

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – May 2011

Chairman's Chatter

It's supposed to be nearing the end of the season! But look how congested the Diary Dates section is with imminent events. Please enter the various competitions and go out with a bang.

Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

The closing date for the club championship is 31st May so there is little time to squeeze in your final rounds. Please take account of the internal events : the Handicap Competition takes place on 4th May and the postponed Quickplay will be on 25th May.

The Cambridgeshire County Chess Association is arranging its Rapidplay on 8th May at PSL Club, Peterborough and the end-of-season Jamboree will be at Godmanchester Comrades Club on 12th May.

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution

Position: 6r1/6p1/4N2B/4N1R1/8/4k2K/1Q6/8

1 Qa1 Ke4 2 Qd4# [1 ... K other 2 Rg2#; 1 ... other 2 Qe1#]

Website to Watch

The FIDE World Championship reaches its next stage with a series of candidate matches in Kazan from 3rd to 27th May. The initial draw is Topolov v Kamsky, Kramnik v Radjabov, Aronian v Grischuk and Gelfand v Mamedyarov with two further knock-out rounds to follow (see <http://kazan2011.fide.com>).

Website : www.newenglandchess.org.uk

Result Round-up

Club Championship : at 27/04/11

Division One	CR	SC	FB	PT	PH	Total
C Ross	X	1 1	½ 1	1 1	1 ½	7 / 8
S Caraway	0 0	X	½ 0	½ 0	P 1	2 / 7
F Bowers	0 ½	1 ½	X	½ ½	1 0	4 / 8
P Turp	0 0	1 ½	½ ½	X	0	2½ / 7
P Hanks	½ 0	0 P	1 0		1 X	2½ / 6

Division Two	RJ	CR	AB	DL	NW	SW	Total
R Jones	X	2	½ 1		1 1 1	1 ½	8 / 9
C Russell	0	X	1		2		3 / 6
A Brookbanks	0 ½	1	X	1	½ 1	1	5 / 8
D Lane	0			0 X	1 0	1 1	3 / 6
N Wedley	0 0	0	0 ½	1 0	X	0 ½	2 / 10
S Walker	½ 0		0	0 0	½ 1	X	2 / 7

Division Three	MT	DS	KT	HC	SS	PS	Total
M Tarabad	X			1 0 0		0	1 / 4
D Sivell		X				0	0 / 1
K Talnikar			X				0 / 0
H Currie	1 0			X	0 0	0 0	1 / 6
S Sitaram		1		1 1	X	1 0	4 / 5
P Spencer	1		1	1 1 1	0	X	4 / 5

Cambridgeshire County Chess Leagues

Cambridge A	2	New England A	3
P Fallon	0	C Ross	1
O Bay-Petersen	0	F Bowers	1
C Davison	1	S Caraway	0
P Ribbands	0	P Hanks	1
G Alcock	1	P Turp	0

New England B	2	Warboys B	2
I Ramdewar	0	J Beck	1
R Jones	1	M Onyons	0
D Lane	1	D Wardir	0
M Tarabad	0	K Harbour	1

New England B	3	Buckden A	1
R Jones	1	S Foster	0
A Brookbanks	1	Default	0
M Tarabad	0	C Emery	1
S Sitaram	1	Default	0

Team 550 Competition

New England 1	1½	Warboys N	2½
P Hanks	0	B Duff	1
D Lane	0	R Mann	1
S Walker	½	M Onyons	½
P Spencer	1	K Harbour	0

Match of the Month

Last month, the newsletter poked some gentle fun at Chris Ross's skill at annotation following some comments of his about the game in the February newsletter. As luck would have it, the same opponents met again recently and in the same spirit of playfulness, Chris demanded the right to reply. Below, he turns a critical eye on the return game and casts his alternative vote when the match and league situation demanded a first-past-the-post result.

Patrick Ribbands v Paul Hanks

Cambridge A v New England A, 13.04.11

1	c4	e5
2	Nc3	Nc6
3	g3	d6
4	Bg2	Be6

If Black intends an aggressive King's Indian type set-up against the English, he may do best to play 4 ... f5 immediately signalling his intent. The development of the light-squared bishop can be delayed, to resist any pressure that can be brought on the b7 square. Although the move played gains a tempo, White defends the c4 square easily enough with d2-d3. With that having been protected, White always has the annoying tactic b2-b4, when a capture by the knight on c6 would allow Bxb7 opening up that lovely bishop on g2. A small point but White wants to expand on the queenside as an integral part of his game plan. Why then, allow him to have free tactics with an advance of the b pawn?

