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Luke Li 2012 North Island Champion



Plus:

- History of Chess – NZ's 1989 Bid for the World Championship
- God Versus The Devil – A Chess Tattoo... ?

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2012 North Island Championship and North Island Rapid

FM Chris Wallis Tournament Winner, Luke Li 2012 North Island Champ

By Mike Steadman

Auckland Chess Centre offered to host the North Island this year to help out (no club could pick up this event). The recent North Islands have had small numbers and it would appear that if the event is not run in Auckland you have no chance of breaking even.

A number of contestants were asking about the entry fee of \$80, but even with the club running on our own premises the break-even point is 30 players. An option would be to reduce the prize money, but it seemed to me that our North Island championship should at least qualify as a GP1 event. This year the event also counted in the Australasian GP event as well. That got us one entry from Australia, FM Chris Wallis (to be fair, he was coming on a holiday and the event tied in with the trip).

As usual, the club had the excellent services of Keong Ang as the Arbiter and things went very smoothly. Apart from the cold venue, everything began without a hitch.

Round 1 saw a couple of the top seeds drop points – Goodhue lost to Layla Timergazi

(up and coming junior out of Wellington) and Scott Yang lost to Hamish Shierlaw (another Wellington visitor for the event). This win by Hamish earned him the DD Smash book prize (donated to both the North and South Island events by Dan Dolejs).

Round 2 saw some more slips. I only managed to draw against Peter Stuart's English – I won a pawn but it was a Rook ending and this was one of those drawn ones. Gino appeared to have a good position, but Dordevic did the business and took the point. Otherwise the top seeds all duly won. Nicole Tsoi joined the leaders having seen off the Wellington junior Layla Timergazi.

Round 3 Smith and Wallis was a Caro Kann. Bob played a tame line against this, got slightly worse, but managed to hold the draw. Luke Li moved to sole leader after his win over Tsoi. Nicole tried her London system, but as she discovered all event, Black gets easy equality and the better players slowly outplay her for the point – I hope she works on something else for the Olympiad.

Tsoi, Nicole - Li, Luke

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 g6 3.e3 Bg7 4.Nf3 O-O

5.h3 d6 6.Be2 Nbd7 7.c4 two systems here, you can play c3 and it's almost a reverse Slav, or this line. **7...Ne4 8.O-O e5 9.Bh2 f5**

(9...Qe7 10.Nbd2 f5 11.Rc1 Kh8)

10.Nbd2 Nxd2 11.Qxd2 e4 12.Ne1 Rf7 13.Nc2 Nf8 14.f3 exf3 15.Bxf3 Ne6 16.Rae1 Qh4 17.b4

(17.Nb4 Ng5 18.Bd5 Be6 19.Rf4 Qh5 20.Bxb7 Rb8 21.Bd5 Bxd5 22.Nxd5 Ne4 23.Qc2 Bh6 24.Rff1 Not sure Black has enough for the pawn now.)

17...Ng5 18.Bd5 Be6 19.Bxb7 Rb8 20.Bd5 Bxd5 21.cxd5 Ne4 22.Qd3 g5 23.a3 h5 24.Rc1 Re8 25.Ne1 g4 26.Bf4 Bf6 27.a4 Bg5 28.Rc2?

(28.Bxg5 Qxg5 29.Rf4 Rfe7 Black is on his way, White has been playing passively and is now paying.)

28...Bxf4 29.exf4 Ng3 30.Qb5 Rfe7 31.Nf3 gxf3 32.Rxf3 Re1+ 0-1

Round 4- I lost to Chris Wallis. He played an anti-Dutch line recommended by Watson in his new "Strategic Openings for White" book, I had a good game but drifted off with a bad plan and then had a brain explosion in a bad position. I better get something together for this line, I might face it again now. Luke carried on his winning way, again crushing Dordevic's Benoni. I have seen them play this line on a number of occasions and Luke appears to win each one – time for a change maybe? Smith unluckily had Gino as Black, when Gino played a g3 King's Indian and then exchanged the central pawns and swapped Queens, there wasn't much Bob could do and a draw was agreed. Was looking like a bad event for Goodhue, he suffered his 3rd loss in 4 rounds, from round 5 he started to turn things around though.

Wallis, Christopher - Steadman, Mike

1.d4 e6 2.c4 f5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.f3 Bb4 (4...Nc6 5.a3 d6 6.e3 g6 7.b4 Bg7 8.Bd3 e5 9.Nge2 Nh5 10.d5 e4 11.dxc6 Qh4+ 12.Kf1 exd3 13.Qxd3 bxc6 14.Bb2 Be6 15.Nd4 Bf7)

5.Bd2 O-O 6.a3 Bxc3 7.Bxc3 d6 8.e3 Qe7 9.Qd2 e5 10.O-O-O a6 11.dxe5 dxe5 12.Bb4 c5 13.Bc3 Nbd7 14.Bd3 e4 15.Bf1 exf3 16.gxf3 Re8

(16...b5 17.cxb5 Bb7 18.bxa6 Bxa6 19.Bxa6 Rxa6 20.Ne2)

17.Re1 Ne5 18.Nh3 Rd8 19.Qf2 Bd7 20.Qg3 Ng6 21.Nf4 Ba4 22.Nxg6 hxg6 23.Qxg6 Qxe3+ 24.Kb1 Qxf3 25.Rg1 Rd7 26.Qxf6 1-0

Li, Luke - Dordevic Ivan

1.d4 c5 2.d5 Nf6 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.e4 g6 7.f4 Bg7 8.Bb5+ Nfd7 9.a4 O-O 10.Nf3 Na6 11.O-O Nc7 12.Bd3 a6 13.Nd2 This is kind of the main line here, there are lots of moves, this isn't the best scorer. **13...Rb8 14.Nc4 Bd4+** (14...Ne8 15.a5 b5 16.axb6 Nxb6 17.Na5 Qc7 18.Qe2 Ra8 If Black has to play back to a8, you start to think that the Rb8 line might not be the best.)

15.Kh1 Nf6 16.Ne2 White is much better. **16...Bg4 17.Qc2 Bxe2 18.Bxe2 h5 19.f5 Ng4 20.Bxg4 hxg4** Now the demolition begins. **21.Bh6 Re8 22.fxg6 fxg6 23.e5 Kh7 24.Rf6 Rg8 25.Bg5 Qe8 26.Nxd6 Qxe5 27.Rf7+ Rg7 28.Bf6 Qxd6 29.Rxg7+ Kh8 30.Qxg6 1-0**

Round 5 Li and Wallis finally played each other and after a lengthy battle a draw was finally agreed. Smith bounced back from his 2 draws and got back into the frame with a nice win over Jeremy Browne. I only managed to draw against Scott Yang;

won a pawn and got into another of those annoying drawn Rook endgames. Gino had another crack at Nicole's London System and like Luke, played a different system, but just manoeuvred around and provoked weaknesses and then won. On a different note, after this event I played a club game against Judy Gao and she played the London System, same result, easy equality for Black and slowly won – hope the girls do something different in Turkey. Benji Lim won again and began his run to turn his event around after the double losses in rounds 2 and 3.

Wallis, Christopher - Li, Luke

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.Qe2 Be7 6.O-O b5 7.Bb3 d6 8.c3 O-O 9.Rd1 Na5 10.Bc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7 12.d5 c4 13.b4 cxb3 14.axb3 Bg4 15.h3 Bxf3 This is new, not a great score for Black from this position, but Luke manages to defend it. **16.Qxf3 Nb7 17.Bb2?** This is completely the wrong idea, the Bishop bites on granite this way. Bd2 was more to the point, preventing Luke's plan he plays later.

(17.Bd2 Nc5 18.b4 Nb7 19.Bd3 Nd7 20.Na3 Nb6 21.c4 bxc4 22.Rdc1 a5 23.Nxc4 axb4 24.Rxa8 Nxa8 25.Nxe5 Nc5 26.Nc6 Long variation, but White is much better, all White's pieces are better than Blacks.)

17...Nc5 18.Rc1 Nfd7 19.b4 Nb7 20.Bd3 Nb6 21.c4 bxc4 22.Na3 a5 23.Nxc4 Nxc4 24.Rxc4 Qd7 25.bxa5 Rxa5 26.Rxa5 Nxa5 27.Rb4 Qc7 28.Qe3 Rb8 29.Bc3 Rxb4 30.Bxb4 Nb3 31.Bf1 Nc5 32.g3 Qb6 33.Ba3 Qb1 1/2-1/2

Smith, Robert - Browne, Jeremy

1.e4 c6 2.d3 d5 3.Nd2 e5 4.Ngf3 Bg4 5.h3 Bxf3 6.Qxf3 Nf6 7.g3 Nbd7 8.Bg2 d4

9.O-O Qc7 10.c3 c5 11.a4 Bd6 12.Nc4 O-O 13.Bd2 Nb6 14.Nxd6 Qxd6 15.c4 Nbd7 16.Qe2 Rfe8 17.f4 Kf8 18.a5 Rab8 19.f5 b5 20.axb6 Qxb6 Watch how Bob wins. It seems easy the way he does this. Not the most aggressive opening, but when you get into a cheerless position like this, Bob is in his element. **21.Ra2 Rb7 22.Rfa1 Ra8 23.Bf3 Nb8 24.Qd1 Qb3 25.Qb1 Nc6 26.Bd1 Qb6 27.Ra6 Qc7 28.Ba4 Rb6 29.Bxc6 Rxc6 30.b4 Rxa6 31.Rxa6 Qb7 32.b5 Nd7 33.Qa2 Nb8 34.Ra5** Stage 1 has been completed, Black is completely tied up and is just holding on. White now threatens to open another front and invades. **34...Qb6 35.Kg2 Ke7 36.g4 h6 37.Kf3 Kd7 38.h4 Kc8 39.Be1 Kb7 40.Bg3 f6 41.Qd2 Qd6 42.Be1 Nd7 43.Ra6 Nb6 44.Qa2 Qe7 45.Ba5 Nc8 46.Qa3 Qf8 47.Rc6** Now a pawn drops, as does Black's position. **47...Nb6 48.Qxc5 Qxc5 49.Rxc5 Rd8 50.Rc6 Rd7 51.Bxb6 axb6 52.g5 hxg5 53.hxg5 Rf7 54.Kg4 Rf8 55.Re6 fxg5 56.Re7+ Kc8 57.Rxg7 Rh8 58.f6 Kd8 59.f7 1-0**

Round 6 Chris Wallis got to equal first with Luke Li after he easily dispatched John Duneas. Luke had a very lucky escape against Bob, Bob played his Benko (he pulls this out when he needs to win), Luke played the b6 decline line, played some questionable moves, got himself in trouble and lost a pawn, he sacked a 2nd one and Bob rightly took it, but played a bit meekly and allowed a perpetual after Luke sacrificed an exchange. I played a Dutch against Gino; things got very murky and instead of taking the exchange for a solid plus I threw some more wood on the fire, confident that Gino would crack under the pressure. This he duly did and lost an

exciting game.

