

New Englander

Chess Club Update – December 2019

Chairman's Chatter

There are plenty of subtle hints – background music at the supermarkets, TV advertisements, shortening hours of daylight... All this expense as a gentle reminder that the Club's Christmas Special is coming soon. I look forward to seeing you all then in a social context rather than over-the-board rivalry!

Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

11th December Fenland Knock-out Trophy matches
Cambridge v New England A and
Cavaliers v Peterborough

18th December Club Christmas Special – fun chess
with refreshments

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2



Last Month's solution (F Lazard 1926)

Position : 3K1k1q/3P3B/5NQ1/8/8/8/8/8

1 Nh5 Qg7 2 Qxg7# [1 ... Qf6+ 2 Qxf6#; 1 ... Qxh7 2 Qe8#; 1 ... Q other 2 Qxg8#]

Website to Watch

December is the month for the London Chess Classic, part of which is the Grand Chess Tour Finals. The latter is billed as the "biggest-money showdown of 2019" but with 4 participants this year, it is a pale shadow of its early years. Full details can be found at <https://www.londonchessclassic.com/> for the knock-out matches between 2nd and 8th December.

The last FIDE Grand Prix event is in Tel Aviv 10th-24th December. It is another knock-out competition but this time, starting from 16 grandmasters. Please see the official website www.worldchess.com.

Result Round-up

Cambridgeshire County Chess Leagues

Royston	P	New England A	P
Provisional date : 13 th January 2020			

Warboys C	2	New England B	2
N Greenwood	0	R Ilett	1
M Shaw	1	E Knox	0
P Wells	½	R Jones	½
D Bently	½	N Wedley	½

Warboys B	P	New England B	P
Date to be arranged			

Team 550 Competition

Spalding	P	NE Cavaliers	P
Date to be arranged			

NE Cavaliers	P	Spalding	P
Provisional date : 26 th February 2020			

Fenland Trophy

NE Patriots	3½	St Neots	½
P Hanks	1	C Emery	0
P Spencer	½	P Barkas	½
C Russell	1	M Friday	0
M Ingram	1	F Rock	0

Club Championship

Round 3			
E Smith (0)	0	1	D Lane (0+P)
P Hanks (1+P)	1	0	S Walker (1½)
E Knox (1+P)	½	½	R Ilett (2P)

Round 4			
C Russell (1½+P)	0	1	R Ilett (½+2P)
S Walker (1½)	1	0	N Wedley (1½)
P Spencer (1+P)	½	½	P Weinberger (½)
P Hanks (2+P)	½	½	S Wozniak (2+P)

Postponements			
E Knox	Rd	1	M Tarabad
J Sutherland	Rd	1	R Ilett
D Lane (0)	Rd	2	P Hanks (1)
R Ilett (P)	Rd	2	R Jones (1)
C Russell (½)	Rd	2	P Turp (1)
J Sutherland (½+P)	Rd	3	M Tarabad (0+P)
R Jones (1+P)	Rd	3	P Spencer (1)
S Wozniak (2)	Rd	3	P Turp (1+P)
P Turp (1+2P)	Rd	4	E Knox (1½+P)
D Lane (1+P)	Rd	4	T Ingram (½)
J Sutherland (½+2P)	Rd	4	R Jones (1+2P)
M Tarabad (0+2P)	Rd	4	E Smith (0)

New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League	Cup	550 Team	Total	TPR*
R Ilett	1½		3		½	5	169
P Hanks	2½		½	1	½	4½	162
P Spencer	1½	1	½	½	1	4½	131
R Jones	1		2		1	4	136
S Wozniak	2½				1	3½	141
C Russell	1½		½	1	0	3	109
J Sadler		1½			1	2½	146
S Walker	2½					2½	119
P Weinberger	1	0	1		0	2	93
N Wedley	1½		½			2	91
J Sutherland	½				1	1½	105
P Turp	1		½			1½	136
M Tarabad	0	½			1	1½	103
E Knox	1½		0		0	1½	113
T Ingram	½					½	70
D Lane	1					1	93
M Ingram				1	0	1	89
J Dilley			1			1	177
A Bhattacharyya	0					0	30
E Smith	0					0	44

* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

Chairman's Challenge

Player	AB	ES	SW	MT	NW	JP	JS	Tot
A Bhattacharyya	X	4/3	0	22/1	25/3	29/1	1/4	0
E Smith	4/3	X	11/3	11/3	8/1	19/2	8/1	
S Wozniak	1	11/3	X	8/1	19/2	11/3	19/2	1
M Tarabad	22/1	11/3	8/1	X	19/2	11/3	19/2	
N Wedley	25/3	8/1	19/2	19/2	X	8/1	11/3	
J Parker	29/1	19/2	11/3	11/3	8/1	X	8/1	
J Sutherland	1/4	8/1	19/2	19/2	11/3	8/1	X	

New England Club Ladder

Position	Change		Player	Record @ 20/11/19
	Month	Overall		
1	-	+3	J Sadler	½,1
2	+2	+1	M Tarabad	½,0
3	-1	-1	P Spencer	1
4	-1	-1	P Weinberger	0

Match of the Month

Many of us must rush home after a game and feed the moves into our chosen software for an authoritative assessment of the sequence of positions that arose. For the following game, I have included in brackets the evaluation by Deep Fritz 13 in multiples of a pawn. However, finding the reasons behind the number is where the process becomes instructive.

P Spencer v P Turp

Club Championship Rd 7; 15.05.2019

This game could well be described as an example of how difficult it can be to win a won game. You may say "it's not over until....". I had played Paul earlier in the season and won but not before I had won an exchange then blundered a piece back! This time, I obviously decided I should just blunder the piece first!

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1      d4                d5
2      c4                c6
3      Nc3               Nf6
4      Nf3               Bf5

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The Slav Defence to the Queen's Gambit differs from the Semi-Slav version (featured in September 2019) by withholding an early e7-e6 so that I can develop my bishop outside the pawn chain. A major alternative is 4 ... dxc4 which seems to be the grandmaster's choice because it eliminates any surprises based on White's Qd1-b3 hitting both b7 and the pawn on d5.

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5      e3                e6
6      a3

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By permitting Bf8-b4, White is inviting pressure on c3. It is not serious e.g. 6 Be2 Bb4 7 Qb3 when

- after 7 ... Bxc3 8 bxc3, the pawns are not going to be doubled for long and the open b file is more useful

- 7 ... Qa4 8 0-0 removes the pin because without the black queen at home, 8 ... Bxc3 is answered by 9 Qxb7.

6 Nh4 violates the principle of not moving a piece twice in the opening but here, it is rewarded with the bishop pair and doubled pawns.

6 ... **Nbd7**

The position is now equal.

7 **Be2** **Ne4**
8 **0-0** **Ndf6**

At this stage, there is very little difference between the range of options but a game S Mamedyarov (2753) v N Nguyen (2625), Khanty-Mansiysk 2013 continued 8 ... Bd6 9 Bd3 Bg6 10 Qc2 Nxc3 11 Qxc3 0-0 12 Re1 Bxd3 13 Qxd3 dxc4 14 Qxc4 c5. White won after 50 moves but the final evaluation of (0.22) suggests the opening was not to blame and Black can improve with 13 ... Nf6 with freer development in a solid position (-0.22).

9 **Bd3**

By conceding a tempo, White acknowledges Black's control of the centre (-0.42) whereas 9 cxd5 exd5 (not 9 ... cxd5? 10 Nxe4 Nxe4 11 Qa4+ forces an embarrassing 11 ... Ke7 though 10 Bb5+ might tempt 10 ... Nd7 which is even worse after 11 Ne5 Nef6 12 e4 dxe4 13 Bg5) 10 Nxe4 Nxe4 11 Ne5 is a level, almost symmetrical contest (0.17).

9 ... **Bd6**
10 **h3** **h6**

Played to keep a slight squeeze on White. A predecessor game sought to capitalise on Black's slight lead in development with 10 ... 0-0 11 Qc2 h6 12 Nd2 Nxc3 13 bxc3 Bxd3 14 Qxd3 Rc8 (M Saad Bouzid v M Cherrad, Algeria 2001) and Black went on to win in 67 moves.

