

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – January 2010

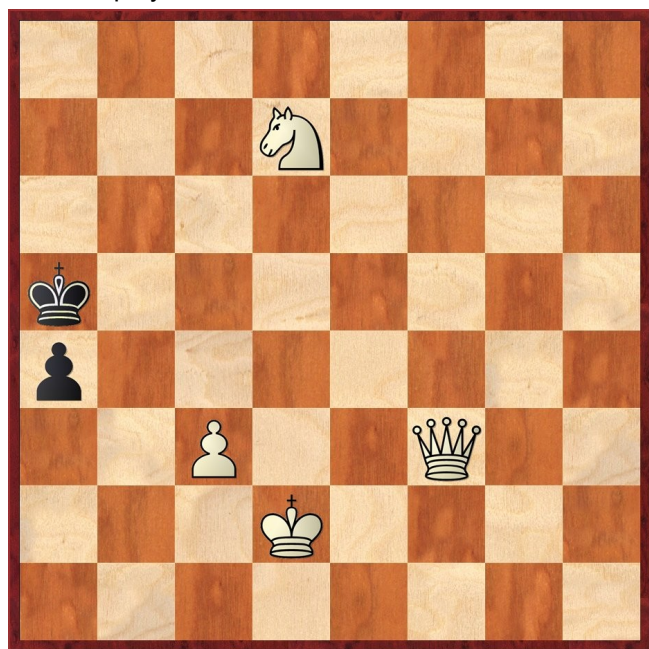
Chairman's Chatter

The New Year is an opportunity to make a new start. Two of my league games slipped away in the rapid finish when a few extra minutes would have made a great difference. So, my resolution is to handle time more effectively. What's yours?

Paul Hanks

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution

Position: 8/kP6/5R2/4n3/KN6/8/7B/8

1 Rf7 Kb6 2 Bg1#; 1 ... N any 2 b8=Q#

Result Round-up

Christmas Special

	Round					Total	Quiz
	1	2	3	4	5		
C Ross	2	2	0	2	2	8	0
F Bowers	2	1	0	2	2	7	1
A Brookbanks	0	2	0	2	2	6	2
C Russell	2	2	0	2	0	6	0
P Turp	2	1	0	0	2	5	1
S Walker	0	2	0	0	2	4	0
D Lane	2	0	0	0	0	2	1
N Wedley	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
M Tarabad	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
H Currie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Club Championship : at 16/12/09

Division One	CR	FB	PT	MD	RJ	PH	Total
C Ross	X	1 1	0	1		P 1	4 / 5
F Bowers	0 0	X		P	P	½ ½	1 / 4
P Turp		1	X		P 1	0	2 / 3
M Dunkley		0	P P	X		P	0 / 1
R Jones	P		P	0		X P	0 / 1
P Hanks	0	½ ½	1	P P		X	2 / 4

Division Two	D L	C R	S W	A B	N W	J A	H C	M T	K T	D S	Total
D Lane	X	0		1 1	½			1		0	3½/6
C Russell	1	X	1		½		P				2½/3
S Walker		0	X	½			1 1	1			3½/5
A Brookbanks	0		½	X			½		1 1		3 / 5
N Wedley	0	½			X	P		0		1	1½/4
J Alster	½				P	X	1			P	1½/2
H Currie		P	0	½		0	X	0		P	½ / 4
M Tarabad	0		0		1		1	X	1		3 / 5
K Talnikar			0	0			P	0	X		0 / 3
D Sivell	1			0	0	P				X	1 / 3

Fenland Knock-Out

Peterborough	2	New England	4
A Timoshenko	0	C Ross	1
A Summers	0	F Bowers	1
E Gibbon	1	P Hanks	0
R Ilett	0	P Turp	1
M Connolly	½	R Jones	½
G Ward	½	J Alster	½

