

# New Englander

## Chess Club Update – April 2020

### **Chairman's Chatter**

I hope you are all in good health and taking appropriate steps to stay safe from the coronavirus pandemic. Anything that wipes out the *Diary Dates* and *Website to Watch* sections of the newsletter must be serious! To compensate, I have included an expanded *Puzzle Problem* article to include finding the winning continuation from an actual game position.

We have suspended all chess meetings but that does not put an end to all chess. Paul Spencer has formed a virtual club on [www.chess.com](http://www.chess.com) to permit us to continue informal tournaments - most enjoyable. **I would encourage all members to participate for two hours from 7-30pm on a Wednesday evening.**

If you are not already a member, the process you must follow is :-

- Launch your browser and navigate to the website [www.chess.com](http://www.chess.com)
- On the left, click on the "Sign Up" area. A pop-up box will invite you to enter a username, your email address and a password. You can also indicate your skill level.
- A few moments later, your Inbox will receive an email titled "Activate Your Account" in which need to click on the Highlighted box
- You may then return to Chess.com and click on the "Log In" area above "Sign Up". A small screen appears in which you enter your email address and password.
- You have arrived at your Home page which will subsequently show completed games and allow you to replay and analyse them.
- Hover your mouse pointer over "Connect" on the left-hand side and choose clubs from the menu that pops up.
- In the "Clubs" dialogue box, type "New England Chess" and click on the magnifying glass to search for our club.
- The top result should be for "New England Chess" formed on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2019. Click on the club name.
- On the first occasion, you will have to request to "Join" and wait to be accepted. Thereafter, you will immediately enter the club chat forum which will list posts from our members including notification of tournaments.
- On the right-hand side, if you click on "Members", you will see a list of players against whom there is a row of small icons. The chessboard with a plus sign will enable you to challenge them to a game.

I hope you are able to join. In my first game, the computer reckoned my accuracy was 98.9%. Can anyone better that?

In these otherwise dismal times, it is a good idea to banish the depression by looking ahead to a brighter future. At some point, the restrictions on movement will be lifted but players will have to proceed with caution until we are confident that the outbreak is over. In this period, I am proposing we adopt rules akin to playing a visually impaired opponent i.e.

- Each player sets up his own board and positions them in parallel two metres apart.
- Players sit opposite each other but offset by the separating distance (social distancing) with the clock mutually at arm's length
- Play continues on each board with players announcing their move before pressing the clock and making their opponent's stated move on the board in front of them.

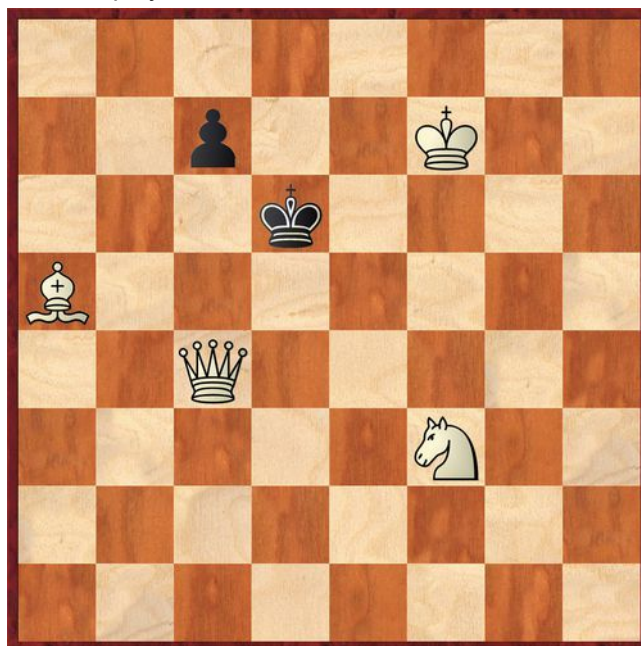
This seems to separate the players and avoid touching each other's pieces. The only disadvantage appears to be that only one player will be able to read the clock. I hope common courtesy will prevail and verbal requests for the time status will be honoured.

I look forward to shaking hands with you all once again.

