

# New Englander

## Chess Club Update – March 2021

### Chairman's Chatter

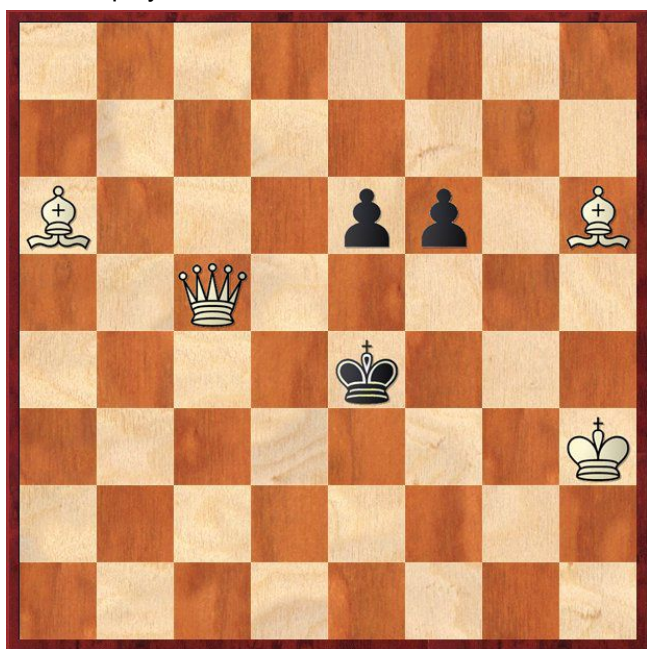
Although Peterborough is proving a stubborn case, infection rates are falling sharply, the vaccination programme is a singular success and we now have a tentative exit strategy from the national lockdown restrictions. Unfortunately, the latter plan precludes indoor social gatherings without limits on number or composition until midsummer. There is no option therefore but to continue our suspension of activities.

Traditionally, our AGM is also in June and will be our next decision point. The date for the meeting will depend on prevailing conditions and be set closer to the time. I trust by then we shall have a proposal for a new venue and be realistically hopeful of re-starting over-the-board team play in September/October. Obviously, the progress of the fight against the virus will dictate the schedule of our preparedness to resume. Fingers crossed!

*Paul Hanks*

### Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2



Last Month's solution (Kviatovsky 1977)

Position : 8/1p2K3/7B/P1kp4/Q7/8/8/8

1 Bf8 d4 2 Ke6# [1 ... b5 2 Kd7#; 1 ... b6 2 Ke6/d7#]

### Result Round-up

Online Club Championship

Round 1			
J Sadler = Rd 2 (1)	P	P	P Turp
Round 2			
P Turp	P	P	E Knox (0)
R Taylor (½)	P	P	P Hanks (0)
Round 3			
P Walker(2)			P Spencer (2)
E Knox (0+P)			R Taylor (½+P)
M Tarabad (0)			P Turp (2P)
Round 4			
P Hanks (0+P)			M Tarabad (0)
J Sadler (1+P)			P Walker(2)
P Spencer (2)			R Taylor (½+P)
C Russell (1½)	1	0	E Knox (0+P)
P Turp (2P)			P Hanks (0+P)
Deadline : 31 <sup>st</sup> March		Next draw : 1 <sup>st</sup> April	

Online tournaments : Spring 2021

Player	January-March			Total	Tie break
	6 <sup>th</sup> Jan	20 <sup>th</sup> Jan	10 <sup>th</sup> Feb		
P Walker	3	2	3½		
P Hanks	-	3	2		-
P Spencer	-	1	-		-
R Ilett	-	-	3½		-
M Tarabad	1	0	1		
C Russell	1	-	-		
E Knox	-	-	-		-
P Weinberger	-	-	-		-
S Walker	1	-	1½		

Iceni League

NE U1700	3	Woodbridge	7
P Walker	½0	"HannibalSchlecter"	½1
P Spencer	10	"timbotastic"	01
P Hanks	½1	"LordGafferMBE"	½0
P Weinberger	00	"dan968"	11
M Tarabad	00	"OrangeZ10"	11

NE U1450	3	Broadland C	5
P Walker	½½	"stevedouglas1977"	½½
P Weinberger	00	"spindr"	11
M Tarabad	10	"ahadrian"	01
S Walker	10	"cookieboy1935"	01

NE U1450	3½	Norwich Juniors	6½
P Walker	00	"BBWill"	11
P Weinberger	00	"D-ragon"	11
M Tarabad	0½	"thecrazyhorseman"	1½
S Walker	01	"KVPranav"	10
J Parker	11	"daisymelody"	00

### Match of the Month

During 2021, the club will hopefully start a fresh chapter in its history by moving to a new venue – the fifth that I know of in the last 40 years. The early years of the club were chronicled in the Christmas 2017 edition of the newsletter and we must all have noticed how things have changed over the years. Within the chess world, we have seen the advent and monumental subsequent impact of computers on the game.