Li, Luke - Smith, Robert

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.b6 Qxb6 6.Nc3 d6 7.e4 g6 8.Be2 Bg7 9.h4

This move is far from popular, and it shouldn't be, it looks horrible and the position doesn't deserve this kind of move.

9...h5 10.Nf3 Nbd7 11.Qc2 Rb8 12.Nd2 Ne5 13.f4 Neg4 Here is the main drawback, White is always playing f4 in this line, and g4 is a huge whole. The position is not lost, but Black's is easier to play. **14.Nc4 Qc7 15.O-O O-O 16.f5?**

This is just an awful move, from equal, White is now much worse.

(16.Bd2 Bd7 17.Bd3 Bb5 18.Rae1 Nd7 This would have kept the balance.)

16...gxf5 17.exf5 Bd7 18.Bg5 Bb5 19.Nxb5 axb5 20.Ne3 Nxe3 21.Bxe3 Nxd5 That's the first pawn for free. **22.Bg5 Bd4+ 23.Kh1 Kg7**

(23...Nf6 24.Bf3 d5 25.Bxf6 Bxf6 26.Bxd5 c4 27.Qe2 Qe5 Black is much better, the opposite coloured Bishops won't help White with Rooks still on the board, a pawn will fall and the endgame should be winning. The move played allows the f pawn to sacrifice itself and make things murky.)

24.f6+ Nxf6 25.Qf5 Qc8 26.Qf4 Rh8 27.Qg3 Kf8 28.Bxf6 Bxf6 29.Rxf6 exf6 30.Qxd6+ Kg7 31.Qg3+ Kf8 32.Qd6+ Kg7 33.Qg3+ Kf8 34.Qd6+ Black played weakly after he won the booty, Qc8 was the last straw and allowed Luke to escape with this draw. 1/2-1/2

Thornton, Gino - Steadman, Mike

1.d4 e6 2.g3 f5 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.c4 c6 5.Nf3 d5 6.O-O Bd6 7.b3 Qe7 8.Nc3 O-O 9.Bb2 Nbd7 10.Qc2 Ng4 11.Nd1 Qf6 12.Qd2 f4 13.h3 Nh6 14.g4 g5

(14...Nf7 15.h4 dxc4 16.bxc4 e5 17.Qc2 c5 18.g5 Qe6 19.d5 Qg4 20.Nc3 Nb6 21.Ne4 Bf5)

15.Nc3 Nf7 16.e4 fxe3 17.fxe3 Qg6 18.Ne1 b6 19.e4 Ba6 20.cxd5 exd5 (20...Bxf1 21.Bxf1 exd5 22.exd5 c5 23.Bd3 Qh6 24.Qg2 Bf4)

21.Rf5 Rae8 22.exd5 c5 23.Ne4 Bf4 24.Qd1 h5 25.Rxf4 gxf4 26.gxh5 Qg7 27.Qg4 Qxg4 28.hxg4 Be2 29.dxc5 f3 30.Nxf3 Rxe4 31.c6 Nc5 32.Nd4 Ree8 33.Kh2

(33...Nxe2 Rxe2 34.Bf6 Nd6 35.Rf1) **33...Nd6 34.b4 Nd3 35.Bc3 Nf2 36.Ne6 Nxc4+ 37.Kh1 Rf7 38.Bd4 Nf5 39.Bh3 Nxd4 40.Rg1 Bf3+ 41.Bg2 Bxc2+ 42.Kxc2 Nxe6 43.dxe6 Rg7 0-1**

Round 7 Wallis and Stuart was a Nimzo Indian where Chris had a slight positional squeeze, he ratcheted up the pressure and Peter's game finally collapsed – Peter's only loss of the event. Luke demolished Roger Perry, I beat Dordevic with some active defence and a small tactic. The surprise of the round was Benji Lim beating Bob Smith. Early on Bob won a clear pawn and seemed to relax and allow Benji into the game, when he managed to double rooks on the 7th, things did not look good for Bob, he managed to liquidate to a Rook endgame a pawn down, this one however was lost because his King was trapped on the back rank, Benji finished him off nicely.

Smith, Robert - Lim, Benji

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bb5 Nd4 6.O-O Nxb5 7.Nxb5 d5 8.exd5 a6 9.Nc3 Nf6 10.d4 c4 Bob was distressed about losing this game, but this opening is poor and White has a bad record from here.

In fact Bob and his wife Viv have played this position once each internationally and lost both of those as well, 0-3 would make me rethink my opening choice. **11.Qe2 b5 12.Re1 Bb7 13.f5 b4 14.Na4 Bxd5 15.Nb6 Bxf3**

(15...Ra7 16.Nxc4 O-O 17.fxg6 hxg6 This was Bob's position against GM Zhao, White is better here, but Bob lost.)

16.Qxf3 Ra7 17.Nxc4 Rc7 18.Qd3 O-O 19.Bf4 Rd7 20.Be5 Ng4 21.Qf3

(21.Rad1 Nxe5 22.Nxe5 Rd6 23.fxg6 hxg6 24.c3 bxc3 25.bxc3 White is a cold pawn up and well on top, the move played is a big mistake and allows Black to equalise.)

21...Rxd4 22.Bxg7 Kxg7 23.Ne3 Nxe3 24.Rxe3 Rd2 25.Qe4 Qb6 26.Re1 Rc8

27.Qxe7? Bad moves follow bad moves, once Black gets the blind pigs (2 Rooks on the 7th), White is in big trouble. **27...Rexc2**

28.Kh1 Rxc2 29.Qe5+ Qf6 30.Qxf6+ Kxf6 31.Rh3 Kg7 32.Rf1 Rgf2 33.Rxf2

Rxf2 34.fxg6 hxg6 35.Rb3 a5 36.a3 bxa3 37.Rxa3 Rxb2 38.Rxa5 White has done well to survive to this, but he is still lost, his King can't get out. **38...f6 39.Ra6 g5**

40.Kg1 Kg6 41.Rc6 Re2 42.Ra6 Kf5 43.h3 Ke5 44.Rb6 f5 45.Rb4 Rd2 46.Ra4

Re2 47.Rb4 Kf6 48.Rb6+ Ke5 49.Rb4 f4 50.Rb5+ Kf6 51.Rb6+ Kf5 52.Rb4 f3

53.Ra4 Re4 54.Ra3 Kf4 55.Kf2 Re2+ 56.Kf1 Kg3 57.Ra5 Rf2+ 58.Ke1 g4

59.hxg4 Kg2 60.Rf5 Ra2 0-1

Dordoveic, Ivan - Steadman, Mike

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.f3 a6 7.Bc4 b5 8.Bb3 Bb7

9.Be3 Nbd7 10.Qd2 Rc8 11.O-O-O Ne5 (11...h5 12.Rhe1 Nc5 13.Kb1 Bg7 14.Nd5

e6 15.Nxf6+ Bxf6 16.c3 O-O)

12.Kb1 h5 13.h4 Nc4 14.Bxc4 Rxc4 15.b3? Rc8 16.Nde2 Bg7 17.Bd4 O-O

18.Nd5 Bxd5 19.exd5 Qc7 20.Nf4 Bh6 21.g4 hxg4

(21...Bxf4 22.Qxf4 Qxc2+ 23.Ka1 Nxd5 24.Qh6 e5 25.Bb2 Nf4 26.gxh5 Nxb5

27.Rxd6 Rfd8 28.Bxe5 f6 29.Rxd8+ Rxd8 30.Bb2 Rd1+ 31.Rxd1 Qxd1+ 32.Bc1 Ng7)

22.fxg4 Nxg4 23.Rdg1 Ne5 24.Rh3 Kh7? (24...Bxf4 25.Qxf4 Qxc2+ 26.Ka1 Nd3

(26...Qe2 27.Bxe5 Qxe5+ 28.Qxe5 dxe5 29.h5 Kg7 30.hxg6 fxg6 31.Rhg3 Rf6)

27.Qh6 Qc1+ 28.Rxc1 Rxc1+ 29.Qxc1 Nxcl 30.Re3 e5 31.dxe6 fxe6 32.Rxe6

Nd3)

25.h5 g5 26.Bxe5? (26.Ng6 fxg6 27.hxg6+ Kg7 28.Rgh1 Rh8 29.Qh2 Qxc2+ 30.Qxc2 Rxc2 31.Kxc2

Kxg6 32.Bxe5 dxe5)

26...dxe5 27.Qd3+ e4 28.Qxe4+ f5 29.Qe6 Rf6?

(29...Qxc2+ 30.Ka1 Bg7+ 31.Qf6 Bxf6+)

30.d6 Qxc2+ 0-1

Round 8 and the two leaders were eyeballing each other; they were a point clear of the field, so Luke only needed a draw for the title. Chris was more interested in the cash. Chris was black against Benji Lim, Luke was black against me. I tried d4 against Luke this time, we both play the f3 Nimzo, so down the line we went, I forgot the right square for the Knight and dropped a pawn cold, having already turned down a draw offer I wasn't too happy with my position, but I saw a slight opportunity for some activity, Luke played a couple of lazy moves and White was fine even though still a pawn down. I offered a draw and to the internet crowd's displeasure, Luke accepted and was North Island champion for 2012.

Chris played a really nice game against

Benji and really crushed him and rightfully won the event. Bob bounced back with a win over Duneas, John played a French badly, got into an awful Knight versus the light squared Bishop (nightmare of all French players), the win was long, but ugly. A truly ugly sight had to be the Advance French gone wrong by Roy Seabrook, Nicole Tsoi dealt to him savagely. She certainly doesn't need to worry about her Black openings.

