

# New Englander

## Chess Club Update – October 2022

### Chairman's Chatter

The recent draw for the Fenland Trophy has not given us as many home matches as expected. Thankfully, that leaves us more time to clear postponed games, particularly in the Club Championship.

*Paul Hanks*

### Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution (Kaiser 1950)

Position : 8/5Q2/R4Bqk/8/8/6P1/8/3K4

1 Bc3 Kg/h5 2 Qxg6# [1 ... Q a-f6 2 Bd2#]

### Website to Watch

Your viewing can get off to a quick start because the European Club Cup runs from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October and will be held in Mayerhofen, Austria. This may just be out of New England's league because top seeds are CSU ASE Superbet headed by Anand and have an average rating of 2715. From the web page <https://eccc2022.at/live/>, you are directed to the commentary partner chess24.com.

### Diary Dates

13<sup>th</sup> November Patrick Ribbands EACU Team Championship at Bury St Edmunds

26-27<sup>th</sup> November Christie Hall, Wansford is the new venue for the County Individual Championship. Entry form available from [here](#)

21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> January '23 EACU Closed Championship

County team matches will be played at Turner Hall, Newmarket on the following dates : 9 & 30 October, 4 December, 19 February, 5 March and either 11 December/12 March (the last to be confirmed).

### Result Round-up

Club Rapidplay : 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Player	Round						Pts
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
P Walker	X	1	1	1	1	1	5
R Ilett	0	X	1	1	1	1	4
P Spencer	0	0	X	1	1	1	3
P Turp	0	0	0	X	1	1	2
E Knox	0	0	0	0	X	1	1
J Jennings	0	0	0	0	0	X	0

Club Championship (see [LMS](#))

	White		Black
P Spencer	1	0	E Smith
P Walker	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	E Knox
J Jennings	0	1	N Wedley
P Hanks	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	P Turp
R Ilett	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	C Russell
E Knox ( <b>P</b> )	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	P Spencer (1)
J Jennings (0)	1	0	E Smith (0)
P Turp ( <b>P</b> )	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	P Walker ( <b>P</b> )
R Ilett ( <b>P</b> )	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	N Wedley (1)
C Russell ( <b>P</b> )	<b>P</b>	<b>P</b>	P Hanks ( <b>P</b> )

Player	PS	PW	NW	PH	CR	ES	EK	JJ	PT	RI	Total
P Spencer	X					1					1
P Walker		X									
N Wedley			X					1			1
P Hanks				X							
C Russell					X						
E Smith	0					X		0			0
E Knox							X				
J Jennings			0			1		X			1
P Turp									X		
R Ilett										X	

Round 3 : 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022

White		Black	
P Spencer			J Jennings
P Walker			C Russell
E Smith			R Ilett
E Knox			P Turp
N Wedley			P Hanks

Cambridgeshire League

New England A	3	Peterborough A	2
P Walker	0	A Nawalaniec	1
R Ilett	1	N Fisher	0
P Hanks	1	J Conlon	0
P Spencer	1	P Ripardo	0
E Knox	0	L Nawalaniec	1

Ely	2½	New England B	1½
O Lenton	1	P Spencer	0
B Tarlow	½	P Turp	½
D Short	1	J Jennings	0
Default	0	C Russell	1

Team 7000

Warboys WC	1½	NE Patriots	2½
J Beck	½	P Hanks	½
R Mann	½	P Spencer	½
B Duff	½	C Russell	½
J Beck	0	J Jennings	1

New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League	Cup	7000 Team	Total	TPR*
P Spencer	1		1		½	2½	1777
J Jennings	1				1	2	1330
P Hanks			1		½	1½	1880
R Ilett			1			1	2071
N Wedley	1					1	1756
C Russell					½	½	1777
P Turp					½	½	1876
E Smith	0					0	1023
E Knox			0			0	1033
P Walker			0			0	1654

\* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

**Match of the Month**

**Pride goeth before...**

Most of my games for this newsletter seem to have become fisherman's tales about the ones that got away. But spotting when you need to continue to develop and when you can go for the throat is a major skill that is very hard to learn. Given enough time, we can all find the answer to the 'mate in n' puzzles in the newspapers, but that is because you are **told** that it is there! Over the board it is a different thing, as the clock is ticking, and assessing each position as it evolves becomes a judgement call, so that you do not run out of time later.

