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Congress 2010

IM Anthony Ker NZ Champion for 11th time



**NZ Championship, Major Open, NZ Rapid and Lightning
Reports**

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Editorial

Editor Alan Aldridge
Technical Editor Bill Forster
bill@nzchessmag.com

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NZCF Contact Details

New Zealand Chess Federation (Inc)
PO Box 216
Shortland Street
Auckland
Secretary Helen Milligan

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Reports from the 117th NZ Chess Congress

IM Anthony Ker wins his 11th NZ Championship Title

IM Anthony Ker's 'ownership' of the Silver Rook continues, with an 11th NZ Championship victory.

Mike Steadman Reports

This year Auckland Chess Centre hosted the 2010 Congress. The titles on offer were those of New Zealand Champion, Major Open Champion, The NZ Rapid and NZ Lightning Champions and the NZ Women's Champion. The women's title was to be decided by the highest placed woman in the Major Open.

We wanted to ensure the venue could house all the players that entered and all the amenities were close by to make life a bit easier for our out of town visitors. We chose the Alexandra Trotting club which had a huge room, food and free parking available on site, plenty of accommodation options across the road and close to various shops for food options.

All in all, there was mainly positive feedback from all the players regarding the venue. We were nowhere near full and had a huge area for the analysis boards. Brian Foster and New Zealand Chess Supplies had a prime location in the first lounge



IM Anthony Ker

where all the players passed by to get to the playing area and just next to the analysis boards. Big thank you to Brian Foster for his key sponsorship and helping with the costs of putting on this premier event.

We had one venue glitch and that was on the day of the 9th round there were trotting trials running from 1.00 till 2.30. Meant about every 30 minutes, we would hear a race being run out on the track. We couldn't stop the round, so the call was made that players could stop the clocks if they found this noise too disturbing. None did in the championship area. With the changes to the NZ rating list coming out just before Congress, we had 28 people with ratings over 2000 that had to play in the championship.



Another rising junior, Daniel Shen, who took third place.

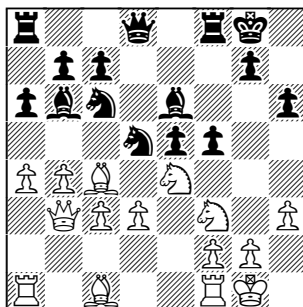
We only had Ker from the top 5 on the rating list, but only Wastney was missing from the next 5 on the list. So heading into the event, Ker with a previous 10 titles to his name was a very hot favourite. We had a problem with the electronic board software and could only get 1 board playing. By round 4 we lost our internet connection and lost that one as well. Otherwise, the tournament ran smoothly and looked to be enjoyed by the players and organisers.

Round 1

A number of upsets occurred in the first round, Nyberg beat Shen, Davis beat McLaren, Croad drew with Lim and Smith drew with Barlow. The remainder of the seeds all duly won their games.

Nyberg, Michael - Shen, Daniel

NZ Championship (1.10), 02.01.2010
1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d3 d6 6.b4 Bb6 7.a4 a6 8.h3 0-0 9.0-0 Be6 10.Nbd2 d5 11.exd5 Nxd5 12.Ne4 h6 13.Qb3 f5 14.Neg5 hxg5 15.Nxg5 Bf7 16.Nxf7 Kxf7 17.Bxd5+ Kg6 18.a5 Ba7 19.b5 axb5 20.Qxb5 Qd7 21.Ba3 Rfd8 22.Bxc6 bxc6 23.Qxe5 Qxd3 24.Qe6+ Kh7 25.Qxc6 Qe2 26.Qa4 g5 27.Qb3



After 13...f5

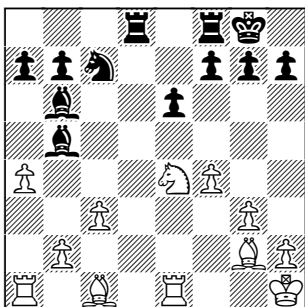
Kg6 28.Qb7 g4 29.Qc6+ Kh5 30.Qf6 Qe4 31.Qf7+ Black resigns 1-0

Round 2

The upsets continued in this round, Nyberg beat Smith, Davis beat Garbett.

Davis, Justin - Garbett, Paul

NZ Championship (2.2), 03.01.2010
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.c3 Nf6 4.e5 Nd5 5.g3 d6 6.exd6 Bxd6 7.Bg2 0-0 8.0-0 Nc6 9.d4 cxd4 10.Nxd4 Nxd4 11.Qxd4 Qc7 12.Nd2 Bd7 13.Ne4 Be5 14.Qc5 Qb8 15.f4 Bc7 16.Kh1 Bb6 17.Qa3 Bb5 18.Re1 Qc7 19.Qd6 Rad8 20.Qxc7 Nxc7 21.a4 21...f5 22.axb5 fxe4 23.Bxe4 Nd5 24.c4 Nb4 25.Be3 Nd3 26.Bxd3 Rxd3 27.Bxb6 axb6 28.Rxe6 h5 29.Rxb6 Re8 30.Kg2 Re2+ 31.Kh3 Rdd2 32.Rh1 Re7 33.Kh4 Rxb2 34.Kxh5 Rc2 35.Kg6 Rxc4 36.Ra1 Rc8 37.Ra7 Rb8 38.f5 Kf8 39.g4 Ke8 40.h4 Kd8 41.g5 Kc7 42.Re6 Rbe8 43.b6+ Kb8 44.Rxe7 Rxe7 45.Ra4 Black resigns 1-0

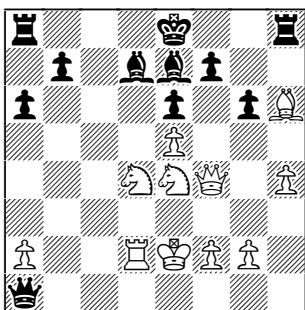


After 21.a4

Steadman, Michael - Thornton, Gino

NZ Championship (2.3), 03.01.2010

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5
Nfd7 6.h4 a6 7.Qg4 g6 8.Nf3 c5 9.dxc5
Nc6 10.Qf4 h6 11.Bxh6 d4 12.Ne4 Qa5+
13.Kd1 Nxc5 14.Bd3 Nxd3 15.cxd3 Qb5
16.Ke2 Nb4 17.Rhd1 Bd7 18.Nxd4 Nxd3
19.Rxd3 Qxb2+ 20.Rd2 Qxa1



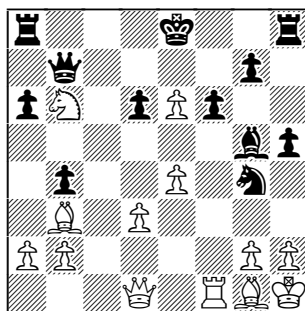
21.Bg5 0-0-0 22.Bxe7 Bb5+ 23.Nxb5
Rxd2+ 24.Qxd2 axb5 25.Bd6 b6 26.g3
Kb7 27.Nc3 Rc8 28.Nxb5 Qb1 (=) 29.Nc3
Qf5 30.Qd3 Qg4+ 31.Ke3 Rc6 32.Qe4
Qh3 33.Ne2 Qf1 34.Qf3 Qd1 35.Qxf7+
Ka6 36.Qxg6 b5 37.Qd3 Qa1 38.a3 Rc4
39.f4 Qb2 40.h5 Qa1 41.h6 Qh1 42.h7
Kb7 43.a4 Kb6 44.axb5 Rc8 45.Qd4+

Kxb5 46.Qd3+ Ka5 47.Qa3+ Kb6
48.Qb3+ Ka5 49.Qxe6 Black resigns 1-0

Milligan, Helen - Marner, Gavin

NZ Championship (2.14), 03.01.2010

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 Nd4 4.Nxd4
cxd4 5.c3 a6 6.Bc4 Qc7 7.d3 dxc3 8.Nxc3
e6 9.Be3 b5 10.Bb3 Nf6 11.Rc1 Qb8
12.0-0 Be7 13.f4 d6 14.Kh1 h5 15.f5 b4
16.Na4 Ng4 17.Bg1 Bg5 18.Rxc8+ Qxc8
19.Nb6 Qb7 20.fxe6 f6



21.Bd5 Qa7 22.Qa4+ Ke7 23.Bxa8 Be3
24.Nd5+ Kxe6 25.Nxe3 Black resigns 1-0

Round 3

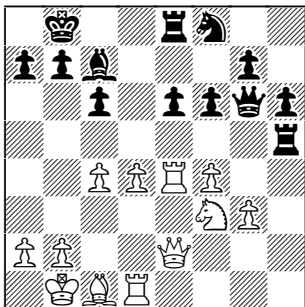
The 2 giant killers Nyberg and Davis had their great starts arrested, beaten by Steadman and Croad. Meanwhile Antonio Krstev was having some remarkable luck, he is a fighter to the end and was turning some decidedly dodgy positions into wins. He turned around a position against Shen that looked pretty precarious.

Hart, Ralph - Watson, Bruce

NZ Championship Auckland (3.4),
04.01.2010

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5
5.Ng3 Bg6 6.Nf3 Nd7 7.h4 h6 8.h5 Bh7

9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 e6 11.Bf4 Qa5+
 12.Bd2 Qc7 13.0-0-0 Ngf6 14.Ne4 0-0-0
 15.Kb1 Nxe4 16.Qxe4 Bd6 17.Qe2 Rhe8
 18.g3 Kb8 19.Rh4 f6 20.Re4 Nf8 21.Bc1
 Qf7 22.Nd2 Bc7 23.f4 Rd5 24.c4 Rxb5
 25.Nf3 Qg6



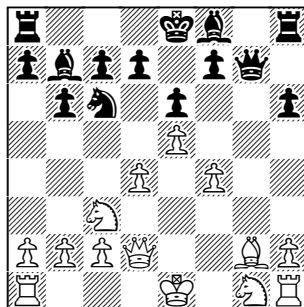
26.f5 Qxg3 27.fxe6 f5 28.Re3 f4 29.Re4
 Rh3 30.Rd3 g5 31.Ne5 Qh2 32.Qxh2
 Rxb2 33.d5 Bxe5 34.Rxe5 Kc8 35.b3 c5
 36.a4 a5 37.Rf5 Nxe6 38.dxe6 Rxe6
 39.Rxc5+ Kb8 40.Rd8+ Ka7 41.Rxa5+
 Kb6 42.b4 Kc7 43.Rad5 Re1 44.a5 Rhh1
 45.b5 Rxc1+ 46.Kb2 Rb1+ 47.Ka3 Rxb5
 48.R8d7+ Black resigns 1-0

Round 4

The top pairing of the round was Steadman vs Ker. This was a Pirc with Steadman going maniac and throwing all his pawns forward. An all out strategy, if they crashed through then payday, all endgames were going to be lost. Ker defended like a demon as usual and managed to hold the position and when he bounced out, Steadman could not adapt and dropped an exchange. Ker was precise in getting the full point.

