



November 2023

# Chess*Moves*



## Three New English World Champions!

# CONTENTS

## Events

<a href="#">An English Double at the World Senior Chess Championships</a> by Nigel Povah	4
<a href="#">European Team Chess Championships 2023</a>	7
<a href="#">Bodhana Sivanandan Wins Gold at the World Girls Under 8 Championships</a>	8
<a href="#">2023 Delancey UK Chess Challenge Terafinal 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October</a> by Alex Longson	9
<a href="#">47<sup>th</sup> Guernsey International Chess Festival 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2023</a> by Kevin Thurlow	14
<a href="#">National Club Championships 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October</a> by Stephen Greep	17
<a href="#">59<sup>th</sup> Northumberland Chess Congress</a> by Mick Riding	20
<a href="#">Nottingham Chess Association</a> by Nick London	21
<a href="#">10th Witney Congress 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> November 2023</a> by Keith Freshwater	22

## Features

<a href="#">UK Open Blitz Final 2023</a> by Nigel Towers	24
<a href="#">The Chess Elite under Fire? Some Insights from Doha and Douglas</a> by Peter Wells	26
<a href="#">Great British Chess Players</a> by John Nunn	31
<a href="#">Books of the Month</a> by Ben Graff	33
<a href="#">Endgames All Club Players Should Know</a> by Glenn Flear	35
<a href="#">It's a Puzzlement</a> by Martin Bennedik	42
<a href="#">From the Archive</a>	44
<a href="#">ECF Chess Visit to HMP Springhill and Grendon Underwood</a> by Carl Portman	45

## News and Views

<a href="#">97<sup>th</sup> Caplin Hastings International Chess Congress 28<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2024</a> by GM Stuart Conquest	47
<a href="#">Northwick Park Congress 16<sup>th</sup> /17<sup>th</sup> December – Venue Change</a>	48
<a href="#">Youth Prevails in Gosforth Chess Club 'Smile for Life' Charity Event</a>	48
<a href="#">Request for Information Regarding BCF Medal</a>	48
<a href="#">Baptism of Fire for the UK Parliamentary Chess Club!</a> by Peter Hornsby	48
<a href="#">List of Arbiters for Green, Blue and Red Panels in FIDE Events 2024-2025</a>	50

## Junior Moves

<a href="#">Littlewood's Choice</a>	50
<a href="#">2024 Online Junior County Championship</a>	52
<a href="#">ECF Girls' Championships 2024</a>	52
<a href="#">ECF Secondary School Rapidplay Chess Tournament Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 at Eton College, Berks</a> by Neill Cooper	53

## Improvers

<a href="#">Paul Littlewood on Tactics</a>	54
<a href="#">Gormally's Coaching Corner</a> by Danny Gormally	55

## Studies and Problems

<a href="#">How to Solve a Study</a> by Ian Watson	57
<a href="#">Monthly Conundrum</a> by Christopher Jones	59
<a href="#">How to Solve a Study Solutions</a>	60

## Calendar

62



# EDITORIAL



Greetings and welcome to the November edition of *ChessMoves*.

We lead this month with the wonderful news that John Nunn and Mickey Adams are Senior World Champions in the over 65 and over 50 age groups. A magnificent result, and congratulations to both of them. Nigel Povah has the full story for us.

A further extraordinary success was achieved by Bodhana Sivanandan, who is now the World Under 8 Champion! This adds to the World Under 8 Rapid and Blitz titles which she achieved at Batumi, Georgia in June. And the England teams achieved some great results in the European Team Championships in Montenegro, with a bronze board medal and IM norm for the England Women team's board 2 WIM Lan Yao and the Open team coming close to a team medal after narrow losses in the last two rounds. What a month it has been for English chess at international level!

In addition to reports on the above, we also have our usual wide range of columns and feature, as well as our comprehensive monthly list of forthcoming events.

Whatever your interest in chess, *ChessMoves* has something for you.

Enjoy!

Andrew Martin

--- IM Andrew Martin Email: [a.martin2007@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:a.martin2007@yahoo.co.uk)

## CONNECT WITH US

Web	<a href="https://www.englishchess.org.uk/">https://www.englishchess.org.uk/</a>
Twitter ECF main account	<a href="https://twitter.com/ecfchess">https://twitter.com/ecfchess</a>
Twitter ECF Online	<a href="https://twitter.com/ECFonlinechess">https://twitter.com/ECFonlinechess</a>
Twitter ECF Women	<a href="https://twitter.com/ecf_women">https://twitter.com/ecf_women</a>
Twitter ECF Schools	<a href="https://twitter.com/ECFSchools">https://twitter.com/ECFSchools</a>
Twitter ECF Juniors	<a href="https://twitter.com/ECFJuniors2023">https://twitter.com/ECFJuniors2023</a>
Facebook	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/englishchess/">https://www.facebook.com/englishchess/</a>
Threads	<a href="https://www.threads.net/@ecfchess">https://www.threads.net/@ecfchess</a>
Instagram	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/ecfchess">https://www.instagram.com/ecfchess</a>
YouTube	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/c/EnglishChessFederation">https://www.youtube.com/c/EnglishChessFederation</a>
Twitch Commentary	<a href="https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary">https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_commentary</a>
Twitch Streaming	<a href="https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_streaming">https://www.twitch.tv/ecf_streaming</a>
Substack	<a href="https://englishchessfederation.substack.com/">https://englishchessfederation.substack.com/</a>
Chess.com ECF Members Club	<a href="https://www.chess.com/club/english-chess-federation-members">https://www.chess.com/club/english-chess-federation-members</a>
Lichess English Chess Players Club	<a href="https://lichess.org/team/english-chess-players">https://lichess.org/team/english-chess-players</a>
Lichess English Juniors	<a href="https://lichess.org/team/england-juniors">https://lichess.org/team/england-juniors</a>
Chess.com English Juniors	<a href="https://www.chess.com/club/england-juniors">https://www.chess.com/club/england-juniors</a>

*ChessMoves* is © The English Chess Federation 2023. Photographs by Brendan O’Gorman unless indicated otherwise.  
Front cover pictures by Nigel Povah (top) and courtesy of Sivanandan Velayutham (bottom)

## EVENTS

### An English Double at the World Senior Chess Championships by Nigel Povah

Michael Adams and John Nunn have both become World Senior Chess Champions!



The World Senior Chess Championships were held in Terrasini, a small, pretty town near Palermo in Sicily, from 24<sup>th</sup> October until 5<sup>th</sup> November. As is now traditional in senior chess, there were two age groups, 50+ and 65+, with Open and Women's sections in each case. The English delegation was relatively small with just two players in the 50+: Petra Nunn, who preferred to play in the Open section rather than the Women's section, and top seed Mickey Adams. The 65+ section had a larger English contingent of eight players, with the leading names being top seed John Nunn, John Pigott, Terry Chapman, Tony Stebbings and myself. Travel to Sicily proved much easier than the difficult time most of us experienced when travelling to North Macedonia for the World Senior Team Championships in September, and everyone turned up on time with no major problems to report.

However, despite the weather being fantastic and the hotel beautifully located on the coast with wonderful sea views, the tournament didn't get off to the best start as the players found a number of matters to challenge them. The first issue of note was that the Chief Arbiter wanted to enforce a 'no draws in under 30 moves rule', and this

troubled quite a lot of the players who saw no reason for this restriction. Bearing in mind that we were all seniors, and this was an 11-round event, it was quite likely that some players would welcome the occasional short draw and an opportunity to enjoy the beautiful weather and the local facilities. This issue therefore became a major topic of discussion at the 'technical meeting' before the first round, and fortunately, after some pressure from the players, the arbiters checked with FIDE and this requirement was dropped. Further niggling matters arose during the event, such as only having a 15-minute default time rather than the more customary 30 minutes, which led to a number of totally avoidable and unhelpful defaults. I won't trouble you with outlining the various other concerns but suffice it to say that the view amongst quite a few of us was that the event could have and should have been run much better than it was.

Fortunately, however, things were running much better over the board. Mickey made a strong start in the 50+, scoring 4½ from his first five games, but then he faced six GMs in a row and drew with the first four of them, before finishing very well with two wins to end on 8½/11 (undefeated) and edge out Serbian GM Suat Atalik on tie-break, after he too finished with 8½.

Here's a crucial win by Mickey in round 10 to keep him in contention:

**Adams, Michael (2670) - Minasian, Artashes (2462) [B12]**  
World Senior Chess Championship 50+ (10), 04.11.2023  
*[Notes by Nigel Povah]*

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.h4 h5 5.Bd3** Currently very popular, and a move that Caro-Kann expert Daniel Fernandez admits poses Black some challenges. **5...Bxd3 6.Qxd3 e6** 6...Qa5+ has been suggested as being the better follow-up, as Black tries to challenge White's attacking threats by offering an early queen exchange: 7.Nd2 (7.Bd2 Qa6 8.e6! Qxd3 9.exf7+ Kxf7 10.cxd3 Nh6 11.Nf3 Nf5 12.Nc3 Nd7 13.Ne2 g6=½-½ Nakamura, H (2736)-Fedoseev, V (2678) Speed Chess Super Swiss KO Chess.com INT blitz 2020 (4.3)) 7...e6 8.Ngf3 Nh6 9.0-0 Nf5 10.Nb3, when Black can choose between ...Qa6 or ...Qb5. **7.Nf3** 7.Bg5 is the main move: 7...Qb6 8.Nd2 c5 9.c4 Qxb2 10.Rd1! Nc6 (10...Qxd4? 11.Qb3 Qxe5+ 12.Ne2 Qc7 13.cxd5 exd5 14.0-0+- when White's lead in development is crushing) 11.Ne2 Nb4 12.Qf3 Nc2+ 13.Kf1 Nxd4 14.Nxd4 Qxd4 15.Qb3 Be7 16.cxd5 exd5 17.Qxb7 Rd8 18.Rh3=0-1 Greet, A (2399)-Ghasi, A (2471) BCF-chT 2223 (4NCL) England 2022 (7.1). **7...Nh6?! 7...Qa5+** is still the way to go: 8.Nbd2 Ne7 9.0-0 Nf5 10.Nb3, transposing to the note with 6...Qa5+ **8.Bxh6+- Rxh6 9.Nc3** 9.Nbd2 has been the more common choice here: 9...c5 (9...Nd7?! 10.0-0 a6 11.Rfd1 Be7 12.g3 g6 13.c4+/-1-0 Le, Q (2713)-

Speelman, J (2509) PRO League Stage Chess.com INT rapid 2020 (2) 10.c3 Nc6 11.0-0/= 9...Nd7 10.Ne2! Rerouting the knight to support his kingside play. 10...Qa5+ 11.c3 Qb5 12.Qd2 c5 13.a4 Qb6 14.0-0 c4?! This gives White a target to enable him to open the b-file [14...Be7 was better, although White is still comfortably on top]. 15.a5 Qc6 16.Rfb1+-



Preparing to open the b-file to create further pressure. 16...Be7 17.b3 cxb3 18.Rxb3 Rh8 19.Qb2 b6 20.axb6 axb6 21.Rxa8+ Qxa8 22.Nf4 Mickey is playing on both sides of the board. 22...g6 23.Ng5 The white knights are quite intimidating, with potential sacs on e6 and g6, and capturing on g5 will concede control of the dark squares. 23...Qc6 24.Qa1 Rg8 25.Qc1?!+= The engine likes the clever but unobvious pawn sac, opening the position: 25.c4! dxc4 (25...Qxc4 26.Rc3 Qb5 27.Qa8+ Bd8 28.Nfxe6 fxe6 29.Rc6 Nf8 30.Rd6+-) 26.Re3, threatening d5 followed by e6. 26...Bxg5 27.hxg5. Ke7 28.Qa3+ Ke8 29.d5 exd5 30.e6 Nc5 31.Qa7 Qb7 32.Qa1 fxe6 33.Nxe6 Nxe6 (33...Ne4 34.f3+-) 34.Rxe6+ Kd7 35.Qf6+- 25...Bxg5 26.hxg5 Kf8 27.Qa3+ Kg7 28.Qe7 Ra8?



Failing to appreciate the danger to f7, which Mickey's next move exploits. 28...Rf8! defending f7 was wiser, but this allows White to grab the a-file 29.Ra3 Kg8 30.Kh2, preparing Ra7 without allowing ...Qxc3-c1+ and ...Qxf4+ etc. 30...Qb7+= preventing Ra7, when, although White is slightly better, it isn't obvious how he can best improve his position. 29.c4! Once again the pawn sac, but this time in order to open the third rank for the rook. 29...dxc4

30.Rf3+- Rf8 31.d5! White's forces coordinate beautifully. 31...exd5 32.e6 Ne5 32...Nc5 33.Nxh5+! gxh5 34.Rxf7+ Rxf7 35.Qxf7+ Kh8 36.g6 with mate to follow. 33.Qf6+ Kh7 34.Qxe5 1-0

Petra Nunn (a member of the Women's team which recently won the Women's World Senior Team Championship), finished with 4½ in the Open 50+ section, which was more or less in line with her seeding, but she spoils a number of very promising games, some of which were against some strong players, so she was rather disappointed with her performance.

The 65+ section saw three English players getting off to good starts. John Nunn scored 5/5 and looked to be playing well, while Tony Stebbings also made a good start with 4/5, only losing to John in round 4, but he struggled in the second half of the tournament, to end on 6/11. Terry Chapman was also having another good tournament and made a most impressive start with 6/7.

John Nunn had three tricky GMs to play in rounds 6-8, and he drew with French GM Nikolay Legky before losing in round 7 to Argentinian GM Daniel Campora after slipping up in a winning position, and then he drew with German GM Rainer Knaak in round 8. So at this stage on 6/8 John began to question his chances, but we all agreed that it was a case of taking it one game at a time and seeing what happened.

Meanwhile, Terry Chapman drew with the tournament leader Argentinian GM Daniel Campora in round 8 to reach 6½/8, the same score he made in World Senior Team Championship in North Macedonia. Sadly, however, he lost a very disappointing game in round 9 against GM Rainer Knaak after Terry had an overwhelming position, when a win would have seen him become joint leader on 7½/9. He bounced back the next day to have the better of the draw against John Nunn, but finished with an unfortunate loss to end on 7/11.

John Nunn's last three games were quite eventful, and he managed to muster 2½/3 to finish with 8½/11, thus enabling him to edge ahead of Slovakian GM Lubomir Ftacnik on tie-break and retain the 65+ World Senior title he won last year. Here's his critical game from round 9:

**Nunn, John (2560) - Renman, Nils-Gustaf (2340) [C19]**  
World Senior Chess Championship 65+ (9), 03.11.2023  
[Notes by Nigel Povah]

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 Bxc3+ 6.bxc3 Ne7 7.a4 Qa5 8.Bd2 Nbc6 9.Nf3 Bd7 10.Be2 f6 11.c4 Qc7 12.cxd5 12.exf6 gxf6 13.cxd5 Nxd5 transposes. 12...Nxd5



**13.exf6 gxf6 14.c3 Rg8 14...0-0-0 15.0-0 Rhg8** again transposes. **15.0-0 0-0-0 16.a5!?**



John comes up with an interesting novelty which, given it is engine-approved, might have been part of his preparation. 6.Re1 is the main move, and was played as long ago as 1977 in this game: 16...e5 17.c4 Bh3 18.Bf1 Nb6 19.d5 Nxc4 20.dxc6 Qxc6 21.g3 Bxf1 22.Rxf1 e4 23.Qb3 (23.Qc2 Qd5 24.Bf4 exf3 25.Rac1 Ne5) 23...Qd5 24.Rac1 Nxd2 25.Nxd2 Qxd2 26.Rxc5+ Kb8 27.Rb5 Rg7 28.Rb1 Rdd7 29.Qe6 e3 30.fxe3 Rge7 31.Qg8+ Rd8 32.Qb3 Rdd7 33.Qg8+ Rd8 34.Qb3 Rdd7 ½-½ Spassky, B (2610)-Korchnoi, V (2645), Candidates, Belgrade 1977. **16...e5 17.a6** 17.Kh1+= was simpler, but John has never been one to shy away from complications. **17...Bh3** 17...b6 18.Qb1 exd4 19.cxd4 Nxd4 20.Nxd4 Qe5 21.Bf3 Qxd4 22.Rd1+= **18.axb7+** += Bold but risky. 18.Nh4! was best: 18...b6 (Note that 18...Rgx2+ 19.Ngx2 Rg8 20.Bf3 Qg7 doesn't work because of the clever 21.Qb3! Bxg2 22.Qxb7+ Qxb7 23.axb7+ Kxb7 24.Bxg2+-) 19.Kh1 Be6 20.Nf3=) **18...Kb8 19.g3!** 19.Nh4 no longer works because of 19...Rgx2+! 20.Ngx2 Rg8 21.Bf3 Qg7, when White doesn't have the Qb3xb7+ resource: 22.Bxd5 Bxg2 23.f3 Bxf3+ 24.Kf2 Qg2+ 25.Ke1 Bxd5 with a decisive advantage. **19...e4?!** A reasonable idea, but Black should capture on d4 first: 19...cxd4! 20.cxd4 e4 21.Nh4 e3 with crazy complications, e.g. 22.fxe3 Rxg3+ 23.Kh1 (23.hxg3? Qxg3+ 24.Kh1 Qxh4 25.Be1 Bg2+! 26.Kxg2 Rg8+ 27.Bg4 Rxg4+ 28.Qxg4 Qxg4+-) 23...Nxe3 24.hxg3 Nxd1 25.Bf4 Bxf1 26.Bxc7+ Kxc7 27.Bxf1 Ne3 when Black is slightly better; if 19...Bxf1 20.Bxf1 cxd4 21.cxd4 e4 22.Ne1 Nxd4 23.Qa4= when Black's weakened king position gives White enough compensation for the exchange. **20.Re1** 20.Qa4! exf3 21.Bxf3 Bxf1 22.Kxf1, when the engine thinks White is slightly better, despite only having two pawns for the rook! Clearly Black's problem is the vulnerability of his exposed king, as the following sample line indicates: 22...Qb6 23.c4 Ndb4 24.Bf4+ Kxb7 25.dxc5 Qxc5 26.Qb5+ Qb6 27.Be3 Qxb5 28.cxb5 Kc8 29.Rc1 Rge8 30.bxc6 Rxe3 31.fxe3 Kc7 32.Ra1 Kb6 33.Ke2 with an edge. **20...e3! 21.Bxe3 Nxe3 22.Qa4!** 22.fxe3? Rxg3+ 23.Kh1 Bg2+ 24.Kg1 Bxf3+ -

+] **22...Nd5** [22...Nf5! targeting g3 and d4 23.Kh1 Rge8 24.dxc5 h5=+] **23.Qa3** John is trying to encourage Black to capture on d4 [23.Rec1=]. **23...Rge8!** 23...cxd4? 24.Nxd4 Nde7 25.Qa6! Qb6 26.Qxb6 axb6 27.Bf3 Nxd4 28.cxd4 Nd5 29.Bxd5 Rxd5 30.Ra8+ Kxb7 31.Rxg8+- **24.Bb5 Rxe1+ 25.Nxe1 Nde7 26.Nd3**



**26...Kxb7??** Renman was clearly finding it difficult to decide how to continue here, as he took over 20 minutes on this move and made the wrong choice: 26...cxd4! sees Black maintaining his advantage, although perhaps Renman was wary of opening the c-file because of a possible Rc1 or 27.Nb4, but these come to nothing: 27.Nc5 (27.Nb4 Qxb7 28.Bxc6 Nxc6 29.Nxc6+ Qxc6 30.Qxa7+ Kc8 and Black is clearly winning.) Qb6 28.Rb1 dxc3 29.Na6+ Kxb7 30.Qxc3 Kc8 -+ **27.d5+-** 27.Nxc5+ also wins: 27...Ka8 28.Bd3 Bc8 29.Be4 Rd6 30.Bg2+- with two pawns and a powerful attack for the piece. **27...Rxd5** 27...Nxd5?? 28.Nxc5+ Kc8 29.Qa6+ Kb8 30.Bxc6+- **28.Nf4! Bd7 29.Qb3! Na5** 29...Qe5 30.Bc4+ Nb4 31.Rc1+- **30.Qb1 Bxb5 31.Nxd5 Nxd5 32.Qxb5+ Qb6 33.Rxa5 Qxb5 34.Rxb5+ Kc6 35.c4 Nb6 36.Ra5 Nxc4 37.Rxa7 Nd2 38.f4** Intending Kf2. **38...Kd5?** Short of time, Renman blunders his knight to Rd7+, but he was losing anyway. **1-0**

### Final standings

#### 50+ (91 competitors)

1<sup>st</sup> Michael Adams 8½ Tiebreak 3 77  
Buchholz  
2<sup>nd</sup> Suat Atalik 8½ Tiebreak 3 76½  
Buchholz  
3<sup>rd</sup> Maxim Novik 8  
67<sup>th</sup> Petra Nunn 4½

#### 65+ (155 competitors)

1<sup>st</sup> John Nunn 8½ Tiebreak 2 70½  
Buchholz  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lubomir Ftacnik 8½ Tiebreak 2 69½  
Buchholz  
3<sup>rd</sup> Nikolay Legky 8  
20<sup>th</sup> Terry Chapman 7  
24<sup>th</sup> John Pigott 7

45<sup>th</sup> Nigel Povah 6½  
 48<sup>th</sup> Tony Stebbings 6  
 77<sup>th</sup> Brian Hewson 5½  
 92<sup>nd</sup> Mick Stokes 5  
 120<sup>th</sup> Hassan Erdogan 4½

Our successes at the senior level are further evidence of England's growing reputation as a leading nation at senior chess, following our recent successes at both the World and the European Senior Team Chess Championships.

## European Team Chess Championships 2023



Congratulations to WIM Lan Yao, who has secured a bronze board medal at the European Team Chess Championship 2023 on board two. In addition, she has achieved her first IM norm and her fifth WGM norm.

For Lan Yao's performance, see

<https://chess-results.com/tnr832216.aspx?lan=1&art=81&turdet=YES&flag=30>

We offer our commiserations to the England Open team, who finished in 6<sup>th</sup> place and narrowly missed out on a medal position. The England Women's team finished in 13<sup>th</sup> place.

For England's overall results see <https://chess-results.com/tnr832215.aspx> for the Open and <https://chess-results.com/tnr832216.aspx?lan=1&art=0&turdet=YES&flag=30> for the Women.

For individual board results see

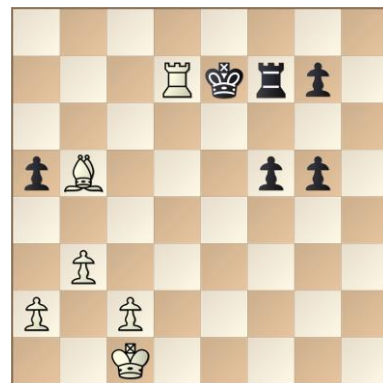
<https://chess-results.com/tnr832215.aspx?lan=1&art=81&turdet=YES&flag=30> for the Open and <https://chess-results.com/tnr832216.aspx?lan=1&art=81&turdet=YES&flag=30> for the Women

Below are two games from the event. The first is Lan Yao's final round match against Pia Cramling.

**Yao, Lan (2344) - Cramling, Pia (2440) [B48]**

European Women's Team Championship chess24.com (9.1), 20.11.2023

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e6 5.Nc3 Qc7 6.Be3 a6 7.g4 h6 8.h4 Nf6 9.Nxc6 bxc6 10.Qf3 Rb8 11.0-0-0 Qa5 12.Rd3 Qb4 13.b3 d6 14.e5 Nd7 15.exd6 Ne5 16.Qd1 Nxd3+ 17.Qxd3 Qxd6 18.Qe4 Qb4 19.Qxc6+ Bd7 20.Qc4 Rc8 21.Qxb4 Bxb4 22.Ne4 Bc6 23.f3 f5 24.gxf5 exf5 25.Nd2 a5 26.Rg1 Bc3 27.Bd3 Rf8 28.Nc4 Rd8 29.Bc5 Rf7 30.Nd6+ Rxd6 31.Bxd6 Bxf3 32.Bb5+ Kd8 33.Rg3 Bf6 34.Rxf3 Bxh4 35.Rd3 Bg5+ 36.Bf4+ Ke7 37.Bxg5+ hxg5 38.Rd7+



1-0

Below is a Nikita Vitiugov's win over Jorden Van Foreest:

**Van Foreest, Jorden (2700) - Vitiugov, Nikita (2712)**

24th European Teams Budva MNE (6.13), 17.11.2023

1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 e5 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.Qc2 g6 5.g3 Bg7 6.Bg2 0-0 7.d3 d6 8.0-0 Bg4 9.e3 Qd7 10.a3 Bh3 11.b4 Nh5 12.Bb2 Bxg2 13.Kxg2 f5 14.Rae1 Nd8 15.d4 e4 16.Nd2 Nf7 17.b5 Rae8 18.a4 Ng5 19.Rg1 f4



20.exf4 Nxf4+ 21.gxf4 Rxf4 22.Re3 Bxd4 23.Kh1 Bxe3 24.Nd1 Rh4 25.Nf1 Bf4 26.Nde3



0-1

## Bodhana Sivanandan wins Gold at the World Girls Under 8 Championships

*The article below is reproduced with the kind permission of Leonard Barden.*



England's outstanding eight year old talent Bodhana Sivanandan completed a remarkable treble and a 33-game winning sequence on Thursday, when she won her 11<sup>th</sup> and final round game at the World Girls Under 8 Championships at Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

The Harrow primary school year 4 pupil won all her 11 games in the classical tournament to add to her 22/22 in the World Under 8 Rapid and Blitz which she achieved at Batumi, Georgia in June. Her eighth birthday was in March, but FIDE ages are based on 1<sup>st</sup> January. Sivanandan's maximalist approach and will to win were typified in the ninth round, where she slowly ground down her Vietnamese opponent in a queen and pawn endgame which the computer showed as 0.00, totally drawn, while her best win, against the silver medallist from China, was well fought until the loser weakened her pawn structure on move 26.



