

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – November 2012

Chairman's Chatter

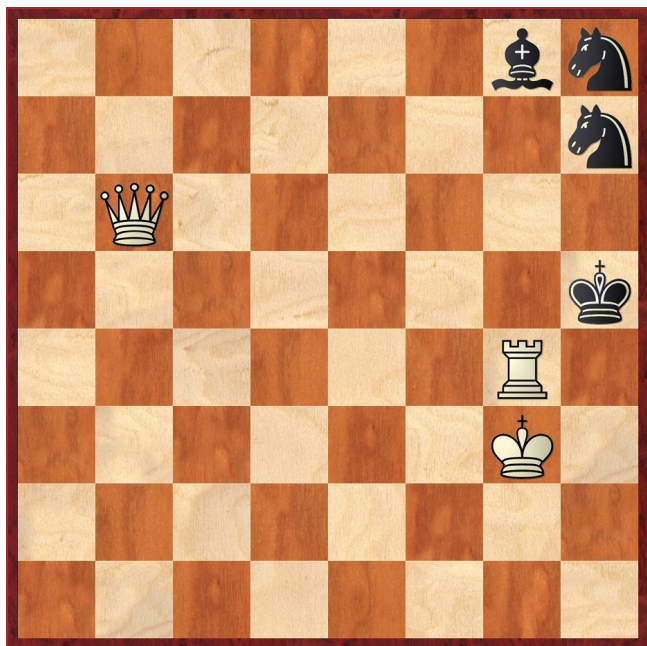
On 29th September, I visited Simpson's-in-the-Strand, the venue for FIDE Grand Prix. It was my chance to see Ivanchuk, Leko, Gelfand, Topalov and others in the flesh and bring back a report for the newsletter. Imagine my disappointment when on arrival, I was told there was no spectator accommodation and the event was Internet-only. Do you want to see the future of chess disappearing into cyberspace?

Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

Final call for the County Individual Championship on 17-18th November at St B's Hall, Yaxley.

Puzzle Problem



Last Month's solution

Position : 4r3/3nk3/2Q1NR2/5K2/8/8/8/8

1 Nc5 Nxf6 2 Qxf6# [1 ... Nxc5/other 2 Qd6#; 1 ... Rd8 2 Qe6#; 1 ... Rh8/other 2 Qxd7#; 1 ... Kd8 2 Qxd7#]

Website to Watch

The second FIDE Grand Prix qualifier for the World Championship takes place from 21st November to 5th December in Tashkent. <http://grandprix.fide.com>, the site for the whole series of six events, will direct you to more specific web content for this tournament.

Perhaps of more interest and relevance is the World Senior Championship taking place in Kamena Vourla, Greece from 12th to 25th November with the website www.worldseniors2012.com.

Window on the Web

World no.1 Magnus Carlsen has a database of world class chess games in his head, any of which he can recall at will and play through from memory. **Question:** Guess how many? (Answer below). This enables him, at the board, often to "just know" the correct move to play, without having to spend time analysing a position.

CBS News interviewed him at the London 2011 Chess Classic and their 13 minute video can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qc_v9mTfhC8. This gives an insight into the life of the top young GM who, at the age of 5, could name almost all the countries of the world, their capitals and populations and it recalls his draw at age 13 with Kasparov in a rapid game.

After watching that video you may be interested in the links on the right of the page to several other chess videos such as a series of 19 openings videos covering such openings as the Ruy Lopez, Sicilian and Dutch. These might be useful if you want to expand your opening repertoire.

Carlsen won the recent Bilbao Masters tournament, during which he managed to defeat World Champion Anand for the first time at classic time controls. Carlsen had the White side of a Sicilian Defence and carried out a very strong king side attack. There is a video of this game at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rel1pmHZQrk> including analysis. Again, there are links on that page to some other chess videos including more of Carlsen's games.

Answer: 10,000.

