

# New Englander

## Chess Club Update – May 2021

### Chairman's Chatter

Springtime, definitely! I have heard my first cuckoo, seen my first wheatear and optimism is in the air. This month has even seen the resumption in Russia of top level chess competition played over the board. Is it too early to reach for holiday brochures? If the UK trends continue, re-starting club play in September seems to be realistic.

Please look out for notification of the AGM in the coming months. We shall have to review options for a new venue, revised subscriptions, player commitment and the team structure for next season. Best of all, naturally, will be the opportunity to meet each other again. See you then!

*Paul Hanks*

### Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2. Don't forget the black queen on h8 when you tackle this month's challenge from the ECF newsletter.



Last Month's solution (Marandyuk 1969)

Position : 8/7B/3K4/3R4/4p3/4pk2/8/6Q1

1 Bg6 e2/Kf4 2 Rf5# [1 ... Ke2 2 Bh5#]

### Result Round-up

Online Club Championship

Round 1			
J Sadler = Rd 2 (1)	P	P	P Turp

Round 2			
P Turp (P)	½	½	E Knox (0)
R Taylor (½)	P	P	P Hanks (0)

Round 3			
P Walker(2)			P Spencer (2)
E Knox (½)	0	1	R Taylor (½+P)
M Tarabad (0)			P Turp (½+P)

Round 4			
P Hanks = Rd 3 (0+P)			M Tarabad (0+P)
J Sadler (1+P)			P Walker(2+P)
P Spencer (2+P)			R Taylor (1½+P)
P Turp (½+2P)			P Hanks (0+2P)

### Iceni League

Norfolk & Norwich	6	NE U1700	2
"StephenO52"	0½	C Ross	1½
"JerungPutih"	11	P Walker	00
"LaupMiths"	½1	R Ilett	½0
"devonexile"	11	P Spencer	00

NE U1350	3	Norwich Juniors	5
P Spencer	11	"jackstone2104"	00
M Tarabad	10	"petergstone58468"	01
J Jennings	00	"ADannatt26"	11
S Walker	00	"Thecrazyhorseman"	11

### Online tournaments : April 2021

Player	April			Total	Tie break
	7 <sup>th</sup>	14 <sup>th</sup>	28 <sup>th</sup>		
P Walker	2	4	1	6	1
R Ilett	3	3	-	6	-
P Hanks	1	3	1	4	1
P Spencer	-	-	3	3	-
C Russell	-	2	1	3	-
M Tarabad	-	1	1	2	-
J Jennings	0	1½	-	1½	-
S Walker	-	1	-	1	-

## Match of the Month

It is always satisfying to end a Masterclass session on a high note, a veritable *coup de grâce* but this was a proper bombshell. Not the sparkling finale of great depth and beauty, just a simple offhand remark. Honorary member, Chris Ross, casually mentioned "Oh! I've just finished writing my book."

We can now expect all those occasions when we had him on the ropes in the club championship to be immortalised and laid bare to enthral the rest of the unenlightened chess world. Well, almost... As a result, it is opportune to give a possible foretaste of what to expect. Here are some games of Chris's together with his annotations supplemented at times by paraphrased snippets from his verbal commentary.

In the Sicilian Defence stemming from **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nc6** (where the Black's second and fourth moves are virtually interchangeable), it is curious that many sidelines are not often explored away from the main Taimanov Variation (**5 Nc3 Qc7**). Indeed, I have deliberated on how the Kan Variation (**4 ... a6**) can transpose into the Taimanov and how both can easily transfigure into the Scheveningen (**5 ... d6**) - if it is beneficial for the player with Black.

The challenge for White is to find a suitable set-up that will determine Black's structure. There are not many lines which will permit White to do this but one such is the King's Indian Attack which is a slower, more methodical approach.

For contrast, I offer two games here, both played within the same league.

In the first, I play White and build up a strong kingside attack when Black's "slow" play on the queenside does not afford him opportunities to create fatal weaknesses on that side of the board. Since the white king is more than adequately defended by the kingside fianchetto, I could begin my attack on that flank without too much fear for my own monarch's safety. In this example, Black should have realised that the creation of weaknesses on the queenside is an admirable endeavour, but he should secure his king's defence first, or importantly, create tension in the centre which will distract White.

Noteworthy in the second example against a very strong Candidate Master is how Black develops on the queenside. Again, White's kingside fianchetto has potential for long-term pressure on the long diagonal (h1-a8). Black should counter this by developing his own light-squared bishop as quickly as possible *before making any kingside committal moves*. In this game, White deems it important to exchange knights on c6 relatively quickly, as Nd5 tactics are on the cards, with the white rook being on e1.

In the first game as White, I did not take this approach and took the direct kingside road, which did not mean exchanging on c6. My removal of the knight back to b3 gave Black an issue to resolve, as his light-squared bishop on d7 does not have any useful role. In that sense then, Black should have exchanged on

d4 and then played Bc6, but that enables White to dominate the centre with his dark-squared bishop.