At one point in the mid '80's, however, I regularly dispatched the software in short order, often with the aid of a sacrifice. The programs were much weaker back then and I was somewhat stronger - both, I acknowledge, are hard to believe today.

Owning a computer was the exciting new technology of the period and to ride this wave of popularity, our forerunner, Perkins Chess Club, organised a computer evening when players and non-members could show off their toys. It was a great success but again, I was dismissive of the silicon brain's potential and so the club arranged another gathering of enthusiasts the following year. On this occasion, I realised I was struggling against the updated software and hardware. In fact, my blushes were only spared by lack of time due to the slow response times.

Rather than being downcast at the passing of human supremacy, club chairman Norman Wedley decided to turn it into a virtue. He declared he would stage a correspondence game between a computer and the whole Perkins workforce (around 10,000 at the time) through the auspices of the in-house *Echo* magazine. The computer move would appear with each edition and the reply would be determined by the majority vote amongst the suggestions that were returned. There was also the incentive of a modest prize for one lucky winner who had advocated the move actually played. [This idea was taken up in Kasparov v The World (1999) though without the surplus promotional mug!]

It was, of course, a white lie. The club did not possess a computer and that role fell to the incumbent club champion. In order not to venture embarrassingly into

unknown territory, I decided the game should start after a few opening moves from a position with which I was familiar. Which game should I choose? Why, the "Poisoned Piece Variation" of course!

You are familiar with the "Poisoned Piece"? It harks back to my days at University and the stem game was against a clubmate who continues to be active in Cheshire.

#### P Hanks v C Higgle

University Club Championship : Round 5, 1977

1	<b>e4</b>	<b>c5</b>
2	<b>Nf3</b>	<b>d6</b>
3	<b>d4</b>	<b>cxd4</b>
4	<b>Nxd4</b>	<b>Nf6</b>
5	<b>Nc3</b>	<b>Nbd7</b>
6	<b>Bg5</b>	<b>h6</b>
7	<b>Bh4</b>	<b>g6</b>

I think both sides are confusing their systems in the Dragon variation of the Sicilian Defence. It is hard to find any grandmaster precedent to this move order and the nearest game seems to be Murey v Taimanov, Moscow 1966 which had gone 6 ... g6 7 Qd2 h6 8 Bh4. As Black won that game, I decided subconsciously to refrain from transposition and vary the course of the game.

8	<b>f4</b>	<b>Bg7</b>
9	<b>Bc4</b>	<b>Qb6</b>

Here is effectively the start position in the exhibition game. White (the computer = me) played



10 **Qe2**

which left Black with several continuations to ponder.

10 ... **Qxb2**

At the time, we still used descriptive notation and before Charlie replied, he cheekily wrote down 10 ... QxN (i.e. Qxd4). This traps the queen after 11 Bf2 which of course, he had seen. I had no real expectation of such an early finish and when he played the text move, he returned to amend his

scoresheet to 10 ... QxNP! Has he accepted a Poisoned Piece? Has White taken leave of his senses?

In the game at Perkins, Black also picked up the gauntlet. The point is that both sides need to have made an assessment of the position after move 13.

11	<b>0-0</b>	<b>Qxc3</b>
12	<b>Nb5</b>	<b>Qa5</b>
13	<b>e5</b>	

Unfortunately, the past sequence is virtually forced so that it is easy for your analysis to arrive here. White has compensation with a lead in development and the initiative but a piece and a pawn is a lot of material.

13 ... Nh5 is not an option due to 14 exd6 with threats of 15 Qxe7# and 15 Nc7+ and 14 ... 0-0 15 dxe7 Re8 16 Bxf7+ Kxf7 17 Qc4# is rather nice for White.

13 ... Ng8 is more complicated but White again has a nice attack after 14 exd6 Bxa1 15 dxe7 when Black has to find a way to stop both 16 Nd6# and 16 Bxf7+ with 17 e8=Q+.

13 ... d5 may be best although 14 exf6 regains the piece and in the correspondence game, Black also chose to return the material with 13 ... 0-0 – a decision Charlie postpones for one move.