*Paul Hanks*

### **Puzzle Problems**

White to play and mate in 2

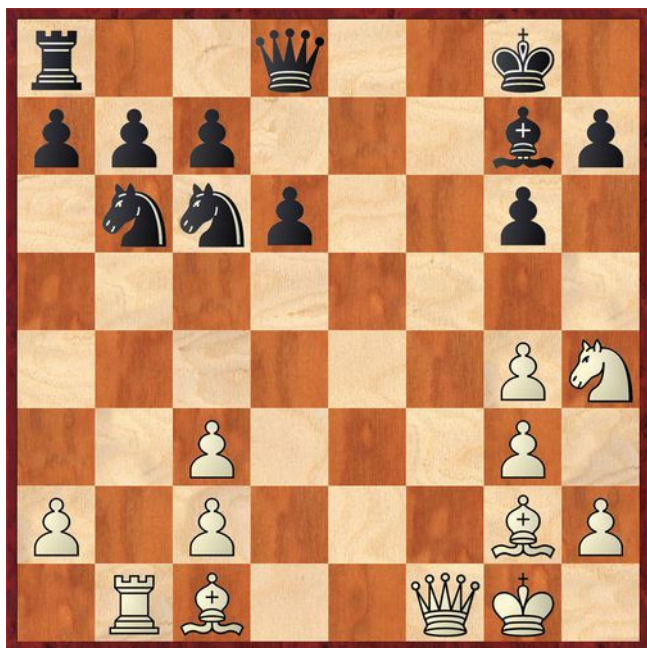


Last Month's solution (Jones 1991)

Position : 8/4p1K1/2R5/4P3/2B1k3/8/5Q2/8

1 Be6 Kxe5 2 Qe3# [1 ... Kd3 2 Bf5#]

White to play and win



## Result Round-up

Cambridgeshire County Chess Leagues

New England B	3½	Warboys B	½
P Turp	½	P Baddeley	½
P Spencer	1	M Onyons	0
E Knox	1	K Harbour	0
R Jones	1	Default	0

Club Championship

Round 2			
D Lane (0)	0	1	P Hanks (1)
Round 3			
R Jones (1½)	½	½	P Spencer (1)

Suspended Games			
C Russell (½)	<b>Rd 2</b>	P Turp (1)	
S Wozniak (2)	<b>Rd 3</b>	P Turp (1+P)	
P Turp (1+2P)	<b>Rd 4</b>	E Knox (1½+P)	
D Lane (1+P)	<b>Rd 4</b>	T Ingram (½)	
J Sutherland (½+P)	<b>Rd 4</b>	R Jones (2)	
D Lane (1+2P)	<b>Rd 5</b>	J Sutherland (½+2P)	
T Ingram (½+P)	<b>Rd 5</b>	E Smith (0+P)	

Re-drawn games			
E Knox (Rd 1)	1	0	P Weinberger (Rd 5)
J Sutherland (Rd 3)			E Smith (Rd 4)

Online Tournament : 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Player	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Total
P Hanks	1	1	1	3
E Knox	0	1	1	2
C Russell	1 <sub>d</sub>	1	0	2
P Spencer	1	0	0	1
T Ingram	0 <sub>d</sub>	0	1	1
E Smith	0	0	0	0

Next Event : **1<sup>st</sup> April @ 7-30pm. Please register from 6-30pm in order to comply with the start time.**

New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League	Cup	550 Team	Total	TPR*
R Ilett	4		6	1	2	13	168
E Knox	3½		4½	1	1½	10½	133
R Jones	2½		3½		3½	9½	143
P Spencer	2½	1	2	½	3	9	125
P Hanks	4		½	1	2	7½	153
J Dille			4½	1		5½	209
C Russell	2		2	1	0	5	105
S Walker	2½				2½	5	116
P Weinberger	1	0	1		2	4	104
P Turp	1½		2		½	4	142
J Sutherland	½				3	3½	91
S Wozniak	2½				1	3½	132
N Wedley	2		½		½	3	97
J Sadler		1½			1	2½	146
M Ingram				1	1½	2½	99
M Tarabad	0	½	0		1	1½	87
D Lane	1				0	1	79
T Ingram	½					½	70
E Smith	0				0	0	42
J Parker					0	0	41

\* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

## Match of the Month

Why is chess so difficult?

My answer is that if it wasn't, we probably wouldn't like it so much! There are a lot of positions that are straightforward and easy to analyse, but every so often you will get a game where the best move is really hard to find. This is particularly frustrating when you know that you have the advantage but there just isn't any killer blow. Here is a recent example of mine.