### Chris Ross v Tim Wells

Kings College London v Battersea; 10.11.2016

1	<b>e4</b>	<b>c5</b>
2	<b>Nf3</b>	<b>e6</b>
3	<b>d4</b>	<b>cxd4</b>
4	<b>Nxd4</b>	<b>a6</b>

This is the Kan variation. White can play main line variations here, to keep it in the Kan structure. However, a slower approach to this set-up is the kingside fianchetto.

5	<b>Nc3</b>	<b>Qc7</b>
6	<b>g3</b>	<b>Nc6</b>

Transposing from the Kan into the Taimanov. Black needs to contest the diagonal as quickly as possible, to limit the scope of the white light-squared bishop.

7	<b>Bg2</b>	<b>Nf6</b>
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This text move develops the kingside pieces, although it is not entirely clear yet to how these should be brought out and it infringes the main principles of the Kan and Taimanov philosophies. In these lines, Black aims to develop his queenside as quickly as possible. Without the bishop on g2, the b7-b5 break would be natural to disturb the white knight on c3 and develop a bishop to b7 but here, it is very dangerous for Black. He must resolve his developmental problems in another way.

7... d6 is the best way to continue. This can be followed up by a rapid Bd7 when the black light-squared bishop can emerge on c6 at an opportune moment. Only then can Black get on with kingside development. There is no immediate danger for Black, since White has taken a slow approach by fianchettoing of his king's bishop.

8	<b>Be3</b>	<b>Be7</b>
9	<b>0-0</b>	<b>0-0</b>

In this example, Black has resolved his kingside and castled. It has been claimed that statistically, the "worst move" after 0-0 is "0-0"! A lot of players automatically castle once your opponent does so, but often, this is a reactionary move. Here is an excellent example. Black's king is in no danger and need not be rushed into castling. The completion of development with d7-d6 and Bd7 will save him a full move. Castling can occur later once the rooks need to be connected.

10	<b>h3</b>
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Seemingly slow, but White has no immediate way to exploit Black's lack of development. Instead, White secures the g4 square, preventing Ng4 ideas for Black if the white queen steps off the d1-h5 diagonal.

10	<b>...</b>	<b>d6</b>
11	<b>f4</b>	

White takes a grip of the centre. Black is no longer permitted to play Ne5/Nc4 ideas, the c4 square being particularly sensitive for White. The half-open c file could become a problem for him, especially so due to his vulnerable c2 pawn.

11 ... **Bd7**

Black has completed development, but this could have been done without having castled, thereby giving him an extra move to deal with his developmental difficulties. Black has a simple plan of exchanging on d4 and either playing his rook away from the long diagonal or playing Bc6 immediately followed by b7-b5 and Qb7, exerting tremendous pressure on the white e4 pawn. This e4 pawn can no longer be supported by the f pawn which has advanced to create tension in the centre for White. Black has a logical way to proceed now. White has his ideal set-up. A path forward now needs to be constructed.

12 **Nb3**

Taking away Black's easy option of continuing. This may seem a slow move but Black has no sensible way to use that gain in time. In order for him to get his light-squared bishop onto the long diagonal, he must also lose a move by moving his knight on c6, thereby balancing out the tempo invested by White here.

12 ... **Rac8?!**

Black considers that the rook on the long diagonal is a tactical liability. If the knights on d4 had been exchanged, Black could have played the light-squared bishop to c6 without the need of moving this rook. As it is, 12 ... b5 seems to be his best way forward as the tactics with e4-e5 do not seem to work for White.

13 **g4!**

Without wanting to labour the point, if the black light-squared bishop had been placed on c6 with the series of moves discussed already, this would have freed the d7 square as a retreat for the black king's knight. As it is, this square cannot be vacated easily, thus providing Black with a serious problem with g4-g5 arriving very quickly. White's attack is direct and very difficult to prevent. Playing on the queenside serves no purpose for White. 13 Na4 achieves little after 13 ... Be8 and Black is beginning to unravel.

13 ... **b5**

Black eventually begins operations on the queenside, but by this time, White has begun his own operations against the black king. As the monarch is more important, White's approach is the more effective.

14 **a3**

White can calmly hold up the Black advancing queenside as there is little follow-up. The knight on c3 is preserved - it solidifies the White centre, blocks the c file and thereby safeguards the c2 pawn.

14 ... **Na5?**

Black's losing move.

The knight moves away from the c6 square to allow the light-squared bishop eventually to step onto the long diagonal. By this time though, Black has not gathered his tempi in the correct way and finds that his position collapses very quickly. It was essential for Black to go ultra-defensive and play 14 ... Be8 giving the d7 square for his king's knight. Although the Black

forces get hopelessly entangled, there is still hope in the position for him.

