

Chess*Moves*

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December 2022

World Senior Over 65 Champion John Nunn – photograph by Fernando Bernardo



Bodhana Sivanandan tied for second overall at the UK Women's Blitz Championship to share the English crown with Kamila Hryshchenko – photograph by Dennis Dicen/ECF



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EDITORIAL



Welcome to the December issue of *ChessMoves*.

We begin this month with the wonderful news that Dr John Nunn is the Over 65 World Champion! We have the news from Assisi including a brilliant game and annotations from John, which everyone will enjoy.

ChessMoves is always first with domestic news, and we have a full report from the UK Blitz Championship, where Bodhana Sivanandan earned a place in the record books as joint English Women's Blitz Champion at the age of just seven. As joint winner of the English title she broke the existing age record for a national women's champion by more than four years in a remarkable performance. We also have a detailed report from the Scarborough Congress and the very welcome news that Greater Manchester has joined the NCCU. We wish them an extended period of harmony.

The ECF is looking for a Safeguarding Officer, an important and responsible position. Free training is offered to those interested who don't already have Level 3 safeguarding qualification. Details on page 47 - please do step forward!

Nigel Towers reports on the ECF Online Clubs, which continues to flourish after the pandemic. International matches are arranged and played. Is this something for you to get involved in?

There is a quite outstanding set of columns this month and a feast of interesting and instructive chess for you to get your teeth into, whatever your chess level.

Last, but very much not least - lapsed members at the end of each calendar year are automatically taken off the *ChessMoves* distribution list, so if you haven't renewed yet and want to continue receiving *ChessMoves* do please renew your ECF membership before the end of 2022.

It only remains for me to wish you and your families a very happy festive season and New Year from all at *ChessMoves*. See you in 2023!

--- IM Andrew Martin Email: a.martin2007@yahoo.co.uk

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COVER STORY

Success Across the Generations

John Nunn put in a tremendous performance to win the World Senior Over 65 Championship which was held in Assisi, Italy. Below is Leonard Barden's article from the Guardian, reproduced with his kind permission.

John Nunn wins World 65-plus Championship in golden year for England seniors – Leonard Barden

2022 has proved a vintage year for English senior chess, half a century after the Fischer v Spassky match which triggered a global boom and, for a while, made England the world No. 2 chess nation behind the former Soviet Union. Earlier English team golds in the world 50+ and 65+ and the European 50+ set a high barrier for John Nunn at the world 65+ individual championship in Assisi, Italy, but the eminent author of 30 high-class books and former top-10 grandmaster rose to the occasion and triumphed in a tense final round last Saturday. Nunn scored 9/11, winning all his six games with White and converting in the logical style of his best years. He sacrificed his queen for checkmate in round three, and refuted unsound play energetically in round five. It was a highly competitive event of 192 players, and victory almost escaped the 67-year-old from Bude, Cornwall. Nunn lost in round eight to Jens Kristiansen, but the Dane blundered to defeat in the final round in a drawn bishop ending. A Fide online report gives fuller details, plus photos from the award ceremony. There is scope for England's current dominance of world senior chess to continue and even accelerate. Due to Covid, FIDE was unable to stage the individual 50+ and 65+ events in 2020 and 2021, but the global body boosted the 2022 prize fund to €37,000 and pledged increased support for senior chess in future. Given that many of England's active amateur players are seniors who grew up with and admire Nunn and other older GMs, there is a case for the ECF to give a higher profile to major senior events. Michael Adams, now 51, and Nigel Short, now 57, challenged for world titles in their peak years, and both legends were key performers in June when England fought off a strong US challenge to win the world 50+ teams. They would have been the top seeds had they played in the 50+ world individual last week. It would be better, of course,

if England had the players and financial resources to compete against the leading nations and individuals in open competition, or even to develop a world class junior squad as in the 1970s. But the chances of either happening are small, while in senior chess there is a realistic opportunity for a decade of English dominance.

John has annotated his favourite game and the two critical last-round positions from the tournament below.

World Senior Championship - John Nunn



Photograph by Fernando Bernardo

Here is my most spectacular game from the World Senior Championship in Assisi.

John Nunn - David Shnaider

World Senior Chess Championship, Assisi 2022
Sicilian Defence

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5

Although I still sometimes play the Open Sicilian, when you are in your late 60s using Bb5 against the Sicilian seems more and more attractive. I played Bb5 three times in Assisi and won all three games, so I can't complain about the results.

3...Qb6

A rather unusual, but far from bad, alternative to the more common 3...g6, 3...e6 and 3...d6.

4.Nc3 e6

Much the most common move, countering the threat of 5.Nd5.

5.0-0 Nge7 6.Re1 g6?!

This has been played several times before, but it is very risky (instead Black should try 6...a6 or 6...Nd4). My opponent may have felt that I was unlikely to have prepared for 6...g6, as in the main databases he has no

games with this position. However, having unearthed his online handle, I then had access to many online games which showed that he had reached this position twice, with one opponent playing 7.a4 and the other 7.b3. I gave my computer a few minutes and it suggested a dangerous attacking continuation for White, which I noted before moving on to the next line.

7.Bxc6

The start of a long forcing continuation.

7...Nxc6

More or less compulsory, as a pawn capture is met by e5 followed by Ne4, while 7...Qxc6 8.d4 gives White a huge lead in development.



8.d4!

The computer's innovation, and much stronger than any previously played moves. The immediate 8.Nd5 exd5 9.exd5+ Ne7 10.d4 is less effective due to 10...c4 11.Bf4 d6 and now 12.Nd2 can be met by 12...Qxd4.

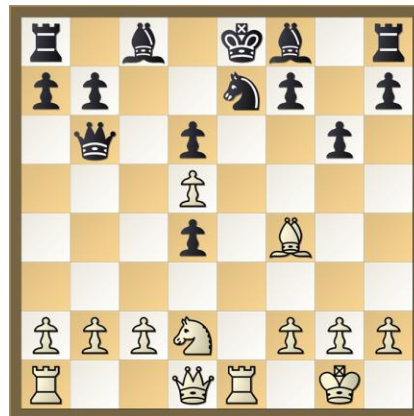
8...cxd4

8...Nxd4 9.Bg5 is excellent for White; for example, 9...Bg7 10.Nxd4 h6 (10...cxd4 11.Nd5 Qc5 12.Qf3 d6 13.Bf6 is also very bad for Black) 11.Nf5! gxf5 12.Bh4 0-0 13.exf5 and White has a huge attack without any sacrifice.

9.Nd5 exd5 10.exd5+ Ne7 11.Bf4 d6

At first sight this sacrifice looks marginal at best, but the next move, which was the key idea behind the computer's line, makes it look much more promising. There is no forced win for White, but Black must play such a long series of 'only' moves to reach a (probably) holdable ending that in practice the chances of success are excellent.

12.Nd2!



Now the knight reaches d6 via c4 or e4 and so Black loses the right to castle.

12...Qa6

12...Bg7 13.Nc4 Qa6 transposes.

13.Ne4 Bg7 14.Nxd6+ Kf8 15.Qf3

Having now reached the end of my preparation, this was a tough decision. The alternative is 15.Rxe7 Kxe7 16.Qe1+ Be6 (16...Kd7? 17.Qe4 is hopeless as there is no way to meet the threat of Re1) 17.dxe6 fxe6 18.Qb4 Kd7, which also favours White but, like the move chosen, does not win by force. After 19.Nxb7 Rac8 20.Re1 Rxc2 21.h4 Rc4 22.Nc5+ Rxc5 23.Qxc5 Rc8 White has an edge due to Black's more exposed king, but Black's pieces are active and his d-pawn is a potential danger.

15...f5?

Black finally goes wrong and in a position like this it only takes one mistake. The move is understandable as it avoids a disaster on f7 and prevents the white queen moving to the e-file, but the loss of time proves fatal. The critical line runs 15...Bd7 16.Rxe7 Kxe7 17.Re1+ Kf8 18.Qe4 Kg8 (18...Bf6? 19.Bh6+ Kg8 20.Qf4 wins) 19.Qe7 Rf8 20.Qxd7 Qa5 21.Re8 Qxd5 22.Be5! and here Black seems to be in trouble since White is threatening 23.Rxf8+ Bxf8 24.Qxf7+ Qxf7 25.Nxf7, while 22...Bxe5 loses to 23.Rxf8+ Kxf8 24.Qd8+ Kg7 25.Nf5+. However, the accurate defence 22...d3! 23.cxd3 h5! 24.Rxf8+ Bxf8 25.Bxh8 Qxd6 26.Qxd6 Bxd6 27.Bf6 (27.Bc3 f5 is similar) 27...Kf8 leads to an ending in which Black has excellent drawing chances despite White's extra pawn. Black's king will gain a tempo by ...Ke6 so White cannot prevent it reaching d5, after which the strong centralised king should be enough to frustrate any winning attempts by White.



16.Qg3!

White has several strong continuations, but I spent some time picking the most convincing. There are several threats, including the simple 17.Qh4, while 16...Bf6 loses at once to 17.Be5.

16...Bd7

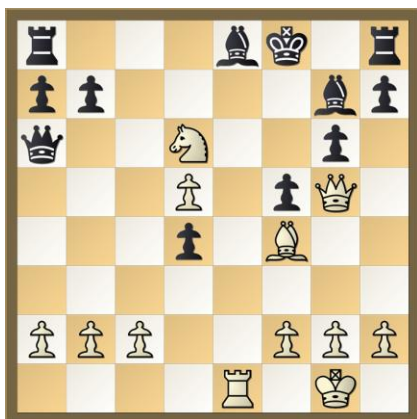
Too late, as White can break through with a further sacrifice.

17.Rxe7! Kxe7 18.Qg5+ Kf8

18...Bf6 19.Re1+ also leads to a quick mate.

19.Re1 Be8

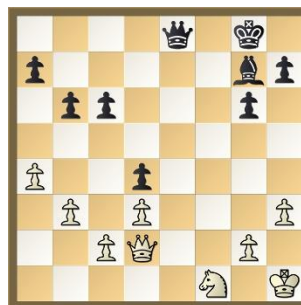
Black allows a neat finish. Instead, 19...Kg8 loses to 20.Re7 Rf8 21.Rxg7+ Kxg7 22.Qe7+ Kg8 23.Bh6 followed by mate.



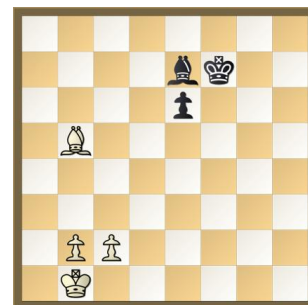
20.Qe7+ Kg8 21.Qe6+ Kf8 22.Qxe8+ 1-0

It's always nice to end with a queen sacrifice.

Before the last round, I was half a point behind the Dane Jens Kristiansen. As he had the better tie-break, only a Kristiansen loss and a win for myself would give me first place. This was the state of play in the two games as the time-control approached:



John Nunn – Valentin Bogdanov
Black to play



Jose Fernandez Garcia – Jens Kristiansen
Black to play

Let's start with my game. Given that I needed to win, the position on the board did not look very promising. True, Black's bishop is not especially active, but the reduced material and the passive position of White's pieces mean that objectively White has no advantage.

27...Qe5

Centralising the queen is perfectly reasonable.

28.Nh2

White intends Nf3 to kick the queen away.

28...c5

Pushing the pawn to c5 secures the d4-pawn but puts another pawn on a dark square. 28...Bh6 is tempting, but Black probably did not like 29.Ng4! (29.Qxh6 Qe1+ 30.Nf1 Qxf1+ 31.Kh2 Qf6 is dead drawn) 29...Bxd2 30.Nxe5 c5 31.Nc6 a6 32.Nb8 Bf4 33.Nd7 (33.Nxa6? Bd6 can only be good for Black) 33...Bc7 34.a5 bxa5 35.Nxc5 and, although this should still be a draw, it's hard to be sure of that in advance. In any case, Black is under no pressure to make a concession.

29.Nf3

Now Black has a choice: to allow Qf4 or give up control of the e-file.

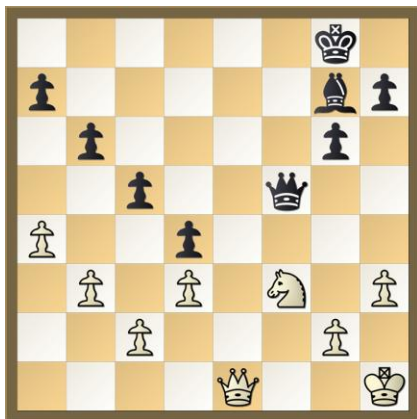
29...Qf5

The idea is to meet 30.Qe2 by 30...Kf7, keeping the white queen out.

30.Qe1!

I am sure we have all lost drawn positions which slip away bit by infinitesimal bit and that's what happens here. Black is of course still drawing, but it's unpleasant to

defend a position with little or no active play and White makes incremental progress.



30...Qd7

30...Kf7 can now be met by 31.Qh4 and the attack on h7 allows the white queen to penetrate to d8.

31.Qe4

31.a5!? was an interesting alternative. If Black takes, his pawns are broken, while otherwise White plays a6 setting up a possible Qe4-b7. However, I decided to simply centralise my queen instead.

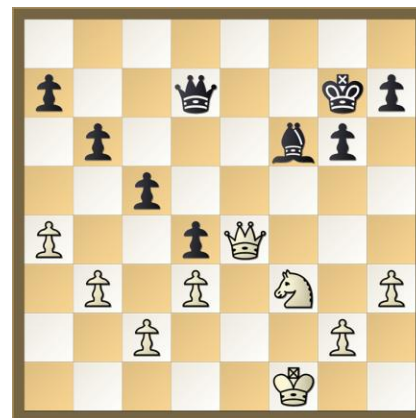
31...Bf6

By now I was thinking that a win was a possibility. For the moment White cannot achieve anything directly, and any attempt to improve White's position, for example by playing Nd2-e4, is frustrated by Black's counterplay against the white king, as in the line 32.Nd2 Bg5 33.Nc4 Qf7 34.Kg1 Bf4 intending ...Bg3.

32.Kg1

It occurred to me that I would be much better off with my king on the queenside, where it is defended by four pawns, rather than just two as on the kingside. Moreover, with the king on b2 additional plans involving a kingside pawn advance become feasible.

32...Kg7 33.Kf1



The long march continues.

33...a5?!

I feel this is a more concrete error. Black doesn't want to keep worrying about a possible a5 by White, as in the note to move 31, so he decides to rule it out completely. However, to fix all the queenside pawns on dark squares looks like a significant concession.

34.Ke2 Qe7 35.Kd1!

35.Qxe7+ Bxe7 is a dead draw, but if Black exchanges on e4 himself White wins because Black's king is completely excluded by the d5-g5 barrier, while White can march his own king to b5.

35...Qd7 36.Kc1 Kf7 37.Kb2

White's advantage is now substantial, and he has a variety of possible plans, such as a kingside pawn advance or a knight transfer to e4.

37...Kg7

Black is content to wait, but 37...h5 might have been a better practical chance, since 38.g4 (38.Qf4 followed by Nd2-e4 is better, still with good winning prospects) 38...hxg4 39.hxg4 Qe6 gives White nothing clear.

38.g4

Threatening g5, followed by Qe5+, h4 and Nd2-e4.

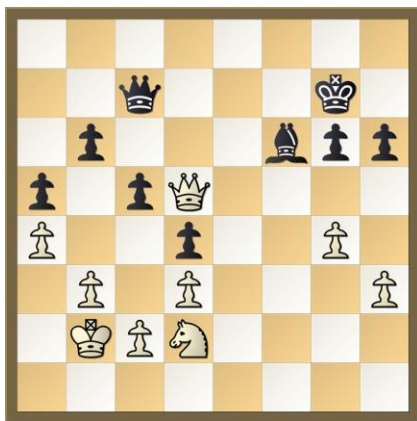
38...Qe7?

Just before the time control Black gives White the chance for an easy win.

39.Qd5?

Overlooking the forcing line 39.g5! Bxg5 40.Nxg5 Qxg5 41.Qb7+ Kh6 42.Qxb6, which would have been decisive since Black is bound to lose a pawn on the queenside.

39...h6 40.Nd2 Qc7



41.Ne4

This centralisation is natural, but it was also possible to transfer the knight to c4 by 41.Nc4 Bg5 (threatening ...Qf4) 42.Qe4 Kh7 43.Ne5 Qg7 44.Nf3 Qf6 45.h4 Bf4 46.h5 and Black is under severe pressure. However, this looked very committal and I decided to try other ideas first.

41...Be7

Although White has made a lot of progress, Black has set up a new line of defence and I couldn't immediately see how to proceed, so I decided to just manoeuvre around and hope for an inaccuracy.

42.Kb1 Kf8 43.Qe6 Kg7 44.Kb2 Qd8?!

Black should not have allowed the white queen to occupy the excellent c6-square. After 44...Bg5 White would have to backtrack and try another idea, such as that mentioned in the note to White's 41st.

45.Qc6!

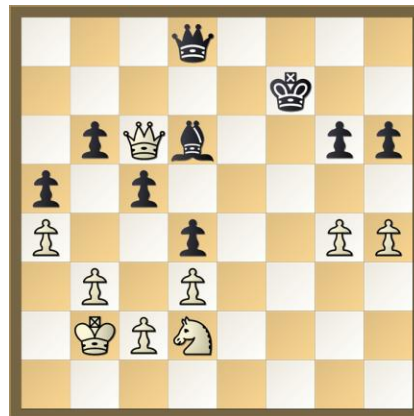
Now the b6-pawn is under constant pressure and Black's options are more limited.

45...Kf7

45...Kh7 46.Qb7 Kg8 47.Nd2 followed by Nc4 is very similar.

46.Nd2 Bd6 47.h4

47.Nc4 Bc7 48.h4 followed by h5 was simpler.



47...Bf4 48.Ne4

Now the threat is h5, after which the additional possibility of Qg6+ will be decisive.

48...Qxh4 49.Qb7+?

An error which could have made the win considerably more difficult. 49.Qxb6 Qxg4 50.Qa7+ Ke6 51.Qxa5 was clearly winning.

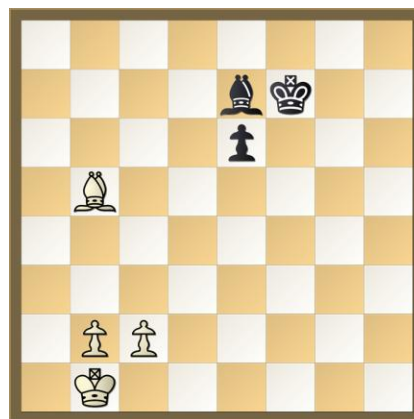
49...Kf8?

Now it's once again straightforward. 49...Qe7 50.Qxb6 h5 51.gxh5 gxh5 52.Qxa5 h4 was much better, when it's surprisingly hard for White to win. The best line is 53.Qe1 h3 54.Qf2 Qe5 55.a5 h2 56.Qh4 Kg6 57.a6 Qc7 58.Qg4+ Kh6 59.Nf2 Be3 60.Qh3+ Kg6 61.Qg2+ Kf7 62.a7 Qxa7 63.Qxh2, which should win in the end, but clearly White should never have allowed Black this chance.

50.Qxb6 Qxg4 51.Qxc5+ Kf7 52.Qxa5 Qg1 53.Qd5+ 1-0

White wins easily after 53...Ke7 54.Qc5+ Kf7 55.a5 and the check on c1 achieves nothing.

Now let's look at Kristiansen's game. Here's the position again.



At first sight this is a dead draw because endings with bishop and two connected passed pawns vs bishop (with opposite-coloured bishops) are generally drawn unless the pawns are quite far advanced. Indeed, on some online forums Kristiansen was rather unfairly lambasted for losing this. There is a standard method of drawing, based on attacking the pawns with the bishop from the front. For example, if you imagine White's pawns are on b4 and c4, with his king on b3, then if Black's king is on b6 and his bishop on f8 it's impossible for White to make progress. However, this defence only works when the white king is behind the pawns. It's much more dangerous for Black when the white king is in front of the pawns. For example, suppose Black wastes time by 37...Bg5 38.Ka2 Bh4 39.Kb3 Bg5 40.Kc4 Bh4. Then White is already winning with 41.Kc5!, from which it's clear that time is an important factor. At the moment Black cannot move his king to the e-file, which makes it slightly more awkward for him.

37...Kf6?!

The last few moves before the time control see Black make things harder for himself. The simplest method was 37...Bf6 38.c3 Ke7 39.Kc2 Kd6 40.b4 Kc7 (40...Be7? 41.c4) 41.c4 and now provided Black finds the only saving move, 41...Kb6!, he can continue with ...Be7 and set up the draw mentioned above. It's not surprising that Black avoided this line in the run-up to move 40 since it depends on a single tempo.

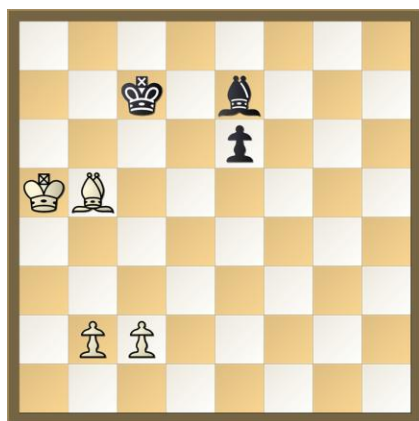
38.Ka2!

The best chance, aiming to get the king as far in front of the pawns as possible.

38...Ke5

Black aims to reach the standard draw by playing his king to b6, but White can prevent this.

39.Kb3 Kd6 40.Ka4 Kc7 41.Ka5



The time-control has been reached and White has managed to stop ...Kb6, which means that Black can no longer use the standard plan to save the game. The critical nature of the position is shown by the fact that Black has only three possible drawing moves here.

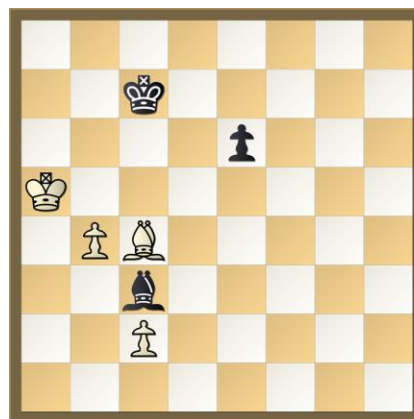
41...Bf6!

Black finds one of the three. There's a different drawing line with 41...Bd8! 42.c4 (42.b4 Kb7+ 43.Ka4 Be7 followed by ...Kb6 is simpler) 42...Kd6+ 43.Ka4 Kc5 44.b4+ Kd4!, when Black is saved by his active king position.

42.b4 Bc3!

The only move to draw, since if White is allowed to play c4-c5 then he is winning. It's interesting to note that the position is a win without Black's e-pawn. In such an ending it usually doesn't matter whether the defender has a pawn, since the attacker's bishop can manoeuvre while controlling the pawn. Unusually, in this case the extra pawn is critical.

43.Bc4



43...e5?

The losing move, since allowing the white bishop to occupy the long diagonal proves fatal. The correct defence is 43...Kd6! (43...Kd7! is the only other move to draw) 44.Kb5 e5! 45.Bd3 Kd5! and the e-pawn prevents White driving the king away from d5 by playing Bf1-g2+.

44.Bd5!

Now it's a win, but White must still find the correct plan.

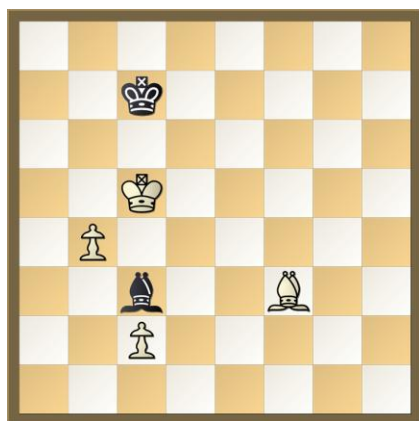
44...Kd6 45.Be4 Kc7 46.Kb5 Kd6 47.Bf3

The simplest method is 47.Kc4 Be1 48.Kb3 Bf2 49.c4, followed by Ka4-b5 and c5, but the line played does not endanger the win.

47...Kc7 48.Kc4 Be1 49.Kc5 Bc3 50.Be4 Bd4+ 51.Kb5 Bc3 52.Bf3 e4

Giving up the pawn makes it rather easy for White. The most resilient defence is 52...Kd6, but White can still win by, for example, 53.Be4 Kc7 54.Kc4 Be1 55.Kb3, as in the note to White's 47th move.

53.Bxe4 Kd6 54.Bf3 Kc7 55.Kc5



Now the plan is to stalemate the black king and force him to release the blockade of the c-pawn.

55...Kd7 56.b5 Kc7 57.b6+ Kb8 58.Kc6 Kc8 59.Bg4+ Kb8 60.Bf5 Bf6

60...Ka8 61.Kc7 leads to a quick mate, so the bishop must move.

61.c4 Be7 62.c5 Bf8 63.Kb5 Be7 64.c6 Bd8

The pawns are too far advanced for this defence to work.

65.Bg4

Now Black is in Zugzwang and must allow the c-pawn to move forward.

65...Ka8 66.c7 1-0

It was a really exciting last round!

'There will be dancing in the streets of Bude tonight!' (with thanks to Kevin Thurlow)

Nigel Povah provided the following additional summary of the tournament.

The 30th World Senior Individual Chess Championship concluded in Assisi, Italy on Saturday 26th November, with GM John Nunn winning the Over 65 age group with 9/11. Nunn had made a storming start, scoring 6½ from 7 before uncharacteristically slipping up against Danish GM Jens Kristiansen but he then bounced back impressively, scoring 2½ from his last 3 games, and

secured the title when Kristiansen lost in the final round. John Nunn deservedly added to his three Problem Solving World titles by winning his first OTB World title, having faced much the strongest field, comprising 4 GMs and 5 IMs.