The textbook move is perfectly acceptable but rapid kingside development is preferable. So, Black should try f5, g6, Bg7 and then, Nf6 with h6 (to protect the g5 square if White plays Nf3) and 0-0. Black has a comfortable and more active position on the kingside.

5	d3	Nf6
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Going somewhat against the point of the set-up. Black should be aiming for a King's Indian set-up, where he can get an f7-f5 in for free without having to manoeuvre his King's knight to d7 or e8 or h5... However, with Black having played an early Be6, the b2-b4 thrust becomes annoying. Here is an example:

5 ... f5 6 b4 Qd7 7 b5 Nd8 8 a4 Nf6 9 Qb3 Be7 10 a5 Rb8 11 f4 0-0 12 Nf3 Nf7 13 0-0 Rfe8 14 Nd5 c6 15 Nxe7+ Qxe7 16 fxe5 dxe5 17 Ba3 Qd7 18 bxc6 bxc6 19 Qc3 Qc7 20 Bc5 where Black had easily reached equality in J Sunye Neto (2470) v V Kupreichik (2480), Barcelona 1984 [1/2-1/2 (43)]

6	e4?!
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Structurally, rather dubious. White is intent on clamping down on the d5 square. But this not need

worry him too much, as Black would spend a lot of time making a central break there. If White really wants to blockade, then the immediate 6 Nd5 has to be the only option.

White is somewhat missing the point of the intended target square, that being the b7 weak point. One of the purposes of fianchettoing the light-squared bishop on g2 is to exert pressure down the long diagonal. Therefore, Nd5 helps a future b2-b4, although there is an argument for the immediate 6 b4!? in the first place due to the tactic already mentioned.

6	...	Qd7
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Black is rushing to exert pressure on the light-squares, but there is a subtle common move-order feature that needs to be kept in mind. As the current position shows, Be6-h3 is not possible as the white king's knight has not been developed. In that sense, the black queen's development to d7 may well be redundant if that knight on g1 never moves and White, say, goes hacking with h2-h4. In that regard then, Black should delay the queen's development to d7 until Bh3 becomes a potential threat, thereby forcing White to deal with the positional threat either by h2-h3 or h2-h4. In either case, Black has developed and forced White to waste a tempo by defending against the positional threat of Bh3.

Black, therefore, does best to develop his kingside and solve the problem of his king's bishop.

Now, in many similar Botvinnik set-ups against the English, Black has played g7-g6, instead of the awkward development move Nf6. Black would now play Bg7 or Nge7 and wait for White to commit himself on the kingside with a knight development. So, here 6 ... g6 or 6 ... Be7 is the most accurate. Here are some examples:

6 ... g6 7 Nge2 Qd7 8 h3 Bg7 9 Nd5 Ne7 10 Bh6 0-0 11. Nxf6+ Bxf6 12 Bxf8 Rxf8 13 Qd2 c6 14 h4 d5 15 Rc1 dxc4 16 dxc4 Qxd2+ 17 Kxd2 c5 18 Kc3 Nc6 19 Rcd1 Bd8 20 b3 Ba5+ 21 Kb2 D D'Israel (2240) v C Sales, Brasilia 1999 [1/2-1/2]

6 ... Be7 7 Nge2 Qd7 8 h3 0-0 9 Be3 Ne8 10 f4 f5 11 exf5 Bxf5 12 Nd5 Nf6 13 g4 exf4 14 Nexf4 Be6 15 Nxf6+ Rxf6 16 g5 Rf5 17 Be4 Re5 18 Nxe6 Qxe6 19 Qd2 Bxg5 20 Bxg5 Rxe4+ 21 dxe4 R Heine (2029) v M Kordel (1965), Germany 2006 [1/2-1/2]

7	Nd5	Nd4?!
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Another slightly awkward move to have to make. White's last has demonstrated the obscure development placement of the black king's knight. Instinct cries out for development with 7 ... Be7 as White would be reluctant to exchange the knight in its strong outpost for a relatively poor, blocked-in bishop. If Black wants to preserve the bishop, a future Bd8 is possible. The text-move is provocative and tempts White into making a strategically ambitious move, which is hard to assess.

8	Bg5
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White had to accept the challenge and weaken the black pawn structure. 8 Nxf6+ gxf6 9 Nf3 0-0-0 is

unclear, but must be OK for White. White can himself escape the king to the queenside if things become too dangerous for him on the kingside, but with the doubled f pawns, Black has no natural pawn break. White can take on d4 and leave the black pawn mass ruptured and very ugly indeed. As long as the white king does not come under direct fire immediately through the centre, White has to be standing better there.

