

New Englander

Chess Club Update – July 2023

Chairman's Chatter

It may be the closed season and supposedly a quiet time of year but at the County level, much new activity has been planned. At the AGM, several initiatives were tabled to expand the match opportunities for players of all standards. Use the summer wisely and get prepared for a full programme of competitions starting in September!

Paul Hanks

Cambridgeshire AGM Summary

The Annual General Meeting of the Cambridgeshire County Chess Association was held on 27th June 2023 in St Ives. The following business was enacted :-

- financially. the Association roughly broke even last season and there was no change to team entry fees
- the Rapidplay at Whittlesford and County Individual at Wansford are being prepared. Please look out for entry details on the County website
- the Executive Committee was re-defined to have 5 permanent members and take decisions on running the Association that exceed the remit of individual officers. It would also assess proposals for expenditure from the Patrick Ribbands legacy
- some initial projects were approved including purchasing equipment for county matches, abolition of match fees and guarantees for the prize fund at the County Individual championship
- the strategy guidelines for legacy spending were decided as being a) junior development b) broadening participation and c) county team chess. Particular emphasis would be given to events that become self-sufficient after any initial funding
- several rule changes were considered.
 - If leagues are completed with an odd number of match pairings, the unbalanced fixtures will be defined at the start of the season on a random basis
 - September ratings were formalised for squad selection for the season with monthly grades used for board order
 - a reduction to four board teams in division 1 found insufficient support
- Rookwood Club, March were admitted to the Association

- a third division was created for teams of 3 limited to a total grade of 4000. Around 10 teams expressed interest
- divisions 1 and 2 and the Fenland Knock-Out events are to be organised as last year with the addition of Rookwood in division 2. Any uncertainty about entries was to be resolved by a deadline of 1st August.

Website to Watch

The Grand Chess Tour continues with rapid and blitz events in Zagreb, Croatia from 5th to 9th July. It has garnered the big names including Carlsen, Anand, Caruana, Nepomniachtchi etc. The website for the event is <https://grandchesstour.org/2023-grand-chess-tour/2023-superunited-rapid-blitz-croatia> and contains links to live streams on Twitch and YouTube.

Biel in Switzerland hosts the major tournament in July from 16th to 26th. This event is a "Triathlon" in which the 8 grandmaster competitors meet in classical, rapidplay and blitz formats. Choose your favourite on <https://www.bielchessfestival.ch/LIVE.html>.

Diary Dates

24 September County Rapidplay at Whittlesford

25-26 November CCCA Individual Champs

Puzzle Problem

Last Month's solution (Lincoln 1992)

Position : 1rk5/1p6/4K3/1N6/7b/8/8/7Q

1 Qh2 Bd8 2 Na7# [1 ... Bg3 2 Qh8#; 1 ... b6 2 Qc7#; 1 ... Kd8 2 Qxb8#]

Problem Night

Whether or not you follow football, you may have heard of the heroics performed by Peterborough United in the last game of the EFL league season. By beating Barnsley away from home and with Derby losing, our boys achieved the only combination of results to snatch the final place in the play-offs.

Then, trying to overcome a record 19 point deficit against Sheffield Wednesday in the semi-finals, Posh recorded a surprise 4-0 victory. In the return leg, the Owls equalised on aggregate heart-breakingly late in added time, again in extra time and eventually, they triumphed on penalties.

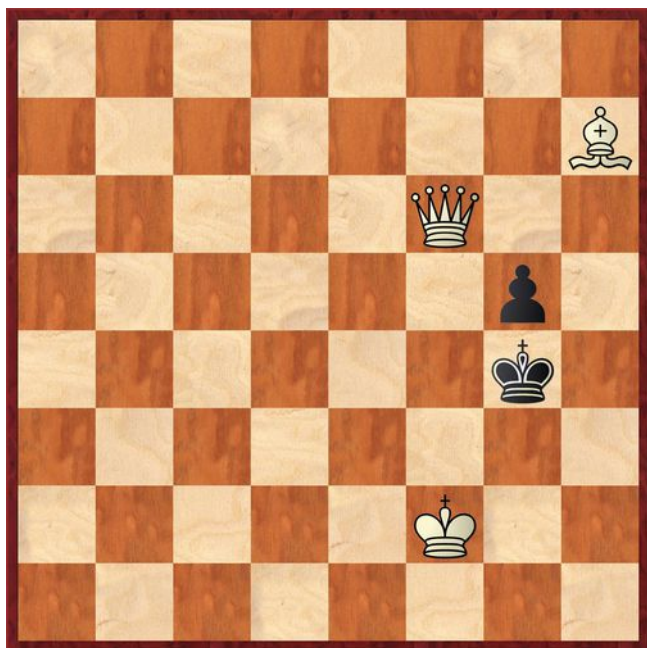
The close of our season was no less exciting. The Problem Night competition was held in the Zoom stadium and attracted 8 season ticket holders. The team sheets included Ray (co-champion and often a front-runner in our Golden Boot competition), fox-in-the-box Phil who ghosted in at the far post to share

the club championship, Andy and Dak (promising newcomers from the training academy), an Iranian international, Ed and Jim the midfield maestros and Chris who is available on a free transfer.

It was a game of two halves but in the current economic crisis, we can only afford the highlights package here and are only covering round 1.

The referee signalled for the start and with White kicking off up the board, the goal of checkmate is delivered with just two passes – no possession football here! A full point is awarded for the first key move with “assists” for each distinct mate thereafter (i.e. only one counts if several defensive tries lead to the same tap-in by White). If you avoid injury time from the sliding tackles by Black, a final whistle after 30 minutes should give you a reasonable work-out.