Ron Jones

Result Round-up

Cambridgeshire County Chess Leagues

New England A	2	Royston	3
P Turp	½	D Coleman	½
S Caraway	½	K Clark	½
P Hanks	½	P Kemp	½
M Dunkley	½	B Judkins	½
R Jones	0	A Strehl	1

New England A	3	St Neots	2
F Bowers	½	P Barkas	½
P Turp	½	A Chapman	½
S Caraway	1	C Emery	0
P Hanks	1	S Foster	0
M Dunkley	0	S Buttercase	1

New England B	3½	Spalding	½
R Jones	½	J van Gemeren	½
P Spencer	1	J Smith	0
D Lane	1	A Coats	0
S Walker	1	R Coates	0
New England B	3	Peterborough B	1
R Jones	½	G Ward	½
P Spencer	½	M Connolly	½
S Walker	1	D McClennan	0
J Parker	1	K Cairney	0

Team 550 Competition

New England 1	2	New England 2	2
M Dunkley	0	P Turp	1
P Spencer	½	S Caraway	½
S Wozniak	½	D Lane	½
J Parker	1	I Garrett	0
St Neots	2	New England 2	2
P Barkas	0	P Turp	1
A Chapman	1	R Jones	0
C Emery	0	D Lane	1
W Stimpson	1	I Garrett	0

New England Club Ladder

White		Black	
H Currie	0	I Garrett	1
I Garrett	0	J Parker	1
S Caraway	0	F Bowers	1
P Turp	1	N Wedley	0
I Garrett	1	N Wedley	0
P Spencer	1	J Parker	0
P Hanks	1	D Lane	0
N Wedley	0	F Bowers	1

Position	Change		Player	Record <small>24/10/12</small>
	Month	Overall		
1	-	+13	F Bowers	1,1,1
2	+1	-1	J Parker	0,1
3	-1	-1	H Currie	0
4	+9	+8	I Garrett	0,1,0,1
5	-1	-2	R Jones	
6	-1	-2	P Spencer	1
7	-1	-2	P Turp	1
8	-1	-2	M Tarabad	
9	-1	-2	N Wedley	0,0,0,0
10	+1	-	P Hanks	½,½,1
11	-1	-3	S Caraway	1,½,0
12	-3	-3	D Lane	0
13	-1	-2	S Wozniak	½
14	-	-1	S Walker	

Club Championship

Round 1			
White		Black	
J Parker	0	N Wedley	1
D Lane	0	F Bowers	1
H Currie	0	P Turp	1
R Jones	½	S Walker	½
C Russell	P	I Garrett	P
M Tarabad	P	S Caraway	P
P Spencer	P	M Dunkley	P
P Hanks	1	H Currie (Rd 2)	0

Match night : 26th September. Deadline : 28th November.
Next draw : 1st December

New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League	Cup	Team 550	Total
P Turp	1	1	1		2	5
F Bowers	1	3	½			4½
P Hanks	1	2	1½			4½
P Spencer		2	1½		½	4
S Caraway		1½	1½		½	3½
J Parker	0	1	1		1	3
S Walker	½		2			2½
D Lane	0		1		1½	2½
I Garrett		2			0	2
R Jones	½		1			1½
N Wedley	1	0				1
S Wozniak	-	½			½	1
M Dunkley		-	½		0	½
H Currie	0	0				0
C Russell		-				0
M Tarabad						0

Match of the Month

Recently, I had the opportunity to play in two Olympiads. The 14th IBCA Chess Olympiad was held during August in Chennai and Russia emerged as victors ahead of Ukraine and Spain. UK tied for 6-9th places and we took silver board medals on the top two boards - my score of 6½/9 losing out on tie-break to Ukraine's Igor Shepelev. Shortly afterwards, the action moved to Istanbul where the IBCA had a team in the FIDE World Chess Olympiad. My contribution of 5½/8 was one game short of qualifying for a FIDE master title but it helped the team to win 5 and draw 3 of the 11 matches. Our position of 44th was our most successful ever and being seeded 87th, we won the gold medal among the Category C teams.