Seabrook, Roy v Tsoi, Nicole

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bd7 6.Be2 f6 7.O-O Qc7 8.Re1 Nge7 9.dxc5 This is not the way, White is confused and goes horribly wrong. (9.exf6 gxf6 10.dxc5 Ng6 11.c4 d4 12.Nxd4 Nxd4 13.Qxd4 Bxc5 14.Qc3 Black has some play for a pawn, but White should be able to consolidate.)
9...fxe5 10.b4 Nf5 11.b5 Nd8 12.Nxe5 Bxc5 13.Bh5+ g6 14.Nxg6? hxg6 15.Bxg6+ Kf8 16.g3 Bxf2+ 17.Kxf2 Rxb2+ 18.Kf1 Bxb5+ Nicole plays very aggressively with Black, and so passively with White, what's that about. Bxf2+ was a nice move to see. **0-1**

Lim, Benji v Wallis, Christopher

1.Nf3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.d3 (3.c5 Nc6 4.Qa4 Bd7 5.Nxd4 e5 6.Nxc6 Bxc6 7.Qc2 Qd4 8.e3 Qxc5 9.Nc3 This is equal, but much better than the way White plays the opening.)
3...Nc6 4.e4 e5 5.Be2 a5 6.O-O Nf6 7.Ne1 Black has played simple moves and is already better. **7...Be7 8.f4 exf4 9.Bxf4 Nd7 10.Bg4 Nc5 11.Bxc8 Qxc8 12.Nd2 O-O 13.Ndf3 f5 14.e5 Ne6 15.Qc1 Qd8**

16.h4? Maybe White's hand slipped and moved the pawn past h3 :-), this just drops a pawn cold and Black is winning easily. **16...Bxb4 17.Nxb4 Qxb4 18.g3 Qg4 19.Nf3 h6 20.Kf2 g5 21.Rg1 Kh7 22.Bd2 Nc5 23.Qf1 Ne4+ 24.Ke1 Nxg3 25.Qg2 f4** Benji could have calmly resigned here, the rest is painful to watch. **26.Kf2 Nxe5 27.Rgd1 Nxd3+ 28.Kg1 Rae8 29.Re1 Nxe1 30.Rxe1 Rxe1+ 31.Bxe1 Ne2+ 0-1**

Smith, Robert v Duneas, John

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Be7 5.e5 Nfd7 6.Bxe7 Qxe7 7.f4 O-O 8.Nf3 c5 9.dxc5 Qxc5 (9...f6 10.exf6 Qxf6 11.g3 Nxc5 12.Qd4 b6 13.Qxf6 This is the same type of endgame that is bad for Black.)
10.Qd2 Nc6 (10...Nb6 11.O-O-O Nc6 12.Kb1 Nc4 13.Bxc4 Qxc4 14.Nd4 Bd7 15.b3 Qc5 16.Nxc6 Bxc6 17.Qd4 b6 This is how Kortchnoi plays this, now Queen swaps sort out Black's bad Bishop, if not, then Black can transfer the Rooks to the c file and threaten to attack.)
11.O-O-O f6 12.exf6 Nxf6 13.Bd3 Bd7 14.Kb1 Rab8 (14...a6 15.Rhe1 b5 16.Ne5 Nxe5 17.Rxe5 Ng4 18.Rh5 g6 19.Rg5 Nf2 20.Ne4 Nxe4 21.Bxe4 Black isn't doing well here either. This is just not a line to be recommended.)
15.Rhe1 b5 16.Ne2 Ng4 17.Ned4 Nxd4 18.Nxd4 Qd6 19.h3 Nh6 20.g3 a6 Another pawn goes on a white square, watch Smith do the business from here. **21.Re3 Rbe8 22.Rde1 g6 23.c3 Nf5 24.Bxf5 exf5 25.Rxe8 Rxe8 26.Rxe8+ Bxe8 27.Qe3 Bf7 28.a3 Kf8 29.h4 Qc7 30.b3 Qd7 31.Qe5 Qe7 32.Qxe7+ Kxe7 33.Kc2 Kd6 34.b4 Be8 35.Kd3 Bf7**

36.Nf3 Be6 37.Kd4 Bf7 38.Ne5 Be8
 39.Nd3 Bd7 40.Ne1 Be6 41.Ng2 h5
 42.Ne3 Bf7 43.Nd1 Be6 44.Nf2 Bc8
 45.Nd3 Bd7 46.Nc5 Bc8 47.a4 bxa4
 48.Nxa4 Bd7 49.Nb6 Be6 50.Na4 Bd7
 51.Nc5 Bc8 52.Nd3 Bd7 53.Ne5 Be8 54.c4
 dxc4 55.Nxc4+ Ke6 56.Kc5 Bb5 57.Ne5
 Kf6 58.Kd6 Kg7 59.Ke7 Be2 60.Nd7 Bb5
 61.Nc5 Be2 62.Ne6+ Kh6 63.Kf6 Bb5
 64.Nc7 Bc4 65.Ke7 Kg7 66.Ne8+ Kg8
 67.Nd6 Bd5 68.Kf6 Kh7 69.Nf7 Bc6
 70.Ne5 Be8 71.Ke7 Bb5 72.Kf7 1-0

Chris was asked about the difference in playing strengths between New Zealand and Australian chess, he was far too polite to say we are actually hopeless, but he did agree that there are far more dangerous players actively playing week in and week out in Australia. I would agree, just ask anyone who journey's across for the Easter Doeberl and SIO events. Chris was a deserving winner, never in trouble and playing some really nice crushes. Luke did what Luke does and won some nice games and saved a couple of hairy ones. Bob and I came 3rd equal, never consistent enough with the lower ranked players to threaten the top 2, but never likely to fall too low either. This top four were substantially higher rated than the rest of the field and duly took the top places, maybe the rating system works.

Again the live boards were a hit, we were getting a lot of interest on the website, Keong did a good job nursing these along.

North Island Rapid

We received 46 entries for the Rapid, both Dordevic and Jason Tang failed

to show, so we had a working field of 44 after round 1. Again the live boards were working, so the internet folks got to see the top five boards each round. A very strong field including Ben Hague, Ralph Hart, Paul Garbett, Ewen Green and Hans Gao made up the field.

The first round turned up two huge upsets. Smith lost to Mukattu and Ewen Green lost to Hamish Shierlaw (he seems to like cracking heads in round 1). I was on the board next to this game and I couldn't help smiling, Hamish was going to play the Tartakower Queens Gambit declined no matter what Ewen did. Ewen slowly used up more and more time trying finesses getting more confused as Hamish pretty much dismissed anything Ewen did and just rolled out the opening setup. By the time they got into the middle game Ewen was already down to 3 minutes remaining, slowly the clock caught up with him and Hamish secured another scalp.

In Round 2 the big guns continued to wipe out the lower rated players, no surprises occurred.

Round 3 started to see the top players matched. Ben Hague's bubble finally burst, he lost to the current lightening champion Noel Pinic. Hans Gao was unlucky to draw to Luke Li, he was coasting and got mesmerised and gave Luke his chance and he snatched a draw. Helen got the easy win in this round when Ewen's phone went off.

Round 4 and Noel continued his smashing way dealing to Ralph Hart in a Slav that went wrong early for Ralph. Hans Gao destroyed me, I played some nonsense

opening and Hans closed the centre and proceeded to bash my Kingside open like it was a King's Indian. Smith started his bunny bashing event having done the swiss loss in round 1 and started his climb. Ben Hague got back into the frame as well. Garbett was having one of those events, he couldn't seem to buy a win. This was his third draw in four rounds. Shen another tough nut to crack had his second draw after two wins so got in the frame also. A surprise package was probably Helen Milligan, rapid is not really her game, but a win over Ewen (phone), draws with Garbett and Shen put her on three points.

Round 5 and Hans Gao drew with Noel, Hart bounced back with a win, Smith carried on taking care of Helen's run, Luke drew a completely lost game with Shen, the rapid + 5 seconds really made the final moves into a farce. I finally nailed Ben Hague and got back into the leading group.

Round 6 and Noel was on 4.5, a group of 3 players were on 4: Smith, Gao, Hart and myself. Smith was White against Noel and really took him apart. I fell into one of Ralph's online pet variations and got hammered. Gao played a controlled Bishop's Opening against Shen, waited till the clock told and took the point.

So Smith, Gao and Hart are joint rapid champions for 2012, a fun event and again smoothly run event by Keong. Not being a FIDE event we could use a system that made pairings a bit more understandable.

Results Summary

2012 NZ Junior Championship

Schoolpupils Champion Luke Li
Schoolgirls Champion Nicole Tsoi

Under 16 Open Champion Luke Li
Under 14 Open Champion Hans Gao
Joint under 12 Open Champions Leo Zhang
William Zhang
Under 10 Open Champion Alphaeus Ang
under 8 Open Champion Allen Fan
Under 16 Girls Champion Nicole Tsoi
Under 14 Girls Champion No Participant
Under 12 Girls Champion Olivia Dong
Under 10 Girls Champion Jasmine Zhang

Waikato Open

1st = 4.5/6 Ben Hague Mark Nobel and
Ralph Hart
Under 2000 1st 3.5/6 Graham Nolan
Under 1800 Tournament
1st = 5/6 Nigel Kennedy, Nigel Crombie

Feilding Rapid

The first tournament held by this new club organised by Mark Noble.

1st Ross Jackson 5/6
2nd Justin Davis 4.5/63rd = Jack James and
James Stewart 4/6

Olympiad Title

Judy Gao has qualified for the title Women's FIDE Master at the Chess Olympiad, with her strong performance scoring of 6/9. Full Olympiad results in the next issue

North Island Championship 2012- Prize Winners

1st 7pts FM Christopher Wallis (Australia)
2nd 6.5pts Luke Li
3rd= 5.5pts FM Robert Smith
3rd= 5.5pts FM Michael Steadman

North Island Champion 2012: Luke Li

under2100 1st 5pts Benji Lim
 2nd= 4.5pts Roger Perry
 2nd= 4.5pts WFM Helen Milligan
 2nd= 4.5pts WFM Nicole Tsoi
 2nd= 4.5pts Alphaeus Ang

under1800 1st 3.5pts Hristo Kolev
 2nd= 3pts Layla Timergazi
 2nd= 3pts Hamish Shierlaw
 2nd= 3pts Stefan Kolev
 2nd= 3pts Daniel Gong

DD Smash Upset Prize Hamish Shierlaw

North Shore Open

An unexpected upset in this year's North Shore Open when junior Thorben Koop of Germany and currently resident in Dunedin scored a perfect 5/5 to win the tournament.

