

# NEW ENGLANDER

## Chess Club Update – January 2012

### Chairman's Chatter

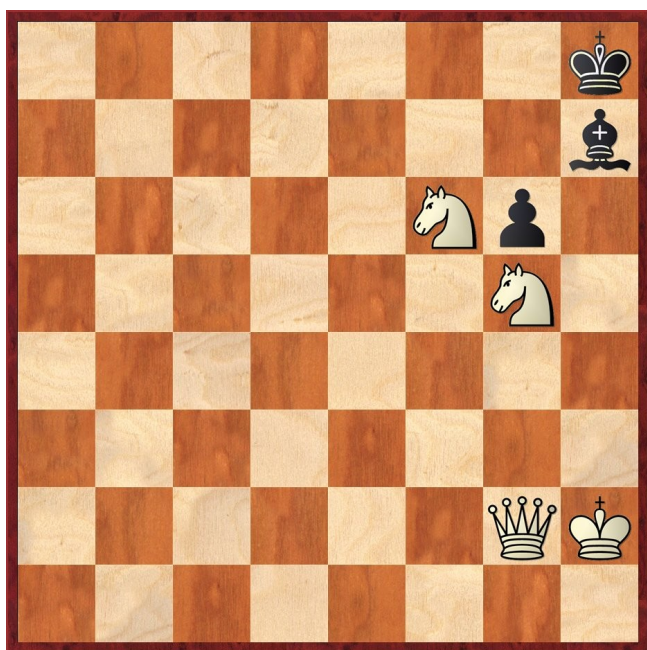
The club's results in 2011 are a hard act to follow but I hope you enjoy your chess in 2012. Happy New Year!

*Paul Hanks*

### Diary Dates

December's newsletter contained the draw for the second round of the club championship but the night set aside for play is 18th January.

### Puzzle Problem



Last Month's solution

Position: 8/Q2p1B2/2k5/4pN2/K7/8/8/8

1 Ka5 d5 2 Be8# [1 ... e4 2 Qb6#; 1 ... d6 2 Ne7#]

### Website to Watch

The Tata Steel Chess Tournament held in Wijk aan Zee is always an impressive congress with three grandmaster events. The top division boasts 10 out of the world's best 15 players and they can be followed from 13th to 29th January (with three rest days) on [www.tatasteelchess.com](http://www.tatasteelchess.com).

### Window on the Web

Exeter Chess Club was established in 1895. Its website <http://exeterchessclub.org.uk/> appears to have been set up in 1994. At least that's the earliest posting date I could find, when a couple of book reviews were posted by 'Dr Dave'.

Apart from the expected information about the club itself, such as club competitions and league results,

there is a huge archive of training material that puts *Wikibooks Chess* (reviewed in October) to shame.

There are coaching handouts on many subjects, e.g. visualisation training, attack (using games of Capablanca), practical tactics including the analysis of variations, combinational vision, candidate moves, reasons for error, piece co-ordination and the link between strategy and tactics. The strategy section includes articles on weak squares, outposts, good and bad bishops, opposite-coloured bishops, pawn formations, pawn mobility and planning, ...

There is extensive material on endings, including general advice, the use of the different pieces in the ending and the principle of two weaknesses.

The openings section contains detailed material on several openings.

There is also a 'Canon of Instructional Games', a database of 980 (!!) annotated games to play through, illustrating various themes such as attacking play, pawn sacrifices, planning, space, psychology, style, various endings and various mates. That's not all – a further section provides several annotated club games to play through.

The link on the Home page to 'Dr Dave's Blog' gives you access to many other pages of instruction and discussion under the title 'Popular Content'.

This site contains an enormous amount of material, that would probably fill several books. Enjoy!

