

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – November 2016

Chairman's Chatter

The Battle of Hastings made me feel old recently. I know some of you will be wondering whether I took part but it was a report on the radio of a re-enactment for its 950th anniversary that depressed me. I can remember the commemorative stamps issued for the 900th!

A lot has changed since then, particularly in the world of chess. Computers have revolutionised analysis and the range of books grows exponentially (and, to a lesser extent, our ability to afford them). Amongst the latter, are a growing number that focus on a solid opening repertoire. Is this the reason grandmaster games are becoming ever more cautious? What ever happened to the open attacking games of yesteryear? If you yearn for the good old days, you will be in the right mood for the *Match of the Month* in this issue...

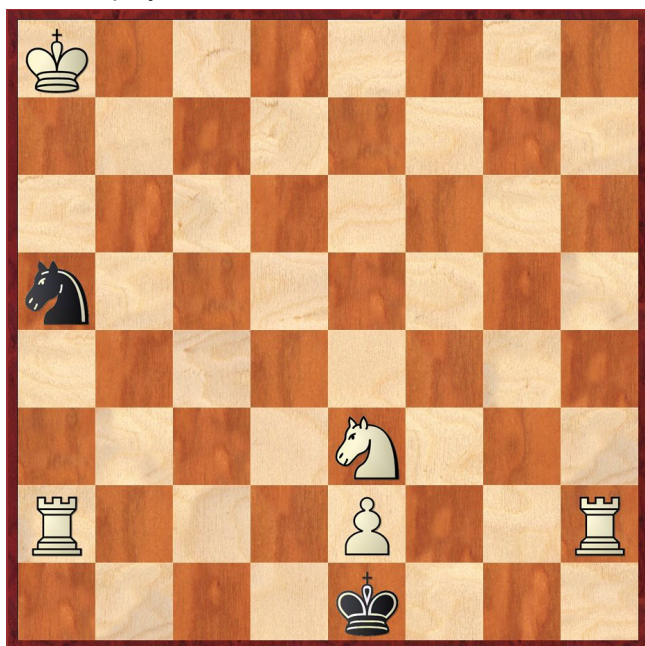
Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

26-27th November Cambridgeshire County Championship at Peterborough Bridge Club, PE1 2PE is a 5 round Swiss tournament with a 9-30am start on each day. An entry form is available at www.cambschess.co.uk.

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2



Last Month's solution (Keirans 1936)

Position : 2k5/R7/2N2K2/5N2/5r2/8/5Q2/8

1 Qc5 Rxf5+ 2 Qxf5# [1 ... Rd4 2 Nfe7#; 1 ... Re4 2 Nd6#; 1 ... R other 2 Qf8#]

Window on the Web

From the 11th to 30th November, the FIDE World Chess Championship 2016 will be held in New York between Norway's Magnus Carlsen and Russia's Sergey Karjakin. There will be a maximum of 12 games and the first to reach a 6.5 score will win the match. If you want to get close to the action and see all the games live, there is no need to go to the expense of booking return flights to New York. As an alternative (but obviously not really the same as being there), you could watch the games at worldchess.com/nyc2016/#_about. The site suggests that you will experience the match as if you had a view from any of the best seats in the house, not just one.

For less than the cost of 4 pints of beer, you can have access to panoramic views of the playing area and feel close to the action. There will be multiple camera views with commentary by GMs and fans, together with an interactive "Dashboard" giving move predictions, analysis and viewer discussions. An interactive board will enable viewers to play through the moves and try other moves. There will be tracking of the time spent on each move with evaluations. There will also be the opportunity for viewers to chat with other viewers and the experts.

Ron Jones

Website to Watch

If you want to whet your appetite before the World Championship match, you could do worse than follow euroclubcup2016.com. The European Chess Club Cup will be held in Novi Sad, Serbia from 6th to 12th November. The names of the 63 team announced so far may be unfamiliar but top boards include Kramnik and Aronian whilst some other big names are relegated to lower boards!