Open

1st Thorben Koop 5/5
2nd Leonard McLaren 4
3rd= Noel Pinic, Mike Steadman, Luke Li and Ivan Dordevic 3½

under-2100 grade prize: Benjamin Lim and William Li

under-1900 grade prize: Layla Timergazi, Roy Seabrook, Alphaeus And and Philip Hair

B-Grade

1st Hristo Kolev 4½/5
2nd= Christopher Riding and Andreas Diller (Germany) 4
4th Hao Jia 3½

under-1600 grade prize: Johnson Chen - under-1400 grade prize: Stephen Holdaway



Thorben Koop and Neil Gunn

History of Chess – The Story behind New Zealand's bid to host a World Chess Championship – Part 1

By Ross Jackson

On 7-10 August 1989, at the 60th FIDE Congress at Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, the President of the New Zealand Chess Federation, Bill Poole, attended to present a bid for New Zealand to host the 1990 World Chess Championship. This would have been for the fifth, and last, of the epic title matches between Gary Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov. Bill's documentations from the time provide a fascinating, and until now unpublished, insight into the behind-the-scenes battles that resulted in New Zealand's bid not being put to the vote.

New Zealand's involvement arose from a conversation, in Moscow in mid-1988, at a lunch meeting between Sir Ronald Scott, Chairman of the Hillary Commission, and Marat Gramov, head of the Soviet GOSCOM Sport with some of his officials. Sir Ron had been invited to Moscow after Russian interest in New Zealand had been attracted by recent sporting successes. The All Blacks had won the inaugural Rugby World Cup and New Zealand yachting had performed impressively against US teams in the America's Cup. (The reason for Soviet support of a New Zealand bid is an interesting point- NZ's 1986 breakdown in relations with the USA over nuclear ships may also have stirred Russian interest in

closer ties with NZ - Ed) Whatever proposals the Russians had in mind were not disclosed because national political events overtook matters - the USSR break-up occurred at the time. However, the meeting proceeded, and Sir Ron mentioned that New Zealand was looking for top sporting events to host to mark the country's 150th anniversary in 1990. One of the Russians remarked that a World Chess Championship match was due that year with two Soviet citizens involved (champion Garry Kasparov and candidate challenger Anatoly Karpov). The Russians informally agreed that New Zealand could be a credible bidder. Sir Ron telephoned the then-President of the New Zealand Chess Federation, previous Prime Minister, Sir John (Gentleman Jack) Marshall and they decided a bid would be prepared.

On 30 August 1988 Jack Marshall unexpectedly died of a heart attack and Bill Poole, by succession, became NZCF President. Bill's introduction to the job was to discover, at his first Board Meeting, that this momentous project was in preparation. The revelation was even more astonishing to Bill because the chess community knew well the hostility between World Champion Gary Kasparov and FIDE President Florencio Campomanes. However, matters had already proceeded to a point that it was decided it was too late not to continue.



Kasparov v Karpov – photo courtesy Chessgames.com

Sir Ron established a task force and an impressive bid was prepared. The offer was for the host city to be Wellington, and the venue the then, architecturally state of the art, Michael Fowler Centre. The prize fund would be 3 million Swiss Francs plus a 0.6 million Swiss Franc contribution to CACDEC - the FIDE Committee for Assistance to Chess Developing Countries. In today's money, in total, this equates to approximately NZ\$7million. New Zealand's remoteness had an advantage - our time zone enabled live television broadcast at acceptable viewing hours across all the world's major chess playing countries. Sir Ron introduced New Zealand's involvement to FIDE delegates at a General Assembly Debate in Salonika in November 1988. Journalist Ismail Sloan described it as a "rousing speech".

Several other cities lodged interest but did not proceed to develop a bid. In the end, there was only one city competing against Wellington - Lyon, France. Bill is suspicious of the manner of the French entry. Lyon was introduced through the back door without formally registering the

notifications advertised as FIDE procedure. FIDE had called for bids to be "coursed" to the Executive Council Meeting in Warsaw on 3-7 May 1989. After the Warsaw meeting, Campomanes would say to Bill that Grenoble (one of the cities to register) had decided they would share their bid with Lyon, then withdrew, leaving Lyon to bid alone. Lyon's bid offered the same prize fund (3 million Swiss Francs) as New Zealand but instead of a contribution for FIDE to develop chess, had a lesser amount (0.16 million Swiss Francs) for a diamond-bejewelled cup. The cup would be a one-off gift for the champion - not for the possession of FIDE. On paper there was no financial advantage for FIDE to prefer Lyon over Wellington. However in a conversation with Campomanes, and FIDE legal adviser David Anderton, Bill gained a distinct impression that they were biased for a French win. Bill would later privately wonder if there might have been more to the Lyon bid than was publicly presented.

Lyon's bid was developed by Michel Noir, the city's mayor. New Zealand had earlier experience of Noir in an unsavoury role. On July 10th 1985 French secret service frogmen, on the authorization of President Francois Mitterand, blew up the Greenpeace Rainbow Warrior boat in Auckland harbour, killing photographer Fernando Pereira. They called the adventure Operation Satanique, their bravado further exemplified by staying in a motel known to be owned by the New Zealand Prime Minister. When the saboteurs were caught France at first denied involvement - even publicly condemning the attack as an act of terrorism. However the deceit was readily

exposed, and two French agents pleaded guilty of manslaughter. They were sentenced to 10 years in jail. On 3rd April 1986, Michel Noir, then French External Trade Minister, publicly threatened to block New Zealand's butter access to the European Union unless New Zealand released the agents. At the time, our economy was dependent on agricultural exports to Britain, which turned a blind eye, and New Zealand was forced to capitulate. The saboteurs went to a French territory where an agreement for full completion of their sentence was dishonoured. They returned to Paris to a heroes' welcome and military promotions. Later in his political career, Noir would be convicted of embezzlement for activities while mayor of Lyon. On an unrelated matter Florencio Campomanes, head of FIDE, would also be convicted of embezzlement – by a Philippine court. This was overturned on appeal though not because the superior court adjudged him innocent. Rather they ruled that he acted as an international citizen and jurisdictionally wasn't their embezzler to prosecute.

By the time of the 60th FIDE Congress, Kasparov's conflict with FIDE had reached crisis point - he was threatening to boycott a FIDE-run World Chess Championship. Kasparov's relationships with FIDE had been bad since 1984 when Campomanes terminated the first Kasparov-Karpov World Championship match. They were aggravated again during an unsuccessful Kasparov-backed Lucena/Keene ticket to take power of FIDE in 1986. The difficulty of unseating Campomanes was that FIDE has a one nation, one vote, electoral structure, and it was alleged that rich

nations bribed key officials and voting blocks of small nations. In August 1986 Spanish GM and journalist Ricardo Calvo was declared persona non grata by FIDE for writing an article entitled "One Bridge Too Far" which identified South American FIDE delegates he claimed accepted bribes in the 1986 election. Beginning in 1986 Kasparov, GM Yasser Seirawan, and Dutch businessman Bessel Kok established the Grandmaster's Association (GMA) intended to be a trade union for chess professionals. They organised a series of well sponsored top-level chess tournaments. In his book *Kasparov vs Karpov 1988-2009* Kasparov wrote, "Already then the GMA could well have replaced FIDE as the organiser of the world championship – this idea was in the air for the whole of 1989, and it was desperately opposed by FIDE, the State Sports Committee, and the USSR Chess Federation driven by Sevastyanov, Krogius and Botvinnik". While Kasparov contemplated a break from FIDE, Bessel Kok and Western GMs favoured an accommodation. Within the GMA Western GM's were a minority but the GMA had a voting structure weighted to favour them to counter-balance the much more numerous Socialist block GMs. This was a cause of instability in the GMA - all grandmasters were equal but some were more equal than others.

New Zealand's delegation consisted of Bill Poole and Gillian Houser, the General Manager of the Michael Fowler Centre. When they arrived at Mayaguez a shock awaited them. Just as Kasparov was considering to boycott a FIDE – run World Championship, so FIDE intended to

legislate so a match could proceed without him and to give FIDE total rights in setting the conditions. The rule changes were drafted by FIDE's legal adviser David Anderton, a chess official and District Court judge, from England. Anderton had previous history of badly writing FIDE rules - his preparation of a FIDE "Code of Ethics" in 1988 (intended to facilitate discipline for the likes of Calvo) received much criticism. The new World Championship rules meant that in the event of the non-attendance by either champion or challenger, a series of lesser substitutes would be held primed in readiness as instant replacements. Also the right of the Champion and Challenger to have input and choice amongst competing venues would be removed. FIDE Congresses, starting with the present one, would decide. Canadian delegate, Professor Nathan Divinsky, likened this to organising a large wedding without consulting the bride and groom. Understandably there was consternation when this news was relayed back to New Zealand. All the planning, sponsorship arrangements, prize money underwriting agreements and other commitments based on understandings with FIDE and its existing rules, were now stripped of their foundation. FIDE would disregard earlier commitments and promises, and the World Championship could well be a "Claytons" match without the World Champion or any number of top players who sided with him. New Zealand saw the problem of FIDE dealing with Kasparov as a situation that called for peace-making and conciliation. FIDE's stance was authoritarian and could be interpreted by Kasparov as being provocative and confrontational.

On Monday 7th August 1989 the new rules were distributed to delegates on the Opening Day of the General Assembly. Campomanes maintained that FIDE traditionally revises its World Championship Rules at the Congress in the year prior to the match. Bill's report notes an opinion – received too late for the debate – that this may have been contrary to FIDE's rules. Mr Caro Martin, a Counsellor to Prof. Divinsky, and (Bill wrote) "something of a constitutional expert", thought "these new rules cannot come into effect until the 61st FIDE Congress, when all constituent Federations have been circulated with them, and they are accordingly ratified."

