wins! 37...Qd2+ 38.Kh3 e4 39.f4) 37.g4 hxg4 38.Rh7+ Kg6 39.h5+ Kg5 40.Rcg7+ Kh4 41.Rh8 white is winning as the h-pawn will roll and white can defend f2 via Rf8]

32.Rc5 32.Rcc2 not immediately 32...Bxa3 33.Nf4 Qf3 34.Rd7

32...Qd6 32...Qf3 33.Nxb2



33.Rd1? Not only missing a great opportunity to take the initiative but passing the advantage to black.

33.Rcc2!! Bxa3 34.Nf4 White has a tremendous attack! 34...Qxb4 35.Rd7 e5 36.Nxh5+ Kg6 37.Rc6! Kxh5 38.Rxf7 and incredibly black cannot coordinate in time to prevent the white attack 38...Qe4 39.Rcxf6 Bb2 40.Rg7; 33.Rxb2 Qxd3 34.Rbc2 Qxa3 35.Rxb5 should be a draw similar to the note to black's 29th (if 29...Bb2).

33...Bxa3 34.Rxb5 Qd7 35.Rc5 only move!

35.Rb6 Qc7

35...e5 36.Rc2?! 36.Rc4 Qd5; 36.Nb2?! Qe6 37.Nxa4; 36.e4! Qd4 37.Kg1 Qxe4 38.Rc3 Bxb4 39.Nxb4 Qxb4 40.Re3 a3 41.Re2 looks like a fortress.

36...Qd5?! Why didn't Nepo just take the pawn? Possibly he wanted to keep things complicated in Carlsen's time trouble but it backfires!

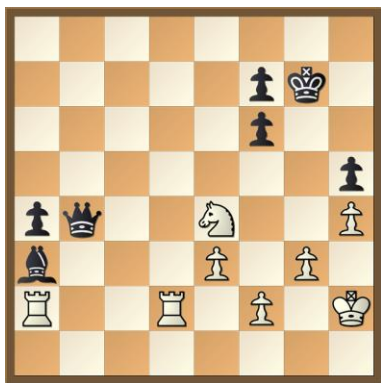
36...Bxb4 Probably white can set up a fortress here but it isn't very pleasant!

37.Rdd2 Defending the rooks - now b4 is protected.

37...Qb3 37...Bxb4 38.Nxb4

38.Ra2 e4 38...Bxb4 39.Rdb2 Qxd3 40.Rxb4 a3 41.Ra4 White wins the a-pawn and now only white can win. Probably black has good drawing chances as he can hope to expose the white king but this is a very difficult judgement call for black in time trouble - you would be worried it would just be losing Possible shades of the first Kramnik - Leko game from their 2004 match where the two rooks were victorious - <https://lichess.org/study/bPDltkl/2r75Y7Zo>.

39.Nc5 Qxb4 40.Nxe4?!



40.Rdc2! Was extremely unpleasant for black who can barely move anything. However the real problem is that white will win the a4 pawn and if we reach the two rooks versus queen endgame this version is much worse for black as he has played the weakening ...e4 and so has less chance of counterplay against the white king 40...Kg6 41.Nxa4 Qxa4 42.Rc3 Qd1 43.Rcxa3 and if black can defend this it will be extremely difficult - white's plan is to simply attack a black pawn with both rooks.

40...Qb3! Nepo pulled himself together for the final move before the time control.

40...Qxe4 41.Rxa3 is just losing - white will win the a4 pawn, put a rook on f4 and with the other attack the f-pawns.

41.Rac2 41.Rdc2 threatening Nd2 41...Be7

41...Bf8 42.Nc5 Qb5 42...Bxc5?? 43.Rxc5 winning.

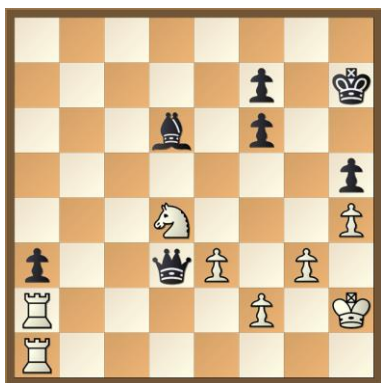
43.Nd3 a3 44.Nf4 Qa5 45.Ra2 The chess.com team were discussing scenarios where white wins the a-pawn and bishop for a rook - leaving R+N+4 v Q+3 with all the pawns on the kingside. The general consensus was that is could be unpleasant for black.