Other notable performances in Assisi in the 65+ event came from Terry Chapman with 7/11, with Paul Hutchinson and Michael Stokes on 6½/11.

The Over 50 Championship was again won by the former 50+ World and European Champion, Georgian GM Zurab Sturua, with 8½/11 ahead of Lithuanian GM Maxim Novik on tiebreak. Keith Arkell finished top of the English contingent scoring 7½/11 and was disappointed to have dropped too many half-points throughout the event. FM Stephen Dishman finished on 6½/11, having faced 5 GMs, but sadly only adding two points in his last five games, thus missing his opportunity to make his third and final IM norm.

Scores for the remaining English players were as follows:
Over 65 – David Bray 6; Norman Hutchinson 5½; Paul Raynes 5½; Hassan Erdogan 4½; Brian Hewson 4/8
Over 50 – Petra Fink-Nunn 5; Ingrid Lauterbach 5; Owen Phillips 5; Nigel White 5

Shreyas Royal Achieves First GM Norm at Just 13 Years Old



The ECF congratulates Shreyas Royal on achieving his first GM Norm at just 13 years old!

You can see his tweet here -

https://twitter.com/shrez_royal09/status/1592108004824207360?s=46&t=9C5UGjjDu81HNCGWXLf6nA

Read Leonard Barden's article in the FT here -

<https://www.ft.com/content/1d5f8a59-a082-43ae-b2c0-6fc7c38f244d>

Kamila Hryshchenko – World Congress of Chess Composition



First of all, I want to say that it was nice to be a part of the GB team at the WCCC 2022 in Fujairah. This solving competition was only my second one, but a friendly atmosphere and great organisation helped me to feel comfortable and perform at my best.

The Congress provided a wide range of solving competitions. All of them were highly competitive and filled with intrigue until the very end. Firstly, I took first place among women in the Open Solving event. The format is slightly different to the main event, but in my opinion it was still a good chance to get some final practice before the World Chess Solving Championship (WCSC) that came after.

Second came the WCSC, which I think is one of the most important solving competitions during the year, and so also one of the most nerve-wracking events for participants too. The director and judge provided us with a range of beautiful and interesting compositions. In the final standings I was the second-placed woman. I am happy with this result, but I have already started to prepare for the next World Championship to get the first place!

Along with the main events I also enjoyed participating in the side events like the Quick Solving and Solving Show held in the evenings. At the close of the WCCC I had the pleasure of playing in the 4th Fujairah Endurance International Chess Championship and ended with 5½ points out of 7. With this performance I again won the top prize for women.

I'm already looking forward to meeting my fellow competitors again at the big events next year and doing even better!

Kamila Hryshchenko

Samar Dayal – Commonwealth Under 8 Champion

Congratulations to Samar Dayal who won the gold medal in the Under 8 section of the Commonwealth Chess Championships.

His mother writes - 'Samar participated in the Commonwealth Chess Championship 2022 that concluded yesterday in Sri Lanka. He played in the Under 8 Open category. I am very happy to inform you that he finished in first place in the championship and won a gold medal and trophy. He scored 7½ points over 9 rounds and conclusively came out on top (second and third positions were tied on 6½ points). The tournament saw strong participation in the U8 category, including the recent World Cadets U8 bronze medallist among others, whom Samar played against and won.



The award ceremony was conducted at the Sri Lankan Prime Minister's residence, with the PM presiding. The Prime Minister graciously spent some time with Samar after the ceremony (above).'

Bodhana Breaks Record to Share English Women's Blitz Title and GM Jon Speelman wins UK Open Title

We feature an in-depth article on the UK Open Blitz Finals later in the edition at the start of the *Around the Country* section.

The Open event was won by GM Jon Speelman in a tremendous battle with Ukrainian GM Eldar Gasanov. WGM Elmira Mirzoeva won the Women's title followed closely by seven-year-old Bodhana Sivanandan and Kamila Hryshchenko who shared the English Women's title.

Below is Leonard Barden's Guardian article following Bodhana's success at the UK Blitz.

Harrow schoolgirl lowers the age record for a national women's champion by more than four years after sharing the crown – Leonard Barden

Bodhana Sivanandan earned a place in the record books last Saturday when the Harrow schoolgirl, just seven years old, tied for second prize in the UK Women's Blitz Championship at Leamington Spa. As joint winner of the English title she broke the existing age record for a national women's champion by more than four years in a remarkable performance against opposition led by internationally-seasoned rivals.

The open winner was Elmira Mirzoeva, 41, a former Moscow women's champion now resident in London and playing under a neutral Fide flag. Sivanandan, a point behind, shared the English title with Sussex-based Kamila Hryshchenko, 20, who as a Ukrainian was the 2019 world girls' under-18 blitz champion. 'Blitz' was defined as three minutes per player for the entire game, plus an increment of two seconds per move.

Sivanandan, already the 2022 world Under-8 girls' champion at both rapid and blitz, added to her growing reputation by her impressive result, finishing well ahead of several England female internationals. She led for most of the final, winning on time in a drawn position against Hryshchenko [after a fluctuating 74-move marathon](#), and reaching 8½/9 before a blunder when well-placed against the chess broadcaster and writer Natasha Regan set her back. Her only other loss in an 11/14 total was to Mirzoeva. All 15 finalists had previously been first or second in regional qualifiers.

The youngster's overall performance was rated at 2076 Fide blitz points, Master standard, and her FIDE rating jumped from 1556 to 1884. Her 328-point gain may be a record for FIDE rating improvement in a single day.

Nigel Short, the 1993 world title challenger and England's most famous player, [tweeted](#) - "I don't like to jinx young players by over-praising them but she looks like a really big talent." Short was himself a prodigy at nine and later

coached several young stars including the three-times British champion, David Howell.

The previous youngest national women's champions were Akshaya Kalaiyalahan, who shared the 2013 British women's title at 11, and Salma Ahmed, who in September won the Egyptian title at 12. Henrique Mecking was Brazilian champion at 13, Bobby Fischer US champion at 14 and Judit Polgar Hungarian champion at 15, ahead of all the men. Polgar was strong enough to win the Hungarian women's title well before her teens but had higher ambitions. At age seven, the all-time No 1 woman defeated a master opponent while playing blindfolded.

Sivanandan is a chess maximalist in the tradition of Fischer, who won the 1963-64 US championship with 11/11 before wiping out Mark Taimanov and Bent Larsen in the 1971 candidates matches, both by 6-0. She won 24 straight games in April and May at the Euroschools and World Under-8 rapid/blitz in Rhodes, while her score against far stronger opposition last Saturday included eight wins in a row.

She has a pragmatic, no-nonsense approach to blitz chess, where her preferred approach is to play the first 20 or so moves fast, establish a lead on the clock and a slight edge on the board, swap queens to favour her endgame skills, and then win on position or time.

Harder tests await. In particular, she is competing this season in the top division of Britain's national league, the 4NCL. Teams of eight include a mandatory women's board, where she plays for Cambridge University. Her first weekend in October proved a baptism of fire, as she was outclassed by WIM Fiona Steil-Antoni, Luxembourg's No 2 and a popular online commentator and interviewer. There are still nine 4NCL games to go, with the next weekend on 14th-15th January.

Sivanandan told the Guardian that her target for 2023 is to become a Women's Fide Master (2100 level) and to win the world Under-8 girls' championship at classical chess, which eluded her this year by the slimmest of tie-break margins. She had hoped to finish first and then take on the boys in 2023. Beyond that, her ambition is to become a grandmaster and England's youngest Olympiad gold medallist, and eventually to win a world title.

Her favourite players are José Raúl Capablanca 'for his beautiful endgames' and Magnus Carlsen 'for his memory and pattern recognition'. At the London Chessfest in July she met Rachel Reeves, herself a former national girls' champion, and reported that the shadow chancellor 'is a good chess player, who played a solid and equal game

against me until she blundered a knight and resigned after 33 moves’.

Sivanandan currently has no professional coach. She hopes to be included in the English Chess Federation’s accelerator programme for elite talents in 2023 and is mentored by IM Ali Mortazavi and Steven Coles of Harrow CC. The ECF provided grandmaster support from the two-time British champion Jonathan Hawkins for her world Under-8 events, but this ceased at the end of the tournaments.

Regular GM or IM coaching would greatly help Sivanandan, but the ECF lacks government support so it may only come to fruition in the unlikely event of a private or business sponsor deciding to back her exceptional promise.

Jonathan Speelman, the former world semi-finalist, won the Open Blitz title on tie-break from Eldar Gasanov of Ukraine. GM Mark Hebden was third, while Scotland’s top junior Freddy Gordon, 12, performed strongly in fourth place, including [a win against Speelman](#). Since the ECF launched its annual UK Blitz Championship in 2018, with qualifiers staged in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast as well as in major English cities, interest has steadily grown, and this week’s extra publicity for Sivanandan will provide a further boost. Speed events are increasingly popular in present-day chess, not least because of the rising costs to participants of traditional tournaments spread over a week or a fortnight.

New To Chess?

Looking for resources for yourself or to advise on other on how to start out in chess and improve?

Well, one great launch pad is the ECF’s New To Chess page.

Free booklets, videos and streams, find a club, find a trainer, guide to online learning resources, books and a whole lot more.

It’s all at <https://bit.ly/newtochess>

FEATURES

Michael Adams’ Game of the Month



A very dramatic game from the Bundesliga, with two very creative, aggressive players who are reluctant to back away from a fight. After creative opening play leaves plenty of opportunities for both players, the board suddenly opens up. Anton Korobov jettisons a lot of material, creating great confusion, and the immense

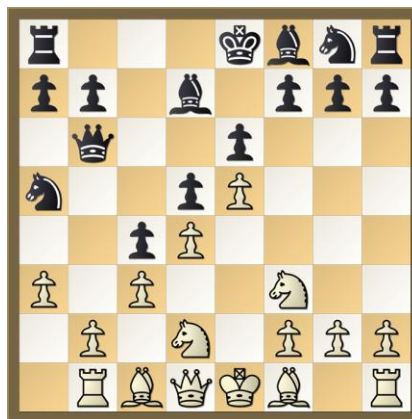
complexity of the chaos on board means that some inaccuracies creep in. However, once given the chance to begin attacking, Gawain returns most of the booty to finish the game impressively crisply.

G. Jones – A. Korobov

Bundesliga 2022

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Qb6 6.a3 c4 Black decides to close the queenside, planning Bd7 and a later O–O–O, interrupting White’s plan to play b4.

7.Nbd2 Na5 8.Rb1 Bd7



9.h4! A very sneaky move. This appears to just be staking out some kingside space, but there is another point concealed.

9...h6 10.b4 cxb3 11.Nxb3 Ba4 12.Nfd2 Qc7



13.Rh3! A handy way to cover the pawn on c3, but, as well as fulfilling this defensive task, the rook will point at the sensitive kingside pawns on f7 and g7.

13...Ne7 14.Qf3 Nec6 15.Nxa5 Nxa5 16.Bd3

Development continues, but now some serious decisions need to be made. Black has more options, but this is not really that helpful as choosing between them is not trivial.

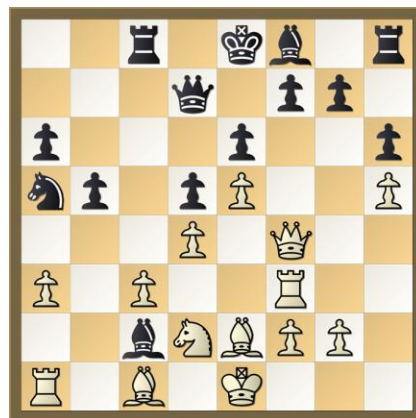


16...Rc8 I would have stuck with the original plan; after 16...0-0 there is a lot going on, but Black has plenty of pieces to keep the monarch defended on the queenside. Probably Gawain would have responded 17.Kf1, White's king will castle by hand and is also fairly secure; a tense middlegame is in prospect.

The alternative 16...Be7 is also playable; castling kingside would not be wise, but nudging the bishop out has some merit: 17.Qg4 g6 18.h5 g5 19.Rf3 Rf8 gets the problem kingside pieces involved.

17.Qf4 a6 18.Rf3 b5 19.h5 Black has locked the queenside, but he is under pressure on the opposite flank and it is not clear how to complete development with the major pieces eyeing the pawn on f7.

19...Qd7 20.Be2 Bc2 21.Ra1



21...g5? I don't like this move. After the pawn swap Black's bishop on g6 will secure f7, but that bishop will then neglect important duties on the other side of the board, and there is irreparable damage to the kingside structure, leaving Black's king effectively homeless. Instead, 21...Rc6 or 21...Nc4 looks more logical.

22.hxg6 Bxg6 23.a4! A typically alert decision by Gawain: the last two moves have radically changed the situation, and now White can grab the initiative on the queenside, activating the passive rook on a1, due to the new tactical horizons.

23...b4 Korobov is also a player who likes to strive for activity. The computer is scandalised by the reckless disregard for material shown by this move, but navigating the morass of variations over the board is far from simple. The calmer 23...Nc4 24.axb5 axb5 25.Nxc4 dxc4 (25...bxc4 26.Bd1!, planning Ba4 is very awkward) 26.Kf1 leaves White with much the safer king.

24.cxb4 24.Bxa6!? was also possible. 24...bxc3 25.Bb5 (25.Bxc8? Qxc8 26.Nf1 Nb3 shows the danger of passive play) 25...cxd2+ 26.Bxd2 Nc6 27.Rc1. The pin is so strong White will emerge with an additional pawn: 27...Be7 28.Rfc3 Bg5 29.Qf3 Bxd2+ 30.Kxd2 0-0 31.Bxc6 Qe7. White's king on d2 would make it difficult to maintain total control here.

24...Bxb4? 24...Nc4! first was a better idea.

25.Bxa6 As well as collecting a pawn, White hits the rook on c8, and the bishop can also drop back to b5, creating a nasty pin.



25...0-0 The king is happy to leave the centre, but at heavy material cost, and the draughty kingside is not the most secure location either. Instead, 25...Rc2 26.Bb5 Nc6 27.Kf1! - possibly followed by Nb3 - shows that Black's threats are largely illusory: 27...Bc3 28.Nb3 Bxa1 29.Nxa1 Ra2 30.Ra3 Rxa3 31.Bxa3 is a funny line, but the pieces remaining on the board greatly favour White; the bishops cut the black position in two.

26.Bxc8 26.Qxh6 Rc3 27.Ba3! Qxa4 (27...Rxf3 28.Bxb4) 28.Rxc3 Bxc3 29.Qxf8+ Kh7 30.Qh6+ Kg8 (30...Kxh6 31.Bf8+) 31.Ke2 Bxa1 32.Bf8! also works, but it is hard to resist grabbing the rook.

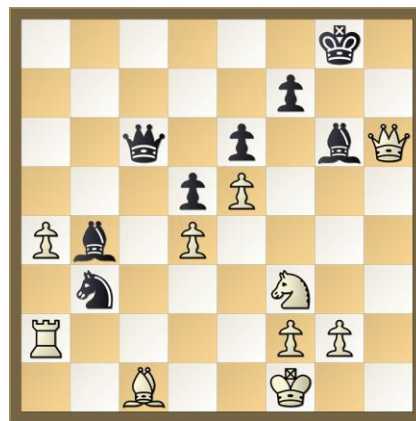
26...Rxc8 27.Qxh6 Rc3



28.Kf1? Natural, but 28.Ba3, developing a piece and swapping pieces whilst ahead on material, finishes the game: 28...Qxa4 29.Bxb4 Qxa1+ 30.Ke2 Rxf3 31.Qf8+ Kh7 32.Nxf3 Ng5; mate is threatened, so Black has to keep on checking: 32...Qb2+ (32...Bh5 33.Bd2, defending and attacking: 33...Nc4 34.Qh6+) 33.Bd2 Qb5+ 34.Ke3 Qd3+ 35.Kf4 Qf5+ 36.Kg3 and Black is out of options.

28...Rxf3? 28...Qc6!, activating the queen and attacking the bishop on c1, gets Black back into things: 29.Bb2 (29.Rxc3? Qxc3) 29...Rxf3 30.Nxf3 Nb3 31.Rc1 Nxc1 32.Bxc1 Bf8 33.Qf4 Qxa4 narrows the deficit to a single pawn, giving good chances to survive.

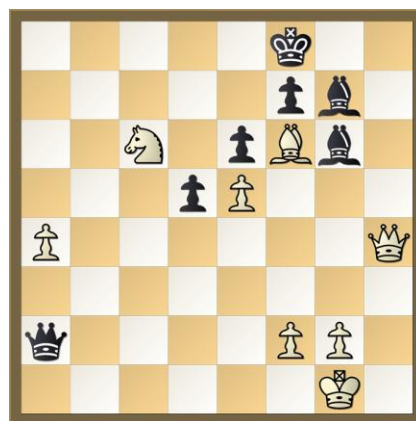
29.Nxf3 Nb3 30.Ra2 Qc6



31.Bg5! White has lots of ways to exploit the generous material surplus, but keeping on attacking is the cleanest, and suits Gawain's style.

31...Bf8 32.Qh4 Qc4+ 33.Kg1 Nxd4 34.Bf6 Bg7 34...Nxf3+ 35.gxf3 Qxh4 36.Bxh4 leaves the a-pawn much too strong.

35.Nxd4 Qxa2 36.Nc6 Kf8 36...Qb1+ 37.Kh2 Qc1 at least gives some potential for checks, but 38.Ne7+ Kf8 39.Nxg6+ fxg6 40.a5! is hopeless 40...Kg8 (40...Qc7 41.Qh7) 41.Bxg7 Kxg7 42.Qf6+ Kh7 43.a6 Qh6+ 44.Kg3 and Black is out of checks.



37.Qb4+ Kg8 38.Ne7+ Kh7 39.Qh4+ Bh6 40.Bg5

Black resigned: after 40...Qa1+ 41.Kh2 Qxe5+ 42.f4 Qg7; now mass liquidation clears the way to promote the pawn: 43.Bxh6 Qxh6 44.Nxg6 Kxg6 45.Qxh6+ Kxh6 46.a5 d4 47.Kg3 stops the black pawn, but White's will have a free run to the line.

Arkell's Endings The Dance of the Knights

*'We're knights of the Round Table
We dance where'er we're able ...'*



Stellan Brynell - Keith Arkell
Leningrad White Knights 1989

Closed GM tournaments in Russia were always considered to be baptisms of fire, potentially painful experiences but ultimately rewarding for your chess development. In Leningrad in June the sun never quite leaves the sky, and at the 'White Knights', a 14-player all-play-all, the following game was, aptly, all about the knights:

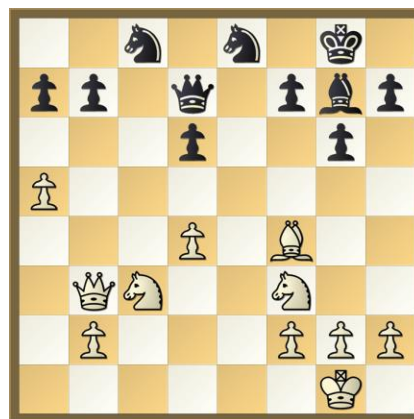
1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Qb3 Bg7 7.cxd5 0-0 8.Be2 Nbd7 9.Bf3 Nb6 10.Bf4 Bg4 11.Bxg4 Nxg4 12.Nf3 Nf6



13.d6 exd6 14.0-0

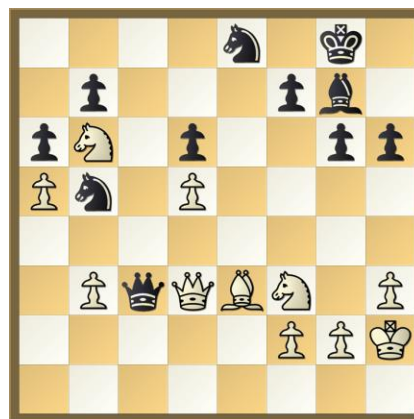
14...Re8 Curiously, this novelty has never been repeated in the intervening 33 years! Normally they play 14...Nh5 or ...Qd7.

15.Rfe1 Qd7 16.a4 Rxe1+ 17.Rxe1 Re8 18.Rxe8+ Nxe8 19.a5 Nc8

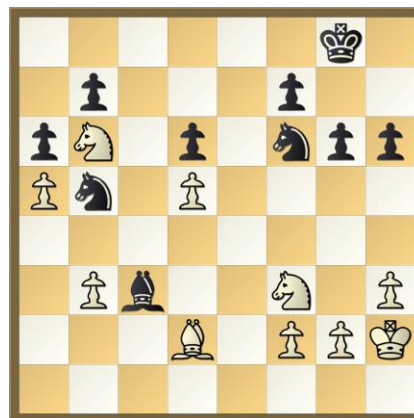


A cramped position is usually more unpleasant when all the pieces are on the board. Here there are no rooks wishing my knights would get out of the way.

20.h3 a6 21.Nd5 Na7 22.Nb6 Qf5 23.Qe3 Qe6 24.Qd3 Nb5 25.d5 Qe7 26.b3 h6 27.Be3 Qf6 28.Kh2 Qc3

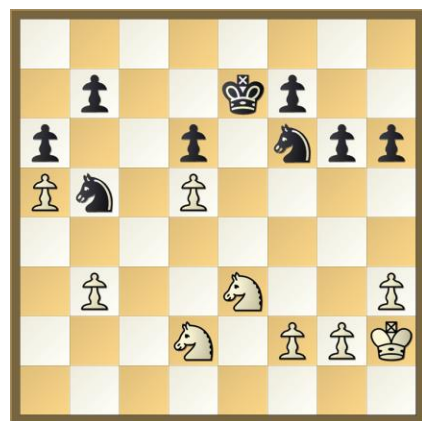


29.Qxc3 Bxc3 30.Bd2 Nf6

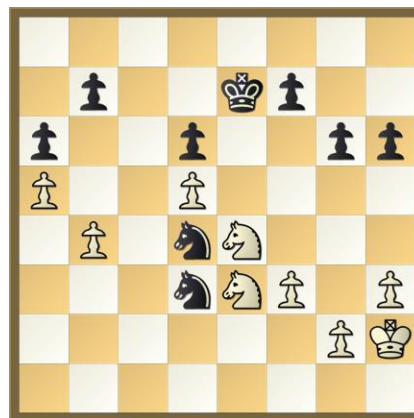


31.Nc4?! I was pleased to see this natural-looking move. White can hold the balance with 31 Bxc3 Nxc3 32 Nd2, when both his knights will bear down against d6 and a mass pawn liquidation will be the likely result.

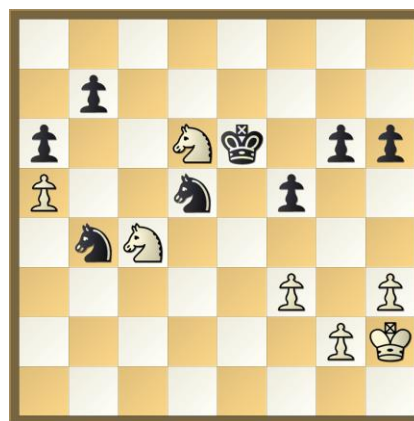
33.Ne3 Ke7



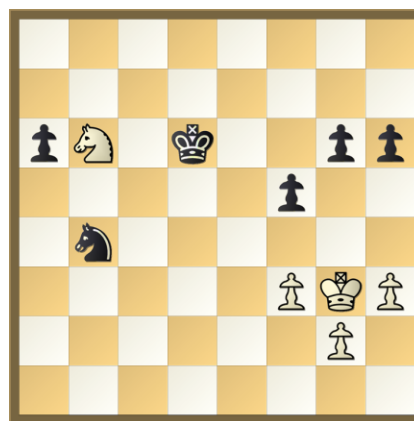
34...Ne4 35.f3 Nc5 36.Nd2 Nd4 37.b4 Nd3 38.Ne4



38...Nxb4 39.Nc4 Nb5 40.Nb6 f5 41.Nd2 Nc3 42.Ndc4
Ncxd5 43.Nc8+ Ke6 44.N8xd6



45.axb6 Nxb6 46.Nxb6 Kxd6 47.Kg3



47...Nd5 48.Na4 Kc6 49.Kh4 Kb5 50.Nb2 a5 51.g4

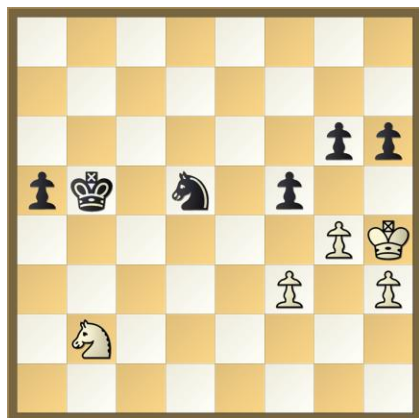
Using Miniatures to Revisit the Fundamentals by Peter Wells



There may be no very established definition of what constitutes a 'miniature' game, but I suspect that for most chess players the term conjures up a clear enough image. A restriction on the number of moves for sure - perhaps 25 at the outside - but also early drama and tactical fireworks, with very

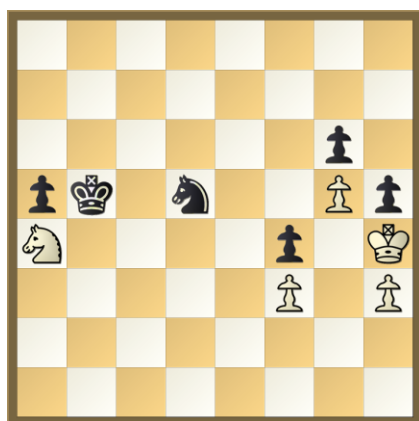
few draws - aside, perhaps, from those involving king hunts followed by some spectacular perpetual check. I guess it could be argued that we are already heavily exposed to these miniatures, beloved as they are by chess columnists for ticking both their logistical and aesthetic boxes. However, I suspect that a focus on the aesthetics sometimes serves to overshadow the potential lessons to be learned from them. Moreover, there is a further question lurking in my mind, drawing me towards this subject. In an age of deep opening preparation, in which we hear frequent laments that the game is getting 'played out', how is it that tournament practice still seems to provide us with a steady stream of miniatures, even from high-level play? Every example I will mention in this column comes from a search of the last few weeks (which excluded blitz games) and I was able to reject numerous plausible alternatives as well. The supply of brief, action-packed and potentially instructive games does not seem under threat.

