

# New Englander

## Chess Club Update – December 2022

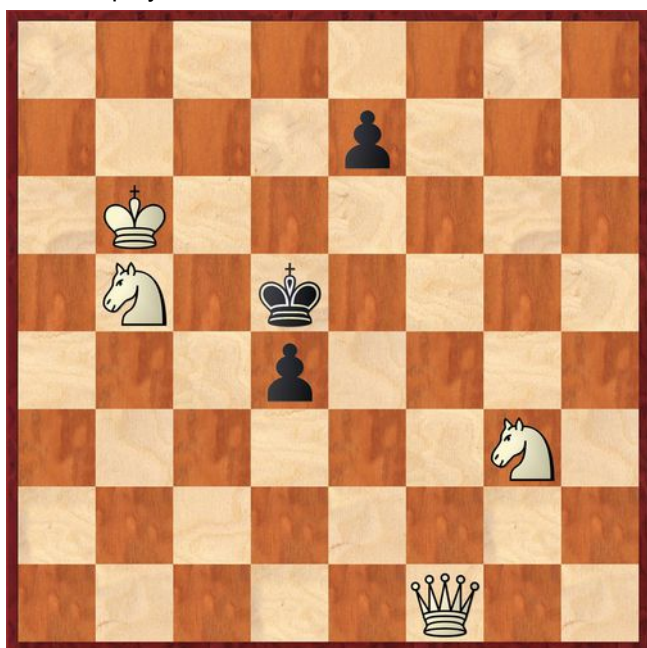
### Chairman's Chatter

Two new members have appeared at the Club like the proverbial London buses arriving together – and just as welcome! It is great to see the room being filled with games on Wednesday evenings and of course, that means the competition will be so much fiercer...

*Paul Hanks*

### Puzzle Problem

White to play and mate in 2.



Last Month's solution (Inostroza 1990#)

Position : 8/Nk6/1P2K3/8/4N3/8/BR6/8

**1 Nc6 Kxc6 2 Bd5#** [1 ... Ka6 2 Nc5#; 1 ... Ka8 2 b7#; 1 ... Kc8 2 Nd6#]

### Website to Watch

The diet for December (in terms of chess!) is rapid and blitz play. The European Championships in these disciplines take place over the period from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> December (see <https://katowice2022.eu/en/home/>) in Katowice, Poland. The World Championships follow on 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The venue was only confirmed at the start of November and a website has yet to be announced.

### Diary Dates

7<sup>th</sup> December Club Lightning

21<sup>st</sup> December Xmas Special

21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> January '23 EACU Closed Championship at the Turner Hall, Newmarket (see <http://www.eacu.org.uk/>)

### Result Round-up

#### New England Grand Prix

Player	Champ	Ladder	League	Cup	Team 7000	Total	TPR*
R Ilett	4½	½	2½	1½		9	2028
P Spencer	3½		4½	0	½	8½	1841
P Walker	5		2	1½		8½	2032
P Hanks	4		2	½	½	7	1922
P Turp	2		1		½	3½	1828
N Wedley	1	2				3	1485
C Russell	0		2½		½	3	1625
J Jennings	1	1	0		1	3	1285
E Knox	1½		0	½		2	1505
N Chedd	1½		½			2	1598
B Stephens		½				½	1928
R Lepley		0				0	1067
E Smith	0					0	1032

\* Tournament Performance Rating is approximate

#### Cambridgeshire League

St Neots A	1½	New England A	3½
P Brown	0	R Ilett	1
A Chapman	0	P Walker	1
R Gompelman	0	P Spencer	1
P Barkas	1	P Turp	0
C Emery	½	E Knox	½

Warboys B	1½	New England B	2½
N Greenwood	½	P Spencer	½
R Mann	0	P Turp	1
P Baddeley	0	C Russell	1
P Wells	1	J Jennings	0

#### Team 7000 competition

NE Patriots	P	Spalding	P
Re-arranged on 15 <sup>th</sup> February			
Away match switched to 10 <sup>th</sup> January			

## Fenland Trophy

New England A	1½	Cambridge	2½
R Ilett	½	S Palucha	½
P Walker	½	D Waller	½
P Hanks	½	S Herring	½
P Spencer	0	P Fallon	1
Royston	P	NE Patriots	P
Re-arranged on 19 <sup>th</sup> December			