*Ron Jones*

### Result Round-up

#### Cambridgeshire County Chess Leagues

Warboys A	3	New England A	2
M Misson	0	F Bowers	1
B Duff	½	P Hanks	½
C Watkins	½	P Turp	½
R Mann	1	D Lane	0
J Beck	1	M Tarabad	0

St Neots	2½	New England B	1½
S Foster	½	R Jones	½
R Dunn	1	D Lane	0
C Emery	0	P Spencer	1
M Friday	1	M Tarabad	0

#### Team 550 Competition

New England 2	2½	St Neots	1½
S Caraway	1	S Foster	0
R Jones	0	C Emery	1
D Lane	½	M Friday	½
M Tarabad	1	B Addison	0

## New England Grand Prix

<i>Player</i>	<i>Champ</i>	<i>Ladder</i>	<i>League</i>	<i>Cup</i>	<i>Team 550</i>	<i>Total</i>
P Spencer	0	4½	2	0	2½	9
F Bowers	1	4½	1	1½		8
N Wedley	0	7				7
P Hanks	1	2	2½	1	0	6½
C Ross	1	3	1			5
S Sitaram	1	2	1½	0	½	5
P Turp	1	0	1½		2	4½
D Lane	1	1½	0	0	2	4½
R Jones	1		1½	½	1½	4½
S Caraway		1½	1	1½		4
M Dunkley	1		2	½		3½
J Parker	0	½		0	2	2½
S Walker	0	2			0	2
M Tarabad	1	0	0		1	2
I Garrett	0	1		1		2
C Russell	0				½	½
S Wozniak		0			0	0
H Currie	0					0
S Farrington	0	0				0

## New England Club Ladder

<i>White</i>		<i>Black</i>	
P Spencer	1	H Currie	0
I Garrett	0	F Bowers	1
S Sitaram	1	J Parker	0
S Farrington	0	N Wedley	1

<i>Pos</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Record</i> 21/12/11
1	P Spencer	½,½,1,½,1,0,1
2	C Ross	1,1,1
3	S Caraway	½,0,1
4	H Currie	0
5	N Wedley	½,½,0,1,1,1,0,1,1
6	R Jones	
7	P Hanks	1,1
8	S Walker	0,0,1,1
9	F Bowers	½,1,1,1,1
10	D Lane	½,1
11	P Turp	0
12	M Tarabad	0,0
13	I Garrett	1,0,0,0,0,0,0
14	S Sitaram	1,0,1
15	J Parker	0,½,0,0,0
16	S Farrington	0,0
17	S Wozniak	0,0
18	M Dunkley	

## Club Championship

<i>Round 1/2</i>			
S Farrington	0	1	P Hanks
Match night : 18th January    Deadline : 22nd February. Next draw : 1st March			

## Christmas Special : 21 December 2011

<i>Player</i>	<i>Rd 1</i>	<i>Rd 2</i>	<i>Rd 3</i>	<i>Rd 4</i>	<i>Rd 5</i>	<i>Quiz</i>	<i>Total</i>
M Body (guest)	1	0	1	1	1	0	4
C Ross	0	1	1	½	1	0	3½
F Bowers	1	1	0	½	1	0	3½
R Jones	1	1	1	0	0	1	3+1
M Tarabad	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
P Hanks	1	1	-	1	-	-	3
S Walker	½	1	0	0	1	0	2½
P Turp	1	0	0	1	0	2	2+2
S Wozniak	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
J Parker	0	1		1	0	0	2
D Lane	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
N Wedley	½	0	0	0	1	0	1½
C Russell	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
I Garrett	0	0	0	1	-	0	1
H Currie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P Spencer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## London Chess Classic 2011

It is already two years since I reported my first visit to the London Chess Classic at Olympia. I went last year but only witnessed four draws that I did not deem suitable for comment. Let's see if the third running of the event gave me good value to justify the increase in ticket prices.