Debate on the rule changes commenced on Tuesday 8th August. IM David Goodman in Chess November 1989 wrote that Anderton argued that "the fact that the match would take place in any event increased the chances of Kasparov's participation". Of Campomanes' contribution Goodman wrote, "in an emotional speech, Campomanes defended FIDE's authority. He said that even if, in the worst event, FIDE were to lose control of the world championship match, the organisation would find ways to continue. 'We will tighten our belts. I will travel third class instead of first class'. He concluded by saying there was little point in consulting the players because they always failed to reach an agreement." The delegates opposing the changes were the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Canada, and New Zealand. Yugoslavia and Turkey opposed but only because the proposed dates for the title match clashed with the Chess Olympiad. For New Zealand's part Bill

explained that a World Championship without the reigning World Champion, was not a credible match and New Zealand's commercial sponsorship arrangements were based on the premise of Kasparov's participation. An angry Vitaly Sevastyanov, the President of the Soviet Chess Federation demanded that votes be recorded individually so history could judge each federation. Sevastyanov's vehemence was a personal turnaround, suggestive of stern direction from political forces higher in Russia. Sevastyanov was the cosmonaut who played the first chess game between space and earth and three months earlier at the FIDE Warsaw meeting had asserted (as translated by a Polish chess player) that New Zealand's air was dangerously radioactive due to our proximity to the Antarctic ozone hole and no one should go there for any reason. Bill had had to rally scientific opinion to refute the allegation. In the end there was little point in "naming and shaming" the delegations that supported the changes – the rules passed by a massive majority of 59 votes to 6.

Later that evening Mikhail Botvinnik, Jan Timman and Bessel Kok arrived in Mayaguez. They had come to appeal for conciliation between FIDE and the GMA. Also that evening the New Zealand delegation of Bill Poole and Gillian Hauser were called for a private meeting with Campomanes and Anderton.

To Be Continued

Let me Entertain You- No 4

By Martin Sims

In the last column readers were invited to send in the names of books with a high Entertainment Value rating. William Lynn responded: "Three books or magazines that achieved high results for me. (1) The Art of the Checkmate by Renaud and Kahn 1953. A book I studied for a few months from cover to cover, prior to the North Island Champs 1970 which I shared first place with Paul Garbett. (I lost one game to Paul) (2) Secrets of the Chess Board by Purdy. This system I completely followed in every game to win the 1972/73 NZ Correspondence title at my first attempt in the Championship. Second place in the tournament was Paul Garbett. (My only loss!!) (3) Winning Chess by Chernev and Reinfeld. Purchased in Feb 2010 and studied for about three/four months before winning the NZ senior title in Christchurch. The book was awarded to the Hawera Chess Club for an intercity chess match!! This 1947 publication was found in an antique shop in Hawera for \$7."

Before moving on to the theme of this column, here is a quote from a silly little book someone has given me ("Horseradish"): "An apocryphal story – the word "apocryphal" here means "obviously untrue" – tells of two people, long ago, who were very bored, and that instead of complaining about it they sat up

all night and invented the game of chess so that everyone else in the world, on evenings when there is nothing to do, can also be bored by the perplexing and tedious game they invented.” So harsh!!!

So, what is your ONE Desert Island chess book? You know, your plane has crashed on this island and all you for company are birds. It’s going to be a long time before you are rescued (if ever) so you need a book that is going to entertain you! Over the decades I have had four such books and I will reveal one each issue.

My first Desert Island chess book was “The King Hunt” by Cozens (1970). The address inside shows I still lived with my parents (I was at high school). I got into trouble for buying this book. I had won my school’s speech prize and was given some money to spend at what was called Whitcombe and Tombs (before becoming Whitcoulls). It was expected that the winner would buy some tome of learned quotations but no way was I going to do that! I bought two chess books and ended up in the principal’s office.

“The King Hunt” only has 45 games in it. Each is well annotated with a nice balance of words and variations (descriptive notation) and each game features a King hunted to its doom by being forced up the board. Each game is therefore exciting and full value. Most can now be found in ChessBase or in an online collection but this wasn’t the case in 1970. So I guess you could argue that the book is redundant now but it captivated me as a high school student. Plus, looking at the non-annotated games scores in ChessBase today hides the

excitement of the games that the annotations bring.

I present 4 games, one a full game score; the other three starting with a diagram when the action starts. All comments are from Cozens’ notes. Richter was a great tactician – as shown by the following game.

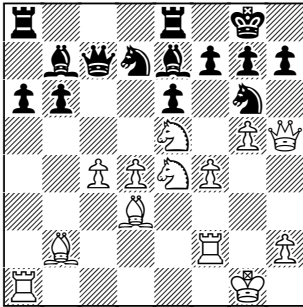
Richter - Kretschmar

Berlin Championship, 1925

1.d4 d5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bg5 h6 4.Bh4 Bf5 5.f3 black has been playing to prevent White’s e4 and White plays to force it **5... Nbd7 6.Nxd5 Nxd5 7.e4 Bxe4 8.fxe4 Ne3 9.Qd3 Nxf1 10.Qxf1 g5 11.Bg3 c6 12.0–0** Black’s castling prospects are not very promising on either wing and White has a fine open game with attacking possibilities **12...Qa5 13.Kb1 Bg7 14.Ne2 Rf8** Black protects his f Pawn in readiness for Queenside castling, but ... **15.h4 f5 16.e5 e6 17.hxg5 hxg5 18.Rh7 Rg8** Richter has been making threat after threat to prevent Black from castling. Now, it does look as if White has run out of threats and Black will equalise **19.d5!! cxd5 20.Nd4 Nf8 21.Nxe6** Richter decides, even at the cost of a piece, to prevent Black from castling **21...Nxe6 22.Qxf5 Qb6 23.Qg6+ Ke7** Perpetual check is available to White but he is not interested **24.c4** open lines! **24...d4 25.Rxd4** throughout the attack Black has seemed to be just one move short of salvation **25...Qxd4 26.Qf6+ Kd7 27.Qf7+ Kc6 28.Qxe6+ Kc5 29.Bf2!! Qxf2** Black had no choice but now his King, deserted in mid-board is at the mercy of the White Queen whilst his own Queen, Bishop and two Rooks are powerless to intervene **30.Qd5+ Kb6 31.Qd6+ Ka5 32.b4+ Ka4 33.Qd7+ Kxb4 34.Qb5+ Kc3**

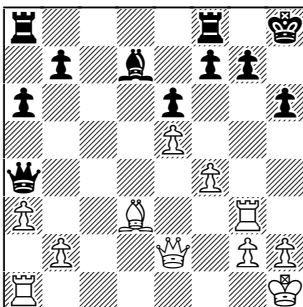
35.Rh3+ Kd2 36.Qb2+ Ke1 37.Rh1+ 1-0

And now a game played by mail.
Moser – Underwood Canada, 1962



21.Nxf7! Nxf4 22.Qxh7+!! and White announced mate in 12! Have fun working out the variations 22...Kf8 (if Black takes the Queen, White simply plays drops the Knight into f6) 23.Qh8+ Kxf7 24.g6+ Kxg6 25.Rg2+ Nxg2 26.Nd6+ Kg5 27.Qxg7+ Kh4 28.Qh6+ Kg4 29.Be2+ Bf3 30.Bxf3+ Kxf3 31.Rf1+ Ke2 32.Rf2+ Kd1 33.Qc1# 1-0

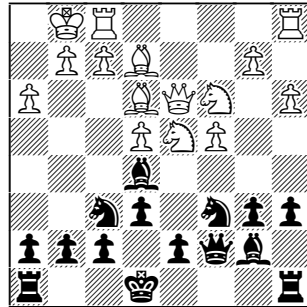
Penrose,Jonathan - Popov,Luben
Enschede (3), 1963



23.Rxg7 Kxg7 24.Qg4+ Kh8 25.Qh4 f5
26.exf6 Rf7 27.Qxh6+ Kg8 28.Qg6+ Kf8
29.Qh6+ Kg8 (29...Ke8 30.Qh8+ Rf8

31.Bg6+) 30.Qg5+ Kf8 31.Bg6 the winning move 31...e5 32.Qh6+ Kg8 33.Bxf7+ Kxf7 34.Qg7+ Ke6 35.Qe7+ Kd5 36.Qxe5+ Kc4 37.Rc1+ Kb3 38.Qc3+ Ka2 39.b4 and mate by Ra1 1-0

Prins,Lodewijk - Day,Lawrence A
Lugano Olympiad (Men) (5), 22.10.1968



12...h5 A violent and rash move which pays off 13.Rfc1 Bh2+ 14.Kf1 Ne5 15.Qd1 Nxe4 16.Na4 Nc5 17.Nxb6 Regaining his pawn Qxb6 18.Nf3 Qc6 19.Bxc5! Bf4! 20.Be3 What Prins failed to foresee ... was how vulnerable his King would now be. Bxe3 21.fxe3 Ng4! When Black played 12...h5 it was probably with this move in mind 22.hxg4 hxg4 23.Ne1? Rh1+ 24.Kf2 g3+! 25.Kxg3 Rxe1 26.Qxe1 Qxg2+ 27.Kf4 g5+ 28.Ke5 Qe4+ and White resigned to spare his King the ultimate indignity of 29.Kf6 Qf5+ 30.Kg7 Qg6+ 31.Kh8 0-0-0mate! 0-1

Readers are invited to send in their own Desert Island books. Please email Martin Sims at martinsims54@gmail.com.

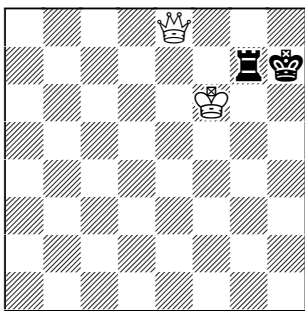
Endgame Workshop - The Struggle Queen Against Rook

By IM Herman van Riemsdijk

Essential to understand how to get fortresses (see my article from the previous issue of NZ Chess April 2012) is the knowledge about what happens in the struggle Queen versus Rook.

