

New Englander

Chess Club Update – April 2022

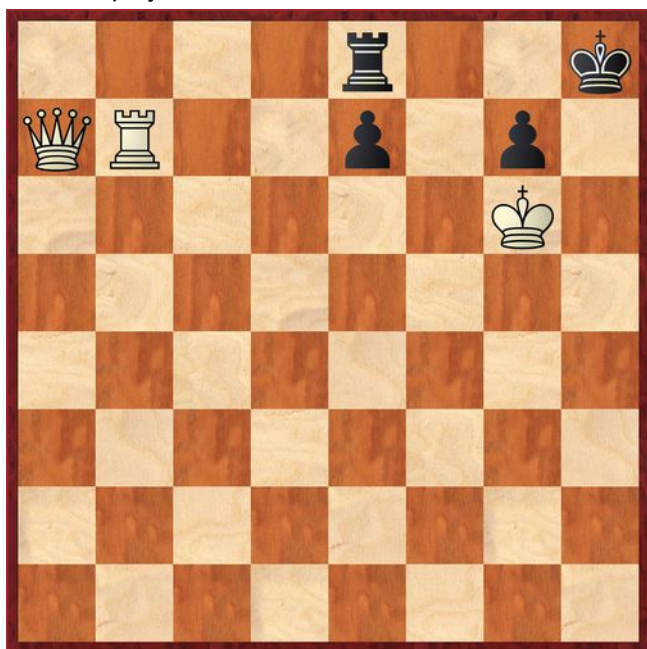
Chairman's Chatter

This newsletter carries a section called *Website to Watch* which lists where the chess action will be for the coming month. In April, maybe we should follow <https://www.c4results.org.uk/chess/php/index.php?GroupId=2> to see how the New England teams fare in the final league standings. Of particular interest will be the match against Spalding in the Team7000 competition on 6th April. It is a winner-takes-all showdown!

Paul Hanks

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2



Last Month's solution (Guidelli 1924)

Position : 8/8/1B3p2/8/8/n6K/8/Qb5k

1 Kg3 Nc4/Nb5 2 Qxb1#; [1 ... Nc2 2 Qa8#; 1 ... f5 2 Qh8#]

Website to Watch

Thanks to Bob Taylor for pointing out that the game viewer ChessBomb lives on. It can now be found at <https://nxt.chessbomb.com> in its new incarnation. You may wish to use it either to catch the closing rounds of the Berlin Grand Prix highlighted last month or until 6th April, for the European Individual Championship in Slovenia (see <https://eicc2022.eu/>). It now has the welcome facility to hide the unnecessary chatter from other spectators.

Diary Dates

13th April Postponed Rd 7 Club Championship

Result Round-up

Club Championship

Postponements			
C Russell (1)	Rd	3	R Jones (2)
R Jones (2+P)	Rd	4	R Ilett (3)
E Smith (1)	Rd	5	R Jones (2+2P)
P Walker (5)	1	0	R Ilett (3½+P)
P Hanks (4)	½	½	C Russell (2+P)

Round 7			
P Hanks (4½)	½	½	P Walker (6)
J Jennings (2)	P	P	R Ilett (3½+P)
C Russell (2½+P)	P	P	P Spencer (4½)
R Jones (2+3P)	P	P	P Cooper (0)
E Smith (1+P)	P	P	E Knox (3)

Round 8			
R Ilett (3½+2P)	1	0	E Smith (1+2P)
P Spencer (4½+P)	1	0	P Hanks (5)
N Wedley (2)	1	0	C Russell (2½+2P)
P Walker (6½)	1	0	J Jennings (2+P)
E Knox (3+P)	1	0	R Jones (2+4P)
P Cooper (0+P)	0	1	P Spencer (5½+P)

Round 9			
R Jones (2+4P)			P Walker (7½)
E Smith (1+2P)			P Hanks (5)
J Jennings (2+P)			N Wedley (3)
C Russell (2½+2P)			E Knox (4+P)
P Cooper (0+P)			R Ilett (4½+2P)