Personally, I find attacking chess far more difficult than defence, because as the position opens up you have many more options to consider, which eats into your precious time. Okay, if you have read any of my previous articles, then you know where this is going. Here is a game when I should have spent just a little longer thinking about how to use my tin-opener to get at the tasty meat inside!

**Neil Greenwood v Chris Russell**

Warboys A v New England A, Board 4; 12.04.2022

**1 e4 e6**  
**2 d4 d5**  
**3 Nc3 Bb4**

The Winawer Variation of French Defence is rich source of counter-attacking lines, which makes it fun to play. But it does hold traps for the unwary. An alternative classical French line that appears to be making a comeback is McCutcheon's Defence 3 ... Nf6 4 Bg5 Bb4 5 e5 h6 6 exf6 hxg5 7 fxg7 Rg8 8 Qd3 Qf6=.

**4 a3!?**

More usual is the main line 4 e5 which prevents the capture of White's e4 pawn and fixes Black with a cramped centre. Now, White gets saddled with doubled c pawns but captures Black's g pawn in compensation, preventing kingside castling.

**4 ... Bxc3+**  
**5 bxc3 dxe4**

This is the most aggressive and best, according to Fritz.

**6 Qg4 Nf6**  
**7 Qxg7 Rg8**  
**8 Qh6**

with a dynamic position, but roughly equal chances.

Black has several options here.

- Interesting is 8 ... Qe7!? 9 Bg5 Ng4 10 Bxe7 Nxe6 11 Bh4=
- 8 ... c5!? looks to have plenty of potential too
- The most commonly seen is 8 ... Rg6 9 Qh4 Rg4 10 Qh3 Nc6 11 Ne2 Qe7=
- 8 ... Nbd7 is playable, but a bit cramped.

Sure that Neil has seen all this before, I decided to venture.

8 ... **Nc6!?**

The computer says this is not the best but is playable.

9 **Bb5??**

The wrong bishop! The white-squared bishop is needed for the defence of g2. Most of Neil's difficulties stem from exchanging off this piece. He told me after the game that he was worried about potential threats with Nxd4, cxd4 Qxd4, attacking the a1 rook. But this sacrifice can easily be defended. Best for White is 9 Bg5! Rg6 10 Qh4 h6 11 Bxf6 Qxf6 12 Qxe4 e5 with equal chances. Now if 13 dxe5 Bf5! =.

9 ... **Rg6!?**

Inviting the exchange of White's bishop. 9 ... Rxc6? 10 Bg5 Qd5 11 Bxc6+ Qxc6 12 Ne2 is level. Fritz recommends 9 ... Bd7 10 Ne2 (or 10 Bg5 Ng4 11 Bxd8 Nxh6 12 Bxc7 Nxd4 13 Bxd7+ Kxd7 14 cxd4 Kxc7 with a small advantage to Black) 10 ... Rg6 11 Qf4! a6! (not 11 ... Rxc6?? 12 Ng3!) 12 Bxc6 Bxc6 13 Qe5 also with a small advantage to Black.

10 **Bxc6+??**

Neil takes the bait. While this looks logical enough and damages Black's pawn structure, White is now in trouble. Better was 10 Qh4 Rg4 11 Qh3 Qd5 12 Rb1 a6 13 c4 Qd7.

10 ... **bxc6**

11 **Qd2**

Neil took a while over this move and started looking uncomfortable. 11 Qe3 is relatively best but there is no good square for the queen – or in due course his king for that matter.