In the opening four rounds, there had been a satisfying number of decisive games. Because five elite grandmasters were pitted against the four top (but generally weaker) Britons, there were a large number of ELO points at stake in most games and this was obviously a great incentive to force the pace. Nakamura had beaten Anand with the black pieces; McShane and Howell drew with Carlsen and Anand but could have achieved more and Adams was going through a sticky patch. Add to this the fact that the players were refreshed after a rest day and round 5 was set for another display of fighting spirit.

The journey to Kensington can be quite hectic. I arrived just as the games were starting and the photographers were taking their brief opportunity for pictures of the players with a barrage of flickering flashlights. Thankfully, this annoying phase was over quickly and the contest could begin in earnest.

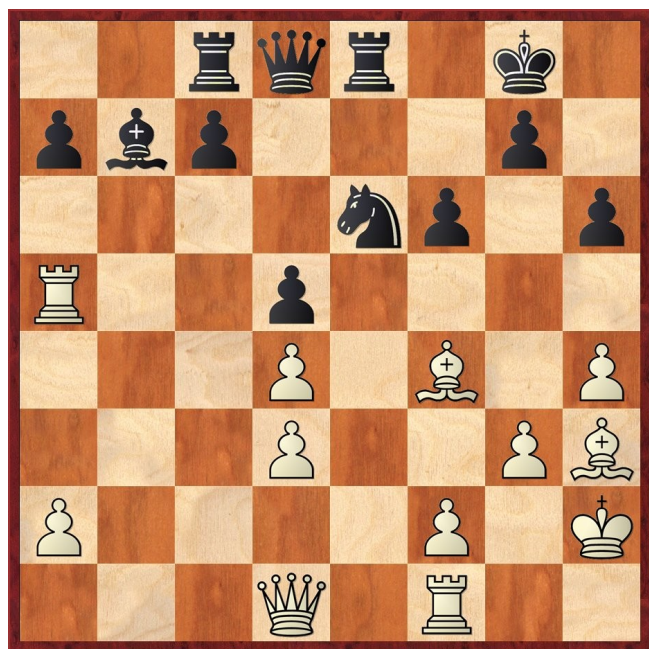
I was heartened to see that serious thinking started in all games around moves 10-12. There was no long

theoretical variation or of rapid exchanges leading to an endgame decided by an insignificant technical inaccuracy. The 400-seater auditorium was about ⅔ full and the participants were serving up the type of chess the audience wanted to see!

**H Nakamura (2758) v D Howell (2633)**  
3rd London Chess Classic, 08.12.11

Astonishment is possibly too mild a word for my feelings when Howell spent 17 minutes over his first 4 moves in a benign English Opening. In fact, the game became becalmed - whenever I looked, more moves had been played but the position never seemed to change! Black's 23rd move opened up the position but by then, Howell only had just over a quarter of an hour left. The play became very tactical and both players seemed determined to continue with a material deficit.

**1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 g3 Bb4 4 Nf3 Bxc3 5 bxc3 Nc6 6 Bg2 0-0 7 0-0 Re8 8 d3 e4 9 Nd4 exd3 10 exd3 Nxd4 11 cxd4 d5 12 Be3 h6 13 h3 b6 14 Rc1 Qd7 15 Bf4 Bb7 16 Be5 Nh7 17 c5 Rac8 18 h4 Nf8 19 Kh2 bxc5 20 Bh3 Ne6 21 Rxc5 f6 22 Bf4 Qd8 23 Ra5**



**23 ... c5 24 Rxa7 Qb6 25 Ra4 Nxd4**

I had been thinking that weakening the light squares around White's king might be worth this sacrifice.

**26 Qh5**

Nakamura played this moved instantly even though software prefers Black's prospects after 26 ... f5.

**26 ... Qc6 27 Rb1 Ra8 28 Rxa8 Rxa8**

This recapture came as a surprise. I expected 28 ... Bxa8 to remove it from the firing line of the rook on b1.