There is no easy answer to this, although such games do serve as a useful reminder that very strong players are only human too. We are frequently told that such an early finish to a game of chess is exceptional and can only be the result of a huge mistake by one side (although my impression is that an accumulation of smaller errors can also be sufficient to guarantee an early exit). In either case, blunders can evoke from observers a range of emotions from barely disguised 'Schadenfreude' to something akin to 'there but for the grace of God...'. What I think we need to avoid is the idea that a blunder is no more than a momentary loss of focus, a freak departure from the normal high-level functioning of our brains - one



51...f4 I'm sure there are many ways to win, but in principle it's best not to swap off too many pawns. Brynell now introduces a bit of humour as he stalemates his king in the hope of a miracle.

52.g5 h5 53.Na4



53...Ne3

I will have a choice of mates. This was one of the most accurate games of chess I have ever played, and the four knights painted quite a picture as they danced around the pawn weaknesses.

0-1

that we can certainly promise ourselves we will try harder to avoid in future, but which is hardly an appropriate object for diagnosis and prescription. I believe blunders can and should be analysed and that an understanding of their likely causes can play a serious role in trying to avoid them going forward. For a start, I think the decisive mistakes within miniatures can be categorised into those which essentially share causes with errors which occur in other phases of the game and those which *arise directly from our approach to the openings*. Take a look at the following striking collapse of a former World Championship candidate.

Emil Schmidek – Zoltan Ribli

Bundesliga Round 1 22.10.2022

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c6 4.e4 dxe4 5.Nxe4 Bb4+ 6.Bd2 Qxd4 7.Bxb4 Qxe4+ 8.Be2 Na6 9.Ba5 b6 10.Qd6 Bd7 11.Bc3 f6 12.Nf3 Ne7



One of those variations of the ‘other’ Marshall Gambit in which Black appears to be taking insane risks with his king, but in which practice has shown that so long as he can blunt his opponent’s bishop pair and evict the queen then his position can be surprisingly resilient. However, playing these variations requires not only good general understanding, but very specific knowledge which needs to be revised regularly, as increasingly powerful engines may reveal hitherto hidden resources for the attacker. I don’t know what Zoltan Ribli had missed here, but it is interesting that a player generally noted for his caution and excellent technique feels obliged to enter such a theoretical minefield against a lower-rated opponent in order to maintain the coherence of his opening repertoire. It may be that 12...Nh6 turns out to be tougher or that the whole line with 9...b6 is under serious pressure. Either way, Black’s position disintegrates with just one more inaccuracy.

13.0–0–0 Qxe2 14.Qxd7+ Kf7 15.Rhe1 Qxc4 16.Re3! Rad8?



This neglects to defend the e7 knight and thus fails to a simple combination. In a sense, the message here is complicated a little by the fact that Black seems to be under severe pressure even after the more resilient 16...Rhe8 17.b3! Qg4! (The fact that Black needs to provoke the move h3 in order to prevent the white queen’s retreat there, which would simply win in the line 17...Qf4?! 18.Rd4 Qh6 19.Qxe6+ Kf8 20.Rh4! Nc5 21.Qh3!, is another scary example of the attention to detail demanded in these variations) 18.h3 Qf4 19.Rd4 Qh6 20.Qxe6+ Kf8 and not 21. Rh4, which is now well met with 21...Nc5 when the queen lacks a convenient flight square, but simply 21.Qd6! with enduring pressure.

17.Ne5+! (or 17 Ng5+, which does the job similarly well). **17...fxe5 18.Rf3+ Kg6 19.Qxe7 Rxd1+ 20.Kxd1 1-0** as Black has no resources left to meet the dual threats of Qf7+ and Rg3+.

I get one very clear message from examples such as this. Whilst the use of sophisticated engines and the ever-deeper analysis of the opening phase can hold out the prospect of increasingly ‘perfect’ opening play, it is also liable to result in particularly drastic consequences when human error does occur. Many players are demanding a great deal of themselves in terms of both work rate and memory. given the sheer complexity of this kind of theory. Yes, some players plan carefully to ensure that they can avoid this kind of theory, and to some extent embracing these demands is a question of preference. Still, when a player with Ribli’s style is embarking on such adventures at a relatively late stage of his career, it tends to remind us that it is not always easy to choose the type of position in which to do battle, especially as Black. In many openings the road to the desired ‘normal’ positions with at least some potential for imbalance necessarily offers White the option of injecting a very sharp dimension into the struggle.

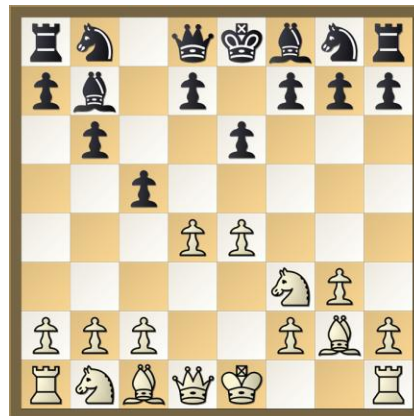
If we consider the simple advice which we receive as beginners on playing the opening - ensure that each move aids mobilisation of the pieces and focus on control of the centre and king safety - it seems almost inconceivable that a strong player's position could collapse with such alacrity. However, we come to learn that development rarely occurs in a vacuum. As Yusupov asks in the opening chapter of his (and Mark Dvoretsky's) *Secrets of Opening Preparation*: 'Can you imagine a game nowadays where for some time the two players simply bring out their pieces, and then begin looking to see what has happened and what to do next?' This is simply not how it works. In most cases development is linked with at least a degree of planning - some notion of how the developed pieces will be utilised in the next phase of the game, based crucially around the evolving pawn structure and often featuring schemes to inhibit the opponent's development in turn. Perhaps some kind of Italian Game with an early Nc3 by White, so beloved of partially-tutored school children, comes closest to Yusupov's 'aimless development' description, but it is for just this reason that this is rarely seen at higher levels. To reach positions rich in possibilities, the opening phase is somewhat harder than we might imagine.

Another source of peril in the opening is the refusal to concede that relatively familiar territory may be less reliable than previously believed, with the consequence that every attempt to avoid any disadvantage in fact renders the situation more critical. Of course, only the players themselves can know what was going through their heads, but it is otherwise difficult to comprehend how an experienced grandmaster can land in quite such drastic trouble so quickly as this. Though it appears here in a rather shocking guise, I suspect that many readers will find this scenario - of consciously rejecting unpleasant positions with each move, only to find that these choices have actually made things even worse - depressingly relatable. I know I do...

M Venkatesh – C. Deepan

Commonwealth Championship, Waskaduwa 18-11-2022

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.g3 b6 4.Bg2 Bb7 5.d4!



I like this move order - resting, as it does, on the terrific compensation which White secures after 5...Bxe4 6.Nc3 Bb7 (6...Bxf3?! 7.Qxf3 d5? 8.Nxd5 is even worse!) 7.d5 Nf6 8.Ne5!. However, whilst relatively rare, there have been sufficient outings for the analogous 4 d4 to make the relative popularity of 3...b6 a bit of a mystery. It seems painfully hard for Black to reach even a 'normal' Hedgehog.

6.Nxd4 Nf6 7.Nc3 Bb4?!

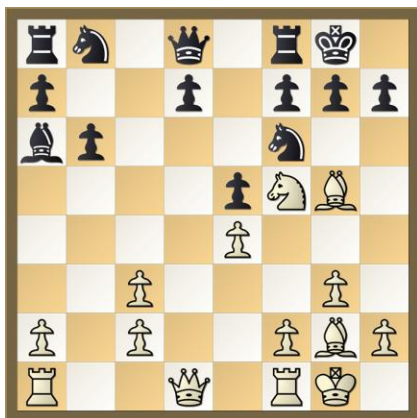
This has been played by the creative and celebrated Georgian GM Baadur Jobava, but, amazing player though he is, imitation of his opening choices is not always advisable. It seems to me that Black has to aim lower here and that the tactical issues consequent upon a quick e4-e5 here greatly outweigh any counterplay which Black can claim. Perhaps 7...d6 is more prudent.

8.0-0 0-0 9.Bg5! Bxc3 10.bxc3 e5?!

The pin on the f6 knight has added greatly to the threatened e-pawn advance, and it is fair to say that more routine continuations already look fairly unpalatable. However, inviting a knight to an almost unchallengeable f5 square can only make matters even worse.

11.Nf5 Ba6?

I guess this is just an admission of defeat. No doubt as to why Black would like to drive the rook from the f-file, but some mystery attaching to why he thought for a moment that this move would accomplish that goal!



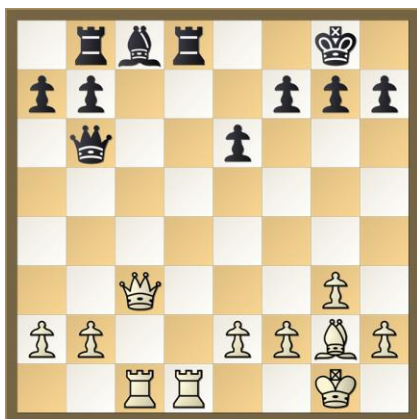
12.f4! Bxf1 13.fxe5 Bxg2 14.Bxf6 1-0 - since giving up the queen would be compulsory to stave off immediate mate.

Moving on from types of disaster inextricably bound up with opening problems to those blunders which can happen at any stage of the game, I would suggest that whilst there are numerous possible causes (shortage of sleep being one obvious possibility), a few stand out as being readily identifiable and therefore a good place to start in working on the problem. These include the danger of focussing on one area of the board to the detriment of others, or even switching the mind entirely into 'positional/structural mode' and forgetting that decisions principally motivated by longer-term considerations can also be profoundly impacted by short-term tactics. Another is the more psychological risk that a player who has been under some pressure may be inclined to relax as their problems appear to be drawing to a close. I suspect a bit of that was going on in the following example.

Viktor Matviishen – Juraj Druska

Texas Collegiate Superfinal, Richardson (USA) 22.10.2022

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.g3 Bb4+ 5.Bd2 Be7 6.Bg2 0-0 7.Qc2 Nbd7 8.0-0 Ne4 9.Ne1 Nxd2 10.Nxd2 dxc4 11.Nxc4 c5 12.dxc5 Bxc5 13.Nd3 Qe7 14.Nxc5 Qxc5 15.Rac1 Rb8 16.Rfd1 Nb6 17.Nxb6 Qxb6 18.Qc3 Rd8



I find Black's opening strategy curiously incoherent here. It is probably fine to spend tempi exchanging the f6 knight for the bishop on d2, but very strange to then open the position, emphasising White's extra development and turning the g2 bishop into a wonderful piece. By the time we reach the diagram, things seem critical as back rank problems are much in evidence to supplement White's lead in development. The next move seems very much to the point, but White's 20th move appears to give Black a bit of a breather.

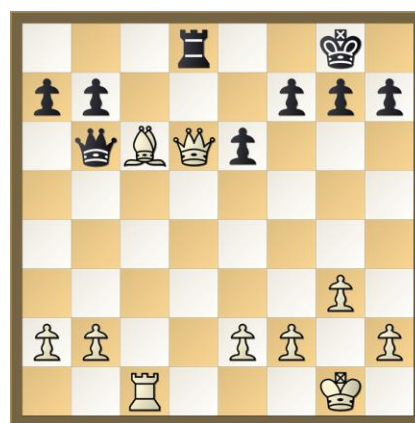
19.Qe5! Ra8 20.Be4?!

This feels a bit tame given that White's advantage rests primarily on better development. The engine likes exchanging on d8, but for me the obvious 'human move' is the 'deflection' 20 Qb5!? which obliges Black to concede the d-file completely, leading, after 20...Rf8 21 Qxb6 axb6 22 a3, to a position in which any solution to Black's mobilisation woes seems further away than ever.

20...Bd7 21.Rd6 Bc6 22.Bxc6 Rxd6

The first 'Zwischenzug' of two, and obviously correct. There is no doubt that White retains an advantage, but I can't help wondering whether Black began to relax with the thought that he had done a good job at damage limitation.

23.Qxd6 Rd8??



A costly moment of back rank blindness. Again, any explanation I can produce involves a degree of guesswork, but this feels like a player trying to show that he is close to completely OK, rather than accepting that a lot of hard grind will be needed to aspire towards half a point. In any case, whilst 24...Rc8 25 Qd7! is just as bad, the pin does afford Black the time to secure the back rank with 24...h6! when ...Rd8 next really will be able to come to his aid.

24.Qxd8+! 1-0 since after 24...Qxd8 25 Bxb7 White will recoup the queen with interest thanks to the weakness of the back rank.

There is also a hint in this example of the hugely significant danger of *making assumptions*, one which numerous commentators - including Jacob Aagaard and Levon Aronian - have indicated tends to underpin vast numbers of blunders. When in the middle of a calculation it is easy to associate ...Rd8 with an implicit 'and the queen has to move', but this is yet another illustration of why all such calculations should be rechecked as they appear on the board.

I suspect that in the following graphic example White assumed that his 23rd move represented the end of a forced sequence of 'action' with the bonus of 'winning a tempo' by attacking a piece and was guilty of just such a failure to submit his calculation to a final check before playing it.

Rauf Mamedov – David Navara

Grand Prix Stage 5 Braila 2022 06.11.2022

1.e4 c5 2.c3 Nf6 3.e5 Nd5 4.d4 cxd4 5.cxd4 d6 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Bc4 Nb6 8.Bb5 dxe5 9.Nxe5 Bd7 10.Nxd7 Qxd7 11.Nc3 e6 12.0-0 a6 13.Bxc6 Qxc6 14.Qg4 g6



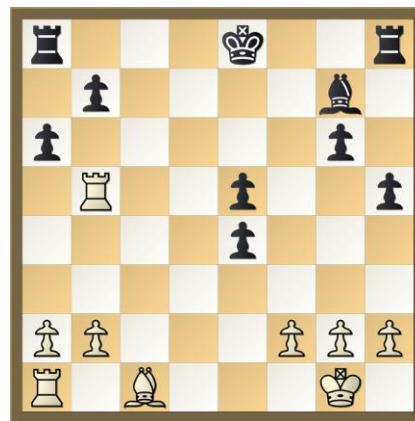
I always assumed this line to be rather insipid and it probably is, but it is one of a growing set of positions in which White seems to be willing to take on a pawn weakness (with his opponent's consequent control of d5) even in the context of some simplification, so long as he can develop smoothly and hinder Black's development in turn. His next move is an attempt to turn this into something more tangible. I am not entirely convinced, but it nearly works here!

15.d5 Nxd5 16.Nxd5 Qxd5 17.Rd1 h5 18.Qa4+ Qb5?!

Natural enough, but 18...b5! with 19 Qc2?! Qc4 in mind looks better. Keeping the queens on for a moment renders White's initiative a bit more convincing.

19.Qd4 e5 20.Qe4 Bg7 21.Rd5 f5?! 22.Rxb5 fxe4

A good moment to pause and consider what you would play with White. Whatever else, it seems clear enough that Mamedov didn't pause for too long here!



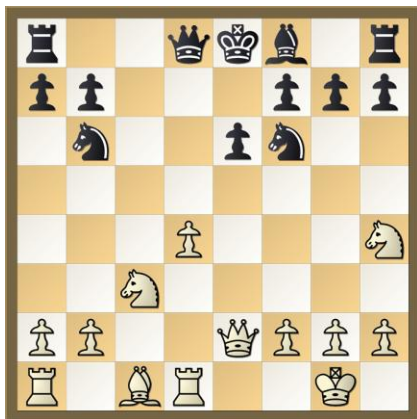
Finally White can claim that his initiative has resulted in tangible positional gains and 23 Rb6! would reveal that the g6 pawn is far from easy to defend. White has time to develop his c1 bishop to secure the back rank and Black is under heavy pressure. Instead, the game went **23. Rxb7?? 0-0-0! 0-1**. No comment needed!

As I hinted earlier in the column, a miniature might not necessarily involve a huge mistake, but rather a series of smaller slips. I want to conclude with the following fascinating miniature, notable not just for the immense quality of the victim (I recently saw Jonathan Speelman join Michael Adams and others in expressing the view that they have encountered no one whose ability really matches that of Vasyl Ivanchuk) but also because I think it illustrates how our thinking about development advantages is being shaped by the engines. This might be a theme for another day, but it seems to me that Alpha Zero's appreciation of long-term compensation is already having an influence in blurring the division we have tended to make between temporary advantages (usually in terms of development, initiative etc) and permanent advantages (usually structural or material). Development advantages may simply endure for longer than we have assumed and assume a form which the old formula – 'exploit them quickly or they will evaporate!'- doesn't really capture.

Pavel Eljanov – Vasyl Ivanchuk

Bundesliga 23.10.2022

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.e3 Bf5 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nh4 Bg6
7.Be2 Nbd7 8.0-0 dxc4 9.Bxc4 Bh5 10.Be2 Bxe2 11.Qxe2
c5 12.Rd1 cxd4 13.exd4 Nb6



14.Nf5!?

In my younger days I might have been concerned about a quick d5 break by White (which was indeed an interesting option here) but would otherwise have enthused about Black's chances - against the isolated pawn with light-squared bishops exchanged, but Eljanov makes a great case for how his better-developed pieces can serve to frustrate his opponent's development.

14...Nfd5

14...g6 15 d5! is a case of this breakthrough which White would not have passed up!

15.Ne4! h6

Another loss of time, but lines such as 15...a6 16 Bg5 f6? 17 Nc5 remind us how quickly the creation of any weaknesses can prove fatal given White's active pieces.

16.a4! a6 17.Nc5

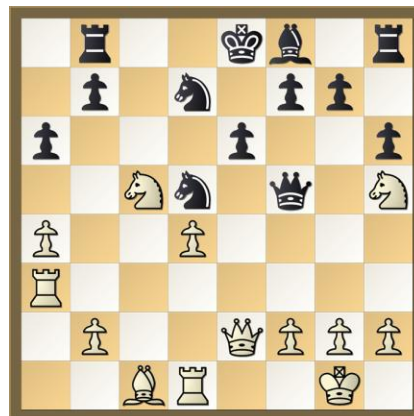
Very much in accordance with how we understand the term 'initiative' - almost every white move contains a threat to which his opponent must respond.

17...Qf6 18.Ng3 Rb8 19.Ra3!

Another notable development enabled by the powerful knight on c5. Every white piece is developed to cause maximum inconvenience.

19...Nd7 20.Nh5 Qf5?

Hoping to restrict the h5 knight's options, this allows a nice combination to finish. Still, whilst perhaps damage-limiting, moves such as 20...Qe7 21 Rg3 g6 22 Nf4 open a different but still very nasty can of worms.



21.Rf3 ! Qxh5 22.Nxe6 ! Ne7 23.Re1 1-0

Books of the Month by Ben Graff



The best new writing and the greatest classics under one roof ... in association with Forward Chess

I hope all our readers' preparations for the festive season are going well. Perhaps you are considering what chess books you might put on your list for Santa. It is certainly the perfect time

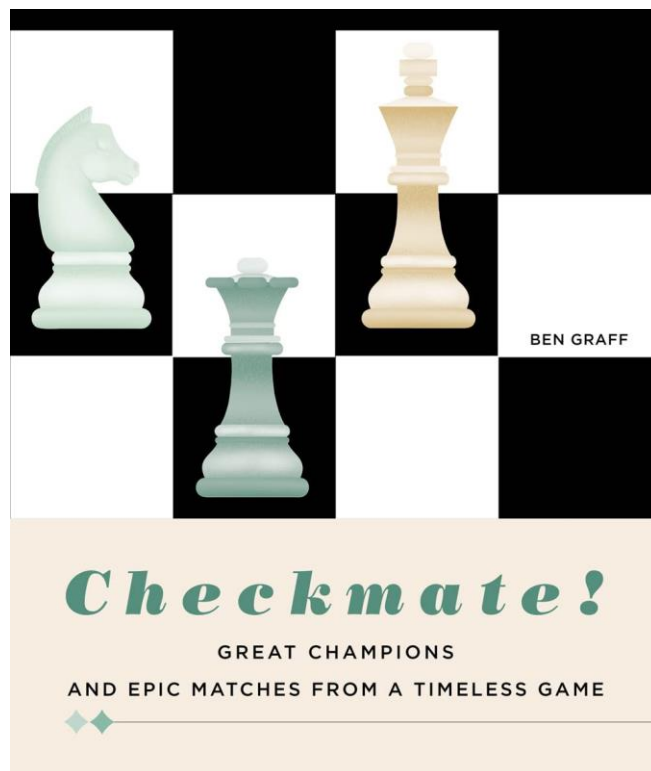
of year, during these shortest of days and longest of nights, to hole up with an interesting read. There are surely few better ways to escape from the in-laws and the plates of cold turkey, if only for a while!

This month, we look at three books which might be just the thing for the holidays. *Masterpieces and Dramas of the Soviet Championship Volume III* by Sergey Voronkov is as exceptional as the two predecessor volumes, brilliantly bringing to life the Soviet Championships between 1948-1953 and the wider society in which these gladiatorial contests took place. *My Sixty Memorable Games* by Bobby Fischer is this month's classic, and rereading it for this column led me to reflect again on both the book and the man.

If you will forgive the indulgence, I also wanted to share a little bit more about my own new book, *Checkmate! Great Champions and Epic Matches from a Timeless Game*. This was published in November, and I thought I might recount the story of how the book came about, and what I learnt about our game during the writing.

So, three very different books. I know that for many this has not been the easiest of years, and I wanted to take this opportunity to wish everybody a very happy Christmas and a peaceful 2023. Here's to better times ahead!

My new book!



Great Champions and Epic Matches from a Timeless Game (White Star)

'To play a match for the World Championship is the cherished dream of every player.' David Bronstein

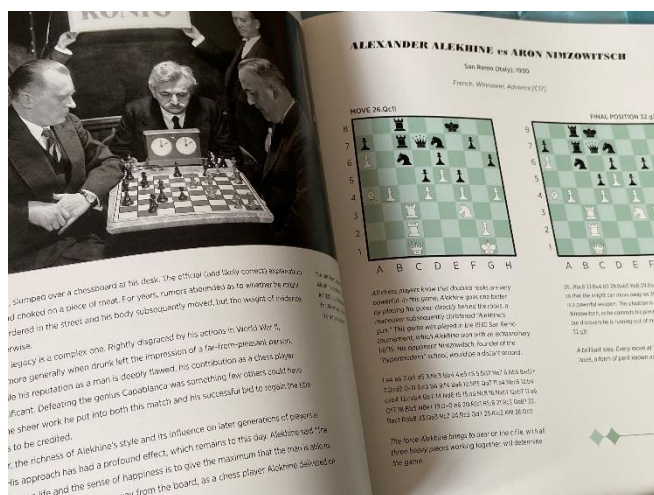
For as long as I can remember, I have been gripped by the world chess championship. I was born in 1975, the year that Fischer chose to walk away from the title without a fight, and my first actual world championship memories are of the epic struggles between Kasparov and Karpov. Just like many other chess fans, I always enjoyed studying the history of previous contests and learning more about those who had reached the pinnacle: competitors whose brilliance was often combined with being eccentric, overly competitive, and on occasion downright impossible. Yet I had never really considered writing a book about this, until I got a call from a publisher, who had been inspired by *The Queen's Gambit*.

It was clear that a wider audience wanted to learn more about the game. The brief was to enable those who are new to chess to gain an appreciation, while also offering plenty for those who already play. I wanted to give readers a sense of the characters who had battled for the world title, and key moments both at and away from the board; to delve into some famous matches in more detail, and to explore the rise of computers and the impact of artificial intelligence on the sixty-four squares. As Kasparov, the world champion who ultimately had to

yield to a chess-playing machine. put it, ‘The chess computer is akin to a powerful telescope, one that allows us to see previously unimagined stars.’



For all of those featured, I shared something of their adventures, and in most cases two of their famous games, always highlighting a key move. I also included plenty of photographs, infographics and further stats. I wanted this to be a very visual work. Perhaps my favourite picture in the book is of Alekhine taking on Bogoljubow, with Lasker sat on a chair between the two players, looking on, mere inches from the action. It is hard to imagine one of today's top players choosing such an intimate vantage point to watch their peers battle it out - although, to be fair, it might well have been staged. What struck me about all the photographs was that across the eras the intensity of the matches, the sense of occasion, the feeling that these games mattered was always perfectly captured by the camera. It is little wonder that encounters that meant so much in the moment live on to this day.



During the writing, I learnt a lot about the insatiable drive to reach the very top that inevitably consumed many of our champions. From Fischer locking himself away in a

hotel room with no window, through to Max Euwe's revolutionary (for its era) fitness regime, and Alekhine's skimmed milk diet, many of these players left no stone unturned; even if others, such as the ridiculously talented Capablanca, achieved what they did, despite no real preparatory work at all.

