

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – September 2008

Chairman's Chatter

September is a month for administration. We start with the club A.G.M. at which we need to decide our competition entries. The County Association meets to compile the leagues and issues the fixtures shortly afterwards.

The club calendar for the coming season will appear in the October copy of **NEW ENGLANDER** and this means it will come out as early as possible. So jump to it with this issue!

Paul Hanks

Eye Opener

Tactical tricks in the opening always bring a smile to my face. Because the opposing sides have yet to complete their development, there is always an economical simplicity about the play. Often, the trap is crude and rather obvious and the attraction to the onlooker arises from the psychology behind how the bait is presented. How do you tempt your opponent into walking into a sucker punch?

One way is to let him discover a way to win material. Not only is this skating on thin ice but paradoxically, some skill is required on the part of your opponent for the play to work. A very weak opponent may miss it!

Trippe v Skonieczna

from www.chessgames.com; 1988

1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Nf6 3 d4 Nxd5 4 c4 Nb4

So the knight is pushed into an exposed position and White can start to plan on winning it.

5 Qa4+ N8c6 6 a3 Na6 7 d5 Nc5 8 Qb5



Hmm, it is not looking too good for Black now.

8 ... e6 9 dxc6 b6

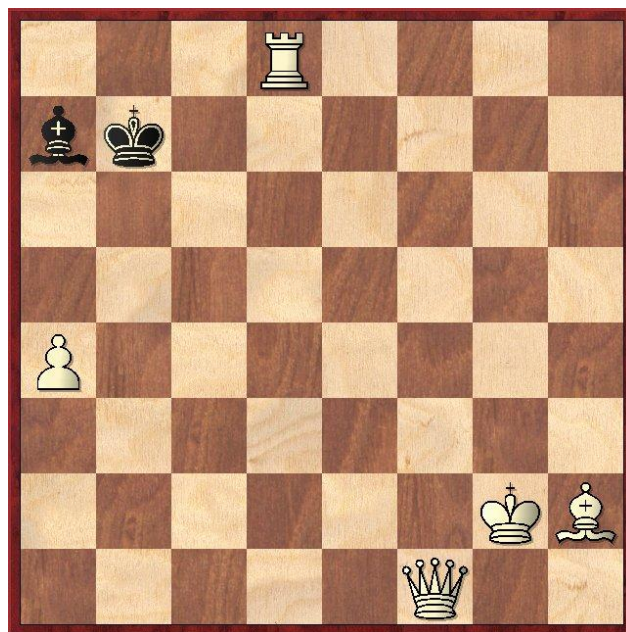
Suddenly, the white queen is under threat from 10 ... a6 11 Qb4 Nd3+ 12 Bxd3 Bxb4. The only way to extricate it is to remove the check on d3.

10 Ke2 a5 0-1

Now 11 ... Ba6 will decide the game.

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution

In Forsyth notation : **8/5NPK/4pk2/8/4B3/1Q6/8/8**

1 Bf5 Kxf5 2 Qf3#

1 ... ef5 2 g8=N#

1 ... K other/e5 2 Qe6#

Diary Dates

The club Annual General Meeting will be held on 3rd September 2008 at 7-30p.m. The main hall will be in use for another event so we should meet in the bar beforehand.

Match of the Month

Playing against a computer is different from playing a human but can still be a lot of fun. My advice is as follows :-

- Set up a board as normal. I find visualisation on a screen is somehow more difficult
- Give yourself a normal time limit but reduce the computer to about 10 minutes. That way you are not rushed by the reply but also do not wait too long. The computer will still be plenty strong enough!
- Record the game. In fact, make conditions as close as possible to a club match so the training is valid and taken seriously
- Do not be disappointed by adverse results. The point is to become more alert in tactical situations and to try to use this watchfulness as a complement to your positional plans.
- Analyse the game immediately afterwards to record what you saw and what you missed. You are never too old to learn – but that obviously does not apply to me!

Here are a couple of my efforts.

P Hanks v Fritz 6

Training Game, 12.03.2008

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 d5 4 Nf3 Be7 5 Bg5 h6 6 Bh4 0-0 7 e3 b6

The Tartakower Defence to the Queen's Gambit has a solid reputation. It was Kasparov's safe haven when Karpov started to dismantle the more active lines in his opening repertoire during their first match. I am not familiar with the variation and will have to improvise from now onwards.

