

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – September 2017

Chairman's Chatter

The vernal equinox falls in September and marks the point when we notice how dark the evenings are becoming. Well, that is just perfect for chess! I hope you have all enjoyed a break during the summer and are ready to rise to the challenge. Welcome to new season!

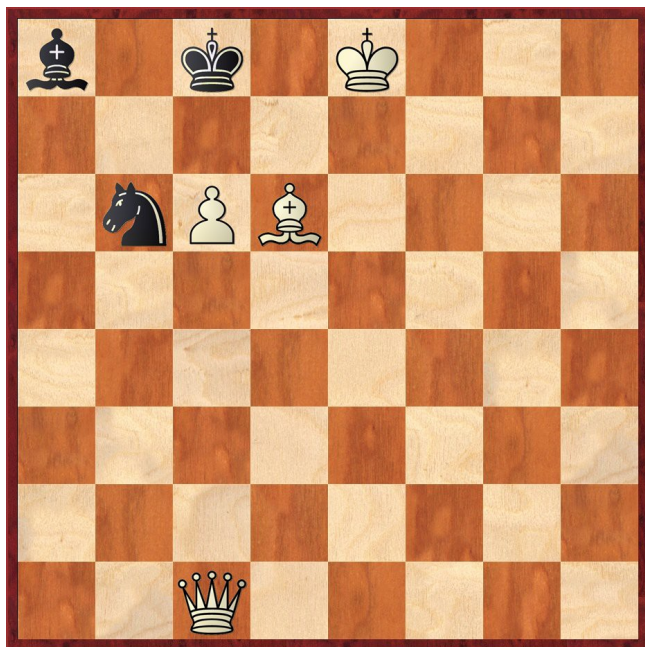
Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

- 6th September Season restarts with two rounds of the Club Championship. Please see the attached calendar of events.
- 24th September Cambridgeshire Rapidplay at St Faith's School, Cambridge. Entry forms from the CCCA website.
- 18-19th November Cambridgeshire Individual Championships at Peterborough Bridge Club, Lincoln Road with Open, U140 and Junior sections. Entry forms are available from F Bowers.

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2



Last Month's solution

Position : 8/8/8/8/4N3/6Kn/6RP/7k

1 Re2 Ng1 2 Nf2# [1 ... N other or 1 ... Kg1 2 Re1#]

Website to Watch

FIDE holds the World Cup Knock-out Tournament in Tbilisi, Georgia from 3rd to 27th September and it has

attracted the world's elite. In fact, the field seems to include all the top 16 on the ELO grading list. The website is tbilisi2017.fide.com. If it does not carry live games, you can still learn about local history, culture and cuisine!

Result Round-up

Summer League

Player	FB	ES	PO	IG	NF	Total
F Bowers	X	1	1	1	-	3
E Serban	0	X	1	1	-	2
P O'Gorman	0	0	X	1	-	1
I Garratt	0	0	0	X	1	1
N Foreman	-	-	-	0	X	0

Club Championship

Round 1		
M Tarabad		P Hanks
N Wedley		E Serban
R Jones		J Parker
S Wozniak		F Bowers
D Lane		S Walker
I Garratt		P O'Gorman
R Ilett		C Russell
M Ingram		P Walker
P Turp		
Match night : 6 th September. Deadline : 31 st October Next draw : 1 st November		

Round 2		
P Hanks		P Turp
S Walker		R Jones
F Bowers		R Ilett
J Parker		I Garratt
P Walker		N Wedley
C Russell		S Wozniak
P O'Gorman		D Lane
E Serban		M Tarabad
M Ingram		
Match night : 13 th September. Deadline : 31 st October Next draw : 1 st November		

Match of the Month

I suspect that I have already mentioned that I love the old-fashioned sacrificial lines in chess, where you take the battle straight to your enemy. Indeed, some have likened chess to all-out war, where a weak response to aggression will be heavily punished. Sometimes there is no alternative to standing toe to toe with your enemy and slugging it out.