My performance in Chennai was probably the most instructive from the theoretical point of view. Having the support of grandmaster Neil McDonald for the match preparation put me in such a strong position when sitting down to the game. His extensive, instructive and deeply prepared theory-building before every match was critical in the start to the games. Spending 3 hours at a time researching my opponent's weaknesses, studying the latest theory on Chess Publishing and the TWIC databases gave me such a strong platform from which to build my game-plan. Having this weaponry in my corner, I was able to sit down at the board with a tremendous quantity of tools, knowledge and theory - and more importantly, I was psychologically and physically prepared for the game and the opponent. It cannot be stressed enough how this deep preparation enabled me to demonstrate my ability in the highest form.

This game illustrates both the theoretical knowledge obtained in those mornings of pre-match preparation and the understanding passed across from a very strong player to a developing player, as myself, about the objectives, vulnerabilities and intricate positional plans of an opening or specific style of position.

In a number of my games in India, I was able to play the first 15 moves from sheer theoretical knowledge gathered in those pre-match sessions and was then able to apply the understanding of such positions in the follow-up play.

Enjoy a game against a player of a similar strength to me. Taking out a player of similar strength with black so quickly is the just reward for Neil's contribution to my play in India.

Jacek Stachanczyk (2260) v **Chris Ross** (2231)

Board 2, Poland v United Kingdom

Round 3, 14th IBCA Olympiad, Chennai 12.08.2012

1	e4	c5
2	Nf3	e6
3	d4	cxd4
4	Nxd4	a6

Having studied my opponent's previous variations in the Sicilian, we discovered that the Kan was his weakest subvariation of the opening. I have played the Kan many times in the past and was happy to adopt it for this game.

Although I had played the Kan previously in IBCA events, we doubted that my opponent had booked up on me in this specific variation. Indeed, my main game versus Tonterri from Finland had inaccuracies which we soon ironed out, in case White had prepped up on that game and had found improvements.

5 Nc3

A slight surprise as we had studied many games by my opponent where he liked to get in c2-c4 and attempt the Maroczy Bind. We were, naturally, fully prepared for this. Whether this was an attempt to surprise me or not, I do not know but, of course, we had covered all of these bases as well.

5 ... Qc7
6 Bd3 Nf6

The most accurate continuation. The Taimanov has an objective of developing the queenside before the kingside and the Kan can be treated in a similar fashion. 6 ... Bc5 is an option and as I demonstrated in Istanbul two weeks later, it is a system that White needs to know well, as he can be caught out very quickly indeed.

7 0-0 Nc6

Played with the desire to enter into the variations deeply prepared in our morning pre-match sessions. We understood these positions well and knew what we were attempting to do. The move order in itself is not important but the objectives of the black opening certainly are!

8 Be3 b5

Not concerning myself about specific move orders here, I wanted to transpose into the lines already prepared. Things at this stage are very comfortable for Black and I had used less than 3 minutes on the clock.

9 Nxc6

A very curious choice by my opponent and one that cannot really be recommended. This was the first move that took me completely out of my specific opening preparation. Now I had to abandon all the theoretical knowledge gathered in those morning sessions and focus on the more critical longer-term, positional objectives. Why were we playing these lines, what were we striving for, which coloured squares were we aiming for and how do we approach such variations?

OK to the basics. The recapture must be made on c6. Recapturing with the pawn is an option, controlling the d5 square. Although desirable, White can play a quick f2-f4 and e4-e5. Black must challenge f2-f4 with either d7-d6 and then a future e6-e5 or lash out immediately with d7-d5 to challenge for the all-important e4 square, the focus of the black pieces. So, recapturing on c6 at the moment with the pawn is not desirable. The queen recapture is the most natural but tactics and positional plans have to be verified. A pause in my play now to verify such calculations and the game plan continues.

9 ... Qxc6

It is the long diagonal that matters, but more crucially, it is the e4 square. The e4 square is the focus of Black's play. Black wants his pieces aiming at that central square. The queen is also a piece that can aid in this endeavour. The h1-a8 diagonal is actually not weak for Black; it is, in fact, his asset!