8 Qc2 Bb7 9 Bd3 Na6

Even Fritz's opening book runs out here but that does not stop the software from playing good moves!

10 a3 c5
11 Qe2

I played this for two reasons. Firstly, there may be a discovered attack on Na6 (though I hardly expected a computer to overlook this) and secondly, I wanted to avoid doubled pawns if the Bb7 is exchanged for Nf3. The tempo loss, however, makes the move hard to recommend and it is probably time to start exchanging.

11 ... cxd4
12 exd4 Nc7
13 0-0

This fairly automatic reaction shows that you always need to be on your guard. The centre pawns looked solid just two moves ago but things have changed.

13 ... dxc4
14 Bxc4 Bxf3

Yes, the d pawn is about to disappear. After 15 Qxf3 Qxd4, Black has forked the two bishops and 16 Bxf6 is necessary to avoid further material loss. I felt that

this simplification may be objectively best but leaves little scope to do anything but lose slowly.

15 gxf3 Qxd4
16 Bg3 Rac8

This surprised me as I thought the knight would jump to the outpost at d5 but 16 ... Ncd5 17 Nb5 Qc5 18 Rac1 gives me hope e.g. 18 ... Qc6 19 Bxd5 Qxd5 20 Nc7. Now I had an array of moves. My favourite was 17 b4 so that 17 ... Qxc3 is met with 18 Be5 trapping the queen and forcing 18 ... Qxa1. Unfortunately, 17 ... Ncd5 is a simple antidote.

17 Rfd1

This looked the most active and good for gaining tempi. 17 Be5 Qh4 is similar to the game but may have additional tactics based on Kh1 and Rg1.

17 Rac1 would be the quiet way to proceed with Bb3 to follow. 17 ... Rfd8 gives the black queen an extra square on d2 in case of Be5 (17 ... Qd7 is safe though timid) 18 Rfd1 Qc5.

It looks as though Black should be in trouble but the queen now has several escape squares and has enough time to avoid any discovered threats.

17 ... Qc5
18 b4 Qh5

18 ... Qc6 19 Rac1 Rfd8 20 Bd3 Qb7

19 Rd4

I was getting quite excited. Was the trapped queen over Fritz's horizon?

19 ... Rfd8

This looks like a defence because 20 Rh4 Qf5 21 Bd3 is met by 21 ... Qxd3

20 Rad1 Rxd4
21 Rxd4 Ncd5
22 Nb5 a5



Gotcha!

23 Rh4 Qg6
24 Bd3

24 ... Rc1+
 25 Kg2 Qg5
 26 f4

Hanks 1 Fritz 0. Dream on!

26 ... Qxh4 0-1

P Hanks v Fritz 6

Training game, 10.04.2008

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 f3

The Saemisch variation was once my automatic reaction to the King's Indian Defence. It gives White natural attacking play but recently, I have found my lack of book knowledge lets the initiative fizzle out against a well-prepared opponent.

5 ...0-0 6 Be3 e5 7 Nge2 c6 8 Qd2 Nbd7 9 0-0-0 a6 10 g4

My play looks rather dated probably because in modern practice, White often closes the centre with 9 d5 (e.g. Dreev v Kozul, Sarajevo 2001). Of the few recent examples, most feature 10 Kb1 whilst the latest fashion is 10 c5 (Riazantsev v Kasimdzhanov, Russia 2006). The text move appeared in Dyachkov v Zakharevich, Russia 1998 but in that game, 11 d5 was the follow-up. Well, we know professionals do not have as much fun as we do!

10 ... b5
 11 Ng3 Qa5

Because of the vast number of candidate moves, the human mind has to focus on small portions of the board. Computers are freed from these restrictions and have a good view over the whole board. Here for instance, I thought the isolated queen was making a feeble attempt at a queenside attack.

12 g5?! Ne8

The only play I had been considering here was 13 Kb1 (to defend the a pawn) b4 14 Nce2 to buttress the centre. Now, I realised that moves could be transposed and the Qa5 was indirectly defending against the g5 thrust. White has to contend with the threat 13 ... exd4 14 Bxd4 Bxd4 15 Qxd4 b4 16 Nce2 Qxg5. How would you continue?