8 ... Nxd5

Making life for the light-squared bishop rather awkward. Again, simple development should be absolutely fine for Black. 8 ... Be7 9 Nxe7 Qxe7 10 h3 is at least equal for Black as the pin on the f6 knight cannot be maintained and the knight on d4 is keeping things together.

9 cxd5 Bg4
10 f3 Bh5
11 Bh3?!

Activating the bishop, but neglecting development. Indeed, this only drives the black queen to a more active square. Fundamentally, White needs to rid himself of that annoying knight on d4, which is tactically keeping Black ahead. With that knight's disappearance, White can play Ne2 and 0-0 in relative comfort. 11 Be3 c5 12 Bxd4 cxd4 and the question arises as to whether White has a "good knight v bad bishop" game, where the bishop on e7 is buried.

11 ... Qb5

Bringing the black queen to exert pressure on the white weaknesses. Due to his lack of development, White is probably struggling now. b2, d3 and now, f3 have become very weak and not all of the positional weaknesses can be defended simultaneously.

12 b3

White has to resort to tactics to solve his development problems. The black queen is active and needs to be driven away from its dominating square by tactical means. The b2 pawn, as in many openings, can be poisonous. 12 a4 is a tactical shot that drives the queen to a dark square and ensures that the a2 pawn is not vulnerable after any Qxb2 pawn grabs. The immediate 12 ... Qxb2? allows 13 Rb1 when b7 is targeted. 13 ... Nc2?? loses to 14 Kd2! and any other black queen move allows Rxb7 with counter play. So, 12 ... Qc5 13 Rc1 Qb6 is clearly better for Black, but White is not out of it entirely.

12 ... h6

Forcing the bishop back to a square where it wants to go. Unless P-R3 moves have a specific strategic purpose, they should be avoided! Black ought to open the centre and rid himself of the backward c pawn. 12 ... c6 is the only logical move in the position as it is active and gets on with Black's strategy. The bishop on g5 is biting on thin air and need not be pestered. After 12 ... c6, White has a lot of problems to solve.

13 Be3 Be7

Strangely enough, Black should concentrate on the positional value of his knight on d4 here and not so

worry about development! The positional threat of capturing on d4 needs to be dealt with. Having driven the dark-squared bishop back to e3, Black now needs to waste time in dealing with the prospect of the knight's capture.

14 Rc1

A logical move, but White should be thinking about the long term plan now. The knight on d4 is simply too dominating. Its capture has to be the critical strategic question. 14 Bxd4 Qb4+ 15 Kf1 Qxd4 [15 ... exd4 16 Rc1 is not so good for Black] and Black has a lot of control of the dark squares, but it is going to take a long time before his bishop comes to life.

14 ... c5

Black misses the chance to rid himself off his worst piece! 14 ... Bg5 15 Bxg5 hxg5 16 Kf1 is very miserable for White. Note that Rxc7 is never a threat due to a Qa5+ tactic picking it off.

15 dxc6 Nxc6

Inconsistent. Black needs to control the centre and maintain that knight on d4. If White wishes to rid himself of it, he will have to give up his precious dark-squared bishop. 15 ... bxc6 16 Bxd4 exd4 17 Qc2 is just better for Black.

16 Kf2?

A miserable move to have to make and one that a player should know is wrong instinctively. With the release of the pressure on f3, White has to look to develop his knight on g1 as fast as possible. Naturally, the tactics have to be calculated carefully but due to Black not having castled, White can just about get away with it.

16 Ne2 Bxf3 17 Nc3 Bxd1 18 Nxb5 and White wins material due to Nc7+ tactics. If this variation works, then White should be able to play Nc3 next move, defending the f3 square in the process, or could simply castle and if permitted, bring the king's knight via c3 into d5 (again, reason enough why 15 ... bxc6 had to be better.)

16 ... 0-0
17 Ne2 Nb4

Targeting the weak light-squares. Is there a slightly more subtle route to go via 17 ... Qa6 with ideas of a break with d6-d5 and then Nb4 ideas? The black queen is going to be hit in any case and its best square seems to be a6, so why not put it there straight away?

