

New Englander

Chess Club Update – June 2024

Chairman's Chatter

The end of another playing season is here and we can look back with great satisfaction. The club retained the Cambridgeshire Division 1 title and decisively won the inaugural Team 4000 league. Congratulations to both the captains for an excellent job done and the squads on their success.

Just as important, however, is the level of participation and commitment shown in Division 2 and Team 7000 competitions. The respective captains have not found team selection as easy during the year but their efforts ensured we involved the full membership, completed our league obligations without defaults and performed competitively. My thanks to all.

In the internal events, it is most gratifying to see so many names in the winners' enclosure :-

Event	Winner	Runner-up
Club Champion	R Ilett	P Hanks
Club Challenger	A Neville	D Dhokia & J Jennings
Ladder	P Walker	R Ilett
Grand Prix	P Walker	N Chedd
Rapidplay	P Walker	3-way tie
Lightning	P Walker	P Spencer
Christmas Special	P Walker	5-way tie
Handicap	I Goodwin	E Knox & C Russell

With a finishing burst, Ray took the Champion's section of the club championship and must be used to the plaudits. Not so for newcomer Andy who likewise saved his best until last in the Challenger's group final. Peter has been the most regular player and is worthily rewarded with most of the other titles. After a break, the Handicap competition returned with Isaac defying the ratings to come out on top. Congratulations!

Paul Hanks

AGM Summary

Ten members attended the AGM on 15th May 2024 with one joining online. The main points were :-

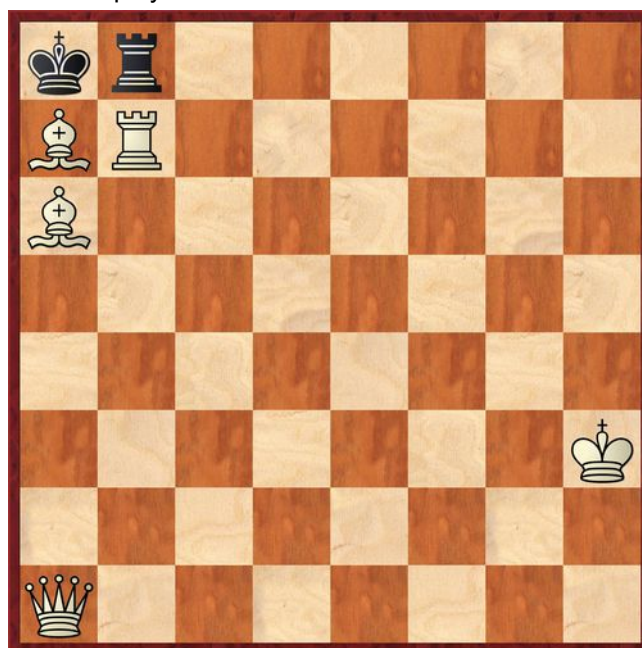
- The Yard of Ale is happy to welcome us again without increasing the price for room hire
- Five new clocks are being acquired under an ECF discount scheme
- The club made a small surplus and with a balance of around £300 in the bank account, is in a financially healthy state. As a result, there is no need to increase subscriptions

Website : www.newenglandchess.org.uk

- Teams fared well in the Cambridgeshire league competitions. The A team retained the Division 1 title whilst the B team encouraged wide participation and still achieved a 50% record. In the Team 7000 event, the squad were competitive but lost out as innocent bystanders when winners St Ives had the benefit of a late match default. The club topped the inaugural Team 4000 league (North) and went to win the play-off 3-0 against St Ives
- All the usual internal events were completed as listed previously
- No changes for next season were made to the committee officers and captains, league entries or the programme of internal competitions. Jamie Sutherland volunteered to increase the club profile through media postings.