Cambridgeshire County Chess Leagues

Cambridge A	3	New England A	2
O Winfridsson	½	C Ross	½
R McCoary	0	F Bowers	1
A Stewart	½	P Hanks	½
S Pride	1	P Turp	0
P Ribbands	1	R Jones	0
Buckden	1½	New England B	2½
A Young	0	R Jones	1
B Taylor	½	A Brookbanks	½
C Money	0	M Tarabad	1
E Alain	1	H Currie	0

Cambridgeshire "550" Competition

Octavia Hill	½	New England 2	3½
C Collins	0	F Bowers	1
A Tarabrial	½	P Turp	½
C Donald	0	H Currie	1
I Garrett	0	D Sivell	1

New England 1	3	Warboys N	1
C Russell	0	B Duff	1
A. Brookbanks	1	P Clough	0
M Tarabad	1	M Onyons	0
K Talnikar	1	K Harbour	0

EACU Club Championship : Club 600 - 21/11/09

Northampton	2	New England	2
A M Brown 178	0	C N Ross 199	1
B Pribranich 166	0	F J Bowers 160	1
A Walters 153	1	M Tarabad 100	0
T Moloney 100	1	H Currie 95	0

New England	2	Bury St Edmunds	2
C N Ross 199	1	M R Le-Vine 164	0
F J Bowers 160	1	S Taylor 156	0
M Tarabad 100	0	C A Roberts 140	1
H Currie 95	0	R L Jones 139	1

Team	Rd 1	Rd 2	Pts
Cambridge City	Ro 2½	No 3	5½
Royston	CC 1½	LB 3	4½
New England	No 2	BE 2	4
Bury St Edmunds	LB 2	NE 2	4
Leighton Buzzard	BE 2	Ro 1	3
Northampton	NE 2	CC 1	3

Website to Watch

January is the time for the Corus Chess event held in Wijk aan Zee, Holland. This year, the competition runs from 15th to 31st and has three sections for the professional grandmasters. The impressive top grouping includes Carlsen, Anand, Kramnik, Leko and Ivanchuk but all games can be followed on the stylish website <http://www.coruschess.com/index.php>.

The World Team Chess Championship is hosted by Bursa in Turkey from 3rd to 14th January and can be followed at <http://wtcc2009.tsf.org.tr/>

Diary Dates

In January, we start to concentrate on the Club Championship with rounds for the full club on January 6th and 27th. In between, we stage the Handicap Tournament on 13th January.

Eye Opener

Sometimes, you come across a truly unexpected move that takes some detailed searching to explain. The shock move can even include resignation! Take

the following example won by a 15 year old who later became a leading player for Germany.

L Schmid v Herzog
Dresden, 1943

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 Qe2

I have seen this variation of the Ruy Lopez called the Wormald Attack. Its aggressive intent is highlighted by the desire not to waste a tempo on castling.

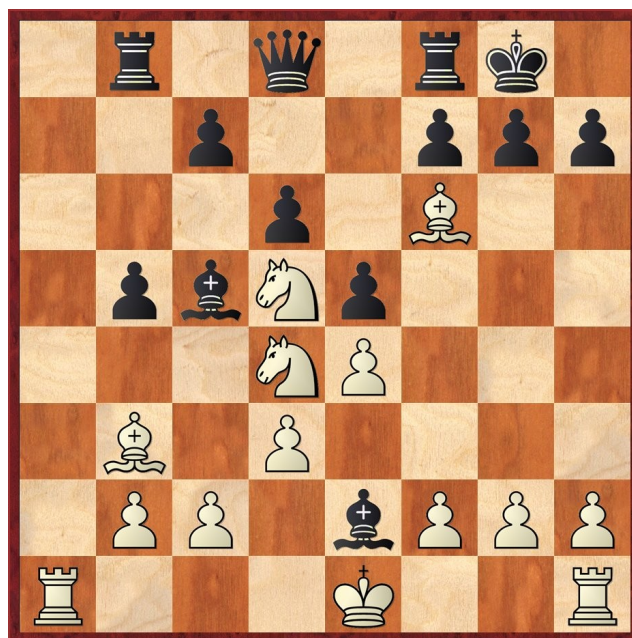
5 ...b5 6 Bb3 Bc5 7 a4 Rb8 8 axb5 axb5 9 Nc3 0-0 10 d3 d6 11 Bg5

The pin of the knight on f6 is particularly effective if Black has developed his dark-squared bishop outside the pawn chain. Of course, two can play at that game...