Cambridgeshire League

New England A	3	Peterborough A	2
P Walker	½	F Bowers	½
R Ilett	1	C Masseron	0
P Hanks	0	I Lavallin	1
P Spencer	1	M Zajackowski	0
E Knox	½	J Blair	½

Warboys A	P	New England A	P
Match postponed to April 12th			

Spalding	2½	New England B	1½
P Cusick	1	P Spencer	0
M Dunkley	½	C Russell	½
J Smith	0	R Jones	1
J Mosely-Hutchinson	1	N Wedley	0

New England B	2	Warboys B	2
P Spencer	½	N Greenwood	½
R Jones	½	R Mann	½
N Wedley	0	P Baddeley	1
E Smith	1	J Beck	0

Team 7000

NE Patriots	2	Peterborough	2
P Walker	½	F Bowers	½
P Spencer	0	C Masseron	1
R Jones	1	C Bengtson	0
C Russell	½	G Carver	½

New England Grand Prix

<i>Player</i>	<i>Champ</i>	<i>Ladder</i>	<i>League</i>	<i>Cup</i>	<i>7000 Team</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>TPR*</i>
P Walker	7½	2	5½	2½	3½	21	2108
P Spencer	6½		8	2½	1½	18½	1795
P Hanks	5	1½	4	2		12½	1822
E Knox	4		2½	2½	1½	10½	1626
C Russell	2½	1	4	½	2½	10½	1599
R Ilett	4½	½	4½		0	9½	1851
N Wedley	3	2½	1½	½	½	8	1450
J Jennings	2	2½	1	1	1	7½	1378
R Jones	2		3½		1½	7	1705
E Smith	1	1	1			3	1085
J Sadler		1				1	1750
P Cooper	0	0				0	825

* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

New England Club Ladder

Please note that 5 games are required in the Ladder competition by the closing date of 1st May 2022.

White	Black	
P Cooper	0	1 P Walker

<i>Position</i>	<i>Change</i>		<i>Player</i>	<i>Record @ 30/03/22</i>
	<i>Month</i>	<i>Overall</i>		
1	-	+8	P Walker	1,1
2	-	+6	P Hanks	½,1
3	-	+3	N Wedley	½,1,1,0
4	-	-3	E Smith	1,0,0,0
5	+2	-3	P Cooper	0,0,0,0
6	-1	-2	J Sadler	1
7	-1	-4	J Jennings	1,0,0,½,1
8	-	-1	R Ilett	½
9	-	-4	C Russell	1

Match of the Month

This is not an especially good game on my part but it contains a few points of instructive value (otherwise known as mistakes!). It was played in a match against Peterborough who were fielding their strongest team in an attempt to lift themselves up the league rankings. They held a grading advantage on the top boards whereas we had high hopes at the bottom. The match would therefore probably revolve around my contribution (if any) in the middle order and that made the encounter a rather nervy affair. Furthermore, I had never met Dennis Browning before and knew nothing of his style.

P Hanks v D Browning

New England A v Peterborough A, Bd 3; 17.02.2022

1	d4	f5
2	c4	Nf6
3	Nc3	e6
4	Nf3	Be7
5	g3	0-0
6	Bg2	d5

This is plain sneaky. Peterborough stalwart Marcus Connolly was a advocate of the Stonewall Variation of the Dutch Defence but with his sad demise, I had not expected to meet it again and had forgotten what little analysis I knew.

7 b3

The text move is an indication of poor form and lack of confidence. Grandmasters would not flinch in giving up the pawn on c4 with 7 0-0 knowing that after 7 ... dxc4, re-capture by 8 Qa4 or 8 Ne5 was simple and leaves White with the open long diagonal and a weakness on e6 to target. Indeed, in the game P Eljanov (2723) v R Rapport (2671) Biel 2015, Black spurned the opportunity with 7 ... c6.