**N Wedley v C Russell**

New England Club Championship Rd 5, 12.02.2020

<b>1</b>	<b>d4</b>	<b>Nf6</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Bf4</b>	<b>d5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>e3</b>	<b>g6</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>c3</b>	<b>Bg7</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Nd2</b>	

The London system is a versatile method of meeting a variety of defences for Black and currently appears popular in our league. White's dark-squared bishop can become very dangerous and it is to Black's advantage to swap it off for a knight, when possible. Hence I ventured:

<b>5</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>Nh5?!</b>
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This is a bit premature. I had overlooked that White can play 6 Bg5! Nd7 7 Be2 Nhf6. Fritz rates this as level but the annoying bishop is still in play. However, Norman is obliging (for once) with

<b>6</b>	<b>Bg3</b>	
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when experience suggests that the open rook's file does not compensate for the loss of the bishop.

<b>6</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>Nxg3</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>hxg3</b>	<b>0-0</b>

Not 7 ... e5 8 dxe5 Bxe5 9 Ngf3 Bg7 losing a tempo. I have a tiny edge. But now Norman embarks on a dubious plan to try and develop his kingside attack.

<b>8</b>	<b>Bd3?!</b>	
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Putting the bishop in no man's land and allowing the centre to be opened up. 8 g4!? (to prevent h5 as a defence) may just be playable but relatively best is 8 f4! after which could follow 8 ... c5 9 Ngf3 Nd7 10 Be2 Nf6 11 Ne5 h5 12 g4 hxg4 13 Nxg4 Nxg4 14 Bxg4 Qb6 when Black still holds a small advantage due to White's central king.

Okay, so now here is an example of what I mean about the game being difficult. I have an edge, but how to exploit it? The moves e5, c5 and Nd7 all look sensible. Perhaps it is easiest to argue that 8 ... e5 9 dxe5 Bxe5 10 Nf3 Bb7 loses a tempo, though Black still retains an edge. Fritz found that against 8 ... c5, White can play 9 Nh3 Nd7 10 Nf3 b6 11 Nhg5 h6 12 Nh3 (12 Bxg6 fxc6 13 Ne6 Qe8 14 Nc7 is interesting) 12 ... Bb7 also with a small plus. Instead, I chose

<b>8</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>Nd7</b>
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This cramps my light-squared bishop but looks to offer the best chance to launch an attack in the centre. Now Norman has a rush of blood to the head!

<b>9</b>	<b>g4?!</b>	
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The threat of 9 ... e5 needs to be prevented. 9 f4! is necessary but after that, 9 ... Nf6 prevents g4 and Black is still better.

<b>9</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>e5!</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>f3?!</b>	

Not 10 dxe5? Nxe5 11 Be2 c5 when White is in difficulties. But 10 Nb3 or Be2 are both better defences. The text creates a new weakness at e3 making it almost impossible to castle.

<b>10</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>exd4?!</b>
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Not great. I was far too keen to break up the centre and get at White's king. Much better is 10 ... Re8! (threatening 11 ... exd4) 11 Ne2 c5! 12 dxc5 Nxc5 13 Bc2 Qb6 with advantage.

Also good is 10 ... c5 11 Ne2 cxd4, which gives White the difficult choice of which pawn retakes.

- If 12 exd4 Re8 13 Kf1 Qg5 14 dxe5 Qe3 15 Bb5 (15 ... Nxe5 16 Bxe8 Nd3 is an easy trap to avoid) a6 16 Bxd7 Bxd7 17 Nb3 Rxe5
- or 12 cxd4 Re8 13 Kf2 exd4 14 exd4 Nf6 15 Bb5 (if 15 Nf4 a5 16 g3 Qb6 17 Kg2 Qxe4) 15 ... Re7 16 g5 Ne8.

<b>11</b>	<b>cxd4</b>	
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11 exd4 looks better but after 11 ... c5 12 Ne2 Qb6 Qb3 Qd6 14 Qd1 cxd4 15 Nxd4 Re8, White is still in trouble.

<b>11</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>Re8</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Kf2</b>	

Best.

<b>12</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>c5</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Ne2</b>	

And here is another difficult decision. I am clearly better but what should come next?