45.Rd5 taking the h-pawn is not a good idea at the moment 45...Qa6 46.Nxh5+? Kh6 and the threat of a2 and hanging piece on h5 is awkward for white.

45...Bb4 46.Rd3 Kh6 47.Rd1 47.Rd5 Qa4 48.Rxh5+? Kg7

47...Qa4 48.Rda1 white makes his intentions clear yet it seems black can tactically hold on.

48...Bd6 49.Kg1 Qb3 50.Ne2 Qd3 51.Nd4 Kh7 52.Kh2



52.Nc2 Qb3 white still cannot take on a3! it is important black is attacking the c2 knight 53.Nxa3 Be5

52...Qe4? A strange choice as it seemed that black was holding by doing what he was doing.

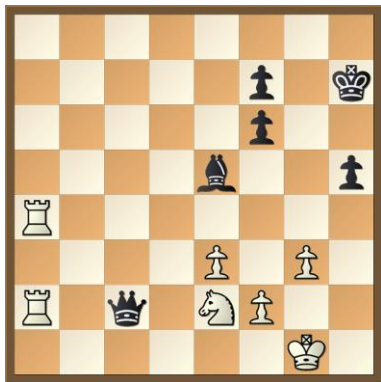
53.Rxa3! Carlsen takes the opportunity to change the position.

53...Qxh4+ 53...Bxa3 54.Rxa3 reaches this endgame which I am sure black is trying to avoid desperately.

54.Kg1! 54.Kg2 Qe4+ and black will get ...h4 in.

54...Qe4 54...Qg4 was also interesting and would have prevented 56.Ne2 55.Ra4 Be5 best move according to the engine (55...h4 56.Nc6) 56.R1a2 Qd1+ 57.Kg2 h4; 54...Bxg3 55.fxg3 Qxg3+ 56.Kf1 is very dangerous for white; 54...Qh3 55.Ra4 h4 56.Nf3! Bxg3 (56...hxg3 57.Rh4+-) 57.Rf1! Qd7! 58.Rd4 Bd6 black might just be holding on with tactics.

55.Ra4 Be5 56.Ne2 Qc2 57.R1a2



'A nightmare position to defend against any GM – never mind versus Magnus Carlsen' - GM Robert Hess.

57...Qb3 Black is playing to keep the white rooks tied up (if the rook moves away from the 4th rank then black may be able to get ...h4 in).

57...Bb2!? 58.Kg2! (58.Nf4?! h4! 59.gxh4 Qd1+ 60.Kg2 Qg4+ 61.Kh2) 58...Qxe2 59.Rb4 with good winning chances.

58.Kg2 Qd5+ 59.f3 A surprise - weakening the king position. Magnus must have seen something concrete after Kh2

59.Kh2 Kg8 intending ...h4 as the rook on a2 is hanging 60.Nf4 (60.Rc2 Qd3 61.Rc8+ Kg7 62.Nf4 Qd1) 60...Bxf4 61.exf4 (61.gxf4!?) 61...h4

59...Qd1 60.f4 white's position just looks too loose now to harbour realistic hopes.

60...Bc7 The second time control is reached. Both players now got an extra 15 minutes PLUS an increment of 30 seconds per move.

61.Kf2 Bb6 62.Ra1 Qb3 63.Re4 Kg7 64.Re8 f5 65.Raa8 Qb4 For the first time since the opening Nepo's clock ran below Carlsen's.

65...Qd3 the following amusing lines was pointed out by the chess24 commentary team 66.Rg8+ Kf6 67.Rae8 h4 68.gxh4 Bxe3+ 69.Rxe3 Qxe2+ 70.Kxe2 stalemate.