I noticed that if there was no check at that point, White could continue 17 Nf5 based on 17 ... gxf5 18 Rg1. In addition to recouping the material with 19 Nxd6, White has the threat 19 f4 when the black queen cannot simultaneously cover the e7 and h6 squares. I spent a long time searching for a defence and felt the only chance was 17 ... c5. Unfortunately, I was reaching the limit of my visualisation powers and my imagination found 18 Qc3 (overlooking the pawn has advanced to b4!) gxf5 19 Be2 (missing that there is a white knight on the square) when Rg1 either gives mate or pins the queen (though Black can play 19 ... Qf6). No wonder computers beat humans!

13 Kb1 bxc4

Whoops! I had concentrated so much on the line in the previous note that I had not given this variation adequate attention. I hoped it might even be better for me as the rooks would now be connected and g1 would always be open to them.

14 Bxc4 exd4
 15 Bxd4 Bxd4
 16 Qxd4 Qxg5
 17 Nf5 Ne5

A fine multi-purpose move. It creates a defence of d6 by 18 Nxd6 Nxd6 19 Qxd6 Nxc4, it blocks the long diagonal and defends f7. 17...c5 18 Qf2 (18 Qd5 Nb6) leaves White with some compensation.

18 f4

White offers another pawn to open the position knowing that it can be regained by 18 ... Qxf4 19 Ne7+ Kg7 20 Nxc6.

18 ... Qxf4
 19 Rdf1

White has some difficult decisions about how to proceed. Here 19 Ne7+ comes into consideration but apart from the above continuation, the loose piece gives Black a defensive tempo after 19 ... Kg7 20 Rdf1 Qg5.

19 ... Qg5

If 19 ... c5 20 Qd5 attacking Ra8.



Another decision point – 20 Rhg1 or h4? The first brings another piece into an impressive attack and safeguards the Nf5. The second has the tactics 20 h4 Qh5 21 Be2; 20 ... Qg4 21 Nh6+ or 20 ... Qg2 21 Ne3 Qg3 22 Ne2 (though I didn't see the latter). However, after 20 ... Qd8, there seems little to choose between the options.

20 Rhg1

Now 20 ... c5 can also be met by 21 Qxe5.

20 ... Qd8
 21 Nh6+ Kg7

21 ... Kh8 22 Nxf7+ Rxf7 23 Bxf7 nets the exchange and still maintains an initiative with the threat of 24 Bxe8 and Qxd6.

22 Nxf7 Qe7

Black has defended coolly which comes from supreme confidence in analysing the tactics. White is now struggling to maintain his momentum.

The realisation struck home like a thunderclap. If only I had played 20 h4! With the rook still on h1, I could calmly play 23 h5 when Black still has to be careful with 23 ... g4 24 h6+ Kg6 25 Qd1. After the game, I looked more closely at what I had missed over the board. I will leave you to have fun with the variations after 25 ... Nf6 26 Rxf6+ Kxf6 27 Qh5 intending Qxg5# or Rf1+ which would probably have led to a victory. Hindsight is a wonderful thing!

23 Ne2

Given time, this knight will shift to g3 and h5. I thought I would be OK if I maintained the pin from c3 so that Nf7 was invulnerable. Other tries all falter e.g. 23 Qe3 Nxf7; 23 Rg5 h6; 23 Bb3 c5 24 Qd5 Bb7.

23 ...

c5

24 Qc3

Not 24 Qd5 Nxc4 25 Qxa8 Bb7 26 Qb8 (26 Qa7 Bxe4+) 26 ... Nf6. Black can break the pin and the attack is over.

24 ... Nf6 25 Nxe5 Qxe5 26 Qxe5 dxe5 27 Rg5 Nxe4
0-1

Website to Watch

We may poke fun at the thought of Liverpool being a capital of culture but if they continue to provide venues and support for chess tournaments, let's not knock it. In September, it hosts the 4th EU Individual from 9th to 18th. The top British players Adams and Short will be there along with a long list of grandmasters including the recent winner of the European Individual title Sergey Tiviakov.

At last, such events are being publicised by professional websites and "action" can be followed on www.liverpoolchessinternational.co.uk.