<b>13</b>	<b>...</b>	<b>Qb6?!</b>
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This looked good at the time but there are two stronger alternatives:

- 13 ... cxd4! Then if
  - ♦ 14 exd4 (best) Qb6 15 Nb3 Ne5 16 Qd2 Bd7 17 Rae1 (not 17 Nc5 Nxd3+ 18 Nxd3 Bb5 wins) 17 ... Rad8 18 Nc5 (if 18 Nc3?! Nc4!) 18 ... Bxg4
    - 19 fxg4 Nxg4+ with a winning attack e.g. 20 Kf3 (20 Kg1/f1 Qf6) Re3+ 21 Kxg4 h5+ 22 Kf4 Bh6#
    - 19 dxe5 Qxc5+ 20 Kf1 Bd7 21 f4 f6 22 exf6 Bxf6 23 f5 Bg7 with a strong position.
  - ♦ Alternatively 14 Nxd4 Rxe3! 15 Kxe3 Qe7+ 16 Kf2 Bxd4+ 17 Kf1 Ne5 18 Be2 Bd7 19 g3 Re8 20 Rh2 Bb6 21 Rc1 Nc6 22 Rc3 Nb4 23 a4 d4 24 Rd3 Nxd3 25 Bxd3 Bxa4 winning.
- Or 13 ... Qf6!? There then could follow: 14 Nf1 (which defends e3 and frees the white king) 14 ... cxd4 15 exd4 Nb6 16 Kg1 Nc4 17 Bxc4 dxc4 18 Nfg3 b5 19 Qd2 Qb6 20 Rd1 Bb7 with a won game.

I had missed

<b>14</b>	<b>Qb3!</b>	<b>Qe6</b>
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Threatens both 15 ... Qxe3+ and c4 but there is a simple defence. Fritz prefers 14 ... Qd6! 15 Qa3 Qf6 16 Bb5 cxd4 17 Nxd4 a6 with a small lead.

<b>15</b>	<b>Bb1??</b>	
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This should lose. Admittedly Norman is in real difficulties. If 15 Bc2 cxd4! smashes through (e.g. 16 e4 Nc5 17 Qb5 Qe7 18 b4 dxe4 19 Qxc5 e3+ 20 Kf1 d3 21 Qxe7 Rxe7 22 Bxd3 Bxa1 23 Nc4 Bd7) and if 15 e4 c4 16 Bxc4 dxc4 17 Nxc4 Nb6 18 Ne3 Qxb3 19 axb3 Be6 20 d5 Bd7 is winning. However, we both missed 15 Bb5! Qe7 16 Qa3 a6 17 Nf1 cxd4 18 Qxe7 Rxe7 19 Bxd7 dxe3+ 20 Nxe3 Rxd7 21 Rad1 d4 when the game is still in the balance.

15 ... cxd4  
16 Nf1?!

Fritz says e4 is best

16 ... Nc5!  
17 Nf4!?

Desperation – Norman said after the game that he had to try something. Fritz proposes 17 Qb4 dxe3+ 18 Kg1 Qb6 when there is no quick win, though after 19 Qxb6 axb6 20 a4 d4, Black's attack is overwhelming.

Now I am one good move away from a convincing win, but what is it?



I had thought that swapping queens ought to win the exchange at least, but also I felt there was more in the position. If 17 Nxb3!? 18 Nxe6 Nxa1 19 Nxc7 Kxc7 20 exd4 Bd7, I assumed I would lose the knight on a1 plus my extra centre pawn. But after 21 Bd3 Rac8 22 Ne3 Rxe3! 23 Kxe3 Nc2+24 Kf2 Nxd4, I am a knight and a pawn to the good!

I also considered 17 Qd6 when I can win the rook in the corner with 18 Qxd5 dxe3+ 19 Kg3 Qxd5 20 Nxd5 Bxb2 but I worried that White had the resource of Nc7 forking my rooks in turn. Yeah, I had not realised that simply Be5+ covers c7 (sigh). If 21 Nc7? e2 wins, and if 21 Nfxe3 Bxa1 22 Bxg6 Be5+ 23 f4 hxg6 24 fxe5 Rxe5 25 Nf6+ Kg7 26 Ned5 g5 when I emerge a whole rook up!

Anyway, to prevent the apparent need to swap queens I played

17 ... Qc6?

I sweated 11 minutes over this move and it is horrible! Both of the lines above are better than this and both of either Qe5 or Qd6 are **vastly** superior! I wanted to avoid leaving my Nc5 en prise but exchanging for the white knight on f4 is a much better idea.