18 Rc4

White had to start getting very desperate now. The d3 pawn had to drop and it is tactics again that have to salvage White's horrible position. 18 Nc3 Qa6 is the cool response as 18 ... Nxd3+ 19 Kg1 Qa6 20 Bf1 does not help Black as the knight on d3 is falling. Then 19 Bf1 is cringe-worthy but a steal on a2 is fraught with danger due to Ra1 pins after Nxa2 or Qxa2 and Ra1 traps.

18 ... Nxa2

A pawn grab which complicates matters considerably. Black should be striving for a break d6-d5 as fast as possible but it's getting complicated. The knight on a2 can become very short of squares.

19 Bd2?

As this does not trap the knight, there is no reason why the dark squares around the white king should be left any weaker than they are already. 19 Ra4 certainly does put the question to the knight on a2 and finding the tactics to save it would have been challenging for Black. 19 Ra4 Nb4 20 Nc3 would force Black to find 20 ... Qc6 21 Rxb4 Qxc3 22 Qd2 when White may hope to hold.

19 ... a5
20 Qb1 Nb4

Black can distract White here and should certainly do so by the move 20 ... d5, to ensure that he can recapture on b4 with the bishop. The pawn itself does not matter at all, but the opening up of the dark-squared bishop on e7 is essential. Black should be able to gather up the white d pawns easily enough and ought not be flustered by the material invested.

21 Rhc1

White should definitely take the opportunity to capture on b4 and render Black's extra pawn a doubled one. It is not that secure and would be difficult to defend.

21 Bxb4 axb4 22 d4 is an ambitious try and Black might have annoying counter-breaks with 22 ... d5 but at least things are clearing up a bit for White. 22 d4 is obviously not strictly necessary.



21 ... Bd8

Retreating, when only forwards will now do. When on top, maintain the initiative and stride forwards and not seek tactics that involve retreats to the back-rank. 21 ... d5 is the only move on the board to be considered. The breaking up of the position has to be Black's sole objective, whether it loses a pawn, two, or

not. 21 ... d5 22 Bxb4 Bxb4 23 exd5 is just horrific for White.

22 Nc3

Securing the d5 post. This shows that d5 had to be played at all costs by Black as now White may have hopes of holding, slim as they are.

22 ... Qa6
23 Bd7

Another very obscure move to make and once again, instinct determines that it cannot be strategically correct. Bb5 is never realistically going to trap the black queen and in the mean time, as the bishop is being distracted to the queenside, the vulnerable white king is going to be mowed down relentlessly.

Again, a player has to consider, when facing obscure moves like this, how to react in the most active, energetic way if the immediate tactics (such as Bb5) clearly do not work.

23 ... Bb6+

Putting the bishop on a better square, but not seeking the most active response. White's king is weak and needs to be opened up as fast as possible. The only realistic pawn break now is f7-f5, so that has to be checked out first.

23 ... f5 24 Be6+ Bf7 25 Bxf7+ Rxf7 is just fine for Black as fxe4 is coming very shortly. Now, if White takes this with either e4xf5 or Bxf5, then Bf7 should be good enough to snaffle an exchange on c4 or in the case of e4xf5, a break with d6-d5 seems pretty devastating.

Black need not calculate too far in these type of positions, as the pawn breaks have to be good for him, since the white pieces are so uncoordinated and the white king open to the elements - and the attack!

24 Kg2 Rad8
25 Bf5 Ba7

Since f7-f5 has been thwarted, Black should aim to get the f file open as fast as possible. 25 ... Bg6 26 Bxg6 fxc6 27 Rf1 seems best for Black.

26 Nd5 Nxd5
27 exd5 Qb6
28 Rf1 Qb5
29 Ra4 b6?

Not a move you want to be playing, in all honesty! 29 ... Bb6 is solid and good. The white pawns are so weak that Black should be able to pick them off at will. There is little left for White after 29 ... Bb6 and a resignation cannot be far away. However, with the black dark-squared bishop shut out, White has a chance to go desperation-hacking!

30 Rc4?

30 Rh4! and White is suddenly generating some threats of his own. The black kingside may suddenly become very weak indeed. Now, if 30 ... Bg6 31 d4! Qxd5 32 Bxh6! and White's back in the game, and better probably!

30 ... Qxd5
31 Be4

It's hard to suggest any continuations now. Black's queen is able to scuttle across to the kingside for any defence against a last-minute dirty hack. Once Black is able to re-activate his dark-squared bishop, the writing will be on the wall for White.

31 ... Qe6
32 Bc6

White's position is hopeless. He could resign quite happily now with a clear conscience.