Result Round-up

Cambridgeshire County Chess Leagues

Peterborough B	3	New England A	2
G Tandy	½	R Ilett	½
A Summers	½	F Bowers	½
M Connolly	½	P Hanks	½
K Johns	1	P Turp	0
N Fisher	½	R Jones	½

New England B	1	Warboys B	3
F Bowers	½	C Watkins	½
P Turp	0	R Mann	1
D Lane	½	M Onyons	½
M Tarabad	0	K Harbour	1

Fenland Trophy

New England A	1	St Neots A	3
R Ilett	½	R Gompelman	½
F Bowers	0	P Barkas	1
P Hanks	0	R Palumbo	1
S Caraway	½	J Dunn	½

St Neots B	3	NE Cavaliers	1
A Chapman	½	F Bowers	½
R Palumbo	1	P Walker	0
C Emery	1	D Lane	0
M Friday	½	M Tarabad	½

NE Patriots	1½	Peterborough	2½
S Caraway	0	A Summers	1
P Hanks	½	M Connolly	½
C Russell	1	D McLennon	0
S Wozniak	0	A Kaszuba	1

Team 550 Competition

NE Patriots	1	Spalding	3
S Caraway	0	P Golimowski	1
C Russell	1	J Smith	0
P Weinberger	0	T Bennett	1
I Garratt	0	R Coates	1

Club Championship

Round 1			
P Weinberger (0)	0	1	R Ilett (0)
J Parker (0)	0	1	F Bowers (0)
S Caraway (0)	1	0	M Tarabad (0)
N Foreman (0)	1	0	G Dharmasena (0)
P Walker (0)	1	0	D Lane (0)
C Russell (0)	1	0	I Garratt (0)
R Jones (0)	½	½	N Wedley (0)
S Walker (0)	½	½	S Wozniak (0)
P O'Gorman (0)	0	1	P Turp (0)
Round 1.5			
I Garratt (0)	P	P	P Hanks (0)

Round 2			
F Bowers (1)			S Caraway (1)
R Ilett (1)			P Walker (1)
P Turp (1)			N Foreman (1)
P Hanks (P)			C Russell (1)
S Wozniak (½)			R Jones (½)
N Wedley (½)			S Walker (½)
G Dharmasena (0)			P O'Gorman (0)
M Tarabad (0)			J Parker (0)
D Lane (0)			P Weinberger (0)
Match night : 30 th November. Deadline : 31 st January Next draw : 1 st February			

New England Club Ladder

White		Black	
P Hanks	1	0	J Parker
N Foreman	0	1	N Wedley
N Foreman	0	1	P Weinberger
M Tarabad	1	0	N Wedley
R Jones	1	0	I Garratt
P O'Gorman	½	½	J Parker
M Tarabad	1	0	N Foreman
I Garratt	0	1	D Lane
R Jones	0	1	P Weinberger
P Walker	½	½	P Hanks
P O'Gorman	0	1	I Garratt

Position	Change		Player	Record @ 26/10/16
	Month	Overall		
1	-	-	F Bowers	½
2	-	-	R Ilett	½
3	+5	+5	P Weinberger	1,1
4	-1	-1	P Hanks	1,1,½
5	+7	+7	D Lane	1
6	+4	+4	R Jones	1,0
7	-2	-2	J Parker	1,0,½
8	-4	-4	I Garratt	0,0,0,1
9	-	-	M Tarabad	1,1
10	-3	-3	N Wedley	1,0
11	-	-	P O'Gorman	½,0
12	+1	+1	P Walker	½
13	-7	-7	N Foreman	0,0,0,0

New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League	Cup	550 Team	Total	TPR*
P Walker	1	½	½	0	2	4	170
P Hanks		2½	½	½		3½	149
M Tarabad	0	2	1	½	1	3½	85
C Russell	1		1	1		3	155
F Bowers	1	½	1	½		3	156
R Jones	½	1	½		1	3	114
D Lane	0	1	½	0	1½	3	109
R Ilett	1	½	½	½		2½	167
S Caraway	1		½	½	0	2	138
P Weinberger	0	1				2	106
N Wedley	½	1				1½	94
J Parker	0	1½			0	1½	84
P Turp	1		½			1½	130
N Foreman	1	0			0	1	56
I Garratt	0	1				1	58
S Walker	½					½	108
S Wozniak	½			0	0	½	94
P O'Gorman	0	½				½	59
G Dharmasena	0					0	3

* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

Match of the Month

As a young man just learning chess, I used to love the romantic lines such as King's Gambit where White would make a tactical sacrifice and then use it to create a decisive opening with which to bludgeon your opponent to death (very satisfying!). Unfortunately, these positions usually have an effective counter so, against a prepared opponent, it can just be committing suicide – or sometimes will force the attack to fizzle out into a drawn position (which is not useful against a weaker opponent and a stronger one will often convert a drawn opening with a winning strategy).

