

NEW ENGLANDER

Chess Club Update – January 2011

Chairman's Chatter

Club champions of East Anglia! Wow! Francis took a team to Whittlesford in early December and we must congratulate them all for getting the better of the opposition to win the title. This is excellent momentum to take us into 2011.

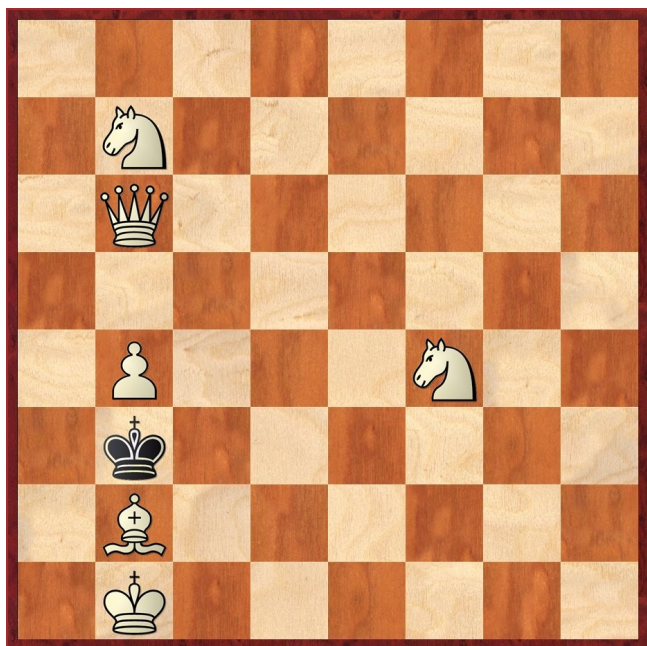
Paul Hanks

Diary Dates

26th January and 2nd February have matches in the "Team 550" competition but for the rest of the club, the weeks are specified as "Championship Reserve." Please try to arrange a club championship match then to avoid problems if games start to pile up.

Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution

Position: 8/3R4/8/5p2/2p1N3/4k3/2K3Q1/8

1 Re7 fxe4 2 Rxe4# [1 ... Kd4 2 Qd2#; 1 ... Kf4 2 Qg3#; 1 ... f4 or c3 2 Qf2#]

Result Round-up

East Anglian Club Championship : 5/12/10

Pos	Team	Score	Board	Score
1	New England	4½ / 8	C Ross	2 / 2
2	Milton Keynes	4 / 8	F Bowers	1½ / 2
3	Cambridge	3½ / 8	P Turp	½ / 2
4			P Spencer	½ / 2

Fenland Knock-Out

New England A	3	Royston	1
C Ross	1	K Clark	0
F Bowers	1	M Pinner	0
S Caraway	0	B Judkins	1
P Hanks	1	K Waterhouse	0

Cambridgeshire County Chess Leagues

New England A	3½	Cambridge A	1½
C Ross	1	O Winfridsson	0
F Bowers	0	R McCorry	1
S Caraway	1	S Pride	0
P Hanks	1	P Ribbands	0
P Turp	½	A Norman	½

Club Championship : at 22/12/10

Division One	CR	SC	FB	PT	PH	Total
C Ross	X	1	1	p	1 ½	3½ / 4
S Caraway	0	X	½ 0			½ / 3
F Bowers	0	1 ½	X	½	1	3 / 5
P Turp	p		½	X	p	½ / 1
P Hanks	½ 0		0	p	X	½ / 3

Division Two	RJ	CR	AB	DL	NW	SW	JA	Total
R Jones	X		1		1	½		2½ / 3
C Russell		X		p		p		0 / 0
A Brookbanks	0		X 1				P	1 / 2
D Lane		p	0 X		1			1 / 2
N Wedley	0				X 0		p	0 / 2
S Walker	½	p		0	1 X			1½ / 3

Division Three	MT	DS	KT	HC	SS	PS	Total
M Tarabad	X	p	P	0 0			0 / 2
D Sivell		p X		p		0	0 / 1
K Talnikar		P	X		p	p	0 / 0
H Currie	1		p	X	0 p		1 / 2
S Sitaram		1	p	1	X	0	2 / 3
P Spencer			1 p	p 1		X	2 / 2

Christmas Friendly : 22/12/10

Player	PH	CRu	CRo	MT	HC	Pts	Pos
P Hanks	X	1	1	1	1	4	1
C Russell	0	X	0	1	1	2	2=
C Ross	0	1	X	0	1	2	2=
M Tarabad	0	0	1	X	1	2	2=
H Currie	0	0	0	0	X	0	5

Website to Watch

One of the world's great tournaments takes place in Wijk aan Zee from 14th to 30th January 2011. It has new sponsors following the take-over Corus by Tata Steel and this is reflected in the updated website name www.tatasteelchess.com. Interestingly, all the overseas players from the London Classic will be participating so it may be time for settling scores.

