

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – June 2008

Chairman's Chatter

The first season is over for the New England Chess Club and I think we can be proud of what we have achieved. It may seem simple to move but there was a lot of hidden effort in

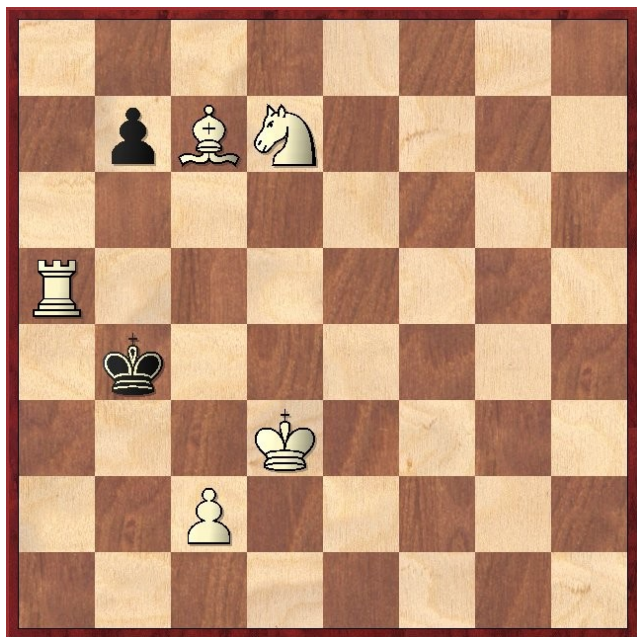
- satisfying our venue requirements
- purchase/transfer of equipment and storage
- setting up the club structure and accounts
- maintaining our playing calendar
- starting to improve our advertising and recruitment.

It was made easier by valuable contributions from many members and I wish to thank you all. As the league season has finished, this issue of "**NEW ENGLANDER**" looks back on our performance and I hope it will give you equal pleasure.

Paul Hanks

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Website to Watch

The European Youth Team Championship will take place between 13th and 22nd June in Szeged, Hungary. It is unclear whether live games will be available online but more information can be found at www.chess.hu/u18etc.

Diary Dates

Masterclass tuition sessions will be available according to popular demand during the summer months. Please note, however, that the venue is

hosting a large event and there is unlikely to be any chess on June 25th. Details of the club AGM will be announced in a future newsletter but is likely to occur in the first week of September.

Eye Opener

To encourage everyone to seek to improve their standard of play, Chris Russell submitted the following short game from the Club Championship. In his words, "Too much violence often cancels out!"

C J Russell v N Wedley

New England Championship 2008

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4

...a surprise. Norman always used to play Classical French (and usually ended up with a poor game as I recall from the old days!) I did not think he was comfortable with the Winawer variation, which is very double-edged.

4 e5 c5
5 Qg4?!

...dodgy, but I am wondering if Norman knows this line.

5 ... Ne7
6 Qxg7 Ng6?

A mistake. I was right - he doesn't know it!

7 h4?

...but it turns out that neither do I! Correct is 7 Bd3 threatening to dislodge the knight immediately, which I really should have found. I also spent ages looking at 7 a3 Qa5 which leads to too many complications for my liking!

7 ... cxd4
8 h5 Bf8!?

... another surprise. I was expecting dxc3 when I thought that if he tried to queen the pawn, I had good winning chances. (Fritz reckons 8 ... dxc3 9 Bb5+ 10 hxg6 cxb2+ 11 c3 Bxc3+ 12 Kd1 Kd7 13 Bxb2 Bxb2 14 Qxf7+ Qe7 15 g7 Re8 16 g8Q Rxc8 17 Qxc8 Bxa1 18 Rxh7 Bxe5 19 Nf3 Bb2 20 Rxe7+ as a win for White, though I had not seen the need for 11 c3 at that point, so maybe not!)

9 Qf6

Played reluctantly, as I have blown it!

9 ... Be7?!

and after

10 Qg7 Bf8

we agreed a draw! I think I was the most relieved!! He should have carried on with 9 ... Qxf6 10 exf6 dxc3 11 fxc6 when I do not really have compensation for the pawn deficit.

