

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – August 2012

Chairman's Chatter

During the summer months, there is no serious club play and we have to turn to other forms of participation. Being an on-line spectator at major events is one alternative but another novel and more nerve-racking way is to act as a player's second. In the background, shady characters work tirelessly to maximise the winning chances of their champion. Who better than Chris Ross to introduce us to this twilight world in this issue?

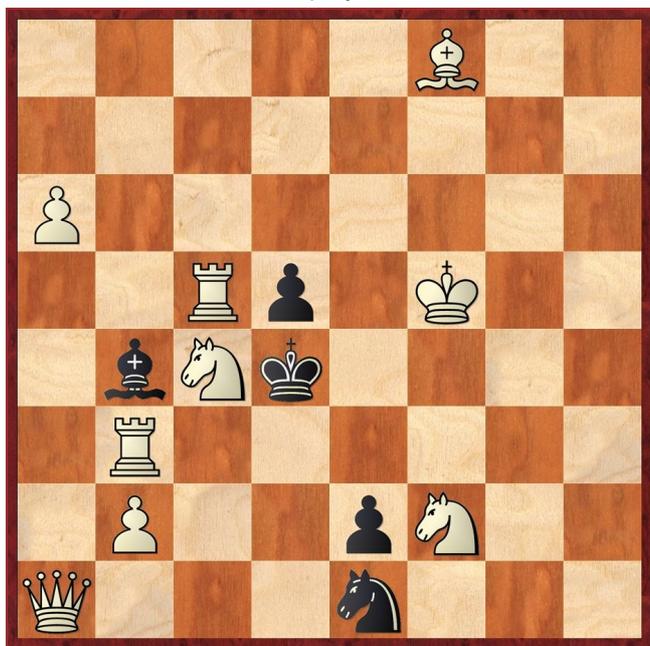
Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

The new season starts with the club AGM at 7-30pm on 5th September. This precedes the Cambridgeshire Executive Committee meeting scheduled for 13th September at which the County events are formalised. Please note that there is a major change in funding for graded games next season which will have an impact on club and league finances. A briefing note will be circulated before the meeting.

Puzzle Problem

This month's problem is the starter puzzle for the Winton Capital Solving Championship and has appeared in a number of newspapers. There are several false trails so find the defences as well as the correct solution. White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution - *L Kubbel*

Position : 5B2/1K6/8/pkp5/8/4Q3/2P5/8

1 Qe3 c4 2 Qe8# [1 ... a4/Kc4 2 Qxc5#; 1 ... Ka4/Kb4 2 Qb3#]

Website to Watch

Olympic Games in London?? Chennai in India is the venue for the 14th Olympiad of the International Braille Chess Association (IBCA). The event runs from 9th to 21st August and the captain of the UK team is our own Chris Ross. Can he cope with the five-star luxury of Le Royal Meridien hotel? The most relevant websites are www.ibca-info.org and www.aicfb.in but I cannot find web pages specifically for the tournament. Perhaps a better try would be to start at <https://sites.google.com/a/aicfb.in/14ibcchessolympiad/home>

Starting 27th August, the IBCA is entering a team in the full Olympiad in Istanbul. This time, it may be the Radisson or Holiday Inn for Chris, the team reserve. If he meets Karjakin or Judit Polgar, you can follow his efforts on <http://istanbul2012.tsf.org.tr/en>.

Window on the Web

www.newinchess.com is a Dutch website with much to interest any chess player. They publish New In Chess magazine, a Yearbook, chess books and ebooks. Thanks go to Paul for bringing this site to my attention following my request for suggestions last month.

There are 8 issues of the magazine per year, with 100 pages in each, containing tournament reports, interviews, openings, endgames and studies, games analysed by the top players, a column by Garry Kasparov and more. The cost of a year's subscription is £64.50. The Yearbook comes out 4 times a year with over a thousand pages of opening ideas for £84.00. There is an on-line shop with many chess books and software items for sale.

The site also contains NICBase, a database of 1.5 million chess games, which Paul used recently to check the score of a game in Informator he was playing through when he discovered White's 8th move was illegal. He found the correct move in NICBase.