10 f3?

A poor move and played after nearly 40 minutes thought. After this, I was more than confident of bringing home a positive result from this game. This is not only a psychological admission from my opponent, but also a demonstration that he is clearly uncomfortable in his position. The white side of the Sicilian should not be played in such a passive manner. Having castled kingside, White must play f2-f4 and strive for a kingside attack or thrust through the centre with e4-e5.

This passive, restrictive move by White simply hands the advantage to Black. Black can now continue development and strive to bring his pieces to bear on the centre and his future d7-d5 is going to give him a massive plus.

Having gone this far as White, 10 a3 is the only realistic move he can contemplate. e4 is becoming a big target and preventing Black's b5-b4 to weaken that square seems sensible. White can then regroup and play Qe2, Rae1, Bd2, Kh1 and hope to have some attempt on the kingside, although Black's play is well on its way to gathering a substantial advantage.

10 e5 is not possible due to 10 ... Bb7 11 f3 Nd5 or 11 ... Bc5 and Black already has a huge advantage with all the dark squares fatally weak for White. The king on g1 is White's constant downfall in this whole game.

10 ... Bb7

Development is Black's best policy here. He is not interested in exchanges on the dark squares, as the white king on g1 is going to be a tactical liability. Forcing exchanges on c5 driving the king to h1 is not to Black's game-plan. Indeed, Black wants to guard his knight on f6 in case of tactics later and the white queen must be prevented from heading to h4, as the bishop on e7 will permit tactics with Nxe4 for Black.

As the pawn structure stands, the white queen has got very few squares to operate on.

11 Qe1

Again the tactical justification to 11 e5 is 11 ... Bc5 when White is struggling on the dark squares, as the e5 pawn will soon drop off or a black knight settle on d5 with a big advantage to Black.

11 ... Qc7

My first move away from the known types of play in this position. See below for opening references.

Naturally, the h2-b8 diagonal is vulnerable and the h2 pawn itself can be a target. However, it is essential to stop e4-e5 now, as the bishop on e3 is protected, stopping Bc5 tactics.

11 ... Bd6 is certainly a move and not one to be scoffed at. Although I gave it consideration, it went

against my known policy of putting it on e7 and preventing Qh4. Also, Qg3 is a trap I want to stop for White.

Here came into play theoretical knowledge learnt from the Najdorf Defence. There are crazy variations where White plays Bd4 to force e4-e5 and when Black plays e6-e5, White pins the e5 pawn to the black queen on c7 with Qg3 and other such tricks. There, often the white king sits on h1 out of the line of fire of tactics on the g1-a7 diagonal.

So, combining all of those ideas, I retreat the queen, to give the bishop on b7 more visibility of the e4 pawn and to allow d7-d5 with more power. Also, Bc6 is necessary to prevent any traps on the a4-e8 diagonal. All of the black pieces are beginning to work together in sweet harmony.

12 Bd4

A move hard to criticise, but one that has been played in the Najdorf many times and failed at that level. Again, that knowledge and theoretical preparation helped me here in my decision making.

White is striving for e4-e5 at all costs. Although a desirable plan for White, he can never get it in and hence, he should play the prophylactic move 12 Kh1 just to avoid all of the future tactics, which prove to be his undoing. OK, Black can develop, castle and obtain a comfortable game, but it is certainly the better option for White. As it is, Black just achieves exactly what he wants.

12 ... e5!

Refining the idea from the Najdorf theory. Here, there are traps with the Qg3 lines, as Black can scramble out of them with a timely 13 ... Bc5. So, 13 Qg3 Bc5 14 Qxe5? Qxe5 wins the white queen as that vulnerable king still stands on g1, the source of all White's problems. After this central thrust, Black is gaining a substantial advantage.

13 Be3 Be7

Again, Black is not interested in exchanges on c5. The knight on f6 needs protection and Qh4 is prevented by White.

14 a4?!