Inevitably, there are many such examples used to teach the game to newcomers – they make for exciting chess. I am sure you can think of a few examples. Of course, with experience, we rapidly learn the dangers of such an approach – it is often difficult to see all of the tactical consequences of an aggressive line, especially against a more experienced opponent! This teaches us to be more circumspect and to wait to see if your opponent might make a clear mistake that you can exploit first, before launching your pieces into his position. Perhaps this is a sounder way to play, but I think that a certain something gets lost from your game when you no longer push all out to deliver checkmate.

Here is a game from the dim and distant days when I used to play like that – fun, but all too easily getting into difficult positions where a mistake can be fatal!

Chris Russell v Paul Hanks

Perkins Club Championship, 19.02.1987

1	e4	e6
2	d4	d5
3	Nc3	Bb4
4	e5	c5

The Winawer Variation of the French Defence is known to lead to fireworks. And it is a popular way for Black to try and play for a win. But being young and reckless, I decided to take Paul on!

5	Qg4	Ne7
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An old-fashioned aggressive line. Paul comes up with the best response. Strangely, almost exactly 5 years later, we met again and reached the same position! On that occasion, Paul was too speculative with 5 ... cxd4 6 Qxg7 dxc3 and after 7 b3, for once, he received his deserved comeuppance.

I think I had intended 6 Qxg7 here but it is a risky and well known line. Currently recommended lines include 5 Nf3 and dxc5. Trying to get away from the book, I thought I had spotted something different...

6	a3?!
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John Watson (Play the French, Cadogan) gives 6 a3 as dubious, with the response of 6 ... Qa5! (Thanks, John!). After 6 ... Qa5, Watson gives three main lines:

- 7 Nge2 cxd4 8 axb4 Qxa1 9 Nb5 0-0 10 Nc7 Na6 11 Nxa8 Bd7 12 Kd1 d3! 13 cxd3 Qa4! 14 Kd2 Nxb4 (0-1 Engholm-Freyer, 1968). Nasty, as White must lose the knight on a8, let alone the massive deficit in development!
- 7 axb4 Qxa1 8 Kd1 cxb4 9 Nb5 0-0! does look very good for Black.

- Relatively best is probably 7 Bd2 cxd4 8 axb4 Qxa1+ 9 Nd1 Nbc6 but still with a strong advantage to Black.

Fortunately Paul has not seen this, as 6 ... Qa5 is very difficult to meet! Or so I thought.... I learned later that Paul's analysis ran 6 ... Qa5 7 Bd2 cxd4

- 8 Qxd4 Nbc6 9 Qd3 Nxe5 which is good for Black
- 8 Nb1 Bxd2+ 9 Nxd2. After these simplifying exchanges and with the d and g pawns en prise, Paul rejected the line. However, 9 ... 0-0 holds the pawns because after 10 Qxd4, I would have been unable to prevent the loss of the e pawn no matter how stubbornly White defends it e.g. 10 ... Nbc6 11 Qe3 Nf5 12 Qe2 Nfd4 13 Qd1 Nxe5.

6	...	cxd4?!
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And so I get lucky - the benefit of pulling a surprise!

7	axb4	dxc3
8	Qxg7	Rg8
9	Qxh7	Qc7
10	f4	

Now I have got the kingside pawn investment I was looking for but with both Paul's queen and king's rook applying pressure, my development is not easy. It becomes increasingly difficult to find a safe haven for the white king.

10	...	Na6
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Fritz prefers 10 ... Rg6 11 Bd3 Rxg2 12 Ne2 cxb2 13 Bxb2 Qb6 14 Qh3 Rg8 15 b5 Nd7 16 Bd4 Nc5 though this still looks good for White. Here, if 14 ... Qf2+ 15 Kd1 Nbc6 16 Bc3 and both queen and rook are forced to withdraw.

In analysing this game, I briefly wondered whether 11 Bxa6?! may be playable but then I cannot defend both c2 and g2. And 11 b5?! also looks very risky. I need to develop – and quickly!