There is a menu option linking to an erratum page for their publications. Unfortunately the proof-reading stage before publication often doesn't pick up every error and it's useful to be able to check prime sources.

On a lighter note, last month I referred to a lack of chess on British television. Suddenly there is some, though not very serious. The two episodes of *Coronation Street* on 9 July included a storyline in which Roy and Mary spend some evenings playing chess. They even have the board the right way round and use a clock! There's a reference to *Deep Blue* and some brilliant lines such as (from Mary to Roy's wife Hayley), 'The game is poised, like a rock teetering on a ledge in a Warner Brothers cartoon.'

These episodes can be seen on www.itv.com/itvplayer until 7 August and hopefully the storyline will continue for a while as the scriptwriters seem to be on top form. Anything that gives publicity to chess must be good.

Ron Jones

Match of the Month

Here is an important moment in the BCA Chairman's Cup tournament held in Bournemouth 2012. White is the top seed in the tournament and a recognised tactician. Black is an Olympiad squad player, due to play in Chennai in August 2012. His strength is also his tactics but as an extensive preparation package for the Olympiad, his coaches have begun a long plan of strategic development.

As second to John Gallagher, I prepared him suitably to meet potential lines in the Grand Prix Attack and Closed Sicilian. Theoretical lines were studied and memorised but more importantly, we focussed upon the long-term strategies of the defences. What objectives do the defences attempt to achieve and how does Black go about realising them? All of this deep positional strategy is beautifully demonstrated in this brilliancy prize winning game from round 4, permitting John to take sole lead of the tournament and eventually, the tournament title and trophy.

Stan Lovell v John Gallagher

BCA Chairman's Cup, Bournemouth 13.06.2012

1 e4 c5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 f4 g6

Already, Black indicates that he is not interested in a central struggle. He wishes to secure his kingside, control the all-important f5 square and aim for White's queenside. After all, White has kingside aspirations. Black wishes to play positionally on the queenside and with the fianchetto of his king's bishop, he is focussing on the b2 square. However, the "Dragon" bishop is principally employed as a defensive piece, which will protect the black king and will, ultimately, emerge to aid in the counter-attacking potential of the black forces.

4 Nf3 Bg7 5 Bb5

As with many anti-Sicilian systems, White has a difficult job finding a useful role for the light-squared bishop. There are many similar lines in the Ruy Lopez, Rossolimo Variation of the Sicilian and other such openings. The light-squared bishop is exchanged for a black knight to damage Black's pawn formation, heading for a good knight v bad bishop ending. White would do best to fianchetto on the kingside. Of course, Black was also ready for those Closed Sicilian set-ups and had lines prepared in that event.

5 ... Nd4

Avoiding any structural damage to the pawn formation and initiating one vital strand in the defence. Since Black has played 1 ... c5, the c file is likely to become open and is now the focus of Black's attention. If White wishes to rid himself of the knight on d4, he will either have to exchange it or move the knight on c3,

play c2-c3. This would make a future b7-b5-b4 thrust possible which alongside the Dragon bishop, puts a lot of pressure on White's queenside.

Also, one of White's major attacking plans in this position is to play Qe1/Qh4 and go hacking on the kingside. With the black knight sitting happily on the d4 outpost, the c2 square has become very vulnerable to tactics. It is extraordinarily illustrative how the c2 square becomes the focus for the next 20+ moves.

6 Nxd4

There are many lines here and this position has been played for the past half-century or so. It is considered best for White to castle here, as the exchange on b5 is not desirable for Black. Indeed, the light-squared bishop hanging out on b5 is a tactical liability.

6 ... cxd4

And the c file has become half-open. The concentration of forces down this file, especially on the c2 square, is going to prove very difficult for White. Unless his kingside attack arrives quickly, the long-term positional strain on White will give Black a comfortable game.

7 Ne2 e6

The one tactical ploy for White in these positions is the thrust f4-f5. This removes the annoying blockading pawn on f4 from a dark square and also opens files and diagonals for the white pieces. Black does best to concentrate his pawns to control this thrust. The d4 pawn is also slightly vulnerable but as long as the Dragon bishop protects it, White is always in a slightly cramped position.