11 ... Bg4 12 Nd5 Nd4 13 Nxd4

This isn't the surprise! But can you foresee the consequences?

13 ... Bxe2 14 Bxf6



14 ... gxf6 15 Nc6 1-0

Fortunately, it doesn't take long to see that wherever the queen moves, there is a nasty knight fork after which White comes out a piece ahead (and sometimes more) e.g. 15 ... Qe8 16 Nxf6+; 15 ... Qc8 16 Nce7+; 15 ... Qd7 16 Nxf6+. Even after the retreat 15 ... Bh5 16 Nxd8, White has several pieces en prise but Black does not have time to capture them all.

So what options did Black have to avoid this debacle? At move 14 in the diagram, Black still loses material if he allows the capture of his queen 14 ... Bxd4 15 Bxd8 or 14 ... Qc8 15 Ne7+ Kh8 16 Nxc8 Bxd4 17 Kxe2.

Less obvious are the continuations 14 ... Qd7 and 14 ... Qe8. After 15 Nf5, the bishop remains taboo (15 ... gxf6 16 Nxf6+) and the mating threat e.g. 15 ... Bg4 16 Nde7+ Kh8 17 Bxg7# forces 16 ... Qxe7 with a similar outcome.

Match of the Month

I recently participated in the Peter Price Memorial Tournament, a B.C.A. congress held in Chesterfield. Three players finished with 4/5 and I won the Ted Williams Shield on tie-break ahead of Graham Lilley and Tyson Mordue. This game, played in round 4 on the Sunday morning, allowed me to lead the tournament by half a point and gain the upper hand in the tie-break system so that the offer of an easy draw in the last round clinched the Shield.

Having gone out for a celebratory birthday drink in Sheffield the evening before, I was undoubtedly feeling a bit rough at the start but, as the complications arose and I had to begin to play ambitiously, the hangover and cobwebs were soon blown away with the exciting finish!

The game is very instructive in the "momentum" and "initiative" elements of chess. Just see how White sets himself up for the first 17 moves, and after having completed his development (move 17 being a queen move to connect the rooks), White's every move thereafter is full of intent and aggression, containing lots of latent energy. After another 18 moves, vigorous activity and relentless thrusting pay dividends in the most emphatic of ways. So, the moral is to maintain the momentum, keep the initiative and don't allow it to slip away from you once you have it! This was Black's failure in this game. Once he had challenged the centre with 13 ... f6, he simply did not take the opportunity to further his position and retain the momentum that he had gathered.

C Ross (2205) v S Burnell (1952)

B.C.A. International Autumn Congress, Chesterfield
15/11/2009

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 Bf5 4 Nf3 e6 5 Be2 c5 6 c3 Nd7 7 0-0 Ne7 8 a3

I find it highly amusing that many players call this system the "Short Defence", since Nigel Short has adopted this variation successfully on many occasions. I don't know of any other opening adopted by White though that is referred to as a "defence"!

The top GM's nowadays prefer the more aggressive drive through the centre with a fast c2-c4, but I have yet to study those variations in depth. Here, I am taking a slower approach with the aim of expanding on the queenside but I am becoming increasingly unhappy with the seemingly comfortable "French-like" set-ups that Black frequently obtains with this strategy. This may be my final game with this system until it has been revitalised!

8 ... Nc6 9 b4 cxd4 10 cxd4 Rc8

This threw me somewhat. I have never seen such a rapid development of the rook and it seems to stop the natural development of my queen's knight. c2 has also become a rather sensitive square.