If you want to think of escaping the winter weather, perhaps you should follow the Tradewise Gibraltar Chess Festival on www.gibraltarchesscongress.com from 24th January to 3rd February.

Eye Opener

The simplest way to find a suitable game for **Eye Opener** is to play one! Chris Ross is responsible for these cheap tactics because having won the toss, he elected to take Black so that "our attacking players can enjoy the white pieces". Here is how I repaid him.

P Hanks v K Waterhouse

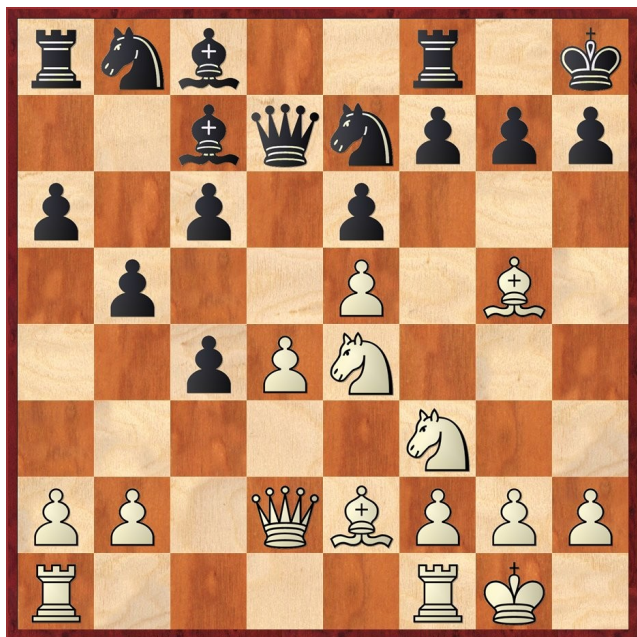
New England A v Royston, Fenland K.O. 08.12.10

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 Nf3 e6 4 Nc3 c6 5 e4 b5 6 Bf4 Bd6 7 e5 Bc7 8 Be2 Ne7 9 Bg5 Qd7 10 0-0 0-0 11 Qd2

Strategically, White should not get away with this and ought to start undermining the queenside pawn mass with moves like b2-b3. Today, however, White's mind was on a tactical solution.

11	...	a6
12	Ne4	Kh8

I was surprised to get this opportunity. 12 ... Nd5 was necessary and although 13 Nc5 does not look nice for Black, 13 ... Qe8 and Nb8-d7 is sufficient.



13	Nf6
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Obvious but 13 Bf6 looked tempting with lines like

- 13 ... gxf6 14 Nxf6 Qd8 15 Qh6
- 13 ... Ng6 14 Qh6 Rg8 (14 ... gxf6 15 Nxf6) 15 Nfg5 Nf8 16 Nxf7 Nxf7 17 Ng5

- 13 ... Nf5 14 g4 gxf6 15 Nxf6 Qd8 16 gxf5 Nd7 17 Qh6 Nxf6 18 exf6 Rg8+ 19 Kh1 Qd6 (19 ... Qf8 20 Ng5 Rxf6 21 Qxf8+) 20 Rg1 but Black can use the tempo more critically with 13 ... Nd5. It is a real defence because 14 Bd1 (14 Qh6?? Nxf6) 14 ... gxf6 15 Nxf6 Nxf6 16 exf6 Rg8 17 Qh6 Rg6 18 Qf8+ Rg8 leads to a draw by repetition.

13	...	Qd8
14	Qc2	g6

I switched to 13 Nf6 when I saw White has time for 14 ... gxf6 (14 ... Nf5 15 Nxf7) 15 Bxf6+ Kg8 16 Qd2 though Fritz says 16 Qe4 and 16 Ng5 are stronger.