Hart,Ralph (2276) - Croad,Nicholas (2332) NZ Championship Auckland (4.2), 05.01.2010

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bg5 e6 3.e4 h6 4.Bxf6 Qxf6
 5.Nc3 b6 6.Qd2 Bb7 7.f4 g5 8.g3 gxf4
 9.e5 Qg7 10.Bg2 Nc6 11.gxf4



11...Rg8 12.d5 Qxg2 13.Qxg2 Rxb2
 14.dxc6 Bxc6 15.Nge2 Bc5 16.0-0-0 0-0-0
 17.Nd4 Bxd4 18.Rxd4 Rdg8 19.Rf1
 Rxb2 20.Rd2 Rgg2 21.Rxg2 Rxg2 22.b4
 a6 23.a4 b5 24.axb5 axb5 25.Nd1 h5
 26.Nf2 h4 27.Nh3 Rg3 28.Ng5 h3 29.Rf2
 Bg2 White resigns 0-1

Round 5

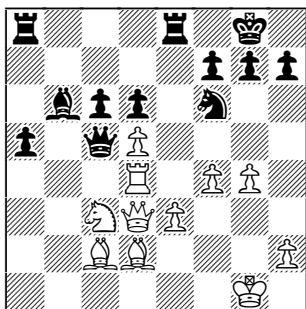
The top board was Ker vs Croad, this was a hard fought draw and meant Ker had removed a good percentage of the top rated players near him and was looking good for another title. Steadman stumbled again, Krstev rode his luck and turned around a completely lost position. Shen had started his recovery from his slow start as he goes on to string 6 wins together.

Thornton,Gino (2214) - Depasquale,Chris (2274)

NZ Championship Auckland (5.3), 06.01.2010

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 Nc6 3.Nc3 e5 4.d5 Ne7 5.g3
 Ng6 6.Bg2 Bc5 7.Rb1 d6 8.Qc2 0-0 9.e3
 a5 10.Nge2 Bd7 11.0-0 Qc8 12.Na4 Ba7

13.Nec3 Bh3 14.Qe2 e4 15.Nxe4 Nxe4
 16.Bxe4 Bxf1 17.Qxf1 Qg4 18.Bg2 b5
 19.Nc3 Qxc4 20.Nxb5 Qxa2 21.Bd2 Bb6
 22.f4 Qb3 23.Nc3 Rfe8 24.Qd3 Nf8
 25.Bf3 Nd7 26.Bd1 Qb4 27.Bc2 Nf6
 28.Ra1 Qxb2 29.Ra2 Qb4 30.Ra4 Qc5
 31.Rd4 c6 32.g4



32...cxd5 33.g5 Re4 34.gxf6 gxf6 35.Rxd5
 Black resigns 1-0

Round 6

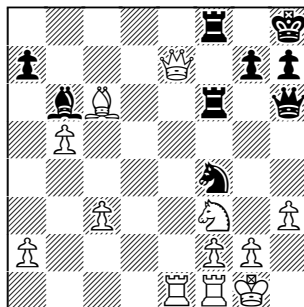
The next lucky suspect for Ker was Thornton. He decided to take on the Pirc and although Black's position looked decidedly dodgy, Ker did his usual and sprang out and Thornton got clobbered. Antonio's bubble started to burst and he lost to Croad with a nicely played game by Nic.

Garbett,Paul (2350) - Watson,Bruce (2297)

NZ Championship Auckland (6.3),
 07.01.2010

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.dxc5 Nc6 5.Nf3
 Bg4 6.Nbd2 e6 7.h3 Bxf3 8.Nxf3 Bxc5
 9.Bd3 Nge7 10.0-0 Ng6 11.Qe2 0-0 12.c3
 f6 13.b4 Bb6 14.exf6 Qxf6 15.Bg5 Nf4
 16.Bxf4 Qxf4 17.Qxe6+ Kh8 18.Qxd5

Qh6 19.Rae1 Rad8 20.Qe4 Rf4 21.Qe2
 Rdf8 22.b5 Nd8 23.Be4 Ne6 24.Bxb7
 R4f6 25.Bc6 Nf4 26.Qe7



26...Nxh3+ 27.gxh3 Qxh3 28.Qxf6 gxf6
 White resigns 0-1

Round 7

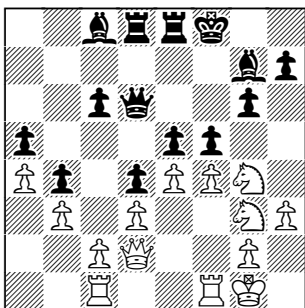
Ker was having to drop down the field and there was no rest for Antonio, his French was absolutely destroyed by Anthony. Meanwhile Watson had been sneaking up through the field and played Croad for a hard fought draw. These results were leaving Anthony with a clear lead with most of his key opposition already played. Shen beat Hart. We were lucky because part way through the game Ralph realized his phone was on and turned it off. It beeped and the DOP pointed out the default rule. The players decided to continue and depending on the result Ralph may have appealed, however, Daniel won the game convincingly and the issue was closed.

Hart,Ralph (2276) - Shen,Daniel (2221)

NZ Championship Auckland (7.5),
 08.01.2010

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6
 5.0-0 Be7 6.Bxc6 dxc6 7.Qe1 Nd7 8.b3 0-

0 9.Bb2 Bf6 10.d3 Re8 11.Nbd2 b5
 12.Qe3 c5 13.a4 See note at end of game
 13...c6 14.Rfd1 Qe7 15.Ba3 Bb7 16.h3 g6
 17.Rab1 Bg7 18.Nf1 Rad8 19.Ng3 b4
 20.Bb2 Nf8 21.Rf1 Qd6 22.Nh2 Ne6
 23.Ng4 Nd4 24.Qd2 Bc8 25.Nh6+ Kf8
 26.Rbc1 a5 27.Ng4 f5 28.Bxd4 cxd4 29.f4
 29...exf4 30.exf5 fxf3 31.f6 Bxg4 32.fxg7+
 Kxg7 33.hxg4 Qe7 34.g5 Qe3+ 35.Qxe3
 Rxe3 36.Rf4 Rd5 37.Rg4 c5 38.Rf1 Rf5
 39.Re4 Rxg5 40.Rxe3 dxe3 41.Rf3 Re5
 42.Kf1 Rf5 43.Ke2 Rxf3 44.Kxf3 Kf6
 White resigns. 0-1



After 29.f4

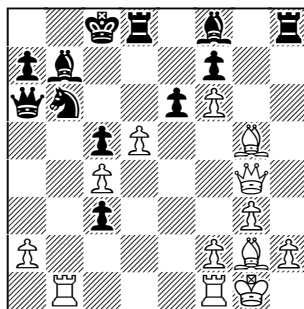
Round 8

This round caused a huge upheaval at the top, Watson played his usual c4, Nf3 opening and really just seemed to crush Ker, all the players near Ker won this round – Croad, Shen, Steadman. So a bit more heat went onto Ker than was there the round before.

Nic Croad played one of the best games of the Championship in round 8 against Daniel Han. Nic annotates the game.

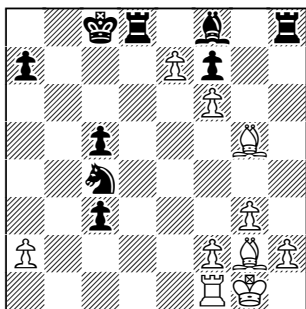
Croad, Nicholas - Han, Daniel
 New Zealand Championship Auckland ,
 09.01.2010

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Nf3 e6 5.Bg5
 dxc4 6.e4 b5 7.e5 h6 8.Bh4 g5 9.Nxg5
 hxg5 10.Bxg5 Nbd7 11.g3 Qb6 12.exf6
 Bb7 13.Bg2 c5 14.d5 0-0-0 15.0-0 b4
 16.Rb1 I knew of this piece sacrifice. The
 idea is to expose the bishop on b7 which is
 an important piece. It is not wise to accept
 the sacrifice immediately. 16...Qa6 17.b3?!
 [The main-line goes 17.dxe6 with
 complications which remain unresolved for
 over a decade. I was looking for a way to
 get away from here at this point as I had
 not prepared this opening for this game.
 My opponent was playing quickly enough
 here that I thought he knew where he was
 going and I actually thought that the
 speculative piece sacrifice I now essay
 might be a variation at this point.]
 17...bxc3 18.bxc4 Nb6 [I don't want to go
 into details here but 18...exd5 was an
 alternative] 19.Qg4



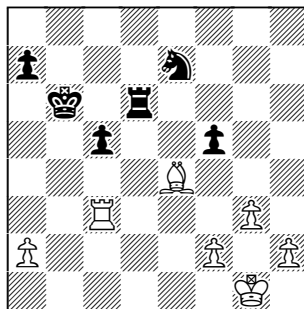
19...Qxc4? [19...c2!? is exactly the sort of
 move disruptive which should be
 considered when the opponent is relying on
 a highly forcing main-line, but here after

20.dxe6 fxe6 (20...cxb1Q 21.e7+ Nd7 (Neither is 21...Kc7 22.Bf4+ Rd6 23.e8Q+- very interesting to Black despite the multiple queen's because White's king is quite safe.) 22.Rxb1 Black has trouble with his bishop because of 22...Bxg2 (22...Bxe7 23.Bxb7+ Qxb7 24.Rxb7 Kxb7 25.fxe7+-) 23.Rb8+ Kxb8 24.exd8Q+- and White wins.) 21.Qxe6+ Kb8 22.Rb2 and White has lots of compensation for the sacrificed piece, though Black has some counterplay here, 22...Bxg2 23.Kxg2 Qb7+ 24.Kg1±; 19...Bd6 was probably the best defence, 20.dxe6 Bxg2 21.e7+ Rd7 22.Kxg2 Qxc4 23.Qxc4 Nxc4 again the position is quite unclear, but I won't go into further detail at this point either.] **20.Qxc4 Nxc4 21.Rxb7 Kxb7** [Much better was the interesting alternative 21...exd5?! 22.Rxa7 d4 23.Re1! ± and White creates threats against the Black king which are too great. Though in practise this would have been a good continuation to choose as this last position is still un-fathomable for a human.] **22.dxc6+ Kc8** [22...Kc7 23.e7 Re8 24.Rc1² is similar to the game in many ways.] **23.e7**

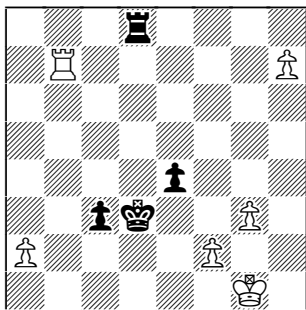


Black had earlier decided to go into this position where he is presently ahead in material, but I felt that White was already much better here. Basically the pawn on e7

is worth the exchange which Black keeps for a while and apart from this the black queenside pawns will drop off. White will eventually transpose into an ending then with an extra pawn. **23...Bxe7** [23...Re8 24.Bc6 Nd6 25.Bxe8 Nxe8 26.Rd1+- is pretty straight forward for White to win.] **24.fxe7 Rd6** preparing to gather the pawn on e7, but now the tactics start. **25.Bh3+**! First I prevent the king from approaching the e7-pawn and take control of the e6 square. **25...Kb7** [Using the trick 25...Rxb3?? 26.e8Q+-] **26.Rc1** Now I will calmly collect one or both c-pawns before figuring out how to win back the exchange. **26...f6** [Probably a more testing defence was 26...Re8 27.Rxc3 Nb6 28.Bg2+ Ka6 29.Bf1+ c4 30.Rxc4! Nxc4 31.Bxc4+ Kb7 32.Bxf7 Rxe7 33.Bxe7 Rd7 34.Bg5 Rxf7+- which leads to a winning endgame, however Black still has some practical chances here because of the unbalanced material.] **27.Bh6!** The second bishop places itself under attack on the h-file, and threatens to go to f8 forcing a pawn promotion. **27...Re8 28.Bf8 Ne5 29.Bf5 Nc6** [29...Nd7 30.Bg6 Rxf8 31.exf8Q Nxf8 32.Be4+ Kb6 33.Rxc3± with a similar endgame to the game.] **30.Bg6 Rxe7 31.Bxe7 Nxe7 32.Be4+ Kb6 33.Rxc3 f5**