Sivanandan already has a FIDE blitz rating of 2021, and performed well against 2000+ male opponents at the recent Riga Open. She also played an informal match against the former British champion Peter Lee, 79, who commented ruefully that 'the last time I was wiped out by a woman was by Nona Gaprindashvili in 1966'.

Victory for Sivanandan is the first by an English player in a classical junior world championship for a quarter of a century, since Nicholas Pert and Ruth Sheldon won the Open and Girls under 18 crowns in 1998. The 90s were a golden decade for English juniors, as Harriet Hunt won the World Girls Under 20 in 1997, while Luke McShane won the World Under 10 in 1992.

Sivanandan's talent was spotted early by Harrow Chess Club, and for the past year her coaching by the former world semi-finalist GM Jon Speelman has been sponsored by the biotech company e-therapeutics, whose chief executive is IM Ali Mortazavi, while the John Robinson Chess Youth Trust has backed her travel to open tournaments in Spain and Latvia.

Her current level is the highest ever by an English pre-teen girl, yet she still has some way to go. A rating of at least 2100, Woman FIDE Master standard, is the minimum for a good performance in strong Open or Women's international events.

You can also read about Bodhana's success on Chess.com at the following link:

<https://www.chess.com/news/view/8-year-old-bodhana-scores-historic-triple-world-championship-title>



# 2023 Delancey UK Chess Challenge Terafinal 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October

by Alex Longson



The 2023 Delancey UK Chess Challenge concluded with the Terafinal held at Blenheim Palace on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October. 60 players took part across five all-play-all age group sections (U8/10/12/14/18). All players had done remarkably well to make it to this stage – the Terafinal is exceptionally difficult to qualify for! The quality of chess on display was very high indeed.

## Background to the 2023 Terafinal

The UK Chess Challenge is an annual competition for UK juniors (ages 5-18) which has run every year since 1996 and has seen over a million children participate. Many of the previous winners have gone on to become international masters or grandmasters, including Adam Hunt, Thomas Rendle, Lorin D'Costa, Stephen Gordon, Yang-Fan Zhou, Brandon Clarke, Marcus Harvey, Matthew Wadsworth, Joseph McPhillips, Harry Grieve and Yichen Han.

Headline numbers for the 2023 season:

- Over 1000 schools represented
- Over 5,000 Megafinal entries
- 31 OTB Megafinals with two online
- Three OTB Gigafinals with one online
- One Challengers
- One Terafinal

To qualify for the Terafinal players first had to qualify via a Megafinal and then qualify for the Terafinal via one of the following strong national events:

Scottish Gigafinal, Broughton High School 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> June

Northern Gigafinal, Wright Robinson College Manchester 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> July  
Southern Gigafinal, Sandown Race Park 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> July  
Online Gigafinal, 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> September  
Challengers, Northampton Town Centre Hotel 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> September

## Terafinal 2023 Report

### Under 8



The U8 section was jam-packed with the UK's strongest U8 players, and it is amazing to see so much talent at such a young age. Many of these players would be competitive in much older sections, and it is clear that the future of UK chess is looking bright in the hands of these players.

The battle for first place was dominated by two players; Dildarav Lishoy Gengis Paratazham (England) and Louis Cheng (Scotland). The two met in round 9 with Dildarav half a point behind, but managing to gain a hard-fought victory to take a half-point lead which he didn't relinquish. Their final point tallies of 10½ and 10 (from 11 rounds) indicate their dominance in the event.

Amy Ba was the convincing winner of the top Girls prize, scoring a very creditable 50% and finishing 3½ points clear of her nearest rival. Amy even won an U10 Gigafinal this season (playing up a category).

1<sup>st</sup> – Dildarav Lishoy Gengis Paratazham (Sythwood), 10½/11

2<sup>nd</sup> - Louis Cheng (Edinburgh Chess Academy), 10

3<sup>rd</sup> – Krish Keshari (Chess with Dino), 9

Girls – Amy Ba (Oxford High), 5½



U8 Champion - Dildarav Lishoy Gengis Paratazham

George is already a multi-time winner of the event, having won the U10 event in 2022 and also finishing as runner-up in the 2021 U8 event.

The Girls prize was also decided in the final round clash between Sheng Lu (Germany) and Aashita Roychowdhury (England). Aashita, needing to win, manufactured a winning pawn endgame, but it was tricky to convert, and in pressing too hard she even managed to lose the game.

1<sup>st</sup> – George Zhao (Westminster Under School), 10

2<sup>nd</sup> – Junyi Zhang (St Paul's), 8½

3<sup>rd</sup> – Ashwin Anjulan (Loyola Prep), 8

Girls – Sheng Lu (Chess Rising Stars), 3½



U8 Girls Champion - Amy Ba



U10 Champion - George Zhao

## Under 10



U10 Girls Champion - Sheng Lu

It was really difficult to predict a winner in this event where four nationalities were represented (English, Indian, Ukrainian and German). A case could be made for many players who have had strong seasons. The standings were close throughout, and in the end first place was decided in the final round in the game between George Zhao (Westminster Under School) and Junyi Zhang (St Paul's). Junyi, needing a win, lost on time, though by then the endgame was difficult to save.



## Under 12



The race for first place in the U12 section proved to be the closest across all the sections, and in the end the trophy was decided on tiebreak score as both Elis Denele Diden and Tom Junde He (both of Coventry Chess Academy) finished joint first on 8½ points after drawing their individual game.

Elis is another multi-time winner, winning the U8 Girls in 2019, the U10 Girls in 2020 and the U10 Open in 2021. She is the only girl in the competition's history to win an Open title, and now she has done it twice. Elis is a member of the Chess Trust's Accelerator Programme and is currently the 17<sup>th</sup> ranked girl in the world in her age category.

Coventry Chess Academy, under the stewardship of Paul Lam, continue to produce some outstanding junior talents and this one-two is testament to their high standards.

- 1<sup>st</sup> (and top girl) – Elis Denele Diden (Coventry Chess Academy), 8½
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Tom Junde He (Coventry Chess Academy), 8½
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Pengxiao Zhu, 7½



U12 Champion - Elis Diden

## Under 14



This was another heavily-stacked section with multiple British champions, former UKCC winners and two members of the Chess Trust Accelerator Programme. The deserving winner, Stanley Badacsonyi (Fortismere), went through undefeated, including decisive victories over the second and third placed finishers. Stanley is making a name for himself as a very dangerous and fast player on the UK scene, and it is fantastic that he has now achieved this latest accolade.

The Girls' title was a close affair, with Dhriti Anand (North London Collegiate) narrowly edging out Lindsay Pyun, in part due to her victory over her nearest rival in round 10. Dhriti also won the Girls U12 title in 2022 and is now a multi-time winner.

A special mention to Kenneth Hobson, who was runner-up now for the third time. Kenneth gained his CM title this year and defeated his first grandmaster – hopefully next year he'll make a run on the U18 championship.

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Stanley Badacsonyi (Fortismere), 9½
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Kenneth Hobson (Cowley), 8½
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Theo Khoury (Gillotts), 8
- Girls – Dhriti Anand (North London Collegiate), 3



U14 Champion - Stanley Badacsonyi





U14 Girls Champion - Dhriti Anand

## Under 18



The U18 section included an international master and a FIDE master, and the standard of play was higher than ever. The two top seeds met in round 6, and Artem Lutsko (Tytherington School) was the decisive winner after Rajat Makkar's opening gambit backfired.

In the last 18 months many strong young players from Ukraine have joined the England chess scene, and junior chess has been greatly enriched by this. Artem becomes the UK Chess Challenge's first champion from Ukraine, and he did it in great style with a thumping 7/7 at the Northern Gigafinal and almost completing a clean sweep in the Terafinal, only being held to a draw in the very last round by second place finisher Aron Saunders.

Aron (Downend and Fishpond) had a great tournament, going through undefeated to second place. Aron, or 'QED' to his online followers, has racked up some impressive achievements in speed chess and variants online, and it is great to see the results now following over the board.

In the battle for the Girls title Tashika Arora narrowly finished ahead of Abigail Weersing after prevailing in their crucial round 7 clash.

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Artem Lutsko (Tytherington School), 10½
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Aron Saunders (Downend & Fishponds), 9
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Sanjith Madhavan (St Ninian's High, Scotland), 8
- Girls – Tashika Arora (Oxford), 4½



U18 Champion - Artem Lutsko



U18 Girls Champion - Tashika Arora

## Taking Part in the Challenge

Schools, junior chess clubs and parents can easily get involved in the 2024 Challenge either by contacting the team on [admin@ukchess.co.uk](mailto:admin@ukchess.co.uk) or visiting the website here:

<https://www.delanceyukschoolschesschallenge.com/>

Schools or clubs taking part receive a school/club tournament kit containing materials necessary to run a chess tournament plus prizes for all the players, including certificates, badges and a trophy.

For parents and players a Megafinal is often their first experience of competitive chess outside the school environment, while the Gigafinals and later stages are some of the strongest junior competitions around. The Terafinal itself is fearsomely strong and notoriously difficult to qualify for!

### Acknowledgments and Appreciations

We are extremely fortunate and grateful to be able to host the event at such a spectacular venue, and the team at Blenheim Palace made us feel very welcome and helped ensure we were able to run everything as planned – including using the ‘Long Library’ for the prizegiving: literally a red carpet prizegiving!

Once again, a huge thank you to our sponsors Delancey, without whom this event could not take place.

We would also like to express our thanks to our core team and the many helpers and organisers this year. In no particular order:

Dominic Hare, Pat Armstrong, Rahil Ahmad, Pauline Whitehead, Alex Holowczak, Nevil Chan, Ken Regan, Matthew Carr, Emma-Jane Billington-Phillips, Sean Marsh, Jon Hunt, Ray Sayers, Ed Jones, John Upham, Maha Chandar, Jamie Mitchell, Jennifer Wilson, Harry Marron, David Eggleston, Julian Clissold, Ravi Kumar, John Stubbs, Oliver Stubbs, John Hipshon, Lara Barnes, Alex McFarlane, Chris Lewis, Daniel Knight, Mark Newman, Richard Croot, Mohammad Rezaul Islam, Thomas Evans, Ritika Maladkar, Andrew Smith, Jo Wildman, Andy Howie, Nilanga Jayawarna, Jorel Ali, Maria Manedilou, Chris Russell, James Corrigan and Adam Robinson. There are many others, of course – apologies if I have missed people!!

This was the first ever Terafinal to take place without the founder Michael Basman, who is sadly missed and to whom we ourselves and UK junior chess are so deeply indebted.

### Games from the 2023 Terafinal

The following two games both won a ‘Mike Basman Best Game’ trophy:

#### Liu, Jack (1920) - Gera, Marvin (1783) [B12]

2023 UK Chess Challenge Terafinal Under 18, Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, 09.11.2023

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.Nd2 e6 5.Nb3 Qc7 6.Nf3 Nd7 7.Be3 Ne7 8.Be2 h6 9.0-0 Bh7 10.a4 a5 11.Bd2 b6** If 11...0-0-0 12.Bxa5. **12.Rc1** White aims to open the c-file to exploit the position of the black queen. **12...Ng6**



Once the knight moves away from the d5 square c4 becomes more attractive for White. **12...Qb7 13.c4 dxc4 14.Bxc4 Nd5** is solid enough for Black. **13.c4! Qb7 14.cxd5** White of course opens up the position, as Black's kingside is still undeveloped. **14...cxd5 15.Bb5** Threatens Bc6. **15...Rc8 16.Qe2 Rxc1 17.Rxc1 Be7** Black would desperately love to castle! **18.Bc6** Making way for the queen. **18...Qa7 19.Qb5 Bd8**



Black prepares ...Ne7, trying to push White back. Now Jack finishes the game with great force and accuracy. If **19...0-0 20.Bxd7** wins a piece. **20.Bxa5!! bxa5 21.Nc5** With a triple attack on d7. **21...Ngf8 22.Nb7!** An easy move to miss, as the knight seemed well placed on c5. However, it's heading for d6. **22...Qb8** If **22...g5 23.Nd6+ Ke7 24.Nc8+** and White wins the queen – and if Black tries **22...Be7** guarding d6, then the white rook plays a decisive role: **23.Bxd7+ Nxd7 24.Rc8+ Bd8 25.Rxd8+ Ke7 26.Qxd7# 23.Nd6+ Ke7**





**24.Qxb8! Nxb8 25.Nc8#** A beautiful checkmate. 1-0

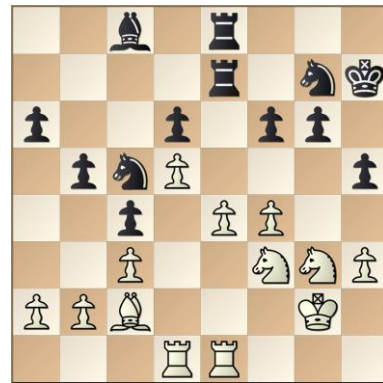
**Khoury, Theo (2132) - Hobson, Kenneth (2060) [C00]**

2023 UK Chess Challenge Terafinal Under 14, Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, 09.11.2023

**1.e4 a6** A fitting opening for a Mike Basman award! **2.d4 e6** This has been played recently by Magnus Carlsen in some rapid games and even at the European Club Cup, and surprisingly isn't so bad. **3.Bd3 3.Nd2 d5** transposes to a line of the French Tarrasch. **3...b5** This gives the game more of a St George flavour than the French. **4.Nf3 Bb7 5.0-0 c5 6.c3 Nf6 7.Bg5** 7.e5 Nd5 8.dxc5 Bxc5 9.a4 puts Black under some pressure. **7...Be7 8.Nbd2 d6 9.Re1 Nbd7 10.Qe2** White has played sensible moves and emerged with a small advantage. **10...0-0 10...h6** - challenging the bishop immediately may have been better. **11.Rad1 e5** The position now has some of the hallmarks of a Spanish Chigorin. **12.Nf1 Nh5 13.Bxe7 Qxe7 14.g3 g6 14...exd4 15.cxd4 Rfe8 16.d5 Nh6** Looks roughly balanced. **15.Ne3 Rac8 15...exd4 16.cxd4 Rfe8** would have been a better try for Black. **16.d5 c4 17.Bc2**



**17..Ng7** The knight ends up misplaced here, and Black never does get the f5 break in. **18.Nh4 Qg5 19.Qg4?! 19.Nhg2 f5 20.exf5 gxf5 21.f4** retains a slight advantage for White. **19...Qxg4 20.Nxg4 h5 20...f5?** doesn't work because of 21.exf5 gxf5 22.Nh6+ **21.Ne3 Nc5 22.Kg2 Rc7 23.f4** White is the first to strike with the f-pawn. **23...exf4 24.gxf4** White now reorganises very effectively, and threatens to make use of the mobile pawn centre. In the meantime. Black's g7-knight is a problem piece. **24...Re8 25.Nf1 Rce7 26.Ng3 Bc8 27.h3!** A useful piece of prophylaxis against ...Bg4. **27...Kh7 28.Nf3 f6?!**



**29.e5! Nf5 29...fxe5 30.fxe5 dxe5 31.d6 Re6 32.Ng5+** is great for White. **30.e6 Nxg3 31.Kxg3 Bb7** Maybe Black had to try 31...f5, but it doesn't look pleasant. **32.f5 g5**



**33.Nxg5+! Kg7 33...fxg5 34.f6+- 34.h4!** Other moves are also good, but style points for this one! **34...fxg5 35.hxg5 h4+ 36.Kg4 Rf8** Black resigned, as the white pawns are too strong. 1-0

## 47<sup>th</sup> Guernsey International Chess Festival 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> October 2023 by Kevin Thurlow

The event was partnered and supported by BWCI (actuaries, consultants, pensions specialists), FIDE, St James, Chessable, Guernsey Sports Commission, DGT, AB Design, and Arcadia Express.

Back in 1972, the world was riveted by the world championship match between Spassky and Fischer. A couple of years later the Guernsey Tourist Board approached John Bisson of the chess club and said they thought it would be great for tourism if Guernsey could host a return match between Spassky and Fischer, and could he try to organise it, and the Tourist Board would make £5,000 available. John said he would contact the players and report back. He was aware that the chances of a return match were slim, to say the least, so he did not bother to contact Spassky and Fischer; instead he reported that the match was not possible, but instead,



why not run a week-long tournament, open to all? Players would visit the island and bring their families, and it would be great for tourism. This got an enthusiastic response, and in 1975 the first festival took place with over 120 players. John did get Boris Spassky to visit Guernsey in 1974 to do a simultaneous display, and Fischer's manager Colonel Edmondson played in the 1975 tournament. The tournament continues annually to this day, except for a two-year hiatus caused by Covid.

One thing that is notable about the tournament is that there are many players who have played multiple times; indeed, several players have attended more than 40 times. There has always been a strong Dutch presence, which was aided by direct flights from Amsterdam to Guernsey. There were more Dutch than English players one year. Direct flights to Amsterdam stopped a few years ago, which is a nuisance for the Dutch players, who now have to fly via the UK, or drive through France and get the ferry. The late Rudi von Saldern told me he flew from Germany to Luton, then got a bus to Gatwick, before flying to Guernsey - and this was when he was in his 80s. People are enthusiastic about the tournament.

The tournament was held in St Peter Port in the early years, then for more than 40 years moved out of 'Town', as locals call St Peter Port. In 2022 it was back in Town at St James, which used to be a church but was converted to a concert and assembly hall. The 2023 event was also held there, with good playing conditions. Refreshments were available, and the friendly and efficient staff did a great job. Long-time organiser Peter Rowe had worked with new Guernsey Chess Federation President Jonathan Hill on the 2022 event, but this time the latter took centre stage. How he manages to run a chess event and still be cheerful and friendly is beyond me, but he does it. There have been enthusiastic and talented organisers there before, and Jon is just the same.

The advantages of having the event in Town are that there are many hotels and restaurants compared with out-of-town venues. You can walk everywhere and avoid driving. The disadvantages are that there are many steep hills, and, if you do have a car, you cannot really park it anywhere. But out-of-town venues require you to stay close to the venue, or have a car, or hope the buses run on time.

I flew from Bristol on the preceding Friday alongside a handful of other chess players (including one Dutchman), and arrived later than planned due to bad weather, but the Aurigny pilot was not fazed by the nasty crosswind and made a very fine landing. I walked round Town on Saturday morning and paused to rest on a bench by the sea. This had a plate attached to it stating that former

Guernsey resident Victor Hugo described the Channel Islands as 'bits of France fallen into the sea and gathered up by England'. Yes, a good description. In the afternoon I headed to Candie Museum for the Renoir exhibition. Renoir spent a summer in Guernsey in 1883, and some of his work from that trip was being exhibited. He painted and sketched a lot in the Moulin Huet area of the island, which he would have pronounced (approximately) "Moolan Way", but the locals pronounce 'Moolon Wet'. Empty picture frames have been set up there, so you can see what he would have been looking at when he worked. Another claim to cultural fame for Candie is that the Beatles performed two concerts there in 1963.

A later walk round Town took me to a shop selling collectables and books. I was surprised to find a copy of 'The Windmills of Surrey and Inner London' by K G Farries and M T Mason, published in 1966. Readers may wonder why your scribe would care. Ken Farries taught Geography and Russian at my old school and ran the chess club in his spare time. He tried to persuade Smyslov to play against the school some years earlier, but he politely declined; however, we did get a postal game against Kotov, and good coverage in 'Soviet Weekly'. I decided against repatriating the book due to its extreme size, but it was nice to see it. But back to Guernsey chess...

Geert Bailleul was again the arbiter, with Mary McDermott assisting. Mary used to run the event with her late husband, Peter Wilson. The prelude to the tournament was a blitz tournament held the evening before the main event. Keith Arkell, Harry Grieve and Danny Gormally all scored 8/9, with fourth place back on 5. The top three drew with each other, but the games were hard-fought: [Chess-Results Server Chess-results.com - 47th Guernsey International Chess Festival - Blitz Tournament](https://chess-results.com/47th-Guernsey-International-Chess-Festival-Blitz-Tournament) Was this a preview of the real tournament?

There were two sections, the Open and the Challengers, which used to be known as the 'Holiday' tournament, and which had a rest day mid-week to allow players the chance to visit Sark. You need all day for that trip, but Herm visits can be achieved in a morning. This time you needed to take a bye if you wanted a day off.

There were 37 players in the Open. Usually there are several players with similar ratings, then a bit of a gap to the next bunch. This time seed 3 was rated more than 250 points higher than seed 4. Round 1 largely went with seeding, although Rosemary Giuliani and Alexander Hertog beat higher-rated opponents. The top three had a fairly smooth passage throughout the tournament but did have a few scares. I played Alan Gravett, a Guernsey regular, but we had not played since 2004. In another

coincidence, he was the first of five opponents whose surname started with 'G'. In the Challengers, there were 28 players, and in round 1 Stephen Berkley, Geerhard Reink and local players Keith Flanagan and Daniel De Lisle overturned the rating differences.

Round 2 of the Open went more or less according to rating, with a few draws, leaving five players on 2/2, Round 2 of the Challengers was similar, but only Geerhard Reink, Karsten Dam and Elmira Walker moved to 2/2.

Round 3 was business as usual, and Messrs Grieve, Gormally and Arkell moved to 3/3. I made the fatal mistake of analysing the move after next against Harry Grieve, then forgetting to play the first move, but in fairness he was better already. However, it was useful practice as the position in the early middlegame has just appeared in several of my correspondence games. In the Challengers Karsten Dam drew with Elmira Walker, while Geerhard Reink lost, leaving 6 players on 2½.

Round 4 saw the first clash of experts, with a fairly predictable draw on top board, but Harry Grieve took advantage of the downfloat to take the sole lead on 4/4, and of course gained a useful tie-break advantage. Experienced Dutchman Peter Hoogakker and local player Gerda Nevska won in the Challengers to share the lead on 3½.

Keith Arkell had the downfloat in round 5 and duly won, while the top board was again drawn. Gerda Nevska won with Black to take the lead in the Challengers.

In Round 6 board 1 was drawn, but Danny Gormally won against Alan Punnett in a very exciting game to join the leaders. Nigel Dennis defeated Gerda Nevska to take the sole lead on 5 in the Challengers.

And so the final round approached. It was obvious where the main prizes were going in the Open, but there were a number of subsidiary prizes, and it was very unclear where they were destined.

1. H Grieve (5) 1-0 O Stockham (4)
2. K Thurlow (4) 0-1 D Gormally (5)
3. A Hertog (4) 0-1 K Arkell (5)
4. S Dilleigh (3½) 1-0 I Browning (4)

All the lower-rated players on the top boards put up a fight, but to no avail. It is worth noting that Alexander Hertog's FIDE rating went up by more than 100, which is very impressive. Predictably, the top three emerged victorious, but they had a few scares along the way. I was pleased to play two of the top three but did not get the opportunity to make my 0-19 score against Keith even

worse. I am beginning to accept that he might be a better player than me.

### Challengers

1. P Hoogakker (4½) draw N Dennis (5)
2. G Nevska (4½) 1-0 E Walker (4½)
3. K Dam (4) 0-1 V Steinbergs (4)

Another hard-fought round saw Nigel Dennis and Gerda Nevska share first place.

The rather lengthy prize lists may be found at [Guernsey Chess Club and Federation](https://guernseychessfestival.org/gg/47th-guernsey-chess-club-and-federation). Harry Grieve won the trophy on tie-break, causing Danny Gormally to comment wryly that he had lost on tie-break in three successive tournaments in the space of a couple of weeks. Gerda Nevska won the Challengers, also on tie-break. Peter Rijdsdijk won the brilliancy/best game prize, which was somewhat unusual as he played in the Challengers. Photos of the prize-giving appear here:

<https://guernseychessfestival.org/gg/47th-guernsey-international-chess-festival-prize-giving-dinner-photos/>

The tournament appeared to run smoothly. The event finished with an enjoyable dinner/prize-giving (which is free for all players) at the Duke of Richmond Hotel. The next morning was bright, and the flight back to Bristol was uneventful and arrived early. The luggage arrived quickly, and the car was available as planned. I might start to enjoy flying again.