Black also should not gain tempi on the light-squared bishop on b5, for due to its loose nature, it is always liable to drop off with some tactical combinations.

8 Ng3

This move is difficult to criticise, as the likes of Sokolov have played it [see below]. The knight is naturally attempting to find a useful square and wishes to aid White in the thrust f4-f5. If White is so set on this, then he ought to do it on move 8. Black should simply ignore it and develop his king's knight, leading to a double-edged game. Black was prepared for this though and there were no concerns in this regard.

The long-term positioning of the knight on g3 has to be under question though, for apart from the duty of aiding a f4-f5 thrust, the knight has no useful purpose on that square.

8 ... Ne7 9 Be2

The first move away from the theoretical positions Black had prepared for. The retreat seems logical enough but is rarely seen. The bishop heads for a seemingly more profitable future on the kingside, which does not actually occur. The retreat to a4 and then b3, to exert pressure along the a2-g8 diagonal is more commonly seen. Note that 9 0-0 can be met with the aggressive 9 ... h5 since Black has refrained from

castling until his positional strategy has been put into place.

9 ... Qb6

Here, Black wanted to develop his queenside pieces before castling. The immediate tactical justification of the move is obvious, since White is not able to castle due to d4-d3 discoveries winning the bishop on e2. The move also has the intention of hindering White's queenside development. Although the reasons are very valid, the queen will have to be relocated, as can soon be seen.

10 d3 d6

Black correctly refrains from lashing out with d7-d5, since White can simply ignore it with e4-e5 if he so wishes. However, more important is that White can recapture on e4 with the d3 pawn at some stage, which is not to Black's advantage. If White were forced to recapture on e4 with a piece, then, indeed, this would be desirable for Black, as then the d5 and f5 squares become available to him. As the text-move proves though, the e5 and f5 squares are duly protected. White's f4-f5 is now very unlikely to occur.

11 0-0 Bd7

Again, Black defers castling. He does not wish to rush into castling while White has a potential kingside hack. Black simply develops and aims his pieces at his positional target - c2. This is excellent control and restraint shown by Black. In comparison, White is now faced with a dilemma, as a premature kingside attack will allow Black to rush his king to the queenside and launch a kingside counter-attack.

12 Rb1

The first clear indication that White is struggling to develop. He does not wish to play b2-b3, as this would weaken the c2 square even more. If White feels the need for a "waiting" move though, the prophylactic Kh1 would be better.

12 ... Rc8

The rook is developed to a half-open file and c2 is pressured a bit more. This is very good piece development, before the issue of the king is resolved.

13 Bf3

White seeks a better diagonal for his bishop. Tactics begin to play a part in the game. If Black is to prevent a f4-f5 thrust by f7-f5 himself [say if White plays g2-g4 and goes for it], then exf5 and Bxb7 has to be considered.

13 ... Qc5

Black frees up the b7 pawn and puts yet more pressure on the target square, c2. The queen has done its job on the b file and not only hits c2, but defends against the f4-f5 thrust. The coordination amongst the black pieces is very instructive.

14 Rf2 0-0

And now, once the white pieces have been forced to very defensive positions [b1, f2, f3], Black castles, as f4-f5 has been successfully neutralised. Black has

already equalised and is gathering a substantial advantage.

15 Qe1 a5

Black correctly advances on the queenside, squeezing down on the white position there. 15 ... b5 would be slightly more accurate, as then b7 will never become a target but the text-move is perfectly acceptable. White now has to prevent a5-a4-a3 which forcing a decision on the b2 pawn and weakening the c2 square even more.

16 f5



The first sign of desperation by White. He is in a cramped position and cannot find a valid plan of action.

16 ... e5

Black takes the positional decision to blockade the centre, with the justified belief that his Dragon bishop will find a better diagonal later once its defensive duties have been concluded. The justification for White was that any captures on f5 would leave the e4 and d5 squares accessible for operation and the b7 pawn weak. This explains why Black would have done best to advance the b pawn instead of the a pawn.

Nevertheless, with 15 ... a5 having been played, Black judges that White's attack is not strong enough and that his own positional strategy is sufficiently solid to withstand any hack on that side. White's options are now limited.