11 **cxd5** **exd5**
12 **Ne2** **Qc8**

Totally the wrong idea (0.09). 12 ... Qc7! would have covered the e5 square (-0.58).

13 **Ne5** **Qc7?**

One move too late and completely missing the obvious reply (1.60)! The aggressive intent behind my twelfth move is shown by the sample line 13 ... Bxh3 14 gxh3 Qxh3 15 f3 Ng3 16 Re1 Qh1+ 17 Kf2 Qh2# and either 16 Nxc3 Qxc3+ or 15 ... Bxe5 16 dxe5 Ng4 lead to a perpetual check. White has some tricky choices which even the computer takes time to resolve but sadly, he can defend easily with 15 Nf4 Qh4 16 Ng2 Qh3 17 Qf3 or not so obviously, 14 f3 Bxe5 15 dxe5 Nh5 16 fxe4 Bxg2 17 Rf2 (17 Kxg2 Qg4+ is another draw).

One simple try would instead be Ne4-g5 either immediately (0.03) or after 13 ... 0-0 14 f3. There is even 13 ... Nc5 as a creative solution.

14 **f3**

Oh dear, what to do now? The bishop on f5 is hanging if I move the knight. I thought long and hard (I should have done that sooner!) and decided the only hope I

had was to try and convince White I was attacking. Just maybe I could do something.

14 ... **Bxh3**

With correct play, White has a large material advantage (2.94). Objectively, 14 ... Bxe5 (1.57) might work better when 15 dxe5 Qxe5 16 fxe4 Bxe4 17 Bxe4 Nxe4 18 Nc3 Nc5 gives me two pawns for the piece and an isolated pawn target.

15 **gxh3** **Ng5**
16 **h4** **Ne6**
17 **f4** **0-0-0**
18 **Ng3** **g6**

Too quiet (2.38). Opening attacking lines with 18 ... g5 was called for (1.97) though after 19 Nf5 gxf4 20 exf4, it is hard to see how my forces penetrate e.g. 20 ... Ng7 21 Nxd6+ Rxd6 or 20 ... Rhg8+ 21 Kh1 Ne4 22 Qe1 f6.

19 **Bd2** **Rdg8**
20 **Bc3** **Ne8**
21 **Kf2** **Qe7**
22 **Rh1** **g5**
23 **hxc5** **hxc5**
24 **Nf5** **Qf6**
25 **Nxd6+** **Nxd6**

The White position may look a little loose but he is OK, just better to the tune of three pawns. However with time ticking, White goes wrong.

26 **Qg4??**

The pendulum swings and instead of 26 Ng4 Qe7 27 f5 with a winning advantage (2.72), the assessment plummets to (0.18). Rather than reinforcement, the queen is a target. I am back in the game!

26 ... **gxf4**
27 **Rxh8** **Qxh8**

Fritz prefers 27 ... fxe3+ 28 Kxe3 Qxh8 29 Nxf7 Rxg4 (29 ... Nxf7 30 Qxe6+) 30 Nxh8 Rg3+ 31 Kd2 (31 Ke2 Nf4+) 31 ... Rg2+ 32 Ke3 Rg3+ with yet another perpetual check.



28 **Ng6?**

This looks good but is a mistake (-2.68). I saw 28 Rh1 would end any hopes I had but luckily Paul goes wrong again. White is OK (0.30) after 28 Rh1! fxe3+ 29 Ke2 Qxh1 30 Qxg8+ Kc7 31 Qg3.

28 ... **Qh2+**
29 **Kf3?**

The computer favours Black after 29 Kf1 Rxc6 30 Bxc6 (-2.65) but the material balance (R+2B v 2N+2P) is just crazy! You would need to probe much deeper than 30 ... Nc4 to know whether White's exposed king or Black's material deficit is the bigger liability.

After the text move, I should win at a canter (-10.73). Don't panic!

29 ... **Kc7?**

And now Black starts to go wrong. The clock was ticking down and I knew there was a way to proceed but just did not see 29 ... Ne4! (-1.91). Not only does this threaten 30 ... Qf2# but 30 ... Ng5+ (either knight) will force White to give up his queen.