I knew that *Checkmate!* would not be complete without exploring the lives of some famous female players, so I also wrote about Vera Menchik, Nona Gaprindashvili and Judit Polgar – the real-life embodiment of *The Queen's Gambit's* Beth Harmon. Menchik, who twice claimed the scalp of Max Euwe and competed with various male world champions on twenty-four occasions, reflected on the power of chess to break down barriers in a 1934 letter to *Chess Magazine*. 'I have often been asked, what made me think seriously about chess?... In other life circumstances it would not occur to me to spend time in such a way, but chess is a quiet game and therefore the best hobby for a person who can't speak the language properly.' Menchik's play shattered many glass ceilings for future generations of women chess players. Her life may have been ended prematurely by a WWII bomb, but her legacy lives on.



We have certainly come a long way from the nineteenth century, a time when chess magazines would routinely mock the notion that a woman could be a strong chess player. Polgar captured it best when she reflected on her victory over Kasparov, a champion who had once been sceptical of female players' aptitude for the game. 'When . . . I was torturing Garry at the board, little by little he transformed his visions. So this is what I'm saying: many people think that people — or the community — cannot change. But it is possible.'

I discovered that victory did not always bring our champions unalloyed joy. For instance, Spassky felt that his years as world champion were the unhappiest of his

life, and he once remarked ‘After I won the title, I was confronted with the real world. People do not believe naturally anymore – hypocrisy is everywhere.’ Fischer, of course, walked away, living for decades as a semi-vagrant. Steinitz and Lasker both faced financial struggles, and Steinitz’s mental health (much like Fischer’s) also collapsed. Alekhine too hardly met a happy end, dying alone as a pariah. Equally, inevitably, as we have learnt more about the game, a larger number of errors have now been identified in the play of the former champions.

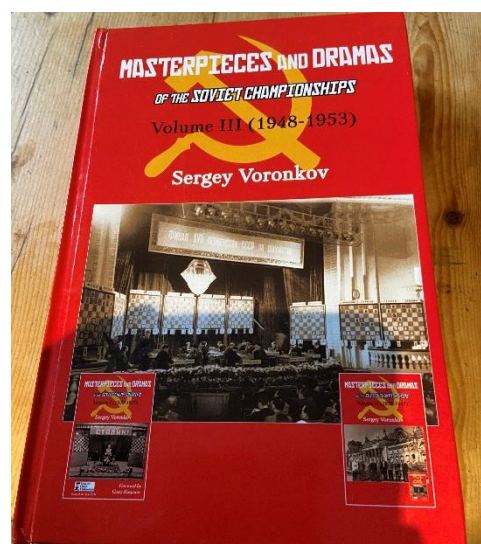
All this led me to reflect that ‘The games we have looked at continue to fascinate, each a work of art to rival the finest painting or sculpture. Yet perhaps it is their very imperfections which give them their meaning. Even the very best players are human. They make mistakes, pick themselves up, navigate their way through the sixty-four squares and life in general as best they can, just as we all do.’ They may not have been perfect players, or led perfect lives, but their contributions are all immense.

As each world champion yielded in turn to their successor, they left an abundance of brilliant games and fascinating stories for the rest of us to enjoy. Modern-day players all truly stand on the shoulders of giants. I hope that in some small way *Checkmate! Great Champions and Epic Matches from a Timeless Game* does justice to these wonderful players.

**Masterpieces and Dramas of the Soviet Championship
Volume III (1948-1953) by Sergey Voronkov
(Elk and Ruby)**

‘The chess players of one-sixth of the world are stronger than all the chess players of the rest of the world taken together.’

Salo Flohr – Quoted in *Masterpieces and Dramas Volume III*



This year, without question, Sergey Voronkov’s *Masterpieces and Dramas* series has been the highlight of my chess reading. It was a privilege to review the exceptional Volume II in a previous column, and I am delighted to report that Volume III is every bit as good. Covering the 1948-53 events, Voronkov brings to life the beginnings of the golden age of Soviet chess, a period when a galaxy of pre- and post-war stars collided with Botvinnik, Smyslov and Keres on one side of the divide, and Bronstein, Petrosian and Korchnoi on the other.

Voronkov tells the story of these fantastic contests, drawing on a host of sources, as well as providing 77 well-annotated games and over 220 photographs, including many (particularly from David Bronstein’s archive) that have not been seen before. As in the previous editions, Voronkov also excels at setting these contests within their broader historical context, in which Stalin looms large.

The 1949 event coincided with Stalin’s 70th birthday year, and 1952 was the last contest in his lifetime. Voronkov reflects thus on the 1952 victor, Botvinnik, and the times in which he lived: ‘The first [Soviet] world champion was and always will be an embodiment of Stalin’s epoch. And the sunset of that epoch was gloomy, bloody and dangerous – as was the decrepit Kremlin dictator who still dreamed of world domination.’

In the country at large, from the pogroms through to attacks on universities and waves of arrests, this was a desperately miserable period. Yet, while dependent on the State for permission to play in tournaments, the Soviet chess world of this era was a little more insulated, a little better protected than in the years described in Volumes I and II. Without question, the prestige Soviet chess players were now garnering internationally, with Botvinnik leading the vanguard, had had an effect. The days when chess players were at significant risk of being imprisoned or worse lay in the past, even if the shadow of what had gone before still loomed, and no one was wholly safe.

The fact that Botvinnik, Bronstein and Boleslavsky were all Jewish certainly did not prevent them succeeding, despite the pogroms. Moreover, the 1950 event in the Soviet jubilee year ‘...wasn’t won by some Russian “Chigorinist” such as Kotov or Smyslov, of whom our people could have been proud – the winner was Paul Keres, an Estonian who had barely escaped arrest after the war for playing in German tournaments... And all this happened at the peak of the fight against “rootless cosmopolitans!”’

Another striking factor of the Soviet Championships in the first half of this era is that the stage was absent its number one superstar. Having become world champion, Botvinnik took a sabbatical to work on his engineering degree, leading Panov to write in 1950 '...The fact that the world champion hasn't played in a single competition for almost three years and has missed four national championships in a row is nothing short of baffling.'

Yet the Soviet championships were still intensely competitive affairs. Salo Flohr remarked, 'It's hard to live on memories of past glories. I'm in desperate need of success. I want to win so much!' - a desire that was matched by all the other competitors. When Korchnoi found himself up against Smyslov in the final round of the 1951 Leningrad qualifying event, Smyslov had already won the tournament. Korchnoi needed a draw to secure his master norm, but victory was essential were he to also qualify for the finals. Korchnoi knew that Smyslov had theatre tickets and was looking for a quick draw. Korchnoi remarked 'Of course, I decided to play and ruined Smyslov's evening.' Perhaps Smyslov had the last laugh, as Korchnoi went awry in a complicated position and after the adjournment 'barely managed to save the game'.

We may envy elite chess players who are blessed with a level of talent that most of us do not possess, but as the Korchnoi story highlights, their lot is not always an easy one. Voronkov notes that 'If a grandmaster wins, everyone says "It's only natural." If he loses, then everyone sighs in pity... Kotov was one such player who had already experienced this pain. When he defeated Petrosian, nobody gave him much praise. However, when he got into a difficult position the next day and ultimately had to resign to Mikenas, the sceptics immediately said, "Some player he is!"'

The 1948 event saw Bronstein tie with Kotov, and a six-match play-off was mooted, but never took place. It appears that the wily KGB agent Kotov did not fancy his chances, and used his political influence to ensure the pair were declared joint Soviet Champions. Interestingly, the following year Bronstein would tie with Smyslov and, for reasons that appear less clear, a suggested play-off did not happen. So much for the strength of Soviet planning! Voronkov laments that the Bronstein vs Smyslov contest that never was must be remembered as a lost opportunity. 'Such a pity that they didn't play a match! Fate never gave them another chance.'

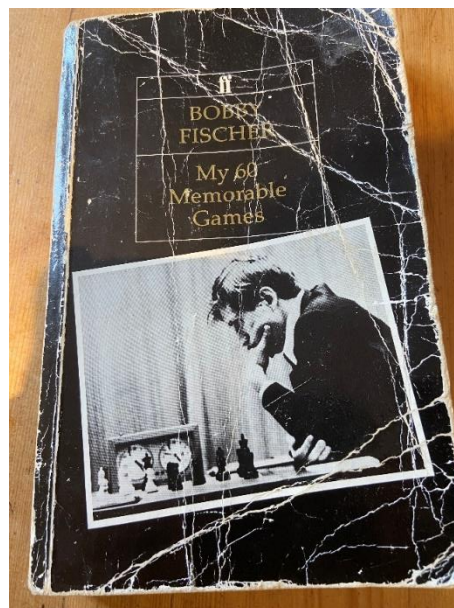
Paul Keres would triumph in 1950 and 1951, before Botvinnik, who had marked his return to the board with a shaky fifth place in 1951, tied for victory in 1952 with

Taimanov. Botvinnik would go on to defeat Taimanov in a 1953 play-off match. He had come a long way from 1951, when 'Botvinnik's fallibility was again demonstrated: in a drawn position, against Smyslov, he left a piece en prise, and he needlessly dropped a point against Geller.' Even for a player as talented as Botvinnik, his long lay-off certainly had a detrimental effect. Still, what better environment than the Soviet Championship to brush off the rust?

Voronkov provides many fascinating portraits of the players. To share but one, he quotes Viktor Vasiliev on Petrosian thus - Tigran 'got to Moscow in late 1949, wearing a light coat, summer shoes and with some chess books under his arm - that was his entire property.' From such humble beginnings, Petrosian's journey, which would ultimately lead him to world championship victory, had begun.

It is impossible for a single review to do justice to the richness of the historical sources, intriguing games and beautifully told stories contained within this book. I have but attempted to give a flavour in this review. If you are looking for the ideal Christmas gift for the chess player in your life - the three volumes of this series are what you are looking for. I would encourage everybody to go one step further and buy them for themselves. They are truly perfect, both for the festive season and any other.

My 60 Memorable Games, by Bobby Fischer (Simon & Schuster)



So much about Bobby Fischer's life was a mass of contradictions and wasted opportunities, leaving a sense of what might have been. The greatest of champions walked away at the peak of his powers, to live for decades

as a semi-vagrant. As well as the brilliant games the world never got to see, we also missed out on the books he might have published. But just as his exploits on the sixty-four squares live on, so does the fantastic *My 60 Memorable Games*, which has been described by British Chess Magazine as the best chess book ever written.

It was commonplace in this era for chess players to share their most crushing victories, to assert their brilliance and prowess, but *My 60 Memorable Games* was somewhat different and altogether more human. It contains three losses and nine draws amongst the efforts, along with annotations in which Fischer revealed significant humility as he sought to make sense of the complexities of the game. In some ways, despite his brilliance, his openness made him feel very relatable to all chess players, whatever their strength. Moreover, Fischer's 'Game of the Century' against Donald Byrne did not even make the collection. Frank Brady noted in *Endgame* that this was 'a humble gesture unheard of in the annals of grandmaster literature'.

Very like the saga as to whether Fischer would turn up for his 1972 title match against Spassky, whether this book would ever see the light of day was another 'on-off' drama. John Donaldson wrote in *Bobby Fischer and His World* that 'For much of the project, which started sometime in 1964, Fischer was torn between his desire to write as perfect a book as possible (which led to endless revisions) and the fear of giving the Soviets (and other competitors) too many of his trade secrets.'

At one point Fischer returned the publisher's advance, at another he suggested the book be published with no annotations. Ultimately, he decided to go ahead, even if his reasoning for doing so might strike some as a little eccentric. Larry Evans, who wrote the introductions to every game in the book, explained: 'He was feeling depressed about the world and thought there was an excellent chance that there would be a nuclear holocaust soon. He felt he should enjoy whatever money he could get before it was too late.'

Each of the games is titled in a way that cannot help but draw the reader in. 'Bear hug', 'Asking for trouble' and 'Detective story' are amongst the most evocative. The preambles all set the scene perfectly. For instance, in relation to 'Detective story,' Fischer writes of his encounter with Keres... 'Occasionally one comes across a miraculous victory in which, despite intensive post-mortems, there seems to be no losing move or pattern, no blunder on the part of the vanquished... the reader is

invited to share the magnifying glass with Fischer and hunt for that elusive error.'

The reflections on Fischer's loss to Tal in game 17 must mirror the feelings that many of us have experienced, albeit in less rarefied circumstances, on seeing potential victory slip away. 'A careful reading of Fischer's notes will reveal a clear echo of the strong emotions that engulfed him during this tense encounter. He misses a win in the opening and several draws along the way, demonstrating dramatically how a continuously advantageous position can abruptly be turned into defeat by seemingly insignificant miscalculations.' All chess players, irrespective of strength, have more in common than divides them. Caissa is impossible to control, despite our best efforts, even for a player of Fischer's skill.

Perhaps game 39, Fischer's one and only encounter with Mikhail Botvinnik, remains the most talked about of these encounters today. Fischer refuted Botvinnik's opening preparation, which led the Soviet World Champion to confess that his 'equanimity was wrecked'. Yet Fischer did not make the most of his advantage and adjourned in a position that appeared still to be winning but was more problematic. The Soviet team worked through the night, and Botvinnik found a saving resource to hold the draw. Fischer always remained convinced that he should have won.

Garry Kasparov wrote many years later in *Child of Change* that Fischer 'left the hall as white as a sheet.' Fischer's unshakeable conviction was not backed up by reality. Botvinnik published extensive analysis to demonstrate the draw and Kasparov wrote that 'I found yet another way for Botvinnik to draw, showing that Fischer, for all his obsession with this particular game, was wrong. At heart, I think he needed to prove in history that he could beat the great Botvinnik, having announced in advance that he would do so.'

My 60 Memorable Games is a gem. For many chess players, it is the book that makes sense of our choices and shows that our struggles at the board matter. This is a chronicle that feels as personal as a diary. As with Fischer himself, we might have hoped for more - a second volume, a follow-up that charted the life Fischer never led, one in which he squared up to Karpov and Kasparov. It was not to be. Yet what we do have is enough - a flawed man, a life not fully fulfilled. Yet Fischer remains amongst the greatest of champions and *My 60 Memorable Games* amongst the greatest of books. That really is some legacy.

It's a Puzzlement!



Welcome to our puzzles section! Last month's puzzles once again proved very popular, so we are back with more - all hand-picked by ChessPuzzle.net

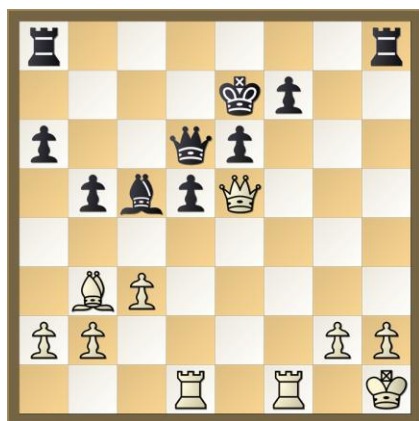
This month's selection is dedicated to GM Dr John Nunn, England's newly-minted Over 65 World Champion.

We provide a link to the relevant ChessPuzzle.net page and a QR code so you can try the puzzles interactively and get hints if needed or even the solutions!

The puzzles are arranged in order of difficulty (easiest first). When you click on the links below you need to play a move to see the hint and/or solution.

Puzzle 1

John Nunn (2565) – Yasser Seirawan (2595)
Toluca Interzonal, 1982

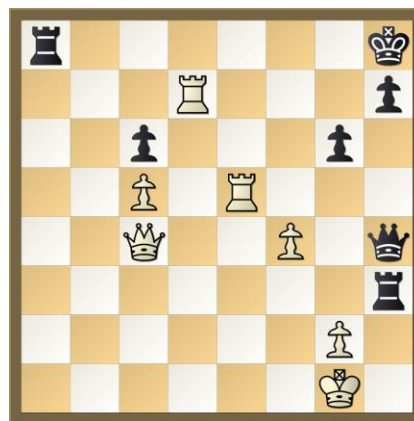


White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 2

John Nunn (2590) – Stefan Duhr
Lugano op, 1982

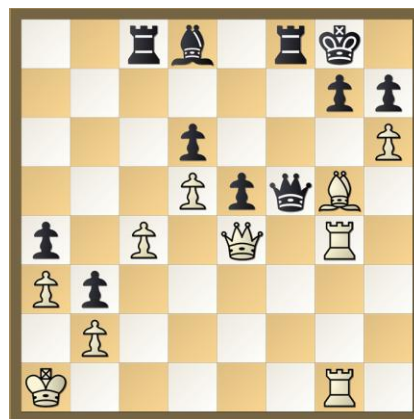


White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 3

John Nunn (2600) – Curt Hansen (2500)
Naestved (10), 1985

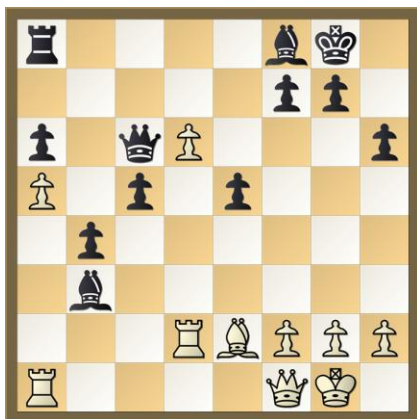


White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 4

John Nunn (2600) – Jaime Sunye Neto (2480)
Amsterdam OHRA, 1985

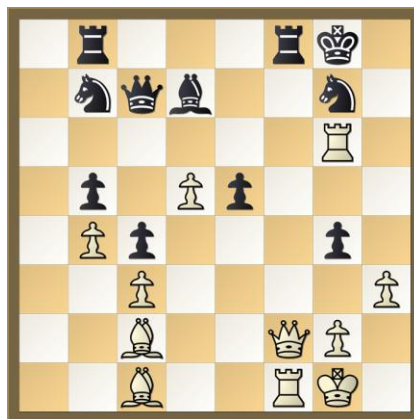


White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 6

John Nunn (2590) – Nigel Short (2615)
OHRA-A, Brussels 1986

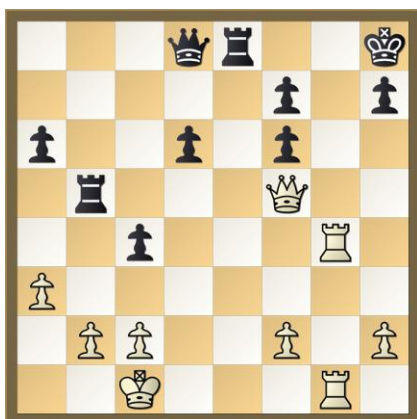


White to checkmate

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 5

John Nunn (2600) – Craig William Pritchett (2395)
Bundesliga 8586, 1985

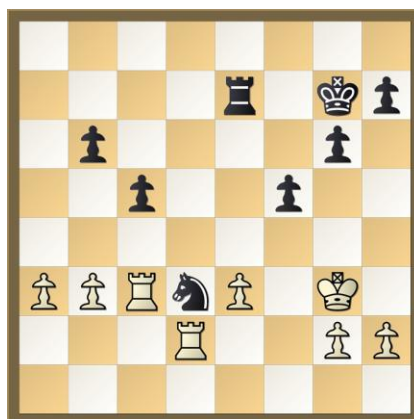


White to checkmate

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 7

John FAI Roedgaard (2380) – John Nunn (2620)
28th Chess Olympiad, Thessaloniki, 1988



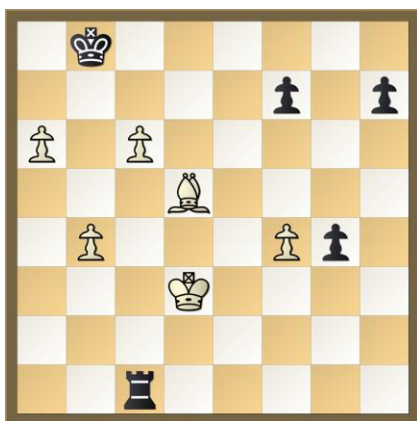
Black to checkmate

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 8

John Nunn – Max Dlugy

Wijk aan Zee, 1990



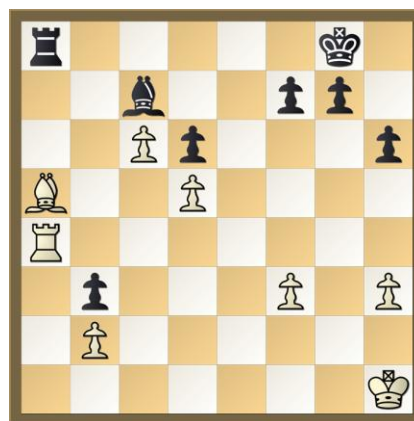
White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 10

John Nunn (2605) – Jun Xie (2510)

Hastings 9697, 1996



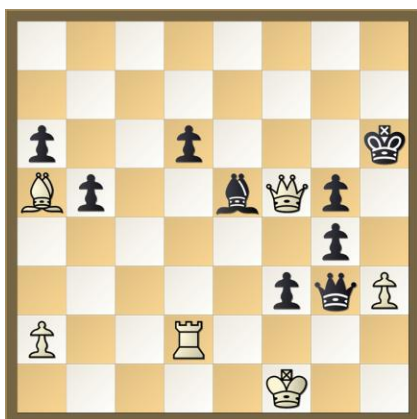
White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 9

Oswald Gschnitzer (2420) – John Nunn (2600)

Bundesliga 8990, 1990



Black to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 11

John Nunn (2578) – Martin Borriess (2439)

Bundesliga 0001, 2000



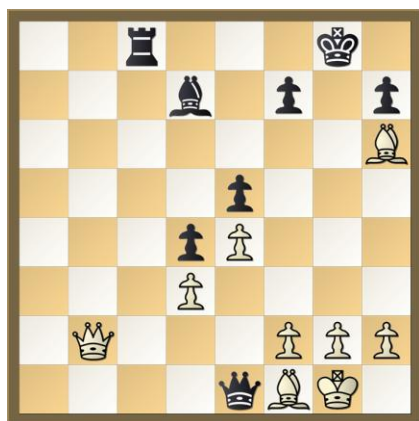
White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

Puzzle 12

GM John Nunn (2580) – IM N. Birnboim (2361)

World Senior 65+, 2022



White to win

[Click here for the solution](#)

All in One

For all the puzzles on one page just visit [ChessMoves December Puzzles](#) by clicking the link or via the QR Code below



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Around the Country

UK Open Blitz Finals 2022



Top four in the Open left to right – 2nd GM Eldar Gasanov, 1st GM John Speelman, 4th Freddy Gordon and 3rd GM Mark Hebden



Top four in the Women's left to right - 3rd and joint English Women's Champion WGM Kamila Hryshenko, 1st and UK Women's Blitz Champion WGM Elmira Mirzoeva, 2nd and joint English Women's Blitz Champion Bodhana Sivanandan and 4th Stephanie Duessler

The 2022 UK Blitz finals took place at the Woodland Grange Hotel, Leamington Spa on Saturday 3rd December.

The Open and Women's finals were played as two tournaments over 15 rounds for the two groups of qualifiers from the 8 regional events.

Photographs by Dennis Dicen. Further details and full results - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/uk-blitz-championships-2022/>.

Open Final



IA Matt Carr surveys the action in the Open final

The Open final proved to be a close battle between GM John Speelman and GM Eldar Gasanov, with the lead changing hands several times and the final result in the balance right up to the last round, with both players finishing on 1½ points and Jon winning on tie break. GM Mark Hebden finished third on 11 points. Top Scottish Junior Freddy Waldhausen Gordon put in a tremendous performance to finish in fourth place on 10½ points, including wins against GMs Danny Gormally, Mark Hebden and Jon Speelman. Freddy's TPR was 2401, with an impressive 243 Elo points gained from the event.



Freddy plays out the final stages of his round 8 draw against FM Yichen Han, watched by GM Jon Speelman and IM Jose Camacho Collados



Winner and UK and English Blitz Champion – Jon Speelman



2nd placed GM Eldar Gasanov



3rd placed GM Mark Hebden

The final standings at the end of the 15 rounds are shown in the table below.

	Player	Fed	Pts
1	GM Jon S Speelman *	ENG	12½
2	GM Eldar Gasanov	UKR	12½
3	GM Mark L Hebden	ENG	11
4	Frederick Waldhausen Gordon	SCO	10½

5	IM Jonah B Willow	ENG	9½
6	GM Daniel W Gormally	ENG	9½
7	FM Yichen Han	NED	8½
8	IM Jose Camacho Collados	WLS	8
9	Jacob Connor Boswell	ENG	7
10	NM Alfie Onslow	ENG	6½
11	Allan W Beardsworth	ENG	5½
12	CM Jonathan Pein	ENG	5
13	FM Charles H Storey	ENG	5
14	Oliver Stubbs	ENG	4
15	Koichi B Nicholas	ENG	3½
16	Mandar Tahmankar	IND	1½

* UK Open Blitz Champion 2022 and English Blitz Champion 2022

Freddy Waldhausen Gordon has kindly annotated his win against GM Jon Speelman for us. Freddy gains space on the kingside, including an excellent pawn sacrifice with 17 e6 which locks out Jon's dark-squared bishop and then switches to an attack on the queenside against Jon's castled king.

Waldhausen Gordon, Frederick (2067) - Speelman, Jon S (2532) [B11]

UK Blitz Championship Final 2022 - 03.12.2022



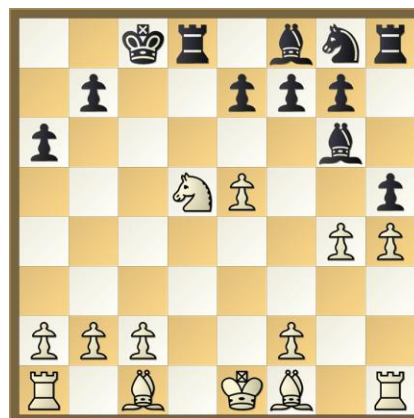
Chess demolishes differences. It's a language of different generations – Judit Polgar

With annotations by Freddy Waldhausen Gordon.

