

New Englander

Chess Club Update – August 2019

Chairman's Chatter

In uncertain times, returning from holiday to a stack of emails is still something to rely on. Clearing what I thought were the innocuous messages, I was somewhat shocked to see Marcus Misson's name in the obituary column of the ECF newsletter (see <https://www.englishchess.org.uk/rip-marcus-misson/>).

Marcus was my successor as county secretary and it is especially sad to see the passing of a member of the younger generation. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his family and I have dedicated the Match of the Month to his memory.

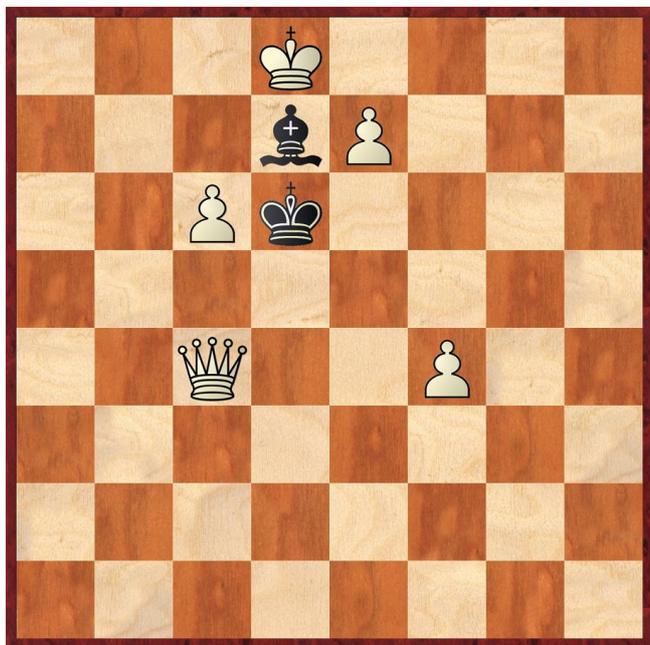
Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

- 28th August Start of Season
 29th August Cambridgeshire Jamboree, 7pm at Godmanchester Comrades Club
 29th September Cambridgeshire Rapidplay from 10am to 6pm at Whittlesford Memorial Hall, CB22 4NE. Please see <http://www.cambschess.co.uk/> for the entry form.

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2



Last Month's solution (Papack 1993)

Position : Bq1n4/1r1rp2N/7Q/7R/2P1k1P1/1NRpPpn1/7B/1K6

1 Qb6 Nf1 2 Ng5# [1 ... d2 2 Nc5#, 1 ... other 2 Nd2#]

Website to Watch

You can still catch the closing rounds of the 2019 British Chess Championships being held in Torquay (<https://www.britishchesschampionships.co.uk/2019/>) until 4th August.

Starting on 17th August, there are 11 rounds of the Sinquefield Cup which features all the top grandmasters from Carlsen downwards. It is part of the Grand Chess Tour cycle of tournaments – for details, see <https://grandchesstour.org/2019-grand-chess-tour/2019-sinquefield-cup>.

Result Round-up

New England Club Ladder

White		Black	
J Sadler	½	½	M Tarabad
P Weinberger	0	1	P Spencer

Position	Change		Player	Record @ 31/07/19
	Month	Overall		
1			P Spencer	1
2			P Weinberger	0
3			M Tarabad	½
4			J Sadler	½

New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League	Cup	550 Team	Total	TPR*
P Spencer		1				1	155
J Sadler		½				½	108
M Tarabad		½				½	128
P Weinberger		0				0	92

* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

Match of the Month

Many of us played against Marcus over the years. My records go back at least a quarter of a century and Chris Russell can even trace games back to 1982 when Marcus was a schoolboy. He was always a respected opponent and through his competitive spirit and enduring love of the game, rose to play on top board for Warboys. Despite his problems, he was almost ever-present during his last season and finished with 1½/2 in league matches against New

England including a draw in March when outgraded by 24 points!

M Misson v P Hanks
Warboys B v Perkins, 18.01.1995

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 exd5 exd5

The Exchange Variation of the French Defence is generally regarded as harmless because it allows both sides to develop freely. However, Psakhis comments that "lovers of isolated queen's pawn position can obtain their favourite structure by means of c2-c4 for White or c7-c5 for Black, thereby diminishing the drawing potential."

4 c4 Nf6
5 Nc3 Bb4
6 Bg5

This looks like an obvious continuation but only 6 Nf3 and 6 Bd3 have appeared in *Informator* in recent years.

6 ... 0-0
7 Nf3 Bg4

There is no pawn to be won by 7 ... Re8+ 8 Be2 dxc4 9 0-0

- 9 ... Be6 10 d5 Bg4 11 Bxc4
- 9 ... Bxc3 10 bxc3 b5 11 a4 c6 12 Ne5 Bb7 13 Bh5 Rf8 (13 ... g6 14 Qf3) 14 Qb1 a6 15 Bf3.

8 Be2 dxc4
9 0-0 c6

Black had nothing to fear from d4-d5 and should calmly play 9 ... Nc6 as 10 d5 Bxf3 11 Bxf3 Ne5 and White still has to work out how to recapture the pawn.

10 Bxc4 Nbd7
11 Qd3 Qc7
12 Rfe1

12 Bxf6 Nxf6 13 Ne5 was Fritz's immediate choice to obtain the knight outpost but it soon favours Marcus's move.

12 ... Bh5
13 Ne5 Ng4

Marcus and I were never ones for quiet games especially if wild complications were in the air. I was obviously hoping for a cheap checkmate after 14 Nxd7 and underestimated the strength of Marcus's reply.