Nonetheless, there are still several openings that can lead to plenty of fireworks if you pick the right lines. The trouble is that your opponent is unlikely to cooperate. A personal favourite of mine is the Winawer Variation of the French Defence, especially those lines with Qg4, which can often be very double-edged. Here is a game I played several years ago against someone whom I believe also enjoyed this strategy. So too, perhaps the result was inevitable!

Chris Russell v Bernard Duff

Perkins B v Wisbech, Division 2 13.03.2000

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5

3 Nc3

The French Defence is still popular in master play today, a good indication of its versatility. It has a reputation as a great counterattacking tool and so is a good weapon in the arsenal for both White and Black.

3	...	Bb5
4	e5	c5
5	a3	Bxc3
6	bxc3	

The main line of the Winawer Variation. Some fun can be had with 4 Qg4 but this is a risky line against a knowledgeable opponent.

6	...	Qc7!?
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Very old school – and annoying! More normal these days is 6 ... Ne7 which can lead to some very dynamic chess. However, the text is perfectly sound. It anticipates 7 Qg4 when Black can play 7 ... f5! when the vulnerable g7 square is protected by the queen.

7	Bb5+?!
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7 Qg4 was indeed what I had intended. I had been out-thought in the opening (again!) and had to try changing gear. The bishop check looked good to me as I thought it allowed me to exchange of the light-squared bishops, play Ne2 and castle into a solid position. But it does not appear in mainstream opening books, so I guess it probably is not very good. 7 Nf3 is recommended as the positional alternative to Qg4. Fritz gives it as level, but I have immediately lost White's opening advantage. The one good thing about it is that Bernard appears to know that it is not a standard move and stops to think for 10 minutes before coming up with...

7	...	Bd7!
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The best response. Now Fritz recommends retreating the bishop to d3 or e2 (level – but having to move the bishop twice would clearly indicate that it is the wrong strategy).

In general terms, so I'm told, Black's problem child in the French Defence is his queen's bishop. It will struggle to find an open diagonal because Black has fixed the central pawns on light squares. Its white counterpart, on the other hand, has an ideal square on d3 from which to attack h7, especially as a defending knight cannot reach f6. As a result, Black is more than happy to allow the exchange.

8	Bxd7?!	Nxd7
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Black gains a tempo, developing a knight with the capture and now I am behind. However, I had seen that the knight blocks the defence of g7 and so could not resist...

9	Qg4?
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Losing! After 9 ... cxd4 10 Ne2 Qxe5 11 cxd4 Qf6, the g7 square is defended – so I am just a pawn down!

9	...	Ne7?!
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Bernard was also worried about the rook on h8 and had not thought it through properly either! Although I

am still behind, I am at least back in the game – and Bernard is well behind on the clock.

10 Ne2 cxd4

Again Bernard took his time here. I had expected 10 ... Nf5 but the text move is equally good. I now gobble the g7 pawn, but lose my centre pawns, so I am still up against it.

11 Qxg7 Rg8?!

Unnecessary. 11 ... Qxe5 immediately stops me taking the h7 pawn and now I am getting back into the game.

12 Qxh7 Qxe5

Here Bernard pondered for another 10 minutes before coming up with taking the wrong pawn. His move looks logical enough, but at this point, Fritz recommends 12 ... dxc3 13 Bf4 Qc4 14 Bg3 Rg4 15 Qd3 Qxd3 16 cxd3 Rc8 when Black is starting to get the upper hand.

13 cxd4 Qf6

And now the game is level again – except I have taken 7 minutes to Bernard's 37. I am not going to criticise him for that. At this point, he had missed less than me but the game is still in the balance. At some point you need to play quickly or run out of time at the end!