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution (Grin 1985)

Position : 6K1/8/8/5P2/8/1Q6/1P1N4/kb6

1 Qc3 Ba2+ 2 b3# [1 ... other 2 Qa3#]

Diary Dates

- 18th June AGM of the Cambridgeshire County Chess Association at Ivy Leaf Club, St Ives from 7-30pm
- 4th September Start of next season (to be confirmed)

Website to Watch

The Grand Chess Tour continues with a classical tournament in Bucharest, Romania from 25th June to 5th July. The ten-player round-robin event features nine top grandmasters (Caruana, Nepomniachtchi, So, Gukesh et al.) and local hopeful Deac. Details can be found [here](#). Action will be available via the St Louis Chess Club channels on [Twitch](#) and [YouTube](#).

Result Round-up

Team 4000 play-off final

NE Cavaliers	3	St Ives	0
J Sutherland	1	J Canamares	0
J Jennings	1	K Walachnia	0
D Dhokia	1	M Tataran	0

Club Championship

White	Postponed		Black
N Chedd	1	0	E Knox
P Spencer	0	1	P Hanks
P Hanks	1	0	N Chedd
E Knox	½	½	P Walker
J Jennings	1d	0d	I Goodwin

Champions League	R	P	N	P	P	B	E	Pts
	I	H	C	S	W	S	K	
R Ilett	X	½	1	1	1	1	½	5
P Hanks	½	X	1	1	0	1	1	4½
N Chedd	0	0	X	1	1	1	1	4
P Spencer	0	0	0	X	½	1	1	2½
P Walker	0	1	0	½	X	0	½	2
B Stephens	0	0	0	0	1	X	½	1½
E Knox	½	0	0	0	½	½	X	1½

Challengers	A	D	J	N	S	I	C	Pts
	N	D	J	W	R	G	R	
A Neville	X	1	0	1	1	1	1	5
D Dhokia	0	X	0	½	1	1	1	3½
J Jennings	1	1	X	½	0	1	0	3½
N Wedley	0	½	½	X	1	½	½	3
S Reid	0	0	1	0	X	0	1	2
I Goodwin	0	0	0	½	1	X	½	2
C Russell	0	0	1	½	0	½	X	2

Online Problem Night : 22nd May 2024

Team	Rd 1	Rd 2	Tot	Pts/person
Chris, Dak, Jim	16	10	26	8.7
John, Phil	16	5	21	10.5
Andy, Ed	15	5	20	10

New England Club Ladder

Position	Change		Player	Record @ End of season
	Month	Overall		
1	+1	-	P Walker	1,1,1,1,1,0,1,1
2	-1	+6	R Ilett	0,1
3	+6	+9	D Dhokia	1,0,1
4	+6	+1	J Jennings	1,0,0
5	-2	+2	C Russell	1,1
6	-2	-	A Neville	0,0,0,0
7	-2	-5	P Hanks	0
8	-2	-5	P Spencer	1
9	-2	-	E Knox	1
10	-2	-6	I Goodwin	0,0,1
11	+1	-	N Wedley	0,1
12	+1	+1	B Stephens	0,0
13	-2	-3	N Chedd	0
14	-	-	J Peoples	0

New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League		Cup	Team 7000	Team 4000	Total	TPR*
			A	B					
P Walker	6	7	4	1½	1½	2		22	1942
N Chedd	8	0	4½	6	0	1½		20	1851
B Stephens	4½	0	4½	5	½	2		16½	1743
P Spencer	6	1	3	2		2½		14½	1731
R Ilett	7	1	3½	½	1			12½	1915
C Russell	2	2	0	6	½	2		13	1488
P Hanks	7½	0	2	1	½			11	1925
E Knox	4½	1	1		1	2½		10	1770
N Wedley	4	2		1			1½	8½	1562
D Dhokia	3½	1		0			3½	8	1348
I Goodwin	2½	1		½			2	6	1392
J Sutherland	-			2½	0	1	2	5½	1628
J Jennings	2½	1		0			2	5½	1326
A Neville	5	0						5	1488
S Reid	3							3	1307
J Peoples	-	0					1	1	1150

* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

Match of the Month

Why can't I play like Carlsen?