Chris Russell

Result Round-up

Division 1	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Games	Points
Warboys A	12	8	2	1	43½	20
Peterborough A	12	8	2	2	38	18
Cambridge	12	5	3	4	33	13
New England A	12	5	2	5	29	12
Peterborough B	12	4	1	7	27	9
St Neots A	12	2	3	7	22½	7
Buckden A	12	2	1	9	17	5

Division 2	Played	Won	Drawn	Lost	Games	Points
St Neots B	10	7	1	2	25½	15
Warboys B	10	7	0	3	24	14
Spalding	10	5	1	4	21½	11
Buckden B	9	4	1	4	21	9
New England B	10	3	3	4	21	9
Peterborough C	9	0	0	0	6½	0

<i>A Team</i>	St Neots A 26 th Sept	Pboro A 25 th Oct	Cams 3 rd Oct	St Neots 15 th Oct	Pboro B 8 th Nov	Pboro A 14 th Nov	Warboys A 28 th Nov	Buckden A 3 rd Dec	Buckden A 30 th Jan	Pboro A 7 th Feb	St Neots A 13 th Feb	Cams 5 th Mar	Pboro B 12 th Mar	Warboys A 16 th Apr	Score	Appearances
Chris Ross	0	0	1	1d	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	0	7	14
Francis Bowers	½	1	½	1d	½	0	½	1	½	0	½	½	½		7	13
Ron Jones						0		½	1d	½	½	1	½	0	4	8
John Osborne		0		1d	1	½	0	0		½	½	½	1d	0	5	11
Phil Turp	1		0	1d	1	1			1	½	½				6	8
M Ashkettle		½	0		0		0							0d	½	5
A Brookbanks	1														1	1
M Ingram		½													½	1
M Tarabad		0													0	1
Paul Hanks	1		1	1d			0	0	½			0	½	1	5	9
Total	3½	2	2½	5d	3	2	1	2	3½	2	2½	3	3	1	36	70

B Team	Buckden B 10th Oct	St Neots B 31st Oct	Pboro C 21st Nov	Spalding 19th Dec	Warboys B 9th Jan	Buckden B 6th Feb	Pboro C 21st Feb	St Neots B 17th Mar	Warboys B 2nd Apr	Spalding 8th Apr	Score	Appearances
John Osborne	1				½			1			2½	3
Mike Ingram	0		1	1	0						2	4
Harry Currie			1		0	0	1	0	1	½	3½	7
Chris Russell	1										1	1
Mahmoud Tarabad	0	0			1		1	0		1	3	6
Alan Brookbanks			0			0	½		0		½	4
Steve Walker		0	1			0	½				1½	4
Chris Collins		0		1							1	2
Sam Caraway				1		1		1	½	½	4	5
Jack Alster				1d							1d	1
Des Lane									0	0	0	2
Paul Hanks		1									1	1
Total	2	1	3	4	1½	1	3	2	1½	2	21	40

Jamboree - 30th April 2008

1	Linton	9½
2	New England I	8½
3	Cambridge	7
4=	Warboys II	6
	St Neots	6
6	New England II	5½
7=	Warboys I	5
	Ely	5
9	New England III	1½

Match of the Month

C Ross (2141) v C Pedersen (2149)

4NCL Round 7.3, Sunningdale 15/3/2008

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 Nc6

A curious version of the Two Knight Tango. Normally, I would know little about this opening but fortunately, I had 10 minutes to book up on my opponent and discovered he played this dubious variation. From the database, I soon discovered that transposition into a line of the NimzoIndian was White's best plan. So, I dutifully followed my preparation...

4 Nc3 Bb4 5 Qc2 d6 6 Bd2 O-O 7 a3 Bxc3 8 Bxc3 Re8 9 e3

An important idea. White does not wish to blockade with 9 e4 as he wishes to keep lines open for the bishop pair he has gone to some pains to obtain. Black, on the other hand, wants a blocked position - he is striving for a good knight bad bishop ending after his dark-squared bishop has been exchanged. Unfortunately for Black, I am the leading expert at

such endings and can avoid them like the plague when required! Black must continue his positional plan; putting pawns on the dark-squares and hoping to gain some outposts for the black knights.

9 ... a5 10 b3 e5 11 d5 Nb8

Here, I came out of my pre-match preparation. My opponent had played 11 ... Ne7 before and the novelty of the text move does not bode well for him. I had lined up 11 ... Ne7 12 Bd3 but 12 Nd2 had also been played on a number of occasions.

