

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – March 2008

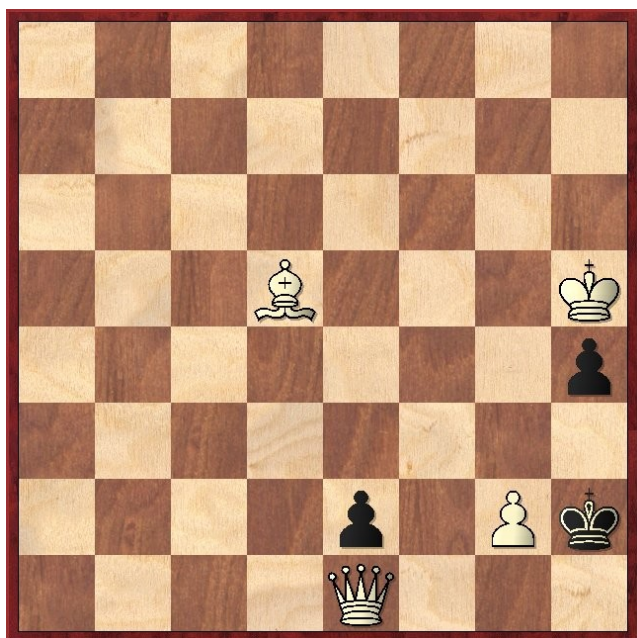
Chairman's Chatter

This issue of "NEW ENGLANDER" reports a good number of results. But I want more! The club championship is now approaching the halfway stage but from the cross-tables, we are falling behind the pace. I must encourage you all to arrange any outstanding games. There are some free evenings coming (e.g. 27th February) so get playing!

Paul Hanks

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Result Round-up

New England A		Buckden A	
C Ross	½	M Thornton	½
F Bowers	½	P Barkas	½
P Hanks	½	C Norton	½
P Turp	1	T Hazel	0
R Jones	1	Default	0

Peterborough A		New England A	
A Timoshenko	½	C Ross	½
P Walker	1	F Bowers	0
R Ilett	½	P Turp	½
A Summers	½	R Jones	½
M Connolly	½	J Osborne	½

New England A		St Neots	
C Ross	½	B Coop	½
F Bowers	½	C Hemming	½
P Turp	½	R Gompolman	½
R Jones	½	J Dunn	½
J Osborne	½	M Pope	½

New England B		Buckden B	
S Caraway	1	C Hamilton	0
A Brookbanks	0	C Money	1
H Currie	0	A Young	1
S Walker	0	B Taylor	1

Club championship

Round 3		Date : 30 th January	
M Tarabad	P	M Ingram	P
C Russell	P	A Brookbanks	P
S Caraway	0	N Wedley	1
S Walker	1	H Currie	0

Division 1

	C R	F B	R J	J O	C C	P H	Total
Chris Ross	X		1				1/1
Francis Bowers		X			1 ½		1½/2
Ron Jones	0		X				0/1
John Osborne				X	0		0/1
Chris Collins		0			X		0/1
Paul Hanks		½	1		X		1½/2

Division 2

	N W	M I	H C	C R	M T	A B	S C	S W	Total
Norman Wedley	X		0			1	1		2/3
Mike Ingram		X	1						1/1
Harry Currie	1	0	X					0	1/3
Chris Russell				X				1	1/1
Mahmoud Tarabad					X		0		0/1
Alan Brookbanks	0					X		1	1/2
Sam Caraway	0				1		X		1/2
Steve Walker			1	0		0		X	1/3

Match of the Month

Ron Jones was kind enough to forward this game for inclusion in this month's newsletter. I include some comments in italics.

R Jones v M Stott
November 2006

1	d4	Nf6
2	Nf3	c5
3	d5	e6

Heading for a Benoni structure. *The unbalanced positions that arise from this opening made it a firm favourite with attacking players in the '70s. It is seen less often these days but Topalov still uses it occasionally. Obviously, he will be following the present game with interest.*

4	c4	exd5
5	cxd5	d6
6	Nc3	g6
7	e4	Bg7

Modern games tend to interject 7 ... a6 at this point to limit White's play and the reply is frequently 8 h3 for similar reasons. It just shows how negative some opening theory has become. In the good old days, White would have chosen a different move order and would have advanced f2-f4 instead of developing the Nf3.