7 ... Bb4
8 Bd2

Ditto the last comment. My train of thought had been to deploy my bishop on b2 to cut through Black's pawns and having moved a piece twice, Black should be behind in development. Now, however, I was

fearful of tactics around the pin on c3 – the last thing I wanted was to lose a piece before move 10! I need not have worried because I have plenty of defence after 8 Bb2 Ne4 e.g. 9 Rc1, 9 Qc2 or even 9 Qd3. The latter even continues to defend d4 in the event of 9 ... Nc6 and 10 ... dxc4.

8 ... c5

A surprise! Black usually goes for a rock-solid formation with c7-c6. This is much more aggressive. My opponent obviously sensed my mood.

9 a3

My move looked safe but I could have a pleasant position with good development and superior pawns by resolving the centre pawns with 9 cxd5 exd5 (9 ... cxd4 10 Nxd4 Nxd5 11 Nxd5 Bxd2+ 12 Qxd2 exd5) 10 dxc5 Bxc5 11 0-0.

9 ... Bxc3
10 Bxc3 Ne4
11 Qc2

I rejected 11 Bb2 due to 11 ... Qa5+ despite 12 Nd2 being playable. Fritz prefers the move order 11 ... dxc4 12 bxc4 Qa5+ 13 Nd2 so that Black can follow up with 13 ... cxd4 14 Bxd4 e5.

11 ... Nc6
12 Rd1

In the post-mortem, we quickly agreed to this move and evidently, we lacked the computer imagination to find 12 dxc5 when 12 ... Nxc5 allows 13 Bxg7 Kxg7 14 cxd5 Qxd5 15 Rd1.

12 ... Qf6

I must preserve my bishop pair. Spoiler alert!

13 Bb2 cxd4
14 cxd5 exd5
15 Nxd4 Nxd4
16 Rxd4 Qf7

I expected 16 ... Qc6 when White has to either give up a tempo or exchange queens (thereby improving Black's pawn structure).

17 Qd3

This starts a faulty strategy and heads towards a poor position. That possibly lead me to take the risks which paradoxically win the game.

- Defending a position against an isolated queen's pawn (IQP), I want firstly to block its advance (which is known to be dangerous) and then, try to concentrate sufficient force to capture it eventually. This is probably too optimistic as Black can muster more pieces to protect a light-coloured square.
- I wanted to eject Black's knight from its e4 outpost and thought its next best position would be on e6 to prevent the blockade and support any future advance. The enemy bishop should be forced to occupy this square.
- The c file is open and I need to remove my queen from exposure to the coming Rc8.

It is just a pity there are too many flaws.

17 ... Be6

Black does not have to defend the pawn on d5. If 17 ... b6 18 Rxd5 Bb7 when moving the attacked rook lights the blue touch paper on numerous forks and discovered attacks e.g. 19 Rd7/Re5/Rd4 19 ... Nc5.

18 f3 Nc5



19 Qe3

At last, the truth dawns. I had intended 19 Qb5 and after Black defends his knight, 20 b4. Sadly, 19 ... b6 20 b4 Bd7 or 19 ... Rac8 20 b4 a6 21 Qa5 b6 trap my queen. 19 Qd1 was my best option.

19 ... Rac8

There are some subtle move order nuances hereabouts. 19 ... Rfe8 looks more forcing and to the reply 20 b4, 20 ... Bd7 comes before the white queen has a bolt-hole on b3 whilst the knight still prevents her moving on the c1-h6 diagonal with the threat Nc5-e6/b3 forking the queen and rook. 21 Qf2 Nb3 22 Rd3 Bb5 23 Rxb3 d4 is not a great prospect.

20 0-0

I should seize the opportunity with 20 b4.

20 ... Rfe8
21 b4

Too late! If 21 Rfd1 Bd7 22 Qf2 Bc6 (22 ... Nxb3 23 Rxd5) 23 b4 keeps me in the game and starts to look like a viable IQP contest.

21 ... Bd7
22 Qf2 Na4

This was my lucky day. If 22 ... Nb3 23 Rd3 traps the knight but 23 ... Rc2 24 Rxb3 Rxe2 turns the tables.

23 e4

I can hold the position with 23 Rd2 when Black does best to swap off the bishop 23 ... Nxb2 24 Rxb2 – an omission he later bemoaned. I felt the power of the bishop pair is best demonstrated in an open position.