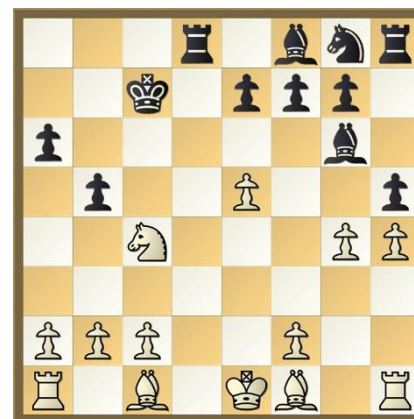
1.e4 c6 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3 a6



4.d4 Bg4 5.h3 Bh5 6.exd5 cxd5 7.g4 Bg6 8.Ne5 Nc6 9.h4 Nxe5 10.dxe5 h5 11.Qxd5 Qxd5 12.Nxd5 0-0-0

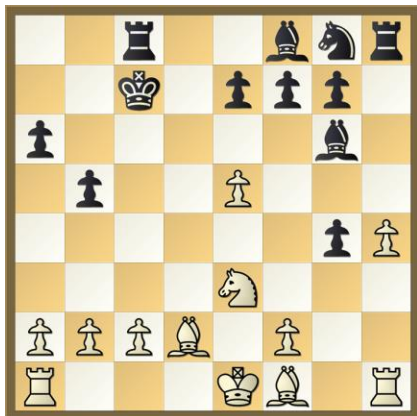


13.Nb6+ Kc7 14.Nc4 b5



Up to now this has all been theory, but now we are out of theory.

15.Ne3 hxg4 16.Bd2 Rc8



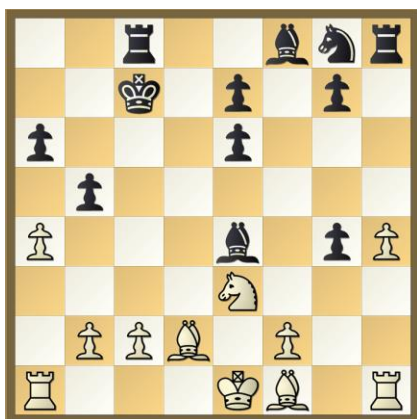
The rook moves because Ba5 is threatened, and it is moved because it could also be a threat if you move your king.

17.e6! fxe6



I played e6 because it blocks in the bishop, which is really important, and it also opens up the angles to the black king.

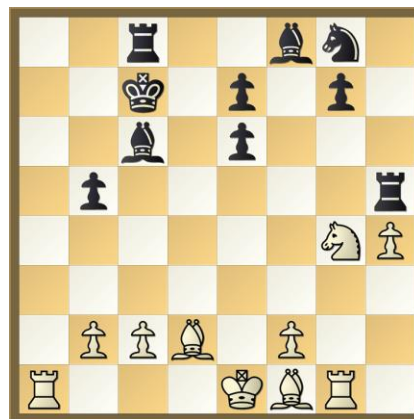
18.a4 Be4



I am putting pressure on the f1 to a6 diagonal. I'm breaking up the pawns, forcing my opponent to do something.

19.Rg1 Bc6 Jon then quickly protects b5, but at the cost of the attack on c2, which will allow my knight to do other things.

20.axb5 axb5 21.Nxg4 Rh5



I do not understand this move. I think he wants to play e5, but I am not sure, which is why I played Bf4+.

22.Bf4+ Kb7 23.Ne5 Rxh4 24.Bg3 Re4+ 25.Kd2



25...Nf6 I'm not sure he should play this. Maybe Bd5?

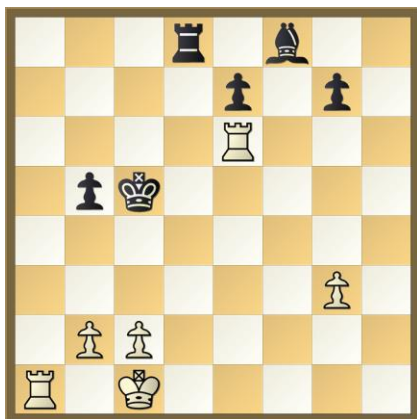
26.Nxc6 Kxc6



Now Jon has the chance not to lose the exchange with Rxc6, but Kxc6 loses the exchange.

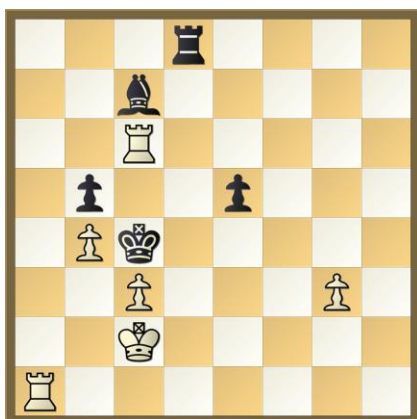
27.Bg2 Rd8+ 28.Kc1 Kb6 Now I am just better because of the exchange advantage and the fact that the bishop on f8 is not active.

29.Bxe4 Nxe4 30.Re1 Nxg3 31.Rxe6+ Kc5 32.fxg3



32...g6 A last desperate pawn sacrifice.

33.Rxg6 e5 34.c3 Bd6 35.Kc2 Bc7 36.b4+ Kc4 37.Rc6+

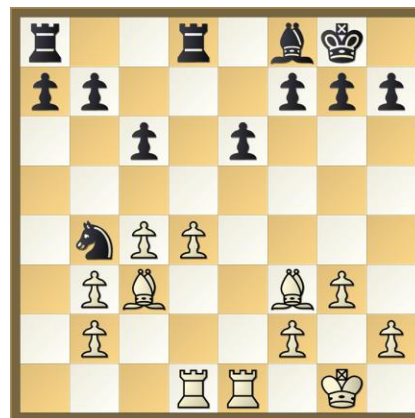


1-0

Jon's loss to Freddy was his only loss of the tournament – after which he spent the remaining rounds chasing GM Eldar Gasanov. Here is Jon's win against Danny Gormally in round 13 which allowed him to draw level with Eldar, before winning on tie break at the end of the 15 rounds.

Jon S Speelman (2500) - Daniel W Gormally, (2450) [D02]
UK Blitz Championship Final 2022, 03.12.2022

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 c6 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.0-0 Bg4 5.d4 Nbd7 6.Nbd2 e6 7.Re1 Be7 8.e4 dxe4 9.Nxe4 0-0 10.c3 Bh5 11.Nxf6+ Nxf6 12.Qb3 Bxf3 13.Bxf3 Qb6 14.Bd2 Rfd8 15.Rad1 Nd5 16.c4 Qxb3 17.axb3 Nb4 18.Bc3 Bf8

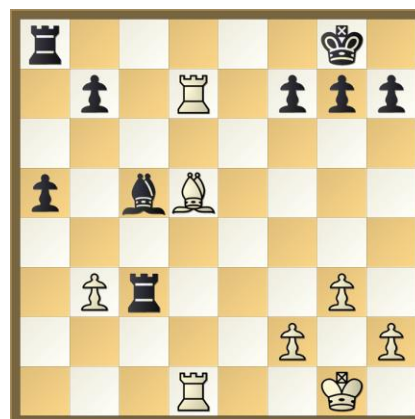


We reach a queenless middlegame with a more or less equal position from Jon's Réti opening. Jon has the bishop pair and will play to open up the position at the right time.

19.Re2 Na2 20.Red2 Nxc3 Exchanging one of the bishops
21.bxc3 a5 Looking to open the a-file with an attack on white's queenside pawns.

22.d5 Countering in the centre with the d5 break.

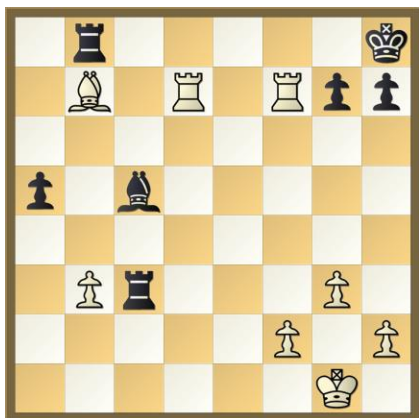
22...exd5 23.cxd5 cxd5 24.Bxd5 Rd7 25.Bf3 Rc7 26.Rd7 Rxc3 27.Bd5 Bc5



Looking for counterplay with the opposite-coloured bishops. White will win the f-pawn and is clearly better at this point with the faster attack.

28.Rxf7 28.Bxf7+ Kf8 29.Bd5 may be better, with the idea of 29...Rc2 30 Rf7+

28...Kh8 29.Bxb7 Rb8 30.Rdd7

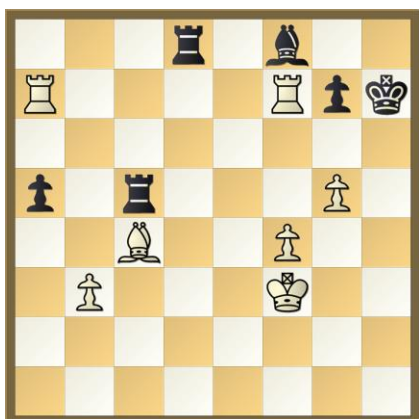


White is now much better, with doubled rooks on the seventh rank attacking the g-pawn.

30...Bf8 The only defence.

31.Bd5 Protecting the c-pawn.

31...h6 32.Ra7 Rc5 33.Bc4 Re5 34.Kg2 Rc8 35.h4 Rce8 36.f4 Rc5 37.Kf3 Rb8 38.g4 Rd8 39.g5 hxg5 40.hxg5 Kh7



White is winning now, as there is no way of stopping f5 followed by f6 with loss of the exchange or mate to follow.

1-0

Women's Final



Women's final with a view across the playing area

The Women's section was an outstanding and historic tournament with top seed WGM Elmira Mirzoeva winning the event on 12 out of 15, closely followed by Bodhana Sivanandan and Kamila Hryshenko on 11 points.



First placed WGM Elmira Mirzoeva



Second placed Bodhana Sivanandan playing her round 10 game against WIM Natasha Regan



Third placed Kamila Hryshenko

Bodhana's performance was described by Leonard Barden as historic with an unprecedented run of 8 wins in a row in rounds 2 to 9, finishing on 12 out of 15 in total. As well as coming second in the event, Bodhana becomes the youngest ever English national champion at seven years of age, sharing the title with Kamila Hryshenko

who finished on the same number of points. Bodhana's TPR was 2076 Elo with an increase of 328 rating points from the event.

	Player	Fed	Pts
1	WGM Elmira Mirzoeva *	FID	12
2	Bodhana Sivanandan **	ENG	11
3	Kamila Hryshchenko **	ENG	11
4	Stefanie Duessler	GER	8½
5	Meri Grigoryan	ENG	8½
6	Madara Orlovska	LAT	8
7	Andrea Henderson	AND	8
8	Louise Head	ENG	7½
9	Elis Denele Dican	ENG	7
10	Lindsay Pyun	ENG	5½
11	Anusha Subramanian	ENG	5½
12	Eugenia Karas	ENG	5
13	Natasha K Regan	ENG	4
14	Anita Somton	ENG	3½
15	Louison Fuchs	FRA	0

* UK Open Blitz Women's Champion 2022

** Joint English Women's Blitz Champion 2022

Here we feature one of Bodhana's wins against Eugenia Karas in round 7.

Eugenia Karas (2004) – Bodhana Sivanandan (1594) [D10]

UK Women's Blitz Championship Final 2022, 03.12.2022

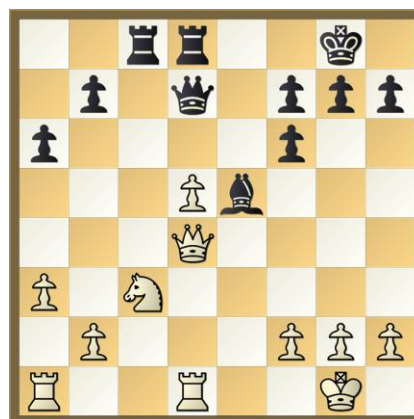
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.Bg5 White plays an exchange Slav with Bg5, with the idea of doubling Black's pawns after Nf6.

4...Nf6 5.Bxf6 exf6 6.Nc3 Nc6 7.Nf3 Be6 8.e3 Bd6 9.Bb5 0-0 10.0-0

The position is more or less equal, with Black's two bishops compensating for the doubled f-pawns.

10...Rc8 11.a3 a6 12.Bd3 Ne7 13.e4 dxe4 14.Bxe4 Qd7 15.d5 Bf5 15...Bg4 is possibly better, pinning the knight.

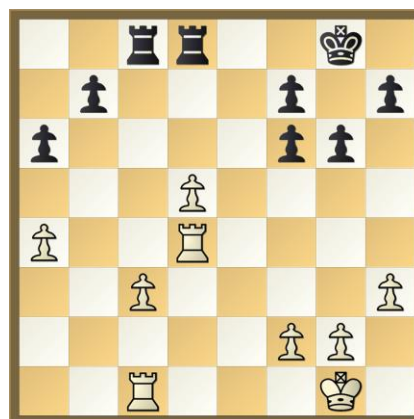
16.Bxf5 Nxf5 17.Nd4 Nxd4 18.Qxd4 Rfd8 19.Rfd1 Be5



Black is slightly better as the d-pawn is blockaded and Black has attacking chances on both sides of the board.

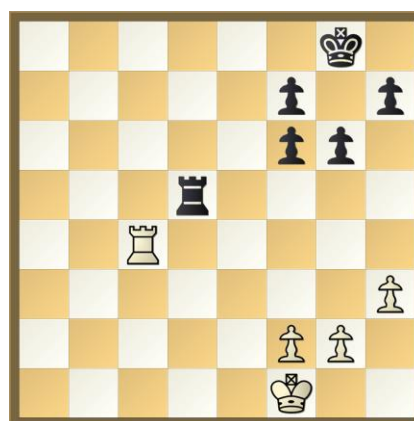
20.Qd3 Qc7 21.h3 Bxc3 22.Rac1 Recapturing the bishop without losing the pawn.

22...Qb6 23.bxc3 Qc5 24.a4 g6 25.Qd4 Qxd4 26.Rxd4



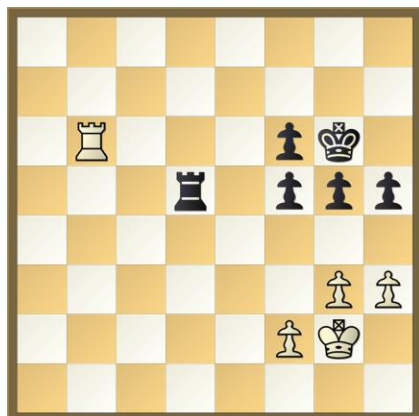
Reaching an equal rook ending where Bodhana demonstrates excellent technique to win the d-pawn and convert based on her kingside pawn majority.

26...Rc5 27.c4 b5 28.axb5 axb5 29.Kf1 bxc4 30.Rcxc4 Rxc4 31.Rxc4 Rxd5



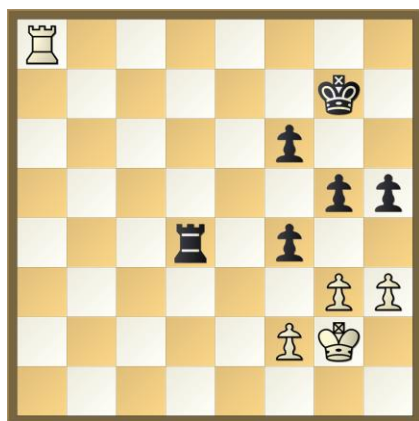
Stage 1 is complete, with Bodhana a pawn up on the kingside, although with a doubled f-pawn the position is a clear technical draw which requires a number of errors on White's part for Bodhana to clinch the win.

32.Rc6 Kg7 33.g3 f5 34.Kg2 g5 35.Ra6 f6 36.Rb6 Kg6 37.Ra6 h5 38.Rb6



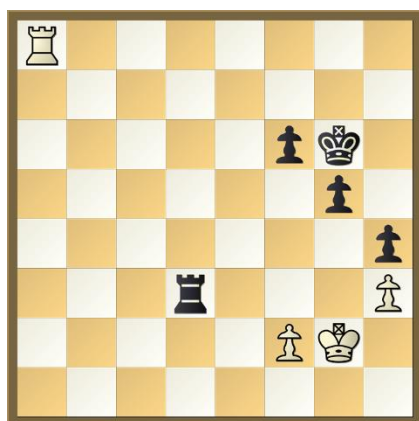
Advancing the pawn majority.

38...Rd3 39.Rb8 Rd4 40.Rg8+ Kh7 41.Rf8 Kg7 42.Ra8 f4!



43.Ra5 43.g4 is better to keep the black pawns doubled.

43...Kg6 44.Ra8 fxf3 45.Kxf3 Rd3+ 46.Kg2 h4.

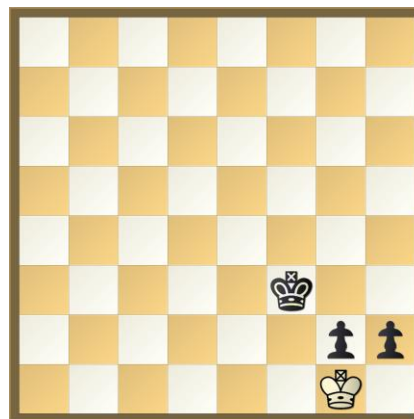


Continuing the advance.

47.Rg8+ Kf5 48.Ra8 Rd4 Preparing Kf4.

49.Ra6 Ke5 50.Ra5+ Kf4 51.Ra6 f5 52.Rf6 Rd2 53.Ra6 Rd4 54.Ra5 g4 55.hxg4 fxg4 Black is now much better, but some technique is still required to convert.

56.Ra8 h3+ 57.Kh2 Kf3 58.Rf8+ Rf4 59.Rxf4+ Kxf4 60.Kg1 Kf3 61.Kh2 Kxf2 62.Kh1 Kf3 63.Kh2 g3+ 64.Kh1 g2+ 65.Kg1 h2+



0-1

Scarborough Report by Nigel Hepworth

Scarborough's 45th congress saw a few changes, with Andrew Butterworth and Chess Direct Ltd retiring earlier in the year. So Nigel Hepworth has now taken over the administration and Chess & Bridge from London are now providing the bookstall and sets. Thanks go to Alex McFarlane as chief arbiter, David Clayton who provided live boards in the Open, and Damien McElvenny. It was Damien's first congress since qualifying as an arbiter; I hope it was good experience for him. Thanks also go to Trevor and Janet Blower for their help in setting up and assisting with taking entry fees.



As usual, the congress was held in the Spa Complex's Ocean Room on the South Bay during the last weekend in October, and despite a few late withdrawals we had a decent turnout of around 340. Unlike many congresses, the Spa allows everyone to play in the same hall and is only a walk away from the promenade. There are also shops and lots of B&Bs available close by, so it's not surprising that it's a popular event. The weather at this time of year can be hit and miss but this year it was mild although we did have a downpour!

In the Open we saw Jim Burnett and Ali Jaunooby just missing out to the joint winners of 15-year-old Rajat Makkar of France and 14-year-old Lorenzo Fava from Italy, who both scored 4½ out of 5. Richard Cowan won all his games in the Major, and the Intermediate section saw a three-way tie between James Hall, Andrew Allen and Simon Layhe with 4½ points. Daniel Turnbull also won all his games in the Minor. whilst the Foundation saw a tie between Vivek Shelgaonkar Yogesh and Kam Wa Siu with 4½ points. All the results can be found on www.chess-results.com where there are also 40 games from the live boards available. All the prize winners can be found on our website www.scarboroughchess.uk.

It was alarming to find that the average age of entries at this year's congress was around 50 in all sections, apart from in the Open where it was under 40, and we had six over 80-year-olds. So to try and encourage the younger generation, one of the changes for next year is to host a one-day junior event in the Promenade Room which is located under the Ocean Room at the Spa. The other main change for next year is to make the Major FIDE-rated along with the Open. It is booked for 27th-29th October 2023 at the Spa and full details will be confirmed along with leaflets at Blackpool's Chess Conference in February. Our website, www.scarboroughchess.uk, will be up to date with developments, where there'll also be an online entry form.

Thanks again to all who entered, and we appreciated receiving early entries. Thanks also to all who gave donations to help fund next year's congress. Anyone with ideas on how to encourage others to enter please contact us through our website, as we aim to break the 400 level and try to fill the Ocean Room. We are also on the lookout for arbiters to help out next year, as Alex McFarlane won't be attending and David Clayton may be at the Isle of Man. So if anyone is interested, again please make contact through our website. Special thanks go to Alex for all his help and support over the years. And finally, a quick mention to Bill Ward from Woodseats who has attended almost every Scarborough congress - his wedding and being in hospital have been the reason for the odd absence!



Chess in Schools and Communities



Chess in Schools and Communities (CSC) is a nationwide charity with a mission to introduce chess to schools and inner city communities and to highlight its social and educational benefits. The charity was founded in 2009 and has steadily grown to have a presence across the country, with a focus on the key urban areas of London, Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, Leeds, Teesside, Birmingham and South Wales.



The charity teaches chess to over 15,000 children per year, many of whom get to visit the London Chess Classic/ChessFest

CSC delivers weekly chess sessions in over 250 schools nationwide. In some of these schools we run traditional chess clubs, either before school, at lunchtime, or after school. However, the core offering of the charity is to run chess lessons in curriculum time. By doing this we ensure our programme is fully inclusive. Girls, often under-represented in chess clubs, excel in our lessons and we often find that children with special educational needs flourish. In addition to the schools that participate in our programme, we have also supported chess at over 1,500 other schools, with staff training and the provision of free chess equipment.

To support our teaching, we have developed a unique 30-week curriculum consisting of lesson plans, worksheets and handouts that takes our students from compete beginners to proficient chess players over the course of a school year. The lessons are delivered by our nationwide

network of tutors, all of whom are fully trained and have enhanced DBS checks. We offer [free training](#) to teachers and teaching assistants in our schools, ensuring that they have the skills and knowledge to support our tutors in the classroom.



Over 300 children competed at our schools tournament held in Liverpool's iconic St. George's Hall in July 2022

In addition to our work in schools, CSC delivers regular chess lessons in a variety of community settings: libraries, hospitals, homes for older people, youth centres, and prisons (see [Channel 4 report](#) on our work in prisons). These lessons assume no prior knowledge of chess and are aimed at communities that experience high levels of socio-economic deprivation. Much of this work is aimed at tackling social isolation. The lessons are always free at the point of delivery.



Over 11,000 people attended ChessFest in London's Trafalgar Square - the UK's largest one-day chess event

CSC also encourages mass participation in chess through large-scale events such as the London Chess Classic and [ChessFest](#). The **London Chess Classic** usually takes place in December and includes a [schools festival](#) attended by up to 2,500 children a year. The children receive chess lessons, watch a 'Meet the Grandmaster' show, and take part in a tournament against their peers from across the country. **ChessFest** is a week-long celebration of chess culminating in the charity taking over Trafalgar Square for

a day of free family-friendly activities: lessons, simultaneous displays, and a living chess demonstration featuring 32 professional actors on a giant board.

CSC welcomes applications from people interested in our school, community, or prison programmes. We have vacancies across the country for paid work and for volunteers. CSC runs a comprehensive induction programme for new tutors, including a training course and a period spent shadowing an experienced CSC tutor. While it is important to have a basic knowledge of chess, we have found that teaching experience or the ability to work with children in a classroom setting is of greater value. Enthusiasm and a passion for learning are essential. If you are interested, please complete our [application form](#).

We are recruiting schools. If you want chess in your child's or grandchild's school please [contact us](#).

To find out more about the work of Chess in Schools and Communities please visit [our website](#).

Chess In Schools and Communities are Recruiting New Tutors

Passionate about chess? Chess in Schools and Communities are recruiting new tutors nationwide to teach in schools, libraries and prisons. We have particular need in the following areas — Leeds, Merseyside, Birmingham, Cardiff, Essex and North/East London.

We run a comprehensive induction programme for new tutors, including a training course and a period spent shadowing an experienced CSC tutor. Our tutors are currently active in over 250 schools, libraries and prisons in 80 boroughs across England and Wales. Whilst it is important to have a basic knowledge of chess, we have found that having classroom experience or the ability to work with children in a classroom setting is of greater value.

Paid and volunteer roles are available with flexible hours. Sign up now to become a Chess in Schools tutor at www.chessinschools.co.uk

Greater Manchester Joins NCCU **by Steve Westmoreland**

I actually had great ideas for an article, with lots of pictures and a huge celebration, when Mike Truran pinged me late at night to write this. Sadly, he messaged

me AFTER the game and I was dragooned into playing for the U2050 team at the time, meaning my phone was switched off with no means to take photos. Apologies to the readers of this article as I put the word AMATEUR into my amateur chess writings!

Please note this article is written from my own Yorkshire perspective as Captain and Vice-President, and as someone who passionately advocated for Greater Manchester joining the Northern Counties Chess Union.



OK, this is not from the event but I wanted to show you the hoodies many of the players were wearing in the 1450 team and other teams. Rogan and Jacob (middle) played in the match, Awen (left and will no doubt play the next match) and Harley (super nice lad I hope to see playing county in future). This was at a Yorkshire Junior Chess Association event in York.

Greater Manchester sits within the counties of Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire and Derbyshire. Founded on 1st April 1974, it has been the source of one of the longest-running disputes in chess history.