Most attempts at defence following 29 ... Ne4 are for connoisseurs of king hunts :-

- 30 Qg1 N6g5+ 31 Kg4 Qh3+ 32 Kxf4 Qf3+ 33 Ke5 f6#
- 30 Qg2 N6g5+
 - 31 Ke2 f3+
 - 31 Kg4 Qxg2+ 32 Kf5 (32 Kxf4 Qg3+ 33 Kf5 fxc6#) 32 ... Qh3+ 33 Ke5 f6+ 34 Kxf4 Ne6#
 - 31 Qxg5 Qf2+ 32 Kg4 Qg3+ 33 Kf5 Qxg5#

What were the chances of me finding these intricate checkmates when I was unable to see the first move of the combination?

The only credible continuation is 30 Bxe4 dxe4+ 31 Kxe4 Rxc6 when I have regained my piece and the enduring attack will soon force resignation e.g.

- 32 Qf5 Rg5 33 Qxf7 Qc2+ 34 Kf3 Rg3#
- 32 Qf3 Qc2+ 33 Ke5 Rg5+ 34 Kd6 Qg6 and either 35 ... Nd4+ winning the queen or 35 ... Nc7+ 36 Ke7 Qe6+ 37 Kf8 Qe8#
- 32 Qd1 Qh7
 - 33 Kf3 Qh3+ 34 Ke4 Qxe3+ 35 Kf5 Ng7#
 - 33 exf4 Rg3+ 34 Ke5 Re3+ 35 Kf6 Qg6+ 36 Ke7 Ng5+ 37 Kf8 Nh7#
 - 33 Ke5 Rh6 34 exf4 f6+ 35 Kxe6 Qd7#

Don't computers make it look easy!

30 **Qh4** **Qxh4?**

Oh dear! Here we go again. The wrong time to simplify (-0.07) and again, I missed the best move. Black should play 30 ... Ng5+! (-1.93)

- after 31 Kg4 Qg2+ 32 Kxf4 (32 Kh5 fxc6+ 33 Kh6 Ndf7#) Ne6+ 33 Ke5 Rxc6, there are several lengthy paths to checkmate e.g. 34 Qe7+ Kc8 35 Qxd6 Qh2+ 36 Kf5 Qh5#
- 31 Qxg5 Qh3+ 32 Kxf4 (32 Ke2 Qxe3+ 33 Kd1 Qxd3+ 34 Kc1 Rxc6 etc.) fxc6 33 Ba5+

(33 Qe7+? Kc8 34 Rg1 Re8 winning) 33 ... Kb8. Black is much better but there must be plenty of mistakes left for both sides.

31 **Nxh4** **Rg3+**
32 **Kf2**

Fritz considers this position equal!!

32 ... **Rxe3**
33 **Bc2**

I still have a slight edge (-0.68) due to the activity of my rook but 33 Rd1! (-0.02) would equalise.

33 ... **Rh3**

Again, I help out (0.00) when 33 ... Ng5 (-0.68) 34 Nf5 Nge4+ 35 Bxe4 Nxe4+ 36 Kg1 Rh3 would let my pieces invade and support the passed pawn.

34 **Nf3** **Ne4+**
35 **Ke2** **Rg3**

36 ... Rg2+ is the strong threat.

36 **Be1**

One last little mistake from White (-1.34) in place of 36 Rf1 (0.00) bringing the last piece into play.

36 ... **Rg2+!**

Black has strong compensation.

37 **Kd3**

The white king walks towards a mating net (-2.43) when 37 Kd1 is the only move (-1.24).

37 ... **c5**
38 **Rc1??**

38 dxc5 (-2.33) N6xc5+ 39 Kd4 Rxc2 40 Kxd5 returns the piece leaving me with winning pawns. 38 Bb3 might have been more testing as 38 ... c4+ 39 Bxc4 dxc4 40 Kxe4 is another pitfall. Instead, 38 ... cxd4 39 Bxd5 N4c5+ 40 Kc4 Rc2+ 41 Kb4 Rxb2+ 42 Kc4 (42 Ka5 b6#) 42 ... b5# would have been a suitably silly climax.

Black has managed to swindle his way out! Paul completely missed the next move and with the first move of the rook,

38 ... **c4#** **0-1**

Phil Turp