11	Ne2	cxb2
12	Bxb2	Nxb4
13	Nd4	

Fritz came up with 13 c3 Na6 14 Nd4 Bd7 15 h4 but in this variation, Black gets to castle and line up his rooks against the white queen.

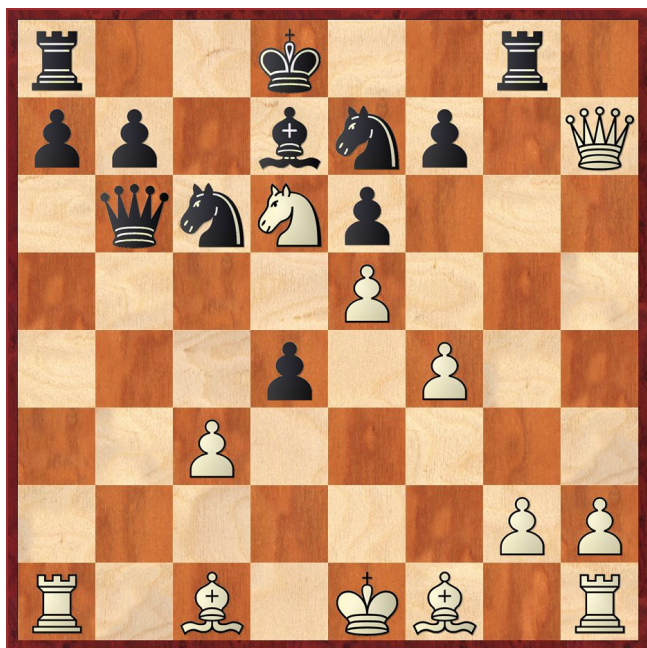
13	...	Bd7
14	c3	Nbc6?!

I think this is a mistake. Now, I get a knight onto d6 and it is very difficult to dislodge. Fritz recommends 14 ... Qc5 15 Qh3! Na6 16 Bxa6 bxa6 17 0-0 but I can see why Paul would reject it – White looks rather better with a safe king, not to mention Black's doubled pawns.

15	Nb5!	Qb6
16	Nd6+	Kd8
17	Bc1	

If 17 Nxf7+ Kc7 18 Bc1 Raf8 19 Nd6 Nf5 20 Nxf5 Rh8 21 Qg6 Rxf5 22 Qg3 and both Black's rooks are active.

17	...	d4
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This is what I mean about getting into difficult positions. Fritz reckons that at this point I have a winning advantage. But...

18 c4?!

Unfortunately not the best move. I was worried about 19 ... dxc3 opening up a queenside attack on my king. However, 18 Rb1! Rg7 19 Qd3 Qc7 20 Nxb7+ Ke8 21 Nd6+ Kf8 22 Rb7 is clearly better for White and if 21 ... Kd8 22 Rb7 Qa5 23 Rb3 Qa1 24 Qd1 dxc3 25 Ra3 Qb1 26 Rxc3 Nb4 27 Rc4 a5 28 Be2 and now Black cannot play Rxc2 because of Bf3 forking the rooks.

18 ... Rg6

This does prevent Rb1 but Fritz found 18 ... f5! which better achieves the same result. I cannot respond with 19 exf6 as 19 ... Qb4+ 20 Bd2 Qxd6 21 fxe7+ Kc7 and the pawn will be lost. Fritz suggests 19 Qh3 Rb8 19 Qa3 Nb4 20 Qxa7 Qxa7 21 Rxa7 Bc6 with a very double edged position.

19 Bd3?!

Thinking that I need to develop my kingside before it is too late. Fritz prefers 19 Qxf7 Kc7 20 Nb5+ Kd8 21 Bd2 Rg8 22 h4 Qc5 23 Rh3 Rb8 24 Rb3 and White's rooks look menacing. Alternatively, 19 Bd2 Qb2 20 Rd1 looks defensively solid. I cannot play 19 g3? Nb4 20 Kf2 and Black has a lot of threats - very risky!