In the pure version, without pawns, the oldest and maybe still the most important position comes from Philidor:

Philidor, François-André – 1777

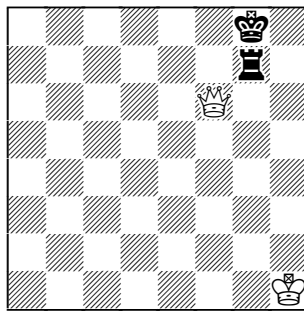


The point is coming back to the same position with black to play: **1.Qe4+ Kh8 2.Qa8+ Kh7** (or **2...Rg8 3.Qh1#**) **3.Qe8** and now white loses the rook or gets mated in a maximum of 5 moves: **3...Kh6 4.Qf8; 3...Rg8 4.Qh5#; 3...Rg4 4.Qh5+; 3...Rg3**

4.Qe4+ Kg8 5.Qc4+ Kh8 6.Qh4+; 3...Rg2 4.Qe4+; 3...Rg1 4.Qe4+ Kh8 5.Qa8+ Kh7 6.Qa7+; 3...Rc7 4.Qh5+ Kg8 5.Qd5+ Kh7 6.Qd3+ Kh8 7.Qd8+; 3...Rb7 4.Qe4+; 3...Ra7 4.Qh5+ Kg8 5.Qd5+ Kh8 6.Qh1+ Kg8 7.Qg1+.

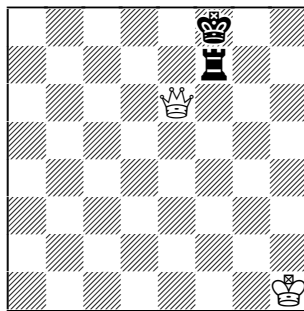
The only exceptions exist when the rook can force a stalemate (or win) by a series of checks.

Berger, Johann – 1889



1...Rh7+ 2.Kg2 Rg7+ 3.Kh3 Rh7+ 4.Kg4 Rg7+ 5.Kh5 Rh7+ 6.Kg6 Rh6+, with a draw. The following position is almost the same, with all pieces moved one file. The stalemate trick is still valid.

Ponziani, Domenico – 1782

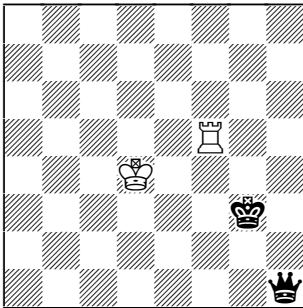


1...Rh7+ 2.Kg2 Rg7+ 3.Kf3 Rf7+ 4.Kg4 Rg7+ 5.Kf5 Rf7+ 6.Kg6 Rg7+ 7.Kh6 Rh7+ 8.Kg6 Rh6+. In both diagrams there are 7 other mirrored positions, e.g. Ka1, Qd6 x Kc8, Rc7; Kh1, Qc4 x Ka3, Rb3, etc.

So normally it's a win, but I quote Batsford Chess Endings (1993, by Speelman, Tisdall and Wade) on page 426: "... If the rook defends very accurately, however, the win can be quite difficult. In 1978, the American grandmaster Walter Brown took on a database. He failed to win the first time round and only won the replay on the fiftieth move."

I let you see some practical examples how humans can struggle.

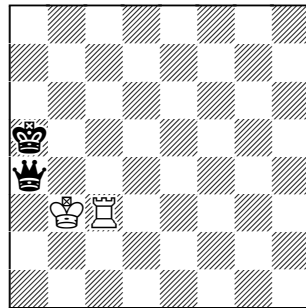
Rowson,Jonathan - Kojima,Shinya
38th Olympiad, Dresden 2008



Tablebase announces mate in 27. **67...Kf4 68.Rc5 Qd1+ 69.Kc4 Ke4 70.Kb5 Qb3+ 71.Kc6 Kd4** A typical zugzwang. **72.Rb5 Qe6+ 73.Kc7 Kc4 74.Rb6 Qe7+ 75.Kc6 Qc5+** The easiest way is **75...Qe8+ 76.Kc7** (The point is that **76.Kd6** loses to **76...Qd8+ 77.Kc6 Qc8+ 78.Kd6 Qc5+**) **76...Kc5. 76.Kb7 Kd5 77.Rb3 Qc6+**

78.Kb8 Kc4 79.Rb1 Qe8+ 80.Ka7 Qd7+ 81.Ka6 Qe6+ 82.Ka7 Qf7+ 83.Ka6 Qg6+ 84.Rb6 Qe8 85.Rh6 Kc5 86.Kb7 Kb5 Here, the quite obvious **86...Qf7+ 87.Ka6 Qf8 88.Rh5+ Kc6 89.Ka7 Qf7+** is winning. **87.Rb6+ Kc5 88.Rh6 Qd7+ 89.Ka6 Qb5+ 90.Ka7 Kc4** Tablebase jumps from mate in 10 to mate in 19. **91.Rh4+ Kb3 92.Rh6 Qc5+ 93.Kb7 Kb4 94.Ka6 Qg5** Better **94...Qc4+**. The jump is from 12 to 21. **95.Rb6+ Ka4 96.Kb7 Qc5 97.Rb1 Qd5+ 98.Ka7 Qf7+ 99.Rb7 Qf6 100.Rh7 Kb5 101.Rb7+ Kc5 102.Rc7+ Kd6 103.Rh7 Kc6 104.Kb8 Qd6+ 105.Ka8 Qa3+ 106.Kb8 Qb3+ 107.Ka7 Qa2+ 0-1.** A neat demonstration that machines don't get tired after long games...

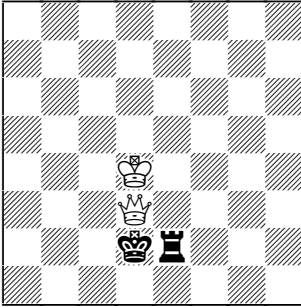
Ninov,Nikolai - Hübner,Robert
Senigallia, 2009



Position after 75...Qxa4+

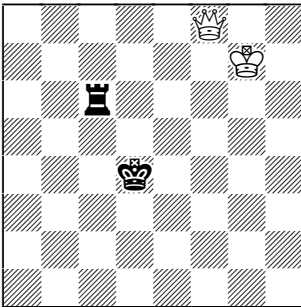
76.Kb2 Qd4 Tablebase announces mate in 20 moves with **76...Qd1. 77.Kb3 Kb5 78.Kc2 Kb4 79.Rb3+ Kc4 80.Ra3 Qf2+ 81.Kc1 81.Kd1! 81...Qe2 82.Kb1 Kb4 83.Ra2 Qf1+ 84.Kc2 Qe1 85.Rb2+ Kc4 86.Ra2 Qe2+ 87.Kb1 Qd1+ 88.Kb2 Kb4 0-1.** White will lose the rook in a few more moves.

Ziatdinov,Raset - Simic,Milan
Belgrade Open, 1989



110...Ke1 111.Qg3+ Kf1 112.Qh3+ Kg1 113.Kd3 Rf2 114.Qg4+ Rg2 115.Qd1+ Kh2 115...Kf2 is better. 116.Ke3 Rg3+ 117.Kf4 Rg2 118.Qe1 Rg8 119.Qf2+ Kh1 120.Qc5 Kh2 121.Qh5+ Kg1 122.Qd5 Rg2 123.Kf3 Kh2 124.Qh5+ Kg1 125.Qh4 Getting the Philidor position.
125...Rg8 126.Qe1+ Kh2 127.Qe5+ Kg1 128.Qa1+ 1-0.

Van Riemsdijk,Herman - Corrêa,Aron
São Paulo Chess Club Championship, 1989



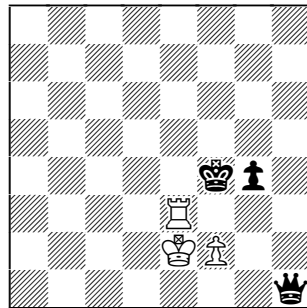
Position after 62.f8=Q

62...Rc7+ Now it should be mate in 30.
63.Kg6 Rc6+ 64.Kf5 Rc5+ 65.Kf4 Kc4 66.Ke4 Kb5 67.Kd4 Rc4+ 68.Kd5 Rb4 69.Qe8+ Ka6 Much more resistant is **69...Kb6 70.Qb8+ Ka5 71.Qa7+ Kb5 72.Qa2 Rh4 73.Qe2+ Ka4 74.Kc5 Ka3 75.Qf3+ Ka4 76.Qf2 Rh5+ 77.Kc4** and mate or loss of the rook is unavoidable.
70.Kc5, 1-0.

When a pawn (or more) joins the rook a whole new world is born. Many fortresses can appear so as in my game against Berg which was shown in the previous article. I'll make a random choice and show some possibilities, even when the queen is also joined by a pawn. The first three examples are from an article I wrote for Brazilian magazine **Jogo Aberto** (Year 1985, page 100).

Van Riemsdijk,Herman - Murari,José
São Paulo, 1985

Simul Club Paineiras



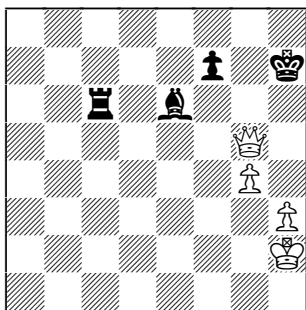
Black to play and win

In the simul my young opponent (then aged 15) allowed me to bring the king to a safe harbour at **g2** and the game ended in a draw. The winning procedure is: **1...Kg5**

2.Rg3 Kh4 3.Re3 Qb1 4.Rg3 Qb5+ 5.Ke1
 Or 5.Rd3 g3! 6.fxg3+ Kg4 7.Kd2 Qb2+
 8.Ke1 Kf5 9.Re3 Qg2 10.Ra3 Qc2 11.Re3
 Kg4 12.Re2 Qc3+ 13.Kd1 Kf3 14.Rc2
 Qa5. **5...Qe5+ 6.Re3** 6.Kf1 Qxg3 7.fxg3+
 Kxg3 8.Kg1 Kh3 (8...Kf3 allows 9.Kh2!
 Kf2 10.Kh1 and black has to repeat
 position with 10...Kg3 11.Kg1 Kh3!)
 9.Kh1 g3 10.Kg1 g2, etc. **6...Qxe3+ 7.fxe3**
Kh3, winning.

When the king is already on **g2**, it's a draw with the black pawn either on the **g** or **h** file.