Early attempts for Greater Manchester to play within the Northern Counties Chess Union were rebuffed. The formation of this chess association led to arguments and ructions during the last 40 years, forcing them to play games from the Midlands.

There was the threat of legal action on top of this. However, Greater Manchester's attempts to join the NCCU found traction with a number of counties and outside supporters, leading to Yorkshire putting a successful motion before the NCCU to admit Greater Manchester based on players in the region picking a county.

It was not just Yorkshire, but goodwill and support were also received from the ECF, Merseyside, Cleveland and Northumberland. Tim Wall did a fantastic job behind the scenes, engaging widely and chairing (we spent a lot of

time talking). Mike Truran was fully supportive, offering advice (again a lot of time talking), whilst Andy Wainwright put up with my constant brainstorming and politicking in the run up to the NCCU AGM. The thankyou list is quite large: Damien McElvenny, Mick Norris and everyone in the NCCU who openly discussed and voted.

The decision in the end proved fortuitous as Manchester put five teams into the NCCU with the first match planned for 26th November with three teams in play.

Greater Manchester U1450, U1650 and U1850 teams vs Yorkshire on 26th November 2022 at the Swinton Royal British Legion

Several of us have never gone to a chess match before and received a hug or such a warm welcome. The Legion itself is a large venue with the U1450 and U1650 teams in the downstairs hall and the U2050 team up the stairs in the main chess room. The warm food was lovely. I would have taken pictures but a shortage in the U2050 team meant I had to lose a game with my phone off and keep a non-camera eye on my U1450 team, as well as the two kids I was directly responsible for.



Jacob Westmoreland, Rogan O'Reilly and Alex Burke of Holmfirth, with Kai Taylor (hiding food) of York

All games were played in a good spirit, with many reviewing their games afterwards in the upstairs room. In the U1450 section Yorkshire had seven juniors playing, including boards 1 and 2. Despite a disparity in rating, it was decided on the last game with Kai Taylor turning a two-pawn deficit into a win. Alex Burke and Jacob Westmoreland from Holmfirth were the other juniors to gain a full point, followed by Dan (Holmfirth), Steve (Harrogate) and Sebastian (Hull), whilst Stuart (Hull) drew.

I was particularly pleased with Jacob's win but, as he is my son, I would be!



Taken by Damien McElvenny later on. Equal points in the U1450 match with the deciding game between Kai and Samarth in front

The U1650 match was more comfortable for Yorkshire, with wins from Jeremy Butts, Elinor Gorrell, Angelica Rowe (moving up from the U1450 team last season), Jack Howarth and John Tate. The scoreline was the same in the U2050 match, but it is noted that there were only two draws in that section and six overall. Watch and learn, Open team!

Finally, these were young sides playing within both Counties. Yorkshire had only one player over 50 in the U1450 team and a large number of under 20s in both the U1450 and U1650 teams. This is a trend we are noticing throughout chess at present, with a sudden influx of online players making it to over the board play. These players have proved to be very reliable and happy to play for their county.

It will only strengthen northern chess as they make their way up the ratings.

As an example, Alex (aged 12) in the U1450 team was only playing his third match. During his first junior session at Holmfirth, he beat our top junior player and a coach, having only played online before. Another similar player has just joined Holmfirth.

Leeds is reporting an influx of players in their 20s, while Ilkley Chess Centre is having to organise more sessions for juniors due to demand. The recent Scarborough Congress scarred many an established player.

Yorkshire U1850 team Vs Greater Manchester on 3rd December at The Stumble Inn, Holmbridge

Finally, a county event that I can walk to! With the Bradford Latvian Club unavailable and time ticking, I offered Rupert Jones use of Holmfirth's home ground. With much of the player base from Leeds and York, as well as the proximity to Manchester, it was highly convenient.



Yorkshire Captain Rupert Jones (middle) with Peter Mason and Robin Brown enjoy a post-match drink and try to shake off a strange feeling of *déjà vu*

The match started a little late due to some late arrivals, but all players enjoyed a good chat in the meantime. There were a few familiar faces at Holmfirth, with Mick Connor from the Calderdale League and David Fowler, who used to come over the border for club nights, present for Manchester.



Yorkshire welcomed back Maksym Kryshafor of Ukraine, who at 8 years of age is developing into a terrifying player. He was the first to finish and won against Alexander Burke.



Maksym is plotting next to Dave Colledge

Maksym then proceeded to watch cricket in the main bar and was delighted to be introduced to the game of pool by myself and James Munroe (a local). He was utterly fascinated.

The games were long and play intense. Fatigue hit many after four hours as some uncharacteristic blunders appeared. There were two instances of phones going off (same player) that were graciously ignored by the opposing player. It was not malicious, but Yoda did cause some amusement in the room. As I said it was all played in a good spirit.



Dave Booth of Holmfirth not yet ready to tap his red shoes together and say 'There's no place like home'. He was one of the last to finish.

It was a battle, but Yorkshire also converted this one to an 8 – 4 win. It was a good event and great to meet more Greater Manchester players. They are an excellent addition to the NCCU.

ECF Online

Nigel Towers reports on this month's ECF online club tournaments and internationals

ECF Online Clubs

ECF Members Clubs is open to all ECF members and supporters on Chess.com or Lichess and provides regular ECF online rated tournaments most days of the week where you can get an ECF online rating, together with online internationals.

Chess.com – <https://www.chess.com/club/english-chess-federation-members>

Lichess – <https://lichess.org/team/english-chess-players>

We also have an Open Club on Chess.com with over 5,500 members with regular ECF tournaments and a chance to play for the ECF England team in the Live Chess World and European Leagues.

Chess.com - <https://www.chess.com/club/english-chess-federation>

Regular ECF Rated Tournaments

You can find a list of all the upcoming tournaments on the ECF Online Events page as well as the Club home pages -

<https://englishchessonline.org.uk/upcoming-club-events/>

As well as the regular schedule of blitz and rapidplay tournaments we now run a fortnightly all-day classical Swiss tournament at a 50|10 time control with round 1 at 11.00 am on alternate Sundays and rounds 2 - 4 starting an hour after the preceding round finishes. This is a good opportunity to get an online rating at the standardplay time control.

ECF Online Grand Prix Series 2023



The Online Grand Prix is run from separate ECF Lichess clubs. Series 3 will take place over ten months from January to October 2023, with entry fees and trophy prizes for the winners across different categories (Open, Women's, Seniors, and rating limited).

The Grand Prix events are held at 2 pm on the first Sunday of each month (for the blitz tournaments) and the third Sunday of each month (for the rapidplay tournaments) from January to October 2022.

Further details and the 2023 entry form at the link here - <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-online-grand-prix-2023/>

Chess.com Internationals



The England team for the Live Chess World League is drawn from players in the ECF Open club. Club members can register for events from an hour before each fixture and are allocated to boards depending on their Chess.com rating.

This month saw the final matches in the Live Chess World League season 10 and Live Chess European League Season 4. We won our final run of matches in the two leagues and should be set for promotion in the next 2023 season - <https://www.chess.com/clubs/matches/live/english-chess-federation>

LCEL - England v Slovenia – 20/11/2022



We won all three legs of our match against Slovenia – Bullet 8½-3½, Blitz 8-2, and Rapid 7-3.

England v Turkey – 11/12/2022



We also won all three legs of this one with a low turnout from the Turkish team.

England v Catalonia – 17/12/2022



This was the final match in the LCEL series with another win against Catalonia 7-3 in the bullet, 6-0 in the bullet and by default in the rapid.

LCWL - England v Puerto Rico – 25/11/2022

Our first LWCL match of the month was against Team Puerto Rico on the evening of 25th November. This was another win in both legs by 10-8 in blitz and 4½-3½ in rapidplay.

Lichess Team Battles



Lichess team battles continue to be very popular with English Chess Players team members. These provide an opportunity to take part in some of the biggest Lichess events with team members paired in Arena format against players from opposing teams. The weekly schedule includes the Bundesliga on Sunday and Thursdays where we move between Ligas 3 and 5, the Liga Ibera on Sundays, and the Champions League on Tuesdays.

Titled Tuesday and Titled Arenas



Chess.com run a weekly Titled Tuesday event with early and late 11-round Swiss Tournament at 5 pm and 11 pm UK time.

<https://www.chess.com/article/view/titled-tuesday#format>

Titled Tuesday is open to players with FIDE titles from FM to GM or WGM, or a National Master (NM) title awarded by their federation. (The ECF awards NM titles to those with a sustained ECF standardplay rating of 2200 or over for a period of at least 24 months in the national lists – further details on the Master Points page here): <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/master-points-system/>)

News and Views

ECF Safeguarding Officer

The ECF is committed to developing our junior talent. We want to encourage as many young people as we can to play given the educational and social benefits this entails, as well as the simple enjoyment of competitive activity.

As part of this, we are committed to ensuring that the chess community in England is safe for vulnerable players, whether juniors or adults. The position of ECF Safeguarding Officer is central to this and we are now recruiting to fill that role. This could be right for you if:

- You believe that safeguarding vulnerable people is essential;
- You share our vision of chess being a positive force in the lives of young people in England;
- You wish to work with our safeguarding team, co-ordinating safeguarding policy and making a difference to the safety of vulnerable chess players;
- You are ready to apply and develop your knowledge of safeguarding;
- You have obtained or are prepared to obtain Level 3 safeguarding training.

The position is voluntary, with the ECF funding any necessary training.

If you are interested in finding out more, please write to Debra Atkinson at debra@englishchess.org.uk by 20th January with a brief statement of your interest and relevant background and qualifications.

Reminder to lapsed members

Lapsed members at the end of each calendar year are automatically taken off the *ChessMoves* distribution list, so if you haven't renewed yet and want to continue receiving *ChessMoves* do please renew your ECF membership before the end of 2022.

4NCL Harrogate Congress

The 29th FIDE rated congress will be held from 20th to 22nd January 2023. More information can be found at https://4ncl.co.uk/fide/information_29.htm

European Cities and Towns Chess Championships - Revised Date 29th January

The European Chess Union announces the first European Cities and Towns Chess Championship which will take place on Sunday 29th January 2023 in hybrid city venues. The event consists of four categories – Open, Women, Seniors, and Youth (Under 12). The first edition of the new European competition is supported by the FIDE Development Fund. Each city or town has the right to nominate one team of four players in each of four categories:

Open Tournament (any age); Women's Tournament (female participants); Seniors Tournament (players over 50 years of age, born in 1972 or earlier); Youth Tournament (players up to 12, born in 2010 or later). For more information and to register – <https://www.europechess.org/european-cities-towns-chess-championship-2022/>

Cambridge International Open



The English Chess Federation is organising the Cambridge International Open Chess Tournament from 15th to 19th February 2023 in Cambridge. This will be a nine-round Swiss system tournament, open to all English and foreign players with a valid FIDE ID. The event will provide an opportunity for participants to achieve international title norms. More information is available at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/cambridge-international-open/>

Pre-2003 Yearbooks

Does any reader have a complete/near-complete set of pre-2003 Yearbooks? If so, would you be willing to carry out a small bit of research for us? Please contact debra@englishchess.org.uk if you think you can help - thank you.

JUNIOR MOVES

Littlewood's Choice



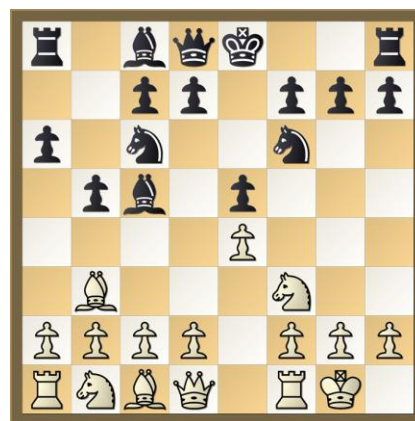
My attention was drawn to the World U14 Youth Championships held in Romania where 13-year-old Kenneth Hobson was representing England.

In the first round he came across a much higher-rated player but produced the following fine

performance.

Farid Orujov (2352) vs Kenneth Hobson (1872)
World U14 Championships 06/09/22

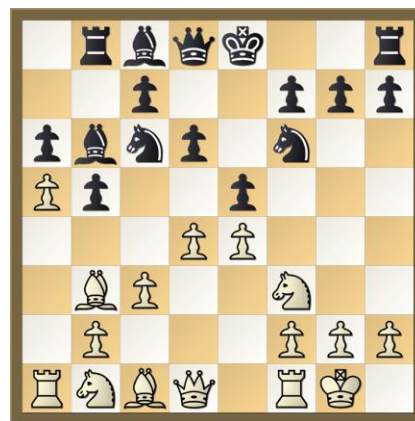
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 b5 6.Bb3 Bc5



This line has been played a lot recently and is a decent alternative to the main line Ruy Lopez with 5...Be7.

7.c3 d6 8.a4 Rb8!? 8...Bb7 is more usually chosen.

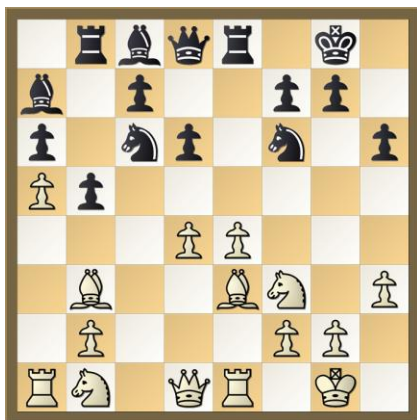
9.d4 Bb6 10.a5!?



Ba7 Avoiding 10...Nxa5? 11.Rxa5 Bxa5 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.Qxd8+ Kxd8 14.Nxe5 which is considerably better for White.

11.h3 0-0 12.Re1 h6?! Not strictly necessary. Better is 12...Bb7 13.Bg5 h6 14.Bh4 g5 15.Bg3 Re8 16.dxe5 Nxe5 17.Nxe5 dxe5 18.Nd2 which is fine for Black.

13.Be3 exd4 14.cxd4 Re8



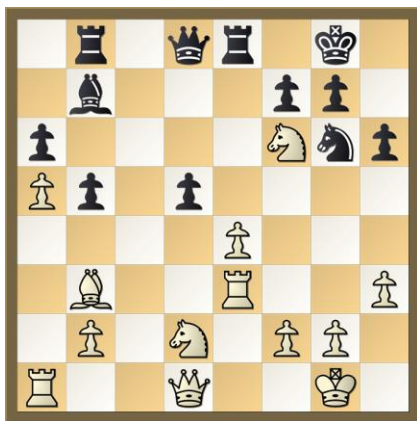
15.Nbd2?! Much more to the point is 15.Nc3! which gives White the better position. Tactically this works because if 15...b4 16.Nd5 Nxe4? then 17.Qc2 Bb7 18.Bxh6 gxh6 19.Rxe4 Rxe4 20.Qxe4 leaves White with a big advantage.

15...Bb7 16.d5 Bxe3 17.Rxe3 Ne5 ? However, this is an error. 17...Ne7 is fine for Black, with the possible continuation 18.Nf1 c5 19.dxc6 Nxc6 20.Qe1 Rc8 21.Ng3 Rc7 when the position is equal.

18.Nd4? White hands back the favour. 18.Nxe5 dxe5 19.Rc1 Qd6 20.Rec3 gives White the advantage.

18.....c5 19.dxc6 Nxc6 20.Nf5 Ne7 21.Ng3 Ng6 The position is now equal but White is the one who has to be careful.

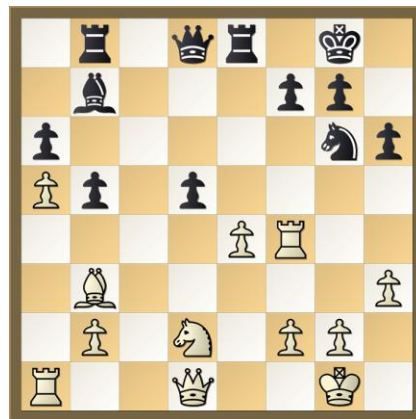
22.Nh5 d5 23.Nxf6+?



...and White makes a critical error. 23.exd5 Rxe3 24.fxe3 Nxd5 25.Ne4 Nxe3 26.Bxf7+ Kxf7 27.Qf3+ Kg8 28.Qxe3 is equal.

23...Qxf6 24.Rf3 If 24.exd5 then 24...Rxe3 25.fxe3 Qxb2 with the advantage. Black might now have tried 24...Qd4 or 24...Nf4!?. The latter is double-edged, but Black seems to be slightly better after 25.g3 Nxh3+ 26.Kg2 Qe6 27. Bxd5 Bxd5 28.exd5 Qxd5! 29.Kxh3 Rbd8.

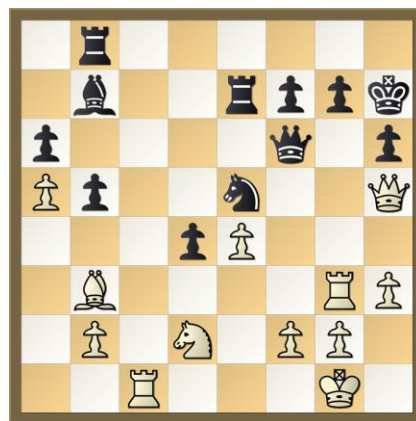
24...Qd8 25.Rf5 Nh4 26.Rf4 Ng6



Interesting is 26...g5 when if White tries to complicate matters by 27.Rxh4 gxh4 28.exd5 then 28...Qf6 29.Qg4+ Kh8 30.Rd1 Bc8 31. Qf3 Kg7 leaves Black standing better.

27.Rf3 White avoids the repetition, perhaps fearing g5 as in the previous note. However, he is now clearly worse.

27.....Ne5 28.Re3 d4 29.Rg3 Qf6 30.Qh5 Re7 31.Rc1 Kh7 31...Kf8! was even stronger... preparing for an ending.



32.Nf3?? A bad blunder. Better was 32.Qf5+ Qxf5 33.exf5 h5 34.h4 Rd8 35.Re1 f6 36.f4 Nc6 when the

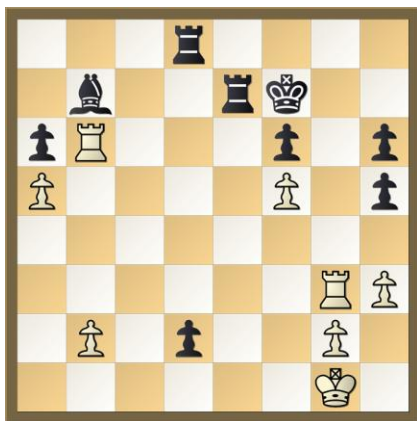
ending is advantageous for Black but he is still a long way from winning.

32....g6! 33.Ng5+ Qxg5! Perhaps White missed this when he played Nf3. Kenneth now wins a piece and plays carefully to snuff out any counterplay.

34.Rxg5 gxh5 35.Rf5 Bxe4 36.Rf6 Bb7 37.f4 Nc4 38.Bxc4 bxc4 39.Rxc4 Rd8 and the passed d-pawn is now decisive.

40.Rc5 Kg7 41.Rb6 d3 42.f5 f6 This is safe and sensible but in fact also winning is **42...d2 43.f6+ Kh7 44.fxe7 d1=Q+ 45.Kh2 Qd2** with mate to follow shortly.

43.Rc3 d2 44.Rg3+ Kf7



1-0

A well-played game by Kenneth, who took advantage of his opponent's mistakes to secure the full point.

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.

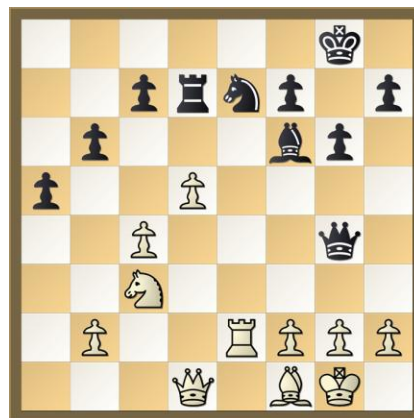
--- Paul Littlewood

IMPROVERS

Paul Littlewood on Tactics

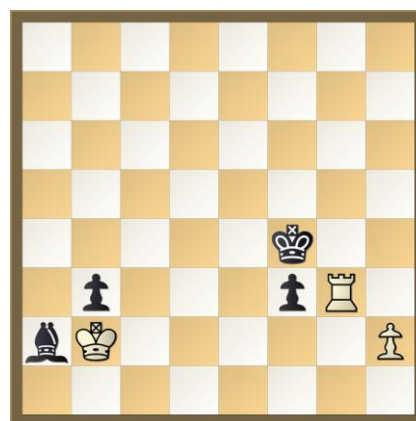
Foreign language scholars will realise that "Zwischenzug" is the German word for intermediate move. In chess it is often the key to all types of combinations.

Consider the following position:



White wins by **1.Rxe7!** as if **1...R** or **Bxe7** then **2.Qxg4**. Whereas after **1....Qxd1** the Zwischenzug **2.Re8+** wins as after **2...Kg7 3.Nxd1** and White is a piece up.

Zwischenzug occurs at all stages of the game. Here is an example from an ending:



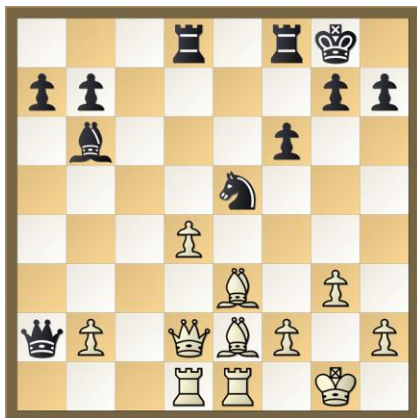
Borisenko – Mezenev

USSR 1950

After the obvious **1...f2 2.Rg8** Black cannot win by **2...f1=Q** because of **3.Rf8+** skewering the new-born queen. However, the Zwischenzug **2...Bb1!** wins because if **3.Rf8+ Bf5** or **3.Kxb1 f1=Q+**.

In defending against a Zwischenzug the most important principle is to see the idea before it occurs.

Consider the following example:



Kozlov – Smirnov
USSR 1969

Black's position is perfectly sound and a move like 1...Qa4 would give him equal chances. However, he played **1...Ba5?** And after **2.b4! Qxd2 3.Bxd2** he resigned because he is losing a piece.

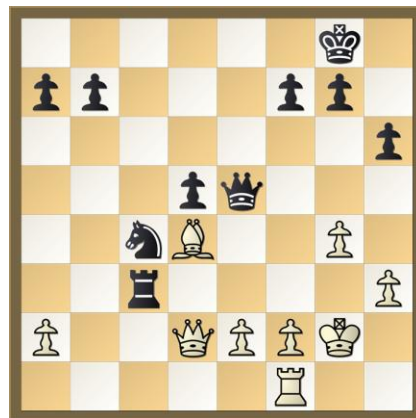
Smirnov thought that 1...Ba5 was winning, but he missed the Zwischenzug 2.b4 and so should have checked it more thoroughly. I learnt this general principle from the Yugoslav Grandmaster, Bojan Kurajica, who said 'If you see a winning move, check and recheck it. Take your time, as once you have played the move you cannot take it back'.

Here are two examples to solve yourself, with the answers at the end of the article:



Miles – Martin
Birmingham 1977

How did White win a piece utilising a Zwischenzug?



Letunov – Ubilava
USSR 1973

If Black plays 1...Nxd2 then 2.Bxe5 or if 1...Qe4+ 2.f3. So how does Black utilise a clever Zwischenzug to obtain an overwhelming material advantage?

Answers

Miles – Martin

White wins by 1.Rxb5 Qxa3 2.Rb7+ Kg8 3.bxa3.

Letunov – Ubilava

Black wins by 1.....Rg3+! Now if 2.fxg3 Qe4+ wins the white queen, whereas 2.Kh2 loses to 2...Nxd2 3.Bxe5 Nxf1+ 4.Kh1 Ra3 when Black is a whole rook up.

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

Three Positions – Analysing to Win by Danny Gormally



In this new series I want to help readers with their analytical skills. The idea is to present at least three positions which hopefully have some benefit and give an insight into a professional chess player's thought process.

I will be asking you to evaluate, to find only moves, to calculate, to find concrete variations, to identify candidate moves, to find constructive plans.

This week's games are from a source close to my heart - my online games. These can be quite an emotional rollercoaster and sometimes you are up against people who just seem to own you and whatever you do you can't escape. I lost to a player the other day who beat me 4-0, no chances for me. No title, nothing. No 1-min rating either. In that case you start to wonder if they are using engines. The downsides apart, they can be a barometer of form and also a useful way to road-test your opening repertoire.

Some people are dismissive of blitz chess, but over the board tournaments are increasingly expensive these days and the opportunities to play in the UK can be quite fleeting. In my opinion it is essential that the ambitious player keeps his or her toe in the water if they want to remain in form.

(1) HeraKlin0S (2726) – Carobee (2707) [B64]
Rated Blitz game lichess.org, 23.11.2022

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 d6



I have recently started playing the Four Knights because of waning confidence in my ability to stand up to variations like the Bg5 Najdorf, and the need for an alternative because of that. Gory eviscerations like my recent game against Harry Grieve in the 4NCL speak for themselves, and not in a good way. However, adding a new opening can often be a tricky business and there needs to be a serious work ethic behind it, which isn't always there in my case. I don't know the ins and outs of this variation, as we shall see in this game.

6.Bg5 e6 7.Qd2 Be7 8.0-0-0 0-0 9.f4 Nxd4 10.Qxd4 h6 11.Bh4 11.Bxf6?! Bxf6 12.Qxd6 Qa5 is a variation that

is not considered to offer Black any problems. I have had to face 13.e5 a few times online, and perhaps that is not surprising. In blitz it is somehow more tempting to play forcing moves. After 13...Rd8 14.Qa3 Rxd1+ 15.Kxd1 Qxa3 16.bxa3 Be7 Black has more than enough compensation for the pawn.