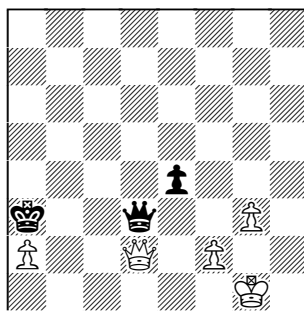


34.Rb3+ I decided to carry on in the same vein, though maybe I should have simply retreated my bishop to f3 instead here, **34...Ka5 35.Rb7 fxe4 36.Rxa7+ Kb4 37.Rxe7 Rd4** When I first saw this position I thought this would be an easy win, advance the kingside pawns and when the c-pawn becomes threatening sacrifice the rook for the pawn, however this plan doesn't work out quite so easily as I anticipated. **38.Rb7+** I gave this check to force the Black king in front of it's pawn, it basically gains a tempo. **38...Kc3 39.h4 c4 40.h5 Kd3** [After the game my opponent suggested 40...Kd2 might be an improvement, 41.h6 c3 42.h7 Rd8 43.Rd7+ again White must go in for this sort of thing, 43...Rxd7 44.h8Q c2 45.Qb2 Kd1 46.Kf1!! similar to the game. 46...Rd2 47.Qb3 Rd3 48.Qa4 Found by Anthony Ker later that evening, 48...Kd2 49.Qb4+ Rc3 50.Qb2 e3 51.fxe3 Rxe3 52.Kf2 Re2+ 53.Kf3 Re3+ 54.Kf4 Re1 55.a4 and White is winning after all. 55...Kd1 (55...Kd3 56.Qb3+ Kd2 57.Qb4+ Ke2 58.Qe4+ Kd2 59.Qd4+ Ke2 60.Qe3+ Kd1 61.Qd3+ Kc1 62.a5+-) 56.Qd4+ Ke2 57.Qe3+ Kd1 58.Qd3+ Kc1 59.a5+-] **41.h6 c3 42.h7 Rd8**



When I envisaged this position I thought

that I would win by sacrificing my rook for the c-pawn and getting the white pawn to g6 on the next move, however this plan has a serious flaw. **43.Rd7+!** Deflecting the rook from it's duty of covering the queening square on h8, but this is not the final sentence of the game. [43.g4? c2 44.Rc7 Rh8 45.g5 Rxh7 and White is certainly not winning any more.] **43...Rxd7 44.h8Q c2 45.Qh6** I had seen this move quite a long time in advance but only when I realised that the transposition into a rook against pawn endgame didn't work did I take it seriously because black has lots of counterplay here. **45...Kc3** [I found the hardest side variation to discover here was 45...Ke2 46.Qe3+ Kd1 47.Kf1!! c1Q (47...c1N 48.Qxe4+-) 48.Qe2#] **46.Qc6+ Kb2 47.Qxd7 c1Q+ 48.Kg2 Qc4** and I had thought this would now be a straight forward win and not worth playing on but the two pawns extra are quite difficult to convert. I took quite a long time before moving now. [48...Kxa2 49.Qa4+ Kb2 50.Qxe4+- will not be difficult to win.] **49.Qd2+ Ka3 50.Kg1 Qd3**



51.Qa5+ [51.Qxd3+?? exd3 52.Kf1 Kb2-+ would be a rather rude reversal.] **51...Kb2 52.a4** with the other pawns doing such a

good job of protecting the king I simply want to advance my a-pawn. Once it is far enough advanced I can leave my queen on e3 protecting the king from checks and it will be straight forward from there. **52...Qd1+?! [52...e3 53.Qb6+- and after a capture on e3 it will be straight forward enough.; 52...Kb3 53.Qb5+ Ka3 it is still quite difficult for White to make progress.] 53.Kh2** I needed to see that h5 was guarded here or Black has a perpetual check. **53...Qf3 54.Qb4+** [54.Qc5 was the simplest solution here, protecting f2 and controlling h5. This idea even works with the Black king on d2 as the transposition into a pawn endgame after a capture on f2 loses.] **54...Kc2 55.Qc4+ Kd2 56.Qa2+ Ke1 57.Kg1** It is not necessary to allow counter-play here so I didn't however [Also possible was the transposition into the pawn endgame with 57.a5 Qxf2+ 58.Qxf2+ Kxf2 59.a6 e3 60.a7 e2 61.a8Q e1Q 62.Qf8+ Ke2 63.Qe8+ Kf2 64.Qxe1+ Kxe1 65.g4+-.] **57...Qd3 58.Qa1+ Kd2 59.a5 e3 60.Qb2+ Kd1 61.fxe3 Qxe3+** [61...Qf1+ is cute but insufficient as well 62.Kh2+- (62.Kxf1?? is stalemate)] **62.Qf2** preventing Black from giving any more checks. **62...Qe6 63.a6! Qg8 [63...Qxa6 64.Qf1+ Qxf1+ 65.Kxf1+- and the Black king is outside the square of the only remaining pawn.] 64.a7 Kc1 65.Qf1+ Kb2 66.Qg2+ Kb1 67.a8Q** Black finally stopped resisting here. 1-0

Round 9

Amazingly Ker lost to Shen and when Croad drew with Steadman, all of a sudden we had a new leader with 2 rounds to play. All the other players missed their chance to capitalise and could only draw. So it was really between Croad and Ker now who

would hold the trophy after round 11.

Round 10

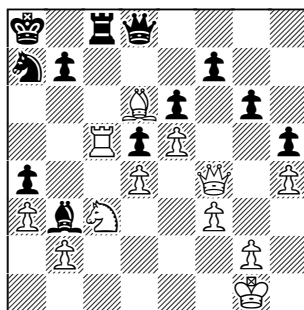
Ker was not likely to lose a 3rd game in a row and he comfortably put Hart away. Pressure was taking it's toll on Croad, he only managed to draw his game against Shen. Admittedly he did halt Shen's 6 game winning streak. Steadman halted Watson's run and beat up his Caro Kann. So Ker and Croad were on 7.5 and Shen was on 7, all of them had played each other, so all depended on the last round draw and the results.

Steadman, Michael (2337) -

Watson, Bruce (2297)

NZ Championship Auckland (10.3),
11.01.2010

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.Ne2 Nc6 5.c3 e6
6.Be3 Nge7 7.Ng3 Qb6 8.Qd2 cxd4
9.cxd4 Bd7 10.Nc3 Rc8 11.Be2 Na5 12.0-0
Nc4 13.Bxc4 Rxc4 14.Rfd1 h5 15.h4
Kd8 16.Rac1 Kc8 17.Nce4 Rxc1
18.Rxc1+ Nc6 19.Nc5 Bxc5 20.Rxc5 Kb8
21.a3 a5 22.Qc2 g6 23.Ne2 Rc8 24.Qd2
a4 25.Bg5 Qb3 26.f3 Na7 27.Nc1 Qb6
28.Be7 Bb5 29.Na2 Bc4 30.Nc3 Bb3
31.Bd6+ Ka8 32.Qf4 Qd8

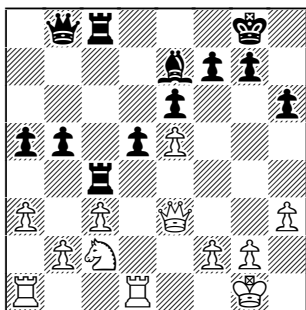


33.Qxf7 Qxh4 34.Rxc8+ Nxc8 35.Qxe6 Qxd4+ 36.Kh2 Qh4+ 37.Qh3 Qxh3+ 38.Kxh3 Nxd6 39.exd6 Kb8 40.Kh4 d4 41.Nb5 Kc8 42.Nxd4 Bc4 43.Kg5 Bd3 44.Ne6 Bf1 45.g3 Bg2 46.f4 Kd7 47.Nf8+ Kxd6 48.Nxg6 Bf3 49.f5 Be4 50.f6 Bd5 51.Kxh5 Black resigns 1–0

Garbett,Paul (2350) - Depasquale,Chris (2274)

NZ Championship Auckland (10.6),
11.01.2010

1.Nf3 c5 2.e4 Nc6 3.Bb5 Na5 4.c3 a6 5.Ba4 b5 6.Bc2 Bb7 7.0–0 e6 8.Re1 Qc7 9.e5 h6 10.Qe2 Ne7 11.Be4 c4 12.Bxb7 Nxb7 13.d4 cxd3 14.Qxd3 Nd5 15.Be3 Nxe3 16.Qxe3 Bc5 17.Qe2 0–0 18.Nbd2 d5 19.Nb3 Rfc8 20.Rac1 Bf8 21.Red1 Qb6 22.Nfd4 Rc4 23.a3 Rac8 24.h3 R4c7 25.Qe3 a5 26.Nc2 Nc5 27.Nxc5 Bxc5 28.Qf4 Be7 29.Qd4 Qb8 30.Ra1 Rc4 31.Qe3



31...Re4 32.Qd3 Qxe5 33.Nd4 b4 34.axb4 axb4 35.Qa6 Qc7 36.Nb5 Qc5 37.cxb4 Rxb4 38.Na7 Rc7 39.Rdcl Qxc1+ 40.Rxc1 Rxc1+ 41.Kh2 Rxb2 42.Nc8 Bf6 43.f4 Rcc2 44.Kg3 Rb3+ White resigns 0–1

The final round saw Ker beat Smith who had finally made his way up through the field. All the rest Croad, Shen, Watson and Steadman drew leaving Anthony clear by half a point. Croad was 2nd with Shen coming in for 3rd for a great result.

Two Young Stars Race Veterans for 2010 Major Open Title

Alan Ansell Pips Hans Gao at Post

By Bill Forster

The 2010 edition of the Major Open was won by the exciting young talent Alan Ansell. Another very promising junior, Hans Gao, led the field for most of the event only to be pipped at the post by the fast finishing Ansell.

A horse racing metaphor is appropriate given that Auckland Chess Centre supremo Mike Steadman had secured excellent conditions for the tournament at that venerable Auckland institution, the Alexandra Park raceway. Perhaps Alan Ansell was inspired by the monument to and grave of the legendary quick finisher Cardigan Bay at the entrance to the venue? In the end Hans Gao had to be content to share second place with Henry Vital and Ed Tanoi. Both of these comparative veterans recovered from poor starts, indeed of the four players

mentioned so far, all except Hans Gao lost in the first round.



Alan Ansell, 2010 Major Open Champion

That is as good an indication as any that this was a well contested tournament, with most players in the field capable of bloodying the nose of a front runner. There were fears in some circles that the Major Open this year would be adversely affected by a quirk in the rating system promoting to the championship several players who are normally tough competitors at the major open level. I think it is fair to say that in the end those fears proved to be groundless.

Inevitably the talking point of round 1 was the upsets already alluded to. Alan Ansell fell victim to an inspired Nicole Tsoi playing in aggressive Ansellesque fashion

on the black side of a Dutch. Henry Vital turned a win into a draw into a loss in incomprehensible fashion in a pawn ending with Shirley Wu. For the rest of the tournament Henry was haunted by his strange decision, after prolonged thought, to move his king onto a square where Shirley would promote with check. This was particularly puzzling given that up until then Henry enjoyed the advantage precisely because he was the one who was going to promote with check. Ed Tanoi tried a little too hard to make something happen against Bob Mitchell's quiet London system, and in ultimately paid for some self imposed weaknesses.

There were more upsets in round 2, Johan Vosloo made an early impact by defeating your humble correspondent, and Bob Mitchell again did some damage against a much higher rated opponent, Richard Taylor was the victim this time.

