

# New Englander

## Chess Club Update – February 2023

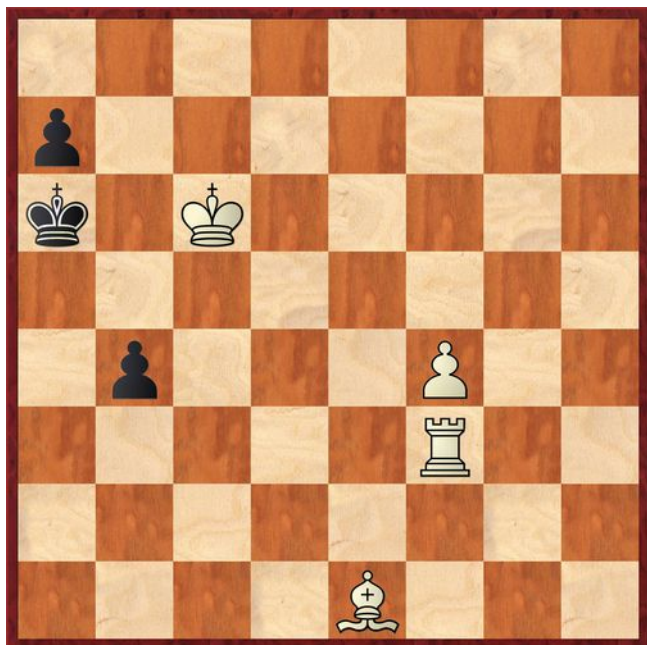
### Chairman's Chatter

The season now seems to have real momentum. The number of participants in the Ladder competition is rising, postponements in the Club Championship are falling and the League season is running without disruption. We just need a similar effort in February ... and then write about it for the next *Match of the Month* articles in future newsletters!

*Paul Hanks*

### Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution (Chessify app)

Position : 8/4p3/7N/3kp1N1/Q1p5/4P3/2n2K2/1B6

**1 Ne4 Kxe4 2 Qxc4#** [1 ... Ke6 2 Qc6#; 1 ... e6 2 Qa8#; 1 ... c3 2 Ba2#; 1 ... N any 2 Qd7#]

### Website to Watch

A common tournament theme is to pit the young and rising stars against established talents – some of whom were considered young not so long ago. The WR Chess Masters in Dusseldorf has 9 rounds from 16<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> February when Nepomniachtchi, Giri and So (among others) defend their reputations against Gukesh, Abdusattarov, Keymer and Praggnanahaa. Names to remember! See <https://wr-chess.com/>.

### Diary Dates

15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> February Cambridge International Open. For details, click [here](#).

### Result Round-up

#### Club Championship

White		Black	
Previous rounds			
P Walker	<b>P</b>	<b>Rd 1</b>	E Knox
P Hanks	½	½	P Turp
E Knox	0	1	P Spencer
E Knox	0	1	P Turp
P Turp	<b>P</b>	<b>Rd 4</b>	P Spencer
E Knox	<b>P</b>	<b>Rd 5</b>	C Russell
E Smith	0	1	P Hanks
N Wedley	<b>P</b>	<b>Rd 6</b>	E Knox
Round 7			
N Chedd	½	½	C Russell
P Hanks	0	1	R Ilett
P Turp	1	0	N Wedley
J Jennings	0	1	P Walker
Round 8			
C Russell	½	½	P Spencer
N Wedley	0	1	N Chedd
R Ilett	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	P Walker
E Smith	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	P Turp
J Jennings	0	1	E Knox

Player	PW	RI	PH	PS	PT	NC	EK	JJ	NW	CR	ES	Total
P Walker	X		1		1	0		1	1	1	1	6
R Ilett		X	1	½				1	1	1	1	5½
P Hanks	0	0	X		½	1		1	1	1	1	5½
P Spencer		½		X		1	1	1		½	1	5
P Turp	0		½		X	1	1		1	1		4½
N Chedd	1		0	0	0	X	½		1	½		3
E Knox				0	0	½	X	1			1	2½
J Jennings	0	0	0	0			0	X	0		1	1
N Wedley	0	0	0		0	0		1	X			1
C Russell	0	0	0	½	0	½				X		1
E Smith		0	0	0			0	0	0		X	0