14 0-0 0-0-0

Fritz (marginally) prefers 14 g3 - but it is a computer!

15 Qd3

To prevent my queen getting trapped, but now I am worried that the Black attack will come first.

15 ... Nf5

Not best. Fritz suggests 15 ... Qg7, but after 16 Qg3 Qh7 17 Qd3, there is a potential draw by repetition. The text allows...

16 Bf4

I am starting to build some threats against the black king.

16 ... Nb6

Necessary. But now it is my turn to have a 10 minute think, after which I came up with...

17 Rab1

I could not decide which rook to put on b1. Fritz says that both moves are equally good.

17 ... Qg6

18 Qc3+

I could not decide whether to play g3, Ng3 or Bg3, so I bought a bit of thinking time.

18 ... Nc4

19 g3

Fritz agrees with me! (If 19 Bg3, then Black swaps off the bishop. But either g3 or Ng3 work.)

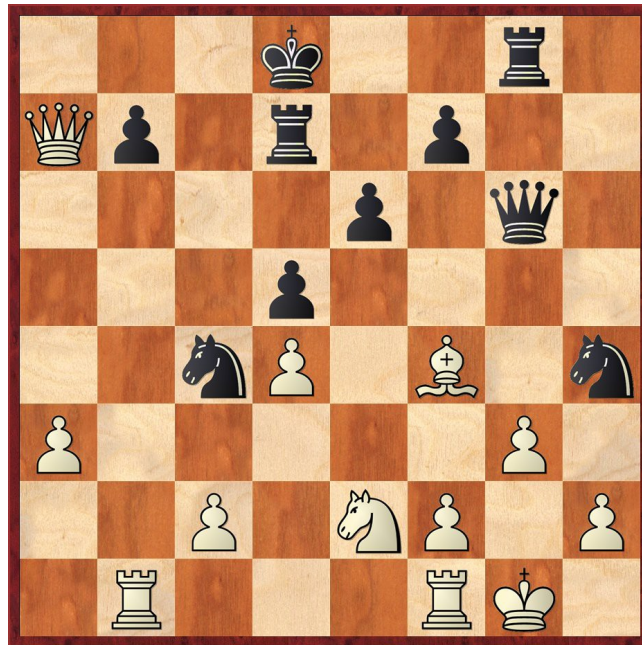
19 ... Rd7

A sensible enough precaution against Qb4 but 19 ... Qh5! keeps the pressure on. However, Bernard is very short of time now.

20 Qb4 Nh4

Annoying but not best. Now 21 f3 is solid defensively. But Bernard has less than 5 minutes to play 16 moves so he needs to try and break through. I am thinking more about the clock than the position now – another mistake!

21 Qc5+ Kd8
22 Qxa7?



The check was okay, but I am now thinking I can find a mate on the black squares – and there isn't one. 22 f3 would have been fine, and should run the clock down. However, in the current position above, 22 ... Nf3! wins.

This may seem an odd assessment. White is two pawns up, my defence looks solid and I am about to start chasing the black king. On looking a little deeper, the black king will be safe on e7, Black can penetrate on the light squares and the white queen is running short of space e.g.

22 ... Nf3+ 23 Kg2 b5

- 24 Qb8+ Ke7 and the white queen has no squares
- 24 Qa8+ Ke7 25 Qc6 Qe4 when the threat of discovered check is crushing e.g. 26 Nc3 Nh4+ 27 Kh3 Qg2+ 28 Kxh4 Qxh2#
- 24 Qa6 Ke7 (24 ... Qe4 is premature here because 25 Qa8+ Ke7 26 Qxg8 removes an essential attacking piece and so the black king must depart from the back rank) 25 Nc3 (say, to prevent Qe4) Qg4 (threatening Qxf4) 26 Be3 Nh4+ 27 Kg1 Qf3 etc.

22 ... Qe4?!

It is hard to criticize Bernard for missing Nf3 when he is so short of time, and the text does look forcing.

23 f3 Qxe2!

Not 23 ... Nxf3+ 24 Rxf3 Qxf3 25 Qb8+ Ke7 26 Qxg8 Qxe2 27 Bg5+ etc.

24 Rf2

Now it is the turn of the black queen to be trapped except for ...

24 ... Nxf3+
25 Kg2?