66.Rac8 Ba5 67.Rc1 67.Rg8+ Kh7 (67...Kf6) 68.Rh8+ Kg7 69.Rcg8+ Kf6 70.Rh6+ Ke7 71.Nd4 Qe1+ 72.Kg2 Qd2+ (72...Bc3 this inhuman move apparently holds) 73.Kh3

67...Bb6 68.Re5 Qb3 69.Re8 Qd5 70.Rcc8 Qh1 71.Rc1 Qd5[71...Qh2+ 72.Kf3 the queen might be out of play over here.

72.Rb1 another great practical move from Carlsen constantly giving Nepo problems to solve.

72...Ba7 73.Re7 Bc5 74.Re5 Qd3 attacking b1 Carlsen went down to 34 seconds.

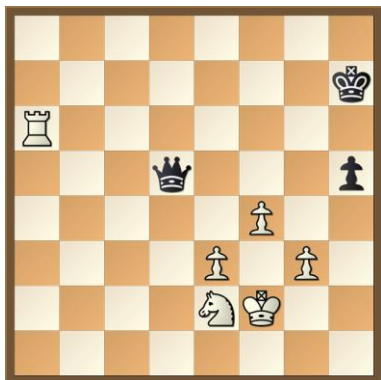
75.Rb7 75.Rh1

75...Qc2 76.Rb5 Ba7 77.Ra5 Bb6 78.Rab5 gaining some time on the increment.

78...Ba7 79.Rxf5 Qd3 80.Rxf7+ another transformation ! and pretty much the only option to try and keep the game going.

80.Rg5+ Kf8 81.Rbe5 f6; 80.Rbe5 Bxe3+ 81.Rxe3 Qxf5; 80.Rfe5 Bxe3+ 81.Rxe3 Qxb5

80...Kxf7 81.Rb7+ Kg6 82.Rxa7 Qd5 83.Ra6+ Kh7



83...Kf5

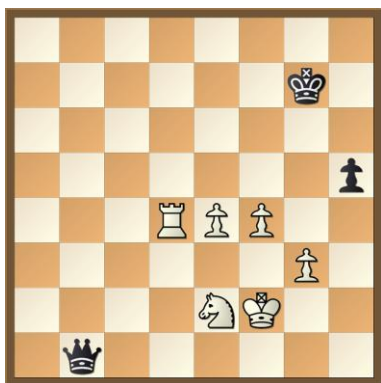
84.Ra1 Kg6 85.Nd4 Qb7 86.Ra2 Qh1 87.Ra6+ Kf7 88.Nf3 Qb1 89.Rd6 Kg7 90.Rd5 Qa2+ 91.Rd2 Qb1 92.Re2 Carlsen wants to push e4

92...Qb6 pinning the pawn.

93.Rc2 Qb1 94.Nd4 Qh1 95.Rc7+ Kf6 96.Rc6+ Kf7 97.Nf3 Qb1 98.Ng5+ Kg7 99.Ne6+ 99.e4 Qb2+ 100.Ke3 Qb3+ 101.Kd4 Qxg3 102.Ke5

99...Kf7 100.Nd4 Qh1 101.Rc7+ 101.f5!/?

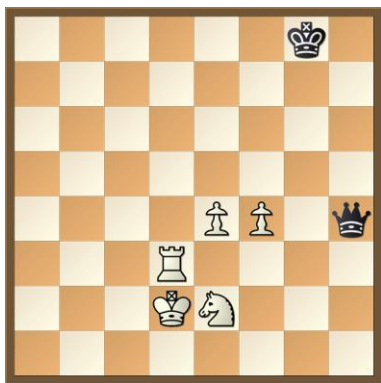
101...Kf6 102.Nf3 Qb1 103.Rd7 Qb2+ 104.Rd2 Qb1 105.Ng1 Qb4 106.Rd1 Qb3 107.Rd6+ Kg7 108.Rd4 Qb2+ 109.Ne2 Qb1 110.e4



finally !

110...Qh1 111.Rd7+ Kg8 112.Rd4 Qh2+ 113.Ke3 h4 [Nepo liquidates another pair of pawns. Maybe in hindsight this was a practical mistake as the resulting endgame is very difficult to hold. By keeping pawns on the board the knight is for now tied down to the defence of the g-pawn.