My queen's bishop now seems destined for b2 which isn't such a comfortable square for it or as natural as e3 but looking even deeper, hasn't Black just got a

French set-up now where the light-squared bishop is outside the pawn chain?

Is that indeed advantageous in the French, as the bishop could be exposed out in the field? And if Black tries f7-f6 to open lines, does White's dark-squared bishop want to sit on e3? Indeed, if White is obliged to make the capture exf6, the bishop blocks the e file and White may want to play down it. The bishop on b2 supports e5 and makes life that bit more difficult for Black when freeing his game.

The conflicting interests are complex. White's pieces are poised but are their long-term ambitions correct, if Black does not cooperate?

11 Bb2 Be7 12 Nc3 0-0 13 Na4

A provocative move and one that must be natural for White to enact if he is to seek any advantage on the queenside. White actually wants to play across the board, but kingside ambitions are somewhat thwarted by the presence of the bishop on f5. White is going to attempt to demonstrate that though outwardly active, it is an ineffectual piece.

Black has now completed development and must formulate a plan. How should Black proceed and what is his ultimate aim? Strategy and objectivity play a big role and will consume considerable time.

13 ... f6

Black wants to play actively. In principle, this is perfectly acceptable but having made the decision, a player has to follow it through. Returning to passivity after such a move is no longer an option.

Other plans for Black were available :

13 ... Ncxe5 seems to win a pawn but is an illusion. 14 dxe5 Bc2 15 Qd4 Bxa4 16 Qxa7 embarrasses the bishop on a4, puts pressure the black queenside, gives White a potential passed pawn and frees the d4 square for his knight. 16 ... Nb6 doesn't trap the queen as 17 Bd4 dislodges the blockade and squashes all the tactics.

13 ... Bg4 is a positional way to continue with the intention of swapping off the light-squared bishop for the better knight and make the white light-squared bishop "bad". d4 could then become difficult to defend.

13 ... Nb6 keeps an eye on the c4 square, with Bg4/Be4, Bxf3 and Nc4 to follow.

13 ... a5 is also not such a silly suggestion. After 14 b5 Na7, White has to defend against Bc2 and Black can reroute the knight via c8 and b6 whereupon the c4 outpost is a sensitive square for White. In that variation, White no longer has the c5 outpost, putting the question to the knight on a4.

All perfectly viable options, but the line chosen by Black is committal.

14 exf6 Bxf6

14 ... gxf6 isn't an option due to 15 Nh4 Be4 16 f3 embarrassing the bishop.

15 Rc1 Re8?!

It was about this time when I started to realise that Black wasn't going to push the boat out too far. Black has to play extremely actively here and should strive to get in e6-e5 at all costs to blast the position open. Further ideas would include dislodging the knight on a4 somehow, capturing on c5 and forcing an unfavourable bxc5 recapture which compromises the white pawn chain.

One variation I had contemplated was 15 ... a6 [to play b7-b5 to force Nc5] 16 Bd3 Bg4 17 h3 Bxf3 18 Qxf3 Bxd4 19 Qh5 which looks strong, but I'm unsure to how critical it is for Black.

The other big disadvantage for Black is the loose nature of his d5 pawn. Depending on how adventurous Black is, he could sacrifice it immediately with 15 ... e5!? 16 dxe5 Ndxe5 17 Nxe5 Nxe5 18 Rxc8 Qxc8 19 Qxd5+ Be6, but that is a complete mess and I'll let you figure out all the crazy variations. I'm sure there will *zwischenzugs* but I was just going to muddle my way through them if the game went crazy!

15 ... Kh8 as a prelude to the central thrust is also interesting. The text move hints at the plan, but he never actually enacts it.

This is where my point of consistency raises its head again. If you are going to lash out with f7-f6, then a further break with e6-e5 has to be the follow-up, whether it be a pawn sac or not. Complications will arise - you just have to accept that and may the best man, or calculator, win!