23 ... dxe4

I was starting to feel more comfortable and my plan at this point was 23 ... fxe4 24 fxe4 Qxf2+ 25 Rxf2 Nxb2 26 Rxb2 with a probable draw.

There is, however, more move order trickery. After the game move 24 fxe4 creates a pin on the f5 pawn. 23 ... Bb5 forces my rook away 24 Rfd1 and then, when the f file opens, the pin operates in the other direction 24 ... fxe4 because 25 fxe4 Qxf2+ 26 Kxf2 Nxb2 and 25 Rxd5? e3 is even worse.

24 fxe4 Bb5

Last chance for 24 ... Nxb2. I took a deep breath.

25 exf5 Bc6

My opponent had overlooked Bg2-d5 and did not react calmly. 25 ... Kh8 removes the threat. The game might continue 26 Rfd1 Nxb2 27 Qxb2 Qxf5 28 Rd5 Qg4 when the computer favours White but some care is needed to stop the black rooks from penetrating with 29 h3 Qe2 30 Qxe2 Bxe2.

26 Ba1

Fritz recommends simplifying the queenside with 26 Bxc6 Rxc6 27 b5 and 26 f6 was also tempting. Most attacking options should be stronger with the unopposed dark-squared bishop on the board and it leaves the black knight misplaced.

26 ... Nb6

A tactical route to d5 was the surprising 26 ... Nc3.

27 Rg4

Fritz says 27 Bxc6 Rxc6 28 Rg4 Rf6 29 Bxf6 Qxf6 is equivalent but this is one move order I do not understand.

27 ... g6

Black can collect some material for his queen with 27 ... Bb5 or as we analysed afterwards, 27 ... Bxg2 28 Qxg2 Rc6/7 29 Rxc6 Qxc6 30 Bxg7 Kxc7 when the game will go on but the exposed black king should give White all the winning chances.

28 Qd4 1-0

The computer pronounces mate in 11 but within my horizon, Black has to counter 28 ... Qd7 (say) 29 Qh8+ Kf7 30 Qg7# and only 28 ... Kf8 avoids disaster. The direct route 29 fxe4 Qxf2+ 30 Bxf2 leaves Black having to defend against 31 Qf6+/g7# with 30 ... Ke7 and 31 gxf7 may lead to a stylish finale 32 Rg7+ Ke6 33 Bh3#.

All the right moves, not necessarily in the right order. Eric Morecambe would be proud.

Paul Hanks

Eye Opener

Of course you know the Janzen-Korchnoi Gambit! It is one of many tricks in the Dutch Defence which makes it a less favoured opening for Black. A sample game is

Carl Fredrik Johansson (2240) v Magnus Hernback
Swedish Open Championship, Gotland; 1997

1 d4 f5
2 h3 Nf6

3 g4 fxg4
4 hxg4 Nxg4
5 Qd3 Nf6
6 Rxh7 1-0

Such a blatant trap should only bear fruit against the weakest opposition and general principles should not be lightly disregarded.

Peter Nielsen (1686) v Zeev Ben Porat (1888)
Xtracon Open Helsingor Denmark; 2019

1 d4 e6
2 c4 f5
3 g3 Nf6
4 Nc3 Be7
5 Bg2 0-0
6 Nf3

So far, only move order separates this from the *Match of the Month* – ha!

6 ... d6

Black, however, takes a different route which keeps the central pawn structure more flexible.

7 0-0 Qe8
8 b3 a5
9 Re1 Qg6
10 Qc2 Ne4

It is looking fairly straightforward. White has a slight lead in space and development and it is hard to imagine how quickly White's position deteriorates with some plausible inaccuracies. Still, nobody tells you there are problems looming, do they?



11 Nxe4 fxg4
12 Nd2 e3

Ouch! The two weaknesses collide. The unprotected queen and the fork on f2 with check scupper White.

13 Be4 exf2+
14 Kg2 fxe1N+ 0-1

White can fall on his sword with 15 Kh3 Qh5#.