15	Ng4
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Sadly, this step in the wrong direction prolongs the game as Black easily avoids 16 Bf6+ Kg8 17 Nh6#. 15 Qe4 is the killer. White has Qe4-h4 to come and the threat to h7 and e7 is decisive unless Black plays 15 ... Nf5 when 16 Nxf7 Qe8 (16 ... Qd5 17 Qg4 Re8 18 Qh3 Nd7 [18 ... Kg7 19 Bf6+ Kg8 20 Nhg5] 19 Nf8+ Kg7 20 Qh7+ Kxf8 21 Qh8#) 17 Nf6 Qd8 18 Qg4 Kg7 (otherwise 19 Qh3+) 19 Nh5+.

15 ... Nd7 16 Qe4 Bb7 17 Nh6 f6 18 exf6 Nxf6 19 Qxe6 Ned5 20 Nf7+ Rxf7 21 Qxf7 Qd6 22 Bh6 Rg8 23 g3 Ng4 24 Ng5 1-0

Black has no defence e.g. 24 ... Ngf6 25 Qxh7+ Nxf7 26 Nf7#

Match of the Month

Here is a nice game which demonstrates neatly how to play aggressively while keeping in mind a set positional plan. It was played during a long, rich vein of form for me and unfortunately, condemned my opponent's team to an 8-0 wipe-out!

Chris Ross (2223) v James Carpenter (2070)
Woodhouse Cup, York 27.11.10

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nd2 Nc6

This move entering the Guimard Variation pops up from time to time and is not such a stupid continuation. The first time I saw it in the Sheffield League, I couldn't believe what my opponent was doing. Then, I played 4 c3 and asked myself what on earth that knight was going to do on c6. My opponent promptly replied 4 ... e5! and I struggled to draw!

4	Ngf3
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The most accurate. It prevents breaks with e6-e5 which would simply equalise for Black.

4	...	Nf6
5	e5	Nd7
6	Nb3	

Two moves are fashionable here. 6 Bb5 is the current trend whilst 6 Bd3 is the move Black wants - to justify a Nb4 manoeuvre and allow a future break with c7-c5. If Black can get that in, he should be doing OK. Hence the text move. The queen's knight which often takes time to join the kingside attack, is maintained on the queenside to keep an eye on the c5 push. White's development is fluid and smooth whereas Black's is cramped.

6 ... a5
7 a4

Maintaining the knight and obtaining the b5 square, which could become important if Black makes the c7-c5 thrust.

7 ... Be7
8 Bb5

Occupying that b5 outpost. Also, Black's other natural break-out (e6-e5) has a defender (knight on c6) under pressure. So, Black has the burden of analysing Bxc6 if he wants to continue that way.

8 ... Na7

Radical. Black intends c7-c5 with central pressure. White can't readily give up the bishop especially for such a poorly placed piece as the knight on a7.

9 Bd3

Now that Nb4 is not an option, the bishop retreats to its natural attacking square.

9 ... c5

Black plays his flank break. Although it exchanges pieces which eases the pressure, the move does not make his position easy to play.

10 dxc5 Nxc5
11 Nxc5 Bxc5
12 0-0 Nc6

Black cannot castle without walking into Greek gift sacrifices on h7 and a swift kill. So, Black attempts to bring his poorly placed knight back into the fray.

13 c3

Guarding the central d4 square and preventing any Nb4 ideas snaffling the light-squared bishop on d3. I must maintain my bishop pair to attack on the kingside. If Black can castle without being hacked up, he is doing fine.

13 ... Bd7

Attempting development and placing the bishop on the best diagonal h1-a8. Logical enough, but the problem of his king still has to be solved. Here is an example of how Black has previously dealt with this position, although White did not attack in the most direct manner. 13 ... Be7 14 Qc2 h6 15 Re1 Bd7 16 Bf4 Rc8 17 Qe2 Kf8 18 h3 g6 19 Qe3 Kg7 20 g4 Qf8 21 Bg3 Bc5 22 Qf4 f5 23 exf6+ Qxf6 24 Qxf6+ Kxf6 25 Ne5 Rh7 26 Bh4+ g5 27 Nxc6 gxh4 28 Bxh7 J Linares v E Gigerl, Graz 1981 [0-1 (52)]

14 Re1

Defending the e pawn and preparing to shift the rook into the attack via e3 and g3. This also releases the knight from defensive duties ready for the attack.