17 a3 Qa7

Relocating the queen to the second rank for defensive purposes in case of any snap-attacks by White. Also, the c file is opened to facilitate the doubling of the rooks. Any b2-b4 pushes are discouraged, since a5xb4, a3xb4 and the white queen may sneak down to a2 and ensnare an unwary white rook. Once again, excellent positional play by Black.

18 Bd1 f6

Snuffing out all the tactical threats that White has. Unless f5-f6 is playable, there is little for White. The Dragon bishop is destined for better things but this can only be seen later. Black has the belief though, the understanding and the prior teaching, that this bishop, ultimately, will find a different diagonal to reap its reward.

19 Bd2 a4

Permanently clamping down on the queenside. More restricting would have been 19... b6 but Black is not worried about the a3-f8 diagonal.

20 Bb4 Qa6

Here Black introduces a new depth to his positional understanding. Since c2 is the focus of his play, he perceives that this weakness will eventually have to advance. When the base of the pawn-chain has to move, he comprehends that d3 becomes the next weak point. So he targets the d3 pawn and makes it difficult to defend before exerting yet more pressure on the fundamental focus point, c2. Deep positional thinking and well executed!

21 Qf1

The first sign that White is struggling for a definite plan. White is beginning to realise the longer-term strategy to Black's play. To advance c2-c3/c4, he first must protect d3. He soon learns though that c2 and d3 cannot be defended with equal intensity. Something will have to give. A better way to defend d3 is 21 Qd2 but that is for another reason...

21 ... Bb5

Black proceeds with his positional play, which can only be applauded. The d3 square has more pressure exerted upon it, putting yet more psychological stress on his opponent. The tactical way to play the position was 21 ... gxf5 22 Nxf5 Bxf5 23 exf5 Bh6 bringing that bishop out to a dominating diagonal. However, Black is content to proceed with his long-term positional plan, which cannot be criticised in the slightest. White is in a difficult position, time trouble and has had a draw offer declined.

22 Qe1

White had to strive for some kind of freedom here, even if it means giving up the c2 pawn and maybe the whole queenside. Going for broke had to be White's policy although Black should have more than enough resources around his king to fend off any last-minute hopes of a hack. 22 fxc6 hxc6 23 Bg4 Rc7 was the only way to play for White.

22 ... Rc6

Doubling on the c file and continuing to batter the c2 square. The position is becoming extremely critical for White.

23 Nf1

White is again struggling for a constructive plan. He may have been considering a kingside pawn storm here, but it would not be in time before an entire collapse of his position. 23 fxc6 hxc6 24 Bg4 Rc7 still has to be his approach.

23 ... Rfc8
24 Ng3 b6

Toying with White! Black reverts to opening up the second rank for the defensive duties of the black queen. However, what he sees now is a neat way in which the heavy pieces can be tripled on the c2 pawn.

25 Qd2 Qb7

Perhaps the slight blemish in Black's play so far. Black was wishing to provoke an advance of the c pawn, but in doing so, he should have made sure that all of his pieces were secure. The only "loose" piece for Black at the moment is the knight on e7. In that regard, 25 ... R8c7 was best before any operations elsewhere or any provocative retreats.

As it turns out, his strategic play is so superior that it does not matter much but for sake of perfection, this should be noted.

26 c3

White wants Black to take on c3 but he should give Black no option. 26 c4 has to be better forcing the sequence 26 ... dxc3 27 bxc3 gxf5 28 exf5 Rd8 which is better for Black since the attention has switched to the d3 weakness. Black will then thrust out with d6-d5 and break open the entire position. The bishop securely sitting on b4 has little influence and if it is exchanged on e7, the c3 pawn becomes very weak.

26 ... dxc3
27 Bxc3

The start of White's capitulation. White was already in desperate time trouble and under a lot of strain, due to the commendable restrained positional play by Black. Presumably, White had thoughts of lashing out in the centre with d3-d4 or something similar but he is not given the time. Also, it is fair to assume that White would like to place rooks on the c file and exchange their menacing black counterparts. As it is, it will be many moves before any white rook can contest the c file and hence, why the c file becomes source of White's utter destruction. More critical was 27 bxc3 gxf5 28 c4. Black will probably win a pawn in the centre, but as long as White attempts to hold up d6-d5, he can hope to survive. Black will have to switch his focus to the kingside and it is highly likely that the g file will become a point of entry.