You can already enter the 48<sup>th</sup> Guernsey International Chess Festival, which will take place 13<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> October 2024. We were missing several old friends this year, and we hope to see them next time. This was my 43<sup>rd</sup> attempt to win the event, so it is obvious that I recommend it.

# National Club Championships 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October by Stephen Greep



*Bryony Eccleston and Aashita Roychowdhury of She Plays to Win cut the Championship cake.*

After a gap of five years (with the exception of an online version in 2021), the National Club Championships were revived at the fine venue of the Canham Turner Conference Centre, Cottingham Road, Hull University over the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October. It was played as a five-round Swiss with teams of four (but squads of up to six allowed) with three sections: an Open, and two sections for teams with an average rating of under 2000 and under 1700.



*The National Club Championships underway*

The venue has hosted a number of previous national events, and the team from Hull had run the successful online National Club Championships in 2021, so it seemed a logical choice to ask them to revitalise the event for 2023.

Everything was all set up and ready to go when storm Babet intervened. Trains from Kings Cross were cancelled until the Saturday, and travelling conditions across the Midlands were terrible. This resulted in two teams not being able to get to Hull at all, one not able to play until the Saturday morning, and a number of teams playing on the Friday evening with two or three players. This didn't unwind totally until the Saturday afternoon, the conditions having resulted in a number of triangular matches as the arbiter team, led by IA Adrian Elwin and supported by FAs Tom Evans and Richard Buxton, sought to ensure the maximum number of games for all players. Due to the storm the original entry of just under 90 players was reduced by 10. Some players (and teams) made heroic efforts to get to Hull to play.

There were a significant number of local teams, and over 40 local players took part in the event. All the sections were keenly contested, and nothing was certain until the end of the final round on the Sunday. The last games to be finished determined the winners and runners-up in the Open and U1700 sections. Such was the uncertainty that the team from Beverley, who were runners-up in the U2000 section, left thinking they had not been successful. There were some tense scenes on Sunday evening waiting for all the games to be finished, the calculations as to positions being made all the more complicated by the triangular sessions on the Friday evening and Saturday morning.

The Open section was especially close. The two leaders, 3Cs and Heffalump Hunters, were tied going into the last round; their match result in round 5 being a 2-2 draw, 3Cs were declared winners on tie break. In the U2000 and U1700 sections there were clear winners, but the runner-up slots in both were also decided on tie-break. Special mention should be made of Ron Kemp, aged 87 with a rating of 1356, who scored 2 out of 3 for Victoria Dock, helping them to a title win in the U1700 section.

A special mention should also be made of the She Plays to Win B team, who scored six match points playing with only three players.





*New trophies*

Local sponsorship provided new trophies for all winners and runners-up as well as banners, pens and scoresheets to give the event a more 'personalised' flavour. The ECF would like to thank the Hull and East Riding Chess Association, VHEY (Visit Hull and East Yorkshire) and other sources of local support for their sponsorship, which enabled the event to take place.

The majority of games were played on live boards, and the final round benefited from live commentary by GM Peter Wells and WIM Natasha Regan. All the games can be replayed, and you can revisit the live commentary, plus see all the cross tables on the National Club Championships website, here:

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/ecf-national-club-championships-2023/>

There are a number of photographs from the event on the website, but more may be found, courtesy of Brendan O'Gorman, here:

<https://brendanogorman.smugmug.com/Chess/2023/National-Club-Championship-2023>



*The successful teams from 3Cs in the Open and Victoria Dock in the U1700 with their trophies*

The title winners and runners-up who shared the prize money of £1,500 were (winners' names first):

Open: 3Cs and Heffalump Hunters (on tie-break, each team scoring six match points)

U2000: Hull 2 (winners on seven match points) and Beverley Patzers

U1700: Victoria Dock (winners on eight match points) and Hull Chess Club 3

Peter Wells kindly annotated the game below from the event.

**Sterck, Arno – Ashton, Adam**

ECF National Club 2023 Round 5 – Heffalump Hunters vs 3Cs

**1.Nf3 d5 2.e3 Nf6 3.b3 Bg4 4.Bb2 Nbd7 5.d4 e6 6.Nbd2 Be7 7.Bd3 c5 8.0-0 0-0 9.Qe1!?**

The downside of the relatively aggressive move of the bishop to d3 is that the pin on the f3-knight is quite annoying, and it is easy to understand why White is keen to side-step this. Still, I can't help finding this a bit artificial, and it does leave me wondering whether the set-up could be tweaked at an earlier stage.

### 9...Rc8

Nothing wrong with this of course, but my engine mentions the possibility of 9...cxd4 10.exd4 Bf5!? so that after 11.Bxf5 exf5 Black has a nice grip on the e4-square. I partly like this because it is a throwback to the way I used to handle the black side of the Exchange Caro-Kann in my youth (on at least one occasion to the consternation of my Bundesliga team-mates), but this does look like a very appealing version of the plan too. If you were ever going to believe in this structure, this might be the moment!

### 10.Ne5



### 10...Nxe5?!

I guess Adam wanted to take immediately, to ensure that White would be denied the option of f4 and taking with the f-pawn. Nonetheless, since Black's bishop should be headed for g6 anyhow, I quite liked 10...Bh5, even without the engine's intriguing insight that 11 f4 cxd4 12 cxd4 Nxe5 13 fxe5 Ng4!? 14 h3 Nh6 leaves the knight well placed if it can later head to f5 following an exchange of light-squared bishops.

### 11.dxe5 Nd7 12.h3 Bh5 13.e4 Qb6?!



It is much harder to make sense of this, however. It is true that Black should avoid closing the centre, since 13...d4 14 f4 would give White a strong c4-square and a free hand on the kingside. However, supporting the d5-point with

13...Nb6!? makes more sense to me, while the thematic pawn sacrifice to secure c5 for the knight 13...c4!? appeals even more after 14.bxc4 Nc5 15.exd5 Nxd3 16.cxd3 exd5 with decent counterplay when the bishop arrives at the healthy post on g6.

### 14.c4

White could also consider releasing the tension in the centre immediately, since after 14.exd5!? exd5, 15 c4 and 15 Bf5 both pose Black some problems.

### 14...Bg6 15.Qe2 dxe4 16.Nxe4 Rcd8 17.Rad1 Nb8



### 18.Nf6+?

Knowing when to keep building the pressure and when to strike a (hopefully) decisive blow often constitutes one of the toughest judgement calls in chess, and I suspect no player in history has been immune from occasionally making the wrong choice in such situations. There is even a load of conflicting advice to point to: 'strike while the iron is hot' on the one hand, against the Soviet School's near-adulation of patience and the avoidance of impetuous errors on the other. I sometimes have the words of the young Anatoly Karpov ringing in my ears at such moments, too. When asked about his strikingly solid and mature style, he replied in exemplary Soviet fashion: 'Of course, sacrifice when it is correct; but bridges I do not burn – it's not my style.'

In this case it is understandable that Black's last move - withdrawal of a key defensive knight – might act as a prompt to look carefully at sacrificing, and it certainly caused us considerable excitement in the commentary when this move landed on the board. However, in the cold light of calculation White's main idea is to land mate on g7, and his problem will be that Bf8 generally covers this threat and – should White try to sacrifice the exchange on d6 – Black will be able to recapture with the queen, which can be expected to replicate this function effectively. Moreover, White had a natural and patient 'building' move in 18 h4!, intending not just to dislodge



the bishop from g6 but to apply immediate pressure to that square in the event that Black exchanges on e4 and will then be obliged to play ...g6 to avoid mate. Ironically, if Black were to be greedy enough to reply 18...Bxh4?, then the idea from the game really comes into its own after 19.Qg4 Be7 20.Nf6+! gxf6 (20...Bxf6 survives longer, but it is none too appealing to play with a white pawn on g7 here!) 21. exf6 Bd6 22 Qh4 Kh8 23 Bxg6 f7+ e5 25 Qf6#. Of course, none of this would have been forced, but Black's resources would have been seriously challenged by this exercise of restraint. At the end of the day, the decision to sacrifice here just feels a bit too much like bridge-burning.

**18...gxf6 19.exf6 Bd6 20.h4**

We were expecting something like 20.Qe3, when the threat to invade on h6 leaves Black no choice, and after 20...Rfe8, perhaps 21.Bxg6 hxg6 22.h4 (22.Rxd6 Qxd6 doesn't help, as I mentioned above.) 22...Bf8 23.h5, but Black can start liquidating with 23...Rxd1 24.Rxd1 Rd8 25.Re1 g5! 26.Qxg5+ Kh7, when the attack starts to run out of steam.

20.Bxg6 hxg6 21.Qg4!? may be the cleverest try, but Black even has a choice here. The 'obvious' 21...Rfe8 22.h4 Kh7 23.h5 Rg8 24.hxg6+ Rxg6 25.Qh5+ Kg8 just about holds together, as 26.Rd3 can be met with 26...Qc6! and an annoying counter-threat of mate on g2. Still, even 21...Bc7!? 22.Qh4 e5 works, by threatening to remove the pivotal f6 pawn. After 23.f4 Rxd1 24.Rxd1 Qe6 25.g4 Nd7 it is again becoming clear that White lacks the firepower to create further threats.

**20...Bxd3 21.Rxd3 Kh8 22.Rfd1 Rg8 23.Qh5 Qc7 24.Bc1 Nc6 25.Bh6 Bf8!**

Just in time to hold everything together.

**26.Rxd8 Nxd8 27.Bxf8 Rxf8 28.Rd3 Rg8 29.Qd1 Nc6 30.Rd7 Qf4! 31.Rxf7 Ne5 32.Rxh7+**

This time the investment of material looks like the only way to continue the struggle. White manages to amass as many as four pawns for the rook in the coming moves, but it is still hopeless. Once the f6-pawn is rounded up Black can push the e-pawn with relative impunity, safe in the knowledge that his opponent's pawns are too far back for any position without queens to present serious technical challenges.

**32...Kxh7 33.Qh5+ Qh6 34.Qxe5 Qg6 35.g3 Rf8 36.Qxc5 Qxf6 37.Qxa7 Rf7 38.Qe3 Qf3 39.Qd4 e5 40.Qd2 e4! 41.c5 e3!**

Forcing a decisive liquidation to a winning ending, which Adam converts very proficiently.

**42.Qxe3 Qxe3 43.fxe3 Rf3 44.Kg2 Rxe3 45.b4 Ra3 46.b5 Rxa2+ 47.Kf3 Rc2 48.c6 bxc6 49.bxc6 Rxc6**

**0-1**

## 59<sup>th</sup> Northumberland Chess Congress by Mick Riding

125 players competed in this year's Northumberland Chess weekend which was held at the Parks Leisure Centre, the winners being:

**Open** - Gustavo Leon Cazares, Tim Wall, Roger Coathup and Rafe Martyn: all 4/5

**Major** - Mark McKay, John Liddle, Raj Mohindra: all 4/5

**Minor** - Noel Boustred and Ethan Tatters: both 4/5

**Foundation**

Alan Johnson: 9/10

The congress reflected its traditional friendly but competitive atmosphere. The Parks staff were excellent, Howard Wood kindly provided a book stall, O'Briens Funfairs a mobile kitchen, and Paul Charlton photography. And thanks also to our arbiters Alex McFarlane and Tom Krause. Next year the county association celebrates its 60th anniversary; here's hoping for a 'gud un'.

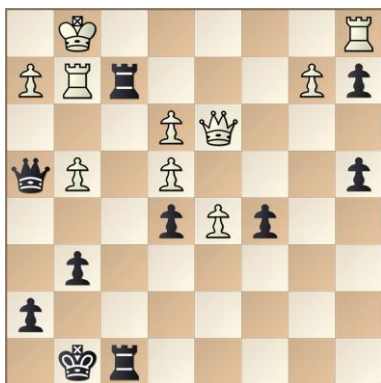


*A game from the Open, round 1*



## Robin Nandi (1805) – Andrew Burnett (2185)

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 0-0 5.Nf3 d6 6.Be2 Bg4  
The Simagin variation, not common but not bad. 7.Be3 e5  
8.d5 a5 9.c5 Na6 10.cxd6 cxd6 11.Qa4 Here instead White  
might go Nd2, looking to exchange his white-squared  
Bishop. Andrew quickly targets the queen. 11...Nd7  
12.Bxa6 Rxa6 13.Nd2 Nc5 14.Bxc5 dxc5 15.Nc4 Maybe  
castling is more prudent. 15...Bd7 16.Qb3 Perhaps better  
to get the queen out of Dodge, say d1. 16...b5 17.Ne3 a4  
18.Qc2 f5 19.0-0 Castling into it. White has a difficult task  
ahead, as Black is pushing on both wings. 19...f4 20.Ned1  
f3 21.Ne3 Qg5 22.Kh1 Qh5 23.g4 Qh4 24.Rg1 Bh6 25.Rg3  
Bxe3 26.fxe3 b4 27.Nd1 f2 28.Nxf2 b3 29.Qe2 Raf6  
30.Nd3 bxa2 31.Rg2 You can be sure Stockfish would have  
polished this off by now. Thank God we're not Stockfish.  
Black's two-pronged attack comes to a wonderful fruition.  
31...Bb5 32.Kg1 OK, d6 is better, but 32.d6 R6f7 33.d7  
Qd8 34.Rxa2 Rxd7 is futile. 32...Bxd3 33.Qxd3 Rf2 and 0-  
1



## Raj Mohindra – Mark Taylor

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.f3 e6  
7.Be3 Be7 8.Qd2 0-0 9.0-0-0 Qc7 10.Kb1 Bd7 11.g4 b5  
12.h4 Nc6 13.Nxc6 Bxc6 14.Ne2 Not sure why. White's  
attack is under way and he should continue pushing the  
g- and h-pawns 14...a5 Black seems too far behind for  
this. Countering in the centre with d5 is best. 15.Nd4 b4  
16.Nxc6 Qxc6 17.h5 Nd7 18.g5 OK, but let's complete  
development and connect our rooks first. 18...Rac8  
19.Be2 f5 At this point Black should stick with his plan A  
and push a4. 20.exf5 Rxf5 21.f4 Rd5 22.Bd3 Nc5 23.Qe2  
Instead, Bxc5 maintains his advantage. 23...Nxd3 24.cxd3  
Qb5 25.Bc1 e5 An error due to Qg4. However, White  
chose... 26.Rhe1 b3. Remarkable that Black looks ahead  
in the king hunt now! 27.axb3 Qxb3 28.d4 a4 Instead,  
28...Rxd4 29.Rxd4 exd4 30.Qxe7 Qc2+ and a perpetual!  
29.dxe5 a3 30.Rxd5 a2+ His only chance seems to be  
taking on b2; a1 is now a safe sanctuary for the white king  
31.Ka1 Qxd5 32.exd6 Bxd6 33.Qd1 Qf5 34.Qb3+ Kf8  
35.Bd2 Rb8 36.Qe6 Qxa2 is quite safe, but we're not live

at the board! Now Black resigned, though he could make  
White work a little while for the full point. 1-0 Well  
played, Raj, on his way to a deserved 1<sup>st</sup> = in the Major  
section.

## Nottingham Chess Association by Nick London

### Centenary Grandmaster Tournament: Report



Nottinghamshire Chess Association celebrated its  
centenary year in 2022-23 with several special events  
including a simultaneous display, a rapidplay County  
Championship and our own 'ChessFest' day in July. The  
grand finale event was a grandmaster round-robin  
tournament in early November. A range of invited English  
and overseas young stars competed against each other  
and against the established GMs in the hope of gaining  
title norms as well as valuable experience in a hard-fought  
event.

The venue was the Nottingham Mechanics Institute  
which, although housed in a modern and well-appointed  
city centre building, can claim a long and proud chess  
tradition as the host of one of the first clubs in the area,  
founded in 1837. The original Mechanics building was  
also the location of Nottingham's first international  
tournament held in 1886.



The same venue also played host to a locally organised junior invitational all-play-all tournament, with ten of the best young players in the county competing for a handsome trophy and prize money – but, more importantly, gaining the experience of a standard play event sitting alongside the established masters.

The organisers engaged the services of Tim Wall as Tournament Director, who set about recruiting a suitable range of players to create a tournament with achievable title norms. This is a complex task, and thanks are due to Tim for finding a good mix of youth, experience, appropriate ratings and nationalities to meet FIDE criteria. The events were also a good opportunity to enhance the qualifications and experience of local arbiters, so Derbyshire's John Shaw worked on the GM tournament while Hambel Willow from Nottingham supervised the junior event.

The games were played in a combative spirit – little sign of any 'grandmaster draws' – and most rounds saw a batch of decisive games. We had recruited IM Andrew Martin to provide a 'game of the day' YouTube video working with Tim Wall, and these are now available on the newly established [UK Chess Events](#) page. Live streaming was also available for those with enough time to watch the action as it happened. More unexpected was the television coverage, which included a preview item on the local Notts TV and an excellent midweek [report](#) on ITV Central News.



The GM event was won by GM Eldar Gasanov, currently resident in the UK, with an unbeaten 6½/9, with the young Dutch GM Thomas Beerdsen and local Nottingham star IM Jonah Willow in joint second place. Sadly, Jonah missed out on a GM norm, but did win a rating performance prize, as did another local talent FM Ankush Khandelwal, who missed his IM norm target by only half a point.

Special mention should be made of the bottom-marker, the Polish CM Andrzej Krzywda, who agreed to fly over and take part at the last minute after a late withdrawal. Despite being heavily outrated he contributed fighting performances and a cheerful demeanour and deserves our thanks for completing the tournament line-up.

Meanwhile, the junior competitors, playing in the same tournament hall, behaved impeccably and competed fiercely. FIDE rating points were at stake, and in some cases school and chess club bragging rights. The race for the winner's trophy was close-run at times, but the clear winner was Furkan Bahtiyar with an impressive 8/9, losing only to Senith Gunarathne, who was joint 2<sup>nd</sup> with Dinuga Basnayake. Best game prizes were also awarded to four of the participants.

The organisers are very grateful not only to our excellent venue hosts at Nottingham Mechanics Institute and to the arbiting team, but also for the major financial support from the Chess Trust, John Robinson Youth Chess Trust and Friends of Chess, as well as to Nottinghamshire Chess Foundation. Without such charitable support events like this could not take place, and opportunities for young people would not occur.

## **10<sup>th</sup> Witney Congress 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

**by Keith Freshwater**

Close on the heels of the Witney Rapidplay, as reported in *ChessMoves*' October edition by Carl Portman, followed the Witney Congress on 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> November. This was the 10<sup>th</sup> Witney Congress to be held and was again hosted by Cokethorpe School in leafy West Oxfordshire. I was engaged as Assistant Arbiter to Matthew Carr, but Matthew was seconded elsewhere and replaced by the equally excellent Richard Buxton.





*Bird's eye view of the playing area*

Carl has already described the venue very well but missed out one key element: the clock in the main hall. Well, I say 'clock' because that is what it is, but it's a large flat screen monitor. Most of the time this displays constantly changing fractal-like patterns, but once every minute these resolve into displaying the time. I'm told it was expensive, and suspect it has AI or something.

As an event the congress is growing in popularity: 94 players entered last year, and 123 this time. There were five rounds and four sections: Open, Under 2000, Under 1800 and Under 1600. In the Open section, as sometimes happens, a couple of players entered who, at face value, looked perhaps better suited to a lower section. I contacted both and moved one. After a brief phone call with the other, I established that he understood what the Open section was and wanted to play in it. Come round 5 and he's playing Black on board 1 against Yichen Han for first place, so I guess he was right, and, yes, I felt rather stupid.



*Open winner Yichen Han playing Dimitrios Zakarian*

We met on Friday afternoon at around 2:30 pm to set up, though for Richard work had started days earlier making

sure everything he was bringing was up to snuff. I'm very pleased to say we had no dodgy clocks. With the help of Witney Chess Club's Alan Gentry, the three of us set up by about 7 pm. The first minor problem arrived early on Saturday when we discovered that I could connect to the printer but not actually print. This meant Richard having to do all the printing out.

There is always a question about the first round and when to run pairings. With registration closing at Friday teatime, you would think it could be run early Friday evening, as this would allow players perhaps to prep for their opponent the next morning. However, here be dragons! The first round always has a degree of panic and confusion. Late withdrawals, late arrivals, problems with transport, late requests for a first-round bye, and so on. Yes, all of this did happen - it pretty much always does to some degree.

Sunday morning was very sunny, and the low angle of the sun through the large windows was a bit of a problem. Richard resolved this with a little Blu Tack and old newspapers kept in a kindling box for the log fire. Not that we needed the fire; the hall was warm and windows had to be opened for a little ventilation.



*Under 1600 section winner Adam Ware*

The whole event went well thanks to a combined effort by those organising, running, and playing. It was Guy Fawkes weekend, and as well as the fireworks outside there were few inside, mostly across the boards. A minor explosion was heard in the hall on Sunday morning when one of the top-rated players realised he had put his queen en prise. Many of us have been there.

A couple of the games from the Open:

## Round 2

**Ogunshola, Olugbemiga (Ben) (2147) - Hayward, Philip T (2090)**

1.c4 f5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 d6  
7.e4 fxe4 8.Ng5 Nc6 9.Ncxe4 e5 10.d3 Nxe4 11.Bxe4 Qe7  
12.Nxh7 Rf4 13.Bxf4 exf4 14.Bxg6 Ne5 15.Re1 Qe6  
16.Qh5 Bd7 17.Be4 Be8 18.Ng5 Bxh5 19.Nxe6 fxg3  
20.fxg3

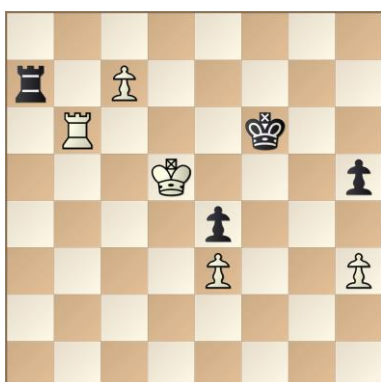


1-0

#### Round 5

Han, Yichen (2506) - Parulekar, Atharva (1300)

1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 Bf5 4.c4 e6 5.Nc3 c6 6.Qb3 Qd7  
7.h3 h6 8.Nf3 Be7 9.Be2 O-O 10.c5 Ne4 11.O-O Bh7  
12.Nxe4 Bxe4 13.Ne5 Qc8 14.Bd3 Bxd3 15.Qxd3 Nd7  
16.b4 Nxe5 17.Bxe5 b6 18.a4 Bd8 19.Rfc1 bxc5 20.dxc5  
Bc7 21.Bxc7 Qxc7 22.b5 Rab8 23.Rab1 Qa5 24.bxc6 Qxa4  
25.c7 Rbc8 26.Ra1 Qc6 27.Rxa7 Rxc7 28.Ra6 Qd7 29.c6  
Qd6 30.Qb5 Rfc8 31.Rb6 Kh7 32.Qb1+ g6 33.Rb7 Kg7  
34.Qb2+ Kg8 35.Rb6 Kh7 36.Qc3 e5 37.Qc5 Qxc5 38.Rxc5  
e4 39.Kf1 Kg7 40.Ke2 Kf6 41.Kd2 Ke6 42.Kc3 Ke5 43.Kb4  
f5 44.Kb5 Kd6 45.Rc1 g5 46.g3 h5 47.Rc2 Ke6 48.Kc5 Rd7  
49.Ra2 Ke5 50.Ra4 f4 51.gxf4 gxf4 52.Rab4 fxe3 53.fxe3  
Rdc7 54.Rb1 Ke6 55.Rg1 Kf6 56.Rd1 Ra8 57.Rxd5 Ra5+  
58.Kd6 Rxd5+ 59.Kxd5 Ra7 60.c7+



1-0

Results and PGNs can be found on Chess-Results via the following link:

<https://chess-results.com/tnr791190.aspx?lan=1>

## FEATURES

### UK Open Blitz Finals 2023 by Nigel Towers



The finals of the UK Open Blitz Championships 2023 will be held at Woodland Grange, Leamington Spa on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. The Championships will include an Open and a Women's final, each event having 16 players with 15 rounds of blitz games in an all-play-all format. The winners will become UK Open and Women's Blitz Champions for 2023. Further details are available at the link below:

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/uk-blitz-championships-2023/>

#### Previous Champions

This will be the fourth UK Open Blitz Championships in the series which started in 2018. Champions to date are as follows:

**2018: Open Champion** GM David Howell; **Women's Champion** IM Sophie Milliet

**2019: Open Champion** GM Justin Tan; **Women's Champion** GM Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant

**2022: Open Champion** GM Jon Speelman; **Women's Champion** WGM Elmira Mirzoeva







2022 finals at Woodland Grange

### Qualifying Players for 2023



Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant



Ameet Ghasi



Mei-En Emmanuelle Hng



Jon Speelman

Qualifying players for the 2023 finals are as shown below based on the eight regional events across the UK:

Open Final	Fed	Rating
IM Ameet Ghasi	ENG	2555
GM Jon Speelman	ENG	2534
GM Eldar Gasanov	UKR	2457
GM Keith Arkell	ENG	2446
IM Andrew Horton	ENG	2401
IM Gediminas Sarakas	LTU	2345
IM Jonah Willow	ENG	2340
IM Araz Basim Mohammed Al-Saffar	IRQ	2304
FM Tom O’Gorman	IRL	2299
FM Bao Nghia Dong	VIE	2299
FM Daniel Kozusek	WLS	2273
IM Jose Comacho Collados	WLS	2212
Jacob Connor Boswell	ENG	2085
Ethan Norris	ENG	2068
Jake Sanger	SCO	1995
Daniel Maxwell	SCO	1991

Women’s Final	Fed	Rating
GM Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant	SCO	2210
WFM Mei-En Emmanuelle Hng	SGP	2125
WGM Elmira Mirzoeva	FID	2086

Kamila Hryshchenko	ENG	2001
Madara Orlovskaya	LAT	1970
WFM Mei-Xian Eunice Hng	SGP	1947
WCM Bodhana Sivanandan	ENG	1944
Elis Dices	ENG	1916
Carmel Barwick	ENG	1845
Shambavi Hariharan	ENG	1723
Kanishka Bhatia	SCO	1692
Irina Briggs	ENG	1559
Anuurai Sainbayar	ENG	1496
Elmira Walker	ENG	1436
Emma Kong	WLS	1399
Siyao Ou	ENG	1387

### Format

The finals will be a 16-player FIDE-rated round robin tournament. The time limit will be all moves in 3 minutes plus 2 seconds per move with the following schedule:

Round	Time	Round	Time	Round	Time
Round 1	12.00	Round 6	14.15	Round 11	16.30
Round 2	12.20	Round 7	14.35	Round 12	16.50
Round 3	12.40	Round 8	14.55	Round 13	17.10
Round 4	13.00	Round 9	15.15	Round 14	17.30
Round 5	13.20	Round 10	15.35	Round 15	17.50

The pairings for the finals will be drawn randomly in advance of the tournament by IA Alex Holowczak.