11 ... **Rxg2!**

Also strong is 11 ... Ba6! 12 Ne2 (not 12 g3?? Qd5 13 Ne2?? e3) 12 ... Rxg2 13 c4 (not 13 Ng3?? e3 14 Qxe3 Qd5 – threatening 15 ... Rxg3 - 15 f3 0-0-0 with a massive advantage in activity) 13 ... Ng4 14 Qf4 Bxc4 (14 ... Nxf2? 15 Rf1) 15 Qxe4 Bd5 when Black has many threats e.g. 16 Qxh7 Qf6.

12 **Qe2**

Neil also thought a while over this and, although moving the queen again looks bad, this is actually White's third best move after 12 Ne2 or Nh3. I realised that he was trying to prevent Ba6 which is very strong. If 12 Ne2 Ba6! and again if 13 c4 Ng4 14 Qf4 Bxc4 15 Qxe4 Bd5.

12 ... **a5!?**

Having seen how useful my bishop would be on a6, this was very tempting, but 12 ... Qd5!! was much better. If then 13 Be3 Rb8! 14 c4 Qf5! ties White completely in knots. 12 ... Rb8 was also good.

13 **Be3?**

Also looks logical enough if you are trying to shore up White's defences, but this move was not even on Fritz's radar. It thinks that best is 13 Qf1 Rg6 14 Qc4 Nd5 15 h4 Kd7 but Black is still well ahead.

13 ... **Ba6!**

14 **Qd2** **Nd5**

Better was 14 ... Ng4! 15 Ne2 (15 h3?? Qh4!) 15 ... Nxh2 16 Rxh2 Rxh2 17 Ng3 Qh4 18 0-0-0 Qe7! ...and wins? See comments below!

15 **h4??**

Another logical looking move by Neil, but it is a mistake that really should lose.



Fritz now assesses Black as more than 9 points ahead in this position! Paul does not like my often-used glib analysis comment 'and wins' which I sometimes use as a shortcut when Fritz suggests that one side has overwhelming force. And he has a point. Sometimes the win is only there after a prolonged technical battle and it is very easy to miss at my level of chess! However, at this point in the game I would argue that I am just one good move away from a fine win against a strong opponent. So, what is it?

I have a very strong position but for some reason I started to worry needlessly about 16 Bg5, playing:

15 ... **Nxe3??**

which is just awful! It does not get into Fritz's top 10 (sigh), probably should have a third question mark against it and I am about to demonstrate Paul's point for him. 15 ... Kd7, Qf6, Qb8, h6, Rb8, Rg4, h5, a4 Bc4 are all much better than what I played. But the winning move here is 15 ... Qxh4!! Once you see the threat of mate, there is not much White can do but lose.

A) If 16 0-0-0, most of us would gobble the rook with 16 ... Qxh1 which, even though the game is not over should win easily (my point!) However, Black now has the thunderbolt 16 ... Qe7!! with mate to follow, though only a computer or a GM would find the full mating sequence (Paul's point!)

A1) 17 Kb2 Rb8+ 18 Ka2 Bc4+ 19 Ka1 Qxa3#

A2) 17 Qe1 Qxa3+ 18 Kd2 Qxc3+ 19 Kc1 Qa3+ 20 Kd2 Rb8 21 Rc1 (21 Ra1 Qc3+ 22 Kd1 Qxa1+ 23 Bc1 Rb1 24 Ne2 e3 25 Rxh7 Nc3+ 26 Qxc3 Rxc1+ 27 Nxc1 e2+ 28 Kd2 e1Q+ 29 Kxe1 Qxc1#) 21 ... Bd3 22



Ne2 (22 cxd3 Qxd3# ) 22 ... Rb2 23 Rxh7 Qb4+ 24 Kd1 Nxe3+ 25 fxe3 Bxe2+ 26 Qxe2 Rg1+ 27 Qf1 Rxf1+ 28 Ke2 Qc4+ 29 Kd2 Qd3#

B) Alternatively 16 Nh3 Qxh3 17 0-0-0 Qg4! 18 Rxh7 Ke7+ when White has no good moves (18 ... Qg8 19 Rdh1 Kd7 20 Qd1 Nxe3 21 fxe3 Qf8)

Oh yeah. By the way, Black wins! But back to the real world...