**29 Bg2**

White could have built a winning attack by 29 Re1 when Black struggles to prevent it reaching e7. A sample line given in the tournament daily report is 29 Re1 Kf8 30 Bxh6 Qd6 (30 ... gxh6 31 Qxh6+ Kf7 32 Qh7+ Kf8 33 Re7) 31 Bf4 Qd8 32 Re6 with a huge advantage.

**29 ... Ne6 30 Rxb7 Qxb7 31 Bxd5 Qc8 32 Bxh6 Ra6**  
If 32 ... gxh6 33 Qg6+ Kf8 34 Qxf6+.

**33 Be3 Rd6 34 Bxc5 Rxd5**

Not 34 ... Qxc5 35 Bxe6+ winning the queen.

**35 Qxd5 Kf7 36 Be3 Qa6 37 Qc4 Qa8 38 d4 1-0**

**V Kramnik (2800) v M Adams (2734)**  
3rd London Chess Classic, 08.12.11

On paper, this clash between these noted positional players was perhaps the least exciting of the round but I was strangely fascinated. Partly, it was due to them playing the initial moves quickly but mostly, it was Kramnik's body language. When Adams opened the centre on move 9, the former World Champion's demeanour changed dramatically. He hunched over the board, sank his head into his hands and shut out the rest of the world with his hands over his ears. Minutes later, he was gazing vacantly around the room as though desperate to remember his home preparation. Had he been surprised in his trademark Catalan Opening?

**1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 Bb4+ 4 Bd2 Bxd2+ 5 Qxd2 d5 6 Bg2 0-0 7 Nf3 Nbd7 8 0-0 dxc4 9 Na3 e5 10 Nxc4 e4 11 Nfe5 Nb6 12 Ne3 a5**

I should have played 12 ... Be6 automatically as a natural developing move and indeed, it is Fritz's recommendation. The purpose would be to occupy the c4 square with either knight or bishop but then White could repulse the invasion by b2-b3. By thinking ahead, Adams wants to prevent this when his pawn reaches a4.

**13 Rac1 c6 14 b3 Re8 15 Rfd1 Be6 16 Rc5 a4 17 b4 a3**

Black has tried to balance White's central outpost with counterplay on the queenside but this seems now to have run out of steam. Not only that but his lonely advanced pawn must eventually become vulnerable.

**18 Ra5**

Another surprise (but then, Kramnik does have a higher grade than me). What's wrong with exchanging rooks and leaving White with horrible pawns?

**18 ... Qd6 19 Rc1 Nbd5 20 Nxd5 Bxd5 21 Nc4 Qe7 22 e3 h5 23 Rxa8 Rxa8 24 Nb6 Rd8 25 Nxd5 Nxd5 26 Rc5 h4**

It is very much in Kramnik's style to run his opponent out of useful move while having a plan to improve his own position slowly but inexorably. I cannot see that Adams is going to whip up a kingside attack but what else can he do?

**27 Bf1 g6 28 b5 cxb5 29 Rxb5 Qc7 30 Qa5 b6 31 Qxa3 Rd6 32 Qb3 Nf6 33 Rb4 Kg7 34 Rc4 Rc6 35 Rxc6 Qxc6 36 gxh4 Ng4 37 h3 Nh6 38 Qb5 Qf6 39 Qe5 Nf5 40 Bg2 Nd6**

The time control has past and both players continued quickly as though the rest were a formality.

**41 a4 Qxe5 42 dxe5 Nc4 43 Bxe4 Nxe5 44 Kg2 Kh6 45 Kg3 f6 46 Bc2 Nc4 47 Bd3 Nd6 48 Kg4 Nf7 49 Be2 Nd6 50 Kf4 Nb7 51 h5 gxh5 52 Kf5 Nc5 53 Kxf6 Ne4+ 54 Kf5 Nxf2 55 h4 1-0**



**N Short (2698) v V Anand (2811)**  
3rd London Chess Classic, 08.12.11

Anand's form has been poor of late with 14 consecutive draws before this game. By choosing the Sicilian Defence, he showed he was itching to put matters right. Both Short and Anand went for an early coffee as though it were an effort to stay awake (the spectator next to me fell asleep at move 15) but generally, of the 8 competitors, it was Anand who stayed longest at the board. I appreciate that because if players are not finding the play sufficiently interesting to concentrate fully, what chance has the audience? The game reaches a weird symmetry at move 16 which Anand breaks with an enterprising temporary pawn sacrifice.