13	<b>...</b>	<b>dxe5</b>
14	<b>fxe5</b>	<b>0-0</b>
15	<b>exf6</b>	<b>Bxf6</b>
16	<b>Bxf6</b>	<b>exf6</b>

Having swapped pawns on move 13, Black has opened the f file and has development difficulties. If White cannot keep up the momentum, however, the two pawn deficit will be his downfall.

17	<b>Qe7</b>	<b>Ne5</b>
18	<b>Nc7</b>	<b>Rb8</b>
19	<b>Bb3</b>	<b>Nc6</b>

So far, White has kept some pressure but here, Black has breathing space. Fritz recommends the unlikely 19 ... Nd7 to answer 20 Nd5 with 20 ... Qc5+ exchanging queens. A more human alternative is 19 ... Bf5 20 Nd5 Ng4 21 h3 Be6 when White assault is diminished. Thankfully, Black can be distracted with more material gain.

20	<b>Qxf6</b>	<b>Qxc7</b>
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By now, a draw is objectively the right result but Black has to tread a dangerous path via 20 ... Bf5 21 g4 Qc5+ 22 Rf2 Ne5. The last move is this variation is particularly difficult as several more moves have to be foreseen e.g. 23 gxf5 Ng4 24 Qh4 Nxf2 25 Qxf2 Nxc7 26 fxc6 with some complications still to come.

This time, the piece really is poisoned!

21	<b>Qxg6+</b>	<b>Kh8</b>
22	<b>Qxh6+</b>	<b>Kg8</b>
23	<b>Qg5+</b>	<b>Kh8</b>
24	<b>Rf6</b>	<b>Bf5</b>
25	<b>Qxf5</b>	<b>Ne5</b>
26	<b>Rh6+</b>	<b>1-0</b>

Unfortunately, the later moves of the correspondence game have been lost. I have contacted the company

to see if there is an archive of old copies of the *Echo* but received no reply. What I can remember is that we were reaching move 35 and the position was still vaguely competitive. At this point, Norman approached me and declared that the game had to end in 3 moves since he was leaving for another job!

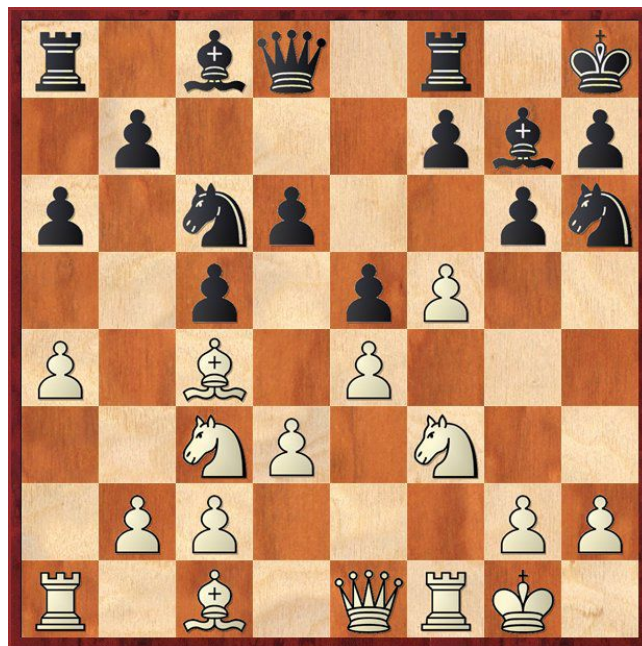
I sat up for most of the night and eventually found a plausible variation in which Black forced checkmate with a pretty sacrifice. I deliberately played the line and was gratified when my multi-headed opposition duly obliged. It is the only time I have been satisfied by a helpmate problem!

### Eye Opener

**Askild Bryn (2036) v Cyril S Sigamoney**  
Gibraltar Round 1; 26.01.2010

1	<b>e4</b>	<b>c5</b>
2	<b>Nc3</b>	<b>Nc6</b>
3	<b>f4</b>	<b>d6</b>
4	<b>Nf3</b>	<b>g6</b>
5	<b>Bc4</b>	<b>Bg7</b>
6	<b>0-0</b>	<b>a6</b>
7	<b>a4</b>	<b>Nh6</b>
8	<b>d3</b>	<b>0-0</b>
9	<b>Qe1</b>	<b>Kh8</b>
10	<b>f5</b>	<b>e5</b>

No position is so simple as to preclude a deadly error. Here, Black allows a standard trap with a new twist.



11	<b>f6</b>	<b>Qxf6</b>
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Not 11 ... Bxf6 12 Bxh6 but ...

12	<b>Bg5</b>	<b>1-0</b>
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