**16 Qxe3 Qf6??**

Feeble. I prevent the immediate capture of Black's e pawn but 16 ... f5! was a much better way of shoring it up, though at the time I thought that it would expose my king. However, 16 ... f5 17 Nh3 Bc4 18 Qh6 Qe7 is perfectly okay. Also fine was 16 ... Qd5 17 Nh3 Rg4 18 Nf4 Qf5.

**17 Ne2 Rg4**

Not wanting the rook trapped after 18 Ng3, which also attacks e4. So I should have just swapped it off with 17 ... Bxe2 18 Kxe2 Qf5 19 Raf1 0-0-0.

**18 h5 Rh4??**

No, I have no idea why I played this either! Simply 18 ... 0-0-0 19 Ng3 Qf4 20 Qxf4 Rxf4 21 Ne2 Rf3 with a solid endgame advantage. Now my 'advantage' is evaporating.

**19 Rxh4 Qxh4**  
**20 Ng3 Qg4??**

Another horrible blunder. I need to play 20 ... f5 to save the pawn. 20 ... f5 21 0-0-0 Qe7! 22 c4 (22 a4 0-0-0 23 Kb2 c5 24 d5 Bc4+ 25 Qf4 ) 22 ... Bxc4 23 Qc3 Qg5+. Now White is ahead for the first time since move 9.

**21 Qxe4 Qxe4+**  
**22 Nxe4 Ke7**  
**23 Kd2 h6??**

I should occupy the g-file first with 23 ... Rg8, but I know that I am now losing, and depression is setting in... If 23 ... Rg8 24 Nc5 Bc4 25 Rb1 Rg2 26 Ke3 leads to a difficult endgame where the white knight is better than the black bishop, which looked so good early on. For example, if 26 ... Rh2 27 Rb7 Rh3+ 28 Kf4 Rxh5 29 Rxc7+ Kd8 30 Ra7 Bd5.

**24 Rg1! f5??**

Loses quickly. 24 ... Bc4 was playable.

**25 Nc5 Bc4**  
**26 Rg7+ Kd6**

If 26 ... Kf6 27 Rg6+.

**27 Rd7#**

An object lesson in how to lose! But it did take 5 successive blunders from a good position.

*Chris Russell*

## Eye Opener

Thumbing through a recent edition of *New in Chess* magazine, I noticed a thought-provoking comment in a "What would you play?" article. Following some mainstream theory in the Sveshnikov Variation of the Sicilian Defence, a position of interest arose :-

1	e4	c5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	d4	cxd4
4	Nxd4	Nf6
5	Nc3	e5
6	Ndb5	d6
7	Bg5	a6
8	Na3	b5
9	Bxf6	



How would you recapture? I asked my venerable Fritz11 software and after considerable thinking time, it evaluated 9 ... gxf6 and 9 ... Qxf6 equally with a small advantage to White of around 0.4 pawns. Put the same question to a modern engine available over the Internet and 9 ... gxf6 receives 0.0 from Stockfish, 0.1 from Fritz 18 and 0.4 from Komodo. However, the more natural 9 ... Qxg6 is now considerably worse rated up to 0.9. Why?

**9 ... Qxf6**  
**10 Nd5 Qd8**

Predictable so far but Fritz11 soldiers on with its favourite 11 c4.

**11 Bxb5 axb5**  
**12 Nxb5**

Black has no satisfactory way to avoid 13 Nbc7+ e.g. 12 ... Rb8 13 Nbc7+ Kd7 14 Qg4+ f5 15 Qxf5#. Perhaps the best try is :-

**12 ... Qa5+**  
**13 c3 Kd8**

If 13 ... Qxb5 14 Nc7+ or 13 ... Rb8 14 b4 and the black queen has no escape square. 13 ... Ra7 returns the material but the computer then likes White's advancing queenside pawn majority.

**14 a4**

Here is the difference in the software. White's general positional advantages are assessed at up to 1.5 pawns by the new boys on the block whereas Fritz11 is only happy with 0.3. Time for an upgrade?