114.gxh4 Qh3+ 115.Kd2 Qxh4 116.Rd3



The 7 piece tablebase confirms that the position is theoretically drawn with all moves except queen blunders!

116...Kf8 117.Rf3 Qd8+ 118.Ke3 Qa5 119.Kf2 Qa7+ 120.Re3 Qd7 121.Ng3 Qd2+ 122.Kf3 Qd1+ 123.Re2 Qb3+ 124.Kg2 Qb7 125.Rd2 Qb3 126.Rd5 Ke7 127.Re5+ Kf7 128.Rf5+ Ke8 129.e5 some non-blunder moves now actually lose for black!

129...Qa2+ 129...Qe6 130.Kh3 is winning for white (don't ask)!

130.Kh3 Qa6? now white is winning !! black had just 2 moves to hold the balance according to tablebase showing how difficult the position has become.

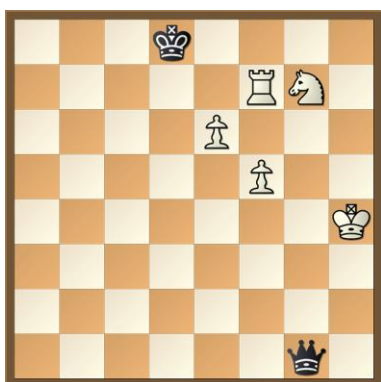
130...Qb1 black has to both prevent Nh5 and be ready to come to the g-file in the event of Kg4 131.Kg4 Qg1 prevents the king from advancing and the knight from moving. this is the key defensive idea. black has a very narrow roads to tread 132.Rf6 Ke7 133.Kh4 (133.f5 exposes the king too much) 133...Qh2+ 134.Kg4 Qg1 135.Rg6 Kf7 136.Kf5 Qg2 (136...Qb1+ loses 137.Ne4) 137.e6+ Ke8 138.Ne4 Qh3+ 139.Kf6 Qh8+ 140.Kf5 Ke7; 130...Qc2; 130...Qa1 131.Nh5! Qh1+ 132.Kg4 Qg2+ 133.Kh4 Ke7 134.Rf6 Qg1 135.Rd6 Qg2 136.Nf6 Qh2+ 137.Kg5 Qg3+ 138.Ng4 white is making progress.

131.Kh4 Qh6+ 132.Nh5 Qh7 133.e6! by now a few moves win but this is the quickest and cleanest.

133...Qg6 134.Rf7 Kd8 134...Qxe6 135.Ng7+ Kxf7 136.Nxe6 Kxe6 137.Kg5

135.f5 Qg1 136.Ng7

black resigned.

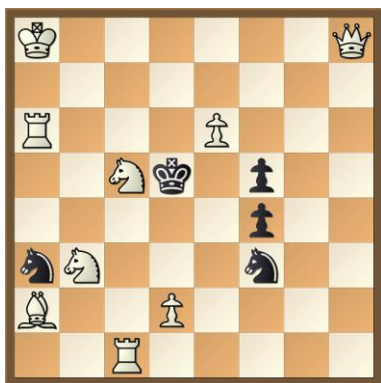


INCREDIBLE !! The longest ever world championship game (in terms of moves) and almost 8 hours in duration. Carlsen wins a classical world championship game for the first time since 2016 and takes the lead in the classical portion of a world championship match for the first time since 2014.