19 ... Rxc2
20 Be4

Not 20 Rb1? Qa5+! Fritz inevitably sees a complicated opportunity for pawn gobbling with 20 Kf1 Rg8 21 Rg1 Rxc2+ 22 Kxg1 Kc7 23 Rb1 Rg8+ 24 Kf1 Qa6 25 Rxb7+ Kd8 26 Nxf7+ Kc8 27 Nd6+ Kd8 28 Bb2 Bc8 29 Rb5 Qa4 30 Bc2 Qa2 31 Kf2 Ba6 32 Rb3 Kd7 but the resulting position is still very tricky.

20 ... Qb4+
21 Kf1 Rg4
22 Qxf7

Forces the black rook to retreat, but Fritz wants to go gobbling again and finds 22 Rb1 Qc3 23 Nxf7+ Kc8

24 Nd6+ Kd8 25 Nxb7+ Kc7 26 Nd6 Kd8 27 h3 Rg3 28 Rh2 when White gets the second rook active with a rather better position.

22 ... Qc3
23 Rb1?!

Cowardice! 23 Qf8+ Kc7 24 Qxa8 Qxa1 25 Qxb7+ Kd8 26 Ke2 Qa2+ 27 Bb2 is definitely better.

23 ... Qh3+

Fritz prefers 23 ... Rg8 24 Nxb7+ (if 24 Kf2 b6!) 24 ... Kc7 25 Nd6 Rab8 activating Black's second rook.

24 Ke1

Fritz found 24 Kf2 Qh4+ 25 Ke2 and Black runs out of checks. If 25 ... d3+ 26 Kxd3!

24 ... Rg8
25 Rxb7 Qh4+
26 Kf1?!

Missing the robust defence of 26 Ke2! Qg4+ 27 Bf3 d3+ 28 Ke3. I did not record the timings for this game but I must have been getting short of time at this point.

26 ... Qg4

If 26 ... Na5 27 Qf6 Qxf6 28 exf6 Nf5 29 Nf7+ Kc8 30 Rxd7 Kxd7 31 Ne5+ Kc7 32 f7 wins.

27 Ke1??

A total blunder (sigh). I guess I must have been worried about 27 ... Qd1+ but this leads nowhere after 28 Kf2! However, (back to my theme) this is another mistake in a difficult position. In a scribbled note on my scoresheet I wrote that 27 Bxc6 wins but Fritz says that this only leads to a draw by perpetual check after 27 Bxc6 Qd1+ 28 Kf2 Qc2+ as if 29 Kf3?? Qg2#.

However there *is* a win here with 27 h3!! This pushes the black queen out of my position. And if 27 ... Qg7 28 f5!! then either 28 ... exf5 29 e6 Bc8 30 Rxe7 Nxe7 31 Bxa8 or 28 ... Nxe5 29 Qxg7 Rxc7 30 f6 Rg8 31 fxe7+ Kxe7 32 c5.

27 ... d3

with a pretty obvious threat. The only thing unclear to me now is how on earth I missed it!

28 Bd2??

Astoundingly bad! I do not remember being out of time here but it is the only excuse for this move. I have two perfectly good options to carry on the game.

28 Rb2 Rb8 29 Rxb8+ Nxb8 30 Bxd3 Qh4+ 31 Kd2 Qf2+ 32 Kc3 Nbc6 33 Be4 Rh8 34 h4 Rg8 35 Rh3 Qf1 36 Rh1 Qf2 37 Rd1 Rg3+ 38 Rd3 Qd4+ 39 Kd2 Qf2+ 40 Kc3 Qd4+ 41 Kd2 Qf2+ 42 Kc3 with a draw by repetition. Or 28 Bxd3 Nd4 29 Rf1 Nf3+ 30 Rxf3 Qxf3 31 Kd2 Qg2+ 32 Kc3 and the king escapes to the queenside.