Again, this move is hard to criticise, but experience in similar positions and variations of the Sicilian have taught me that this thrust has to be well prepared. When White plays this, he has to ensure that d7/d6-d5 has been prevented. In this case, White has not done so and hence, why the wing-thrust a2-a4 should be questioned.

Positional understanding of the systems in the pre-match sessions taught me that piece placement is critical. Black cannot allow his queenside to be broken down so easily and weak pawns left on b5 or a6 so easily.

Here, I adopt a plan from prior experience. However, it is not easy to comprehend long-term.

14 ... b4

Sacrificing a pawn!

If the queenside is to be opened up, it has to be on Black's terms. White now loses 3 tempi to win the black b pawn. In that time, Black can complete development, but more importantly, achieve the typical Sicilian equalising/advantageous thrust.

15 Na2 a5

This is necessary as I do not want the knight to land on b4 and control d5. Although I am happy to give up the pawn, it has to be on a square of my choosing. After all, a weakness has to be created for White to win the pawn.

16 c3

The white plan is simple enough, but deeply flawed. Namely, the third rank for White is critically weak (b3, d3 and e3 potentially) and the loose nature of the white pieces proves too much. Naturally, I cannot capture on c3 and allow Nxc3/Nb5. Similarly, I cannot permit cxb4 and b4xa5 unless there is a certain tactical justification. Black's move is therefore forced.

16 ... b3

Giving up the pawn, but forcing the white pieces onto very vulnerable squares.

17 Nc1 d5

Black achieves his central thrust targeting the e4 square. After this move, Black is just simply better. It is a testament to Black's position that he has not had to play d7-d6, before achieving d5. Now, the e4 square is going to collapse.

18 Nxb3 dxe4
19 fxe4

White is playing meekly into Black's hands. More testing was 19 Bb5+ Bc6 20 f4 when I had prepared 20 ... Ng4 21 fxe5 0-0 and Black has got a terrific game and all the outposts for his pieces. The other major concern for White is that the e pawn is very weak.

The text-move just allows Black to get his king into safety, after which it is incredibly difficult to see a decent plan for White.

19 ... 0-0

Black stands hugely better here, if not already winning. Although a pawn down, the e4 pawn cannot be maintained for long. Another advantage of the bishop on e7 is that Rxf6 tactics are not looming. The knight on b3 is loose and a future Rb8 is going to apply such pressure down the b file that something will have to give.

Finding a decent move for White is impossible. I walked away from the board confident of converting the victory at this point.

20 Nd2

White is keen on attempting to hold his pawn but his knight has moved from c3-a2-c1-d2 - a lot of moves to grab a pawn which cannot be maintained. The e4 pawn is so vulnerable that tactics have to flourish on it. It is isolated and such little protection must mean a collapse at some point. The focus of the Black's opening is going to bear some fruit.

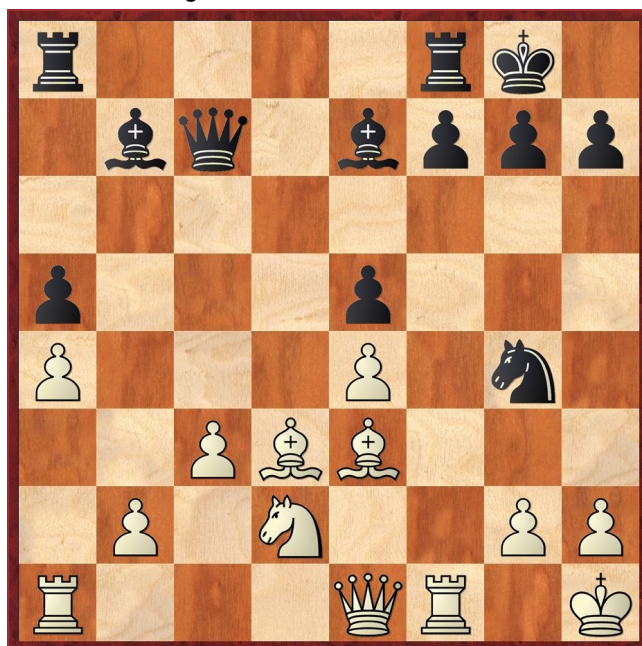
20 ... Ng4

Snaffing the bishop pair, stopping any last-minute hacks by White and dominating all of the dark squares. If only the white king was on h1, none of this would have been possible for Black. As it is, the plan is simple enough for Black. The move also contains a subtle tactic.