32 ... Bg6

Naturally, 32 ... d5 is more accurate, but no doubt, both players were becoming short of time in the time scramble to reach move 36.

33 Be4 f5

It's rather curious how Black has persistently rejected the d6-d5 thrust throughout the game. Here it just wins material without any fuss. Again, time-pressure must have been a factor.

34 Bc6 d5

At last!

35 Rc3 e4
36 fxe4 fxe4
37 Qe1 Rxf1
38 Kxf1 Qh3+
39 Kg1 b5+
40 Be3 d4
41 Bxe4 Bxe4
42 dxe3 dxe3 **0-1**

The key point to remember from this encounter is that once you have the momentum, you must retain it at all costs and push forwards and onwards, seeking those pawn-breaks, especially through the centre, and maintain the initiative, even at the cost of a pawn, or two!

Chris Ross

Despite winning the game, what have I learned?

In the first instance, look where Chris put in the bulk of his effort. If I had annotated this game, I should have concentrated on giving watertight variations of the attack after move 35. For Chris, this is merely mopping up after obtaining a strategically won position and any reasonable continuation would have sufficed. Chris bared his teeth mostly before move 23 and concentrated on the long term implications of the moves played.

The game demonstrates that Black's pieces do eventually achieve the necessary coordination after the pawn break cleared the centre. Chris sensed this well in advance and had the confidence to let it guide his strategic thinking.

Sadly, this coolness hides considerable tactical mastery. For example, after Chris's suggestion of 18 Nc3, did you spot the variation 18 ... Qxd3 19 Nd5 with a desperado combination against the bishop on e7? Tactical awareness and precision is something we should all aim to improve throughout the game - not only for a sudden gain of material or the final

assault but also to justify strategic breaks (Black's move 12, 21 and 23) or to avoid ugly solutions to positional problems (move 15 and 18). Then, you can focus on positional judgement and consistent planning...

Thanks for the assistance Chris!

Paul Hanks

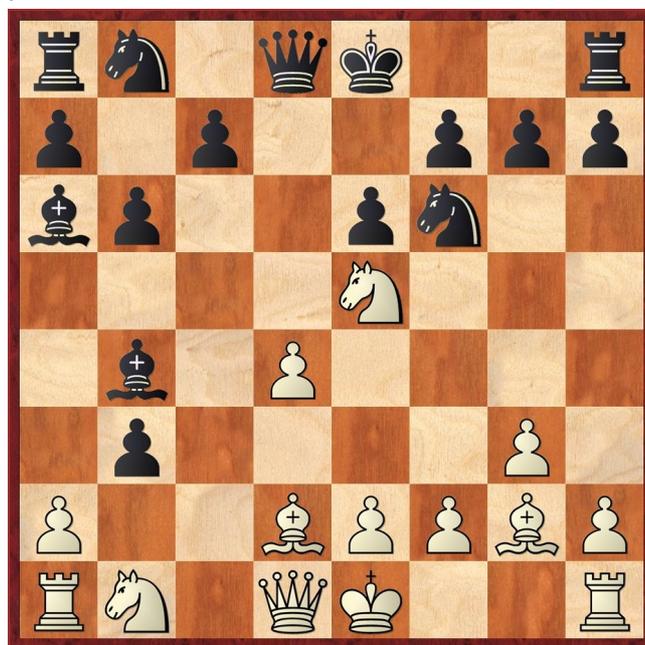
Eye Opener

If threading your way through a tactical maze has to become second nature, here is a test. See if you can predict the moves after Black's eighth and correctly evaluate the resulting positions.

P Petran (2440) v A Adorjan (2525)
 Szirak Szirak, 1985

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 g3 Ba6 5 b3 d5 6 Bg2 dxc4 7 Ne5 Bb4+ 8 Bd2 cxb3

Fritz thinks Black's position is slightly inferior and that this is his best try. The complications certainly give practical chances.



9 Nc6

Simple continuations favour Black e.g.

9 Bxb4 b2 10 Bc3 bxa1Q 11 Bxa1

9 Qxb3 Bxd2+ 10 Nxd2 Qxd4

but

9 axb3 Qxd4 10 Nc6 (again nothing is straightforward because 10 Bxa8 Qxa1 11 Bxb4 Qxe5 is good for Black) 10 ... Qxa1 11 Nxb4 is similar to the game with one queen less!

9 ... b2
10 Nxb4 bxa1Q
11 Bc3 Qxc3+
12 Nxc3 c6 0-1

A prosaic finish but you need to quit when your ahead...