28 ... Qe2#

Oh, dear. A miserable end to a thoroughly combative and enjoyable game. Is there a moral? I could say that it is better to go down fighting than to meekly surrender but I suspect that the real one is that victory goes to he who makes the fewest stupid mistakes!

Chris Russell

New England Chess Club Fixtures 2017-18

Updated 17 Sept 2017

Club Championship		League Match			Internal Event	
H = home A = away		Fenland Trophy			County Event	
Day	Date	All Club	A team	B team	Patriots	Cavaliers
W	06/Sep	Round 1	←	←	←	←
W	13/Sep	Round 2	←	←	←	←
W	20/Sep	Club Ladder	H v Royston	←	←	←
Su	24/Sep	County Rapidplay, St Faith School, Cambridge				
W	27/Sep	Club Ladder	↔	A v Warboys C	←	←
Th	28/Sep		A v Pboro			
M	02/Oct				A v St Neots	
W	04/Oct	Club Ladder	↔	↔	↔	H v Royston
W	11/Oct	Club Ladder	↔	↔	H v Spalding	H v Godmanch'r
M	16/Oct				A v Godmanch'r	
W	18/Oct	Club Ladder	A v Cambridge	←	←	←
W	25/Oct	Club Ladder	↔	H v Warboys B	←	←
Th	26/Oct		A v Pboro			
W	01/Nov	Club Ladder	↔	H v Spalding	←	←
W	08/Nov	Club Ladder	↔	↔	H v NE Cavaliers	A v NE Patriots
M	13/Nov			A v St Neots		
W	15/Nov	Club Ladder	↔	↔	H v Godmanch'r	H v Spalding
S/S	18-19/Nov	County Championship, Lincoln Rd, Pboro				
W	22/Nov	Club Ladder	H v Warboys A	←	←	←
W	29/Nov	Club Ladder	↔	A v Warboys B	←	←
W	06/Dec	Club Ladder	↔	H v St Neots	←	←
W	13/Dec	Club Ladder	H v Pboro A	←	←	←
W	20/Dec	Xmas Special	←	←	←	←
W	27/Dec	No meeting				
W	03/Jan	Round 3	←	←	←	←
M	08/Jan		A v Royston			
W	10/Jan	Round 4	←	←	←	←
M	15/Jan					A v Godmanch'r
W	17/Jan	Club Ladder	↔	H v Pboro B		
W	24/Jan	Club Ladder	↔	↔	A v NE Cavaliers	H v NE Patriots
Tu	30/Jan				A v Spalding	
W	31/Jan	Round 5	←	←	←	←
W	07/Feb	Round 6	←	←	←	←
Th	08/Feb			A v Pboro B		
W	14/Feb	Club Ladder	↔	↔	A v Warboys N	←
W	21/Feb	Club Ladder	H v Cambridge	←	←	←
Tu	27/Feb					A v Spalding
W	28/Feb	Round 7	←	←	←	←
W	07/Mar	Club Ladder	H v St Neots	←	←	←
W	14/Mar	Club Ladder	↔	↔	H v Warboys N	←
W	21/Mar	Club Ladder	↔	↔	↔	A v Warboys N
M	26/Mar		A v St Neots			
W	28/Mar	Lancaster Club AGM – No Meeting				
W	04/Apr	Club Ladder	A v Warboys A	←	←	←
W	11/Apr	Club Ladder	↔	↔	↔	H v Warboys N
Tu	17/Apr			A v Spalding		
W	18/Apr	Round 8	←	←	←	←
W	25/Apr	Club Ladder	↔	H v Warboys C	←	←
W	02/May	Rapidplay	←	←	←	←
W	09/May	Round 9	←	←	←	←
W	16/May	Handicap	←	←	←	←
W	23/May	Problem Night	←	←	←	←
W	30/May	Club AGM	←	←	←	←
W	06/Jun	Masterclasses and Summer Sprint until 26 Aug				