## Club Championship

White		Black	
Previous rounds			
P Walker	P	Rd 1	E Knox
P Hanks	P	Rd 1	P Turp
R Ilett	1	0	C Russell
E Knox	P	Rd 2	P Spencer
E Knox	P	Rd 3	P Turp
Round 4			
P Turp	P	P	P Spencer
J Jennings	0	1	R Ilett
E Knox	½	½	N Chedd
C Russell	0	1	P Walker
N Wedley	0	1	P Hanks
Round 5			
P Spencer	½	½	R Ilett
P Turp	1	0	N Chedd
P Walker	1	0	N Wedley
E Knox	P	P	C Russell
E Smith	P	P	P Hanks
Round 6			
N Chedd	0	1	P Spencer
C Russell	0	1	P Turp
P Hanks	1	0	J Jennings
N Wedley	P	P	E Knox
E Smith	0	1	P Walker
Round 7			
E Knox	1	0	E Smith
Round 10			
P Walker	1	0	P Hanks

Player	PS	PW	NW	PH	CR	ES	EK	JJ	PT	RI	NC	Total
P Spencer	X					1		1		½	1	3½
P Walker		X	1	1	1	1			1		0	5
N Wedley		0	X	0				1		0		1
P Hanks		0	1	X	1			1			1	4
C Russell		0		0	X				0	0		0
E Smith	0		0			X	0	0		0		0
E Knox						1	X				½	1½
J Jennings	0		0	0		1		X		0		1
P Turp		0			1				X		1	2
R Ilett	½		1		1	1		1		X		4½
N Chedd	0	1		0			½		0		X	1½

## New England Club Ladder

White		Black	
J Jennings	1	0	N Wedley
N Wedley	1	0	J Jennings
N Wedley	1	0	R Lepley
R Ilett	½	½	B Stephens

Position	Change		Player	Record @ 30/11/22
	Month	Overall		
1	+1	+1	N Wedley	0,1,1
2	-1	-1	J Jennings	1,0
3	-	-	R Lepley	0
4	-	-	B Stephens	½
5	-	-	R Ilett	½

## Match of the Month

For its own survival, chess needs to recruit more players from the younger generations and so, it is good to see the new face of a rising talent appear on the scene... That is, until he happens to be sitting opposite you!

### A Nawalaniec v R Ilett

Peterborough v New England, Fenland Cup; 06.10.22

1 e4 d5

If it's Ray Ilett, it must be a Scandanavian Defence!

2 exd5 Nf6  
3 d4 Nxd5  
4 c4 Nb6  
5 Nc3 e5

5 ... e5 is a move I discovered many years ago and if White takes the pawn, Black does get good compensation. White also gets the chance to go wrong as this game amply demonstrates. Probably this is why White normally plays 5 Nf3.

It is hard to find examples of this opening in international competition. We are still following a predecessor game (G Wall v S Drazic, Bergamo 2004) whereas 5 ... g6 is a more popular choice.

**6 dxe5**

The game cited above continued 6 Nf3 and an even earlier outing of the variation (L-D Nisipeanu v J Palkovi, Balatonbereny 1996) saw 6 Qe2. The computer thinks these options give White a small edge but considers Black gets full compensation for the sacrificed pawn with the text move.

Younger players tend to be well-schooled in the latest theory thanks to modern information technology. Nigel Short was one grandmaster who circumvented this by reviving ancient openings to test their opponent's understanding of unfamiliar settings rather than just their memory.

**6 ... Qxd1+**  
**7 Kxd1 Nc6**

White has his king stranded in the centre but without queens on the board, it may seem safe. However, Black has easy piece development and in particular, White's disjointed pawn centre means that Black's bishop pair have unrestricted scope.

**8 Nb5**

Here is the turning point. 8 Nb5 is by no means obvious mistake though 8 f4, 8 Be2 and 8 Nf3 are all better and about equal. White needs to consolidate instead of this show of premature aggression. For instance, with 8 f4 Bf5 9 Nf3 0-0-0+ 10 Bd2 Bc5, Black has a fine position. The game continuation is similar but gifts Black an even bigger lead in activity.