Problem Corner

Christopher Jones with his monthly conundrum

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

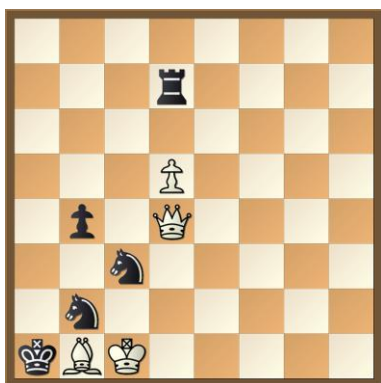


Mate in 2

Herman L. Jonsson, *Wiener Hausfrauen-Zeitung* 1887

I quoted this problem as another example of ‘black correction’. Like the problem by Marakulin we looked at in that article, the key does not have a threat but instead puts Black in Zugzwang. After 1.Ne4! a random move by the a3N is met by 2.Nbc5; and if Black *corrects* by playing the a3N to c4 then because he has blocked the c4 square 2.Nc3 is mate. Similarly, upon a random move of the f3N we’d have 2.Qd4; 1...Ne5 would thwart that possibility but would instead fall prey to 2.Nc6 (a pleasing echo of the ‘correction mate’ 2.Nc3 that we saw earlier). The other mates both land on the c5 square – 1...fxe4 (another self-blocking move) 2.Rc5 and 1...Kxe4 2.Nc5. As David Shire remarks in the Problemist Supplement article from which I’ve lifted this problem, “a fine construction”.

There are also many problems showing *white* ‘correction’. Consider the following problem:



Mate in 2

Barry Barnes, Commendation, *British Chess Magazine* 1961

I am cribbing the commentary on this problem from the very clear exposition in John Rice’s *Chess Wizardry: The New ABC of Chess Problems* (which, if you can get hold of a copy, is an excellent introduction to many chess problem concepts): “If the Nb2 moves at random, 1...b3 leads to 2.Qa4, but 1...Rc7! refutes, as the Q+N battery cannot now open to give mate. So White corrects with 1.Nc4, which cuts out 1...Rc7 as an adequate defence. But 1...b3! now refutes, since the Queen can no longer play to a4. A random move by the Nc3 again threatens a battery-opening; 1...b3 leads, as before to 2.Qa4, but 1...Rxd5! refutes [unlike after moves by the b2N, the reply 2.Nxd5 isn’t available – CJ]. The correction 1.Nb5! (an anticipatory closure of the line d5-a5) is the key: this is the only safe move that either Knight can make. 1...Rxd5 is now answered by 2.Qa7.”

Here is another example of white correction, which you may like to have a go at solving yourselves:



Mate in 2

Herbert Ahues, 2nd Prize, *Schach-Echo* 1960

From the build-up I've given it you won't be surprised to find that (like the Knights in Barry Barnes' problem) there is a white piece that simply by moving anywhere threatens mate. Your job is to find the black defence if that succeeds if White moves that piece 'any old where', and then to explore how White can improve upon 'any old where' and find the one square that works. (By the way, it would be anathema to a composer to set this position if the strong moves 1...Bxd5 and 1...Kxd5 were *unprovided* – that is, could be played with impunity if it were Black to move; but you'll see that as matters stand those moves could be met respectively by 2.Nd2 and 2.Qf3.)

I shall give the solution next time (unless you or your computer crack it before then!).

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

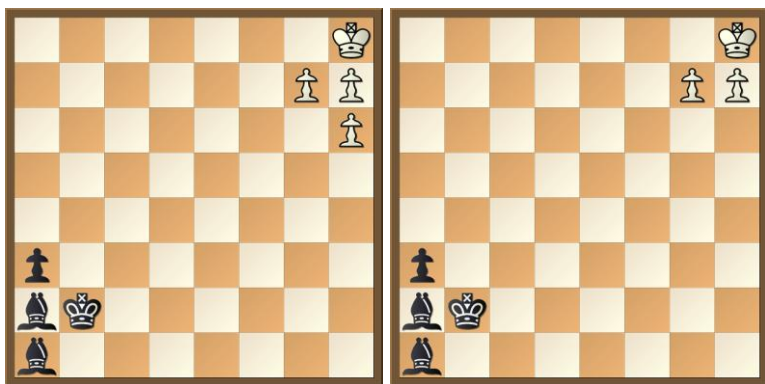
--- Christopher Jones Email: cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk

How to Solve a Study

Ian Watson writes ...