8	Bb5+	Nbd7
9	Bf4	Qe7
10	0-0	

Surprisingly, we are still following a grandmaster game. In this case, it is Gligoric v Gurevich, New York 1988 which continued 10 ... 0-0 11 Re1 Ng4.

10	...	a6
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Here, I didn't want to lose time with 10 Ba4 b5, so

11	Bd3	b5
12	e5	

Even though Black has not yet castled, this is premature and leaves me with an isolated queen pawn. I missed 12 Bxd6 Qxd6 13 e5 which could also have been played on the previous move. *If White had played the variation with f2-f4 (see note to move 7), this advance would give a very strong attack.*

12	...	dxе5
13	Nxe5	Nxe5
14	Bxe5	

14 d6 is better. 14 ... Qxd6 fails to 15 Bxb5+ with a discovered attack on Black's queen. *Black can continue 15 ... Ke7 16 Bxe5 Qxd1 17 Raxd1 axb5 18 Rfe1 Be6 19 Bd6+ Ke8 20 Nxb5 with great complications.*

14	...	0-0
15	Re1	Bb7

Now the pressure mounts on the isolated pawn. How to defend it?

16	Qf3	Qd8
17	Bxf6	

It looks fairly drastic to give up the bishop pair like this. 17 Rad1 also defends the d pawn but you have to be able to analyse some complex lines e.g. 17 ... Nxd5 18 Bxg7 Nxc3 (18 ... Kxg7 19 Be4) 19 Qxb7 Nxd1 20 Bxf8 Nxb2 21 Be7 or 17 ... Bxd5 18 Be4 Nxe4 19 Rxd5 Ng5 20 Qd1 Qb6 21 Bxg7 Kxg7 22 Rxxg5 etc.

17	...	Bxf6
18	Be4	b4

The position is better for Black. He has the two bishops and both are well placed.

19	Na4	Bd4
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Fortunately, I saw that Black now threatens f5 forcing the e4 bishop to leave its defence of the d5 pawn and the d4 bishop stops White's rooks defending the pawn from the rear.

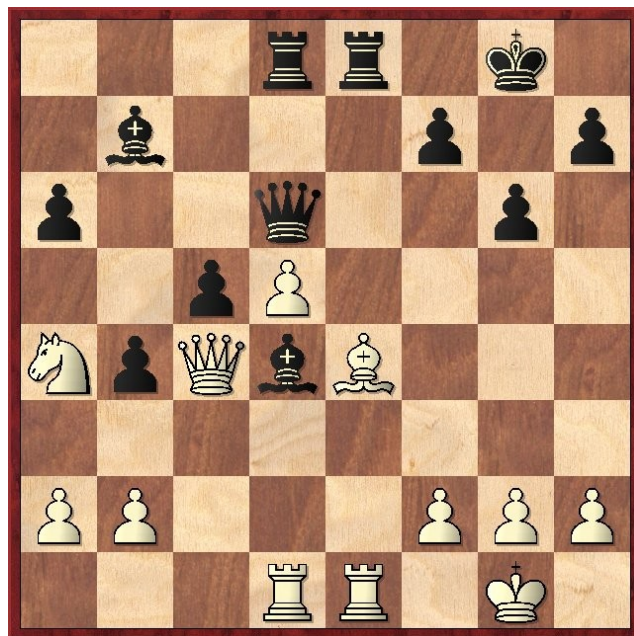
20	Qb3	
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Now if the f7 pawn moves, White has 21 d6 with a discovered check and a discovered attack against the bishop on b7.

20	...	Qf6
21	Qf3	Qd6
22	Qb3	Rad8
23	Rad1	

The d5 pawn could have been captured 23 ... Bxd5 24 Bxd5 Qxd5 25 Qxd5 Rxd5 despite the tactic 26 Nxc5 due to 26 ... Bxf2+ 27 Kxf2 Rxc5. Black has no need to hurry.