Shirley Wu 2010 NZ Women's Champion

In round 3, Ed Tanoi lost for a second time, Shirley Wu generated a thematic attack from the black side of a Leningrad Dutch and crashed through in exemplary fashion.

Shirley had a huge role in this tournament, playing a very strong field, winning a truckload of rating points and scoring heavily enough to head off all the other local female players and become NZ Women's champion. Of course Helen Milligan also had a great tournament, and she was playing in the championship, but

no one would begrudge Shirley this accolade.



Shirley Wu, 2010 Women's Champion

Going into round 4 only three players had maximum points. Hans Gao and Don Eade who were playing each other, and Anthony Booth. Hans built up winning c file pressure against Don's French defence with queenside castling setup. Meanwhile Anthony accounted for Eachen Chen in an upset. This set the scene for a classic youth versus experience battle on top board in round 5. Disappointingly perhaps for fans of gallant greybeards, Hans Gao continued to sweep all before him, playing smoothly as black in a Kings Indian, Hans exploited a slight lack of coordination in Tony Booth's setup to win a piece and quickly mop up. This began a rather dramatic fall from grace for Tony, as he fell from the

giddy heights of 4 out of 4 with a run of 4 successive losses. Then there was then a slight revival and ultimately a score of +1.

Hans Gao started the tournament with an impressive streak of 6 wins, the last of which was achieved with a huge slow burning Kings Indian attack against Shirley Wu's French (effectively, after starting as a Sicilian). Hans broke through with a double pawn sacrifice, but Shirley would surely have had good chances of defending and exploiting her extra material except that very poor time management left her with no time to play many moves in a critically complex position.

Going into round 7 I was sitting in second place with 5 from 6 and it was my turn to try and halt the Gao express. I at least succeeded in ensuring there would be no picket fence, although there's not much glory in grimly defending to hold for a draw as white. Based on the post-mortem, from which it was clear Hans saw about ten times as much as me, I predict a big future for this very young player if he sticks with the game. You heard it here first.

If the first half of the tournament belonged to Hans Gao, the second half, may I call it the money half?, belonged to the equally precocious and talented Alan Ansell. After his shock first round loss Alan quietly but efficiently set about righting the ship. Alan's win versus Shirley Wu, annotated by him for this issue, was typical of this phase. By round 8 he had worked his way up to a board 1 clash with Hans Gao. The

feeling on the street was that this clash of the young guns would likely decide the tournament. As it happens the street got it wrong, and the game was drawn (Alan as white played the Barry attack sideline against Hans' attempted Kings Indian and a no holds barred opposite side castling slugfest ensued which eventually burned out to a drawn ending). So the real pivotal moments were deferred to the last three rounds.

At this stage Hans had conceded two draws for seven out of eight, Alan was on 6 out of 8, his scoresheet featuring the loss and draw that we've already covered, plus a round 5 draw against the highly rated Ian McNally. Incidentally Ian, who had a rather disappointing tournament was second seed, whilst the nominal top seed was Chilean Andrea Rivas Villanueva. However since Andrea has no local rating, her FIDE rating based top seeding was perhaps a little doubtful. She recovered from a mid tournament slump to feature on the top boards again at the end of the tournament and finish with a very respectable 7 from 11.

So going into round 9, Alan Ansell, Henry Vital and Ed Tanoi were chasing Hans Gao and were one point adrift on 6 out of 8. Another 3 players were an extra half point back. The dramatis personae now played each other and some serious momentum changes ensued. Ed Tanoi went into self destruct mode and handed Alan Ansell an easy point with a blunder straight out of the opening. This was a shame for Ed and the only blemish in a storming 7 from 8 finish after his nightmare 1 from 3 start. Characteristically, Ed didn't draw any

games. Meanwhile Hans Gao drew his third game in a row, this time in an interesting double edged clash with Henry Vital. In the final position Hans has a big material advantage but Henry has compensation in the form of advanced passers, each with rooks backing them up. However as well as a numerically superior army Hans had advanced passers too, and his were connected. My engines waste no time in scoring the position as better than +3 for Hans. In retrospect this looks like a wasted opportunity for Hans to have returned to his earlier winning ways.

Round 10 saw Alan win again, this time his Barry attack transposed into a Pirc defence against Arthur Casilang. My database suggests Arthur is normally very faithful to the Caro Kann when defending against king pawn openings, this suggests that this standard transposition trick left him playing an unfamiliar opening. If so he coped pretty well, but Alan won an exchange and defused black's compensation with some nice active defence. Meanwhile David Evans capped a strong surge by inflicting Hans Gao's only loss of the tournament at this critical stage. Hans mishandled an Alekhines defence and found himself forced to give up a piece for two pawns as his cramped pieces ran out of squares straight out of the opening. For a while it looked as if Hans was getting some serious compensation, but in the end David's calm play made the extra piece tell. Like Ed Tanoi, David had made a poor 1 from 3 start then rallied strongly, in David's case scoring 6.5 from the next 7

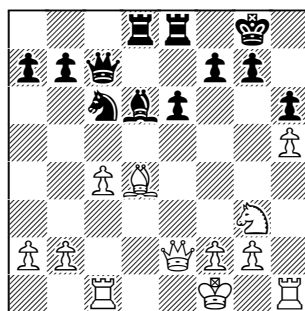
and putting him only 0.5 behind Alan Ansell going into the last round. With a half point lead and white versus Henry Vital, Alan played quietly for once, seemingly content with a draw and a guaranteed share of the title. Henry sac'ed a pawn for two bishops and an attack, but Alan again defended actively, forcing off one of the bishops and breaking the attack. Alan was disinclined to push for victory and a draw was agreed. Hans Gao on 7.5 was playing white against Arthur Casilang on 6.5. A Panov-Botvinnik Caro Kann ensued and Hans had a thematic attack to compensate for an inferior structure. Arthur defended well and disappointingly for the fans, Hans, presumably deciding that otherwise he was likely to end up with nothing more than a worse ending, bailed out with a draw. There was some real fighting chess in the battle of the comeback kids between Ed Tanoi and David Evans. Evans on 7.5 had a chance to take a share of the title, but in the end Tanoi prevailed with an exchange sac and a very determined and uncompromising attitude. David was left on 7.5 all alone in fifth, but of course out of the money. A group of five players were a further half point back on 7 (Casilang and Rivas Villanueva, plus James Cater, Wayne Power and Brett Rider). Others with plus scores included lowly rated juniors Luke Li, Brian Liu and George Chen. Watch out for those names in the future

The following game from the Major Open is annotated by Alan Ansell

Wu, Shirley - Ansell, Alan

New Zealand Major Open 2010 Auckland (7.3), 08.01.2010

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.h5 Bh7 8.Nf3 Nd7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 Ngf6 11.Bf4 Qa5+ 12.Bd2 Qc7 13.c4 e6 14.Rc1 ?! A questionable move- white gives up the opportunity to castle queenside, where he(/she) usually castles in this variation. **14...Bd6 15.Ne4 Be7 !?** I return my valuable black bishop to e7, hoping that white will capture on f6, when I may recapture with the bishop and castle Queenside with play against whites d4 pawn. **16.Ng3 ?! 16...0-0 17.Bc3 Rad8** Preparing to declare war against the d4 pawn with a move like ...e5 or maybe even ...e5 **18.Qc2 Rfe8 19.Ne5** White foregoes her last chance to safeguard her king by castling. However, this means sacrificing the h-pawn: **19.0-0 Bd6 20.Ne4 Nxf5**. Still, I believe it is a better option, as whites king turns out to be very exposed. **19...c5 20.Qe2** (20.Nxd7 is perhaps slightly better) **20...cxd4 21.Bxd4 Bb4+** The white king is knocked out of position (22.Bc3 Bxc3+ 23.Rxc3 Qxe5 wins a piece) **22.Kf1 Bd6 23.Nxd7 Nxd7 24.Qg4 Ne5 25.Qe2 Nc6**



Black wins a pawn and shatters whites king protection. **26.Be3 Bxg3 27.fxg3 Qxg3 28.Rh3 Qe5** With the plan of Nc6-d4-f5,

where the knight is excellently posted. **29.Qg4 Nd4** h6 is taboo- **30.Bxh6 Qf6+** picks up the Bishop **30.Bf2 Nf5** From here the knight controls important squares and completely blocks any attack that white might cobble together in desperation. **31.Qe2 Qf4 32.Re1 Rd2** Black has achieved complete domination. Now he comes in for the kill... **33.Rf3 Qg5 34.Qe4 Red8 35.Rf4 R2d4 ! 36.Rg4 ?** White blunders a rook under terrible time pressure. The best response would have been to sacrifice the exchange with **36.Rxf5 exf5 37. Qxd4 Rxd4 38. Bxd4**, even though black gets two more pawns after **38... Qf4+ 39. Bf2 Qxc4+ 40. Kg1 Qxa2 36...Qxg4** White resigns 0-1

Some Silverware for Nic – Croad departs with NZ Rapid Title

Congratulations to Nic Croad who on the eve of his departure for England for a job posting is starting to fulfill his potential with some good results, capped by winning the NZ Rapid title. The Rapid followed the usual format of nine rounds over two days. A good sprinkling of players from the Championship and Open took part plus a number that couldn't play in the long main tournaments. In the end we had 56 entries. Day 1 was 5 rounds and the top two players at the end of day were Mike Steadman and Noel Pinic, from the Mount, on 4.5 Noel had to be favourite after as he had already played Ker and Steadman, leaving only Croad of the top rated players left, while

Steadman hadn't played any top rated players.

Day 2 was a complete turnaround, Pinic immediately started dropping off the pace, while Steadman won his next two games and had a one point advantage with 2 rounds to go but then lost his last two. Croad who had beaten Ker on the first day, lost to Steadman but rebounded with three wins; this along with his early draw to Cornford (yes, that Cornford, MIA for years, he came out for this event), allowed him to win with 7.5 from 9. Daniel Han played a perfect swiss, got beaten by Croad in round 4 and because of the long tail did not have to play any tough opposition until round 8. He beat Lukey and then Steadman in the last round, coming 2nd.

Surprisingly Ker who needed to win in the last round for a first equal placing, lost with his favourite c3 Sicilian and ended tied 3rd equal with Steadman, Barlow and Nijman.

NZ Lightning Champs

The Lightning was held straight after the rapid and 42 players competed. The field was split into three groups based on some kind of rating system cut. As happens in these kinds of things, two of the fields weren't too tough and one was a pool of death. In this quagmire lurked Hart, Ker, Lukey, Han, Croad and Krstev – very tough for these players.

After the round robin series the top two players from each group went through into the double round robin play-off and the remaining players into a swiss. Garbett and Steadman went through from one group, Ker and Hart from the pool of death, Shen

and Mario Krstev from the third group.

In the finals Hart proved to be a machine when it comes to the short form of the game. As he was the highest scorer in the Auckland interclub lightning event earlier in 2009, it was no surprise to us. He was comfortably clear of the field by 1.5 points, the race was really about who would get 2nd. Thanks to his win over Hart, Steadman scored 6/10 and was 2nd, Ker scored 5.5/10 and 3rd.

In the reserve section Han with 8/9 was a point clear of 3 players – Lukey, Krstev and Thornton on 7/9. Three of these players came from the pool of death again showing how skewed the initial fields were.

