

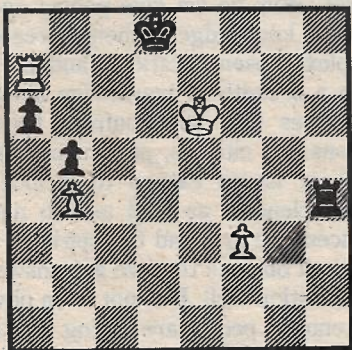
MURRAY CHANDLER

Not the brilliant touch

AN INTRIGUING little publication, entitled *The Not the British Chess Magazine*, is apparently about to scandalise the world with its appearance. My contribution to this disgraceful organ, the only magazine *guaranteed* to go bust after one issue, was the arrangement of the prestigious 1983-84 "Blunder of the Year" competition. Here is a sneak preview of some of the most appalling, gross and truly magnificent blunders that made the final.

Blunder number one

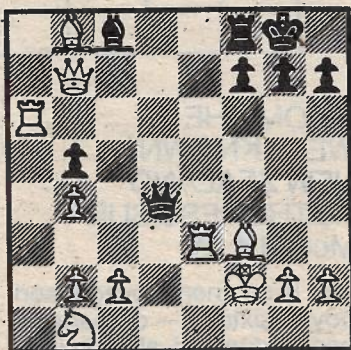
De Firmian v Arnason, Norway 1984.



Play went 54.Rxa6?? Rf4?? (preferable was 54...Rh6 ch winning a rook) 55.Kd6?? Rf6 ch and Black won. Black did then take on a6 in case you are wondering.

Blunder number two

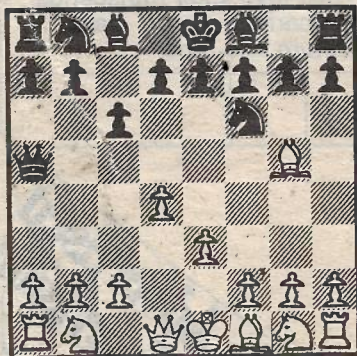
Clemance v Gloistein, New Zealand 1983.



Yes, White (a New Zealand championship player) is a rook and two pieces up. 36.Qe7? Bxa6 37.Bd6 Rc8 38.Qe8 ch?? Rxe8, and eventually Black won.

Blunder number three

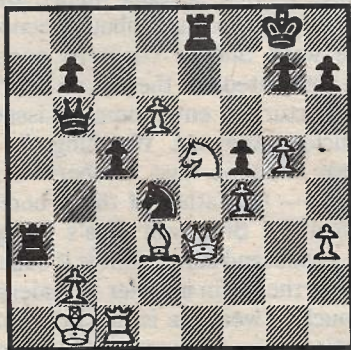
Z. Dordevic v M. Kovacevic, Yugoslavia 1984.



White resigns. The moves of this mini-epic were 1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 c6 3.e3 Qa5 ch.

Blunder number four

Sztern v Lundquist, Australia 1983 (where else?).



White, having been offered a draw, has asked his opponent to make a move first. The result: 28...Qxb2 ch!! (29. Kxb2 Rb3 ch wins) 29. Resigns?? White was so stunned he forgot to accept the draw.

Blunder number five

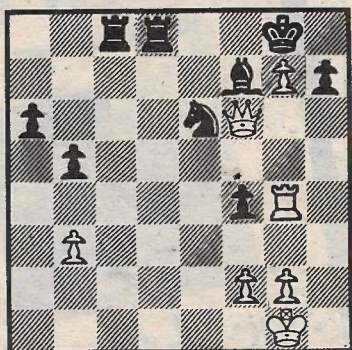
Jonasson v Angantytsson, Iceland 1984.



After 26.f6 Black sacrificed his queen with 26...e2? 27.fxe7 Bd4 ch 28. White resigns?? Evidently neither player saw 28.Ne3, which wins for White.

Blunder number six

Ftacnik v Gobet, Switzerland 1984.



Black stands better, so 34...h5? 35. Qh6 resigns.

A distinguished panel of judges, including English grandmasters Tony Miles, John Nunn and Jon Speelman, mused long and hard over such a wealth of non-talent. New Zealand's entry was strong, but possibly suffered because some commentators believed White must have been in time-trouble — Phillip Clemance assures me he was not! In the end, however, the game from Australia (in which Lundquist resigns after being offered a draw) just had to win. "The draw offer is stunningly original" — Miles. "... brilliant coup of resignation" — Speelman. ■