### Tie-Breaks

In the event of a tie after round 15, tie-breaks will be as follows:

1. Direct Encounter
2. Sonneborn-Berger
3. Koya System
4. Tournament Performance Rating, calculated using the players' ratings in the following order:
  - a. Higher of FIDE or ECF blitz rating (December 2023)
  - b. Higher of FIDE or ECF rapidplay rating (December 2023)
  - c. Higher of FIDE or ECF standardplay rating (December 2023)
  - d. Other rating assigned by the Organiser. This will normally be a player's national rating.
5. The tie will remain unbroken, and any awards or prize money for the tied positions will be shared.

### Prizes

The prize money for the finals will be as follows:

Position	Open Final	Women's Final
1 <sup>st</sup>	£800	£400

2 <sup>nd</sup>	£400	£200
3 <sup>rd</sup>	£300	£150
4 <sup>th</sup>	£200	£100
5 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup>	£150 (x4)	£75 (x4)
9 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup>	£100 (x8)	£50 (x8)
Total	£3,100	£1,550

**Total prize fund: £4,650**

All games will be played on live boards and broadcast via the DGT cloud and various online providers. We will also be organising commentary for the finals on Twitch.tv.

## The Chess Elite under Fire? Some Insights from Doha and Douglas by Peter Wells

Within the last month we have been lucky enough to witness two incredibly strong Swiss system tournaments - The Qatar Masters Open in Doha and the FIDE Grand Swiss in Douglas on the Isle of Man - which resulted in a feast of great chess. I describe them thus because while Qatar, with a lower rating limit of 2300, retained some of the feel of an Open event, the Grand Swiss was not only considerably stronger but self-consciously elitist, an invitation only event with an astonishing 20 players over 2700 and a large majority of the remainder exceeding 2600. It was a pity that English representation in an event so close to home was down to just two players, but there was still an enormous amount to enjoy. For me, part of the fascination was seeing how the world's elite players – the household names who play a significant portion of their chess against each other – would fare when pitted against the tier just below them, with whom they get to compete far less frequently (at least at classical time controls). Part of the motivation for this focus is, I guess, a feeling that there are some incredibly strong players just outside of the elite level who perhaps struggle to get the opportunities that their abilities deserve. A stronger form of the argument might suggest that the elite players are in a sense shielded from the rating deflation which has increasingly become a talking point since Covid, a world in which games against significantly lower-rated players have become decidedly treacherous territory.

Since chess players are notoriously obsessed with their ratings, it is no surprise that the FIDE rating system itself is a frequent target of criticism. Just lately, for example, there has been criticism from Jacob Aagaard and others about the lack of any sanction for lengthy periods of inactivity, which arguably renders the ranking of top players less convincing than that in sports such as tennis, in which a much higher weighting is put on success in the



current year. This concern has probably been prompted by the now lengthy absence from play of the new World Champion, Ding Liren, but also seems to me to reflect the sense that after years of rating inflation we have moved into a period of deflation. This phenomenon appears to be driven in large part by a mass of talented and hardworking (primarily, but not exclusively young) players, who used lockdown very wisely to hone their chess skills, such that their prowess now greatly exceeds their ratings. Moreover, with the ready availability of high-quality opening material available to anyone willing to invest the necessary time, the task of winning with the black pieces - in particular - against a lower-rated opponent not averse to a sharing of the spoils has become to a significant degree an exercise in risk-taking and risk management. Sharp, highly theoretical main lines tend to contain just a few too many forced draws for comfort!

I should point out – as I have done before – that I am not using this argument to explain away the decline in my own playing level. That is multi-causal, and regrettably more to do with my own psychological battles than I might care to admit as someone who has written a book on mindset. However, I do believe that all the way down the system players who have to compete in those Open tournaments in which it is usually necessary to fend off a number of significantly lower-rated players in order to secure games against anyone of similar rating or above are at a considerable disadvantage compared with those who, for example, are fortunate enough to receive invitations to closed tournaments or elite ‘Opens’. Of course, there will also be a stylistic variable in all this. There have always been some players for whom beating lower rated players comes relatively easily and for whom games against even similarly rated players tend to be tough. However, I believe these are a minority. A trickier question might be – even if my basic contention is sound, does it extend all the way to the top?

If we just look at the headlines then it would appear that it does. Qatar was especially notable for the participation of Magnus Carlsen, and whenever the player who many believe is the strongest of all time loses 17 rating points in a tournament it does not go unnoticed. Unfortunately his second-round loss to a player rated 300+ points lower attracted some unfortunate publicity following Magnus’s reaction, in which he highlighted that his opponent wearing a wrist watch had proven a distraction – an example, I fear, where the point about consistent implementation of anti-cheating measures was essentially sound, but the likely perception of the remarks was not fully factored in, involving as it did an opponent whom no one suspected of unfair play. For all that, it was a cracking attacking game, and fully merits an appearance in these pages.

## Alisher Suleymenov – Magnus Carlsen

Qatar Masters 2023 Round 2

### 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 b6 4.a3

It is interesting to see Petrosian’s elegantly prophylactic system showing some signs of a comeback. I was actually asked this weekend why it went out of fashion, and realised that while I had convinced myself that White had somewhat tired of these 4...Ba6 lines, there in fact appear to be plenty of fresh vistas to explore.

### 4...Ba6 5.Qc2 Bb7 6.Nc3 c5

The point is that by deflecting the queen to c2 Black is able to strike at the centre at a moment where 7 d5?! is just an unconvincing gambit.

### 7.e4 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5 9.Nf3!?



For years White routinely played 9 Nb3 in what is now essentially an Open Sicilian structure. Indeed, I suspect there was a time when the books said something like ‘Not 9 Nf3, since Black can strike at f2 with 9...Ng4’ or, as in my own case, I see with regret, 9 Nb3 was simply assumed to be the best. The engine has no doubt assisted in getting us over this mental block!

### 9...Nc6

There is nothing strictly speaking wrong with 9...Ng4, but it is obviously good news for White that he can defend f2 whilst developing constructively with 10.Bg5! (Better than Mamedyarov’s combative 10.b4 Bxf2+ 11.Ke2 Bh4 12.h3, when Black can untangle his minor pieces with the neat 12...Nf6! 13.Nxh4 Nh5! with decent chances.) 10...f6 11 Bh4. The key tactical justification is that if instead 10...Bxf2+?! 11.Qxf2 Nxf2 12.Bxd8 Nxh1 13.Bc7! the white bishop is likely to emerge onto an excellent square on d6, whilst the black knight is unlikely to emerge at all.

### 10.b4 Be7

Another major boost for this line is the realisation that the most popular response – the simplifying 10...Nd4 11 Qd2! Nxf3+ 12 gxf3 – yields White promising attacking chances to compensate for the structural defect after 12...Be7 13.Rg1 0–0 14.Bb2. I also wondered about 10...Bd6, since this is often a decent square for contesting the dark squares (Blundering the piece, as Karpov notoriously did in an analogous position against Larry Christiansen a full 30 years ago in an analogous position, is far from compulsory). However, a similar structure is likely to arise after, for example, 11.Bb2 Qb8 12.Rd1 Ne5 13.Nb5! Nxf3+ 14.gxf3 Bf4 15.Rg1, and it once again offers promising play on the g-file.

**11.Bb2 Qb8 12.Rd1 0–0 13.Be2 d6 14.0–0 Rc8 15.Rfe1 Bf8**

Here, or on the next move, Magnus would have been well advised to contest the centre and shield his king with 15...Ne5!? 16.Nxe5 dxe5 17.Bf1 a5 18.Qb3, when White still has an edge, but Black shouldn't be in great danger. In the coming moves, the world's strongest player's usually fine-tuned sense of danger seems to desert him.

**16.Bf1 Ne7?! 17.Nb5!**



**17...Ne8?**

A serious misjudgement, whereas 17...Ng6! would have been much the lesser evil, and indeed, Anish Giri seemed to feel afterwards that Magnus's position would still have been essentially sound after this. As for the move Magnus chose, well, I sometimes try to impress upon my students how much the absence of a knight on f3/f6 can prove the trigger for a kingside attack, even deploying the debatable claim that this, in essence, is the crux of what is going on in the celebrated Marshall variation of the Spanish. Here the argument stands up unusually well, since White can float a knight straight towards the kingside and Black has no safe way to send it away. It should be pointed out that in most of the variations that follow, it is *both the king and queen* which are the target of White's aggressive play. It is tough to admit for an annotator who used to regard

putting the queen on b8 as something of a trademark, but in this position her situation there becomes a total nightmare.

**18.Ng5!**

At this point, Anish Giri described the game as 'over' and – in what was definitely a dig at Magnus rather than his opponent – added 'you can take off the watch after Ng5'(!)

**18...Ng6**

Black would dearly love to send his opponent's knight packing, but White is ready to sacrifice with 18...h6 19.Nxf7! Kxf7 20.e5! when the e-pawn cannot be taken (that poor queen on b8) with the consequence that it spearheads a vicious attack after 20...d5 (20...Nf5 21.exd6) 21.Qh7! Rxc4 22.Be2, and Bh5+ will follow with great impact.

**19.e5! d5 20.Qb3 Be7**



**21.Nxf7!**

Another lovely blow. As soon as Black has managed to organise an attack on the knight White is ready to sacrifice - a whole rook in fact, for just a couple of pawns, secure in the knowledge that his pieces will pour in on the weakened light squares.

**21...Kxf7 22.cxd5 Bxd5 23.Rxd5! exd5 24.Qxd5+ Kf8 25.Nd4 Nf4**

The familiar theme of the constricted queen rears its head again after the plausible 25...Nc7, since after 26.Qf3+ Kg8 27.Nc6 her thankless career is over.

**26.Qf3 Kg8 27.Qxf4 Qb7 28.Nf5 b5 29.Bxb5 Bf8 30.Bc4+ Kh8 31.Nh6 1–0**



Yes, Magnus played poorly, but it is difficult to overstate what a joy it must have been for Suleymenov to conduct an attack so crisply against a player of his quality.

Intriguingly, alongside the player who declined to defend his World Championship title, one of the other key high-profile players to suffer in these events was the only man against whom Magnus expressed a willingness to do so – Alireza Firouzja. To be honest, his disappointing performance looked primarily like a case of bad form and most likely some rustiness too – it would be rash to try to use it to press some grand claims about the rating vulnerability of the elite. Indeed, it might rather serve as a response to Jacob Aagaard – the system may not directly punish inactivity, but a gap of several months between tournaments is likely to take some toll without any particular interventions! There were frankly a few baffling moments, such as this position against Poland's number 3:

**Mateusz Bartel – Alireza Firouzja**  
FIDE Grand Swiss Round 10 2023



White has chances to advance his kingside pawns, while at the same time driving back Black's knights. Nonetheless, either 23...Qc6 or 23...d5 keep the centre intact and offer the promise of decent counter-chances. Instead, Firouzja played 23...Nd5?, a move which I can only really make sense of if he thought that 24 Rxe4 was not possible. My best guess is that he saw that 24...Nc3+(?) 25. Bxc3? Qxe4 26. Bd3 Nxf4! works for Black, but somehow forgot that the simple 25 bxc3! Qxe4 26 Bd3 is a disaster. This feels, so late in the event, like a player who somehow hasn't got close to recovering his true form.

The other player who seemed to struggle in both events, although more drastically in the Isle of Man, was the immensely talented young Indian star Dommaraju Gukesh. This surprised me even more than the others, not only because I am a huge fan but because at the age of just 17 he is necessarily a relatively recent addition to the elite, and a substantial part of his rise to the top consisted

of winning a number of open tournaments, often by very impressive margins. In Qatar he did manage to win some impressive games, but he lost to a couple of highly in-form players: his countryman Narayanan, who actually managed to achieve a very impressive 'double' over him with a further victory in the Isle of Man, and his opponent in the following fascinating game:

**David Paravyan – Dommaraju Gukesh**  
Qatar Masters 2023 – Round 7

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Nf6 5.Nxf6+ exf6 6.c3 Bd6 7.Bd3 0-0 8.Ne2 Re8 9.Qc2 h5 10.0-0 h4**



**11.Bf4!?**

There is nothing particularly surprising about the desire to exchange dark-squared bishops in this position. However, a large majority of players facing Black's now very trendy advance of the h-pawn have felt the need to stop it in its tracks with 11 h3. On the face of it this makes sense. It certainly would not be desirable to allow the pawn to rest on h3, eyeing an enticing-looking g2 square which would remain a perpetual target for counter-play. However, what White's play reveals is quite how many attacking chances may become open to him if he concentrates on rapid development, and then permits the exchange of his g-pawn for the h-pawn, hoping that he will be the one to exploit any resulting open lines. Whatever the ultimate theoretical verdict, the idea looks dangerous, and works superbly here.

**11...Na6**

It is worth noting that 11...Rxe2? 12.Qxe2 Bxf4 fails to 13.Qe4, but 11...h3 would be likely to lead to similar play to the game.

**12.Qd2 h3 13.Rfe1!? Bf8 14.Ng3 Be6!?**

I guess this could be seen as a tempo loss, as the exchange on h3 will require the bishop to move again. However, lines such as 14...Rxe1+?! 15.Rxe1 hxc2 16.Qe2! g6 17.Nh5! give a striking illustration of how rapidly White's

initiative can evolve into something distinctly threatening. The knight is clearly immune, while ‘neutral’ developing moves such as 17...Bd7? would already lose to 18.Bxg6! fxc6 19.Qc4+ Kh8 20.Qf7.

**15.gxh3 Qd7 16.Re3 Bxh3 17.Ne4 Bf5 18.Rae1 Bg6 19.Rg3**



It was this fascinating idea which attracted me to annotating this game. The engine is not so impressed, because it believes that if Black took the opportunity to exchange the knight on e4 then he would only be slightly worse. However, it is also far from easy to appreciate that he will be far better off exchanging this piece for a knight than permitting his opponent to give a rook for it! Of course, much of the argument is about the resulting structure, and the extent to which this exchange sac weakens the black king is instructive. However, I don't find it so difficult to understand that even Gukesh had to learn this the hard way.

**19...Qd5 20.Rxg6!! fxc6 21.Re3 Re7 22.Qe2! b5 23.a4?!**

This looks logical enough, but there is strangely no decent reply to the simple 23 Bc2! since snatching the a-pawn with 23...Qxa2 would just encourage White to renew the threat with 24 Qd1!. Such a simple idea – a check on the a2-g8 diagonal with a serious danger of mate on the h-file to follow, and it is easy to see that 24...Qxb2 25 Bb3+ Rf7 26 Re2! Qa3 27 Ra2 doesn't even come close to a defence.

**23...Nc7 24.axb5 cxb5 25.Bxc7 Rxc7 26.Bxb5 Rb8 27.Bd3**

White can be patient. The threat to exploit the white diagonal towards the king feels somehow like a semi-permanent, albeit dynamic advantage. There are simply no black pieces which are suited to fight for these light squares without returning the exchange, leaving White a pawn to the good. Ultimately this is what happens, and the resulting endgame offers precious few opportunities to complicate White's technical task.

**27...Rbc8 28.Ba6 Rd8 29.Nd2! Qf7 30.Bc4 Rd5 31.Bb3 Rb7 32.Bxd5 Qxd5 33.Qc4 Qxc4 34.Nxc4 Kf7 35.Re1 g5 36.h3 Rc7 37.Ne3 g6 38.Ra1 Rb7 39.b4 Rc7 40.Nd5 Rd7 41.Ra5 f5 42.Kf1 Ke6 43.Ne3 Rc7 44.Ra6+ Kf7 45.Nd1 Bh6 46.Ke2 g4 47.hxg4 fxc4 48.Kd3 Re7 49.c4 Bf4 50.c5 g3 51.fxc3 Bxc3 52.Ne3**

**1–0**

I have concentrated on the high-profile casualties of these two events – not least because I focused on this issue in the hope of finding some interesting and instructive games, as much as to try and force home my argument. It is time to come clean. While some of the elite players struggled to adapt to playing against the next ‘tier’, and the consequences for anyone out of form could be quite severe, the results overall were quite mixed. Intriguingly, Hikaru Nakamura, the player who some years ago shocked me by suggesting pretty much the polar opposite of my assumption here when he complained that some players were artificially climbing the world rankings by playing in weaker events(!), did one of the best jobs of supporting his thesis by gaining tangible rating points in the Isle of Man. Perhaps this is just about believing it, although I suspect he falls into the stylistic groups for whom this works, as I alluded to above. Several others lost points, but marginally, and by no means on the scale which I had felt possible. I don't think this closes the argument. There are several possible explanations. For one thing, the Isle of Man was staggeringly strong. Yes, the elite were competing against a different set of players from the ones whom they have faced time after time. However, the rating disparity was not so great that they needed to take undue risks with Black – the ‘damage’ from a half point ceded was relatively minimal. Indeed, I didn't see a large colour disparity in the draws – the next ‘tier’ of strong GMs were pretty tough at defending with Black as well. Furthermore, the elites are shifting to some degree too, and are never entirely clearly defined. By some measures Vidit Gujrathi's superb and popular victory could be seen as a blow against the elite, but in reality he has been on the fringes of the elite for some time, and his victory and qualification for the Candidates could also be viewed as a player at last fulfilling the full potential which was obviously there. What is clear is that there are some very dangerous players just outside the elite grouping who seem to know no fear and are consequently a threat to anyone. I have always thought of Ivan Saric as falling into this category, but others have come to the fore now: in addition to Narayanan and Paravyan already mentioned, Alexander Predke, for example, impressed in this way, and as I write these words he has just defeated Vincent Keymer in the European Team Championships, one day after Magnus escaped with a draw by the skin of his teeth against



Valentin Dragnev of Austria. If the experience of the elites battling it out against the next tier didn't prove anything conclusively, such contests clearly enrich our experience as chess spectators, and the questions I raised are not going away any time soon.

## Great British Chess Players by John Nunn



### Jonathan Penrose (1933-2021)

Jonathan Penrose was born in Colchester on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1933 and, after learning the game at the age of four, he showed early chess promise and won the British Under 18 Championship while only 14. At Southsea 1950 he beat both Efim Bogoljubow and Savielly Tartakower, but despite these early successes he remained an amateur throughout his life. The Penrose family was academically gifted; his father Lionel was a geneticist and his sister Shirley had a distinguished medical career, while brothers Oliver and Roger went into physics, the latter winning the Nobel prize in 2020. There was also a strong chess thread in the family; for example, Lionel was a strong player and composed both problems and endgame studies. Jonathan himself gained a doctorate and lectured in psychology.

His career meant that his chess appearances were fewer than they might have been, but he was able to compete frequently at Hastings and especially in the British Championship, while he turned out for England in nine Olympiads from 1952 to 1974. His results in the British Championship were outstanding, and he won the title a record ten times, while his scores in Olympiads were also generally very good. He appeared less motivated in other events, and his Hastings results were rather mediocre. He also took part in a few high-level international tournaments, his best result here being 11½/16 in the Enschede Zonal 1963, where he made a clean sweep of the bottom eight players. He was less successful at Mar del Plata 1959 (5½/15) and Palma de Mallorca 1969 (6½/17), although both these events were very strong. His most famous game is his spectacular win against Mikhail Tal at the Leipzig Olympiad 1960, at a time when Tal held the World Championship. This was the first win by a

British player against a reigning world champion since 1899.

In later years the stress of playing chess caused Penrose health issues, and he collapsed during a game at the 1970 Siegen Olympiad. He continued to play intermittently and according to Mega Database the 1979 British Championship, where I had the privilege of playing him, was his last over the board tournament. Like Alexander before him, Penrose turned to correspondence chess in later years, and here he was extremely successful, topping the correspondence rating list in the period 1977-79. He gained the correspondence grandmaster title in 1983 and FIDE gave him the over the board grandmaster title in 1993.

There's often a debate about how strong Penrose and other British players from the 1950s and 1960s really were. These days it's hard to imagine how poor the standard of British chess was in the 1950s. Ignoring events such as the British Championship, in which they played against each other, the main test of the top players in individual events was at Hastings. But here, for example, in the three events 1954/5, 1955/6 and 1956/7, out of a total of 69 games between the British and foreign players, the Brits only managed to win two (Clarke against Toran and Persitz against Diez del Corral). The rise of Penrose was a step forward, and he was the first post-war British player to really challenge high-class European opponents.

The following game is less well-known than his win against Tal, but features an attractive king hunt.

### Jonathan Penrose - Luben Popov

Enschede Zonal 1963

Sicilian Defence, Kan Variation

**1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 a6 5.Be3**

A rather unusual move which poses Black fewer problems than 5.Nc3 or 5.Bd3, although transpositions are possible.

**5...Nf6 6.Bd3 d5?!**

A dubious move, given that Black cannot meet e5 by ...Nd7. Black can prepare the advance of the d-pawn by 6...Qc7 7.0-0 d5, but perhaps the simplest solution is 6...e5 7.Nb3 (7.Nf3 d5 is fine for Black) 7...d5 8.exd5 Nxd5 and White will struggle to prove any advantage.

**7.e5 Ng8**

7...Nfd7 is strongly met by 8.Nxe6 Bb4+ (8...fxe6 9.Qh5+ Ke7 10.Bg5+ Nf6 11.0-0 is very good for White) 9.c3 fxe6 10.Qh5+ g6 11.Bxg6+ hxg6 12.Qxh8+ Bf8 13.h4! followed

by some combination of f4 and h5, and White has a clear advantage. The alternative 7...Ne4 8.0-0 followed by Nd2 is also unpleasant for Black.

#### 8.Nd2 Nc6 9.f4

White has achieved a favourable type of French structure in which Black has lost considerable time.

#### 9...Nxd4 10.Bxd4 Qc7



#### 11.0-0

This natural move is not bad, but by opening the position immediately with 11.c4! White could have exploited Black's poor development. The justification for this move lies in the line 11...Bc5 12.cxd5 Bxd4 13.Qa4+ Qd7 14.Qxd4 Qxd5 15.Qc3 Ne7 16.Be4 Qd8 17.Nc4, and the outpost on d6 gives White a large advantage.

#### 11...Bc5 12.Bxc5 Qxc5+ 13.Kh1

Even in this line White retains an advantage due to his superior bishop and kingside attacking chances.

#### 13...Ne7 14.c4

This comes too late to be effective, since Black is already about to castle. At this point White should have preferred a purely positional approach such as 14.c3 Bd7 15.a4 0-0 16.Nf3, with some advantage.

#### 14...0-0 15.Qh5 h6 16.Rf3

Black must take care, since White has some threats on the kingside, but against accurate defence these shouldn't amount to much.

#### 16...dxc4

16...Bd7 17.Rg3 Kh8 was perhaps even simpler.

#### 17.Nxc4 Nf5



White must exchange this knight if he wants to play Rg3.

#### 18.Bxf5 Qxc4?

A serious error. Black probably didn't like the idea of White's knight settling on d6, but 18...exf5 19.Nd6 Qc2 20.Raf1 Be6 21.R3f2 Qd3 is not dangerous for Black. His queen and bishop are active, and it's hard for White to do anything constructive without exchanging queens, but then Black can free himself with ...f6.