14 ... Ne7
15 Ng5!

The pressure mounts. Black cannot be allowed to play Ng6, 0-0 and sew up the kingside. White has to start attacking the undeveloped black pieces. White is well on the road to good development and the queen's bishop on c1 has currently no obvious square. So, a

path for the white queen is cleared and the white pieces start to gather on the kingside.

15 ... h6

Black is forced into a concession. If White is permitted to play Qh5, there are nasty tactics on all of the light squares. Hence, Black must react and create a hole.

16 Nh3

A knight to the rim, I hear you call? Well, yes, but that knight is heading for h5 where it will hit g7 and allow Qg4, Re3/Rg3 and mate on g7!

16 ... d4!?

A very spirited attempt by Black and probably his best before he is slowly squished. Black wishes to open up his own bishops and maybe have some kingside ambitions of his own. If Black can take on c3 and then play Bc6, his own two bishops are blazing down the board. If Qd5 comes in, there are mating ideas all over the place. White has to be very careful finding the correct plan. Think hard about this position.



17 Qg4!

Controlled aggression - a theme we will revisit on a few occasions. Black has several potentially weak pawns but White has to tread carefully. Counterplay cannot be allowed.

White has a lead in development which must be maintained. The knight's slightly awkward position on h3 has to be justified so the queen's entry into the position and kingside probing is the only logical response. Pawn structure here has little relevance as the position is becoming very tactical and open lines are of vital importance.

17 ... dxc3

White threatened to take this pawn. Is White's advantage so big now?

18 Be4!

Centralisation! Black's best plan is to control the long diagonal h1-a8 diagonal - Bc6 and Qd5 ideas become

very annoying. OK, let's take that further. 18 Qxg7 Rg8 puts the rook on a very nice file and once the queen has run away, Black will play Bc6 and suddenly, g2 is becoming very weak indeed. So, no, g7 is a tasty pawn but it has to be captured at the right moment. The bishop on d3 was loose and the white rooks are poised to control the c and d files. 18 bxc3 Bc6 19 Bc2 h5 is still better for White but not so clear.

18 ... **g6**

Again, Black feels it necessary to force a weakness. The position is very complicated and tactics abound. With my lead in development, I felt confident that Black would not find the right path. Here are some ideas: 18 ... Bd4 19 Rb1 Bxe5 20 bxc3 Bxc3 [20 ... Bxa4 21 Bxb7 Bc2 22 Rb2 Bxc3 23 Rxc2 Bxe1 24 Bxa8 Qxa8 25 Nf4 with complications, whereas in this line 25 Qxg7 is not very good due to 25 ... Rg8 26 Rc8+ Qxc8 27 Qxh6 Bb4].

Black also decides not to take the pawn. 18 ... cxb2 19 Bxb2 gives White yet more development advantages. The pawn disadvantage means little in such an open and tactical position.

19 **bxc3**

As Black has conceded two weaknesses on the kingside, White can afford the time to recapture his pawn disadvantage. The pawn on c3, however, is of little worth and White can give that up without any qualms. In the mean time, it does a very good job of controlling the d4 square, stopping that dark-squared bishop of Black's from being centralised.

19 ... **Bc6**
20 **Bxc6+**

Since Black has played g7-g6 and blocked the light squares, this exchange favours White. Hence the bishop's centralisation. It's the dark squares that matter now.

20 ... **Nxc6**
21 **Nf4**

The knight is re-developed. There are some very big nasties on e6 and g6 for Black to avoid.

21 ... **Qc7**
22 **Nd3**

So, the knight does not have h5 any more for an outpost... Instead, it finds its best square, putting pressure on the dark squares and that all-important c5 square.

22 ... **Be7**

22 ... Ba7 allows 23 Ba3 and the dark squares will be Black's downfall.

23 **Qc4**

Here, White begins the demonstration of the effectiveness of switching from one side of the board to the other. Black has blocked up the kingside for now, but that flank still has weaknesses to be exploiting. However, with the black king not yet committed, it is important to concentrate positionally on the queenside, with the idea of a swift, controlled, strike on the kingside.

With these lovely open b and d files, the open 4th rank for the white queen and rooks, the white pieces can slip from side to side and make the best use of the open space.