21 Kh1?

After which, White is really struggling to salvage anything from the game. There is an irony that the king flees when it is far too late. The damage on the long g1-a7 diagonal has already been done.

Now comes a very subtle tactic indeed. One that I have learned in a Sicilian by playing in the British Championship in Torquay in 2009. There I missed a win in a similar position by not playing this clever retreat. I learnt from that mistake and now, I apply it with devastating effect.



What are the types of moves a visually impaired person is apparently most likely to miss? Well, the word goes that "retreats" are the most difficult. For me, it is not necessarily the case and here it certainly wasn't!

21 ... Qd8!

A very clever tactic indeed. I realised that the pieces on the 3rd rank were a target. The knight on b3 had wandered away so the bishop on d3 had to be the liability. Also, the queen on e1 is guarding the knight on d2, which may prove to be overloaded. Also, the e4 pawn is my focus point and a tactic now reveals itself, giving me a clear passed pawn.

22 Bb5??

Astonishingly, my opponent blunders without much forethought. He played this without too much consideration, which was very surprising.

22 Qe2 Nxe3 23 Qxe3 Bg5 24 Qe2 Bxd2 25 Qxd2 Bxe4 gives Black a winning advantage due to his kingside majority and passed e pawn. Note how the

white queenside is pinned down by the pawn on a5. The remainder of the game would be simple technique, as the e5 pawn must advance down the board with the aid of the f pawn. Sure, tactics would have to be taken into account, but the massive positional plus should make conversion comfortable for Black.

As it were, the pressure of the opening leading to my superior position just allow me to win a piece. The rest is simple enough.

22 ... Nxe3
23 Qxe3 Bg5

Winning a piece. White could have resigned here.

24 Qg3 Bxd2

I guess White was hoping for some tricks on the c1-h6 diagonal but nothing is not forthcoming. I did briefly think about 24 ... Qxd2 25 Rad1 Qxb2 26 Qxg5 Bxe4 27 Bc4, but decided that I could not be bothered with the pressure on my f7 pawn and went for the easiest route.

25 Qxe5 Qh4

Again, demonstrating that the e4 pawn was the focus of Black's game. Sure, I am a piece up and White should have resigned by now, but I was forced to demonstrate that I still knew what I was doing. With the bishop on d2 released, I can maybe begin a kingside attack.

26 Rad1

Perhaps White was wondering if I had seen that my bishop was en prise. Nevertheless, I simply develop, making moves quickly now, as the game was over a matter of moves ago.

26 ... Rad8 0-1

After which, White finally realised that there was no hope and eventually threw in the towel. A convincing, comprehensive and thoroughly prepared victory.

Opening references

A 11 ... Bd6 12 Bd4 e5 13 Bf2 0-0 14 Nd1 Bc5 15 Ne3 Rfe8 16 Rd1 Qe6 17 b3 Bxe3 18 Qxe3 d5 19 Bh4 h6 20 Bxf6 Qxf6 ½-½ M Adams (2731) v V Zvjaginsev (2640), Moscow 2001

B 11 ... Bc5 12 Kh1 Bxe3 13 Qxe3 d6 14 a4 b4 15 Na2 Qc5 16 Qd2 a5 17 Bb5+ Ke7 18 c3 bxc3 19 Nxc3 Rhd8 20 Rac1 Qb6 21 Nd1 Kf8 22 Ne3 d5 23 e5 Nd7 24 Bxd7 Rxd7 25 Nc4 Qc6 26 Nxa5 J Jackova (2393) v C Peptan (2387), Eforie Nord 2009 [½-½ 65]