The final mistake is mine! After 25 Rxf3! Qxf3 26 Qb8+ Ke7 27 Qxg8 the position is back to all-square. And Black should probably run out of time. As it happens...

25 ... Nh4!
26 Kg1 Nf3+
27 Kg2 Nh4+
28 Kg1 Nf3+

is a draw by repetition.

I looked up this game because I thought it was a good battle that had fizzled out to a draw. Inevitably there were rather more mistakes than I remembered. But it does show that if you are aiming for a variation that has plenty of fireworks, and even if you have an opponent that likes the same variations and will cooperate, you do need to be extremely well prepared. I was expecting 6 ... Ne7 and was in trouble when I did not get it. The more you play a variation, the more knowledgeable you will become, but the more your opponents will know what you like!

Chris Russell

Eye Opener

M Herbold v A l'Ami
 Isle of Man Open, 2016

1 e4 c5
2 Nf3 d6
3 Bb5+

Here is an example of modern prudence. My oldest chess book contains only one game with the Canal-Sokolsky Attack whereas the Open Sicilian Defence 3 d4 and a subsequent tactical approach was far more popular. With the text move, White declines to open the game by swapping a centre pawn for a wing pawn and instead, hopes Black's position will be slightly constricted especially if Black replies 3 ... Nd7.

3 ... Bd7
4 Bxd7+ Qxd7
5 c4

Many players prefer 5 0-0 and 6 c3 when the advance d2-d4 will maintain White's d4/e4 pawn centre.

5 ... Nf6
6 Nc3 g6

The players are almost repeating Carlsen v Anand, Bilbao 2012 but in that game, the grandmasters decided to do without castling until move 12.

7 0-0 Bg7
8 d4 cxd4
9 Nxd4 0-0
10 f3 Rc8

A strange choice, presumably aiming for the tricks that White's next move permit. As an aside, when Anand

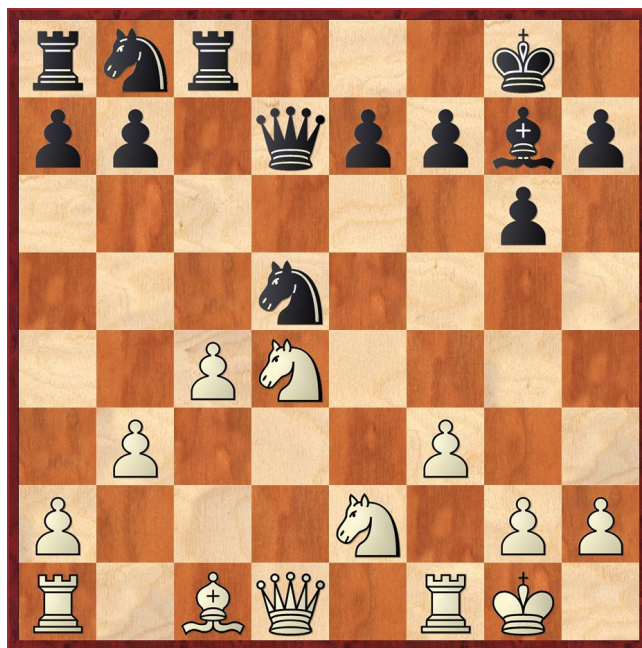
reached this position (except neither side had castled), he chose to occupy the c file with Qd7-c7 and despite achieving a satisfactory opening, crashed to a heavy defeat when he blundered by moving a rook to c8 on move 17.

11 b3 d5
12 exd5 Nxd5

After 13 cxd5 Rxc3, the pawn on d5 cannot be protected.

13 Nxd5 e6 seems to give Black pressure on d5 (and later c4) because retreating the knight allows Bxd4+ and Bxa1. However, White has to see that he can get relief with the exchanges following 14 Bh6.

13 Nce2



Now, the black knight must retreat and then, White can fortify d4 with Bb2.

13 ... Nc3 0-1

Whoops! The cheeky knight move wins material however White continues:-

- 14 Nxc3 Qxd4+
- 14 Qd3 Nxe2+ 15 Qxe2 Bxd4+
- 14Qd2 Nxe2 15 Nxe2 Bxa1 etc.