For those that are unaware, Paul runs an excellent series of club Zoom meetings throughout our chess year. We mostly spend an hour in the evening analysing a Grandmaster game, attempting to predict the correct method to successfully execute a flamboyant attack on one of the lesser lights of the game while they try to use their ingenuity to wriggle out of their difficulties, often leading to an exciting king hunt. What I have learned from these games is that it requires considerable chess vision (generally considerably more than I have!) to find the way past potential pitfalls thrown up by a skilful opponent and subsequently win the game. Also, that you need a lot of nerve to launch a sacrificial attack when the resulting win is a lot further on than would normally be expected to be seen over the board. Sadly, it is all too easy to play it safe, for fear of throwing away a winnable game.

However, swashbuckling attacking chess was what first got me excited about the game so, when the opportunity presents itself, I do try to play in a slightly more adventurous style. Often, I end up with egg on my face. Here is a recent example when I managed to look good instead...

Chris Russell v Mike Hellewell

New England B v St Neots B Bd 4; 20.3.2024

1	e4	e5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	d4	exd4
4	Nxd4	Nxd4

I have found this exchange surprisingly popular in the Scotch Game, despite the fact that it gives a strong position for the white queen. After the game, Mike told me that he felt that he had to swap off knights as I can otherwise double his pawns and if he puts a knight on f6, I could attack it with e4-e5. However, if 4 ... Nf6 5 Nxc6 bxc6 6 e5 (the Mieses Variation) 6 ... Qe7 7 Qe2 Nd5 8 c4 Ba6 9 b3 leads only to a minimal advantage for White, if any. Had the game gone this way, I should have been playing like Carlsen (see Carlsen v Sulskis, Khanty-Mansiysk Olympiad 2012)! A more typical line would be 4 ... Bc5 5 Be3 Qf6 6 c3 with equality.

5	Qxd4	d6
6	Nc3	a6
7	Be3	Be6
8	Be2	Nf6
9	f3	h6?

Up to this point, Mike has been playing solid chess, but this is much too passive. I had expected something like 9 ... c5! 10 Qd2 b5! when Black is starting to put up a fight.

10	0-0-0!	Be7
----	---------------	------------

Logical but Fritz still prefers 10 ... c5.

11	g4!
----	------------

I have completed my development and am ready to launch a kingside assault. Had I been Black, I would

have now played 11 ... Qd7 intending to castle on the queenside. Fritz still prefers 11 ... c5 or 11 ... b5, though castling to kingside is no longer on its radar.

11	...	g5??
----	-----	-------------

Oh dear! This concedes the h file to maintain material equality and the isolated g pawn will be horribly weak.

12	h4
----	-----------

With the knight on f6 pinned, 13 h4xg5 is a horrible threat and 12 ... gxh4 13 Rxh4 h5 14 g5 c5 15 Qd3 Nd7 16 f4 gives me the attack I was dreaming of.

12	...	Rg8
13	hxg5	hxg5
14	Qd2	

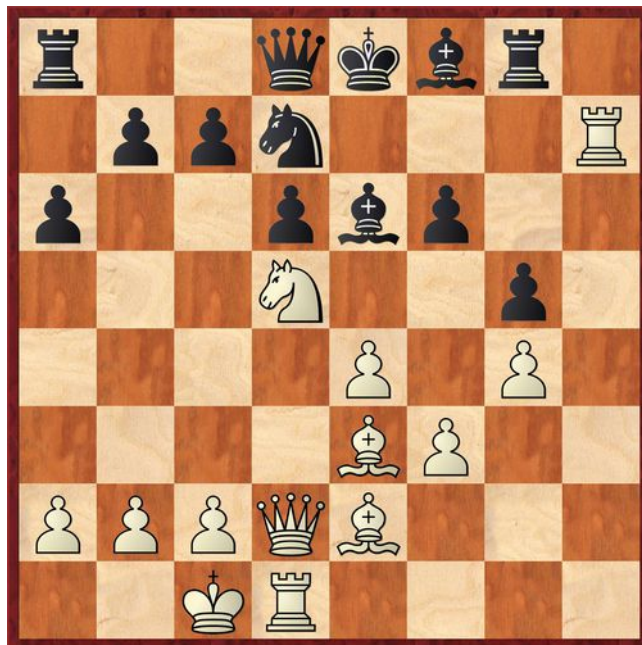
Fritz prefers 14 Bc4 c5 15 Qd3 Qd7 16 Bxe6 fxe6 17 Qd2 when Black can castle but the g pawn is lost.