#### 19.Bd3 Qb4 20.Rg3 Kh8 21.Qe2?

Missing an attractive forced win by 21.Rxg7! Kxg7 22.Qg4+ Kh8 23.Qh4 Kg8 24.Qxh6 f5 25.exf6 Rf7 26.Bh7+! Rxh7 27.Qg6+ Kf8 28.Qxh7 followed by Qg7+.

#### 21...Bd7?

21...Rd8! prevents the sacrifice since the d3-bishop is now hanging, while after quieter replies Black can complete his development by ...Bd7.

#### 22.a3?

Black has the extra tempo ...Bd7, so the sacrifice is less clear-cut than on the previous move. However, it should still win: 22.Rxg7! Kxg7 23.Qg4+ Kh8 24.Qh4 Kg8 25.Qxh6 f5 26.exf6 Rf7 27.Bg6 and now:

- 1) 27...Rxf6 28.Qh7+ Kf8 29.Qh8+ Ke7 30.Qg7+ wins.
- 2) 27...Qf8 28.Bxf7+ Kxf7 (or 28...Qxf7 29.Re1) 29.Qh7+ Ke8 30.Rd1 Bc6 31.f5! e5 32.Qg6+ Qf7 33.h4, and Black is powerless against the advance of the h-pawn.
- 3) 27...Raf8 28.Rd1! Qxb2 29.Qg5 Kh8 30.Qh5+ Kg8 31.Qg4 Kh8 32.Bxf7 Rxf7 33.Rxd7! Rxd7 34.Qh5+ Kg8 35.Qe8+ Kh7 36.Qxd7+ with a winning queen endgame.

#### 22...Qa4?

22...Qe7 stops the sacrifice, but sheds a pawn after 23.Qe4 g6 24.Qxb7, so 22...Qc5! is best, when 23.Rxg7 Kxg7 24.Qg4+ Kh8 25.Qh4 f5 26.exf6 h5 is unclear.





**23.Rxg7!**

Third time lucky. Penrose spots the winning idea, which is even more effective than the move before, since Black's queen is less active on a4 than on b4.

**23...Kxg7 24.Qg4+ Kh8 25.Qh4 f5**

25...Kg8 26.Qxh6 f5 27.exf6 Rf7 transposes.

**26.exf6 Rf7 27.Qxh6+ Kg8 28.Qg6+ Kf8 29.Qh6+ Kg8 30.Qg5+ Kf8**

30...Kh8 31.Re1 Bc6 32.Bg6 Raf8 33.Qh5+ Kg8 34.Re5 is also decisive.

**31.Bg6! e5**

Now White wins with an old-style king hunt.

**32.Qh6+ Kg8 33.Bxf7+ Kxf7 34.Qg7+ Ke6**



**35.Qe7+ Kd5**

35...Kf5 36.Qxe5+ Kg6 37.Qg5+ Kf7 38.Re1 also leads to mate.

**36.Qxe5+ Kc4 37.Rc1+ Kb3 38.Qc3+ Ka2 39.b4 1-0**

## Books of the Month by Ben Graff



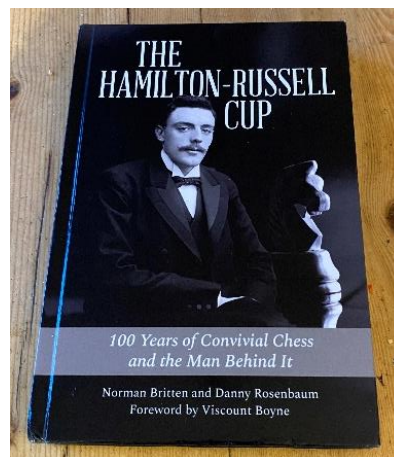
**The best new writing and the greatest classics under one roof ... in association with Forward Chess.**

This month we explore two excellent, if very different books: *The Hamilton-Russell Cup* by Danny Rosenbaum and Norman Britten, and a children's book, *The Discovery of Chess* by Phil Amara and Oliver Chin. Yet there is an important similarity too. What they share is an acute ability to make real the history of our game. So let us turn the clock back and begin!

**The Hamilton-Russell Cup – Danny Rosenbaum and Norman Britten**

*'He was one of the most powerful and enthusiastic patrons the game has ever had.'*

*Chess Magazine*, November 1941 - quote on Fredrick Hamilton-Russell



Danny Rosenbaum was the first Editor of *ChessMoves*, and played a significant role in creating the magazine we all enjoy today. From his work as the ECF Social Media

Manager, through to organising the hugely successful ECF 24-hour sponsored events, Danny has made a big contribution to our game. A former current affairs journalist on *Dispatches* and *Trial & Error*, and a Channel 4 news producer in his time, Danny's work has received significant praise far beyond the chess world. His exceptional book *London Lives*, which charted the story of the capital through the eyes of 24 people across a day and a night, was praised by Andrew Marr for bringing the city to life in a way that few offerings ever do. Danny is also Secretary of the Hamilton-Russell Cup, and in conjunction with Norman Britten, who is the RAC's chess circle's Social Secretary, has produced a book that vividly tells the story of an extraordinary chess event now in its hundredth year, and the people behind it.

In 1923 British Chess Magazine announced that 'A challenge cup has been presented by The Hon F. G. Hamilton-Russell, a member of the Royal Automobile Club Chess Circle, for a competition to be confined to social, political, naval and military Clubs in the West End of London and will be played under the sectional tournament system with nine boards a side, starting October next.' Ultimately the first event was contested over six boards, and the competition continues to this day.

Yet as Rosenbaum and Britten note, despite having gifted both the trophy for this competition and the more famous Olympiad trophy, 'Fredrick Gustavus Hamilton-Russell himself remained largely unheard of.' In setting out to put this right, the pair tell the story of the age and the changing nature of chess in this period, while also unearthing an even more fascinating character than Hamilton-Russell himself - his remarkable wife.

It is noted that 'Fredrick was not one of the strongest players of the era, but he was certainly enthusiastic.' So in many ways he was much like most of the rest of us - except, of course, that he was much wealthier. Born into a world of 'substantial estates' in 'almost the middle of the Victorian period', the expectation was that Hamilton-Russell, rather than getting a normal job, would instead 'act in an administrative capacity on the family estates and perform other civic and community duties.' Yet much like many other wealthy families in this period, 'There is a clear and definite divide between their lives before and after the First World War.' The time of glamour and foreign travel seemed to abate, but this gave further time for Hamilton-Russell and his wife to 'mix with the rising middle classes in the world of chess both over the board and on committees.' Ultimately Hamilton-Russell would serve as President of the British Chess Federation between 1939 and his death in 1941.

Perhaps as a protagonist Hamilton-Russell has his challenges. As R S H Stevenson (Vera Menchik's husband) wrote in Hamilton-Russell's obituary, he was 'a man of few words, [but] what Mr Hamilton-Russell did say or write was always sound common sense, straight to the point and very practical.' Yet through painstaking use of sources Rosenbaum and Britten do a terrific job of making his life and contribution to chess very real. Grandmaster Matthew Sadler has also annotated several of Hamilton-Russell's games, which adds real insight and depth as to Hamilton-Russell the chess player, and this makes for fascinating reading.

Yet for me Hamilton-Russell's wife Margaret Scott, whom the authors cover in superb detail, is the more interesting of the pair. A three-time British Ladies golf champion, *The Scotsman* viewed her as 'one of the greatest players of all time.' While not similarly renowned as a chess player, it is clear that her determination to encourage women and girls to take up chess also made her a true pioneer in the chess world. As Vera Menchik observed, 'Perhaps her most important work for the game was the organization of the girls' championship in 1926. Apart from presenting a handsome silver cup and various other prizes, she took a close interest in this competition, going to no end of trouble to encourage new players to come forward.' According to other sources, she 'had a charming personality' and 'her genius for organisation was universally admired.'

This book also charts the story of the Hamilton-Russell Cup across the board, and in doing so gives a wonderful insight into the changing nature of the game. As the authors note, 'clocks would be a bone of contention.' *The Times Literary Supplement* highlighted a 1925 dispute, where some players would only agree to take part if clocks were not used, while another would only play if they were. *The Daily Mirror* observed in the same year that, while not compulsory, clocks were 'highly recommended,' going on to note that 'Experience has shown that, unless a time limit for moves is thus imposed, the proportion of drawn games is inconveniently high.' It is also interesting to reflect on the fact that the competition was featuring in the mainstream press in this era, although that would not endure in the latter years of the event.

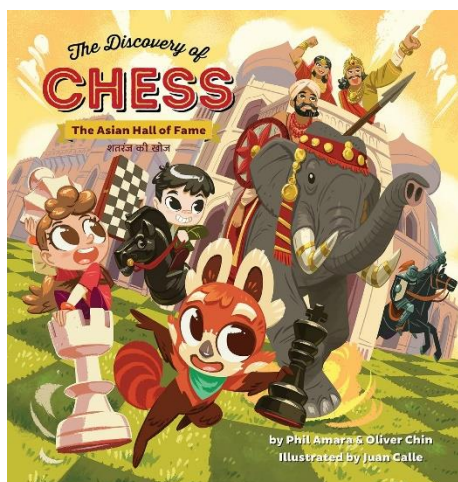
One of the great strengths of this book is that Rosenbaum and Britten are accomplished historians who draw on a host of contemporary sources to great effect. There are various intriguing stories, and I particularly liked the retelling of Joseph Blackburne hosting a simul at Hastings. A 'shocked' opponent saw Blackburne reach across and drink his whisky. As Blackburne put it, 'My opponent left a glass of whisky en prise and I took it en passant.' I can



think of one or two modern GMs who might well make the same decision!

Perhaps inevitably there are some gaps, as not all the event records have yielded to Rosenbaum and Britten's quest to discover them. Yet the authors note that hopefully this book will act as a catalyst for further research and discovery in this area, and hint at the possibility of a second edition at some point in the future. While this would doubtless be something to look forward to, what we have today is more than enough. The intriguing story of a benefactor and his wife, once forgotten, is now remembered. The history of our game is seen through the prism of a competition that still endures, all brilliantly told by two extremely gifted writers. Wonderfully presented, this would make a great addition to any chess library, and could also be a fantastic Christmas present for anyone who enjoys the game.

**The Discovery of Chess – The Asian Hall of Fame by Phil Amara and Oliver Chin (Illustrated by Juan Calle) – Immedium**



This beautifully illustrated children's book starts out in Washington Square, as Emma and Ethan spy 'pairs of people... staring at small figures on a square board.' Soon after, a friendly red panda named Dao You appears on the scene to take the children back in time to India in 500 C.E. The authors step through the origins of chess very engagingly. We learn about a four-player war game named Chaturanga, and its evolution to Chatrang, Shatranj and ultimately Chess. The changing names and roles of the pieces are nicely outlined, as what started out as a dice-based game evolves into the ultimate test of skill we all now know and love.

From Staunton, to Morphy, to Menchik and today's players, *The Discovery of Chess* is skilled story-telling at its finest, expertly retelling chess's history with a minimum of words and some lovely illustrations. I particularly liked the fact that female players including Gaprindashvili and

Polgar feature prominently and, as Polgar is quoted as saying, 'We are capable of the same fight as any other man.'

Innovative, warm and compelling, from the rise of the computer through to the role of chess in popular culture, this short book packs a lot in and to great effect. It captures much of the spirit and substance of our game through the years, and I have no doubt that anyone learning about chess for the first time through this story will be keen to explore our game further. I enjoyed reading it and, while it is a children's book, I'm sure many others of any age would too.

## Endgames All Club Players Should Know by Glenn Flear

### Opposite Bishop Endgames

It's well known that the presence of opposite bishops can help the defender. Indeed, they are widely acknowledged as the most 'drawish' type of endgame of all. Still, there are many cases where the stronger side can win if the defender can't set up a blockade. The presence of an additional pair of rooks can increase the winning chances, but perhaps the most significant factor is the possibility of being able to penetrate the opposing camp with the king. The struggle for a king invasion brings to mind perhaps the most famous opposite bishop endgame of all:

**Topalov, V – Shirov, A**  
Linares 1998



Here 'the most amazing move of the century' was played...

**47...Bh3!!** The bishop attacks the g-pawn; indeed, but the pawn attacks the bishop! Well, true, but after

**48.gxh3 Kf5 49.Kf2 Ke4** Black's king has earned sufficient time to make inroads into the white camp. After the further moves -

**50.Bxf6 d4** Black has two passed pawns.

**51.Be7 Kd3** The king penetrates.

**52.Bc5 Kc4 53.Be7 Kb3** The white forces can't stop both pawns, so Topalov resigned.

If he had instead decided to play on, a possible continuation would have been

**54.Ke2 Kc2 55.Bb4 d3+ 56.Ke3 a3** and the bishop is overloaded.

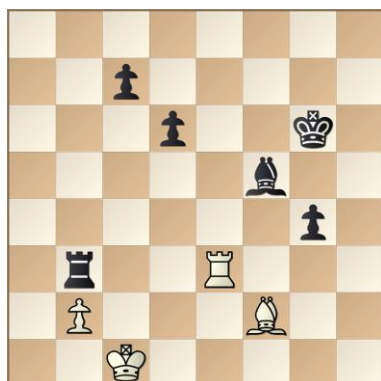
This example illustrates well a couple of general rules:

1. To win, two passed pawns (or the potential to create them), are often necessary, but are not always sufficient for victory.
2. The attacking side's king needs to be able to penetrate the opponent's camp.

Of course, in this example the bishop sacrifice for time and influence turned out to be decisive, but in most cases the attacker needs to find a way to break down the opponent's blockade.

Zugzwang is something that club players sometimes forget about in their calculations. A fortress can sometimes be breached if the opponent hasn't any satisfactory temporising moves:

**Oms Pallisse, J - Salgado Lopez, I**  
Barcelona 2011

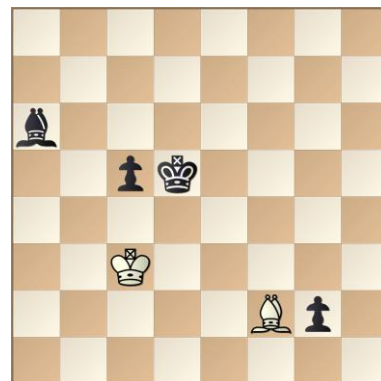


It's not always easy to decide whether or not to exchange rooks, but there are already two passed pawns which should offer decent winning chances, so Black decides to play the pure opposite bishop endgame.

**60...Rxe3 61.Bxe3 g3 62.Bf4 g2 63.Bh2 Be6 64.Kd2 Kf5 65.Ke3** White has all avenues of attack covered on the kingside, so in order to win Black needs to create some threats on the other wing.

**65...Bb3 66.Kf2 Bd5 67.Ke3 Ke6 68.b4 c5! 69.bxc5 dxc5 70.Kd3 Kd7 71.Bg1 Kc6 72.Bf2** Now Salgado Lopez takes his time to make sure that he has worked out a watertight way to victory before committing himself.

**72...Kb5 73.Kc3 Bb7 74.Bg1 Kc6 75.Bf2 Kd5 76.Bg1 Ba6 77.Bf2**



**77...Kc6 78.Bg1 Kb5 79.Bf2 Bc8 80.Be3 Be6 81.Bf2 c4!** Played only when White's king cannot make it to b4.

**82.Be3 Ka4 83.Bc5** After 83.Kb2 Black has a neat tactical way to break down the defences: 83...Kb4 84.Bd2+ c3+! 85.Bxc3+ Kc4 and the bishop cannot stop the g-pawn from promoting.

**83...Bf7** Zugzwang. White has to cede ground.

**84.Bf2 Ka3 85.Be3 Ka2 86.Kc2 Bg6+ 87.Kc3 Bd3 88.Bf2 Kb1 89.Be3 Bf1** Again White is invited to move something, just when his pieces are on their ideal defensive squares.

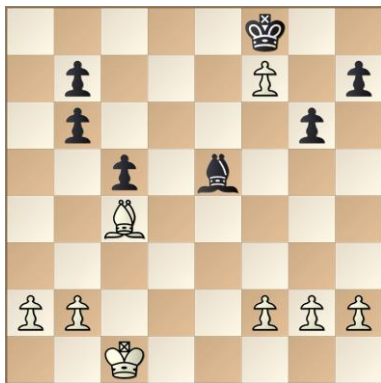
**90.Bg1 Kc1 91.Bf2 Kd1 92.Kd4 Bd3 93.Ke3** After 93.Ke3 even 93...c3! wins as 94.Kxd3 c2 95.Be3 overloads the bishop.

**0-1**

Here's an example of my failing to make much impact, despite having a passed pawn on the seventh rank:



**Flear, G – Korchnoi, V**  
Lugano 1988



**26.h3** I later considered 26.a4, but it doesn't seem to be sufficient either: 26...Bxh2! 27.Kc2 Bg1 28.f3 Be3 29.Kd3 Bc1 30.b3 h5 31.Ke4 (Here there is some danger and Black has to be on his toes.) 31...g5? (ceding access to the f5-square turns out to be a mistake; instead, 31...Ke7 or 31...h4! 32.Ke5 Ke7 are better, and White can't cross over to the queenside without abandoning the f-pawn). 32.Kf5 h4 33.Ke6 Bf4 34.Kd7 Bd2 35.Kc7 Ba5 36.Kxb7 Ke7 (Now a useful way of creating a passed pawn.) 37.b4! cxb4 (37...Bxb4 38.Kxb6 and the a-pawn can be advanced) 38.Bb3 - the black bishop is locked out of play and White can now make progress on the other wing. 38...Kf8 39.Kb8 Ke7 40.Kc8 Kf8 41.Kd7 and Black is undone by Zugzwang. All very well, but mainly wishful thinking!

**26...b5 27.Bd5 b6 28.b3 b4** Korchnoi prudently places his queenside pawns on dark squares.

**29.Kd2 b5!?** Defending the c4-square in order to deny some invasion options.

**30.Kd3 Ke7 31.Ke4 Bd6 32.g4 Kf6 33.f4 h6 34.h4 g5 35.hxg5+ hxg5 36.f5** Two passed pawns! Indeed, but there are no real additional threats.

**36...Ke7 37.Be6 c4** The number of pawns on the queenside isn't important here.

**38.bxc4 bxc4 39.Bxc4 Bg3 40.f6+ Kf8 41.Be6**  
½-½

The lesson here being that one passed pawn, even a really big one, isn't enough if the opponent can control enough key squares or maintain a fortress.

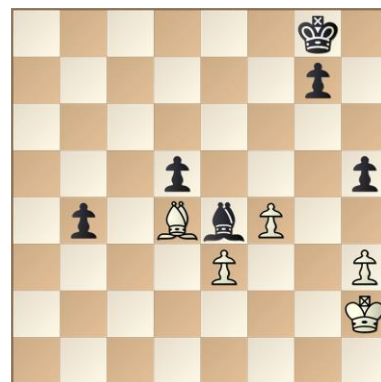
So some advice for the defender:

1. The defender should usually place his pawns on the opposite-coloured squares to the opponent's bishop.

2. The main defensive strategy is to construct a fortress based on the attacker's difficulty in making much impact on one of the colour complexes.

Here is an instructive example that illustrates a beautiful breakthrough:

**Kotov, A – Botvinnik, M**  
USSR-ch Moscow 1955



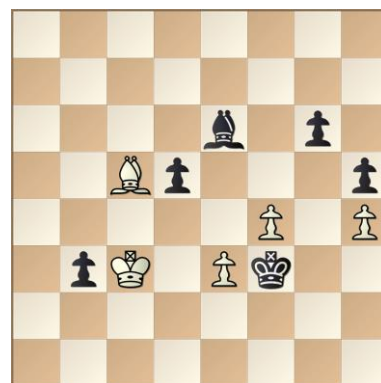
Black has an extra pawn (and a passed one at that), but it doesn't look evident how Botvinnik will be able to create a second passer anywhere.

**47.Kg3 Kf7 48.h4** The pawn is placed on a square which is of the opposite colour to the opponent's bishop.

**48...g6 49.Kf2 Ke6 50.Ke2 Kf5 51.Kd2 Kg4** Black penetrates, but the weaknesses on h4 and e3 look easy to defend.

**52.Bf6 Kg3 53.Be7 Kh3 54.Bf6 Kg4 55.Be7 Bf5 56.Bf6 Kf3 57.Be7 b3 58.Kc3 Be6** Defending the b-pawn indirectly, as 59.Kxb3 allows 59...d4+ followed by dxe3 with an even more dangerous passed pawn.

**59.Bc5?**



Kotov has covered the b2-square (to stop the b-pawn advancing) and the e3 pawn, but Botvinnik's next move ensures that Black will nevertheless obtain a passed

pawn.

Not 59.Kxb3 d4+ etc.; However, it turns out that White can still hold (but only just!) with the precise defensive move 59.Kd2!

**59...g5!!** I love this move!

**60.fxg5** If 60.hxg5, then 60...h4 and so on.

**60...d4+!** A necessary follow-up to ensure that the b3-pawn's future is secure.

**61.exd4 Kg3** Now the h4-pawn is picked off, and the second passed pawn appears on the board.

**62.Ba3 Kxh4 63.Kd3 Kxg5 64.Ke4 h4 65.Kf3 Bd5+** White resigned, as after 66.Kf2 Kf4 67.Bc1+ Ke4 68.Bb2 Kd3 the king wins the bishop for the b-pawn and the h-pawn is of the right colour, enabling an easy conversion.

**0-1**

Now for a few examples where the result was in doubt, and often came down to some key decisions:

**Bricard, E – Flear, G**

St. Affrique 1999



Sometimes seeking solace with opposite bishops is the wrong approach.

**33...Re7?** I soon regretted not having chosen 33...Re2! pressing against f2, as White would have all sorts of problems in converting his advantage. Here counterplay is a better defence than hoping for a blockade, especially as White's king can't join the fray without shedding the f-pawn or making other major concessions.

**34.Rxe7 Kxe7** Here there are no problems for White in creating a second passed pawn, so the endgame is miserable for the defender.

**35.Kg2 Kf6 36.f4 gxf4 37.gxf4 Kf5 38.Kf3 Bg1 39.h3 Bd4 40.Bg8 Bc5 41.Bh7+ Ke6 42.Ke4 Bf2 43.f5+ Kd6 Or 43...Kf6 44.Kd5 etc.**

**44.Kf3! Bd4 45.Kg4 Kc5** In the case of 45...Bg7 White invades easily enough: 46.Kh5 Bf8 47.Kg6 Ke5 48.f6 Ke6 49.Bg8+ Kd7 50.Bd5 Ke8 51.Bc6+ Kd8 52.Kf7 Bc5 53.Kg8 Bd6 54.f7 Bc5 55.f8Q+

**46.Bg8 Kb6 47.Kh5 Bg7 48.Kg6 Bf8 49.Kf7 Bc5 50.f6 Kxa6 51.Ke8 Kb6 52.Bh7 a5 53.Bc2 Bd6 54.f7 Kc5 55.f8Q Bxf8 56.Kxf8 h5 57.h4 Kxc4 58.Bd1 Kd5 59.Bxh5** Of course, from my point of view, it would be great to have the king on h8, but it's never going to get there.

**1-0**

**Flear, G – Prakken, G**

St. Affrique 1995



White has the threat of penetrating to c7 with the rook, so my opponent sacrificed a pawn for an opposite bishop-style blockade.

**24...Nc5 25.Nxc5 dxc5 26.Be6 Rd6 27.Bb3 Bd4 28.e3 c4** The pawn is lost, but the bishop heads for b6 in order to bolster the queenside.

**29.Rxc4** There is nothing doing in the rook endgame: 29.exd4 cxb3 30.axb3 Rxd4 31.Rc7 Rb4 32.Rxa7 Rxb5=

**29...Bb6 30.Rc8+ Rd8 31.Rc2!** White does best to keep rooks on the board at present. The principle here is that opposite bishops are not such an easy route to a draw when there are other pieces still on the board.

**31...Kg7 32.Kg2 Kf6 33.Kf3 h6 34.g4!** It's necessary to create some chinks in Black's armour.

**34...Rd6 35.gxf5 Kxf5** The alternative 35...gxf5!? comes into consideration, but it's not an easy choice. I suspect that the pawn capture is a better practical chance, as it denies White's king access to the e4-square.



**36.Rc8 Rd8** A little too routine.

I think that placing all the pawns on dark squares is the most natural: 36...g5.

**37.Rc6 Rd6 38.Bc2+ Kf6 39.Rxd6+!** Now White is ready to simplify, and on his own terms! The route towards b7 is open, and the king will soon profit from this fact. There are no passed pawns as yet, but the potential is now there for one on the queenside as well as a second one on the f-file.