So this was the final event of the NZ Congress for 2010. everyone helped out and the room was broken down very quickly and it was like we had never been there. Overall I think everyone left happy. Moving the event up to start earlier worked, and numbers were up on the last championship held in Auckland. The venue was especially popular and the prime spot held in the entrance for the book sales from New Zealand Chess Supplies always appeared to be busy and have people perusing and buying various items. The event would have to be marked down as a success and the Auckland Chess Centre was happy to be the hosts for 2010.

Play the Nimzo Larsen Attack – Part 2.

USA Chessplayer Steve Willard continues his humorous look at his favourite opening

Having just seen my first article published—thank you “New ZealandChess!”—I am convinced that a follow-up is most definitely called for.

You see, I know how chess players think and I’m betting that some of you (not many...but some) are convinced that certain artistic liberties may have been taken the first time around. “Emerged with solid advantages against Master-strength players...he must be taking the mickey!” To be clear, I understand such disbelief but please continue to read as I demonstrate how the Nimzo-Larsen Attack brought me some considerable measure of success at a recent chess tournament held in South Carolina. (no doubt some of you are now on your feet...saying something along the lines of...) “Oy! I played this bloke at the club in Wellington...he bowls the occasional googly but he ain’t what I’d call a right proper cricketer.” (...or, at least, so I imagine) Yes, yes, that sentiment is quite understandable, albeit; altogether misguided in this case.

You see, chess in New Zealand is very different from chess in America. Please allow me to explain: In the United States,

tournaments abound with ruthless cutthroats and, I must echo Hobbes here, ‘the life of a class-player is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short!’ Don’t believe me? Well, perhaps you need to rent Michael Moore’s “Bowling for Columbine” again. Nuff said. Look, in America I’m in my element. I’m ready for a no holds barred contest and I train the way Rocky Balboa prepared to fight Apollo Creed! Well, okay I don’t drink raw eggs... and push-ups and running aren’t really a major part of my regimen either...but those differences aside, I think that’s a pretty accurate description.

Okay, now lets take a look at my chess adventures in New Zealand and try to ferret out the principle reasons why I did not perform as well as I should have. First up, the 2004 Wellington Quick Championship. To understand my results, we must view them against the proper backdrop: you see, going into the event I was already operating under the (erroneous!) impression that your collective grasp of the game was not altogether sound to begin with! Allow me to explain: you see, my first and only introduction to NZ Chess up until that time, had been as spectator—there was a major tournament underway and so “sadly, no skittles tonight.” Okay, so I’m there...the players are shaking hands...and, an officious passerby whispers, “That guy there is one of our very strongest players!” Okay, now I’m very interested...for about 5 minutes...which was long enough for aforementioned Kiwi chess titan to essay a defense consisting of 1...f6 then 2...Kf7 (I immediately ran to check the crosstable: yes, yes, he’s almost a 2200...

and so, if I do my math correctly...based on my almost 2000 rating back home coupled with that opening I just witnessed—Good Heavens, I’m probably like a 2800+ player here! Bob’s my uncle, indeed!!) Of course, had I stuck around all my dreams of chess glory would have been dashed right there and then. Instead, however, I chose to promptly register for the upcoming club championship and then head home. Of course, these days I’m well acquainted with the Vandilzer Defense but at the time...seriously, what was I to think? And so it was that I arrived for my first NZ tourney having simply brushed up on the Scholar’s Mate and several similar attacking strategies. (I bet they won’t be expecting 1. e4 e5 2. Qh5?! Ha Ha!)

Next up: a 2005 Upper Hutt 1-day rapid affair. So, I’ve come prepared this time but little good it does me because...the tournament is an absolute delight! Seriously, it was a real pleasure—amiable players, hot tea & bickies between every round, a group lunch, and, it must be emphasized, an atmosphere of intense joviality! Still, I went into that first round with an “eye of the tiger” mindset (see Rocky III) and came out swinging with the Albin Countergambit! It was an exciting game, I must say, my opponent quite up to the challenge! In fact, he wasn’t thrown at all by my chosen defense; instead, he played a solid line holding his pawn plus and forcing me to seek out wild complications. Just as the game neared rolling boil, however, the clock became a factor and not willing to just roll the dice (blitz finish) we agreed to sign a peace treaty. Have you noticed that a hard-fought draw is sometimes more

inspiring than a win? It seems to have a way of stirring up an intense bloodlust, of summoning your inner-berserker for the next battle. Sadly, in this tournament, my gladiatorial spirit (think Russell Crowe: "At my command, unleash hell!") was immediately tamed... by an ANZAC biscuit, which just about chipped my front teeth, and a warm, oh so soothing cup of tea. And so, my friends, disaster invariably ensued and I regrettably finished with a negative score. No worries though, this tournament still goes down in my book as one of my all-time most memorable experiences—jolly good show, Upper Hutt Club...jolly good show!

Well, that was quite the post-mortem! Please don't feel too bad for me, though, because, as God as my witness, upon my return to America I would take my revenge. It didn't hit me right away, no. Nor was my professional therapist able to provide the needed elucidation. It came, believe it or not, via the Internet. The date, I will never forget, was February 2nd, 2006...the ChessBase site...an article on the Queenstown Chess Classic. As I scanned the text, I noticed a section about Bob Wade (must read!) showing him in action: here he is in the 2nd round, drawing Grandmaster Chandler!, who you'll undoubtedly remember went on to take sole first place, and here is another nice picture of him drawing in round 8. Now wait just a cotton-pickin' minute! (we actually do talk like this in the South, by the way) Isn't that Bill Forster? The caption (written by Amiel Rosario) confirmed my suspicion: "New Zealanders Bill Forster

and IM Bob Wade sharing a pot of tea!" I sit stunned...you see, I know Bill...he's a terrific guy...loves chess... plays a solid game...a real gentleman...but he ain't no Murray Chandler! So what gives? It has to be the tea...has to be! Before segueing on to my final paragraph about my chessical (mis)adventures with tea in America, I want to say one more thing about Forster. Let me set the stage for you: a tense, crucial game...exciting opening erupts into tactical slugfest...I have mate threats...he is forced to sac queen to stay alive...the win is in sight... my time ticking down...I pin him to back rank...then deliver check with my bishop...he moves to h1...I've got him now...just need to move my king up to deliver the coup de gras...STALEMATE! AARRGGHHH... "From hell's heart, I stab at thee!" (read Moby Dick or, if that would detract from your chess studies, see Star Trek: The Wrath of Khan) That's not the thought I want to leave you with though...you see, the next night...I bump into Forster at the local pub...and he sends over a very nice glass of wine (Central Otago Pinot Noir, oh yeah!) to salve my bruised ego. Now that's a classy move, equal to any Kasparov brilliancy!

Okay, where was I? Yes, yes...how I used tea to turn the tables during several crucial games played in American tournaments. Now I readily admit that I'm standing on the shoulders of a giant here... but I think you will agree that my improvisation is a definite improvement over the shared pot of tea strategy...where that pot of tea is an Earl Grey or similar brew. My theoretical novelty?

Celestial Seasonings' Sleepytime Tea! A relaxing, snooze-inducing potable featuring chamomile, spearmint, lemongrass, tilla flowers, blackberry leaves, orange blossoms, hawthorne and rosebuds. The catch? First, I remove the real tags and replace with nice eye-catching Twinings' English Breakfast Tea tags—who could resist? Then, before I return to the table with tea service for two, I pop a whole handful of caffeine pills. Works like a charm! But, isn't that illegal or, in at the very least, unethical? Ahhh...I'd have to say no, no it isn't. After all, we are talking about chess here...and all is fair in chess and war! Sadly, I'm out of space now but I promise to tell you all about my recent success in South Carolina...with the Nimzo-Larsen...if, and this is probably a big if, New Zealand Chess invites me to submit a third article. Cop you later...

Who Were Our 2009 Club Champions?

By Alan Aldridge

The clubs are the heart of chess in NZ and the most important tournament of the year is the Club Championship. Here are the 2009 Club Champions (where we could get the results) and some other club tournament winners.

Results of Club Championships 2009

A, B and C Grades

Auckland Chess Centre

- A Bruce Wheeler, Mike Steadman
- B Hans Gao

- C William Li

North Shore CC

- A Ralph Hart
- B Daniel Johns;
- C Hao Jia & David Rong;
- Junior David Rong.

Other North Shore results

- Rapid Championship Paul Garbett
- Lightning Championship Ralph Hart

Papatoetoe CC

- A Hans Gao
- B Graeme Coleman
- C Jing Yu

Howick Pakuranga CC

- Played as a top ten round robin
- 1 Ben Lim, Paul Spiller, Stan Yee

Other Howick Pakuranga Results

- Parkinson Cup Stan Yee
- Allegro: Jim Benson, EdwinYip
- Fairhurst Pawn GP: Craig Blaxall, Ben Lim
- Richard Sutton Rapid: Henry Vital, B Lim
- Booth Shield: Andrew Janisz
- Gentil Knight (Blitz):Ben Lim
- Junior Champs: Luke Li
- Four junior members of HPCC from Somerville Intermediate school took out the NZ title in Palmerston North and also represented NZ in Australasian finals , coming 2= in Melbourne. The winning team in board order was : Leo Zhu, Luke Li, James Lee and Saissen Naicker.

Mount Maunganui CC

- A Noel Pinic
- B Kris Roberts (countback winner), James Thwaite, Hans van Hutten, Nick Sayers

C Marcus Dudley
D Shavaugn Kinsella

Wellington CC

A Russell Dive
B Alan Aldridge
C John Gillespie

Other Wellington Results

Summer Cup Anthony Ker
Autumn Cup Group 1 Anthony Ker,
Group 2 Ian Sellen, Group 3 Bruce Kay,
Group 4 Michael Hewson
Rapid Nic Croad
Fischer Random Nic Croad, Russell Dive
Blitz Anthony Ker
Julian Mazur Russell Dive

Wanganui CC

A John McDonald
B Finn Brown
C Michael Zhang

Other Wanganui Results

Rapid A Grade Chris Burns and John
McDonald
Rapid B Grade Finn Brown
Wanganui Summer Handicap Tournament
Dilbagh Sangha.

Palmerston North CC

A Justin Davis
B Fans Visser
C Jack James

Other Palmerston North Results

Rapid Stephen Talyor, Mathew King,
Justin Davis
Blitz Justin Davis
60/60 Mathew King
10/10 Justin Davis

Hastings and Havelock North CC

A Chris Smith
B Bailey Sadlier
C Allan Edwards

Canterbury CC

A Matthew McNabb, Peter
Fraemohs
B Ross McKerras
C Jason van den Elzen, Steven
Hartwell and Edward Rains

Other Canterbury Results

Arie Nijman Trophy, Matthew McNabb
Eric Browne Shield, Stephen Lukey, Peter
Fraemohs
Summer Rapid, Jeremy Watson, Andy
Machdoem and Renato Remaneses
Grim Reaper, Andy Machdoem
Colthart Cup, Matthew McNabb and Arie
Nijman
Chas L Hart Cup, Andy Machdoem
Gambit Tournament, Chao Qi

North Canterbury CC

Arie Nijman & Bob van den Bergh

Otago CC

Senior J John Sutherland
Intermediate Iain Lamont
Junior Adam Scott

Other Otago Results

Handicap Tournament Standard: 1st Adam
Scott (+67), 2nd Iain Lamont (+60), 3rd
John Sutherland (+54)
Handicap Tournament Rapid: 1st Charlie
Ruffiman (+72), 2nd Patrick Dawson (+60),
3rd Shoji FukushiR
Rapid Geoff Aimers
Rapid Intermediate Patrick Dawson
Rapid Junior Shoji Fukushima
Rapid D Grade Charlie Ruffiman

Vaughan Mark Collingwood

8 Jan 1977 to 20 Dec 2009

By Caleb Wright

I'm left with many memories of my second cousin Vaughan Collingwood, who for all those who didn't know of him, was at one time a Mt Maunganui RSA chess member who passed away last year, aged almost 33 years old.