**1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 Bb5+ Bd7 4 Bxd7+ Qxd7 5 0-0 Nc6 6 Qe2 g6 7 c3 Bg7 8 Rd1 e5 9 b4 cxb4 10 cxb4 Nge7**

There does not seem to be an immediate tactical flaw in accepting the gambit with 10 ... Nxb4 but Fritz says the position remains level after 11 Bb2 Ne7 12 d4.

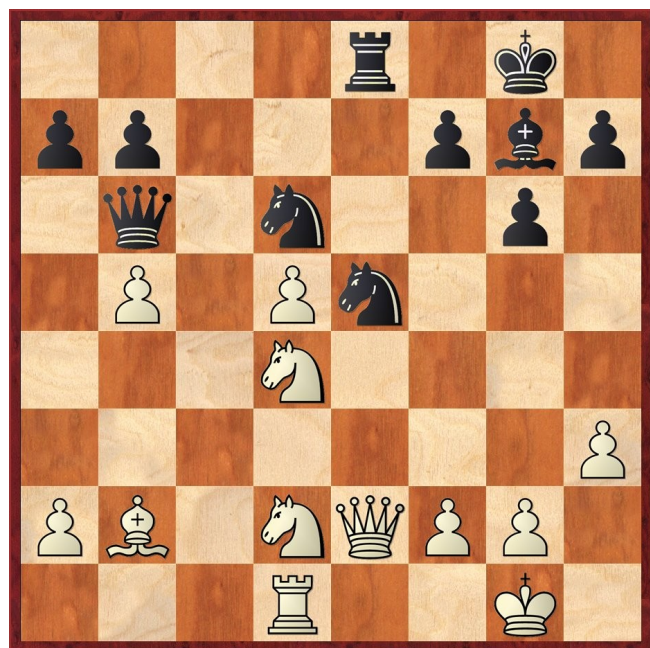
**11 d4 exd4 12 Bb2 0-0 13 b5 Ne5 14 Nxd4 Rac8 15 Nd2 d5 16 h3 Rfe8 17 Rab1**

I had been impressed by White's opening play which has saddled Black with an awkward d pawn and given chances to expand with f2-f4. When seeing this move, I had to ask myself "Why?" and find that Fritz gives White's game a small downgrade at this point.

**17 ... Qc7 18 Rbc1 Qb6 19 Rxc8 Nxc8**

Anand surprised me by taking time over this move. I expected him to keep his rook on an open file with Rxc8 and never considered an alternative. When you look at the knight's previous lack of outlet squares, you can understand this redeployment even at the cost of a pawn.

**20 exd5 Nd6**



**21 Qf1**

This looks passive and I have to ask what exactly is Black's threat? Actually, it is reasonably simple namely 21 ... Nc6 attacking both the queen and the knight and if 22 Ne6 Bxb2.

**21 ... Rc8 22 N2b3 Nec4 23 Ba1 Na3 24 Qe1**

Black has activated his pieces nicely and White needs to respond by penetrating to e7 in order to relieve the pressure. This does not look too worrying as it has little support from White's uncoordinated army.

**24 ... Rd8 25 Qe7 Re8 26 Qg5 Naxb5 27 Nxb5 Qxb5**

Note that the poor pawn structure has changed hands!

**28 Bxg7 Kxg7 29 Qf4 Qb6 30 Rc1 h5**

Again, the grandmasters tread an indirect route when 30 ... Re2 catches the eye.