**39...exd6 40.Ke4 Ke6 41.Bb3+ Ke7 42.Kd5 Kd7 43.Bc2 g5 44.h3 h5 45.Bg6 h4 46.Bh5 Ba5 47.a4 Be1 48.Bg4+ Ke7** If 48...Kc7 it's the f-pawn that causes the damage: 49.f4 gxf4 50.exf4 Bb4 51.f5 Bc3 52.Ke6.

**49.f3** 49.f4 is also good.

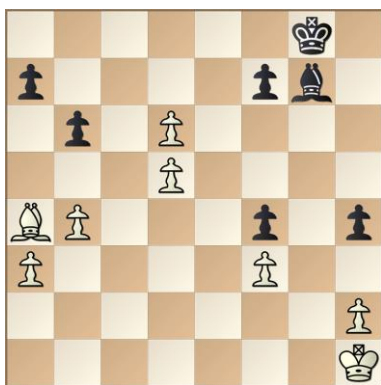
**49...Bd2 50.e4 Ba5 51.Kc6 Bb6 52.Bf5 Ba5 53.Kb7 Bb6 54.Ka6 Kd8 55.a5 Bd4 56.Kb7 Be3 57.Kc6 Bc5** If 57...Ke7 then 58.b6 axb6 59.axb6 Bf2 60.b7 Ba7 61.Kc7.

**58.e5** Black resigns, and even before I had obtained a passed pawn, but the threats are overwhelming.

**1-0**

**Flear, G – Etchegaray, P**

Nice 1998



White has a passed pawn (or even two, at least temporarily!) on the d-file, but needs a second meaningful one somewhere else. The reasoning can be likened to the typical theme of creating a second weakness, a well-known idea even in middlegames in order to stretch the defence to breaking point. The obvious plan would be to create a passed h-pawn, but my opponent was able to thwart that one, so I needed to find another target.

**35...Kf8 36.Bc2 Bb2** The simplest defence would be 36...b5! (fixing both of White's queenside pawns) 37.Bd3 (Or 37.Kg2 Bb2 38.Kh3 Bxa3 39.Kxh4 Bxb4 40.d7 Ke7

41.Bd3 Kxd7 42.Bxb5+ Ke7 43.Kg5 Kf8 and neither passed pawn is going very far.) 37...Bb2 38.Bxb5 Bxa3 39.d7 Ke7 40.Kg2 Bxb4 41.Kh3 Be1 and holds.

**37.a4 Ba3 38.b5 Bxd6 39.Kg2 Bc5 40.Kh3 Bg1** A nuisance, but I already had my heart set on invading in order to attack (and win) the a7-pawn!

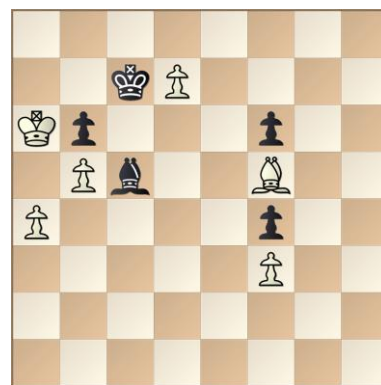
**41.Kg2 Bc5 42.Kh3 Bg1 43.d6 Ke8 44.Bf5 Kd8 45.Kxh4 Bxh2 46.Kg5 Bg1** The f4-pawn can't be captured (47.Kxf4 Bh2+ and ...Bxd6), but in any case this isn't the main target.

**47.Kf6 Bc5 48.Ke5 Bb4 49.Kd5 Ba3 50.Kc6 Bb4 51.Bg4 Ba3 52.Bh5** Before leaping into the fray there's no harm in getting the opponent to advance a pawn.

**52...f6 53.Bg4 Bb4 54.Bf5 Ba3 55.d7** Finally, the king will be ready to head to b7.

**55...Bb4 56.Kb7 Bc5 57.Be6 Bd4 58.Kxa7 Kc7 59.Ka6 Bc5?!** I was amazed to see that Black can perhaps still hold this position. Here is the analysis: 59...Kd8! 60.a5 bxa5 61.Kxa5 (61.b6 Be5 62.Kxa5 Bb8 63.Ka6 Bd6 64.Kb7 Bc5!) 61...Kc7 62.Ka6 Kd8 63.b6 Be5 64.Kb7 Bd4 65.Kc6 Be3 66.b7 Ba7 and the bishop will install itself on b8. A very good example of a fortress on one colour-complex.

**60.Bf5**



**60...Be7?** The wrong diagonal.

If 60...Be3 61.a5 bxa5 White needs to calculate 62.b6+! (62.Kxa5 only seems to draw, just as in the previous note) 62...Bxb6 63.d8Q+ Kxd8 64.Kxb6 a4 65.Kc5 a3 66.Bb1 Kd7 67.Kb4, and the counterplay is insufficient as White will be able ultimately to convert the f-pawn.

**61.a5 bxa5 62.b6+ Kb8 63.Kxa5** Two passed pawns, plus a third pawn on f3 in reserve. Victory is starting to feel in sight.

**63...Kb7 64.Kb5 Bd8 65.Be4+ Kb8 66.Kc6 f5 67.Bxf5 Be7**

**68.Bd3 Bd8 69.Ba6 Ka8 70.Kd6 Bxb6 71.Ke7 Ka7 72.Bd3**  
 White wins the bishop for the d-pawn and then comes back for the f4-pawn.  
**1-0**

**Ninov, N – Flear, G**  
 Aurec Rapid 2013



I enjoyed the following endgame, and not just because it was so instructive, as it was against an opponent whom I had previously lost to.

**19...Bh3** Black wins a pawn, but this is only of minor significance at present, as there are no passed pawns in view.

**20.Rfe1 Bxg2 21.Re3 Be4+ 22.Rg3 Rb8 23.Rxg6 Bxg6**  
 Black is master of the most significant open file, but how to make progress?

**24.Re1 Kf7 25.Re3 Be4 26.f3 Bf5 27.Kf2**



**27...a5!** Adding an extra element into the equation.

**28.Be5** With the benefit of hindsight, it seems that my opponent should have tried 28.a4, as the black a-pawn soon becomes a major player once it advances to a3.

**28...a4** The c7-pawn is no use anyway, so its loss won't be a problem.

**29.Bxc7 Rb2+ 30.Re2 a3 31.Ke3** White offered a draw, but he failed to realise how significant his problems are.

**31...Rxe2+ 32.Kxe2 Bb1 33.Be5** Instead, 33.Ba5 Bxa2 34.Bb4 fails as 34...Bc4+ is check!

**33...Bxa2 34.Kd2 Bc4 35.Kc2** So Black has obtained a handy passed pawn, but he'll need some additional threats in order to generate winning chances.

**35...g6 36.Bc7 Ke6 37.Bf4 Kd7!** At present entering the white position via the kingside isn't on the cards, but a solution exists. It turns out that going round the houses is the way to invade.

**38.Kb1 Kc8 39.Bc1 a2+ 40.Kb2 Kb7 41.Be3 Ka6 42.Bd4 Kb5 43.Be3 Bb3!** Freeing up the c4-square.

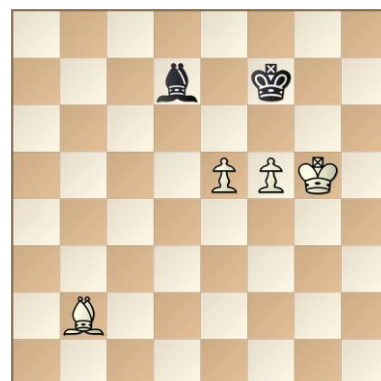
**44.Bd4 Kc4 45.Ka1 Kd3 46.Kb2 Bc4 47.Ka1 Ke2 48.f4** The f-pawn has been provoked forward.

**48...Kf3 49.Be5 Ke4 50.Kb2?** 50.Bd6! is a tougher nut to crack: 50...Kf5 51.Kb2 Kg4 52.Ka1 h5 53.Kb2 h4 54.Ka1 h3 (the other rook's pawn is brought up into the fray) 55.Kb2 Kf3 56.Be5 Kg2 57.Ka1 d4! (This reminds me of Botvinnik's endgame with Kotov, the point being that the bishop on c4 has a clear view along the diagonal.) 58.cxd4 Kxh2 59.f5+ Kg2 60.fxg6 h2→ noting that the g6-pawn isn't dangerous.

**50...g5**  
**0-1**

Here are a couple of positions that are worth knowing.

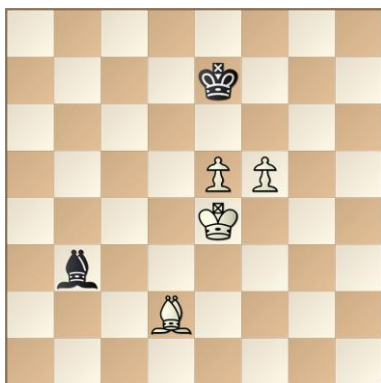
**Illustrative position 1**



The black bishop controls e6 and f5, and has a temporising move available (The bishop can shuffle between c8 and d7.), so White can't win.



## Illustrative position 2



White can win this one, despite the fact that Black's bishop controls e6 and has plenty of passing moves available.

**1.Bg5+** Simplest is to take control of f6 and e7.

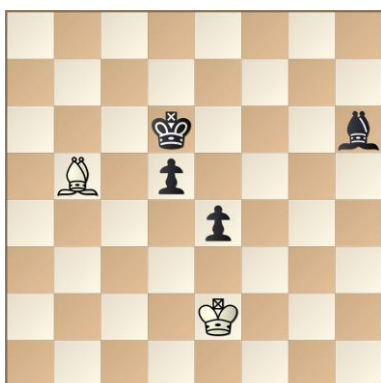
**1...Kf7** Following 1...Kd7 White invades on the right-hand side of the board: 2.Bh4 Bc4 3.Kf4 Bf7 4.Kg5 Ke7 5.Kh6+ Kd7 6.Kg7 Ke8 7.Kf6! (But not the impatient 7.e6? because of 7...Bxe6!) 7...Kf8 8.e6 Be8 9.Ke5 There's no rush: it's best to get one's pieces optimally placed before pushing the pawns. 9...Bh5 10.f6 Bg6 11.Be1 Be8 12.Bb4+ Kg8 13.Kd6 Kf8 14.Bc5 Bg6 15.Kd7+ Kg8 16.Ke7 and the f-pawn can finally be pushed to f7.

**2.Kd4** The king calmly walks around to d6 to support the e5-e6 advance. This is only possible because the f5-pawn is not under attack.

**2...Ba2 3.Kc5 Bb3 4.Kd6 Bc4 5.e6+ Kg7 6.Ke5 Be2 7.f6+ Kf8 8.f7 Bh5 9.Bh6+** and promotes.

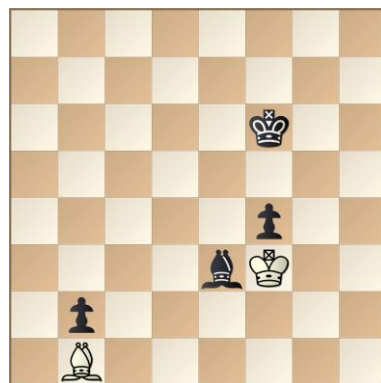
Finally, a couple of exercises to test how well you have taken in the article.

### Exercise 1



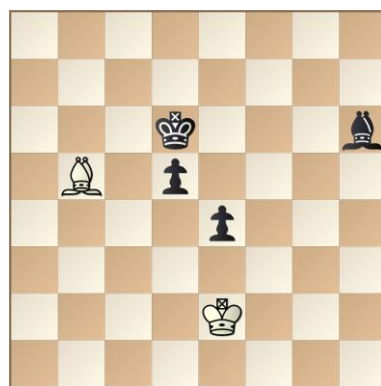
White to play and draw.

## Exercise 2



White to play and draw.

### Exercise 1 (answer)

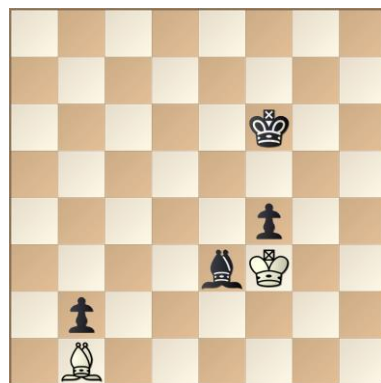


White should anticipate that Black will soon play ...d5-d4, with an eventual ...d4-d3+ in mind, so needs to cover the d3-square (Well, he is doing so at present, but read on!), but also prevent Black's king from supporting the ...d3 advance by attacking e4. So the bishop should head for c2.

**1.Ba4! d4** Or 1...Kc5 2.Bc2 Kd4 3.Bb3 Ke5 4.Bc2 d4 5.Bb1 and so on.

**2.Bc2! Kd5 3.Bb1** ...and then just wait.

### Exercise 2 (answer)



In the Oms Palisse - Salgado Lopez game above Black was able to win by using the whole width of the board. White needs to stop this skirting around manoeuvre.

**1.Kg4!**

A slack move such as 1.Bc2 loses to 1...Kg5! 2.Bd3 (2.Kg2 Kg4 3.Bd1+ failing to 3...f3+! 4.Bxf3+ Kf4) 2...Kh4 3.Bf5 Bc1 Zugzwang. The position is basically a mirror image of one from the Oms Pallisse -Salgado Lopez encounter.

**1...Ke5 2.Bg6 Kd4 3.Kf3 Kc3 4.Ke2 Kb3 5.Bb1** and the fortress remains intact.

## It's a Puzzlement!



Welcome to our puzzles section! Here are this month's puzzles - all hand-picked by [ChessPuzzle.net](https://chesspuzzle.net)

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!

*When you click on the links below you need to play a move to see the hint and/or solution.*

**Puzzle 1 - Dzida, Kamil – IM Ghasi, Ameet**  
Titled Tue 3 Oct Late, Chess.com INT



**Black to win - [Puzzle One](#)**

**Puzzle 2 - IM Ghasi, Ameet – FM Van Dael, Siem**  
Titled Tuesday 17 Oct Late, Chess.com INT



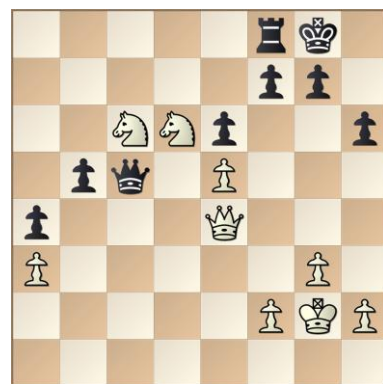
**White to checkmate - [Puzzle Two](#)**

**Puzzle 3 - GM Kazakouski, Valery – IM Pert, R.**  
Titled Tue 3 Oct Early, Chess.com INT



**Black to checkmate - [Puzzle Three](#)**

**Puzzle 4 - FM Martin, Le – IM Santos Flores, A.**  
Titled Tue 10 Oct Early Chess.com INT



**White to checkmate - [Puzzle Four](#)**



**Puzzle 5 - Magzumov, Damirali – Varley, Joe**  
ECF National Club 2023, Hull ENG



White to win - [Puzzle Five](#)

**Puzzle 6 - FM Trost, Edwin – IM Kanyamara, Tarum**  
Nottinghamshire Centenary, Nottingham ENG



White to checkmate - [Puzzle Six](#)

**Puzzle 7 - FM Haydon, D. – GM Andreikin, Dmitry**  
Titled Tuesday 10 Oct Late, Chess.com INT



White to win - [Puzzle Seven](#)

**Puzzle 8 - IM Ghasi, Ameet – FM Adam Bermudez, S.**  
Titled Tuesday 17 Oct Late, Chess.com INT



White to win - [Puzzle Eight](#)

**Puzzle 9 - White, S. – Badacsonyi, Frankie**  
Scarborough Congress 2023, Scarborough ENG



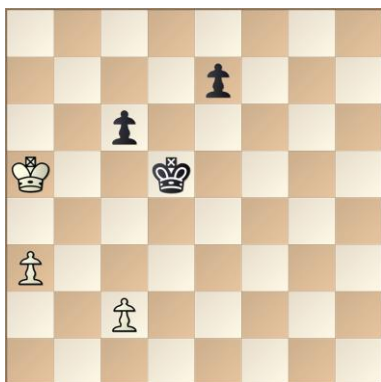
Black to win - [Puzzle Nine](#)

**Puzzle 10 - IM Willow, Jonah B. – IM Kanyamarala, Tarun**  
Nottinghamshire Centenary, Nottingham ENG



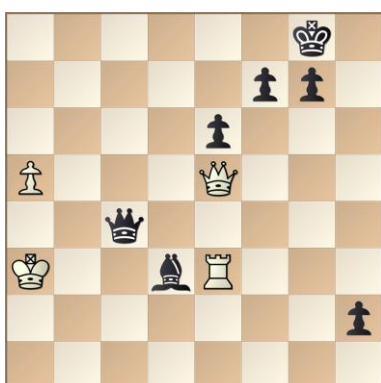
White to win - [Puzzle Ten](#)

**Puzzle 11 - Pal, Rohan – Garnett, J.**  
Scarborough Congress 2023, Scarborough ENG



**Black to win - [Puzzle Eleven](#)**

**Puzzle 12 - Ciuravin, Andrei – Rocco, Federico**  
ECF National Club 2023, Hull ENG



**White to win - [Puzzle Twelve](#)**

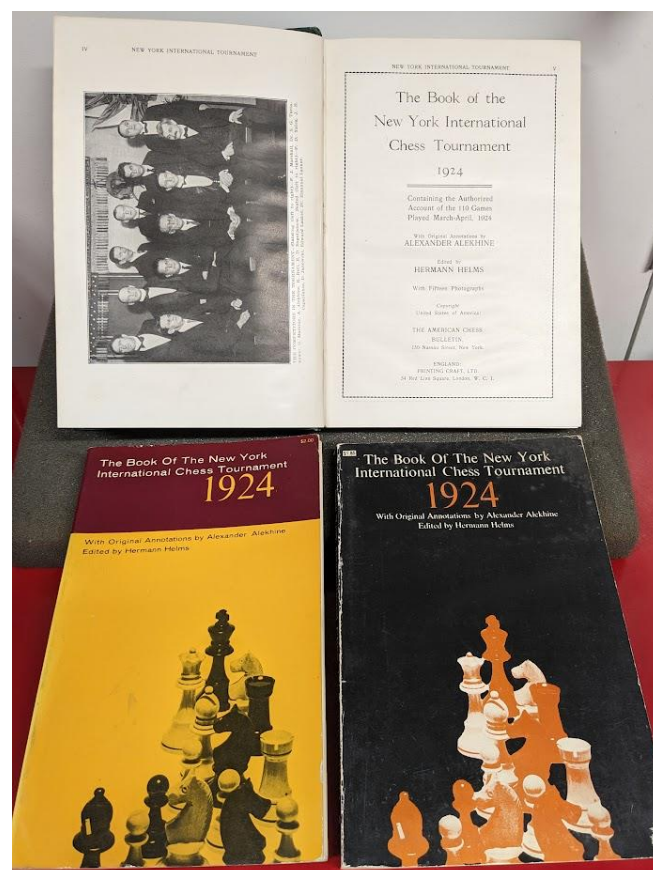
## All in One

For all the puzzles on one page just visit  
[https://chesspuzzle.net/List/9244?utm\\_source=ecf&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=novembernews](https://chesspuzzle.net/List/9244?utm_source=ecf&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=novembernews)  
by clicking the link or via the QR code.

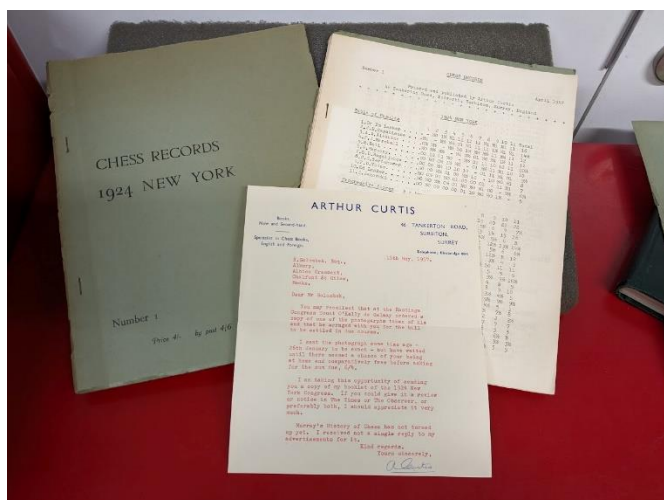


## From the Archive

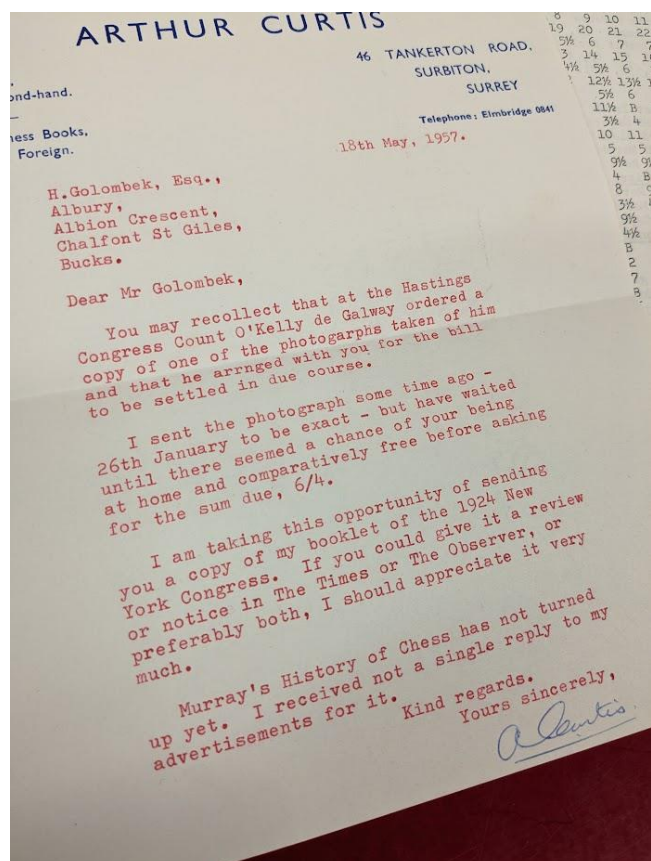
### Publishing the New York Chess Tournament 1924



The New York International Chess Tournament of 1924 has been widely studied as a memorable gathering of famed masters, with Emanuel Lasker placing first ahead of Capablanca, Alekhine, Marshall, Réti and Maroczy. The ECF Library holds two copies of the 1925 tournament book published by *American Chess Bulletin* with annotations and analysis by Alexander Alekhine. This book would become a standard text for players seeking to improve their game – and the copies of it in the ECF Library reveal a story about availability, the state of British chess in the 1950s and the usefulness of reprints!



The two copies of the original 1925 book both come from the libraries of major collectors, G.H. Diggle and J.M. Soesan. By the 1950s the original volumes would have been rare, expensive and considered to be collectors' items, a situation that would not benefit young chess players looking to learn! It is therefore interesting to find a booklet in the Golombek Collection entitled *Chess Records: 1924 New York*, published in April 1957 and available by post for 4 shillings 6 pence. The publisher, Arthur Curtis of Sussex, notes that this issue will be part of a series of records of chess tournaments. A letter tucked into the volume, addressed to Golombek, asks him to review the booklet in either (or both) of his chess columns in *The Times* or *The Observer*.



The *Chess Records* booklet will have met a need among British chess players at that date to have an accessible and inexpensive summary of the best games from the 1924 tournament. In 1961 Dover Publications reprinted the 1925 volume, thus making all the tournament games widely accessible – doubtless many readers of this article will have the Dover edition in their own libraries! In total there are three editions of the Dover book in the ECF Library. The importance of the reprint is evidenced by a copy gifted to R.J. Broadbent by the G.P.O. Chess Club, which has been rebound in monogrammed green leather.

There is an excellent blog post about Curtis by Michael Clapham: see [Chess Book Chats: Here's one you haven't got!](#) (2016). My thanks to Mike Dougherty for his assistance with this article.

## ECF Chess Visit to HMP Springhill and Grendon Underwood by Carl Portman

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2012

Sponsor: Michaela McAdam



My prisons 'chess tour' continued with a visit to HMP Springhill and HMP Grendon Underwood on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

**HM Prison Spring Hill** is a Category D men's prison, located in the village of Grendon Underwood in Buckinghamshire. The prison is operated by His Majesty's Prison Service, and is jointly managed with HMP Grendon, which is situated next to Spring Hill.

**HM Prison Grendon** is a Category B men's prison, located near the village of Grendon Underwood in Buckinghamshire. The prison is operated by His Majesty's Prison Service, and is jointly managed with HMP Spring Hill, which is situated next to Grendon.