- 17 ... Qe5!! White has nothing better than 18 Nd3 dxe3+ 19 Ke2 Nxb3 20 Nxe5 Nxa1 and I am a rook and 2 pawns ahead. Game over.
- 17 ... Qd6!! also wins easily. If 18 Qxd5 dxe3+ 19 Kg3 Qc7! (This was the move I missed, grrr!) Now the bishop has to be sacrificed to get the rook out of the corner e.g. 20 Bxg6 hxg6 21 Rc1 Be5 22 Kh3 Bxf4 23 Rxc5 Qb6 24 Qc4 e2 25 Nh2 Bd2 wins. If 18 Qd1 dxe3+ 19 Nxe3 Qxf4 wins. Fritz prefers the tricky 18 Qa3 dxe3+ 19 Nxe3 Bd4 20 Nfxd5 Qxd5 21 Rd1 Rxe3 22 Rxd4 Rxf3+ 23 gxf3 Qxd4+ 24 Qe3 Qxb2+ but Black is still winning.

18 Qxd5 dxe3+

As above 18 ... Qc7! is better.

19 Nxe3 Qb6!

Finally, a move that Fritz approves of! If 19 ... Bxb2 20 Bc2 Bxa1 21 Rxa1 Qf6 22 Rd1 Qxf4 23 Qxc5 Be6, Black is the exchange up but with still work to do.

20 Qd2

20 Rxh7!? looks drastic but the rook cannot be taken. 20 ... Kxh7?? 21 Bxg6+! Qxg6 (forced, else Black is mated though White wins anyway with 22 Nxc6.) However 20 ... Qxb2+ 21 Bc2 Qxa1 22 Rxc7+ Kxc7 23 Qxc5 Bd7 is still a complicated win!

20 ... Be6!

Fritz agrees, getting the rooks in play is best.

21 Bxg6?!

Fritz prefers 21 Nxe6 Rxe6 22 Kg3 Bxb2 23 Bxg6 Be5+ but the game is still lost.

21 ... hxg6

22 Rae1

Fritz prefers 22 Rad1.

22 ... Rad8

23 Qc2 Bxa2!

I am still unable to find that killer blow. Fritz agrees that this is the best move, but I took 8 of my remaining 18 minutes over this. The game is about to descend into farce...

24 Kg3 Qxb2??

Another stinker! Trying to pick up the pace, I simply left the knight hanging. To rub salt into the wound 24 ... Be5!! is lethal – threatening 25 ... Bxf4+ 26 Kxf4 Qc7+ when the wandering king gets mated. White has no way to defend the knight e.g. 25 Ned5 Bxd5 and Fritz is reduced to recommending 26 Rxe5 Rxe5.

25 Qxc5

Gratefully taken!

25 ... Bd4??

Yet another mistake, but now I am dreadfully short of time. 25 ... Be5! 26 Nd1 Bxf4+ 27 Kxf4 Qd2+ 28 Re3 Rc8 29 Qa3 Rxe3 30 Nxe3 Rc3 31 Qxa7 Rxe3 32 Kg3 (32 Qxe3 g5+33 Ke4 Qd5#) Qd6+ 33 Kf2 Ra3 34 Qxb7 Qd4+ 35 Kg3 Qe5+ 36 Kf2 Be6 wins.

**26 Qg5 Bxe3?!**

Now trying to simplify the position but I had not seen that Norman has positioned his queen to attack my Rd1. If 26 ... Qb6 27 Qh6 Bc3 28 Qh7+ Kf8 29 Qh6+ Bg7 30 Qh4 Qc5! still gives me a theoretical win.

**27 Rxe3 Rc8**

The penny drops!

**28 Rxe8+ Rxe8**

After holding an advantage of more than 10 points at some stages of this game, Fritz finally rates this position as dead level! White has a forced perpetual check with 29 Nxc6 fxc6 30 Qxc6+ Kf8 31 Qd6+ Kg8 32 Qg6+.

**29 Qh6?!**

Norman wants a win, but my extra pawn still counts. After 29 ... Qe5 Fritz rates me better. But I have only 2 minutes left now. There rapidly follows:

**29 ... Qg7?**

After 30 Qxc7 Kxc7, 31 Ra1! draws.