14 Qg3 Ndx5
15 dxe5 Rfe8

Over-optimistic when there was a better and more active alternative in 15 ... Bc5 16 Ne4 Qxe5 17 Bf4 (17 Nxc5 Qxc5) 17 ... Qd4 but Black is still clutching at straws.

16 h3

If 16 Bf4, any queen move leaves my knight without squares after e.g. 16 ... Qa5 17 h3. The best I can do is 17 ... Nxf2 18 Qxf2 Bc5 19 Be3 Rxe5.

16 ... Nxe5

I thought this would hold but there is no other option.

17 Bf4 Bd6
18 Ne4



18 ... Nf3+

I pinned my hopes of an escape route on this move. After all these years, I cannot remember if I even contemplated 18 ... Nxc4 but it is hardly any better provided Marcus eschews exchanges on d6 and continues 19 Nf6+ Kf8 (19 ... Kh8 20 Nxe8) 20 Nxh7+ Kg8 21 Nf6+ Kf8 22 Nxh5.

19 gxf3 Bxf4
20 Nf6+

I was probably still thinking Marcus was digging himself into deeper trouble. His queen is en prise, right? Marcus, however, has it all planned.

20 ... Kh8
21 Rxe8+ Rxe8
22 Qxg7+

22 Nxe8 was also viable and following 22 ... Bxg3 23 Nxc7 Bxc7 24 Re1 f6 25 Re7 may even leave his rook better placed than in the game. Nevertheless, Marcus's move shocked me.

22 ... Kxg7
23 Nxe8+ Kf8
24 Nxc7 Bxc7
25 Rd1 Ke7

Black should have some hope of defending this endgame despite the material disadvantage. I have the two bishops and both sides have pawn weaknesses.

26 Kg2 b5

Perhaps, I should have taken the strategic decision to adopt passive defence but I must have been confident of setting up a fortress by preventing the white king from penetrating my position.

27 Bd3 Bg6

Here goes the bishop pair because 27 ... h6 28 Be4

28 Be4 Bxe4
29 fxe4

Now Marcus has improved his structure.

29 ... Be5
30 b3 a5
31 Kf3 h5

Perhaps, I can contain yet the white king.

32 Ke3 Bd6
33 f4 Bc5+
34 Kf3 Bb6
35 e5 Bc7
36 Ke4

It is not looking good...

36 ... Ke6
37 Rc1 Kd7
38 Kf5 Bd8
39 Rd1+ 1-0

Either 39 ... Kc7 40 e6 fxe6+ 41 Kxe6 and the passed pawn will cost a piece or 39 ... Ke7 40 Rd6 c5 41 Rc6 winning a queenside pawn with Kf5-g5 to come. An efficient endgame demolition by Marcus.

It was only after annotating this game that I realised how your collection of games constitutes an important part of your legacy. As a mirror on your personality, it forms a publishable record of your exuberance, attentiveness and dogged determination. Most significantly, it enshrines many traits in the minds of your opponents and the chess-playing community. Our fallen comrade Marcus has indeed left many pleasant memories.

Paul Hanks

Eye Opener

R Rapport (2686) v M Blübaum (2643)
Germany 2018

1 e4 e6
2 d4 d5
3 exd5 exd5

The same opening as the *Match of the Month* but it quickly takes a different turn without affecting the general character of free piece play for both sides.

4 Nf3 Nc6
5 Nc3 Bb4
6 Bd3 Nge7
7 0-0 Bg4

Without the support of a knight on f6, this bishop looks isolated.

8 h3 Bh5
9 a3 Bd6

Black seems to want to preserve the bishop pair rather than inflicting structural damage without loss of tempo by 9 ... Bxc3 10 bxc3. Instead, he could consider 9 ... Bxf3 10 Qxf3 Nxd4 11 Qg4 Bxc3 12 bxc3 Ne6.

10 Re1 Bxf3

A strange decision after the previous move. Having put value on the bishop pair, Black suddenly discards

them. One problem is that after 10 ... 0-0, White can make the Greek Gift sacrifice 11 Bxh7+

- 11 ... Kh8 12 g4 Kxh7 13 gxh5
- 11 ... Kxh7 12 Ng5+ Kg6 (12 ... Kh6 13.Ne6+ Kg6 14 Qd3+; 12 ... Kg8 13 Qxh5) 13 g4

An alternative might be 10 ... Nxd4 11 g4 Nxf3+ 12 Qxf3 Bg6 13 Nxd5 0-0 14 Bg5 Bh2+ 15 Kxh2 Qxd5 16 Qf4.

11 Qxf3 Nxd4
12 Qxd5 c6
13 Qh5

13 Qxd4?? Bh2+

13 ... Qd7

If 13 ... g6, White can ignore the threat to his queen with 14 Ne4 owing to 14 ... gxh5 15 Nf6+ Kf8 16 Bh6#.

14 Ne4 Ne6

Has Black forgotten 14 ... 0-0-0?



15 Bh6 Qc7

Not 15 ... gxh6?? 16 Nf6+. Now it is too late for 15 ... 0-0-0 16 Nxd6+ Qxd6 17 Qxf7 and Black's knights are hanging.

16 Bc4 Bh2+

The bishop on h6 is still taboo. 16 ... gxh6 17 Nxd6+ Qxd6 18 Rxe6 Qf4 19 Rae1 etc.

17 Kh1 Qe5
18 Ng5 1-0

Black simply cannot protect everything – h2,f7,e6,...