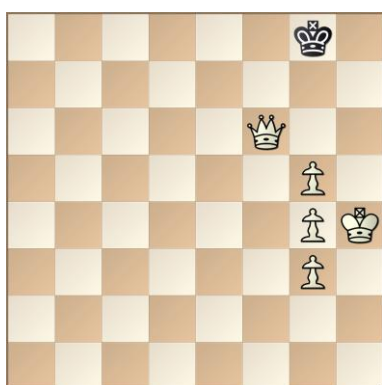


I spent a hugely enjoyable and productive day at both prisons mentioned above - both spread over one site. Both sets of prisoners have different needs, and are different category prisoners, but as ever chess was the unifying factor throughout the day. I was pleased to note that I had a rigorous search upon entering Grendon - which is just how it should be. Reception staff at some prisons can be rather incredulous when they see a chess player before them armed with chess books, sets and boards.

Once the prisoners were released for the morning session, I spoke about the ECF, what chess has meant to me throughout my life, and how it can benefit us in so many ways, from problem solving to building social friendships and even reconnecting with families. This has happened many times through chess. Then we got down to solving chess problems and playing games. As ever, I enjoyed a question and answer chess session on each site. The prisoners were very keen to ask questions.

It was interesting to note once again that the top two questions were about the en passant and 50-move rules. The former can be tricky to explain, and it has to be done carefully, while the latter is easy enough, but again prisoners were of the opinion that 21 moves was the rule. This is a common misconception, and I am always happy to clarify it. The third most frequently asked question is about the touch-move rule. Many think it is optional, especially in friendlies. I talk about 'rules', but they are actually the 'laws' of chess.

It was fascinating to see how both groups of prisoners tackled the following problem:



It is White to play and checkmate in three moves. Neither group could solve it despite valiant attempts, and the notion that the only way to mate in three begins with a retreating move 1.Kh3 was received in one case with applause from one inmate. The analogy for life here is that in conflict one does not always have to move forward (attack) to reach the desired result. One can simply

retreat and 'walk away', yet still prevail in the end. This was not lost on the prisoners.

One prisoner was determined to solve the puzzle and did not wish to be told the answer, and he stood, like a lone soldier at the demo board while everyone else had moved away and given up. This for me revealed character and 'stickability', as I called it, to solve a problem. Here was an individual who, once given a task, would not give up. There's much to be admired in that. I told him that I would have him on my team any day.

I was at the prison from 8.30 am to 4.30 pm, and the day was full-on chess, punctuated by a delicious tuna and cheese panino made for lunch by the prisoners. Michaela was a superstar, keeping me topped up with tea to boost my energy levels - I am not getting any younger, that's for sure. The prisoners learned that the ECF supports chess in prisons in order to try to encourage people to use chess as a tool - a springboard - for a better life. Indeed, I have written testimony that this sometimes happens. Chess really is that powerful.

I donated a copy of my book 'Chess Behind Bars' and a chess set and board, along with some magazines. The prison is suitably inspired to try to run a regular chess club in the New Year, and they now have a nominated prisoner (their strongest player) to be the ambassador for this. I really hope it takes off.

I should like to thank the governor at Grendon plus Michaela, Kerry and all support staff for making this visit happen. Without the support and belief of these champions chess simply would not happen in prisons in an organised way.

# NEWS and VIEWS

## 97th Caplin Hastings International Chess Congress - 28<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to 7<sup>th</sup> January 2024 by GM Stuart Conquest



Coming as always just after Christmas, this famous congress this year celebrates its 97<sup>th</sup> edition, with tournaments for all strengths and a full programme. The Hastings Masters is a nine-round Swiss, with the top two seeds at the time of writing both rated over 2600: GM Maxime Lagarde (2629, France) and GM Abhijeet Gupta (2606, India). Last year's winner GM Sarunas Sulskis from Lithuania makes a welcome return. From China GM Pengxiang Zhang will play, one of three confirmed Chinese entries so far, as will regulars GM Romain Edouard, GM Danny Gormally and GM Deep Sengupta, not forgetting young Swiss IM Daniel Fischer. IM and WGM Laura Unuk will also play. Latest to sign up are two young French players, GM Pierre Laurent-Paoli and IM Mahel Boyer, together with Brazil's FM Hugo de Melo Lux. Many other titled entrants are anticipated.

The congress schedule includes many other events too, played over four or five days, finishing with the Hastings Weekend Congress, now in its 39<sup>th</sup> year. The venue for all tournaments remains the Horntye Park Sports Complex, which has hosted the congress since 2000/01.

New this year are the Con Power Christmas tournaments, which are six-round Swisses played over four days from Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> December to Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. (Con Power was Congress Director from 1983 to 2015.) The five-round New Year events are played over five days from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 to Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024, and are followed by the Weekend Congress, played from Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> January to Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January. Many events, not only the Masters, are FIDE-rated. Total prize money exceeds £20,000.

Hastings has a long and illustrious history, with every world champion before Kasparov playing there except for Bobby Fischer, starting with Wilhelm Steinitz who played at the Hastings Tournament in 1895. Vera Menchik was

the first female player to take part in the Premier section between 1929/1930 and 1936/ 1937. Here are the final standings from the 1934/1935 tournament, which was won by future World Champion Max Euwe:

Hastings 1934-1935												
1	<u>Euwe,Max</u>	X	1	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	6.5
2	<u>Thomas,George Alan</u>	0	X	½	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	6.5
3	<u>Flohr,Salo</u>	½	½	X	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	6.5
4	<u>Capablanca,Jose Raul</u>	½	0	½	X	0	½	1	1	1	1	5.5
5	<u>Lilienthal,Andor</u>	½	0	½	1	X	½	1	½	½	½	5
6	<u>Botvinnik,Mikhail</u>	0	0	½	½	½	X	½	1	1	1	5
7	<u>Michell,Reginald Pryce</u>	0	1	0	0	0	½	X	½	1	1	4
8	<u>Menchik,Vera</u>	½	0	0	0	½	0	½	X	½	1	3
9	<u>Norman,George Marshall</u>	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	X	0	1.5
10	<u>Milner Barry,P S</u>	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	1	X	1.5

Source Wikimedia Commons

Here is the famous magic rook game between Wilhelm Steinitz and Curt Von Bardeleben, played many years earlier at the famous 1895 tournament.

### Wilhelm Steinitz - Curt von Bardeleben [C54]

Hastings, ENG (10), 17.08.1895

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Bb4+ 7.Nc3 d5 8.exd5 Nxd5 9.0-0 Be6 10.Bg5 Be7 11.Bxd5 Bxd5 12.Nxd5 Qxd5 13.Bxe7 Nxe7 14.Re1 f6 15.Qe2 Qd7 16.Rac1 c6 17.d5 cxd5 18.Nd4 Kf7 19.Ne6 Rhc8 20.Qg4 g6 21.Ng5+ Ke8 22.Rxe7+! Starting a famous sequence of magic rook moves. Kf8 23.Rf7+! Kg8 24.Rg7+! Kh8 25.Rxh7+!



At this point Von Bardeleben is said to have quietly left the playing area and venue, leaving his clock to run down. There is a forced mate or ruinous loss of material, which Steinitz demonstrated to the spectators. **1-0**

The Congress Committee gratefully acknowledges the continuing support of Caplin Systems, the specialist provider of desktop and mobile e-trading technology, and Hastings Borough Council.

For full details of the 97<sup>th</sup> Caplin Hastings International Chess Congress (including online registration for all events) please visit [www.hastingschess.com](http://www.hastingschess.com) . For Caplin Systems, please visit [www.caplin.com](http://www.caplin.com)

## Northwick Park Congress 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> December – Venue Change

**LJCC players (U10 and U14) and Northwick Park Congress players - please note:**

Tournaments on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December have moved! They will now take place at University of Westminster Marylebone Hall, 35 Marylebone Road, NW1 5LS.

This only applies to the first weekend. Tournaments after Christmas (28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> December) will be in our usual venue of Harrow Campus Northwick Park, Middlesex HA1 3TP.

This includes LJCC U8, U12, U16/18/21 and all sections of the Christmas Congress.

Entries for all these events are open now:  
<https://www.ljcc.co.uk/>

Please spread the word so that nobody turns up in the wrong place!

## Youth Prevails in Gosforth Chess Club 'Smile for Life' Charity Event

Gosforth had a lower than average turn-out for our third charity event on 14<sup>th</sup> September, but still raised £205 for Gosforth's Cafe Beam: <http://smileforlife.org.uk/>

Trophy winners were Tom Cameron (U1800), nine-year-old Lev Drobiazko (U1400) and James McKay (Overall) from a field of 20, pictured here with their memento trophies:



I'm sure the guys are smiling inside! In 2024 Gosforth plan three more events, raising money for charities with which our members have a connection.

## Request for Information regarding BCF Medal

We have received a request for more information regarding the medal in the pictures below. It is believed to have been awarded in 1926-27, possibly to Peter Winckworth. The medal, which is contained in a presentation box, is by Fattorini and Sons, Bradford.



If anyone is able to help, please contact the ECF Office:  
[office@englishchess.org.uk](mailto:office@englishchess.org.uk)

## Baptism of Fire for the UK Parliamentary Chess Club! by Peter Hornsby

The UK Parliamentary Chess Club played its first over the board match in decades, and it was a bruising encounter for them against a well-organised and impressive Imperial College London team.

The club was relaunched off the back of the successful Lords vs Commons match which took place in March, and it now meets every Monday evening in Portcullis House when Parliament is sitting.



Although the match was one-sided chess was the real winner, and it was great to see so many people participating in playing chess in Parliament.

Afterwards the Imperial College students were rewarded with a tour around the Parliamentary estate, and they even managed to visit the public gallery to watch one of the late-night debates in the House of Commons.

If you have a team or a club that would be interested in playing against the UK Parliamentary Chess Club you can contact the captain, Peter Hornsby, at [peter.hornsby@parliament.uk](mailto:peter.hornsby@parliament.uk)

We look forward to seeing the club continue to grow from strength to strength!



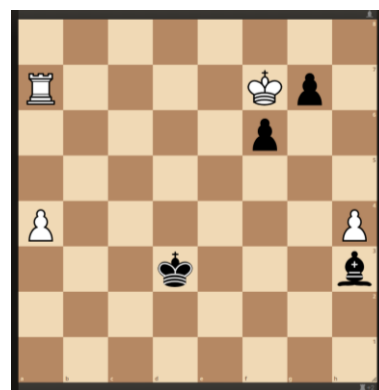
Peter Hornsby (left), the UK Parliamentary Chess Club's captain, who played a neat trick with Bd3+ in the final match to get his team on the scoresheet



The match was played in one of the conference rooms in Portcullis House, and it will probably be necessary to use a larger venue next time!



Adam Afriyie, MP for Windsor, playing a post-match friendly game against Chris Fegan; Imperial College London is Adam's alma mater, so he was especially pleased to meet several of their students afterwards to catch up on how the university is doing



Imperial College London	13 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2023 Final score: 17-1	UK Parliamentary Chess Club
FM Ulysse Bottazzi	2-0	IM Malcolm Pein
Gautam Jain	2-0	Chris Fegan (Public Inquiry Point for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Chess)
George Smith	1-1	Peter Hornsby (Parliamentary Assistant for Mark Eastwood MP)
Kai Lam	2-0	Lord Trevethin and Oaksey
Thivan Gunawardana	2-0	Griff Simon (Parliamentary Assistant for Khalid Mahmood MP)

Holly Gill	2-0	Oliver Moorhouse (Parliamentary Assistant for David Morris MP)
Nicolas Zeitouni	2-0	Danylo Nikiforov (Parliamentary Assistant for Bob Seeley MP)
Vincent Goverse	2-0	Lord Dafydd Wigley
Mahmoud Farrag	2-0	Daniela Stuhlmann (House of Lords Library)

## List of Arbiters for Green, Blue and Red Panels in FIDE Events 2024-2025

From FIDE:

*FIDE has now published its list of arbiters which includes:*

*Green Panel: Alex Holowczak (ENG)*

*Blue Panel: Shohreh Bayat (ENG), Chris Bird (USA), Alex McFarlane (SCO)*

*Red Panel: Andy Howie (SCO)*

*We would like to congratulate all of those named on their inclusion in the panels and to express the hope that they obtain worthwhile arbiting appointments in 2024 and 2025.*

## JUNIOR MOVES

### Littlewood's Choice



I have just read about the brilliant achievement of Bodhana Sivanandan in the World Cadets Under 8 Championships. She scored 11/11 in a remarkable performance which underlined the fact that she is the strongest female player of her age.

Obviously she is still young, but it would now be great to see her have success in strong Open tournaments... hopefully giving her a chance to obtain the GM title in due course.

Her style is very solid, often obtaining no advantage from the opening, but then outplaying her opponent in the middlegame. Here is an example from the recent tournament:

#### B. Sivanandan - M. Ahmadi

World Cadets U8 Girls Championship Round 10

**1.e4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.e5 Nfd7 4. Nxd5!?**

This is typical of Bodhana; she prefers to go her own way and not head down the theoretical lines with, for example, 2.e5 or 4.d4. However, the move chosen does not give her any real advantage, but does set her opponent challenges that she may well have not faced before.

**4...Nxe5 5.Nc3 Bf5 6.d4 Nec6 7.Nf3 Nb4?!**

Black should have preferred simple development of her kingside pieces. This foray wastes time, and gives White a slight advantage.

**8.Bb5+**



**8...c6 9.Ba4 e6 10.0-0 Be7 11.Ne2**

An alternative is 11.a3 Nd5 12.Nxd5 exd5 13.Bf4 0-0 14.Re1, which gives White a slight edge.

**11...Nd7 12.c3 Nd5 13.Ng3 Bg6 14.Bc2 Bxc2 15.Qxc2 0-0 16.Bd2**

Preferable is 18.c4 N5f6 19.Bf4, when White is slightly better.

**16...N7f6 17.Rfe1 Qb6?!**



This is the wrong square for the queen. Better would be 17....Qc7, controlling f4.

**18.Ng5?!**

This premature attempt at an attack is easily repulsed, and just leads to exchanges which favour the defensive side. Simply 18.c4 Nb4 19.Qc3 Na6 20.a3 would give White the advantage.

**18...Qd8 19.Nh5 h6 20.Nxf6+ Nxf6 21.Nf3**

The position is now completely equal, but Bodhana continues to try to generate chances.

**21....c5 22.Rad1 Qc7 23.dxc5 Bxc5 24.h3 Qg3 25.Be3 Bxe3 26.Rxe3 Qc7 27.Nd4 Rad8 28.Red3 a6 29.Qd2**

Objectively best is 29.Nf3 Rxd3 30.Qxd3, when White's control of the queen's file gives her slightly better chances, although Black should be able to hold with sensible play. However, Bodhana wants to keep pieces on and try to complicate matters.

**29...Qa5 30.b4?!**



This is a weakening move which loosens White's queenside position. The best move is 30.Nc6! Rxd3 31.Nxa5 Rxd2 32.Rxd2, when White has a slight advantage in the endgame. However, Bodhana wants to keep queens on, and so risks getting a worse position.

**30....Qd5 31.Qe2!?**

Again, a better objective choice is 31.Nxe6! Qxd3 32.Nxd8 Qxd2 33.Rxd2 Ne4 34.Rd3 Nxc3 35.a3 b5 36.Nc6, when White has slightly the better ending. Clearly this did not appeal to Bodhana, and so she regroups her forces for a kingside attack.

**31....Qe4 32.Re3 Qd5 33.Rdd3 Qc4 34.Rg3**

White suddenly has some dangerous threats. For example, if 34...b5? then 35.Qe5! Kh8 36.Rxg7 Kxg7 37.Rg3+ Kh7 38.Qxf6 gives White a vicious attack. A possible continuation is 38...Rg8 39.Qxf7+ Kh8 40.Qf6+ Kh7 41.Qe7+ Kh8 42.Nxe6 Rxg3 43.Qf6+ Kh7 44.fxg3 Rg8 45.Nf8+ Rxf8 46.Qxf8 Qxc3 47.Qf7+ Kh8 48.Qg6, with a winning ending.

**34....Rfe8??**

Under pressure, Black blunders. The only good move is 34...Qc7! guarding e5, and with careful play the defence can hold the balance.

**35.Rxg7+! Kxg7**





**36.Rg3+ 1-0**

Black's queen is lost, and so she resigns.

A tough game. I was impressed with the maturity shown by both players, and it is difficult to believe that they are still just eight years old.

Clearly Bodhana is a fantastic prospect, and I wish her well in her future chess exploits.

Meanwhile if you have played any exciting games as a youngster that you would like a chance to have published in my column then please send them to me at [plittl@hotmail.com](mailto:plittl@hotmail.com).

## 2024 Online Junior County Championship

This event takes place on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Entry costs £20.00 per team. The basic rules are:

- Played on the Tornelo website
- Requirement to connect to a Zoom call
- Teams of four (maximum one per county per section)
- Teams must have a mix of boys and girls
- 'Academic year' age groups
- Seven rapidplay rounds
- ECF online rated

Team composition spreadsheet (to submit with your entry) here:

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Registration-Form.xlsx>

You can enter online here:

<https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/2024-online-junior-county-championship/>

The regulations are here:

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/Juniors/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Tournament-Regulations.pdf>

## ECF Girls' Championships 2024

It is a delight once again to sponsor and host the ECF's National Girls' Chess Championships: a unique and collegiate event. From its inception in 2014 this tournament has exceeded all expectations each year and is one of the most dynamic national chess competitions for young female players. We look forward to welcoming schools from all over the country, and warmly invite new participant schools to help celebrate this exceptional assembly of like-minded girls.

– Mrs Alice Phillips, Headmistress, St Catherine's, Bramley

### Girls' Semi-Finals

NORTH: Nottingham High School, Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023 [www.nottinghamhigh.co.uk](http://www.nottinghamhigh.co.uk) Organiser Edward Jones

SOUTH: St Catherine's School Bramley, Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024 [www.stcatherines.info](http://www.stcatherines.info) Organiser IM Andrew Martin

ONLINE: TBA February 2024

Both over the board events will start at 10 am and finish at approximately 5 pm.

**Teams of three** in U11 and U19 categories.

All teams will play five rounds against other competing teams.

The Swiss pairing system will be used.

Time control: 20 minutes plus 10 second increment per move.

For the first time we are trialling an online semi-final in February for new teams and those who have not qualified by the over the board route. Details will be released as soon as we have them. Six teams will qualify for the final from the southern semi-final, two from the northern semi-final and two online, enlarging the final to 10 teams.

The finals will be held over the weekend of 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at St Catherine's School. Overnight accommodation can be booked. The number of points scored will decide qualification, not individual match results.

### Schedule (OTB)

9.30 am Welcome; 10 am-11 am Round 1; 11.15 am-12.15 pm Round 2; 12.30 pm-1.30 pm Round 3

1.30 pm – 2.30 pm Lunch 2.30 pm – 3.30 pm Round 4;  
3.45 pm – 4.45 pm Round 5; 5 pm Awards

Enquiries may be made to the Girls' Tournament Director  
Andrew Martin. Email: [a.martin2007@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:a.martin2007@yahoo.co.uk)

Download a flyer here:

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/NSCC/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Girls-NSCC-202324.pdf>

Tournament rules here:

<https://www.englishchess.org.uk/NSCC/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/National-Schools-Girls-Rules.pdf>

Under 19 entry form here:

<https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/u19-girls-national-schools-championships-2324/>

Under 11 entry form here:

<https://britchess.wufoo.com/forms/u11-girls-national-schools-championships-2324/>

## **ECF Secondary School Rapidplay Chess Tournament Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 at Eton College, Berks by Neill Cooper, ECF Manager of Secondary School Chess**

After a break of four years due to Covid and then building works, the ECF Secondary Schools Team Chess Tournament hosted by Eton College took place on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October. Teams came from far (Dublin, Liverpool, Torquay) and near (Eton, Holyport, Reading).

Demand was high, and all the original 50 places were taken by the end of June. With the availability of an overflow room, entry was raised to 56 teams, each of six players, some with reserves. In total over 350 players took part. The highest rated were Yichen Han (2540) and Rajat Makkar (2387), while over 100 were playing their ever first ECF-rated games of chess. The highest rated teams were Wilson's School (average rating 1991), National Chess Champions Hampton School (1934) and past winners Haberdashers' Boys' School (1846), while there were six teams which had no rated players.

With such a wide range of experience and ability, results in the first round were mainly one-sided, with some teams winning 6 – 0. Since the tournament was scored using game points rather than match points such comprehensive victories were valuable to the teams.

Round 2 saw closer fixtures, with four of the teams who had lost 0 – 6 in round 1 winning by a similar margin in round 2. No team won both matches 6 – 0, so in round 3 the two leading teams, Latymer A and St. Paul's Girls' School, both on 11½ points, met in the top match. A convincing 5 – 1 win by Hampton against Highgate resulted in their leading the tournament on 16points, ahead of Latymer 15½ and Haberdashers' (15).

By round 4, many of the matches were closely fought between teams of similar abilities. Hampton beat Latymer A 4 – 2, while Haberdashers' beat Gonzaga College (Dublin) 4½ – 1½, Magdalen College School (MCS) beat Reading School 4 -2, while Wilson's beat St Paul's Girls' 5 – 1.

This set up a very close final round, with Hampton on 20 points playing Haberdashers' on 19½, while Wilson's (pictured below) on 19 played Latymer A (17½). While Hampton and Haberdashers' played out a 3 – 3 draw, Wilson's beat Latymer 4½ – 1½ to win the tournament by a mere ½ point from Hampton, who were ½ a point ahead of Haberdashers', who in turn were ½ a point ahead of MCS.



*The winning Wilson's School team*

Some players deserve praise for winning all five games: Yichen Han (MCS), Rajat Makkar (Hampton), Magnus Borissow (RGS Guildford), Rock Yu (Dame Alice Owens) and Hao Ran Leung (Bishop Douglas), all on board 1 and somehow never playing each other; Rahul Babu (Wilson's) on board 2; Kian Shah (Haberdashers') and Ryan Moore (King Edward School, Birmingham) on board 3; Ryan Martin (The Judd School) on board 4; and Yueyue Sui (MCS) on board 6.

All the results can be found here: <https://chess-results.com/tnr825935.aspx?>

The whole event was played in great spirit, and the arbiting team of Chris Howell, Phillip Beckett, Rejean Dupuis and Daniel Young were kept busy and ensured fair play all round, with any queries quickly resolved.

Eton College yet again were great hosts, and many accompanying staff and parents enjoyed the tour of the college by our host Justin Moston. He had also worked tirelessly to get the hall ready for play, and then ensured it was cleared afterwards.

We are already starting to plan next year's tournament, and hope to have space for even more teams!

## IMPROVERS

### Paul Littlewood on Tactics

I wanted today to illustrate how important tactics are when playing a normal game. All the brilliant wins by Tal, for example, would not have been achieved had he missed the crucial winning tactic at the decisive moment.

Consider the following game of mine which was played last year:

**D. Dicks - P.E. Littlewood**  
4NCL Online 22/11/2022

**1.c4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Nf3 e4!? 4.Ng5 c6**

This pawn sacrifice looks strange, but I had seen the game Aronian - Praggnanandhaa, where a complex struggle arose with chances for both sides. Consequently I spent some time before the game looking at the various continuations, because I knew that my opponent usually played the English Opening.

**5.Ngxe4 Nxe4 6.Nxe4 d5 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.Ng3 h5 9.e3 h4 10.Ne2 Nc6 11.d4 Qf6 12.Nf4**

In the above-mentioned game Aronian played the more natural 12.Nc3, and after 12...Qg6 13.a3 Bd6 14.Bd2 Bf5 Black had good compensation for the pawn. Then, after some interesting moments, the game eventually ended in a draw.

**12....Bd6!**

Another pawn has to be sacrificed to maintain the initiative.

**13. Nxd5 Qg6 14. Nc3 Bf5 15.a3 0-0-0 16.Bd2 Rhe8 17.Nb5 h3!**

Weakening the white squares around the white king, which is of critical importance later in the game.

**18.g3 a6 19.Nxd6+ Rxd6**

...and we come to the first critical point:



White is two pawns up, but he has wasted quite a lot of time, so is quite a long way behind in development. He now plays a natural move, but this fails to a pretty combination. The best move is 20.Bc3, when the game could continue 20...Ne5 21. Be2 Nd3+ 22.Bxd3 Bxd3. The opposite coloured bishops then give Black at least equal chances, but no more.

**20.Be2? Bc2! 21.Qc1 Nxd4 22.exd4 Rc6**

Black now has some very dangerous threats. For example, if 23.Bc3? then 23..Rxe2+ 24.Kxe2 Qd3+ 25.Ke1 Re6+ wins. So White has to return some material.

**23.Be3 Be4 24.Qd1 Bxh1 25.d5 Rd6**

Objectively the position is about equal, but White has to be very careful with his king in the centre.





The best move is the counter-attacking 26.Qa4! when the game could continue 26....Qe4 27.Rc1+ Kb8 28.Qxe4 Rxe4 29.Bf4 Rxf4 30.gxf4 Bxd5 31.Bg4 Bc6 32.Bxh3 Rd4 33.f5 Bf3 with an approximately equal ending. Instead, under pressure White makes a serious error, allowing a pretty combination.