I was fortunate to be the person that apart from Vaughan's immediate family, spent more time with me than any other person he came in contact with his whole life. Those that knew him well enough had a lot of time and patience with him, of which I didn't develop just a special friendship him, but far more than that - a genuine one, so genuine that at times I was able to give truthful sometimes harsh feedback and simultaneously show kindness, acceptance, and realness in all areas as a true authentic real friend does. Not all people reached out to Vaughan and befriended him.

On the physical side of life Vaughan had what is known as "Spina Bifida". In a rough nutshell this is an upset in the flow of normal spinal fluids to the lower part of the body - in Vaughan's situation meaning little physical development from about the waist down and hence some difficulty walking.

Vaughan loved having a go at things, and when I saw him come to local chess and begin his first stint at chess we would visit each others' places and stay over during

school holidays and really be part of each others' lives. Of course we had many scoresheet games too, of which I was able to spend time going through them showing him things after every game. Fascination in computer chess in the very early 90's meant that Vaughan and I would spend endless hours playing an aging Commodore 64 cassette program against my aging portable plug in dedicated sensory chess computer.

Vaughan loved his basic, regular and comfortable patterned set routines. He was a very time conscious person - and very often knew what the time was and regularly seemed to keep an eye on it. So it was ironic that after finishing school Vaughan had a go at being a wrist watch glass cutter, moving to Auckland, and playing some chess there. Later Vaughan had a go at a polytechnic basic desktop computing course, before returning to Tauranga. We kept well in touch by the many letters I still have in their original postmarked envelopes.

After some time Vaughan took up chess again for a short time and I was proud to have been Vaughan's Groomsman at his wedding.

Having a go at various jobs followed in amongst the abundance of regular opportunities and help available to him by many people. Vaughan had developed his strong interest in TV console games, Daytime TV serials, Movies and kept up with Cycling such as the Tour de France, sport such as Tennis, Rugby, Olympics, surfing the net. Cycling 'ran' in the family and with Vaughan unable to fully

participate due to his physical condition, the interest grew out of being a very reliable and faithful time keeper. I've never known someone who followed cycling so much.

Vaughan's marriage ended and earlier had yet another go at local chess, returned to live with his parents, and worked for a significant period of time as a receptionist in a hospital unit, which lasted for some time. Vaughan's hallmark was the willingness to give things a go, friendliness to new chess members as well as some teaching. Some time earlier Vaughan had began help in area of getting involved in chess club raffles at the RSA.

Vaughan and his Dad also worked on the BOP girls and BOP school teams tournaments and as part of helping them both out I was able to have Vaughan at one of my tournament training and information sessions, and also with part of the practical side, helping and monitoring their involvement with the club's C&D grades any anything else necessary. Going through basic concepts such as prize money e.g. 3rd prize never gets more than 2nd prize, how different formats work e.g. only the top section of players go through to the next stage. E.g. Withdrawing any players who definitely aren't going to play. All this of course very much appreciated when repeatedly explained to both of them.

Vaughan also played at some tournaments, and reached a rating of 1335. Definitely a Guillotine player and also a Rapid player, his Rapid rating reached 1442. During this time Vaughan was always enthusiastic and willingly taking up unwanted tasks such as

very clear encouragement into both unwanted local club titles such as the club Secretary title and concurrently for about ten months the club President title - always being guided along step by step as for example committee meeting minutes show. So Vaughan was helpful in the club and he did attend part of most club evenings while at the club in his last go at chess. Many people can be so proud to have helped him along the way to make tasks easier to cope with.

Vaughan had some Melanoma Cancer removed. Then later on got sick, which was caused by a piece of melanoma having grown again and spread undetected too quickly. A tragic end.

Vaughan would also want me to particularly mention his Christian faith and that despite all our own varying and ongoing human faults, God accepts us however we are, and our of acceptance of God into our lives leads to eternal life with God. So Vaughan is in a happy place now. He escaped from his earthly shell of mind and also of body. I look forward to seeing you again Vaughan.

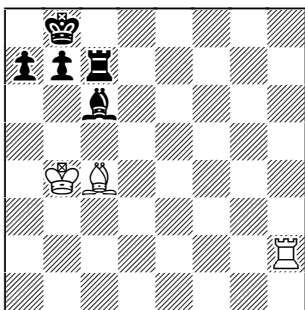


Endgame Workshop

Resources in Same Colour Bishop Endings

By IM Herman van Riemsdijk

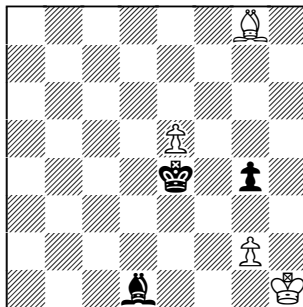
Tactical resources in endings have been explored for centuries. **Gioacchino Greco** showed already in 1621 the following cute position:



1.Rh8+! Rc8 2.Rxc8+ Kxc8 3.Ba6!! and there is no way for black to win. After either 3... bxa6 or 3... Kf7 4 Bxg7, the white king heads for a1 and because the opposite color of this promotion square regarding the black bishop's diagonal it's a draw. A very well known pattern in bishop endings, both in the same color and the opposite color versions.

Another very important and common resource is stalemate, this so exciting feature of chess! I'll show you a sophisticated study of **Vitold Yakimchik**, published in "Chess in the USSR", in 1966.

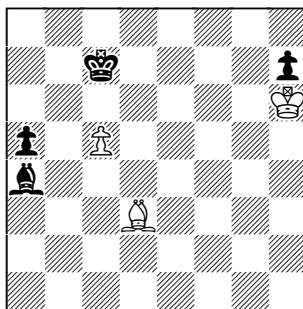
In the following position White to play and win.



1.e6 g3! [1...Ba4 2.Bf7 Bb3 3.Bg6+ Ke3 4.e7 Ba4 5.e8Q++, with an easy win] **2.Bf7 Ke3** (the king is freeing himself from the white bishop's checks) **3.Be8!!** [This is the only move. Of course it's difficult to foresee that 3.e7? Kf2! 4.e8Q Bf3!! 5.Bd5 Bxg2+ 6.Bxg2 is a stalemate.] **3...Kf2 4.Bc6! Be2 5.e7 Bf1** (trying the same old dirty trick) **6.e8N!** and now black is helpless against 7 Nf6 and 8 Ne4+.

In some rare occasions you can have them in the same ending. Look what happened in a recent game of the internal championship of my club:

Herman van Riemsdijk x Eduardo Baptista – São Paulo 10.12.10

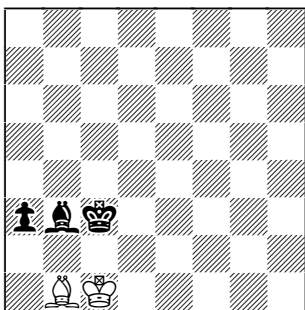


White to play

67.Kxh7? [Of course I was struggling for survival but the correct way was 67.Bxh7! Now black has two variations:

a) 67... Kc6 68.Kg5 Kxc5 69.Bg6 (or 69.Bf5) and the white bishop has two sufficiently long diagonals (a4/e8 and a4/d1) 69... Kd4 (Black can secure the pawn advance with 69... Kb4 70. Kf4 Bb5 71. Bc2! – but not 71. Ke3? Kc3!, winning. Look at my post-script – 71... Bc4 72. Ke3 Bb3 73. Kd2 a4 74. Kc1) 70.Kf4 Kc3 (controlling c2, so threatening Bb5 followed by a4) 71.Bh5! (controlling d1 and e8) 71... Kd2 72.Bf7! Kc2 73.Bg6+! Only but sufficient.

b) 67... Bb3 68.Kg5 a4 69.Kf4 a3 70.Bb1 Kc6 71.Ke3 Kxc5 72.Kd2 Kd4! (72...Kc4 73.Bd3+ Kd4 74.Kc1 is a draw) 73.Kc1 Kc3



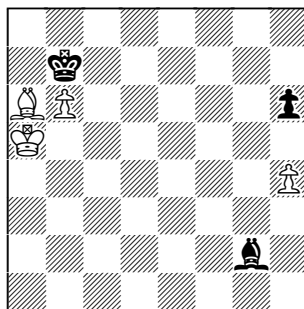
White to play

I had seen this position in my quick (60'+30 seconds was the playing rate and we were already in the annoying 30 seconds phase) mental analysis and had valued it as a losing zugzwang situation. But any move on the b1/h7 diagonal is sufficient for a draw: (by example 74.Bg6) 74... a2 because of the surprising 75.Bb1!! If black promotes to queen or rook its

stalemate and if he promotes to bishop or knight it's insufficient for a win! You can imagine how disappointed I was when I found this line in the post-mortem, not because of a half point, because they go and come, but for missing this unique opportunity! Still now it reminds me of James Lipton's regular question to his guests in "Inside the Actor's Studio": what is your favorite curse word?

The rest is uninteresting. My opponent just took the candy out of my mouth. **67...Kc6 68.Kg6 Kxc5 69.Kf5 Kd4 70.Be2 Bc2+ 71.Kf4 a4 72.Bh5 a3 73.Bf7 Kc3 0-1**

Capablanca is one of the undisputed grandmasters of endgame. His technique was very clear and educative. But even genius like him can go the wrong way.



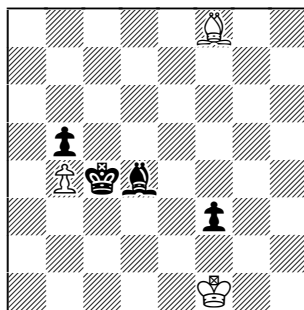
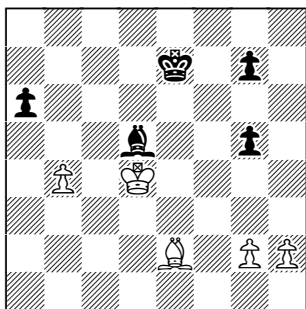
61...Kc6 One of the few Capablanca's bad decisions. The correct way was 61...Kb8 62.Kb4 Bb7 63.Be2 (63. Kb5 h5! Or 63. Bxb7 Kxb7 64. Kc5 h5!) 63... Be4 64.Kc5 Kb7! and white cannot make any progress. **62.Bc8 Bf1 63.Bg4 Bd3 64.Bf3+ Kd6 65.Bb7 Be2 66.Ba6 Bf3 67.Bf1 Bb7** Black must forbid the access of the king to a7. **68.Bh3 Ke7 69.Kb5 Kd6 70.Bg4**

Zugzwang 70... Ke7 71.Kc5 Bg2 72.Bc8
Kd8 73.Ba6 Bf3 74.Kd6 Bg2 75.Bc4 Kc8
76.Bd5 Bf1 77.Ke6 Be2 78.Kf6 Kd7
79.Kg6 h5 80.Kg5 Kd6 81.Bf7 Kc6
82.Bxh5 1–0

As a post-script to the first part of this article let me show you one more diagram:

Bill Forster x Karolina Smokina –
Queenstown Classic 2009

I had a similar ending in Spain:
Herman van Riemsdijk x José Luis
Ramón Pérez – Balaguer 2004, July 21th



Black to play

40...Bxg2? This is a bad mistake. With 40... Kd6 black would have good drawing chances. Probably my opponent supposed an automatic capture on a6 followed then by Kd6.