Penrose,Jonathan - Mecking,Henrique
 Lugano Olympiad,1968



Position after 60.g4

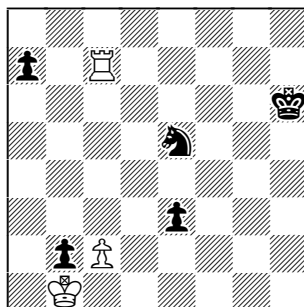
60...Bxg4! A brilliant sacrifice. White has the choice between keeping the **g** or the **h** pawn. The draw with the **h** pawn was already demonstrated by Nikolai Grigoriev in 1917. **61.Qxg4 Rg6 62.Qf5 Kg7 63.h4 Re6 64.h5 Rh6 65.Kg1 Re6 66.Kh1 Rh6 67.Kg2 Re6 68.Kh2 Rh6 69.Kg3 Re6 70.Kh3 Rh6 71.Kg4 Re6 72.Kh4 Rh6 73.Qe5+ Kh7 74.Qc3 Re6 75.Kg5** and

Penrose was unable to break through, ½-½.

That the defending side must be very cautious is illustrated by the following game:

Timman,Jan - Nunn,John

Hoogovens TournamentWijk aan Zee, 1982

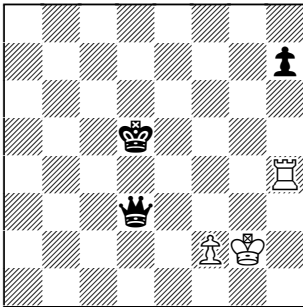


53.Rc3 With 53.Re7 Nc4 54.Rc7 it was an easy draw but Timman got maybe over ambitious. **53...Nf3! 54.Kxb2** Timman first analyzed this position in **Schaakbulletin** (Year 1972 page 97) He thought that 54.Rxe3 Nd2+ 55.Kxb2 Nc4+ was winning for Black. In **Jogo Aberto I** already mentioned that it still was a draw but I made a big mistake saying that after 56.Kb3 Nxe3, both 57.Kb4 or 57.c4 would make an 'easy' draw. In a matter of fact only 57.c4 is a draw. 57.Kb4 loses by 57... Nxc2+ 58.Kb5 Nd4+ 59.Kc5 – or 59.Ka6 Nc6 60.Kb5 a5 – 59...Nf5 60.Kc6 Ne7+ 61.Kb5 Nc8, etc. After 57.c4 Ng4 58.c5 Ne5 59.Ka4 Nc6 60.Kb5 a5 61.Kxc6 a4 it's really a draw. **54...e2 55.Rxf3 e1Q 56.Ra3 Qb4+ 57.Ka2 Qc5 58.Kb2 Kg5 59.Rb3 Kf4 60.Rd3 Ke4 61.Ra3 a5 62.Rd3 a4 63.Ra3 Qb4+ 64.Ka2 Kd5 65.Rd3+ Kc5 66.Ra3 Qc4+ 67.Kb2 Kb4 68.Rd3 Qe4**

69.Ka2?? 69.Ra3 is the correct way. **69...a3!** and Timman resigned, **0–1**. After 70.Rb3+ Kc4 71.Rd3 Qg2 72.Kb1 Qf1+ 73.Ka2 Qc1 74.Rc3+ Kb4 75.Rb3+ Ka4 76.Rb8 Qxc2+ 77.Ka1 Qd1+ 78.Ka2 (or 78.Rb1 Qd5, with a zugzwang) 78...Qe2+ 79.Kb1 Qh2 and the rook has no good square.

Averbakh, Yuri - Bondarevsky, Igor

16th URS-ch – Moscow, 1948



Position after 60.Rxh4

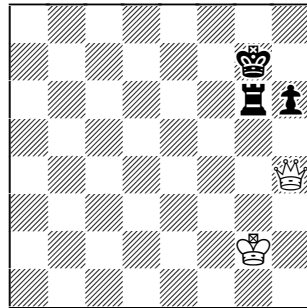
This endgame Averbakh analyzed in **Lecturas de Ajedrez** (1969) and later on in **Averbakh's Selected Games** (1998).

After **60...Ke6 61.Rh3 Qe4+ 62.Kh2 Kf6 63.Re3 Qd5 64.Rg3 h5 65.Re3 Kg5 66.Rg3+ Kf4 67.Re3 h4 68.Rh3 Qb7 69.Re3 Kg4 70.Rh3 Qb1 71.Kg2 Qh7 72.Kh2 Qc7+ 73.Kg2 Qc2 74.Re3** the game ended in a draw. According to Averbakh, Lev Abramov found out, later on, that the subtle **60...Qg6+!** 61.Kh2 (or 61.Kf1 Qf5 62.Rh2 Qf3 63.Kg1 Qd1+ 64.Kg2 Qg4+ 65.Kf1 h5 66.Rh1 h4 67.Rg1 Qd1+ 68.Kg2 h3+ 69.Kh2 Qf3, winning) 61...Qf5 62.Kg3 (62.Kg2 Qg5+ 63.Kh3

Qg1) 62...Qe5+ 63.Kf3 (Also 63.Kh3 Qg5 64.Rg4 Qf5 65.Kg3 h5 66.Rh4 Qg5+ 67.Kh3 Qg1 68.Rxh5+ Ke4, is losing) 63...Qg5 64.Rh3 (Or 64.Rg4 Qh5 65.Kg3 Qh1, again with a win) 64...Kd4 65.Rg3 Qd5+ 66.Ke2 Qh1 was winning for Black.

Ghitecu, Theodor - Badea, Bela

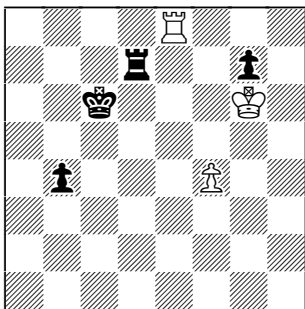
Bucarest, 1991



55.Kf3? I think almost every player would play this automatically! The way to win, as demonstrated by Valentin Stoica in **Schachwoche** (# 3/1992, page 25) is 55.Kh3 Rg5 56.Qd4+ Kh7 57.Kh4 Kg8 58.Qd7 Kh8 59.Qf7 (zugzwang) 59...Rg7 60.Qe8+ Kh7 61.Qe4+ Kg8 62.Kh5!, and so on. **55...Rg5 56.Qe4 Rg6 57.Qe7+ Kg8 58.Kf4 Rg5 59.Qf6 Kh7 60.Qf7+ Rg7 61.Qf5+ Kg8 62.Qe6+ Kh7 63.Qe4+ Kh8 64.Kf5 Kh7 65.Kf6+ Kh8 66.Qe8+ Rg8 67.Qe6 Rg7!** But not 67...Rg5? 68.Kf7 Rg7+ 69.Kf8, winning. **68.Qc4 Kh7 69.Qd5 Kh8 70.Qe4 Kg8, ½–½.**

Finally an example with a more advanced pawn in which another drawing theme appeared. The outcome of this game was very important for me to keep the hope to qualify for the 1990 Manila Interzonal Tournament.

**Van Riemsdijk, Herman -
Tempone, Marcelo**
São Paulo Zonal Tournament, 1989

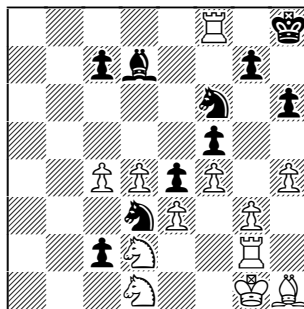


51.Rb8 Kc5 Of course 51...Rb7 52.Rxb7 Kxb7 53.f5 b3 54.Kxg7 b2 55.f6 b1=Q 56.f7 is a well-known draw. **52.f5 Rc7 53.Rg8! b3 54.Rxg7 b2!?** **55.Rxc7+ Kb6 56.f6 b1Q+ 57.Kg7 Qg1+ 58.Kh8 Qd4 59.Rf7! Kc6 60.Kg8?** Again Tablebase spoils one of my 'good' endings. Correct was 60.Kg7! **60...Qd5?** Returning the favor. Tablebase announces mate in 46 with 60...Kd6. His main line goes as 60...Kd6! 61.Rb7! Qg4+! 62.Kf7 Qe4 63.Rb6+ Kd7! 64.Rb2 Qc4+ 65.Kg7 Qd4 66.Ra2 Qg4+! 67.Kf8 Qc4 68.Rg2 Qc5+ 69.Kg7 Qe5 70.Rg6 Ke8 71.Rg4 Qc7+ 72.Kg6 Qf7+ 73.Kf5 Qd5+ 74.Kg6 Qd3+ 75.Kg5 Kf7 and now a human can believe this... **61.Kg7 Qg5+ 62.Kh7 Qf5+** Sealed move **63.Kg7 Qg4+ 64.Kh7 Kd6 65.Ra7! Qf5+ 66.Kg7 Qg4+ 67.Kf7 Qc4+ 68.Kg7 Qd4 69.Re7 Qg4+ 70.Kf7 Qh5+ 71.Kg7! Qg5+ 72.Kf7 Qg4 73.Ra7 Qc4+ 74.Kg7 Ke6 75.f7 Qd4+ 76.Kg8 Qg1+ 77.Kh8!, ½-½.**

God versus the Devil – A Chess Tattoo...?

By Bill Forster

Recently the magazine's editorial staff fielded an unusual enquiry from Wellingtonian Awos Arhaim. Awos wrote; "This is going to be a strange request, but I need some help in coming up with a check scenario (not a CHECKMATE) for a tattoo.....". After a little back and forth including some undiplomatic and curmudgeonly grumbling about the popularity of tattoos these days I agreed to come up with some ideas. Awos provided a little more detail; "I'm heavily tattooed ... the theme of my body suite is heaven vs hell...the idea for my back piece, is a chess game, the devil's hand is holding a piece looking to play ... the devil puts god in check, and then god ... is able to escape the check to format his own attack" My first idea is almost a cliché for chessplayers; Bogoljubov v Alekhine, Hastings 1922. The candidate tattoo position is of course;



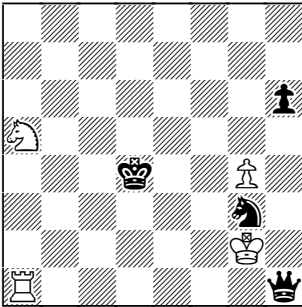
Remarkably Black has encouraged White

Chess Friendships

By Alan Aldridge

to capture all three major pieces in turn along the back rank with a strong looking check at the end. The saving grace is that Black's rampant pawn captured White's queen during this sequence and now inevitably promotes. Black emerges with rough material equality and a decisive attack. Awos rejected this idea, at least partially because there are too many pieces to tattoo...