14	...	Nd7
15	Nd5	f6??

Attempting to save the g pawn but another mistake. Even at my skill level, this one should be decisive. I had been expecting 15 ... Ne5 16 Nxe7 Qxe7 17 Bxg5 f6 (17 ... Rxd5? 18 Rh8+) 18 Bh4 0-0-0 19 b3 when I have won a pawn but Black has managed to complete his development and the game is not over. Alternatively, 15 ... Bxd5 16 Qxd5 c6 17 Qf5 when I have a dangerous attack. Fritz recommends 17 ... Qc8! 18 Rh6 Nf8! and Black fights on.

16	Rh7!	Bf8
----	-------------	------------

The black king is trapped in the centre and now I just need to create some open lines to get at it. What is the best way to proceed?



17	Qc3?!
----	--------------

I was quite pleased with myself when I found this move, because it attacks c7 and f6 simultaneously plus I have the threat of an exchange sacrifice that cuts through Black's defences e.g. 17 ... Rc8 18 Rxd7 Kxd7 19 Nxf6+ and 20 Nxg8. But sadly, with hindsight it not good enough here – so much for trying to play adventurously and messing it up (sigh). What should I

have played here to open up the position, and what resource for Black did I miss?

I really should have seen 17 Bc4! Black cannot play 17 ... Bxd5?? 18 Qxd5! winning quickly. But more difficult to see is that after 17 ... c6?? 18 Nb6! Bxc4 19 Nxc4 Ne5 20 Qh2! Rg7 21 Rxg7 Bxg7 22 Nxd6+! Best for Black is 17 ... Rg7! 18 Rxg7 Bxg7 19 Nxc7+ Qxc7 20 Bxe6 Ne5 21 f4 gxf4 22 Bxf4 Ke7 23 Bf5 Rh8 24 g5 when White still has a large advantage.

According to Fritz, even better is 17 f4!! Rg7 (if 17 ... gxf4 18 Nxf4 Bxa2 19 Qa5 Bf7 20 Bc4 or 20 Rxf7) 18 Rxg7 Bxg7 19 fxc5 Bxd5 20 Qxd5 Qe7 21 Qxb7 Rb8 22 Qc6 fxc5 23 c3 Be5 24 Bxa6 Qe6 25 Bb5 but only a GM or a chess computer finds lines like this!

17 ... c6??

The losing move. Mike misses his chance to stay in the game and I get to look good after all! Much better was 17 ... Bxd5!! (the resource I overlooked) 18 exd5 Rg7 19 Bd3 Qe7 20 Rxg7 Bxg7 21 Bf5 when there is still plenty in the game.

18 Rxd7!

I had seen this when playing 17 Qc3 and it does win now but there is a better move on the board – what?

18 Bb6!! is absolutely crushing. Black must exchange his queen for two minor pieces.

- 18 ... Qc8? 19 Nc7+ forces 19 ... Qxc7 as 19 ... Kd8 allows checkmate after 20 Qxf6+ Nxf6 21 Nd5+ Qc7 (21 ... Ke8 22 Nxf6#) 22 Bxc7+ Ke8 23 Nxf6# or 22 ... Kc8 23 Nb6#
- 18 ... cxd5 19 Bxd8 Kxd8 (19 ... Rxd8 20 Nc7#) 20 Qa5+ etc. winning.

18 ... Bxd7

If 18 ... Qxd7?? Nxf6+ wins. Fritz prefers 18 ... Kxd7 but after 19 Bb6 Qc8 20 Nxf6+ Ke7 when White is still winning with 21 e5 d5 22 Qe3 continuing the attack or the similar but simpler 21 Nxc8+ Bxc8 22 e5 d5 23 Qe3 Bh6 24 Rh1 (24 ... Qf8 25 Bc5+).