23 ... **Rc8**
24 **Rb1** **Kf8**

Black has had enough worry about his king safety and "castles artificially". White's domination of the whole board is impressive. Black struggles for a constructive plan but slightly better was 24 ... Nd8 25 Qb5+ Qd7 and White has to decide on how to proceed.

25 **Be3** **Kg7**

Again, Black is intent on fleeing with his king. Better was the retreat 25 ... Nd8 26 Qb5.

26 **Qb5** **Rb8**
27 **Bb6** **Qc8**

White has successfully driven Black onto his back rank and to defend a miserable pawn on b7. Now, how to increase the pressure? If allowed, Black will wriggle. The white knight needs to be brought to bear on the position.

28 **Nb2?!**

A clumsy way to bring the knight around to d6. Positionally, well intended, but poorly executed. This is an artificial move and one that does not look right in the first place. I thought I had time, but I simply don't.

28 Nc5 was my instinctive move, but I wasn't sure what would happen if Black exchanged. I would have a nice bishop on d6, but was that enough? Probably not, but a good advantage, it would be. 28 Bxa5 Nxa5 29 Qxa5 Rd8 was a slower and less secure route.

28 ... **Bd8**
29 **Bc5** **Be7**
30 **Bxe7**

White's clamp on the position is slipping slightly. Exchanges do not favour him and he has to be careful how to proceed. Repeating the position was less than ideal and 30 Nc4 Bxc5 31 Qxc5 Ne7 looked too loose.

30 ... **Nxe7**
31 **Qxa5**

A cheeky pawn steal, but tactics were abundant in the time scramble. Accuracy was not the order of the day as we were now struggling to reach move 42. Who could bluff whom?

31 ... **Ra8**
32 **Qb5** **Nd5**

Annoyingly, Black has a lot of counterplay with his knight. There are many weak squares for the knight to land on and the white queenside pawns are vulnerable. Time (but not much!) to consider that controlled aggression again. Defend on the queenside but attack on the kingside...

33 **Rbc1** **Qc7**
34 **c4**

That knight on b2 has a use after all! It does not have the range of forks of its black counterpart but it's suitably defending the weak white pawns for now...

34 ... Nf4

Now it's Black with the aggressive intentions! That cannot be allowed! Flash attacks or even mating ideas for Black cannot be permitted in the slightest. No, "controlled aggression" by White. Be proactive in the approach and keep Black on his toes...

35 Re4!

Eviction of the knight is essential and the rook is airlifted to the kingside. To prevent an attack, you must attack yourself! So, I don't hang around. I kick the knight away and target the black king...

35 ... Nd5

35 ... g5 36 Qb3 does not solve Black's problems.

36 Qb3

The queen is rerouted to the kingside for the attack. Before, it was the 4th rank that was useful for the queen to swing back and forth. Now, it is the 3rd rank.

36 ... Rhc8

37 Qf3

Targeting the kingside. f6 is becoming a very sensitive square if the white queen can reach it.

37 ... Qe7

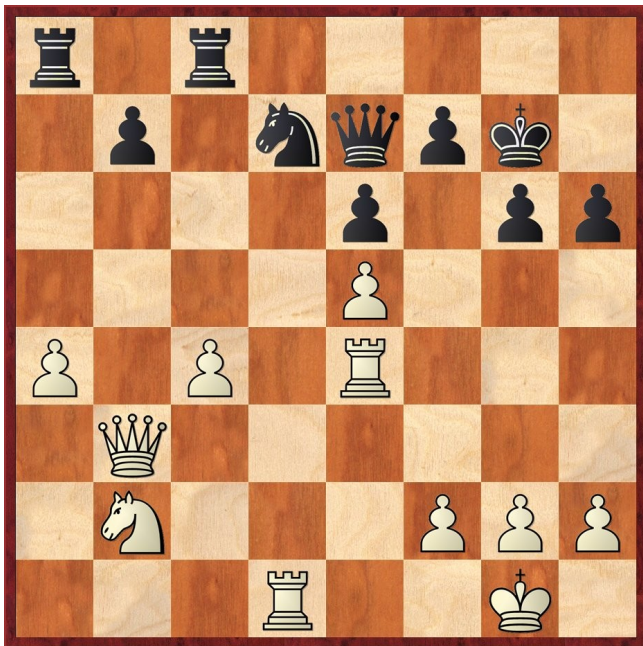
38 Rd1 Nb6

39 Qb3

Again, demonstrating the agility of the white queen. Swinging from defensive duties on the queenside, to attacking intentions on the kingside. The a4 pawn is protected and the black knight is kicked from its perch.