## Cambridgeshire League

<b>Peterborough A</b>	<b>2½</b>	<b>New England A</b>	<b>2½</b>
C Tandy	0	R Ilett	1
A Kaszuba	1	P Walker	0
M Dunkley	½	P Spencer	½
C Masseron	½	E Knox	½
B Rhodes	½	N Chedd	½

<b>New England B</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Peterborough B</b>	<b>1</b>
P Spencer	1	D Redden	0
N Chedd	1	M Zajackowski	0
C Russell	1	C Bengtson	0
J Jennings	0	P Ripardo	1

## Team 7000 competition

<b>Spalding</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>NE Patriots</b>	<b>4</b>
J Moseley-Hutchinson	0	B Stephens	1
S Mitchell	0	E Knox	1
K Davis	0	N Chedd	1
L McKenna	0	J Jennings	1

<b>NE Patriots</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Warboys WC</b>	<b>2</b>
P Walker	1	J Beck	0
P Spencer	1	R Mann	0
E Knox	0	B Duff	1
R Lepley	0	J Beck (Jnr)	1

<b>NE Patriots</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Spalding</b>	<b>P</b>
Re-arranged on 15 <sup>th</sup> February			

## New England Club Ladder

<b>White</b>		<b>Black</b>	
R Lepley	0	1	P Walker
B Stephens	1	0	N Wedley
P Walker	1	0	B Stephens
E Smith	0	1	B Stephens
I Goodwin	0	1	J Jennings
N Wedley	0	1	C Russell

<b>Position</b>	<b>Change</b>		<b>Player</b>	<b>Record @ 25/01/23</b>
	<b>Month</b>	<b>Overall</b>		
1	+5	+5	P Walker	1,1
2	-	-1	J Jennings	1,0,1
3	+1	+1	B Stephens	½,1,0,1
4	+5	+5	C Russell	1
5	-2	-2	R Lepley	0
6	-5	-4	N Wedley	0,1,1,0
7	-	-	E Smith	0
8	-3	-3	R Ilett	½
9	-1	-1	I Goodwin	0

## New England Grand Prix

<b>Player</b>	<b>Champ</b>	<b>Ladder</b>	<b>League</b>	<b>Cup</b>	<b>Team 7000</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>TPR*</b>
P Spencer	5		6½	0	2½	14	1851
P Walker	6	2	2	1½	1	12½	2035
R Ilett	5½	½	3½	1½		11	2089
P Hanks	5½		3	1	1½	11	1910
N Chedd	3		2		2	7	1664
E Knox	2½		½	1	2	6	1590
P Turp	4½		1		½	6	1856
C Russell	1		4		½	5½	1673
J Jennings	1	2	0		2	5	1205
N Wedley	1	2		0		3	1389
B Stephens		1½			1	2½	1941
R Lepley		0	0		0	0	1018
E Smith	0					0	1034
I Goodwin		0				0	1006

\* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

## Match of the Month

If you are a club member reading this newsletter article, you should be sufficiently interested to contribute a game of your own. Many people wrongly think you would need to play perfectly but that is far from the truth! Here is an example of how badly you can perform and still get the game published...

### M Cooper v P Hanks

St Neots B v New England B; 14.12.2022

1 e4 e6  
2 d4 d5  
3 e5 c5

In his seminal work *My System*, Nimzowitsch devoted two chapters to the Advance Variation of the French Defence. In "Overprotection", he espouses White's

plan to make the e5 square unassailable and in "Pawn Chain", he recommends that Black breaks up the pawn structure starting at its base. The game normally revolves around the struggle between these competing ideas.