11...Bd7 12.Be2 Bc6 13.g4



This is the first real test, the first position. White has announced his aggressive intentions with his last move - he clearly wants to play g5 and open lines. How should Black proceed now?

Solution on page 55

(2) 2Tilted (2475) - SirGerhard (2678) [A73]
Live Chess Chess.com, 23.11.2022

This is the next game played on my SirGerhard account on Chess.com. In case you are wondering where the name for my account comes from, Sir Gerhard is a hurdler trained by Willie Mullins. It is a possibility for the Champion Hurdle, but if they go down that route they could run into Honeysuckle, State Man and a possible world-beater in Constitution Hill. Sir Gerhard would probably be 4/5 in the pecking order.

I had beaten this next opponent a few times in a row, but as so often in these situations I lost concentration in the final game and lost. This can be infuriating when you are significantly higher rated than your opponent, as one loss can wipe out all the progress made previously.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 0-0 5.Be2 c5 6.d5 d6 7.Nf3 e6 8.0-0 exd5 9.cxd5 Bg4



One of the tabiyas of the Benoni variation. I probably should have played this opening more often, as it suits my dynamic style. Instead, I often find myself locked in stodgy Slavs and even worse, King's Indians where I often don't get beyond my own second rank.

10.Nd2

10.h3 Bxf3 11.Bxf3: to some extent Black wants to make this exchange and it is all part of the plan. 11...a6 12.a4 Nbd7 13.Bf4 Qe7 14.Re1 Rfe8 (14...Ne8 also looks rather thematic and typical in this opening. This uncovers the potential of the bishop on g7 and in some cases Black can play the knight to c7, supporting the ... b5 break.) 15.a5 Rab8 - Black retains decent chances and next will play ... b5, activating the rook down the b-file.

10...Bxe2 11.Qxe2 Re8



At first sight everything is rosy for White as the knight will eventually find a fine square on c4. However, losing the bishop pair also has some downside - it robs White of some dynamic potential.

12.Qd3 a6 13.a4 Nbd7 14.f4



Now I would like you to evaluate the position. Is White better, is Black better, is it equal or what? I would also like you to consider some candidate moves for Black. Take your time, have a cigar, watch a World Cup match and soak in the position.

Solution on page 55

(3) SirGerhard (2683) - SirStrateg (2607) [B07]
Live Chess Chess.com, 23.11.2022

The next game was also played on Chess.com against 'SirStrateg' A clash of sirs?

1.d4 d6 2.e4 Nf6 3.Nc3 c6 4.f4 Qa5



Black plays the Pribyl variation, an opening I have considered dubious ever since preparing for Rob Willmoth in a British championships in Bournemouth many moons ago.

I recall the engine giving the variation I played as pretty much a forced win for White, and this online game follows a lot of my analysis from back then.

5.Bd2 5.e5 Ne4 6.Qf3 Nxc3 7.Bd2 Qd5 is better for White, but at least Black manages to escape to an ending.

5...e5 6.Nf3 exd4 7.Nxd4 Qb6 8.Nf3!



This is what I did against Willmoth. Most people move back to b3, but placing the knight on f3 is very direct and strengthens the effect of the later pawn break e5.

8...Qxb2 9.Bc4 9.Rb1 Qa3 10.Rb3 Qc5 11.e5 dxe5 12.fxe5 Ng4 13.Ne4 Qd5 14.Bd3 I think was my analysis (or should I say the engine's analysis) for the Willmoth game, when White is winning, but of course many years later and lacking enough time to recall all this during a blitz game, I wandered from the correct path.

9...Be7 10.0-0 10.Rb1 Qa3 11.Qe2 is very good for White.

10...Qb6+ 11.Kh1 Qc5? 11...Nfd7 12.Qe1



White has a promising initiative and I suspect that most attacking players would take White every time here. In fact, most PLAYERS full stop would take White.

12.Qe2 0-0 13.e5 dxe5 14.fxe5 Nd5 15.Ne4 Qa3 16.Rab1? It didn't surprise me to find later that 16.Nfg5! was winning for White, only because I vaguely recalled from the Willmoth preparation that a random Ng5 foray was occasionally relevant. Unfortunately, I was unable to find this in the game. 16...Bxg5 (16...h6 17.Nxf7 Rxf7 18.Rxf7 Kxf7 19.Qh5+ Kg8 20.Bxh6+- The

lack of development on the black queenside is telling.) 17.Nxg5 h6 18.e6+-.

16...b5 17.Bd3?! h6 18.Nd4 Na6 19.Nf5?!



I was making some strange mistakes that morning and probably hadn't fully woken up yet. If he had played the knight to d7 I was intending to take on c6, so why I didn't do that here with 19.Nxc6, when Black collapses, I have no idea.

19...Bxf5 20.Rxf5 Nc5 21.Nxc5 Qxc5 22.Qe4 g6



Spoiler alert: White is winning! (Although you probably already guessed that.) The question is to find the most incisive way to finish the game off. Can you do better than I did?

Solution on page 57

Three Solutions – Analysing to win

Danny Gormally

(1) HeraKlin0S (2726) - Carobee (2707) [B64]

Rated Blitz game lichess.org, 23.11.2022



This is the first real test, the first position. White has announced his aggressive intentions with his last move - he clearly wants to play g5 and open lines. How should Black proceed now?

13...Nxe4!



With this neat use of tactics Black grabs a large advantage so kudos to you if you found this trick. I think this is why it is so important to be aware of the particular tricks and traps that are unique to each opening and by doing so it can often help you to navigate some scary positions.

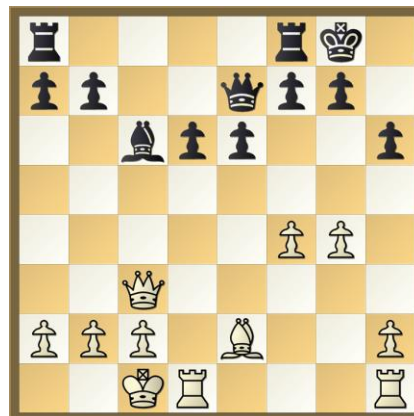
I'm sure if something like this had occurred in the Najdorf I would have been aware of the refutation, but my knowledge in the four knights is lacking. Effectively by taking on e4 Black is refuting the idea of White playing g4 without preparation. You have to punish the opponent for coming up with bad ideas!

13...Qa5? This was played in the game and shows a lack of attention and, perhaps just as importantly, a lack of

knowledge of the nuances of this particular opening variation. 14.g5 Nh7? (14...hgx5 15.Bxg5 was better, but this looks rather uncomfortable to say the least, as White will have an obvious attack once the rook reaches g1.) Rg8 20.Bh5 Qc5 21.Qg2 Qe3+ 22.Kb1 I resigned.

14.Bxe7 14.Nxe4 Bxh4 → is even worse - Black has an extra pawn and the two bishops as well, and White can't grab on d6 as the rook h1 will be hanging.

14...Nxc3 15.Qxc3 Qxe7 ♠



The position is clearly better for Black.

(2) 2Tilted (2475) - SirGerhard (2678) [A73]

Live Chess Chess.com, 23.11.2022



Now I would like you to evaluate the position. Is White better, is Black better, is it equal or what? I would also like you to consider some candidate moves for Black. Take your time, have a cigar, watch a World Cup match and soak in the position.

14...Qc7?

This fails to get to the point of the position. It simply isn't dynamic enough, so perhaps the Benoni isn't for me after all. Or rather with limited time I wasn't able to

see all the possibilities within the position. Or perhaps more relevantly, as in the example seen before, I simply lack experience in this opening and am unaware of the thematic ideas contained within.

If you said that Black was clearly better and managed to find 14...c4!



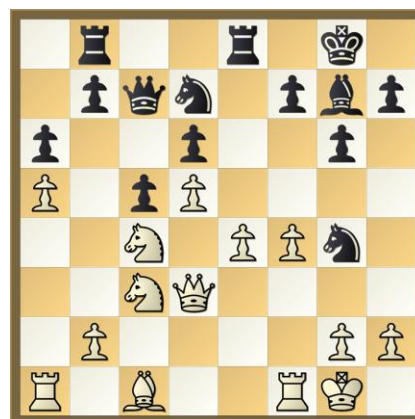
then give yourself a pat on the back. It turns out that e4 is very weak. 15.Qf3 (After 15.Nxc4 Nc5 16.Qf3 Nxc4 material has been regained but it's worse than that for White. His position is full of holes and the engine already says that Black is winning; 15.Qxc4 Ng4 is fairly horrible for White, as the position is too open. Threats of ...Qb6, ... Rc8 followed by ... Nc5 mean that Black is likely to run rampant in the near future. It's funny how White was trying to control the game with all this Nd2 stuff but now his position just looks undeveloped and over-extended. Don't make too many pawn moves when you haven't completed your development might be the moral of the tale here!) 15...Rc8 ...Nc5 is coming and Black has a very good position. 14...Ng4! is also good. This hits White in a slightly different way, but it also demonstrates that f4 was too optimistic and left the White position in too fragile a state. After 15.e5 dxe5



16.f5 White has to go for the "sweeper sealer" just to limit the damage. 16...e4! After 17.Ndxe4 Ndf6 White remains under pressure.

15.Nc4 Rab8 15...Ng4!?

16.a5! Ng4?!

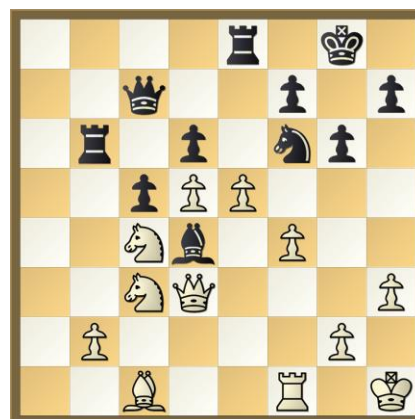


17.h3? 17.Qf3! would have shown my last lunge to be an empty gesture: 17...Ngf6 18.h3. Now the dynamic breaks have gone, and White is firmly in control.

17...Bd4+ 18.Ne3 Ngf6 19.Kh1 b5? 19...Bxc3 20.bxc3 Nxe4 was the trivial win of a pawn, but too often such possibilities are missed in blitz.

20.axb6 Rxb6?? 21.Nc4 Rb4 22.Rxa6 Nb6 23.Rxb6 Rxb6 24.Nxb6? Too flat, and it allows me to escape.

24.e5!!

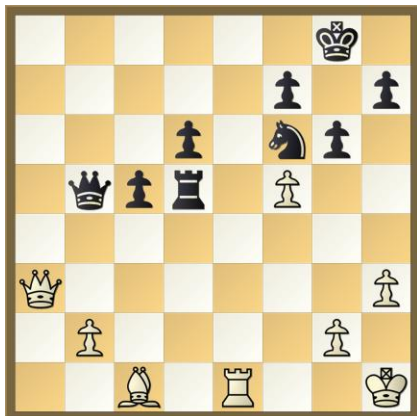


is a very thematic break in Benoni structures, and here it is just crushing. 24...dxe5 (24...Nd7 25.Nxd6 Rxd6 (the knight can hardly be left on d6) 26.Nb5!+-) 25.d6 Rxd6 26.Nb5+-

24...Qxb6 25.Nb5? now, as is typical in online blitz, the mistakes escalate as both players get short of time

25...Rxe4 26.Nxd4 Rxd4 27.Qa3 Qb5?! 28.Re1 Rxd5?!
 28...Kg7 controls his counterplay, although what I played in the game should also be good enough.

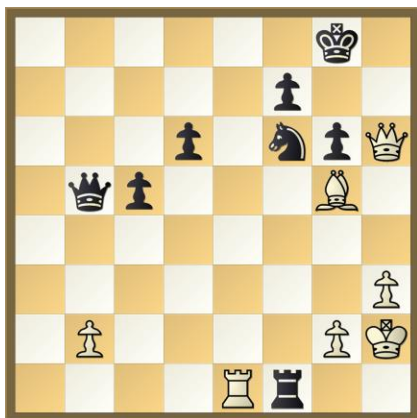
29.f5



29..Kg7?!

29...Rxf5: I was vaguely concerned about him playing 30.Bh6 but the continuation 30...Rf1+ 31.Rxf1 Qxf1+ 32.Kh2 Qe1 covers the back rank and leaves Black two pawns to the good.

30.fxg6 hxg6 31.Qe3 Rf5?! 32.Qh6+ Kg8 33.Bg5 Rf1+ 34.Kh2



34...Nh7?? I needed more time to find the mopping-up combination 34...Ng4+! 35.hxg4 Rxe1 36.Bf6 Rh1+ 37.Kxh1 Qf1+—

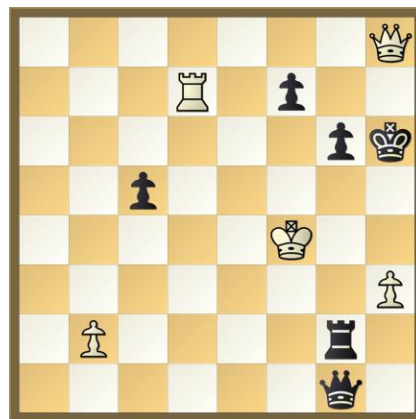
35.Re7? 35.Rxf1 Qxf1 36.Be7=

35...Nxc5 36.Qxc5 Qc4 37.Rd7 Qd4 38.Qd8+ Kg7 39.Qg5 Qg1+ 40.Kg3 Rf2 41.Qd5 Rf5?? 41...Qe1—

42.Qxd6? 42.Qd2!=

42...Rg5+ 43.Kf4 Rxc2?? 43...Rf5+ 44.Kg3 Qe1+ 45.Kh2 Rf1—

44.Qe5+ Kh6 45.Qh8# 2Tilted won by checkmate.



1–0

(3) SirGerhard (2683) - SirStrateg (2607) [B07]
 Live Chess Chess.com, 23.11.2022

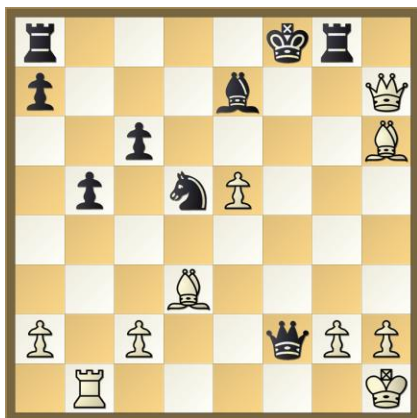


23.Rf3?? oh dear.

If you found 23.Rxf7!!



then you get a lot of credit. This is indeed the most convincing way to win because if you can win a technical position by tactical means, then all the better.
 23...Rxf7 24.Qxc6+ Rg7 (24...Kf8 25.e6!) 25.Qe6+ Kh8 26.Bxh6 Rgg8 27.Qh3 Qf2 28.Bg5+ Kg7 29.Qh7+ Kf8 30.Bh6+



Black is ripped apart. But there were other ways to win and even the sadistic 23.Rbf1 was good enough. 23...Nc3 24.Qg4 Qb4 25.Qf3+-

23...Bg5!

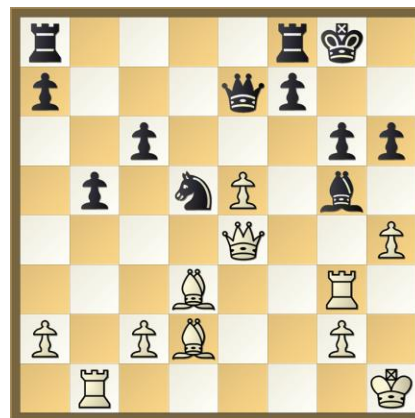


Credit also goes to my opponent who finds an only move.

Now we entered a familiar situation for me in online chess. A situation where my anger levels gradually rise into a crescendo of agonising screams as my advantage falters and I realize that not only am I not going to win, but I'm going to lose this completely winning game. It's the most painful feeling in the whole wide world to blow a winning chess game.

Clearly, I need to do some work on my technique, as this seems to be happening to me far too often of late.

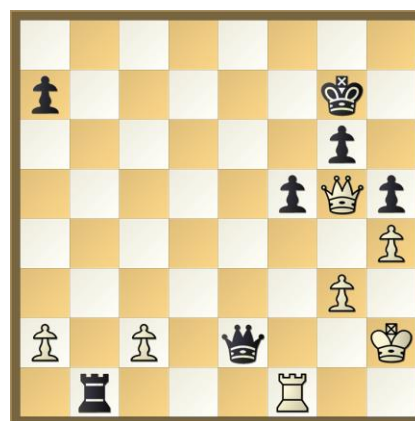
24.Rg3? Qe7 25.h4??



This was pure tilt and, to be honest, shock that I hadn't put it to bed by now.

25.Bxg5 hxg5 26.Bxb5

25...Bxd2 26.Rf1 Bf4 27.Rxf4 Nxf4 28.Qxf4 Kg7 29.Qd4?! Rad8 30.Qf4 Rd5 31.Re3 Re8 32.e6 f5 33.g3 Qf6 34.Qc7+ Re7 35.Qxc6 Re5 36.Rf3 R5xe6 37.Qxb5 h5 38.Qb4 Rb6 39.Qf4 Rb1+ 40.Kh2 Qe5 41.Qg5? Qe1 42.Rf1? Re2+ 43.Bxe2 Qxe2+



SirStrateg won by resignation

0-1

A Focused Attitude by Andrew Martin

Tkachiev,Vladislav (2644) - Carlsen,Magnus (2837)
Wch Rapid Astana (9), 07.07.2012
Andrew Martin

Mounting and sustaining pressure, without error, is one of the hallmarks of master play. Let us learn from three excellent examples this month. We start with a game from Magnus Carlsen.

1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.e3 Bf5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Qb3 Qc7 7.Bd2 e6 8.Bb5+ Nbd7 9.0–0 a6!



Maybe the simplest way of resolving difficulties.

9...Bd6 turns out to be a superfluous developing move in this current instance. In the following game Black is routed: 10.Rc1 Qd8 11.Bb4 Bxb4 12.Qxb4 Qb6? (Maybe Black has to settle for 12...a6 but after 13.Bxd7+ Qxd7 14.Ne5 Qb5 15.Qxb5+ axb5 16.Nc3 b4 17.Nb5± the position he reaches by force really isn't very nice.) 13.Ne5 a6 14.Nc3!! axb5 15.Nxb5 and threats of either Nd6+ or Nc7+ are too strong for Black to meet. 15...Bg6 16.a4 Qa5 (16...Kd8 17.a5 Qa6 18.Nd6 Rb8 19.Ndxf7+ Bxf7 20.Nxf7+ Ke8 21.Nxh8) 17.Rc8+ Rxc8 18.Nd6+. 1–0 Prusikin, M (2522)-Miller, E (2110)/Nuremberg 2010

10.Rc1 10.Be2

10...Qb6 11.Be2 Qxb3 Again Carlsen chooses the simplest way, reaching a position which Black can hardly lose.

11...Bd6 also looks pretty safe: 12.Nc3 (12.Qxb6 Nxb6 13.Ba5 Nbd7 14.a3 Ke7 15.Nc3 h6 16.Nd2 Rac8 17.f3 Bh7 18.Nb3 b6 19.Bb4 Nb8 20.Nd2 Rhd8 21.Kf2 Rc6 1/2–1/2 Prusikin, M (2534)-Milov, L (2558)/Germany 2010) 12...h6 13.Na4 Qxb3 14.axb3 Ne4 15.Ba5 0–0 16.b4 Rab8 17.Nc5 Ndf6 18.Bb6 Rfc8 19.b5 axb5 20.Bxb5 g5 21.Ne5 Nd2 22.Rd1 Nde4 23.Ned7 Bxc5 24.dxc5 Nxd7 25.Bxd7 Rxc5 26.Bxc5 Nxc5 27.Bb5 Bc2 28.Re1 Bd3 29.Rec1 b6 30.Bxd3 Nxd3 31.Rc2 Rd8 32.Kf1 Kg7 33.Ra7 Ne5 34.Rb7 Rd6 35.Rcc7 Kg6 36.h3 h5 37.Ke2 Kf5 38.Rb8 h4 39.Rcc8 Nc4 40.b3 Na5 41.Rc3 Nc6 42.Rb7 f6 43.Ke1 d4 1/2–1/2 Tkachiev, V (2657)-Wang Hao (2684)/Dagomys 2008

12.axb3 Bd6 White can try to dissolve his pawn weakness with b4–b5, but Black always meets this idea comfortably with ...Ke7!

13.Nc3 Ke7 14.Nh4 Bg6 15.Na4 I don't much like this move.

Better chances to at least draw could be obtained after 15.Nxg6+! hxg6 16.h3 Rac8 17.f3 g5 18.Bd3 g6 19.Kf2. Objectively the position is about equal, but White would not have the same problems facing him that he does after the game continuation.

15...Bh5 16.Nf3?! Indecision.

I think he should take the opportunity to get Black's light-squared bishop off the board: 16.Bxh5 Nxh5 17.Nc5 Bxc5 18.dxc5 Rhc8 19.b4 Nh6 20.Bc3 g6 21.Nf3 Ne4 22.Be1=.

16...Ne4 17.Be1 b5 17...Rhc8.

18.Nc3 b4 19.Nb1 Tkachiev clearly does not want to put his knight on the edge of the board, yet this may have been the better continuation. The knight on a4 would be active, limiting Black's plans: 19.Na4! a5 20.Bd3 Rhc8 21.Bxe4 dxe4 22.Nd2 f5 23.Nc4 Bc7 24.Rc2 White is fine here, with the doubling of rooks imminent.

19...a5 20.Bb5 Rhc8 21.Nbd2 Rxc1 22.Rxc1 Nxd2 23.Nxd2 Rb8 24.Bf1 Bg6 25.f3 e5



Black has a small edge and the way he increases the pressure is most instructive. If White now takes on e5, b2 hangs, but otherwise Black threatens ...exd4, weakening the d4–pawn.

26.Bg3 26.Ra1 Bc7 27.dxe5 Nxe5 28.Bg3 Ra8 29.Be2 Bb6 30.Nf1 f6

26...exd4 27.exd4 Nf8 28.Kf2 Ne6 29.Ke3 f5! Counter-intuitive, in that the scope of the bishop on g6 decreases, but this is only temporary.

30.Bxd6+ Kxd6 31.f4 Bh5 32.Bd3 g6 An eventual break with ...g6–g5, levering open the kingside, is Black's ongoing plan.

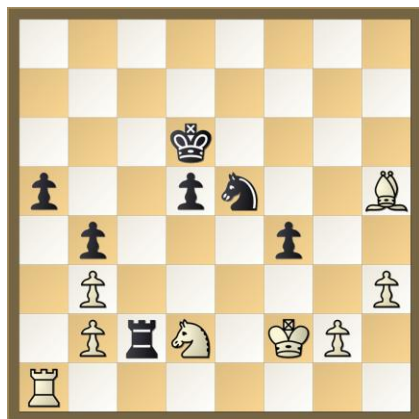
33.Nf1?! 33.g3 Nc7 34.Kf2 Bg4 35.Bf1 Ne6 36.Ke3 h6 37.h3 Bh5 38.h4 Rg8 39.Bb5 g5 40.hxg5 hxg5 41.Rh1 Be8 42.Bxe8 Rxe8 43.Rh6 Kc7 is still a little better for Black.

33...g5 34.fxg5 34.g3.

34...f4+ 35.Kf2 Nng5 36.Nd2 Ne6 37.Bxh7 37.Ra1 Ra8 38.Bxh7 Nxd4 39.Bd3 Nc6 is the type of plausible continuation which does not really satisfactorily solve White's problems. He is still worse, and Black has good chances to penetrate in the centre.

37...Nxd4 38.Bd3 Rh8 39.Ra1 Nc6 40.Bb5 Ne5 41.h3 41.Rxa5 Ng4+ 42.Kg1 Rc8 must have seemed unattractive.

41...Rc8 42.Be2 Rc2 43.Bxh5?



Like it or not, White had to try **43.Ke1 Bxe2 44.Kxe2 Rxb2 45.Rxa5 Nc6 46.Ra6 Kc5 47.Kd3 Nd4**. This is very uncomfortable to defend, doubly so because it is Carlsen pressing, and triply so because of time shortage.

43...Rxd2+ 44.Kf1 Rxb2 45.Bd1 Rd2 46.h4 Ke6 46...a4! seems most accurate: **47.bxa4 Nc4+.**

47.h5 Kf6 48.Be2 d4 49.Ke1 Rb2 50.Rxa5 d3 51.Bd1?? 51.Bf3 might have led to a draw: **51...d2+ 52.Ke2 Nxf3 53.gxf3 Rxb3 54.Rd5 Re3+ 55.Kxd2 Rxf3 56.h6 Kg6 57.Rd6+ Kh7 58.Rb6 b3 59.Rf6 Kg8 60.Rf5 Kh7 61.Rf6.**

51...Rxd2 52.Rd5 f3 53.Kf1 Rd2 54.Ke1 f2+ A triumph for tenacity and perseverance.

0–1

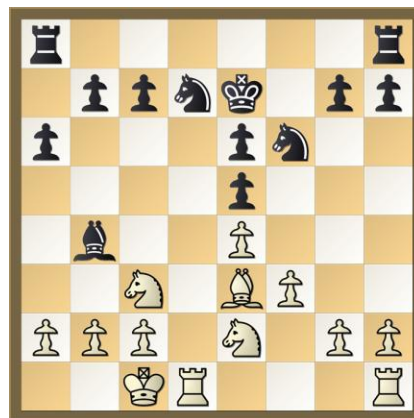
Ristic, Nenad (2425) - Georgiev, Vladimir (2592)

Cutro 07th Cutro (8), 29.04.2001

Andrew Martin

This is one of my favourite recent games and is very deceptive, almost right from the beginning.