**26.f3? Bxf3! 27.Qc1+ Kb8 28.Bxf3 Rf6!**

This is the critical continuation, which leaves White without resource. Now if 29.Be2 then 29...Qe4 30.Bf4+ Ka8, and there is no sensible defence to 31...Qxe2 mate.

**29.Kf2 Rxf3+ 30.Kxf3 Qe4+ 31. Ke2 Qg2+ 32.Kd3 Qxd5+ 33.Ke2 Qg2+ 34.Kd3 Qe4+ 35.Ke2 Rc8!**



White's queen is now lost, and his king is still exposed, so the win is not far off.

**36.Qd2 Rc2 37.Rd1 g5 38.Rf1 Rxd2+ 39.Kxd2 Qe5 40.Rc1 Qxb2+ 41.Rc2 Qxa3 0-1**

After 42.Bc5 Qa5+ 43.Ke2 Qb5+ 44.Kf2 Qd3 White's position is hopeless.

Clearly tactics played a big part in this game, and I can assure you that they are always around every corner!

Here are a couple of examples to solve, with the answers at the end of the article:



**V. Hort - L. Portisch**

Madrid 1973

White to play and win



**M. Tal - G. Tringov**

Amsterdam 1964

White to play and win

**Answers:**

**V. Hort - L. Portisch**

White won by 1.Rg4+ fxg4 2.Qg5+ Kh8 3.Qh6 Bxd3 4.Qxf8 mate

**M. Tal - G. Tringov**

White won by 1.Bxf7+ Kxf7 2.Ng5+ Ke8 3.Qe6+ Kd8 4.Nf7+ Kc7 5.Qd6 mate

Paul Littlewood Email: [plittl@hotmail.com](mailto:plittl@hotmail.com)

## Gormally's Coaching Corner

### by Danny Gormally



**Defending Isn't Scary**

**Turner, Max N - Gormally, Daniel W**

Hull 4NCL Congress 2023 Canham Turner Centre, Hull HU (5.1), 10.09.2023



How you are able to evaluate positions is obviously important as a chess player. The stronger you are, the better you are able to evaluate. Look at Magnus Carlsen - he seems to understand almost every position, know what plans are available, know what to expect from the game. When you become a grandmaster you are a fairly accomplished player, and it's easy to think you also know everything and understand every position very well. However, recently I have come to question this point of view, as there have been a couple of positions I got horribly wrong in analysis; these were scary-looking, and I mistakenly thought they were just winning for White, so it was fascinating to see the resources that the engine threw up. It made me realise that I tend to overestimate attacking positions in general.

**15.h4!?** I felt as if this was a good sign from my opponent's point of view. Having just beaten Mark Hebden with Black and gone a half point clear, it would be easy in this final round to just try to play negatively with White and aim to secure a draw. Instead, he is reminding me that it is not going to be a one-sided game.

**15...Rfd8** This was a possible variation that I analysed later with a student of mine. Keeping the tension like this in a must-win game isn't at all a bad idea.

15...cxd4 was what I played in the game, a practical decision which I think was fine. I'm not drawn into creating any weaknesses or lured into unclear complications. I've noticed in my games that I often don't spend enough time on forcing moves like pawn captures, and tend to drift a bit. Going for a central exchange like this can often bring about positive clarification. 16.Bxd4 dxc4 17.Nxc4 Rfd8 18.Ng5 Nf8 19.Rfd1 Bxg2 20.Kxg2 b5 21.Ne3 Rxc1 22.Qxc1 Bxg5 23.hxg5 Qb7+ 24.f3 Nb4 25.Qc5 Nd5 26.Rc1 a6 27.Nxd5 exd5 28.Qc6 Qe7 29.f4 Ne6 30.Bb6 Rb8 31.Bc5 Qd8 32.Bd6 Ra8 33.Qxd5 Rc8 34.Rc6 Qd7 35.Rxc8+ Qxc8 36.Qe4 a5 37.Be7 g6 38.Bd6 Kg7 39.Be7 Kg8 40.g4 Nxf4+ 41.Qxf4 Qb7+ 42.Qf3 and my opponent offered a draw. Relieved that I had escaped after being lost some moves earlier, I accepted; I did consider 15...h6, but then I wondered if that might

encourage him to really throw himself onto the attacking warpath by playing g4–g5, even if the downsides of such an all-out approach are very clear.

**16.Ng5 Nf8 17.f4** This was just a variation we roughly covered - of course this is far from best play.

**17...h6 18.Nxf7 Kxf7 19.f5**



I casually showed this variation to my student as if to illustrate the dangers of the position and how easy it was to go wrong for Black. This looked awful for Black to me, or at least incredibly scary in a practical game. The queen is buried on b8, far from the action. If I calculated this variation as Black in a game, then I'd be keen to avoid it. But my student wasn't so sure. He wanted to check with the engine, and it turns out that he was right and things are not so clear.

**19...cxd4!** Central clarification is the right way! This is useful as it cuts down on White's options, as now the queen is threatening to re-enter the game via e5.

19...exf5 20.Qxf5+ Kg8 (20...Ke8 21.Qf7+ (21.Bh3 also wins for White.) 21...Kd7 22.Bh3+ is even worse.) 21.Qf7+ allowing White to win back material is hardly a good idea: 19...Kg8 20.f6 gxf6 21.exf6 Bd6 22.f7+ also looks like something to avoid. 22...Kh8 23.dxc5+ Be5 24.Rf6 - we got this far in our analysis and there were shouts of WOW! at this point. I felt as though I was just showing off. But later we came back and found there was a better way to play. 24...Bxb2 (24...d4 25.Rxh6+ Kg7 26.Rh5 Bxg2 27.Kxg2 Rxc5, and here I would rather be White, but note the presence of the knight on f8 – without its being there White could play Qh7 or Rh7+ and probably Black would resign on the spot.) 25.Qxb2 d4 26.Rxh6+ Kg7 27.Rh5, although even here Black still has more pieces and the game doesn't seem too clear.

**20.f6** This seemed like the most obvious try.

20.fxe6+ Kg8 21.Rf7 also looks a decent try, and creative players would certainly give this one a look. 21...Rc7! seems to be a bit of a party killer, though.

**20...gxf6 21.exf6 Bb4!**



And now the computer assesses the position as winning for Black! What a misassessment I had made of this whole variation! What is interesting to me is that the knight on f8 more or less beats off the white attack on its own. It's a defensive piece that creates an entire shield around the black king.

21...Bc5 is also good.

**22.Nf3 dxc4 23.bxc4 Qxg3→**

**Gormally, Daniel - Kosten, Anthony C**  
GBR-ch 100th Torquay (4), 01.08.2013



Another sign that I tend to overestimate attacking positions came in the following game, against a bit of a bogey opponent for me in Tony Kosten.

**17...Re8!** He spent a lot of time before playing this excellent defensive move, a resource that I had originally overlooked when calculating this variation. Which is surprising, as it's a fairly obvious move, preparing to bring the bishop to f8. While waiting for him to move I drifted over to the spectator seats. I was nervous and surveyed the position. 'What happens if he moves the rook to e8?'

I suddenly thought. Just as soon as that realisation drifted into my mind, his hand reached out for the rook...

**18.Nd6?** Bothered by my nerves and still suffering from a tendency to overestimate my chances, I go horribly wrong. I think this game came at a bad point in my career, when I was in the 'wilderness'. I had become lazy and dependent on engines. I wasn't analysing positions in the right way, wasn't used to calculating, and wasn't looking for hidden resources. Nd6? is a patchwork variation. Concerned by some details in the other lines, I go for a move that I had barely calculated. It doesn't work out well.

18.Nf6+ Bxf6 (18...Nxf6 - I think from memory Tony told me afterwards he would have just gone for this, when White can force a draw. 19.Qg5+ (19.exf6 Bxf6 20.Be4 Bg7→) 19...Kh8 20.Qh6+= Lesson learned - if you see a draw like this in a shaky position then grab it with both hands. In this game I lost my objectivity and paid the price.) 19.Re4 Bg5 20.Rg4 dxc3 I vaguely recall seeing this variation in the game. White can win the queen but there is no clear perpetual check then, and Black gets chunks of material for it. 21.bxc3 Bb7 22.h4 Nxc3 23.Rxg5+ Qxg5 24.hxg5 Ne2+!

**18...Bf8 19.Qh5 Bxd6 20.Re4** Flailing.

**20...Bxe5 21.Rxe5 dxc3**

**0-1**

## STUDIES AND PROBLEMS

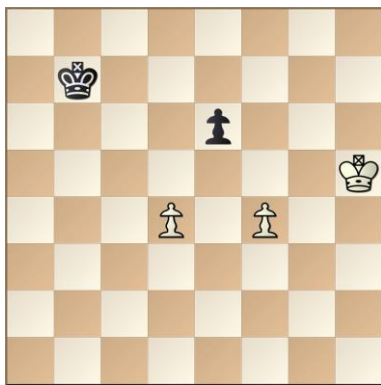
### How to Solve a Study by Ian Watson

#### Simple Chess

Pawn endings, the simplest of chess positions - or not. Study composers have found many that are very far from simple solving. This month, we have three from a new book about pawn endings, 'A Book of Bedtime Pawn Endings' by one of the world's leading study experts, John Beasley.

The first study was composed by Artur Mandler and published in *Prager Presse* in 1929.





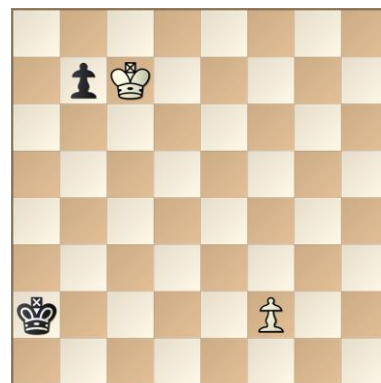
White to play and win

Even if you are not a regular study-solver, you know about 'the opposition' in pawn endgames, so you will already be thinking about how to use it here. If you move your king in straight away, Black will do so too; thus, 1.Kg6 Kc6 keeps the opposition, and 2.Kf6 Kd6 doesn't change that. You next look at 1.Kg6 Kc6 2.Kg7 Kc7 3.Kg8 Kc8, and Black still has the opposition. You now realise that Black will always be able to keep it, so you need some additional device, not just manoeuvring with your king. The only other device available is to sacrifice your d-pawn, to clear the path for your f-pawn. How about 4.d5 to do that? OK, this is a 'simple' pawn ending, but surely it should be more difficult than that? Indeed it is, because Black defends successfully with 4...Kd7, after which, if you approach with your king, you block the f-pawn's path.

Back to square 1, or rather move 1. It was unlikely that 1.Kg6 was correct; it's too obvious a move - why would the composer have chosen to start from a position where the first move was so simple? With that thought, you try other king moves. 1.Kg5 Kc7 2.Kg6 Kc6 is back to what you already examined. So, you try 1.Kh6; Black has to reply 1...Kb6. It can't be 2.Kg7/g6/g5 next, so that only leaves 2.Kh7. Now Black has to go back to b7 - if he goes to b5, then 3.Kg7, and the c5-square isn't available. OK, now what? Again, moving to the g-file reverts to what you already looked at, so it has to be 3.Kh8. Black has to respond 3...Kb8. This feels right - the king march up the h-file is just the kind of thing that study composers love. So, once again: now what? It has to be that second device - there's nothing else to try. So 4.d5. Yes! This time it works, because Black doesn't have 4...Kd7 - he's been dragged too far away. Also, he's been dragged to the back rank, which means that the white f-pawn will promote with check.

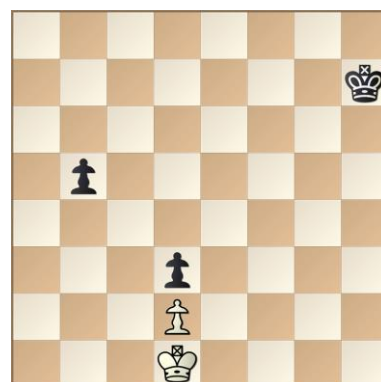
The solution therefore is **1.Kh6 Kb6 2.Kh7 Kb7 3.Kh8 Kb8 4.d5** and wins. In John Beasley's words, 'The white king must ignore the central battlefield entirely, and march straight up the board into the corner.'

Our other two studies are for you to solve. The first was again a composition by Mandler and was published in *Národní i Osvobození* in 1938. The solution is nine moves long:



White to play and win

Your second solving task is a 1985 study composed by the greatest modern master of the pawn ending, Mikhail Zinar, and published in *Shakhmaty v SSSR*. The solution to this one isn't simple either, but it is short:



White to play and draw

John Beasley's book is available from Chess & Bridge ([www.chess.co.uk](http://www.chess.co.uk)) and its ISBN is 978-0-9555168-5-6. The solutions are given on page 60.

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

## Monthly Conundrum by Christopher Jones

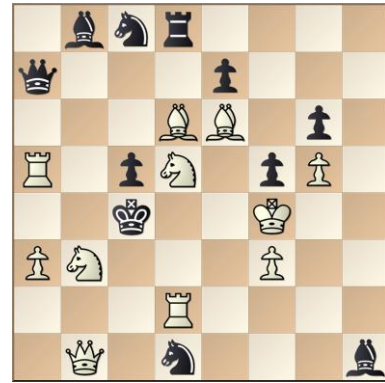
Firstly, here is the 3-mover which I left you to solve in the last issue:



Christopher Jones  
*The Problemist* 2000  
Mate in 3

At the recent MindSports Olympiad solving tourney quite a few competitors found that the key is 1.Bb3!, creating Zugzwang. There are then three possible black moves, against each of which there is a unique white second move to enforce mate on the following move: 1...exd6 2.Nc3!; 1...e6 2.Re5; and 1...e5 2.Re4+. I'll leave you to fill in the details of Black's second and White's mating third moves!

The solving competitions in Britain that I've mentioned in recent issues are a small fraction of the total array of such events held throughout Europe, and even further afield, in the course of the year. To get an idea of this you can go to the WFCF (World Federation for Chess Composition) website and view the 'solving portal' there. On that portal you can also see the problems that have been used in these competitions. Recently I (fairly randomly) looked at the problems used in the fourth Branko Babic Memorial Tourney, which took place in Belgrade on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2023. I'd like to share a couple of the problems from that event. This time, instead of 'White to play and mate in x moves' problems I'm looking at a selfmate and a helpmate. Solving tourneys invariably include problems from these two genres, and so in order to compete effectively you must acquire a certain degree of familiarity, and hopefully expertise, in them. Let's first look at a selfmate:



Yakov Vladimirov and Yakov P. Ursegov  
Selfmate in 3  
1<sup>st</sup> Prize, *Prvenstvo Moskve* 2002

First, a reminder that in a selfmate White is doing all he can to force Black to checkmate White, and Black is doing all he can to thwart White's intentions. I must confess to not being a good solver of selfmates myself, and so I can't prescribe the best way to root out the solution of this one, but the most prominent feature of the position is the battery lined up from e6 to c4, and you can bet that the firing of this battery will figure in the solution, although composers' preference for subtler key moves makes it unlikely that the d5 knight will move, discovering check, on move 1. Sure enough, a quieter move is the key: 1.Rg2. Like many moves in selfmate solutions, this gives the black king more room, which turns out to be more rope with which to hang himself. We are threatening 2.Nd2+ Kd4 3.Be5+! Bxe5#. (I've previously mentioned that as solutions are scored out of five it's neat if it happens to be the case that there are five lines of play a solver is required to give. This is such a problem. You'd get your first of the five points for giving this key and threat.)

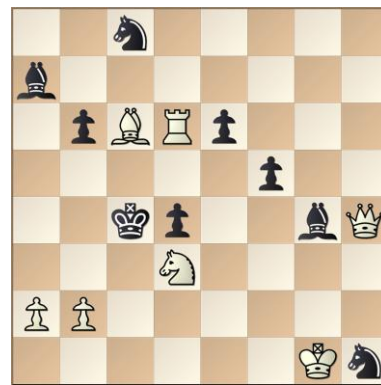
Black has four defences, and you'd get a further point for each of these that you wrote down: 1...Qxa5 2.Nxa5+ Kd4 3.Be5+ Bxe5#. The remaining three defences do at last show the e6-c4 battery coming into action: 1...exd6 2.Nb6+ Kc3 3.Rxc5+ dxc5#; 1...Rxd6 2.Nb4+ Kc3 3.Qd3+ Rxd3#; and 1...Nxd6 2.Nc7+ Kc3 3.Nb5+ Nxb5#. It's well worth studying why in each of these three lines of play White must be careful to choose the one specific square to which to play his knight on move 2. (By the way, any solving tourney veterans reading this will know that in a tourney you don't have to include the third [mating] black move as I've done above.)



Christer Jonsson  
Helpmate in 2 - three solutions  
2<sup>nd</sup> Prize, *Kudesnik* 2009-10

Second, here is one of the helpmates from the Branko Babic Memorial Tourney. Problem buffs will know that in the murky metaverse of the helpmate Black plays first, and does all he can to help White to mate him. In any decent helpmate all the white pieces (with the allowable exceptions of king and pawns) will be gainfully employed (or, perhaps, captured) in every solution. In many classical helpmates, there is an extremely close move-by-move correlation between the solutions, but there are also charms in helpmates in which there are radical differences in the ways in which the white officers are used in the different solutions, and problems illustrating this trend tend to be the choice for solving tourneys, giving competitors more of a mental workout. Perhaps the solutions to Jonsson's nice problem give an idea of the diversity that is possible in three (all quite appealing) solutions (by convention, helpmate solutions show black moves in the place in which you'd normally expect to see white moves): 1.Rb2 Kxb2 2.Ng3 Bf2#; 1.Re3 Nd3 2.Rg5 Rd8#; and 1.Bxe5 Nb7 2.Bf4 Re4#. For solving tourney purposes decimal points come into play here, as the five points are divided equally between these three solutions.

Finally, you may like to have a go at solving another of the problems used in the Serbian tourney. This is an orthodox problem – mate in 3. But it may prove quite challenging. It does have the solving tourney virtue of eschewing 'decimalised' scores, as there are five lines of play to find. One is the key move and its threat. The other four are defences with which Black delays mate until White's third move. One at least of these defences is not very interesting (it wasn't part of what the composer wanted to show, but was a necessity in order to make the problem sound); however, as a competitor in a solving tourney you'd want to avoid dropping points by missing mundane lines of play.



L. A. Kuijers  
Mate in 3  
1<sup>st</sup> Prize, *Casopis Holandske sahovske federacije* 1920

I'll give the solution in the next issue.

Finally, if you are interested in taking part in a solving tourney, you may be interested in the International Solving Competition on the afternoon of 21<sup>st</sup> January 2024. The British site for this event is in Sheffield. Full details will be posted on the website of the British Chess Problem Society ([www.theproblemist.org/](http://www.theproblemist.org/)) – or you can email me. And, of course, don't hesitate to email me with any queries at all to do with this column.

Christopher Jones  
[cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk)

## How to Solve a Study – solutions

(Mandler 1938)

**1.Kd6 Ka3 2.Kc5 Ka4 3.f4 b5 4.f5 b4 5.Kc4 b3 6.Kc3 Ka3 7.f6 b2 8.f7 b1Q 9.f8Q+** and mate or win of the queen.

As in the first Mandler, 1.Kxb7 and 1.f4 are hardly likely to be correct because they're too obvious. Anyway, it's easy to see that 1.Kxb7? Kb3 2.Kc6 Kc4 defends, and that 1.f4? b5 also does so. It's not trivial to see why 1.Kd6 is correct, however. 1.Kd6 has blocked the black king's route back to stop the f-pawn, so Black has to try to push his own pawn, but 1...b5 2.Kc5 Kb3 3.Kxb5 wins, so 1...Ka3 is forced. Then White has to force the black king up the board and back down again.

For the record, 1.Kb6? Kb3 2.Kc5 is met by either 2...Kc3 or 2...b6+. In the solution line 3.Kd4? Kb5 draws.

(Zinar 1985)

**1.Ke1 b4 2.Kd1 Kg6 3.Kc1.** As John Beasley describes it in his book: 'Try the natural 1-5.Kxb5? No, Black will play to e2 and win. White must go the other way: 1.Ke1. If Black again brings up his king, say 1...Kg6, White will play 2-4.Kxd3 b2 5.Kc2 and catch the b-pawn. So this pawn must advance at once: 1...b4, so that 2-4.Kxd3 can be met by its promotion. But White goes back: 2.Kd1. White may seem to have wasted two moves to no purpose, but he is one



square nearer to the black pawn, and the journey back to guard his own pawn will be one move shorter. Hence 3-6.Kxb4, and if Black still plays to e2 White will play 7.Kc3 and even win. Black must hold back, ready to meet Kxd3 by ...Kd5 and settle for the draw.'

**[Editor's note]** We apologise that in the printed version of our October issue the solution given was for the wrong month's study. It should have been:

(Michelet)

**1.Rxa3 Qxa3 2.Kg6 Qe7 3.Rxh4+ Kg8 4.Rh8+ Kxh8 5.Qa1+ Kg8 6.Qa8+ Qf8 7.Qa2+ Kh8** Now White is ready to climb the ladder for the first time. **8.Qb2+ 9.Qb3+ 10.Qc3+ 11.Qc4+ 12.Qd4+ 13.Qxd7 Rh1 14.Qd5+ Kh8 15.Qxh1+ Nh2** And now the second time. **16.Qa1+ 17.Qa2+ 18.Qb2+ 19.Qb3+ 20.Qc3+ 21.Qc4+ 22.Qd4+ 23.Qd5+ 24.Qe5+ 25.Qe6+ 26.Qh3+ Qh6+ 27.Qxh6+ Kg8 28.Qg7.**

Stairway to heaven? The ladders are of course the major attraction, but the introduction is striking too - packed with surprise moves.

The second time on the ladder, if White again plays Qd7, Black has a nasty counter: 23.Qd7? Qf6+ 24.Kxf6 f1Q+ 25.Kg6 and 25...Qa6+ or 25...Qb1+

This study is beyond the ability of my computer to check; I hope it's sound, but if any reader finds a defect, please let me know.



## New books from Elk and Ruby

- Masterpieces and Dramas of the Soviet Championships: Volume III (1948-1953) by *Sergey Voronkov*
- The Pawn Study Composer's Manual by *Mikhail Zinar*
- 101 Endgame Masterclasses: Rooks and Material Imbalances by *Alexander Galkin*
- Mate Threats and Defense - 1000 Tactical Examples by *Jakov Geller*







Available in the UK  
from Chess & Bridge  
and on Amazon



**Elk and Ruby**  
www.elkandruby.com

## EVENTS CALENDAR

The full events calendar is updated daily, and can be found at <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/event-calendar/>

<b>Week beginning 27<sup>th</sup> November</b>	
27 November	National Online School Chess League
28 November	4th 4NCL Online Autumn Congress
28 November	London Finchley Road 3+2 FIDE Blitz at the Cumberland Lawn
29 November	Coulsdon Chess Daytime Chess, Coulsdon
30 November – 5 December	Junior 4NCL Online Season 8
1 – 10 December	London Chess Classic, London
2 – 3 December	5th Twickenham Junior Chess Congress
2 December	NSPCA Grand Prix, Nottingham
2 December	Southall Junior LJCC Qualifier
2 December	Chess Training - adults only, Newcastle
2 December	Southall Junior LJCC Qualifier
2 December	Twickenham Junior Chess Congress
3 December	2023 Warwickshire Junior Championship
3 December	Ealing FIDE Rapidplay
3 December	Kent Junior Chess Association - GP3 & LJCC qualifier
3 December	North London Grand Prix 3
3 December	7th Plymouth Rapidplay 2023
3 December	Bolton Rapidplay
3 December	ECF Secondary Schools Blitz Tournament, Harrow
3 December	Elstree Children's Chess Tournament
<b>Week beginning 4<sup>th</sup> December</b>	
5 December	Chessengland.com Grandmasters Festival, London
5 December	4NCL Online Season 8
5 December	Uxbridge Advanced Chess Lessons
6 December	Coulsdon Chess Daytime Chess, Coulsdon
8 December	2nd Ribble Weekend Congress
8 December	Secondary School Chess Lichess Battle
9 – 10 December	Southall FIDE Congress
9 December	Maidenhead Junior Tournament
10 December	Lincoln Rapidplay, Lincoln
10 December	Wey Valley Surrey Christmas and LJCC Qualifier
10 December	5th Bristol League Open Blitz Championship
<b>Week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> December</b>	
11 December	National Online School Chess League
12 December	4NCL Online Season 8
13 December	Coulsdon Chess Daytime Chess, Coulsdon
14 December	Junior 4NCL Online Season 8
16 December	London Junior Chess Championships
16 – 17 December	15th Northwick Park Five Round Congress, London
16 December	Coulsdon Chess Junior Grand Prix Autumn Term
16 December	Sandwich FIDE Rapidplay
16-17 December	Wimbledon FIDE Congress - King's College
<b>Week beginning 18<sup>th</sup> December</b>	
18 – 21 December	Christmas Brain Camp, Kingston
19 December	4NCL Online Season 8
20 December	Beckenham FIDE Rated Club Championship