**8 ... Bg4+**  
**9 f3 0-0-0+**  
**10 Ke1 Be6**  
**11 b3**

A third tricky, strategic decision for White but 11 b3? is another mistake since after 11 ... Bb4+, Black is clearly winning. I am regaining the sacrificed material with advantage but which pawn should White return? The alternative 11 f4 ironically runs into 11 ... Nb4 and it is not easy to avoid the fork on c2 without other concessions.

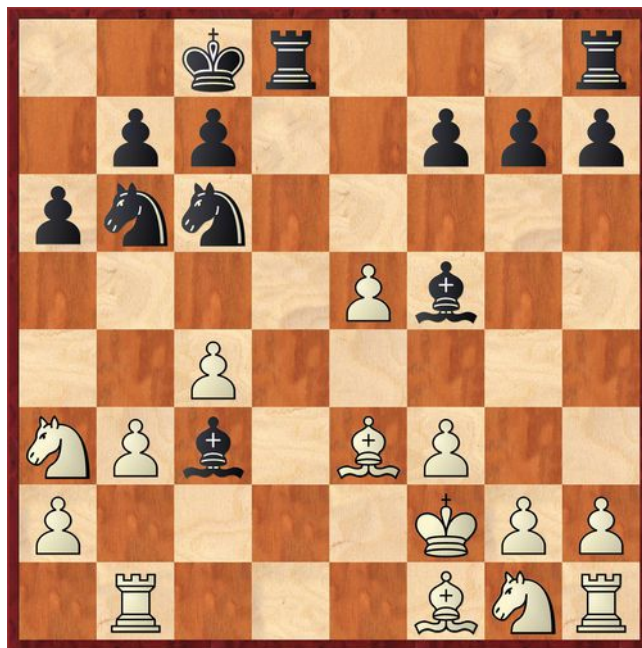
- 12 Rb1 Bf5
- 12 Kf2 Bc5+
  - 13 Ke2 Bxc4+ 14 Kf3 (14 Ke1 Nc2#) 14 ... Bxf1
  - 13 Kg3 Rd1 14 Be2 (14 Nf/h3 Bxc4; 14 Ne2 Rd3+ with mate in 5) 14 ... Rxc1
  - 13 Kf3 Nc2 14 Rb1 and Black has options to attack e.g. 14 ... Rd1 15 Nh3 Ne1+ 16 Ke2? Bg4#
- 12 Ke2 Nc2 13 Rb1 Bxc4+ 14 Kf2 Bc5+ 15 Kf3 Bxf1.

These lines involve fairly simple tactics that flow from Black's development. A great advert for the Scandinavian! The best continuation is the unpromising 12 Na3 when 12 ... Nxc4 13 Bxc4 Bxc4

14 Nxc4 (14 Nf3 Nd3+ and a discovered check) 14 ... Nc2+. Sadly, the move played also gives away the exchange.

**11 ... Bb4+**  
**12 Kf2 a6**  
**13 Na3 Bc3**  
**14 Rb1 Bf5**  
**15 Be3**

White is at last bringing out his pieces but 15 Be2 was probably a better order to prevent Rd8-d1 possibilities.



**15 ... Bxb1**

It is hard to criticise a move that wins material as the culmination of the opening phase but 15 ... Bb4 was more emphatic. There is no salvation in 16 g4 Bxb1 17 Nxb1 Rd1 when a piece is lost and it is an easy win for me. So far so good for Black but a failure to ram home the advantage allows White to fight on and nearly save the game.

**16 Nxb1 Bxe5**  
**17 g3 Rd1**

We have reached what is called the conversion stage which makes it sound easy to realise your advantage! Here, for instance, my move is OK among several equivalent directions but 17 ... Rhe8! is stronger.

**18 Bh3+ Kb8**  
**19 Bf5 Nd4**  
**20 Be4 f5**  
**21 Nc3 Rxc1**

White has returned the compliment by embarrassing a rook on the first rank. My move is an obvious exchange but Fritz recommends the bizarre 21 ... Ra1 22 Bb1 Nxb3 23 axb3 Bxc3 24 Ne2. There was evidently no computer cheating here!