19 Nxf6+ Kf7
20 Nxc8

Fritz likes 20 Bc4+ d5 21 Nxd7 Qxd7 22 exd5 Ke8 23 dxc6 Qxc6 24 Qe5+ Be7 25 Bxc8.

20 ... Kxc8
21 Bc4+ Kh7
22 e5?!

Fourth best, but I have several mates here. I rejected the much better 22 Rh1+ because of 22 ... Bh6 but should have seen that simply 23 Qd2! wins.

22 ... d5
23 Bd3+?!

keeping my bishop in the game but missing 23 Qd3+ Kg7 24 Rh1 with 25 Qh7 to follow.

23 ... Kg8
24 Rh1 Be6

halting the pawn advance but 24 ... Bg7 was better.

25 Qd2 Be7?
26 Qh2 Kf8
27 Qh6+ 1-0

The bishop is lost and I also have mate in four - 27 ... Ke8 28 Qxe6 Kf8 29 Rh8+ Kg7 30 Rh7+ Kf8 31 Qf7#.

So now you know. I cannot play like Carlsen because I miss too much. But this was a fun game and I do not get to play a king hunt very often. Plus, my opponent did let me look good, so thanks, Mike!

Chris Russell

Eye Opener

Magnus Carlsen (2214) v Adnan Orujov

European U12 Championship, Peniscola Spain; 2002

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 exd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nxc6 bxc6 6 e5 Qe7 7 Qe2 Nd5 8 c4 Ba6 9 b3

So far, this is recommended in the main game. Even the under-12s know their openings these days!

9 ... 0–0–0 10 g3 Re8 11 Bb2 f6 12 Bg2 fxe5 13 0–0 g6 14 Qd2 Nb6 15 Qa5

The computer evaluation hovers around equality for these logical developing moves. Magnus chooses a more aggressive option rather than 15 Re1.

15 ... Kb7 16 Ba3 Qf6



It is hard to see that this square is inferior to 16 ... Qf7 but White will deploy his knight aiming for c5 and the route via c3 and e4 would now gain a tempo.

17 Bxf8 Rhxf8 18 Nc3 Qe7

Black could try to hold back the tide tactically with 18 ... Qf5 19 Na4 e4 20 Nc5+ Ka8 21 Qb4 Bb7 22 Bxe4. It returns the pawn but so does the continuation...

19 Na4 d6 20 Bxc6+ Kxc6 21 Qxa6 e4

Black should seek shelter for his king by 21 ... Kd7.

22 c5 dxc5 23 Nxc5 Kxc5

Not 23 ... Qxc5?? 24 Rac1 but 23 ... Rf5 is a stronger defence. Magnus finishes the king hunt efficiently.

24 Rfd1 Qe5 25 b4+ Kxb4 26 Rab1+ Kc3 27 Rb3+ Kc2 28 Qe2#

That's how it should be done, Chris!

Cambridgeshire County Chess Association

Division 1

A Team	Cambridgeshire League – Division 1										Score	Appearances	Grading	
	Fen-land Cambridge 6th Dec	St Neots A 18th Sept	Peterborough A 17th Jan	St Ives A 29th Nov	St Neots A 3rd Apr	Peterborough A 29th Feb	St Ives A 26th Mar	Peterborough A 18th Apr	St Neots A 24th Apr	St Ives A 30th Apr			Opponent Average	Performance
Peter Walker	0	1	½	1	0	0	0	½	1d	1	4+d	10	1932	1890
Ray Ilett	1	0	1	½	½	½	0	½	1d	½	4½+d	10	1894	1894
Paul Hanks	½		½			0		1	1d	½	2½+d	6	1894	1894
Ed Knox						1					1	1	1855	2230
Ben Stephens	0	1	1	½	0		½	½	1	0	4½	9	1799	1799
Paul Spencer		0	0	0	1		1		1		3	6	1703	1703
Neil Chedd		1		1	1	1		½			4½	5	1675	1978
Chris Russell							0			0	0	2	1634	1259
Total	1½	3	3	3	2½	2	1½	3	5	2	27			
Sum of opponents' grades	8193	8190	9172	9039	8975	9172	8699	9232	3667	9138	based on September grades – excludes defaulted games			
Sum of New England grades	7581	9186	9366	9186	9186	9138	9109	9256	3622	9179	* includes estimate			