41.Kc5! Kd7 42.Kb6 Kc8 43.Bxa6+ 43.Ka7 a5 44.bxa5 (44.b5 a4 45.b6 a3 46.Bc4 Kd7) 44...Kc7 wasn't clear at all. 43...Kb8 44.Bb5 g4 45.Bc6 Bf3 46.Bd7 Be2 47.Kc6 Bf3+ 48.Kd6 Kb7 49.Ke5 Kc7 50.Ba4 Be2 51.Ke6 Bd3 52.Be8 Bc2 53.Bb5 Be4 54.Bf1 Kc6 55.Kf7 g6 56.Bc4 Kd6 57.Kf6 Kc6 58.Kg5 Bf5 59.Be2 Kd5 60.Bxg4 Bd3 61.Bd7 Kc4 62.b5 Kc5 63.h4 Kb6 64.Be8 Kc5 65.Bxg6 Bxb5 Or 65...Be2 66.Be8. 66.h5 and black resigned because of the obvious 66... Bc4 67.h6 Bg8 68.Kf6. 1–0

55...Bc3 56.Kf2 Bxb4 57.Bh6 Bc5+ 58.Kxf3 Everything logical until now. Karsten Müller published a diagram of this position as an exercise in his endgame lab in Chesscafe.com. I think our technical editor hadn't much hope... 58... b4?? As Müller pointed out WGM Smokina, (normally with a very good technique) had to give a body check with 58... Kd3. He gives the following simple variation: 59.Bg7 b4 60.Bf6 b3 61.Bb2 Bd4 62.Ba3 Kc2 63.Ke2 Bc5, with a classical deviation. 59.Ke2 Bd4 60.Kd1 Kb3 61.Bf8 Be3 62.Bxb4 Kxb4 ½–½

Ratings Report

Including the Ratings Revision Explained

By Rowan Wood

Arpad Elo wrote in his book, *The Rating of Chessplayers*: “An underrated player truly victimises his opponents regardless of the outcome of the game. A difference between actual strength and indicated rating can result in each opponent losing points, undeservedly. The loss may not be great at any one time but small losses could accumulate into significant amounts.”

Over the past few years, there has been a gradual decline in the distribution of the rating pool of approximately 10%. At the same time, the number of juniors has increased significantly. In period 3 of 2006, there were 213 juniors, in period 3 of 2009, there are 437 juniors in the active rating pool. Juniors usually start with a low rating because they play in low-rated junior tournaments. Most will improve and some will improve significantly, sometimes even in a single rating period.

To counteract this deflation, intermediate ratings for players with exceptional performances have been introduced. There are now four phases in the rating calculation. Phase 1 calculates ratings for unrated and provisionally rated players while phase 2 calculates ratings for established players. Players with an exceptional performance (bonus point gain)

in phase 2, get an intermediate rating that equals the pre-period rating plus the basic rating points change. Phases 3 and 4 are repeats of 1 and 2, this time using the intermediate ratings for a player's opponents.

Using intermediate ratings significantly reduces the negative impact that underrated players have had on the rating pool. The new calculation has been applied retroactively. The cumulative rating point changes therefore have resulted in the sizable increases in ratings for this period.

GM Murray Chandler remains top of the open standard rating list ahead of IM Russell Dive and IM Anthony Ker. Roger Nokes moves up one place to fourth with IM Ben Martin dropping off due to inactivity. IM Puchen Wang, a “new” entry completes the top five. Gino Thornton is the other new entry in nineteenth place.

Puchen Wang is still at the top of the open rapid rating list. IM Ker and IM Dive swap places with Nic Croad and Mark Noble fourth equal. Ralph Hart has moved up six places to lucky thirteenth and Edward Lee is the only new entry in nineteenth place.

IM Puchen Wang's re-entry on the junior standard list pushes the top five from the previous period down one place. Surprisingly, there is no real change in the top eleven juniors. No doubt, Alan Ansell, up two places to twelfth and new entry Hans Gao in fourteenth, will look to change the status quo in the next period. It is a similar situation on the rapid list with the top seven rankings unchanged.

The women's rating lists have seen little

change on the standard list and no change at all on the rapid list. Sue Maroroa is the top standard rated player ahead of Helen Milligan, with the reverse applying on the rapid list.

Peter Stuart holds first place on both senior lists. Prince Vetharanim remains in second on the standard list with Richard Taylor, up two places to third. Arie Nijman moves from eighth to fourth. The same four occupy the top of the rapid list with Taylor in second ahead of Vetharanim and Nijman.

Top 10 Open Standard

1 (unc)	CHANDLER M	2546
2 (unc)	DIVE RJ	2458
3 (unc)	KER AF	2432
4 (+1)	NOKES RI	2383
5 (new)	WANG PC	2372
6 (unc)	SMITH RW	2368
7 (+1)	WASTNEY S	2358
8 (+1)	GARBETT PA	2350
9 (+1)	STEADMAN M	2337
10 (-3)	CROAD N	2332

Top 5 Junior Standard

1 (new)	WANG P	2372
2 (-1)	BAIDER D	2231
3 (-1)	SHEN D	2221
4 (-1)	KRSTV M	2122
5 (-1)	SHEN A	2104
6 (- 1)	WATSON J	2090
7 (unc)	WU MH	2078
8 (unc)	MAROROA SY	2034
9 (unc)	PETRESKI F	2000
10 (unc)	GAO J	1966

Top 10 Women Standard

1 (unc)	MAROROA S	2034
2 (unc)	Milligan H	2018
3 (unc)	Gao J	1966
4 (unc)	CHEN E	1928

5 (unc)	FAIRLEY N	1844
6 (+ 1)	CHARAMOVA E	1762
7 (- 1)	SMITH VJ	1759
8 (+ 1)	KINGSTON ZH	1671
9 (+ 1)	WU S	1671
10 (- 2)	WU S	1670

Top 10 Women Rapid

1 (unc)	MILLIGAN H	1839
2 (unc)	MAROROA SY	1793
3 (unc)	CHARAMOVA E	1791
4 (unc)	CHEN E	1788
5 (unc)	KINGSTON ZH	1700
6 (unc)	WU S	1648
7 (unc)	GAO J	1626
8 (unc)	WU S	1605
9 (unc)	SMITH VJ	1572
10 (unc)	DU PLESSIS M	1545

Top 10 Senior Standard

1 (unc)	STUART PW	2057
2 (unc)	VETHARANIAM PAR	1973
3 (+ 2)	TAYLOR R	1913
4 (+ 4)	NIJMAN AJ	912
5 (- 1)	POWER PW	1909
6 (- 3)	DAVIES G	1885
7 (- 1)	LYNN KW	1834
8 (+ 2)	HAASE GG	1815
9 (new)	GOFFIN PB	1795
10 (new)	STRACY DM	1791

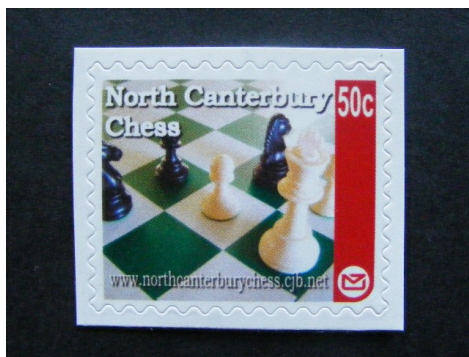
Top 10 Senior Rapid

1 (unc)	STUART PW	2106
2 (unc)	TAYLOR R	1906
3 (unc)	VETHARANIAM PAR	1899
4 (+ 1)	NIJMAN AJ	1869
5 (- 1)	POWER PW	1822
6 (new)	STRACY DM	1795
7 (- 1)	LYNN KW	1780
8 (unc)	MITCHELL RS	1717
9 (- 2)	WHIBLEY J	1711
10 (unc)	CRUDEN N	1665

Mail a letter - with a North Canterbury Chess Club Stamp

Based in the township of Kaiapoi just north of Christchurch, the North Canterbury Chess Club is, it would be fair to say, even among chessplayers far from famous. When I received an email with their club championship results I was puzzled. Who is this from? It dawned, here is a club I never even knew existed. Which explains why the club never gets mentioned in *NZ Chess*. Checking their website, I learnt that they were founded in 2001, have around 40 members and had come up with an innovative idea to gain income and raise their profile; a North Canterbury CC postage stamp. That must be unique in the history of NZ chess clubs. The service is offered by NZ Post, who call them CALs 'Customised Advertising Labels' otherwise known to the rest of us as 'stamps'.

The design of the North Canterbury CC stamp was created by the club President, Scott Stringer. The first day issue was date stamped on 9/10/2009 by the Kaiapoi Post office. 1000 have been printed with 150 First Day Covers. The club says the issue has been a success with stamp collectors and chess players and remaining stocks are low. If you are interested in purchasing the stamps or first day covers contact Grant Wright on 03 3274888 or the club's website www.northcanterburychess.cjb.net.



Letter From the Kingside

Serious Round Robins

By Roger Nokes

How often do you get to play in a round robin tournament these days? In the last couple of decades, apart from a few club championships (one game a week), I hadn't played in a round robin tournament until I had the opportunity to play in the 2009 Australian Masters in Melbourne. Events like the Australian Masters, and the George Trundle in Auckland, are rather special. There's a seriousness about them that just isn't captured by large open swiss events. During the early 1980s the NZ Chess Championship underwent a transformation from a 12 player round robin to a 24 player swiss. The transition, while well meaning in that it attempted to give more players access to the chess elite

in NZ, was not a success in my opinion, particularly when the championship of the country was at stake. Unusual results were possible determined by the vagaries of the draw. Winners could go through the event and not play some of their main contenders, or alternatively all the contenders could have played by round 7 or 8 leaving frustrating pairings in the final rounds. The return to the round robin format was welcomed by most of the top players I believe.

The participants in a round robin event take on a sharper focus than those in a swiss. After all you are assured of playing every one of your colleagues in a round robin event, and from the very start you know which colour you have against which opponent and in which round. In a swiss event everything is a blur until the draw for each round is made. You are only vaguely aware of the opposition until you suddenly find yourself paired against them. As I said, round robins are serious affairs.

So at the start of a round robin event you take stock of your opposition. If you are like me you are very conscious of your previous encounters. The entrants for the 2009 Australian Masters were a varied and interesting group. My first observation was that I was the sole Kiwi facing nine Australians, despite the fact that some of them were playing under foreign flags. Due to my rather sporadic chess activity over the last 25 years I had never even met, let alone played, some of the other players. Twelve year old Bobby Cheng, the world under 12 champion (a Kiwi, but claimed by the Australians as one of their own), and fifteen year old James Morris who recently

qualified for the IM title in the Oceania Zonal event, were strangers to me, as was Wang Lee. Bobby and James, both with unrealistically low ratings, posed a major threat to everyone in the event. Eddy Levi and Dom Dragicevic I had encountered in previous events without having played them, and all of the remaining four players, Mehmedalija Dizdarevic, Darryl Johansen, Stephen Solomon and Erik Teichmann, I had encountered at the board.

My records against Mehmedalija and Darryl were both pretty good, while my previous encounters with Stephen had been disastrous. Perhaps my most interesting history was against Erik, an Englishman, who I encountered twice during my UK travels back in the early 1980s. If memory serves correctly our record was a win and a loss apiece.

Already the tournament takes on a structure based on the order of opponents and your feelings about playing them. For me, I faced my opposition in the following order: Erik, Mehmedalija, James, Wang, Darryl, Stephen, Bobby, Eddy and Dom. A tough first up game against Erik (who was rated marginally above me), followed by three theoretically weaker opponents. Then the tough middle games against Darryl and Stephen, followed by a run home against the talented youngster and two lower rated opponents.