**30 Qg5 Bc4**

**31 Qc5 b5**

**32 Qxa7 Qe5**

**33 Qf2??**

Played too quickly. Norman is clearly trying to push me against the clock, but it is his turn to blunder. (33 Qa1! Qxa1 32 Rxa1 Kf8)

**33 ... g5!**  
**34 Rh5 Qxf4+**  
**35 Kh3 Qf6?**

Apparently I have a forced win with 35 ... f5 which Fritz informs me is mate in 24 moves after 36 Qg3 fxc4+ 37 Kh2 b4 etc. You could see that, right?

**36 Qd2 Kf8**  
**37 Qb4+ Kg7**  
**38 Qb1 Qg6?? 1/2-1/2**

I offered Norman a draw which he accepted.

Had I seen 38... Rh8! immediately I might well have played it, but I had just 20 seconds on my clock and would have probably lost the resulting endgame, which, according to Fritz, I am now 'clearly winning'. Black's extra piece is decisive.

If 38 ... Rh8! 39 Rxc8 (If 39 Qc1? Rxc5+ 40 gxc5 Be6+ wins) 39 ... Kxh8 40 Kg3 Qd6+ 41 Kf2 Qd2+ 42 Kg3 b4 43 Qa1+ Kh7 44 Qe5 Qf4+ wins.

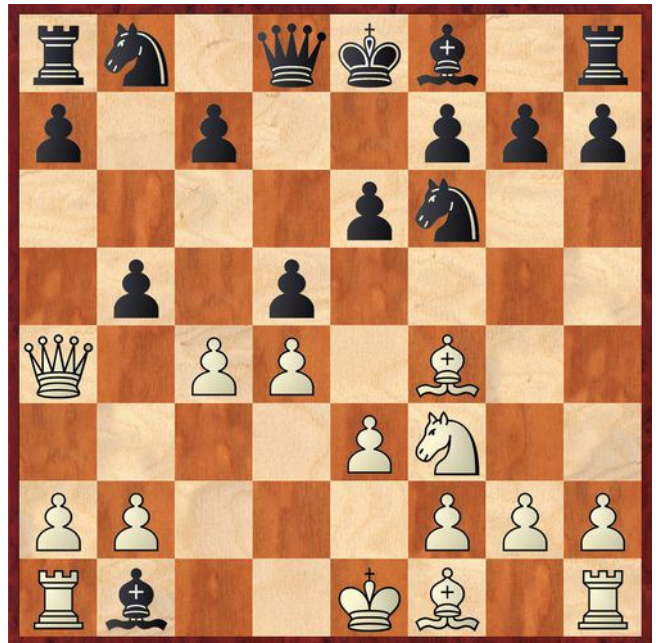
All of which goes to show that (IMHO) chess is really difficult – annoyingly so! Just because the computer insists that you have a crushing advantage does not mean that it will be easy to find.

*Chris Russell*

## Eye Opener

**E Inarkiev v R Wojtaszek**  
 Moscow 2019

1	d4	Nf6
2	Nf3	d5
3	Bf4	Bf5
4	c4	e6
5	e3	Bxb1
6	Qa4+	b5



I can only imagine Black hoped to extricate his bishop after 7 Qxb5+ c6 but the queen has a satisfactory retort 8 Qb7. Nevertheless, White is not that bothered about material.

7	cx b5	Be4
8	b6+	

The bishop is away but at what cost? 8 ... Nfd7/Ke7 9 b7 are obviously bad. The alternative 8 ... Qd7 9 bxc7

- 9 ... Nc6 10 Bb5
- 9 ... Bb4+ 10 Qxb4 Nc6 11 Qb7 Rc8 12 Bb5
- 9 ... Qxa4 10.c8Q+ Ke7 11 Qb7+

also look dreadful. By a process of elimination...

8	...	Nbd7
9	bxc7	Qe7

9 ... Qc8 10 Ba6 traps the black queen.

10	a3	
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White can be patient. Black is prevented from simplification by 10 ... Qb4+ and has to deal with the threat of 11 Rc1 etc. If 10 ... Rc8 11 Ba6 Rxc7 12 Bxc7, White has a material advantage, a raging attack and a rook that will still want to penetrate down the c file after Ra1-c1 and Bc7-a5. Black clutches vainly at straws...

10	...	Bxf3
11	gxf3	g5
12	Qc6	Rc8
13	Ba6	1-0