15 **Nxa5** **Qxa5**  
16 **g5** **Ne8**  
17 **Qd2**

Simple and very strong. The white queen need no longer guard the h5 square as the black knight has been driven back to the back-rank. The queen move offers protection to the g5 pawn, but supports sacrifices on h6, were Black to try and blockade on the kingside with a future h7-h6.

Tactically, White has the immediate threat of 18 Nd5 which will attack the loose dark-squared bishop on e7, which will fall with check.

17 ... **Qd8**

Avoiding the immediate tactics, but demonstrating that his position is pretty hopeless. White can proceed in many ways here, although the direct approach is logical and devastating.

18 **f5** **exf5**

An ugly move if there was ever one. Black is obviously attempting to open up lines for exchange opportunities. This exchange though not only opens up the light-squared bishop on g2, but critically, gives the d5 square for the white knight.

19 **exf5** **Bc6**

Losing material, but there is nothing better in the position. All variations are just good for White. 19 ... f6 only allows 20 g6 and 20 ... h6 is not available for Black due to the aforementioned sacrifice on h6 with Qxh6 to follow.

20 **Bxc6** **Rxc6**

Although this exposes the white king, the tactical justification is that the rook on c6 is loose - an important feature that can now be neatly exploited.



21 **f6**

Winning a piece. 21 Nd5 would be the slower positional way to play it, but there is little point as the material grab is simple enough. As long as White is careful of his exposed king, the conversion should not be too challenging.

**21 ... Nxf6**

Giving up a piece for two pawns. 21 ... gxf6 22 gxf6 opens up a fork with 23 Qg2+ to follow, ensnaring the loose rook on c6.

**22 gxf6 Bxf6**  
**23 Rf3**

Securing up all the light-squares around the white king and protecting the h3 pawn. It is only a matter of time now before the material advantage will prove too much for Black to defend.

**23 ... Be5**

There is no mileage in 23 ... Bxc3 24 bxc3 d5 25 a4 as the pawns will all come off and the dark-squared bishop will stand predominantly on d4 soon enough.

**24 Raf1 Qc8**

Allowing White to unravel his queenside quicker than he ought to have been allowed. There is no future for Black down the c file, so he may as well try to reroute the loose rook on c6 to a more active square, such as c4, possibly.

**25 Nd5 Qe6**

All the tactics work out for White. The check on e7 is sufficient to win material

**26 c3 f6**

An amusing conclusion to the game. Black wishes to cement his dark-squared bishop on e5, thus making life very awkward for White to make progress. Although this is true in one sense, the major problem for Black in the position is the loose nature of his pieces. White has a tactic!

**27 Ne7+ 1-0**

White forks and exploits the loose rook on c6. Naturally, if 27 ... Qxe7 28 Qd5+ picks up the rook, leaving White a full rook up.

#### **Feliks Kwiatkowski v Chris Ross**

King's Head v King's College; 12.10.2016

**1 e4 c5**  
**2 Nf3 e6**  
**3 d4 cxd4**  
**4 Nxd4 Nc6**  
**5 Nc3 Qc7**  
**6 g3 a6**  
**7 Bg2**

So far, a transposition into Ross v Wells above.

**7 ... d6**  
**8 0-0 Bd7**

Notice here, however, that Black has not touched his kingside pieces and can already start thinking of deploying his light-squared bishop to c6 after an exchange on d4. In the previous game, that plan only became plausible at move 11.

**9 Re1**

Of course, conversely, Black has also delayed the possibility of kingside castling. If White were to attempt the understandable (and laudable!) option to emulate my play in the previous game, a plan based on g2-g4 looks premature and would not embarrass the knight on f6 which now would have a useful retreat square. Without the black king as a target for a flank advance, White instead tries to exploit its position in the centre by threats to open the e file with Nc3-d5.

**9 ... Nf6**  
**10 Nxc6 bxc6**

10 ... Bxc6 would allow 11 Nd5 when 11 ... Bxd5 would secure White the advantage of the bishop pair.

**11 Na4 Be7**  
**12 c4 0-0**  
**13 b3 Rad8**  
**14 Bb2 c5**  
**15 Nc3 Bc6**  
**16 Qe2 Qb7**

Success for the strategic plan!

**17 Rad1 Rfe8**  
**18 Rd2 Nd7**  
**19 Red1 Qc7**  
**20 f4 Nf8**  
**21 Rd3 Ng6**  
**22 Qd2 Bf6**  
**23 Na4 Be7**  
**24 Nc3 Bf6**  
**25 Na4 Be7 1/2-1/2**

By consistently following the correct high-level strategy, I have achieved a very creditable result against a dangerous opponent.

*Chris Ross*

Chris would welcome any suggestions for a witty title but there is still much preparation work to do before the book is issued (possibly late this year). One task will be for an eminent chess player to write a glowing foreword and of course, I can make myself available as required. When it is ready, an appropriate link to the marketing website will be circulated. Perhaps you should prime your lawyers to be ready to spring into action!