**31 Nc5 Qd8 32 Qb4 Qe7 33 a4 b6 34 Na6 Qf6 35 Re1 Rc8 36 Qb1 Rc4 37 Nb4 Qc3 38 Nc6 Rxa4**

The rest is fairly straightforward.

**39 Qd1 b5 40 Kh2 Qf6 41 Qd2 Ne4 42 Qe3 Qd6+ 43 Kg1 Qxd5 44 Nxa7 Qb7 45 Qd3 Qxa7 46 Rxe4 Rxe4 47 Qxe4 Qa1+ 48 Kh2 Qc3 49 f4 Qc5 50 Qd3 b4 51 f5 h4 52 Qd7 g5 53 Qd8 Qxf5 54 Qd4+ Kg6 55 Qd6+ Qf6 56 Qxb4 Qf4+ 57 Qxf4 gxf4 58 Kg1 Kf5 59 Kf1 Ke4 60 Ke2 f3+ 61 gxf3+ Kf4 62 Kf2 f6 0-1**

**L Aronian (2802) v M Carlsen (2826)**  
3rd London Chess Classic, 08.12.11

During the game, Carlsen pressed his fists into his stomach on several occasions and grimaced. Was he suffering from indigestion or was this a natural mannerism? Either way, his play was indifferent and might have been severely punished. In the Slav Defence to the Queen's Gambit, early development of Black's queenside bishop normally runs into Qd1-b3 hitting both d5 and b7. I have won several short games in the rapid attack that follows and maybe, Magnus should have paid more heed to them. Aronian gets a lasting initiative that Carlsen blunts by exchanging queens but is still left horribly uncoordinated in the endgame.

**1 Nf3 d5 2 d4 Nf6 3 c4 c6 4 e3 Bf5**

Here is the offending move. I suppose it is considered playable because White has played e2-e3. Had the tempo been used for normal development e.g. Nb1-c3, at some later point, White could play e2-e4 speeding up the attack.

**5 Nc3 a6 6 Be2 h6 7 Qb3 Ra7 8 cxd5 cxd5 9 Bd2 e6 10 Ne5 Be7 11 Rc1 0-0 12 0-0 Nfd7 13 Nxd7 Nxd7 14 a4 Nb8 15 e4**

Having largely ignored Black's artificial queenside development, Aronian decides to exploit his position with a belated show of aggression. By now, however, Black has castled and is relatively safe.

**15 ... dxe4 16 d5**



### 16 ... Nd7

16 ... exd5 17 Nxd5 gives White several options based on the position of the rook on a7 (e.g. Bd2-e3 and Nd5-b6/c7), down the open d file with Rf1-d1 or reaching the seventh rank by Rc1-c7. Black would probably start swapping pieces with 17 ... Bg5 to dampen the initiative.

### 17 Be3 Bc5

Fritz thinks 17 ... Nc5 is distinctly better after 18 Qc2 Ra8.

### 18 Nxe4 Bxe3 19 Qxe3 Qb6 20 Ng3

I had hoped 20 Nf6+ was possible but it's pure fantasy because after 20 ... gxf6 21 Qxh6, the rook manoeuvre Rc1-c3-g3 is too slow and ineffective. Instead, 20 Nd6 was something to consider.

### 20 ... Qxe3 21 fxe3 Bg6

I was expecting White to win this endgame mainly on the difference in rook activity. Compare for instance the black rook on a7 with a putative white rook on c7. Aronian seems to prefer occupying open lines and chooses a different plan.

### 22 dxe6 fxe6 23 Rfd1 Nf6 24 Rd6 Bf7 25 Bf3 a5 26 Rb6 Be8 27 Rxe6 Bxa4 28 Re7 Re8 29 Nf5 Rxe7 30 Nxe7+ Kf8 31 Nc8

None of the preceding moves is noted as blunder by computer software but with each step, White's advantage has been ebbing away. Here, the recommendation is 31 Rc7 Bd7 32 Ng6+ Ke8 33 Ne5 Kd8 34 Rxb7 Rxb7 35 Bxb7.