The IM norm was an unrealistic 7/9, but even so one still tends to set targets for groups of games. For me a positive score in rounds 1-4, hopefully holding my own in Rounds 5 and 6 against the two top seeds, and then a plus score to finish.

The real frustration of chess, and one of its real joys, is its unpredictability. This event proved to be as unpredictable as any in which I have participated. Except for Mehmedalija who had a miserable tournament, perhaps encapsulated in his Round 7 default against Darryl when he was caught in traffic for over two hours and missed the 30 minute deadline by a few minutes, the players in this event were very evenly matched. It appeared that anyone could be victorious on the day, and except when it happens to you, this unpredictability makes for an exciting event. Notable early results were a smooth and apparently effortless win by Darryl against Stephen in Round 2, a disastrous loss by James against Eddy in the same round, and a very near loss for Stephen against Eddy in Round 5. To be honest the first half of the event went pretty much as ratings would have suggested with Darryl, Erik, James and myself leading after 6 rounds with 4 points followed by Stephen with 3.5. But even then the spread of scores was not large.

My progress was exactly on track with my pre-tournament plans. A score of 3/4 (an interesting loss to James in round 3) followed by two draws with Darryl and Stephen had set me up for the run home. Then in round 7 the whole complexion of the tournament changed. Darryl, Erik and I collapsed, scoring a mere 2 points from 9 games between us, and that included Darryl's win by default against Mehmedalija. Stephen stormed home with 3 wins for victory and James, who led going into the last round, demonstrated that his IM result was no flash in the pan by taking clear second. Eddy also had a

wonderful finish scoring 3/3 to take a share of 3rd place.

So how does one explain the change in fortunes of Erik, Darryl and myself? Such twists of fate can be due to any number of reasons: a slump in form, facing harder opposition, physical tiredness, or perhaps mental weakness. I do have a habit of not finishing strongly after good starts. My score at the Dresden Olympiad was 5.5/6 followed by 0/4, although it must be said that in that event the standard of opposition changed dramatically in the last four rounds. My most memorable performances (perhaps I should say least memorable) occurred in 1982 when I played in two international events in Hungary in the run up to the Luzern Olympiad. In both events I was on track for IM norms and had played some very satisfying chess. In both events I faltered in the home straight, scoring 0.5/4 and 0/3 after having scored 5/7 and 6.5/10 in the previous rounds. On telling my teammates in Luzern of these performances I earned the nickname "7 round Nokesh" (the Hungarian pronunciation of my name).

After 27 years it would be nice to have an answer to this problem of inconsistency, but I suspect I am not alone with this difficulty in the chess world! Others have the reverse problem of slow starts and storming finishes - of the top players Topalov has a reputation for this. I suspect in most cases it is a case of mental brittleness and if I could bottle the antidote I would be a wealthy man.

I would like to thank Leonid Sandler and his team for their smooth and professional

running of the event. My congratulations to Stephen and James for impressive performances and my thanks to all of the players for a stimulating and enjoyable tournament.

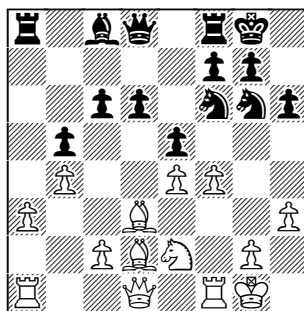
To finish, here is my tactical melee with Erik Teichmann from Round 1. The game includes its fair share of errors but the resulting battle was entertaining for the spectators and thrilling to play.

Nokes,Roger - Teichmann,Erik

Australian Chess Masters Rd 1

1.e4 Nc6 Preparing for Erik is easy and impossible. He plays Nc6 against both e4 and d4 and knows the resulting positions way better than I ever will with only a couple of hours of preparation. One just has to play naturally and hope! **2.Nc3** Offering Black a chance to transpose to a Vienna, but of course that is my territory and Erik declines my kind offer. **2...e6 3.d4 Bb4 4.Be3 d6 5.Bd3 e5 6.Nge2 Nf6 7.d5 Ne7 8.h3** The centre has stabilised momentarily and while White has a slight edge in space Black, in my view, has a fine position. His problem bishop is on the outside of his pawn chain and White's centre is difficult to consolidate against the c6 thrust. **8...0-0 9.0-0 c6 10.Bg5 Ng6 11.a3 Ba5 12.b4** [12.dxc6 bxc6 13.Bc4 h6 14.Be3 Bb7 is an alternative for White, but ultimately the d5 break will occur with a slight edge for Black. My plan was to eliminate the black squared bishop and if given the chance play c4 with some control over d5.] **12...Bb6 13.dxc6 bxc6 14.Na4 h6 15.Nxb6 axb6 16.Bd2** [16.Bxf6 Qxf6 17.c4 doesn't really go anywhere for White. While he controls d5 Black has dominance of the dark squares, a potentially more active bishop

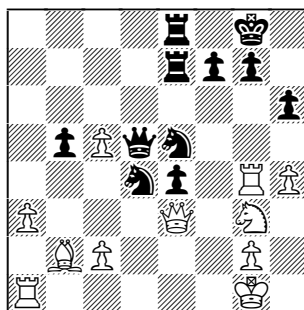
and the semi-open a file. Too passive for my taste. The retreat to d2 instead of e3 was played with the intention of redeploying the bishop to c3 where it could bring pressure to bear on e5.] **16...b5!?** [in my analysis of this position, when choosing to go down this line at move 12, I had only considered d5. The advance of the b pawn, trying to nail down my weakness on a3 hadn't even occurred to me. I think objectively d5 is the right move but my response to the move played perhaps justifies it as a good choice! After 16...d5 17.exd5 cxd5 18.Ng3 Black's stable and commanding centre gives him the advantage.] **17.f4?**



[17.Nc3 leaves the position balanced. Black must be careful of his own weakness at b5 after a thrust in the centre with the d5 advance and White is preparing a4. But of course, feeling that Black had wasted a previous tempo before hitting back in the centre, my inclination was to try to generate an initiative on the kingside and to active my bishops. Hence the overly ambitious f4.] **17...exf4?!** [Erik let's me off the hook somewhat. Strong was 17...d5 18.fxex5 Nxe4 19.Bxe4 dxe4 20.Bc3 Qg5 when Black has a strong initiative and rather fewer weaknesses.] **18.Nxf4 Ne5**

19.Bc3 Re8 20.Qe1? [It is true that White wants a route to the kingside for his queen, but the move played is not the right way. More logical was 20.Nh5 Nxh5 21.Qxh5 Be6 but really Black's position is quite solid and White's bishops are no match for the powerful knight on e5.] **20...d5!** **21.Qg3 dxe4** [21...d4 22.Bd2 Nc4 23.Bc1 is an alternative which leaves White rather more passive than in the game.] **22.Be2** Black has netted a pawn but White has generated some counterplay. The bishops have become active, particularly the one on c3 and White has chances for pressure along the f and g files. That knight on e5 is the lynchpin of the black defensive screen and Black's next reinforces it. **22...Nfd7 23.h4 Nf8?!** [23...g6 24.Bb2 Qe7 25.Nh5 Qe6 26.Rad1 is probably a safer course for Black. After the chosen move White's initiative starts to become tangible.] **24.Bh5 Ra7 25.Ne2?** [a strange idea that removes a piece from the attack and allows Black to consolidate. The correct way to continue the attack was 25.Rad1! Qe7 (25...Rd7?? 26.Bxf7+ Kh7 27.Nh5 and it is all over.) 26.Nd5! the critical idea 26...cxd5 27.Bxf7+ Qxf7 28.Rxf7 Rxf7 29.Bxe5 and White is substantially better.] **25...Neg6 26.Rf4??** [26.Bxg6 is the only move. Then 26...fxg6 27.Bd4 Rd7 28.c3 leaves Black with an edge, but there is still plenty of play in the position.] **26...Qd5 27.Bg4 Bxg4 28.Rxg4 Ne6 29.Bb2?** [Time pressure and the complexity of the position were starting to take their toll. The move played protects the a3 pawn and frees the c3 square for the White queen so as to provide threats on the long diagonal, but it seriously weakens the d2 square and overlooks the threat of h5 trapping the white rook on g4. Better was 29.Qe3]

29...c5? [29...h5! is very strong and should win for Black. The white rook has nowhere to go.] **30.Qe3 Rae7?!** [too slow. Instead 30...Ne5 31.Qxe4 Qxe4 32.Rxe4 Nc4 33.Bc3 f5 leaves Black the exchange ahead and White with no counterplay at all.] **31.Ng3 Nd4?** [this looks impressive, stifling the bishop on b2 and threatening the fork on c2. But in fact it is a waste of time as the second of these is illusory due to the intermezzo Qc3 attacking g7. 31...h5 32.Qxe4 Qd2 33.Nf1 Qh6 is again the winning idea.] **32.bxc5 Ne5??**



[32...Ne6 33.Rf1 h5 34.Rxe4 Nxc5 35.Qc3 f6 is still complex with chances for both sides. The idea of hitting the rook with Ne5 seems very attractive as it simultaneously closes the long diagonal and rethreatens Nc2. However the knight on g6 had been playing a the key role of protecting the g7 square and now White crashes through with a fairly simple combination. I should say that both players were desperately short of time by this stage.] **33.Rxg7+! Kxg7 34.Nh5+** amazingly there is no square for the king that doesn't get mated or lose the queen to a knight fork. **34...Kg6 35.Nf4+ Kf5 36.Nxd5 1-0**

Book Review

Botvinnik – Smyslov, by Mikhail Botvinnik

Reviewed by Peter Stuart

Botvinnik and Smyslov played three matches for the World Championship – in 1954, 1957 and 1958 – and this book gives all 69 of the games, annotated mainly by Mikhail Moiseevich himself but with five annotated by Vassily Smyslov and a few by other Soviet grandmasters. The book was compiled and edited by the champion's nephew Igor Botvinnik and there are a few additional footnotes in this English translation by the translators (Ken Neat and Steve Giddins) who, of course, had access to Fritz and Co. It is published by New In Chess.

Just to recap the background to these matches, Botvinnik won the World Championship in the 1948 match-tournament and defended the title against David Bronstein in 1951 with a 12-12 tie. The 1954 match was also a 12-12 tie but Smyslov was back in 1957 and this time took the title with a 12½-9½ victory. In those days a defeated champion had the right to a return match and in 1958 Botvinnik regained the title, winning the match 12½-10½. Given that Botvinnik was now in his late 40's while Smyslov was ten years younger it was some achievement – and one that he was to repeat with Mikhail Tal in the next World championship cycle.

Botvinnik is well known for his objectivity and his annotations do not spare either player for the mistakes that are inevitably made in such tense and long events. Maybe I'm lazy but I don't play over a lot of long variations unless a particular position is really interesting. There are, of course, some in this book but not too many while the strategy is explained very well indeed, and also the psychology, so you can get a good feel as to how the match was proceeding as well as how the players reacted.

Botvinnik also revolutionised game preparation with his thorough and logical approach and it wasn't so easy then with no personal computers and chess databases. The existence of Botvinnik's secret notebooks has been known for a long time and here they are published for the first time.

Remember adjournments? There are some fascinating endgames which, given the time for intensive analysis between playing sessions, were sometimes played rather less well than one would expect. All in all a fine read, especially for anyone who grew up (chesswise) while Botvinnik was still playing or who is interested in chess history.

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