**22 Rxc1 fxg4**  
**23 f4 Bf6**

The material balance could have shifted yet again with 23 ... Nf3 but after 24 gxf5 Nxc1 25 Kxg1, it is hard to see whether this endgame is any more promising.



24 Nxe4 Rd8  
25 c5 Nc8

Black has the opportunity of 25 ... Nd5 which White could have denied by 25 Nxf6. It would keep the kingside pawn structure intact after 26 Nxf6 Nxf6 but there could be complications if White tries 26 Rd1.

26 Nxf6 gxf6  
27 Rd1 Nc6  
28 Rxd8 Nxd8  
29 g4 Nc6  
30 h4 N8e7  
31 g5 f5

As exchanging pieces in an endgame proportionately favours the stronger side, I can be pleased so far but there are pitfalls. 31 ... Nd5 is more active but gives White hope after 32 h5 fxg5 33 fxg5. The best line is then 33 ... Kc8 because the passed pawns can become dangerous after 33 ... Nxe3.

32 h5 Ng8  
33 Ke2 Kc8  
34 Kd3 Kd7  
35 Bd2 Ke6  
36 Kc4 Nge7 0-1

The position is technically won and indeed, that was the eventual outcome but my scoresheet ends here under time pressure. In the end, it was a nice win, thanks to an opening trap but I did not play all that well after it and very nearly blew it,

As a postscript on the opening, I think there are a few examples of 5 ... e5 but the 2 ... Nf6 variation does not have a good reputation at Master level and for that reason top level games are limited. Nevertheless, my young opponent seems to have been impressed. Only a month later, the following game appeared :

#### A Pyda v A Nawalaniec

Birmingham Open, Rd 1; 19.11.2022

1 e4 d5 2 exd5 Nf6 3 Nc3 Nxd5 4 Nf3 Bg4 5 Bc4 e6 6 0-0 Nb6 7 Be2 Nc6 8 d3 Bd6 9 Bg5 Qd7 10 h3 Bh5 11 Be3 0-0-0 12 Nd4 Bxe2 13 Qxe2 Nxd4 14 Bxd4 Rhg8 15 Be3 h6 16 a4 Kb8 17 a5 Nd5 18 Nxd5 exd5 19 c4 Qe6 20 cxd5 Qxd5 21 d4 a6 22 Qc2 f5 23 f3 g5 24 Kh1 h5 25 f4 g4 26 Kh2 h4 27 Qd2 Rde8 28 Rg1 Qe4 29 Rae1 gxh3 30 Kxh3 Rg3+ 31 Kxh4 Rg4+ 32 Kh5 Rh8#.

He is going to be quite a handful when on equal terms.

*Ray Ilett*

#### Eye Opener

L Van Foreest (2526) v I Haitin (2349)  
European Rapid 2019, Tallinn, 06.12.2019

1 e4 d5  
2 exd5 Qxd5

This is the more normal continuation in the Scandanavian Defence.

3 Nc3 Qd6

This modern line is supposed to allow Black aggressive counterplay on the queenside.

4 d4 Nf6  
5 Nf3 c6  
6 Bc4 Bf5

This has been called the Gubnitsky-Pytel Variation. Several grandmaster games have trodden this path and there can be no better recommendation than I Nepomniachtchi v M Carlsen, Kolkata 2019. However, here Magnus played 6 ... Bg4 and maybe there is a reason he chose to pin the knight...

7 Ne5 Bg6  
8 Bf4 Qb4

White has stolen tempi with his last two moves but Black is following his plan despite the deficit in development.



9 a3

It is a rapidplay game and taking the b pawn attacks both the knight on c3 and the pawn on c2. It must be better than lamely retreating, Black thinks.

9 ... Qxb2  
10 Na4

How many escape squares does the black queen have?

10 ... Qxc2  
11 Bxf7+

It is payback time. 11 ... Bxf7 loses the queen.

11 ... Kd8  
12 Bxg6

Remarkable! Despite being on a different square, the black queen still has no options.

12 ... Qxd1+  
13 Rxd1 1-0

After 13 ... hxg6 to regain the piece, 14 Nf7+ wins the rook on h8 and the knight has a way out of the corner.