Spot the Differences! – Christmas puzzles

Find the differences between these two endgame studies ---



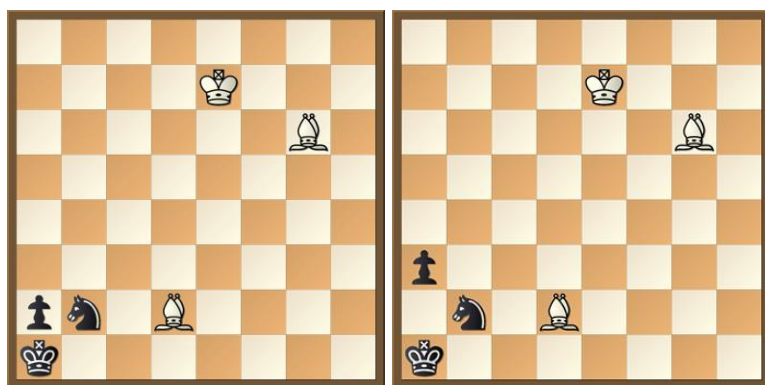
White to play and draw in both

Child's play? Well, obviously there's an extra pawn in the first; so, equally obviously, I hope, that's not your main puzzle. These were composed by John Roycroft and published in 1958; they were in a theme tourney for 'twin' studies – studies with near-identical positions. Such studies have to have solutions that are very different, which creates the pleasing paradox of variety from similarity. The solutions aren't hard to find, but please also find why White's first

move in each doesn't work in the other one. So your main puzzle is to Spot two different Differences.

This is a good place to celebrate John Roycroft. He founded the magazine EG in 1965, and it continues to be the world's leading endgame study magazine. John wrote 'The Chess Endgame Study' which remains a key reference book for many study composers. He was also a significant figure in the creation of the early endgame table-bases. John reached age 92 this year – he's been a study composer for three-quarters of a century!

You have another twin task for your Xmas present; this pair is newly composed by another major name in British endgame studies, Paul Michelet. Paul also provided the November studies in this column. Again you need to Spot the Differences. Unlike the Roycroft studies, I'm only asking you to give the first White move in each... but you'll need to see much deeper if you are going to make the right choices. Like the Roycrofts, please also find why White's first move in each doesn't work in the other one. Good luck – this pair is a tough challenge!



White to play and win in both

The solutions are given at the end of this issue ...

Ian Watson Email: ian@irwatson.uk



A Triumphant Return to Tournament Chess?

Mark Jordan writes ...

Arriving at the first tournament I've played in for some time, I enter the welcoming, brick-built church hall and I wonder what to expect of my play, given I'm very rusty. But then that's no excuse as so is everyone else after the enforced cessation of over-the-board play caused by the pandemic safety measures. I see, with approval, that most people are wearing masks or at least visors. Before me are rows of trestle tables laden with chess clocks and chess boards with the pieces neatly placed in readiness for play.

A gradually increasing number of players, including a couple of IMs and a GM, wander around, chatting to old mates and searching for their boards. A few, who've already found their places, check for their pens and glasses, perhaps a flask of tea at their side, and wait for their opponents.

I find my board just in time for Adam, the tournament director, to remind us of the rules of play, including ensuring that all mobile phones are switched off, and then he tells the players with White to start their opponent's clock and we're off.

This is an event run on Swiss system pairings over 6 rounds which means no-one gets knocked out, you play people on the same number of points as yourself as far as is possible, and in due course you find yourself up against players of comparable strength. The first round, however, is seeded with the highest rated player taking on the top player of the lower half, number 2 taking on the next player down, and so on. The top half players always overwhelmingly beat the lower half in round 1 but there are always some draws and the occasional complete upset. I am seeded 8th in my section and I find myself with the Black pieces up against a studious looking junior who is almost certainly a better player than his rating suggests. Oh dear! Will I be one of the upsets? This is a rapid play tournament (15 minutes each for the whole game with a 3 second increment for each move played), so I'll have to think fast.

My young opponent plays his King's pawn forward 2 squares (e4), and I immediately reply with d6 which seems to take him by surprise. Juniors these days tend to know their openings quite well, so surprise is a good start. Nonetheless, after a moment's hesitation he plays the very standard d4 and we're soon in a main line Pirc Defence, although I have moved instantly while he's spent three minutes over the first few moves. He clearly doesn't know the Pirc so well, so I made a good opening choice. My opponent commits a couple of inaccuracies, as he's clearly having to think for himself almost from the outset, and I quickly achieve equality, mix it up a little, and seize the initiative. In the unaccustomed position of being ahead on time against a junior I ruthlessly turn the screw, he blunders the exchange, and suddenly it's all over. We fist bump, sign the score sheets and he disconsolately goes off to join his friends who have also finished early while I take the front sheet of both our score sheets to the arbiter's desk on the stage. A good start!