Position #1



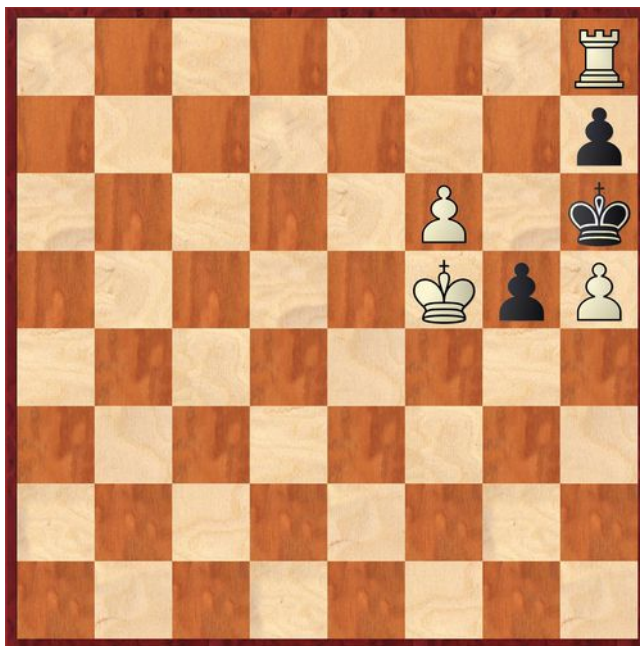
Key move	1
1 ...	2
1 ...	2

This position proved troublesome for Russell Rovers until they received instructions from the bench to accept a yellow card for time-wasting by taking the ball to the corner flag...

Ilett Athletic were also finding that Black had parked the bus and they could not get behind the defence. In fact, they had discovered the solution in the opening minutes but needed the hint that football has its one-two tactic whereas chess also has a two-one move order.

Turp Town were flying and the trainer never came onto the pitch. They raced into a two goal lead so we had better play the advantage and wave play on.

Position #2



Key move	1
1 ...	2

Call me old school but I deplore abuse of the referee. This position caused verbal allegations of unfairness after a promising run by the pawn was brought down in the penalty area as only mate in 3 and a penalty was awarded after a VAR review allowing White to score with a direct shot in a single variation.

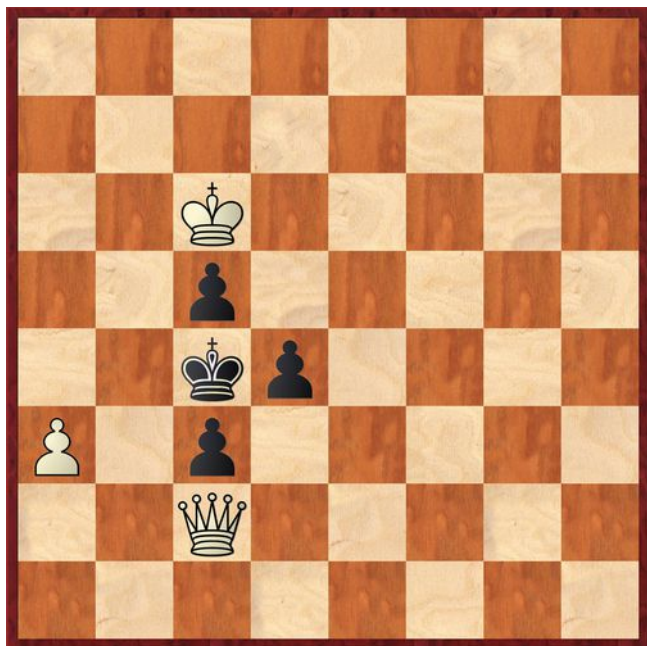
Position #3



Key move	1
1 ...	2
1 ...	2

Knox United were also in fine form. Mahmoud eschewed intricate passing between the knights and correctly, went for a direct route to White's star striker.

Position #4



Key move	1
1 ...	2
1 ...	2

The table show that there are two assists in this passage of play and although Chris made the net ripple, he struggled to find the second variation. When asked to count pawn moves, his exasperated invective showed he was as sick as a parrot.

Position #5



Key move	1
1 ...	2
1 ...	2
1 ...	2

Ray nominated Andy as Man of the Match for his diving header that unlocked the defence after a number of near misses.

The final league table :-

Team	Rd 1	Rd 2	Total
Ed & Mahmoud	15	22	37
Chris & Jim	11	15	26
Phil & Dak	6	18	25
Ray & Andy	10	7	17

How did you compare in Round 1? Are you over the moon or have you pulled a mental hamstring?

Eye Opener

A recent Masterclass session was on the subject of "Pinning and Unpinning". It is heartening in a ghoulish way to find that grandmasters still fall foul of this simple tactical concept.

S K Williams (2465) v D Paravyan (2586)
Airthings Masters; 03.02.2023

1	d4	Nf6
2	Nc3	d5
3	Bf4	g6
4	e3	Bg7
5	h4	h5
6	Nf3	0-0
7	Ne5	c5
8	dx c5	Qa5
9	Be2	Ne4



10 Qxd5

White would be OK after 10 0-0 but the Ginger GM is not one to back down from complications.

10	...	Nxc3
11	Qd2	Nc6 0-1

The knight on e5 is effectively pinned against the threat to c3 and White, unable to recapture there, will lose a piece.