### 31 ... Ra6 32 Bxb7 Re6 33 e4 Bd7 34 Rc5 Nxe4 35 Rxa5 Bxc8 36 Bxc8 Rc6 37 Rf5+ Nf6 38 Bb7 Rb6 39 Bf3 Rxb2 1/2-1/2

So ended a thoroughly enjoyable day. I saw the world's top grandmasters in action and three of the games had a decisive outcome. But was it exciting? Sadly not. Chess is surely about contriving difficult positions that you are confident of handling better than your opponent. Here, I did not see any attempt by the

players to force the pace of the game and impose their personality. On several recent occasions, grandmasters have failed to find tactical solutions so I believe there must still be some space in the modern game to assert yourself through aggressive but objectively risky play. As a spectator, I want to be kept on the edge of my seat by positions balanced on a knife-edge.

It will be interesting to see if the participants rank their efforts as flagship games that should be featured in chess publications over the coming weeks. Somehow I doubt it.

## Eye Opener

At grandmaster level, the Petroff Defence and an offer of a draw are almost synonymous. This is not always the case because the lines can quickly become very sharp if one or other players steps off well-trodden paths. Although imperfect, it does highlight how loose pieces can accelerate your opponent's development and lead to unexpected complications.

### Maria de los Angeles Plazaola v Rojas Ruben Sotelo (2124)

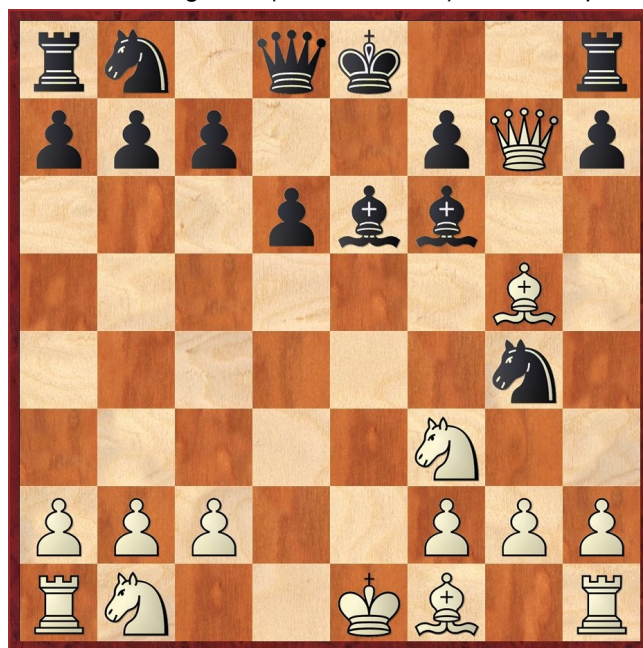
Najdorf Memorial, Buenos Aires, 2002

### 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 d4 exd4 4 e5 Ng4

4 ... Ne4 is usual

### 5 Qxd4 d6 6 Bg5 Be7 7 e6 f6

7 ... Bxe6 8 Qxg7 Bf6 (8 ... Rf8 9 Bd3) looks complex



but exchanges on f6 quickly lead to equality.

### 8 Qxg4 fxg5 9 Bd3

9 h4 also comes into consideration.

### 9 ... Nc6??

9 ... Bf6 is best. If 9...0-0, White has a hearty attack e.g. 10 h4 Rf4 11 Qh5 g6 12 Bxg6 hxg6 13 Qxg6+ Kf8 (13 ... Kh8 14 hxg5+) 14 hxg5 Bxg5 15 Rh8+ Ke7 16 Rh7+ Kf8 17 Rf7+

### 10 Qh5+ Kf8 11 Qf7# 1-0