Division 2

B Team	Cambridgeshire League – Division 2											Score	Appearances	Grading		
	Godmanchester 11th Sept	Ely 27th Sept	St Ives B 8th Nov	Peterborough B 23rd Nov	St Neots B 22nd Jan	Rookwood 20th Dec	Godmanchester 10th Jan	Ely 4th Dec	St Ives B 20th Feb	Peterborough B 7th Feb	St Neots B 20th Mar			Rookwood 7th Mar	Opponent Average	Performance
Peter Walker				½					0	1			1½	3	2092	2217
Ray Ilett						½							½	1	1843	1843
Ben Stephens			1	½	1		0	1	0	½	1	0	5	9	1822	1864
Paul Spencer	½	0	0	0			1			0	½		2	7	1688	1527
Neil Chedd	½	1	1		½		1		1	0	1		6	8	1660	1848
Norman Wedley								1					1	1	1567	1942
Paul Hanks												1	1	1	1447	1930
Jamie Sutherland						1	½	1					2½	3	1411	1661
Jim Jennings		0			0							0	0	3	1387	1012
Chris Russell	1	0		1	0	½		1	½		1	1	6	9	1349	1519
Isaac Goodwin*	½		0										½	2	1348	973
Dak Dhokia*						0							0	1	1302	927
Total	2½	1	2	2	1½	2	2½	4	1½	1½	3½	2	26			
Sum of opponents' grades	6375	6452	6439	6926	6618	6020	6076	6221	6994	7308	6524	6020	based on September grades – excludes defaulted games			
Sum of New England grades	6618	6447	6857	7180	6499	6242	6665	6251	7070	7257	6895	6679	* includes estimate			

Team 7000

Team 7000	Fenland		Team 7000						Score	Appearances	Grading	
	St Ives DM 17 th Oct	St Neots 18 th Dec	Peterborough D 18 th Oct	St Ives WC 14 th Nov	Spalding 12 th Dec	Peterborough D 18 th Jan	St Ives WC 14 th Feb	Spalding 13 th Mar			Opponent Average	Performance
Peter Walker	½	1			1		1	0	3½	5	1986	2136
Ben Stephens		½	½	½	1	0	0		2½	6	1775	1712
Dak Dhokia								0	0	2	1348	973
Paul Spencer				1		1		½	2½	3	1765	2015
Chris Russell	½		1	½		½			2½	4	1380	1508
Jamie Sutherland		0			1				1	2	1295	1319
Ed Knox	1		0	½	1	0		1	3½	6	1689	1751
Neil Chedd	0	0	1					½	1½	4	1675	1582
Total	2	1½	2½	2½	4	1½	1½	1½	17			
Sum of opponents' grades	6557	6961	6554	6713	6504	6809	6370	7043	based on September grades – excludes defaulted games			
Sum of New England grades	6952	6840	6829	6939	6884	6939	6819	6811	* includes estimate			

Team 4000

Team 4000	Team 4000							Score	Appearances	Grading	
	Rookwood 21 st Sept	Spalding 1 st Nov	Rookwood 29 th Nov	Peterborough K 31 st Jan	Spalding 27 th Feb	Peterborough K 28 th Mar	St Ives A 30 th Apr			Opponent Average	Performance
Jamie Sutherland		1					1	2	2	1513	1888
Norman Wedley	½		1					1½	2	1447	1635
Jim Jennings			1	1d	0	0	1	2+d	5	1441	1441
Isaac Goodwin	0	1		1d	0	1		2+d	5	1204	1264
Dak Dhokia	1d	1	½				1	3½+d	5	1167	1451
John Peoples				1d	1			1+d	2	1000	1375
Total	1½	3	2½	3	1	2	3	16			
Sum of opponents' grades	2749	3593	4177	n/a	3771	3898	3981	based on September grades – excludes defaulted games			
Sum of New England grades	3008	4275	4184	3949	3949	4296	4104	* includes estimate			