White's plan is obvious - control e4 with pieces and open the position for the bishop pair with the f2-f4 thrust. With the knight on b8, 12 Bd3 is prevented by the fork 12 ... e4. There is no rush though. The bishop pair will ultimately come into its own (so I hope!) and quiet development should suffice.

12 Be2

Nbd7

12 .. e4 was possible but it creates an outpost for the knight on d4. This would have been the reply to the inaccurate 12 Nd2; the white pieces are prevented from becoming active and the pawn is exerting a massive cramping affect. He must find some other way in which to develop.

13 O-O

b5!?

Black throws down the gauntlet. He does has no wish to wait for White to build up his position slowly. Black therefore targets the white central pawn on d5 which is supported by a single pawn. Black aims to undermine the pawn chain and starts at c4 and then plans a5-a4 to break the base. Good positional chess in theory and one that is very difficult to condemn.

The move has deeper positional aspects which probably did not strike Black. He is seeking activity but opening lines will eventually help White with the bishop pair. Going back to basics, what fundamental weakness is left by the b pawn thrust? c6, of course. The square is a massive permanent hole and indeed, the c7 pawn is now backward and open for attack. Both aspects seem irrelevant at the moment. Just notice though how that c6 square comes back to haunt Black for the remainder of the game.

14 Nd2

I have a clear, specific plan in mind. The knight is destined for e4 and then, I will play f2-f4. Previously, I should have tried 14 cxb5 Nxd5 15 Bb2 e4 where Black seems to be holding his own comfortably enough. A new me is emerging... I shall simply ignore Black and get on with my whole game plan.

14 ... bxc4
15 Nxc4

White does not recapture with the pawn since he wishes to prevent the black knight landing a beautiful outpost on c5 - it would be almost impossible to dislodge. The b pawn must be preserved to kick the knight with a timely b3-b4. White also opens the c file towards the backward pawn. All very relevant positional factors but wait a minute! d5 is en prise!

The tactical justification is that the a5 pawn is also en prise. If White can play 16 Nxa5 and Nc6, he will be in absolute control. Incidentally, previously I would have played 15 bxc4 Nc5 16. f4 where Black seems to be OK. But no, new Rossie has other ideas now!

15 ... a4

Moving the attacked pawn and intending to double the pawns on the a file before regaining the material on d5. Are the doubled pawns weak or strong? E.g. 16 bxa4 Nxd5 17 Bb2 N7f6 or 17 ... Ba6. Then, a4 is especially weak and if I am forced to advance a4-a5, the a5 square has been taken away. Black dominates the centre and the light squares seem very weak.



16 b4!

No, not a blunder, but a deliberate and deeply thought out pawn sacrifice! This was initiated at move 14 based on White's clear lead in development, the bishop pair and the better coordinated pieces. More important though is the c6 outpost available to White. The text-move has denied the vital c5 outpost to Black, and he will now find it difficult to find a good home for the knight on d7.

Now, if Black does not accept the sacrifice, White will simply support it with a rook and continue with his game plan. This is a clear illustration of a positional pawn sacrifice and disregarding material values in the position.

16 ... Nxd5
17 Bb2

Black thought for a long, long time. I have preserved the bishop pair, opened lines down the c file and can defiantly mock the insecure a4 pawn Black has in compensation. White can simply plonk a knight on a5 as planned in any case and directly attack the pawn. Black also has to worry about is the e2 bishop emerging onto f3, with tremendous pressure down the long diagonal.

17 ... N7f6

17... N7b6 looks tempting but 18 Bf3 and the pin on the d5 knight is extremely uncomfortable. Now, 18 Bf3 could be met by 18 ... e4 breaking the pin. The knight, however, can be attacked from another angle,

18 Rfd1

developing and threatening 19 Bf3 as 19... e4 allows possible tactics on the loose nature of the knight on d5. A cheeky pawn snatch with Bxe4 could be playable.

18 ... Be6
19 Na5

Again, continuing with the plan. The knight is en route for the c6 outpost, the c file is open and the scope the e2 bishop has increased. a4 is attacked and Black must take time to defend it.

19 ... Qd7
20 Bc4

Activating the bishop and attacking the precarious knight on d5. White could be preparing Qe2 and Bb5.

20 ... Reb8?