39 ... Nd7

Spot the threat. A big long, deep think is now needed. I banged out my next move with such confidence, and in such a time-scramble, it must have been a very, very scary move for my opponent to cope with. White can demonstrate unequivocally that he has a huge advantage, if not winning position. How to exploit it...



40 h4!

Bang!!

What a horrible surprise to face when you are threatening a fork and have less than a minute for the remaining 3 moves to the time control. Utterly ignoring a threat is sometimes the most powerful psychological weapon you can throw at an opponent. Tactically, the fork is actually not threatened, as my opponent soon discovers. If the threat need not to be taken seriously, get on with your own plan.

"Controlled aggression" is the game plan here and that black kingside is a target. Black has successfully blocked it. So, it's time to open some lines.

The back rank must be cleared or Black will use it tactically. The other point to the rook move to e4 is that h2-h4 is now facilitated! Naturally, the computer wants to grab the pawn on b7 i.e. 40 Qxb7 Rcb8 41 Qxd7 [41 Rxd7 Rxb7 42 Rxe7 Rxe7] 41 ... Qxd7 42 Rxd7 Rxb2 43 h3 which is probably still winning, but does not have the surprise and shock value of the text move.

40 ... Nc5

41 Qb4

Easily refuting the tactic. The white queen pins the knight and prepares to re-route to the kingside via d2 hitting the f6 and h6 squares. White's whole strategy is so fluid, it plays itself.

41 ... Qe8

Desperately trying to win the pawn on a4. No better was 41 ... Rc7 42 Rf4 Nxa4 43 Qxe7 Rxe7.

42 Red4 Nxa4

And the time control has been reached. Black has won his pawn back, but at a cost. White has the kingside attack, the d file, lots of targets and very active pieces, whereas Black has three major pieces all on the back rank.

43 h5

That controlled aggression again. White forces open lines against the black king. Stealing on b7 is not an option, even if it was tactically justified, which it isn't. 43 Qxb7 is easily answered by 43 ... Rcb8. NO, break open that black king whilst putting pressure on the queenside is the plan.

43 ... g5

Black cannot allow his king to become exposed so desperately attempts to blockade the position. There is only one answer to that then, right?

44 f4

Open it must come! White has to prise open lines at all costs. Surprisingly, it is the white king that is the safer, Black's has no safe place to hide.

44 ... Nxb2

45 Qxb2 Qe7

With the intention of recapturing on g5 with the queen and keeping things in the balance. However, White's recapture on b2 has led to some very neat tactical possibilities. White has a killer plan now.

46 f5!

After which, there is little hope for Black. The tactics along the long diagonal are just too strong.

46 ... **Qc7**

Taking and opening up lines is very scary. 46 ... exf5 47 e6 must be good, although 47 Rd7 Qa3 48 Qxb7 Rf8 has to be pretty terminal too.

47 **fxe6**

White needs open lines, not blockading ideas with f5-f6+. No, I want that black king nice and exposed.

47 ... **Qxe5**

48 **exf7**

Trying to keep it as simple as possible. 48 Qxb7 Qxe6 49 Qb3 Rc6 gave hope to Black.

48 ... **Rf8**

White was simply threatening to promote the pawn and open up the 7th rank for the rooks to penetrate and create mating nets. The end is nigh.

49 **Qc2**

Unpinning the rook on d4 and threatening to penetrate on g6 with devastating effect. Of course, the computer

wants to take on b7 and cling on for ages with a boring long grind with 49 Qxb7 Qe3+ 50 Kh2 Qe5+ 51 Kh1 but where is the fun in that? All the way through, the computer has wanted to steal that lonely insignificant pawn on b7 all game, and it has absolutely no importance in the grand scheme of things. Mating the black king is the objective, not a pawn grab on b7.

49 ... **Qf6**

Black finally crumbles under the tremendous pressure he has been under for the whole of the game and especially since move 31. 49 ... Ra6 is a difficult defence to find. White would then play 50 Re4 and the game goes on, but with the black king so horribly exposed, it is doubtful that his defence will hold out much longer.

50 **Rd6** **1-0**

And with 50 ... Qxf7 51 Rd7 coming in, Black had had enough.

Chris Ross