27 ... Qa6
28 Bc2

After which, White has no hope at all. Placing a piece on the half-open c file has to be vulnerable to tactical possibilities. The only desperate hope for White was to get tactical with 28 fxc6 Bxd3 29 gxh7+ Kxh7 30 Bc2 Bxc2 31 Qxc2 despite it being hopeless for him.

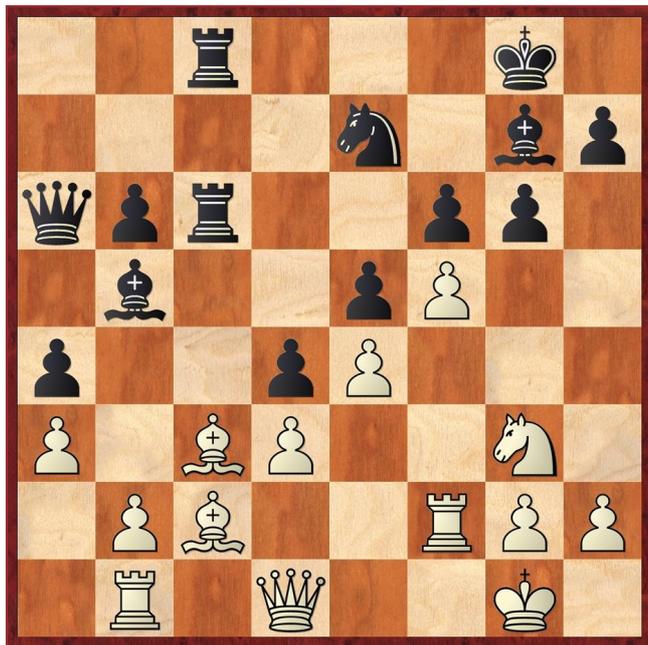
28 ... d5

Black rids himself of his only weakness, his backward d pawn. The centre is blasted open with Black's pieces poised to take advantage of the cleared lines. After this very intuitive central thrust, White can respectfully resign.

29 Qd1

All the variations work out for Black. 29 exd5 Nxd5 30 d4 Nxc3 31 bxc3 Rxc3 32 dxe5 [32 fxc6 Rxc2 33 gxh7+ Kh8]

29 ... d4



Opening the c file and allowing entire penetration.

30 Bb4 R8c7

Being ultra-cautious. However, the spirit has just about gone from White now. The emergence of the final black piece would have been more effective here, that hidden Dragon bishop i.e. 30 ... Bh6 31 Kh1 [31 Bxe7 springs to mind but 31 ... Be3 32 fxc6 hxc6 is a worse line for White] 31 ... Kf7 32 fxc6+ hxc6 33 Ra1 and White can soon resign.

31 Bxe7

White is attempting to distract the black rooks from the c file. Although a valiant attempt, he would do best to try some play against the black king along the a2-g8 diagonal. However, the black king is perfectly safe on the g7 square, as long as the Dragon bishop is re-routed to the c1-h6 diagonal, targeting the penetration square on c1. 31 b3 Bh6 32 bxa4 Bxa4 33 Bb3+ Kg7 34 fxc6 [34 Bxa4 Rc1 35 Rxc1 Rxc1 36 Bxe7 Qxa4] 34 ... hxc6 35 Rf1 [35 Bxa4 Rc1 36 Rxc1 Rxc1 37 Bxe7 Qxa4 38 Qxc1 Bxc1 39 Bxf6+ Kg8] and all of the lines are just simply winning for Black.

31 ... Rxe7
32 fxc6

There is little else for White. 32 b3 just allows a further penetration on the dark squares with 31 ... Rc3.

32 ... hxg6
33 Rd2

White realises that there are abundant tactics in this position. 33 b3 Rxc2 34 Rxc2 Bxd3 35 bxa4 and Black is coming out on top in all the subvariations.