**4 c3 Nc6**

The move Qd8-b6 can be played at this point or at several later times. One advantage of going early is that without a knight on c6, Black can develop with Bc8-d7-b5 to exchange White's light-squared bishop. Otherwise, with no black knight on f6, White can build a dangerous attack on the b1-h7 diagonal.

**5 Nf3 Bd7**  
**6 a3 Rc8**

I have a theory that if my opponents are younger, they are likely to be better versed in opening theory than me. As this was the case here on both counts (no prizes for that!), I chose a sideline rather than transposing back to the mainstream.

**7 b4 cxd4**

As you may have guessed, I needed to do some post-mortem reading for this commentary. I came across a recommendation for 7 ... c4 which I rejected as it negates the strategy of undermining the pawn chain. An accompanying remark, however, does highlight the positional nature of the play. It read that Qd8-b6 thereafter would be bad as that square should be reserved for Black's king's knight to facilitate Bd7-a4!

**8 cxd4 Nge7**  
**9 Bd3**

I had hoped that my occupation of the c file would deter 9 Nc3 due to 9 ... Nxb4 but sitting at the board, I started to worry about the threat of smothered mate on d6 starting 10 Nb5. Fortunately, I have 10 ... Bxb5 11 Bxb5+ Nbc6 but this was to be only the first instance of poor mental analysis on my part.

9 Bb2 is the most popular continuation and Movsesian v Gurevich, New York 1998 successfully introduced 9 ... b5 based on 10 Bxb5 Nxe5.

9 Nbd2 is another try. The knight still heads for c5 with relative to the game, it will still serve a useful function protecting d4 when waiting on b3.

**9 ... Be3**  
**10 Be3**

10 Bb2 enables Nb1-c3 without any tactical tricks and in A Motylev v Cao Sang, Ohrid 2001, it is the continuation preferred by the highest rated grandmasters to reach this position.

**10 ... Be7**  
**11 0-0 f6**  
**12 Bxf5**

This motif occurs in many games springing from this opening and is the computer's top choice. It surprises me because the black king should now feel safe on the kingside.

**12 ... exf5**  
**13 Nc3 Be6**  
**14 Rc1 0-0**

**15 Na4 b6**  
**16 Rc3 Qd7**

I could start immediate action in the centre with 16 ... fxe5 but I was thinking of discovered attacks under the misapprehension that White's knight on a4 was unguarded!

**17 Qc2**



As expected. My intended reaction was going to be 17 ... Nxb4 18 axb4 Rxc3 19 Qxc3 Qxa4 until I noticed 19 Nxc3. Backward captures can often be "invisible"!

**17 ... fxe5**  
**18 dxe5**

18 Rc1 is a messy bloodbath which I could not fathom. It leads to a positional assessment of the endgame that arises from a long series of exchanges - always presuming I have not lost material along the way! As a sample line, 18 ... exd4 19 Rxc6 Rxc6 20 Qxc6 dxe3 21 Qxd7 (21 fxe3 Bc5) 21 ... Bxd7 22 Rc7 Bxa4 (22 ... Rc8 from Fritz) 23 Rxe7 Re8 (23 ... exf2+ 24 Kxf2 Rf7). See what I mean?

**18 ... f4**

Black has two main alternatives but after 18 ... d4 19 Rd1 (19 Rd3 Nxb4) 19 ... Bxb4 20 axb4 or 18 ... Bxb4 19 axb4 d4 20 Rd1, the same position is reached by transposition. 20 ... Nxb4 21 Qe2 Qxa4 - it is en prise now! - 22 Rxc8 Rxc8 23 Rxd4 when Black has an extra pawn but still needs to take care.

**19 Bd4**

I thought I was OK after the retreats 19 Bc1 and 19 Bd2 due to 19 ... d4 but totally missed 19 Bxb6. Black cannot recapture immediately with 19 ... axb6 20 Nxb6 Qb7 21 Nxc8 Rxc8 22 Rc1 and I doubt I would have realised that 19 ... d4 20 Rd1 gains the tempo needed for 20 ... axb6 21 Nxb6 Qb7 22 Nxc8 dxc3 23 Nxe7+ Qxe7 24 Qxc3. Even then, I am unconvinced by Black's prospects.