The pressure finally tells. Black had consumed a massive amount of time trying to solve his positional complications. The extra pawn has not aided him and finding active play is almost impossible. The text move is understandable as it removes the rook from the a4-e8 diagonal. The rook arrives an open file and the bishop on b2 could be left vulnerable if White overlooks Rxa5 tactics at an appropriate juncture.

Having accomplished all the positional advantages I was aiming for, it was time to cash in some of them and allow the tactics to regain my invested material with interest. Incidentally, 20 ... c5 21 e4 Nb6 22. Bxe6 Qxe6 23 bxc5 Rxa5 24 cxb6 didn't seem nice for Black but was probably his best try.

21 e4 Nb6
22 Bxe6

Being careful of the tactics. 22 Bxe5 Nxc4 23 Bxf6 Nxa5 drops a piece.

22 ... fxe6

22 ... Qxe6 23 Qxc7 regains the pawn. d6 seems weak and the knight on b6 becomes loose after Nc6.

23 Bxe5

regaining the invested pawn and emerging with a clear advantage. Let's stop and pause for a moment. From move 14, when the pawn sacrifice was initiated, until now, when the pawn has been regained, White has suffered little, used little time on the clock and has no serious structural weaknesses.

Consider Black. He is massively down on the clock, has 3 pawn islands, including a weak pawn on a4, faces a strong dark-squared bishop, has a hole on c6 for a white knight, a backward c7 pawn and inactive rooks. The black knights are stifled and there is indeed little hope for him.

23 ... Rf8
24 f3 Rac8
25 Bd4

moving the bishop away from attacks when the queen moves. Also, the loose nature of the knight on b6 needs to be exploited. Since the solidifying pawn move f2-f3 has been played, the g1-a7 diagonal has to be watched. c7-c5 by Black is also delayed.

25 ... Qb5
26 Qc6

The c6 square now becomes a nightmare for Black. White puts every single piece on this outpost and Black can do nothing to avoid it!

26 ... Qg5
27 Qc1 Qb5
28 Nc6

The white queen has found a slightly better square (idea of Qe3) and the knight finally lands c6, threatening Ne7+ and Na7 winning the exchange.

28 ... Rce8
29 Na7 Qd7

29 ... Qa6 30 Qxc7 is another steal of the c7 pawn.

30 Qc6 Qxc6
31 Nxc6 Nfd7
32 Rac1 Na8

You know your position is hopeless when you have to defend like this.

33 Rc2 Rf7
34 Rdc1 Nb8?

Black's final mistake. After the exchange of knights, there is no hope for him. Black had to bank on his coordinated knights to build some kind of fortress and make it incredibly difficult for White to break through. Black was in serious time trouble now and could not analyse the position accurately. The knight vacates c6, just for another piece to occupy it!

35 Nxb8 Rxb8
36 Rc6 e5
37 Be3 h6
38 Ra6

Attacking the weak a4 pawn. Also, the c6 square is yet again vacated for the final white piece!

38 ... Nb6
39 Rc6 Rd7

Black cannot hold onto all of his pawns. 39 ... Nc8 40. Rxa4 Rd7 41 Rc2 was the only other way to play on.

40 Bxb6 cxb6
41 Raxb6 Rbd8

The time control has been reached. White has won a pawn, got a dominating position and still has a massive target on a4 to aim at. The one last desperate resource Black has is the rook pair. If he can get his rooks onto the 7th rank, he might get a perpetual check but to do that, an open file is required. White has control of the c file so the d file is the best prospect. But White is a pawn up and from his viewpoint, allowing the opening up of the d file is fine as long as a pair of rooks can be exchanged in the process .

42 Rb5 Kf7
43 Ra5 Kf8

Black can do nothing. White is in total control of the position. 43 ... d5 44 exd5 Rxd5 45 Ra7+ R8d7 46 Rca6 gets a pair of rooks off and wins the a4 pawn quickly.

44 h3 h5
45 h4 Rf7
46 Rxa4 d5
47 exd5 Rf4

The idea is now 47 ... Rxd5 48 Ra8+ and at least one pair of rooks will be exchanged. Otherwise, 47 ... Rfd7 runs into 48 Re6 cleaning up easily.

48 Ra7 Rd4
49 Rcc7 R4xd5
50 Rf7+ Kg8
51 Rxc7+ 1-0

And with the king-side pawns dropping off too, Black had seen enough.

Chris Ross