33 ... Bh6

And with the emergence of this final piece for Black, White should throw in the towel. The black king has a safe square on g7 and the dark-squared penetration

on e3 and the protection of the c1 penetration square is the final piece in a very delicately pieced-together jigsaw, which Black has cleverly and immaculately constructed.

34 Re2 Rec7
35 Nh1

As good as resigning. White has no satisfactory way to defend against all of the penetration threats.

35 ... Qc8

Once again, hammering home the sheer domination of the position. The tripling of the heavy pieces down the c file demonstrates that penetration on c1 is going to be fatal. An admirable positional display by Black!

36 Bxa4

White can grovel with 36 Bb3+ axb3 37 Qxb3+ Kg7 38 Qxb5 Rc1+ 39 Re1 Be3+ 40 Kf1 Bd2 41 Qxb6 Bxe1 42 Qd6 Bh4+ 43 Rxc1 Rxc1+ 44 Ke2 Qg4+ 45 Kd2 Bg5# but who would want that?!

36 ... Bxa4
37 Qf1

Giving up the piece and effectively resigning. 37 Qxa4 Rc1+ 38 Re1 Rxb1 39 Qb3+ Kg7 40 Rxb1 Rc1+ 41 Rxc1 Be3+ 42 Kf1 Qxc1+ 43 Ke2 Qxh1 44 Qb4 Qxh2 45 Kd1 Qxg2 46 Qe7+ Kh6 47 Qb4 Qf1+ 48 Kc2 Qe2+ 49 Kb1 Qxd3+ 50 Ka2 Qxe4 51 Qf8+ Kg5 52 Qb4

37 ... Be3+
38 Nf2 Rc1
39 Re1 Rxb1

With Black a piece up, he can simply exchange into an easily won ending. The rest is trivial.

40 Rxb1 Rc1

We should point out that 40 ... Rc2 41 Ra1 Rxf2 42 Qxf2 Bxf2+ 43 Kxf2 Qc2+ 44 Kg1 Bb5 is another plan.

41 Rxc1 Qxc1 42 Qxc1 Bxc1 43 b4 Bxa3 0-1

And with the ending easily won for Black, White decided enough was enough. An excellent, cool, deeply-calculated strategic plan executed by Black! It has to be noted though that it was the initial deeper, positional, long-term objectives introduced to Black, which enabled him to conduct himself in such a controlled manner. I, personally, take much satisfaction from this but the player has to be applauded for executing the strategies in such a commendable way!

Chris Ross

Opening references

A 8 c3 dxc3 9 dxc3 Ne7 10 Qd6 0-0 11 0-0 f5 12 e5 g5 13 g3 Nd5 14 c4 Re8 15 Qa3 Bf8 16 Qb3 Bc5+ 17 Kg2 Nb6 18 h3 a6 19 Ba4 Qc7 20 Kh2 Nxa4 21 Qxa4 b5 22 cxb5 Bb7 **C Vinas Guerrero** (2120) v **D Reizniece** (2341), Caleta 2010 (0-1)

B 9 0-0 a6 10 Ba4 h5 11 d3 h4 12 Nh1 b5 13 Bb3 d5 14 Nf2 Bb7 15 Re1 a5 16 a4 b4 17 Qg4 Kf8 18 Bd2 Rc8 19 Re2 dxe4 20 dxe4 Qb6 21 Rae1 Rh5 22 Nd3 h3 23 f5 exf5 24 exf5 **E Bukacek** v **C Partos**, Sinaia 1965 0-1 (37)

C 9 0-0 Qb6 10 a4 0-0 11 Bd3 d5 12 e5 f6 13 exf6 Rxf6 14 b3 Nc6 15 Ba3 Qc7 16 Ne2 Bd7 17 Qe1 Bf8 18 Bxf8 Raxf8 19 Qg3 Bc8 20 h4 Kh8 21 Bb5 Nb4 22 Nxd4 Nxc2 23 Rac1 Qb6 **A Sokolov** (2525) v **A Greenfeld** (2590), Pamplona 1993 1/2-1/2 (41)