**19 ... Bf5**

I had the right idea of putting pressure on f3 but could have done so directly with 19 ... Bg4

- 20 Bxb6 Bxf3 21 Rxf3 Nxe5
- 20 b5 Na5 21 Rxc8 Rxc8 22 Qd3 Nc4
- 20 Rd1 Bxf3 21 gxf3 (21 Rxf3 Nxd4) 21 ... Qe6 with aspirations of a kingside attack.

20 Qb3 Be4  
21 Re1

A sad error.

- 21 b5 loses the b pawn (or worse) after 21 ... Na5 22 Qb2 Nc4 23 Qe2 (23 Qb3 Bxf3; 23 Qa2 Qxb5) 23 ... Qxb5
- 21 Bxb6 Bxf3 22 Rxf3 Nxe5 23 Rh3 axb6 24 Nxb6 Qe6 25 Nxc8 Rxc8
- 21 Rd1 looks best for White 21 ... Qe6 e.g. 22 Nb2.

21 ... Bxf3  
22 e6

Simply 22 gxf3 Nxd4.

22 ... Qd8

This is probably the worst choice but a safe one if you are unable to see 22 ... Qe8 and its consequences.

- 23 Rxf3 Nxd4
- 23 gxf3 Nxd4 24 Rxc8 Qg6+
- 23 Rxc6 Bxg2 24 Rxc8 Qg6.

23 Rxc6 Rxc6  
24 Qxf3 Qe8

Another oversight but thankfully, my opponent does not take advantage.

25 Qxd5

After 25 Nc3, I cannot save the d pawn and the simplification is avoided.

25 ... Rd6  
26 Qe5 Rxd4  
27 Qxd4 Qxa4

I was right on move 16!

28 Qd7 Qxd7  
29 exd7

Black will win the d pawn and the endgame.

29 ... Bd8  
30 g3 ffg3  
31 ffg3 g6  
32 a4 Kg7  
33 b5 Rf7 0-1

*Paul Hanks*

## Eye Opener

Philip Stuart Milner-Barry v Arthur Henry Trott  
Ilford Congress Ilford; 1951

1 e4 e6  
2 d4 d5  
3 e5 c5  
4 c3 Nc6  
5 Nf3 Qb6  
6 Bd3

This variation of the Advance French Defence is called the Milner-Barry Gambit. If White cannot play it, who can?

6 ... Nge7  
7 dxc5 Qc7

The text move is timid. Did Black think his queen was trapped after 7 ... Qxc5 by either 8 Be3 or 8 b4?

8 Na3



8 ... Nxe5

Black had a glimmer of hope after 8 ... a6 but accepting the pawn meets an elegant refutation.

9 Nb5

Not 9 Bf4?? Nxd3+.

9 ... Nxd3+

Black's move is forced because 9 ... Qb8 10 Nd6+ Kd8 11 Nxe5.

10 Qxd3 Qxc5

Black removes the threat of a check on d6 which would follow 10 ... Qa5 11 Nd6+ Kd8 12 Nxf7+ but trying to avoid the fork on f7 is fatal 11 ... Kd7 12 Ne5+ Kc7 13 Nb5+ Kb8 (13 ... Kd8 14 Nxf7+) 14 Qg3 b6 15 Nc6+ Kb7 16 Nd8+ Ka6 17 Nc7#.

11 Be3 d4

11 ... Qc6 12 Ne5 does trap the queen.

12 Bxd4 Qc6  
13 Ne5 Qxg2

The only escape square - 13 ... Qd5/a6 14 Nc7+.

14 Nd6+ Kd8  
15 Bb6+ 1-0

White checkmates viz 15 ... axb6 16 Ndx7+ Ke8 [16 ... Kc7 17 Qd6#] 17 Qd8#.