16 Re1 Qe7?

I see absolutely no point in this move. It doesn't aid Black very much at all, apart from put his queen in the sights of the white rook on e1 and is a positional, if not major tactical inaccuracy. I can't call it the losing move, but it certainly contributes to Black's problems for the rest of the game. Black has no choice now but to lash out, whether he's dropping a pawn on d5 or not. 16 ... e5 is the only possible move to generate some counterplay.

Since 13 ... f6, Black hasn't taken a decisive step in his own plan or played a move that has forced a response from White. After all, every action meets a reaction, right?

17 Qd2

A subtle move with the express intention of playing Bd3 and forcing off White's poor light-squared bishop. Now, the struggle for the e5 outpost can really be seen.

White develops and connects his rooks, but the most important point is that the queen can no longer be pinned to the knight on f3. 16 Bd3 Bg4 is very awkward for White and the e6-e5 break is looking strong for Black.

17 Qd2 is also another shot at the black queenside. The queen controls the a5 square, which is an important flight square for the knight on c6, once it has been hit by b4-b5. If the black knight cannot go to a5 and then c4, where else is it going?

17 ... Be4

This is a tactical mirage. Black wishes to exchange on f3 and then play Bg5 to win the exchange on c1.

White can even consider giving up the exchange on c1, as the control of the dark-squares would be hugely advantageous for him. The recapture on f3 with the light-squared bishop would also open up tactics with Bxd5, since the e6 pawn is pinned [a constant drawback to 16... Qe7?]. The point is that whenever Black captures with Bxf3, White will simply recapture with the g pawn, as the shattered pawns mean absolutely nothing in this position. Indeed, White wants a pawn on f4 so that Bg5 can always be met by f3-f4. Having the bishop pair, the open g file and a permanent target in the backward weakness e6 White would be very much in control.

17 ... a6 18 Bd3 Bxd3 19 Qxd3 was the only way to play, but then White will plonk his knight on e5, play f2-f4 and have a dominating position.

18 b5

White now starts to exert his domination and commences driving back the black pieces. Tactics begin to flow but cause no concern due to White's accumulating positional advantages.

18 ... Ncb8 19 Qa5!

Occupying the square where the black knight wanted to go. The white queen avoids tactics down the c1-h6 diagonal and exerts tremendous pressure on the dark squares in Black's queenside, gaining a tempo on the a7 pawn in the process. c7 is a possible penetration square now too if Black is not extremely careful.

19 ... a6

Defending the pawn, but holes are starting to appear in the black camp on b6 and c5. Can Black hold them together successfully?...

20 bxa6 Nxa6

20 ... Rxc1 21 Rxc1 bxa6 22 Nb6 should see White penetrate onto the 7th rank via c7 with a rook and then the queen.

21 Nd2

Rerouting the knight and forcing a pawn to f4. I also wanted the light-squared bishop to enter the fray on the kingside. The safer option was 21 Nc3 when perhaps 21 ... Nab8 22 Nxe4 dxe4 is Black's best try.

21 ... Bg6 22 f4

Aggressively played, but I was attempting to take my own council by playing actively having started in that vein on move 18. Have you noticed that each of my moves from move 18 has forced Black into a decision or a retreat?

Yes, f4 exposes the white king, but it stops any Bg5 counter-attacks and clamps down on the e5 outpost. The other way to play was 22 Rxc8 Rxc8 23 Bf3 Nc7 but I wasn't convinced if that was active enough.

22 ... Ra8

Again, Black is seeking one-move tactics. Positionally, the rook doesn't belong on a8 - what can it do on that file? Not much, since the a3 pawn is well positioned and securely defended. Naturally, the threat is Nac5

winning the knight on a4, but this is easily refuted. 22 ... Rxc1 23 Rxc1 Qd6 24 g3 was the continuation I envisaged. White has a very pleasant pull.

23 Qb5

Naturally, I would love to play 23 Nb6 but annoyingly 23 ... Qd8 pins the knight on b6 as white queen is undefended. This step sideways apparently threatens a pawn and facilitates Nb6 ideas.