Round 2 and I'm White against stronger opposition and we have a very tight strategic game in which I cannot seem to make any headway. I get impatient and, over pressing, I make an error which should give him a slight advantage, he fails to find the best response and so we're back to equality. We meander to a rather frustrating draw, and are among the last in the section to finish. Meanwhile, the boards of the open section that includes the masters are mostly still populated and I take the chance to check out the endgame play of the pros.

1½/2 is not a bad start so I sit down to play my 3rd game in an optimistic frame of mind and find myself against another junior who plays well above his rating and completely crushes me. Oh well. My opponent goes on to win the section. Someday he'll be a master.

It's lunch so I eat my sandwiches and chat to Syd who plays for a club I used to belong to a few years ago. He's one of the highest rated players in my section and is in on 3/3.

Round 4 sees me screw up a won position with the White pieces and I end up with another draw and I'm on 2/4. Not so good. Meanwhile Syd has won again and I'm jealous.

Things look up in round 5 when I win very convincingly with the Black pieces against a guy who outrates me but, like me, is clearly not on his best form. I'm now on a plus score of 3/5 so although I'm not doing well enough to challenge for a prize, I at least have the chance to end up on a respectable 4/6 which will be enough not to damage my rating. Syd has drawn and so is on 4½/5 and is equal 1st with 2 others.

Round 6 sees me being comprehensively outplayed and running short of time, and I'm just resigning myself to an unsatisfactory 3/6 when my opponent suddenly and inexplicably blunders a piece and I achieve an entirely undeserved win! That's the way it goes sometimes. Meanwhile Syd has drawn and ends up on 5/6 with a share of 2nd place.

And then to the pub for a beer or two and some games of blitz in convivial company, before catching the tube and then the train home. Not perhaps my best day of chess, but not a bad result all considering.

How I've missed tournament chess!



Chess Improvers

Watch Out For Those Tactics - Paul Littlewood with a new column aimed at chess improvers

Chess can be a frustrating game because, even when you play well, you are not guaranteed to win. Of course the worst thing is when you miss a devastating tactic which completely ruins your position. Take the following case for example -

B. Kurajica - P. E. Littlewood

Borovo 13/08/1980 Round 5

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6. Re1 b5 7.Bb3 0-0



I have played the Marshall Gambit many times over the years but nowadays most people avoid it by playing various Anti-Marshall lines. Bojan is no exception as he continues:

8.a4 Bb7 9.d3 d6 10.Nc3 Na5 11.Ba2 b4 12.Ne2 c5 13.Bd2 Rb8 14.Ng3



White has a slight edge but with careful play Black should be able to equalise fairly comfortably.

14...Bc8 15.Nf1 Be6 16.Bxe6 fxe6 17.Ne3 h6 18.Nc4 Nxc4 19.dxc4 Qe8 20.g3



White has played rather aimlessly and the position is now good for Black. The best plan is 20...g5! preventing Nh4 and preparing to use the half-open f-file to my advantage. However I thought White's last move was an error and saw a way to win a pawn.

20...Qc6 21.Nh4! Nxe4?

... and this mistake throws away all the advantage. The best move was 21...Qe8 but of course that had not been my intention when playing 20...Qc6.

22.Ng6 Rf7?

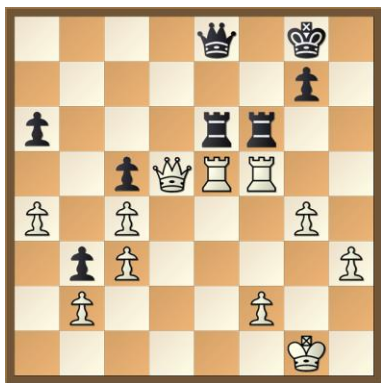
Rbe8 was the last chance when the position is about equal as Black has good compensation for the loss of the exchange but I had completely missed White's next move.



