

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – October 2007

Chairman's Chatter

This "**NEW ENGLANDER**" aims to get the Club Championship on the road. It contains the contact details for all members (actual and potential) so we can communicate and ensure that games are played on the scheduled night or re-arranged by mutual consent. If games are allowed to drift, it affects all the club and not just yourself so please support this competition throughout the season.

Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

The club championship preliminary rounds are scheduled for **17th and 24 October** with reserve nights in November when one or other of the teams has a home fixture.

Round 1 draw for 17th October :-

| | | |
|---------------|-----|---------------|
| Norman | v | Francis |
| Mahmoud | v | Paul |
| Mike | v | Chris Ross |
| Chris Collins | v | Alan |
| John | v | Chris Russell |
| Ron | v | Steve |
| Harry | bye | |

Please confirm arrangements with your opponent.

Result Round-up

St Neots were unable to field a team for the Fenland Knock-out first round on 26th October.

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Match of the Month

One of the great features of chess is that you can replay games in exact detail and appreciate past brilliancies. Equally, you can reminisce about the opportunities you missed or swindles you have perpetrated. This month, Chris Russell recounts some of his adventures so if the thought of Chris in his heyday is not too terrifying, read on...

What I want to write about is the richness of the opportunities that the chessboard can offer, even after an apparently critical blunder. If there is one thing that I have learned over the years, it is that chess is a war, pure and simple and you will never win a war by giving up! Okay then, hopefully a couple of examples will show you what I mean.

Take this position from a game I played in 1989. As White, I have built up a good position and have a strong advantage after fxc5, but I am also dreadfully short of time with only 20 minutes to play another 22 moves.



18 Qh5+ g6
19 Qh6??

I suddenly realised that the intended Qg7 is covered by

19 ... Nf5!

Really tragic! In spite of the fact that I am going to lose a whole queen, the game is not entirely dead, although Black should win from here. Still, it does not take too much imagination to spot that after

20 fxc5 Nxh6
21 gxf6

I have two immensely strong joined pawns on the 6th rank and it is my opponent's turn to have to think. Watching players proposed 22 ... Nf5 after the game but this actually ends in a draw by repetition after 23 Bg5! if Black tries to retain the queen e.g. 22 ... Qc8 23 f7+ Kf8 24 Rxf5 gxf5 25 Bh6+ Ke7 26 Bg5+ Kf8. I think that the best move here is hard to find.

According to Fritz, the best move is 21...Bg8! Black neutralises the dangerous pawns for the loss of a minor piece. After 22 Bxh6 Bxe6! (not 22 ... Rxb6 23 e7 Qd7 24 f7+ Bxf7 25 Bxf7+ Kxe7 26 Bd5! Re8 (best) 27 Rf7+ Kd8 28 Rxd7+ Kxd7 29 Bf3, after which White still has chances to save the game) 23 f7+ Bxf7 24 Rae1+ Kd7 25 Rxf7+ Kc6 and White's attack has petered out. And if 22 Bf5 Nf7 wins by blockading the pawn advance.

After thinking for some while and running his own clock down, my opponent tried

21 ... Nf7?!

trying to neutralise the troublesome pawns by doubling them. Fritz rated this marginally third best, after 21 ... g5. The game continued

22 exf7+ Kd7

Not 22 ... Kf8?? 23 Bh6++

23 Bg5?!

Fritz likes 23 Bh6 better.

24 ... Rf8?

A mistake but by now, we are both short of time.

25 Rae1 Kc8?

Again, Kc6 is better.

26 Re7

intending to smash through with 27 Rfe1 and under time pressure himself, Black resorted to desperation measures to keep my clock ticking...

26 ... Rxf7??

27 Bxf7 c6

28 Re8

At this point, I had a full 2 minutes to make 12 more moves and though my opponent tried to run me against the clock for a few moves more, with his position hopeless, he resigned.

A game with lot of mistakes, you may say – and that is the point! When a position becomes as complex as that, the average club player cannot expect to see everything, especially with only a few minutes left. But by taking the battle to my opponent, I was able to put him under enough pressure to get a result.

Another equally dramatic example is from an internet game I played about 2 years ago. With White, I carelessly dropped a pawn in the opening...

1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 a6 6 Be2 b5 7 a3 Bb7 8 Bg5?

This is a complete lemon! I was intending to play f3 first but for some reason, I swapped the move order completely missing

8 ... Nxe4

9 Nxe4 Bxe4 (see position)

Now I am just a pawn down and really annoyed with myself! Once again, the position gives me a chance to redeem myself!

10 0-0 Qc7

Fritz recommends h6 but Black decides to try and relieve the pin on his e pawn without disturbing the kingside pawns. Logical enough, if you do not know what is to come...



11 Rc1 e5

intending to drive the knight away first but because Black has to waste a tempo to capture, I have an opportunity to sacrifice properly this time!

12 c4!? exd4?!

Black took a long time over this capture - clearly uncomfortable. And with good reason – now

13 cxb5

leaves Black no good square for his queen...

13 ... Qb7?!

If 13 ... Qd7 14 Qxd4 Bf5 15 Bf3

14 bxa6 Qd7

15 Qxd4! Bf5

If 15 ... f5 16 Bh5+

16 Qd5! Nc6

17 Bb5

and there is no good answer to Bxc6, so Black resigned.

This is probably one of my better attacking games, and yet it all started from a blunder! Which was what I was trying to say all along – chess is so difficult that even masters make mistakes. Remember - *“It ain’t over till the fat lady sings”*