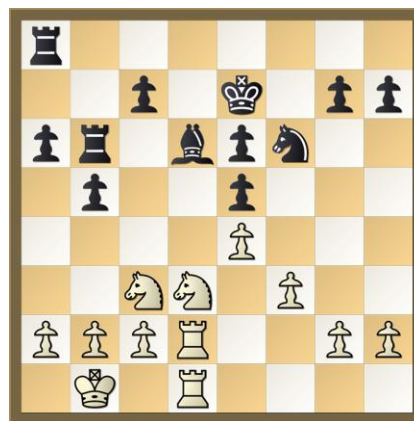
1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 4.dxe5 dxe5 5.Qxd8+ Kxd8 6.Bc4 Be6 7.Bxe6 fxe6 8.Be3 Bb4 9.0–0–0+ Nbd7 10.Nge2 Ke7 11.f3 a6



It is hard to believe that Black can develop a winning attack from this situation, but that is exactly what happens. It is remarkable that he seems to be able to improve his position move by move, whereas White appears planless.

12.a3 I don't think this move is necessary, and it might actually weaken White's king position.

Maybe White should settle for something like **12.Rd2 b5 13.Rhd1 Bd6 14.Kb1 Rbh8 15.Nc1 Nb6 16.Bxb6 Rxb6 17.Nd3**



and claim a slight edge, but not the type of advantage which is easy to realise.

12...Bd6 13.g3 b5 14.Rhf1 Rhb8! Now that a2–a3 has been played, a plan for Black comes into focus.

15.Nb1 He is afraid, but was Black actually threatening anything?

We should test 15.f4 b4 16.axb4 Rxb4 17.fxe5 Nxe5 18.Nd4 Rc4 (but not the tempting 18...Rxb2?! 19.Kxb2 Nc4+ 20.Ka1 Nxe3 21.e5!) 19.Bf4 Rb8 20.Nf3 and White is hanging on.

15...c5 16.Nd2 c4



Quite often in this line you can see White manoeuvring a knight to d3. That has been stopped, more or less for good, and the black initiative is in full swing.

17.g4 Rc8 18.h3 a5 19.f4 b4 20.g5 Nh5 21.axb4 If 21.a4 c3 looks good, with Black seriously better after 22.bxc3 bxc3 23.Nb3 Rab8! with ...Rb4 to come.

21...axb4 22.f5 Ra1+ 23.Nb1 Bc5 23...Nc5! was also pretty strong: 24.f6+ .

a) 24.fxe6 Nxe4 25.Rf7+ Kxe6 26.Rb7 c3;

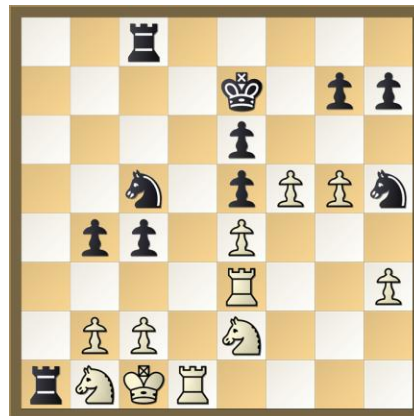
b) 24.Bxc5 Bxc5 25.Rf3 exf5 26.Rd5 (26.exf5 e4) 26...Nf4! 27.Nxf4 exf4;

24...gxf6 25.gxf6+ Nxf6 26.Bg5 Ncxe4.

I guess Black was trying to win the game without having to calculate too much.

24.Rf3 Or 24.Kd2 Ra2! 25.Bxc5+ Nxc5 26.Ke3 Rxb2

24...Bxe3+ 25.Rxe3 Nc5



White has a lot of pieces doing precisely nothing. Black, meanwhile, keeps his grip right until the end.

26.Rf1 Nd3+! 27.cxd3 cxd3+ 28.Nec3 28.Kd2 dxe2 29.Rxe2 Ng3+.

28...bxc3 29.bxc3 Rb8!→ 30.Kd2 Nf4 31.Ree1 Rb2+ 32.Ke3 Ng2+ You might look at the position after 7...dxe6 and wonder whether that game really happened. **0–1**

Kallai, Gabor (2525) - Yusupov, Artur (2641)

SUI-chT Switzerland (7.1), 1999

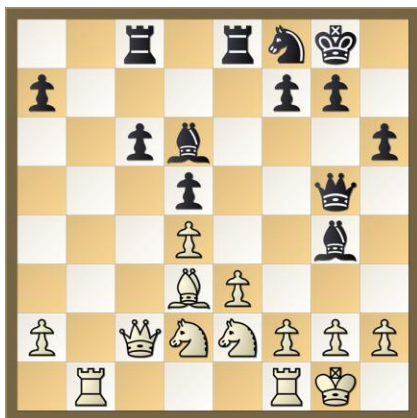
Andrew Martin

The minority attack is an attack by a smaller pawn chain on a greater pawn chain, hoping to create weaknesses. If you find yourself on the receiving end of this plan, you must not play passively and allow the position to become static.

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 4.Nc3 Nbd7 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Bg5 Be7 7.e3 0–0 8.Bd3 Re8 9.0–0 c6 10.Qc2 Nf8 11.Rab1 White readies himself for the minority attack b4–b5! Black places his pieces as aggressively as possible in reply, pointing towards White's King.

11...Bd6 12.Bf5!? An interesting move which prevents ...Bg4. When light-squared Bishops are exchanged, the easy plan of b4–b5–bxc6 will leave the backward c6 pawn very vulnerable. Moreover, swapping pieces decreases Black's attacking capability.

After 12.b4 Black presumably plays 12...Bg4! with a promising position after 13.Nd2 h6 14.Bxf6 Qxf6 15.b5 Qg5 16.bxc6 bxc6 17.Ne2 Rac8.



On top of a possible kingside attack, Black can also now consider playing ...c6–c5!, bringing the Rook on c8 into the game.

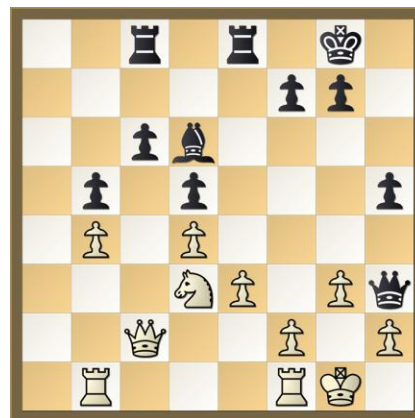
12...Ng6 13.b4 a6 14.a4 b5!



Another very interesting moment. Yusupov slows up the minority attack and buys himself some time to start his own initiative. This is a question of excellent judgement, as it is not easy to gauge how weak the pawn on c6 really is.

15.Bxc8 Rxc8 16.axb5 axb5 17.Ne2 h6 18.Bxf6 Qxf6 19.Nc1 Nh4! The knight on f3 is a key defender of the white king and so Black exchanges it off.

20.Nxh4 Qxh4 21.g3 Qh3 22.Nd3 h5!



A fine move by Yusupov. Despite exchanges, he can still bring pressure to bear against the white king.

23.Qe2 Re6 The rook comes to the third rank, intending to swing across to g6 or h6, according to what is required.

24.Qf3 h4 25.Rfe1 You would think that 25.Qg2 was sensible, trying to get the queens off before the roof caves in, but then 25...Qf5! 26.Rfd1 Ra8 is simply good for Black, who has brought all his pieces into excellent positions and threatens ...Ra3 or ...Ra2, increasing his advantage. 25.Ra1 also came into consideration, taking the file, but even there 25...Rg6 26.Qg2 Qf5 27.Ra3 h3! 28.Qh1 Re8 29.Nc5 Bxc5 30.bxc5 Rf6 is awful for White, who cannot break out.

25...Rce8 26.Rbc1 hxcg3 27.hxcg3 Rh6 28.Ra1 Ree6 Yusupov systematically brings all his pieces into the attack.

29.Qg2 Qf5 30.Nc5 Bxc5 31.bxc5 g5! The plan is to play ...g5–g4 and triple major pieces on the h-file.

32.g4 32.Ra8+ Kg7 33.Rd8 g4 34.Ra1 b4 would again leave White short of moves If 35.Rb8 Rh3! cleans up: 36.Rxb4 Reh6 37.Rb7 Qf3–+.

32...Qh7 33.Qg3? Maybe White has to try 33.e4 Rh3 34.Re3 but after 34...Rxe3 35.fxe3 Rxe4 36.Qg3 Kg7 White finds himself a pawn down with an open king. His position is lost.

33...Rh3 34.Qb8+ Kg7 35.Kg2 Qe4+ The minority attack gets very good results for White and is applicable in many positions where a suitable pawn structure is present. However, if Black is precise in his defence (which is not easy), we have seen that he has counter-chances. Yusupov did not relax for one second in this game and developed serious pressure as a result. I

think that a focused attitude is the main lesson we can draw from this selection of games.

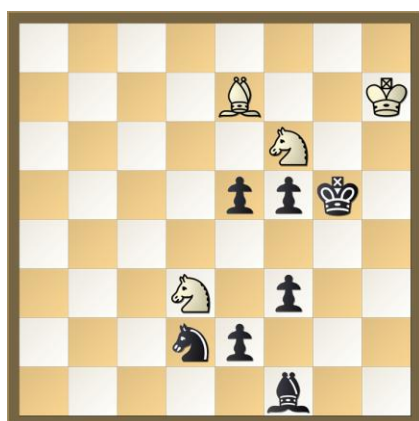
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STUDIES AND PROBLEMS

PROBLEM CORNER

Christopher Jones with his monthly conundrum

Last time I left you with this problem to solve:

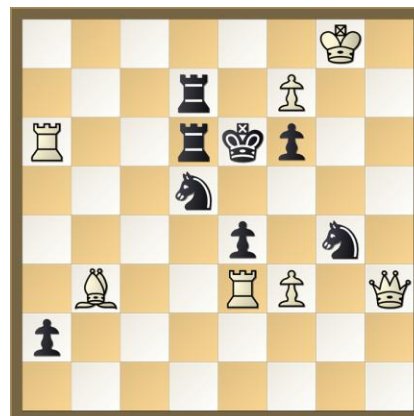


Mate in 3
Zdenek Mach
Besedy lidu 1899

The key move is 1.Nf2!, which has the threat 2.N6e4+ Kh5 3.Ng3 (or 2...Kf4 3.Bg5). If 1...Kf4 then 2.Nh5+ Ke3 3.Bc5. If 1...f4 (unblocking f5, but blocking f4) then 2.Ne8+ and 3.Ng7. If 1...e4 2.Sd5+ Kh5 3.Nf4.

This month I'd like to delve into an area of chess 'problem-dom' that I know often has appeal (despite, or perhaps partly because of, its total impracticality to practical players), the *series-mover*. You are given a position and invited to find a way to achieve a particular outcome purely by making consecutive moves by one side. This sort of problem is also a stimulating challenge to composers, as they have to ensure that at each stage of the solution the sequence of events is exactly determined.

In our first example I don't recommend you try solving it, although you may like to take a good look at it first to try to get an idea of what type of play might conceivably reach the desired conclusion.

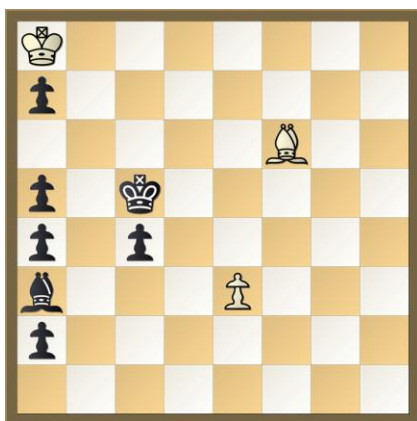


Series helpstalemate in 18
Geoff Foster and Ian Shanahan
1st Honourable Mention, StrateGems 2010

First of all, what is a 'helpstalemate'? Well, it means that the end goal in this problem is not the usual one of Black being checkmated but instead of his being stalemated. And the 'help' bit means that it is Black that will make the sequence of moves doing all he can to help to create a position in which it is possible for White in one move to put him in stalemate.

How could this be? At present, Black has a multitude of legal moves; and, although three of his pieces, the pinned knights and pawn at e4, are immobilized, it's worth noting that the other pinned unit, the rook at d6, is far from immobilised. What we should like is to create a situation in which, on the four lines on which the white rooks, bishop and queen menace the black king, there is a black piece next to the black king (preventing the king from moving in that direction) and itself immobilised by being pinned. As White can do nothing to help, this entails Black having to provide a sequence of self-unpinning moves until the desired result is achieved – 1.a1=B 2.Be5 (the first self-unpin) 3.exf3 4.f2 5.f1=Q 6.Qc4 7.Nb6 8.Rd5 9.Qe4 10.Bd6 11.Nc4 12.Rf5 13.Nge5 14.Qc6 15.Be7 16.Rd5 17.Nd6 18.Qe8+ and now 18...fxe8=Q gives stalemate. This tremendous achievement by the Australian composers, surprisingly not awarded a prize in its tourney in 2010, did receive its due accolade of inclusion in the 2010-12 FIDE Album, in which the annotation, concisely, reads "Twelve successive interference self-unpins with cyclic effects". (The 'cyclicity' comes to light if you think about which black piece unpins which other black piece, which in turn unpins which other black piece, and plotting the ways in which black pieces reciprocally unpin each other in the course of the solution.) Initially it may be surprising that Black on move 5 promotes to a queen (which cannot be immobilised by a pin) but the queen plays a nifty role in the play before sacrificing itself on the last move.

I'm finishing with another series-mover that made it into the 2010-12 FIDE Album. This one might be slightly more amenable to solving, but if you get tantalised by it before the next *ChessMoves* (in which the solution will be given) don't hesitate to contact me on cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk. (Unless you have very specialised software you won't be able to get your computer to tell you the solution; but such software does exist and has verified that in this, and the previous problem, the intended solution is indeed the unique sequence of moves that achieves the desired result.)



Series helpmate in 23

George Sphicas (dedicated to Sir Jeremy Morse, the great supporter of British chess, who was himself an accredited expert at producing sound series-movers)

The Problemist 2012

In this case, the final goal, after all Black's helpful moves, is to enable White to checkmate (not stalemate) Black. In the diagram position, Bd4 looks a very likely possibility for the eventual mating move! But how to block all the potential flight squares of the black king? It looks as if that vertical column of black pawns will have to provide, by promotion, the necessary building blocks. And if you know anything about composers' ways you have an idea of the task that they like to achieve with four promotions... As I say, solution next time.

Do let me know if you have any thoughts about these two problems, or about series-movers generally!

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

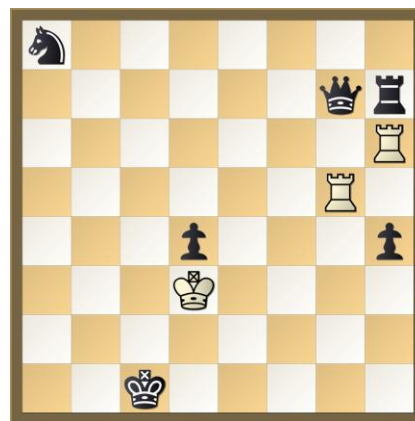
HOW TO SOLVE A STUDY

by Ian Watson

World Chess Solving Championship

The annual World Championship for chess solving took place in the UAE in November. It includes an Individual Championship and a National Teams Championship. The gold medal team was Poland, and the individual gold medal was won by Danila Pavlov. Pavlov is from Russia and was participating under the 'FIDE flag', under the same procedures as in over the board chess. He is surely the finest solver ever; he wins almost every event he takes part in and usually by a large margin. This was already his second world title, even though he is one of the youngest solvers on the circuit, born in 2002. His dominance is even greater than Magnus Carlsen's.

In the World Championship there are three studies for solving, in addition to many problems of various types (direct mates, helpmates, selfmates). I'll give you the diagrams for all three studies, and I'll go through the solution to the first one; its composer was Paul Heuacker and its first publication was in *New Statesman and Nation* in 1953.



White to play and win

It's not hard to divine White's plan. Given a move, Black will win easily. You obviously need to keep the black king tied down while threatening various mates. Okay, so 1.Rc6+ because 1.Rc5+? Kd1 gives you no follow-up. 1.Rc6+ Kb2 2.Rb5+ Ka3 3.Ra6 mate is simple, so Black has to play 1...Kd1. Now what? This is a composed study, so as usual you should be on the look-out for surprise moves, and the play so far has been forced, so maybe the first surprise move is now. That should guide you to the attractive 2.Rf6. Black only has 2...Qe7, and White only has 3.Rg1+ forcing 3...Qe1. Now 4.Ra6 is the only move to progress, and Black also has no choice other than

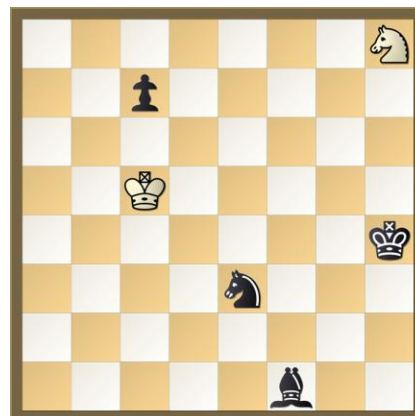
4...Rc7. Here, you probably realise that we're going to get a rook versus knight ending and that White will have to trap the knight to be able to win. So, 5.Ra1+ Rc1 6.Rxc1+ Kxc1 7.Rxe1+ Kb2. All of the moves so far have been relatively easy to find (except for the clever 2.Rf6), because neither player had any serious alternative at any stage. (Would that all studies were like that....)

You've got to control that knight with your rook. Only 8.Re7 does that; it uses the fact that 8...Nb6 allows 9.Rb7. It threatens 9.Ra7, so Black needs to distract White by pushing his h-pawn. Now what? You can't go after the h-pawn without letting the knight escape. All the moves up to here are pretty much forced, so you can be confident this is the composer's solution line which means there is a method to win. That should be enough to convince you to look hard and so find 9.Rb7+ Kc1 10. Rb8. and the follow-up 10...Nc7 11.Rc8 which nicely echoes the variation 8...Nb6 9.Rb7. Job done.

Of course, you should check for sidelines, although you know there aren't many because so much of the play was forcing. There is 10.Ra7? Nb6 11.Rc7+ Kd1 12.Rb7 but now 12...Ke1 13.Rxb6 Kf2 and draws. It's easy to fall for a line like that after doing the great bulk of the solving work!

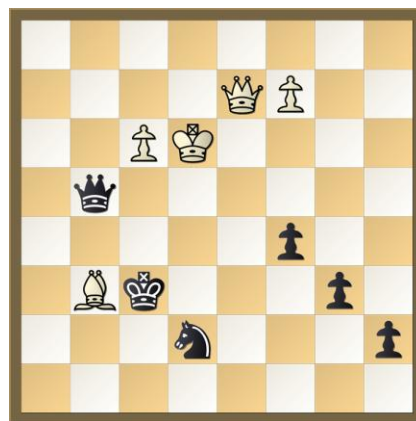
In chess solving events, there are five points available for each study. You need to find the composer's line and the points are awarded for how far you found that line. In this study, you got 1 point if you found all the moves up to and including 2.Rf6. You got an additional 1/2 point if you also found 2...Qe7 3.Rg1+. If you also found the moves up to 5.Ra1+, you got another 1/2 point. Up to 7.Rxe1+, another 1 point; 8.Re7 got another 1 point; the final two half points were awarded at 10.Rb8 and 11.Rc8. The moves the solvers needed to write were: **1.Rc6+ Kd1 2.Rf6 Qe7 3.Rg1+ Qe1 4.Ra6 Rc7 5.Ra1+ Rc1 6.Rxc1+ Kxc1 7.Rxe1+ Kb2 8.Re7 h3 9.Rb7+ Kc1 10.Rb8 Nc7 11.Rc8.**

The second study is for you to solve. It was composed by Yuri Makletsov and published in Schach in 1979.



White to play and draw

The third study in the WCSC was extremely difficult; no solver got more than 2½ points out of the 5 available for solving it. For comparison, all of the top twelve solvers got 5 out of 5 for both the Heuacker and the Makletsov studies. A study that defeats Danila Pavlov is a truly tough task, but he was solving against the clock, and you aren't. So, as it's the holiday month and you may have enough free time, your Christmas challenge is to beat the best ever. I won't give you the solution here; rather, I'll go through it in next month's column. It was composed by Janos Mikitovics and published in Springaren in 2009.



White to play and draw

The solution to Makletsov's study is given below (and the Mikitovics solution will be in next month's issue).

If you want more solving over the holidays, there are new online study-solving tourneys on the netchex.club site. On the same site are many problem-solving tourneys, of various levels to suit all strengths of solver.

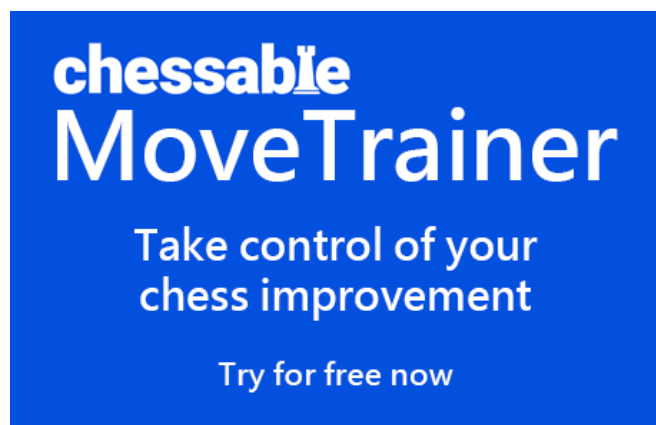
Ian Watson - ian@irwatson.uk

How to Solve a Study – solution

(Makletsov)

1.Kc6 Kg5 2.Nf7+ Kf6 3.Nd8 Ke7 4.Kxc7 Nd5+ 5.Kc6 Nb4+ 6.Kc7 Na6+ 7.Kc8 Bg2 8.Nc6+ and 8...Bxc6 is stalemate. The five points were awarded after White's moves 2 (1/2 point), 3 (1/2 point), 4 (1 point), 5 (1), 7 (1), & 8 (1).

The sidelines are: 1.Nf7? Bg2 2.Nd8 Kg4 3.Ne6 Nd5 4.Nd4 (4.Kc6 Nf4+) Bh1 5.Nb5 Kf5 6.Kc6 Nc3+; 1.Ng6+? Kg5 2.Nf8 Kf6 3.Kc6 Ke7 4.Ng6+ Kd8; 1.Kd4 Nf5+ 2.Ke5 Kg4; and, in the main line 2.Kxc7? Kf6 and 8.Nb7? Bh3 mate.

A blue rectangular banner with white text. The top line says 'chessable' in a lowercase sans-serif font. Below it, 'MoveTrainer' is written in a large, bold, white sans-serif font. Underneath that, the phrase 'Take control of your chess improvement' is written in a smaller white sans-serif font. At the bottom, 'Try for free now' is written in an even smaller white sans-serif font.

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EVENTS CALENDAR December 2022/January 2023

For details on all the events listed below visit <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/event-calendar/>

28 - 30 December	London Junior Chess Championships - University of Westminster
28 December - 8 January	Caplin 96th Hastings International Chess Congress - Horntye Park Sports Complex, Hastings
28-30 December	London Christmas Chess Congress - University of Westminster
2 January	Hastings Junior Rapidplay – St Mary Star of the Sea, Hastings
5 January	2022/23 Birmingham League Blitz Grand Prix Event 4 (online)
6 – 8 January	Shropshire Chess Congress – Wrekin Centre, Telford
7 - 8 January	4NCL Rounds 3 and 4 – Daventry Court Hotel
7 - 8 January	Caplin Hastings 38th Weekend Congress - Horntye Park Sports Complex, Hastings
7 January	Golders Green FIDE Rapidplay 2023 Open – St Luke’s Church, Golders Green
10 January	Muswell Hill FIDE Rapid – The Clissold Arms, Muswell Hill
14 - 15 January	4NCL Rounds 3 and 4 - Daventry Court Hotel
14 - 15January	5th Somerset New Year Congress, Walton Park Hotel, Clevedon
14 January	Maidenhead Junior Tournament - Claire’s Court Junior Boys School, Maidenhead
15 January	Hull Rapid 2023 - University of Hull, Hull
15 January	H.E. Atkins Memorial Rapidplay - Mountsorrel Memorial Centre, Mountsorrel
19 January	Junior 4NCL Online Season 7 Round 1 (online)
19 January	Hendon FIDE Rapid – Cumberland Lawn Tennis Club, Hendon
20 - 22 January	World Chess League.Live 2022-23 (online)
20 - 22 January	29th 4NCL Congress - The Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate
20 - 22 January	Castle Chess 20th Fareham Congress - The Lysses House Hotel, Fareham
20 – 22 January	London FIDE Congress - 15 Montague Street, London
21 January	2023 Kenilworth Junior Open - Leyes Lane, Kenilworth
21 - 22 January	EACU Closed Championships - Church Lane, Newmarket
21 January	Second Lancaster Rapidplay - Cumbria University, Bowerham
21 January	Newham Junior Grand Prix - Gallions Primary School, Warwall
22 January	Wey Valley Surrey New Year Squad Selection Event - Therfield School, Leatherhead
22 January	West London Chess Academy - Uxbridge
24 January	Muswell Hill FIDE Rapid - The Clissold Arms, Muswell Hill
24 January	4NCL Online Season 7 Round 1 (online)