23.Qf3!!

John Nunn told me that he thought this was one of the most beautiful moves he had ever seen. If 23...Rxf3 24.Nxe7+ and 25.Nxc6. Meanwhile if 23...d5 then 23.Qxf7+ Kxf7 24.Nxe5+ and 25.Nxc6. So Black is now completely lost and no matter how much I wriggled, Bojan did not let me off the hook. The game finished -

23.....Bg5 24.Bxg5 hxg5 25.Rxe4 Qe8 26.Qd3 Rf6 27.Qxd6 Rxg6 28.Rd1 b3 29.c3 Kh7 30.Rxe5 Rb7 31.Qd3 Kh6 32.g4 Kh7 33.Rxg5 e5 34.Qe4 Rbb6 35.Rd5 Rbe6 36.Rdxe5 Kg8 37.h3 Rgf6 38.Qd5 Kh7 39.Rh5+ Kg8 40.Rhf5



Resigns.

This was a painful lesson but what can we learn from it?

Firstly, before playing a move, always have one last look at the position to make sure you are not missing an obvious tactic. Secondly, if you think your opponent has blundered, always make sure he is not laying a diabolical trap for you.

Thirdly, don't move so fast when you are about to play what you think is the winning move. It doesn't do any harm to spend that little bit more time to make sure that you have not missed anything.

If I had been that little bit more careful and followed the rules above I would not have missed 22.Qf3 and could have secured a rather different result to that which I obtained in the game!

--- Paul Littlewood Email: plittl@hotmail.com



How to Solve a Study – Spot the Differences! – solutions

(Roycroft – pawn on h6)

1.g8R K-any 2.Rg7 draws. Black can't avoid eventually giving stalemate.

If White tries 1.g8Q? we get 1...Kc1+ 2.Qg7 Bb2 3.Qxb2+ axb2 4.Kg7 b1Q 5.h8Q and Black will soon check on f5 and mate on f7.

(Roycroft – no pawn on h6)

1.g8Q Kc1+ 2.Qg7 Bb2 3.Qxb2+ axb2 4.Kg7 b1Q 5.h8Q and draws, because White's king has access to the square h6.

1.g8R? Kc1+ 2.Rg7 Bb1 3.Kg8 Bxg7 4.Kxg7 Bxh7 wins because White doesn't have a pawn left.

So the try in the first Roycroft study, is the key in the second, and try in the second is the key in the first.

(Michelet – pawn on a2)

1.Bh6

White can now achieve mate in 21, which sounds forbiddingly-long, but the mechanism is simple: (1.Bh6) Na4 2.Bg7+ Nb2 3.Kf6 Na4 4.Ke6+ Nb2 5.Ke5 and White can walk his king towards Black's king putting his king on the long diagonal to avoid stalemates.

(Michelet – pawn on a3)

1.Bg5 Play continues 1...Nd1 2.Bf6+ Ka2 3.Kd6 Kb3 4.Bf7+ Kb4 5.Bh4 Nc3 6.Be1 and now Black has to lose his pawn after which we have a standard ending of two bishops versus knight which is a general win. White's clever fifth and sixth moves are why only 1.Bg5 works.

The winning method is very different in the two positions: in one, White plays directly for mate, whereas in the other he plays to force Black's king up the board where it can't support the pawn.

In the first position, 1.Bg5? fails because White's king needs to move in front of the bishop to prevent stalemate. In the second, 1.Bh6? doesn't allow White to continue 5.Bh4. So, as in the Roycroft twins, the try in one of the Michelets is the solution to the other, and vice versa.

If you aren't convinced by my brief notes, you can check these studies on the six-man table-bases which you can find at www.k4it.de If you do, you'll notice that mate in the second one takes up to 84 moves; it doesn't matter whether any pawn moves or captures occur in that long sequence, because in endgame studies the fifty-move rule does not apply.

If you successfully found the first moves to the Michelet studies, my congratulations! In any case, I hope you enjoyed your Christmas puzzles!



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