23	...	Rfe8
24	Qc4	



At this stage I was expecting Black to take the d5 pawn and exchange the white-square bishops and the queens, ending up a solid pawn to the good with a clearly winning position. However,

24	...	Rxe4??
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Black attempts to liquidate and get a pair of rooks off the board as well. He thought the sacrifice of the exchange would be temporary but there is a flaw.

25	Rxe4	Bxd5
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Forking White's queen and rook but after

26 R(4)xd4

Black's bishop is pinned.

26 ... cxd4
27 Qxd4

Threatening 28 Nb6.

27 ... Bc6

Black could lay a trap by 27 ... Re8 taking advantage of back rank mate threats. If White continued 28 Nb6, Black can break the pin with 28 ... Qe7. The text move leaves Black with a hopeless endgame.

28 Qxd6 Rxd6
29 Rxd6 Bxa4
30 Rxa6 Bc2
31 Rb6 b3
32 a4 1-0

Diary Dates

March 19th was scheduled for the challenge match but arrangements are not progressing swiftly. Stevenage eventually declined because they also play on Wednesdays and need their evenings for their other competitions. They may be interested in a pre-season friendly so the effort may not have been wasted. As a result, I may have to swap the challenge match and the "Problem Night" scheduled for 9th April to give more time to finalise the fixture.

Website to Watch

Late February is the time for the elite Linares tournament with most of the top 10 graded players competing. For the last two years, the expense has been split with a venue in Mexico and the leg in Morelia has been taking place over the period February 15th – 23rd. Unfortunately, the time zone difference has meant that for fans in the UK, the live games have been played late at night. From 28th February until 7th March, the contest moves to Spain and hopefully, the times will be more convenient. See

www.ajedrezmorelialinaires.com.mx/english/index.htm

Eye-Opener

When trying to obtain an early tactical advantage, the weakness of the f7 square in the initial position is an obvious thing to try to exploit. Some years ago, I nearly ran into an embarrassing situation as follows :

K Hogan v P Hanks

1 e4 Nf6 2 Nc3 e5 3 Bc4 Nxe4 4 Bxf7+ Kxf7 5 Nxe4 d5 6 Qf3+ Kg8

White now surprised me with

7 Ng5

when the threat of 8 Qf7# cannot be met with 7 ... Qe7, 7 ... Qf6 or 7 ... Qxg5 due to 8 Qxd5+. I was fortunate still to have the defence

7 ... Qd7

I later learned that this trick is standard in some variations of the Scotch Game and Two Knights Defence e.g.

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Bc4 Nf6 5 e5 Ng4 6 Bxf7+ Kxf7 7 Ng5+ Kg8 8 Qxg4

The immediate 8 Qf3 sadly allows 8 ... Bb4+ which frees the f8 square and removes Qd5+ as a threat. Now, the plausible

8 ... d6

is met by

9 Qf3

Note how some control of d5 managed to save Black in the first example but he is helpless here. It is also worth remarking that White still has to play with care to realise the advantage. 9 ... Qe8 10 Qd5+ Be6 11 Qxe6+ is the simplest continuation. 11 Nxe6 looks tempting but it runs into 11 ... Nb4 12 Qb3 (12 Qc4 d5) Nxc2+ though White should still win.

You may think this analysis is only suitable for beginners as you are unlikely to see it at grandmaster level. Rafael Vaganian was a world championship candidate in the eighties and in the game below, he succumbs in just 12 moves to an attack against f7. Who better to administer the lesson than Mikhail Tal!

M Tal v R Vaganian

Dubna, 1973

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nc6 4 Ngf3 Nf6 5 e5 Nd7 6 Nb3 f6 7 Bb5 fxe5 8 dxe5 Nc5 9 Ng5

The assault begins. At this stage it does not look dangerous and indeed Black should be able to defend comfortably e.g. 9 ... Nxb3. The problem is that Black does not realise that the support of Nc5 by Bf8 can be cut off by the congestion around the black king when defending f7.

9 --- Bd7

White now removes the defence of f7 by Nxe5

10 Bxc6 bxc6



11 Qh5+ g6
12 Qf3 1-0

White's 11th move allows the continuation 12 ... Qe7 13 Nxc5 Qxc5 14 Qf7+ Kd8 15 Qf6+