23 ... Reb8

Black is still playing too passively. Blocking up the rooks in this manner is something Black really doesn't desire. If White took the b7 pawn, the queen ends on a dangerous square and the bishop on b2 is vulnerable to Reb8 in appropriate circumstances. No, White isn't taking that pawn any time soon, so there is no need to defend it.

Black needs to get that knight on a6 back to c6. He should be playing here 23 ... Nab8 hitting the knight on a4. 24 Bg4 Ra6 25 f5 [25 Qxb7 Qd6 26 f5 exf5 27 Rxe8+ Bxe8 isn't so great for White] was the best way to play. The pawn on f4 is loose, so unpinning with Qd6 at some point has to be a plan. Forget about b7, it isn't important, even if you drop the pawn at some point, the open file will allow the black rooks to become active.

24 Bg4

More energetic play by White. Black has no respite. The bishop is activated and the pressure down the e file is going to become intolerable. Note how Black's 16th move is persistently coming back to haunt him. That's another reason why he should have dealt with that inaccuracy before now and thrown in Qd6 to alleviate the problem.

24 ... Nf8 25 Nb6

The threats and forcing moves continue. Black's cramped rooks and vulnerable queen are a constant headache. His time was becoming a very critical point with less than 15 minutes left to save his position, which is nearly impossible to do considering the pressure he's been under for the past 10 moves or so.

25 ... Nc7

25 ... Ra7 26 Nc8! is a neat win of material.

26 Qb3 Ra6 27 f5

Onwards and upwards! Keep the momentum flowing! 27 Be2 or 27 a4 are all perfectly acceptable alternatives, but the power is with the white forces at the moment, so there must be no relenting.

27 ... Bf7

The other line I considered was 27... Bg5 28 Re2 Bxf5 29 Bxf5 Bxd2 30 Rxd2 Qd6 31 Bxh7+ Nxh7 32 Na4 and the material is equal but the black forces are scattered far afield and the white rooks control the important files. 28 fxe6 Nfxe6 29 Nxd5!?

A mysterious misjudgement of the position. I was very conscious of the time element and wanted to present Black with as many complications as possible. This evidently cheeky pawn grab is playable, but only just!



White should refine his play by 29 Bxe6! Nxe6 30 Nxd5 which is clearly winning. Note that 29 ... Bxe6 30 Rxc7 Qxc7 31 Rxe6 defends the knight on b6 and is clearly winning too. 30 ... Qf7 31 Re2 is a clear demonstration of White's material plus.

29 ... Nxd5 30 Qxd5 Rd8?

Again, Black chases shadows. White has walked into a discovered attack on his queen, so Black should try and exploit it. After 30 ... Nxd4 31 Rxe7 Bxd5 32 Rd7, Black has to play extremely accurately to maintain the material balance. It's possible but I reckoned with limited time, he would go astray in the tactical melée! 32 ... Ra5 33 Rf1 [threat Rxf6] 33 ... h5 34 Bd1 and Black needs resources!

31 Qe4 Qd6

The pawn is untouchable due to the pin down the e file. How Black must be regretting his 16th move!

32 Nf3 Nxd4

Desperation, but what else could Black do? The pawn can't be allowed to stand and rule. White will simply reroute his pieces and push the pawn down Black's throat. But Black's forgotten about his back rank!

33 Nxd4 Bxd4+?

Losing outright, as Black drops a piece. 33 ... Ra4 keeps the fight going but White can safeguard the bishop with Red1 and cling to the material, as the back rank threat is still effective.

34 Qxd4 Qxd4+ 35 Bxd4 Ra4

The point is that 35 ... Rxd4 36 Rc8+ exploits the back rank and Black must lose a piece by interposing the bishop from f7. A nice little exploitation of positional advantages to win tactically! Now I can maintain the extra piece and force Black's immediate resignation.

36 Bb6 1-0

Chris Ross