C 12 Kh1 Be7 13 a4 b4 14 Ne2 0-0 15 c3 d5 16 e5 Nd7 17 f4 Nc5 18 Bxc5 Qxc5 19 Rf3 g6 20 Rh3 Rfe8 21 Qd2 Bf8 22 Bc2 Bc8 23 a5 Rb8 24 cxb4 Qxb4 25 Qxb4 Rxb4 26 Rb3 Rxb3 27 Bxb3 Bd7 28 Bc2 Rb8 29 b3 Bc5 30 Bd3 Bb5 31 Rd1 Bxd3 32 Rxd3 Rb5 33 g4 Rxa5 34 f5 Ra2 35 Nd4 Bxd4 36 Rxd4 Re2 37 f6 Rxe5 38 Ra4 g5 39 Rxa6 h6 40 b4 Re4 41 b5 Rxg4 J Priborsky (2320) v V Potkin (2534), Pardubice 2005 [0-1 43]

Chris Ross

Eye Opener

Top players can't possibly lose pieces in the opening, can they? Well, maybe it is forgiveable in a blitz play-off...

M Carlsen (2843) v F Caruana (2773)
Bilbao Masters final, 2012

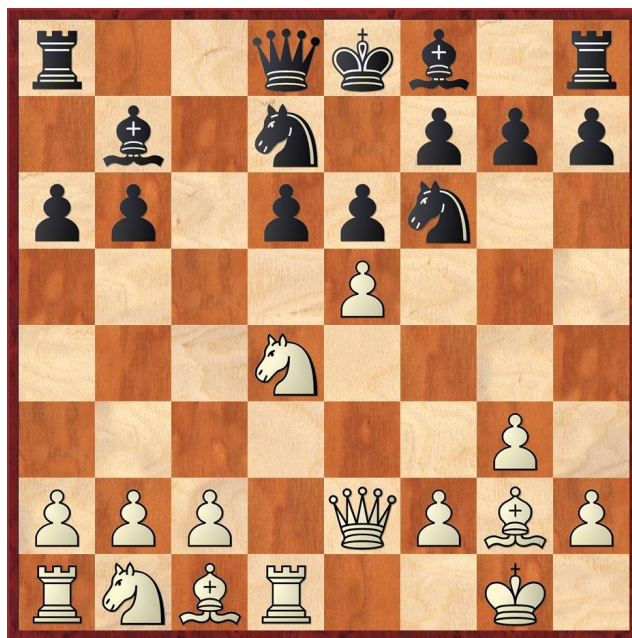
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 g3

From his vast storehouse of memorised games, Carlsen must have known this was uncommon in games from the top flight. Most players wishing to avoid the mass of theory try 3 b3 but those following the King's Indian Attack throw in 3 d3 (if not a move earlier). Perhaps Magnus remembered some games of Boris Spassky in which he tried this more flexible approach.

3 ... b6 4 Bg2 Bb7 5 Qe2 d6

Here, Spassky v Cramling, Copenhagen 1997 went 5 ... Nf6 which elicited the traditional 6 d3.

6 d4 cxd4 7 Nxd4 Nf6 8 0-0 Nbd7 9 Rd1 a6?! 10 e5



OK, put your defensive hats on and decide how you would continue. Were you going to try ...

10 ... Bxg2??

If not, did you see why not? (Fritz already thinks that Black is in a bad way and 10 ... dxe5 is the best way to limit the damage.)

11 exf6 Bh3

The piece had few options. 11 ... Bd5 12 c4 only asks the bishop to choose again whilst 11 ... Bb7 meets 12 Nxe6 fxe6 (12 ... Qxf6 13 Nc7+) 13 Qxe6+ Be7 14 fxg7 when the rook has no escape.

12 Qh5 Qxf6

If 12 ... Bf5, it still costs a piece to shield the e file after 13 Nxf5 exf5 14 Re1+.

13 Qxh3

and Black struggled on for only four more moves.