For my second idea I selected the gorgeous point of a Kasparian study. The devil has just queened a pawn with check.



It looks like an inevitable draw **1.Rxh1 Nxh1 2.Kxh1 Ke4 3.Kg2 Kf4 4.Kh3 h5 5.gxh5 Kg5** and White's last pawn falls. But no, justice prevails **1.Kxg3!!** the queen has many squares, but is dominated by the scattered but co-ordinated White pieces. Wherever it goes white wins it, retains an extra piece and avoids the misplaced king that allowed a draw in the other line.

Awos liked this more but unsurprisingly seems reluctant to make such a committal decision. In fact he even asked me if I have any checkmate (rather than check) ideas. Perhaps the readers can help? Email bill@nzchessmag.com and I'll forward your ideas to Awos.

Chess is a great way to make friends and I always enjoy catching up with old mates at a chess tournament. And while renewing old acquaintances in the back of your mind little evil geniuses are plotting how to thrash said friend over the board in a few days time. I'll be looking forward to this when Wellington Club hosts the National Congress this year for the first time since 2004.

I have been fortunate to have a number of good chess friends. My chess friendships have extended to some odd places. For years I've engaged in a long running series of chess (and tennis) matches with Ed Sarfas, a member of the old Civic Club in the 90s. Games sans clocks have been played in cafes, homes, and by candle light in tramping huts throughout the North Island. So far the score 105 – 103 to Ed, or some similarly ridiculous high number. The running score faithfully kept on a scrap of 'sacred paper' in his portable chess set.

My other long running chess battle has been with Steve Willard (columnist for this magazine) of the USA. A lifelong chess player Steve visited Wellington to train the defence department in 2005 'Alan' he said 'I was in the navy but never went to sea!' 'I wouldn't trust you with a ship either' I replied, 'Those things are expensive!' And lo a friendship was born. 'But' said the landlubber sailor, "now in the civilian side I've risen through the ranks and am now

practically a general!' So when losing to some underrated junior I'd say, 'That kid should show you some respect, doesn't he know you're practically a general!'"

Steve and I have since 2005 played two series of 12 game postal style matches (using Stans Netchess) and met up for two US Opens. Last month I travelled to Littlestown Pennsylvania and stayed with Steve, his wife Edie and three children. We played part one of a long planned over the board match. With an overly optimistic eye for history, these 6 games, played outdoors in Steve's Gazebo, we dubbed the 'Gazebo Match' (or 'the famous Gazebo match') Deck chairs were set up for viewers and Steve's son Josh stapled to the front gate and charged with selling admission. Crowds were thinner than expected but the chess was exciting. By the last game I needed a win to tie and this all out Nimzo Larsen attack was the result. Steve found a resource at the very end (just when I could smell and taste victory!) to draw and take the match 3.5/2.5.

A Aldridge – S Willard October 2012

1.b3 e5 2.Bb2 d6 3.e3 Nc6 4.Bb5 Bd7 5.Nf3 f5 6.O-O Nf6 7.d4 e4 8.Ne1 Be7 9.Nc3 d5 10.Ne2 g5 11.Rc1 a6 12.Bxc6 bxc6 13.c4 Qb8 14.Nc3 Be6 15.f3 h5 16.fxe4 fxe4 17.Qc2 Ng4 18.cxd5 cxd5 19.Nxe4 c5 20.Ng3 Rf8 21.Nf3 h4 22.Qg6+ Kd7 23.Nxg5 Bxg5 24.Qxg5 hxg3 25.Qg7+ Kd6 26.Ba3 Here the computer gives dxc5 as winning for white 26...Rxf1+ 27.Rxf1 Qh8 28.Bxc5+ Kc6 29.Qxh8 Rxh8 30.h3 Nf2 31.Bb4Kb5 32.a3 a5 33.Be1 Ne4 34.Rf3 Rg8 1/2-1/2

Letter From the Kingside – What Should we Pay Them?

By Roger Nokes

Those of you who have a passing interest in physical as well as mental pastimes will have witnessed the resurfacing of the old chestnut of equal prize money for men and women at Wimbledon this year. Gilles Simon of France waded into this argument, as men so often do, with bluntness and self-assurance. "We often speak of equal money, but I think it's something that doesn't work in sport," said Simon. "Tennis is the only sport today where we have parity even though men's tennis remains more attractive than women's at this time.". Simon resorts to the argument that men's tennis is more attractive than women's while another parallel argument is rather more prosaic – men play the best of five sets in grand slam events while women only play the best of three, and hence should get paid more for playing more.

Serena Williams, the 2012 Wimbledon Women's Champion, hit back with the opposite perspective. In response to the claim that men's tennis is more attractive than women's she raised the rather unusual argument that more people were likely to watch Maria Sharapova playing tennis than Gilles Simon simply because she was "hot". I

don't think Serena has a reputation for subtlety either.

The issue is complex, inspires strong views from both sides of the argument, and is far from settled in many sports. Chess too has a reward system that almost always favours the male players and it is interesting to explore the justifications for retaining the status quo or for overturning it.

Before embarking on a discussion that is sure to get me into trouble it is worth remembering that at the top level players essentially have at least three sources of income of which the prize money is only one, and then perhaps not necessarily the largest. Players earn money from endorsements, appearance fees and prize money. I tend to remember reading an article about Tiger Woods in the years before his fall from grace that stated that his earnings from endorsements far outstripped his income from prize money. True or not there is no doubt that the top sportspeople earn substantial sums from sponsorship. This, to me, seems to be a separate issue beyond the purely competitive side of the sport (for example I would be fairly confident that Maria Sharapova earns more from endorsements than Gilles Simon).

So let's just focus on the prize money and appearance fees which are directly related to playing chess. A useful question to ask in this debate, and the exchange between Simon and Williams hints at this, is what is the appearance fee or prize money actually rewarding? Interestingly I couldn't find either Williams or Simon referring to the standard of tennis played. For certain male tennis players play "better tennis" than their female counterparts, by which I mean

that in a match between a top female and top male player the male player would be victorious. In general the same would be true in chess, although here there are certainly exceptions, for example when Judit Polgar was in the world's top 10. What is also interesting is that while men and women never play tennis against each other (except in mixed doubles) in chess this is becoming increasingly common and at least this ensures that the prize money is not gender based.

So what are the arguments for equal or unequal remuneration in tennis? "Attractiveness" seems to be foundational to both arguments. Simon says men's tennis is more attractive although I haven't seen him expand on this idea. Is it because men play for longer (the five sets versus three sets argument, so the spectator gets more bang for their buck), or because men play a faster, harder game, or because they have a more diverse range of shots, or because they grunt louder (actually this is one area where the ladies are pretty competitive as far as I can tell)? Williams counters with the argument that the spectators vote with their feet, wanting to watch celebrities such as Sharapova over relatively obscure male players such as Simon himself (a former world number 6).

What is the chess argument for why we pay professional chess players for playing? Is it the attractiveness of the chess they play? Is it the celebrity factor? Is it the strength of the player? And how do the answers to these questions impact on the issue equal or unequal rewards?

It is impossible to consider chess at all levels so let me focus on the upper echelons, the elite events and the world championship. What is very clear is that the celebrity factor is of towering importance. Ultimately it is the profile of the player(s) that has a profound impact on the interest generated in the chess public and perhaps the general public as well. This is particularly true in the world championship contests. Witness the prize funds of the second Spassky-Petrosian match and the Fischer-Spassky match where Fischer's controversial character amongst other factors generated a more than 10-fold increase in the prize fund. The standard of chess was little different between the two matches but the fact that a Russian was playing an American, and an eccentric one at that, caused this foundational shift in prize money. For very obvious reasons, whether planning Wimbledon or Wijk aan Zee, tournament organisers will need to reconcile the prize fund they offer with the interest generated by the players who will be providing the showpiece of their event. Inviting 10 or 12 strong but obscure grandmasters to Wijk aan Zee simply wouldn't justify the prize money that Carlsen, Anand and Kramnik could attract. Gender has nothing to do with this simple business imperative.

Ultimately tournament organisers want media coverage, local audiences and worldwide internet interest in order to make their events successful. To achieve that attention they need to assemble a group of competitors that will provide a fascinating spectacle. To me this spectacle, while influenced by the celebrity factor at a superficial level, is ultimately determined by the battles on the chessboard. In theory there is

a direct correlation between the celebrity status of a player and their endeavours at the board. But sadly, while generally true, for specific events other factors can impact on the allure of the over the board play. I hold up the recent World Championship Match between Anand and Gelfand as an example. Personally, I am an enormous Anand fan and think back fondly to his matches with Kramnik and Topalov for the title. These short matches were full of tense and intricate struggles and in the Kramnik match in particular Anand showed extraordinary opening preparation and fighting spirit. I am sure others will hold a differing view but, to me, the match between Anand and Gelfand was lacking almost every quality that made the earlier matches so exciting and absorbing, excluding the tension that all such matches possess. Whether Anand was poorly prepared, or the players' styles negated each other, or Anand decided on a conservative strategy that would see the match decided in the rapid tie-breaks (which it ultimately was), were the reasons I certainly can't guess, but the spectacle was missing. Personally I am not sure they earned their prize money.

It appears to me that there is little argument to justify a difference in prize money between male and female chess events purely on the basis of gender. If we want entertaining and inspiring chess we should reward the players who provide it, not because they are male or female. In fact, it is my general impression that women's chess events have more decisive games and often exhibit more competitiveness and risk taking than their male equivalents. However, the realities at present are that male chess players have had greater exposure and the

issue of “celebrity”, in the best sense of the word”, cannot be ignored by tournament organisers. I would like to see more and more female chess players playing in the elite events so they too have the opportunity to gain the exposure that the Kramniks and Anands attract.

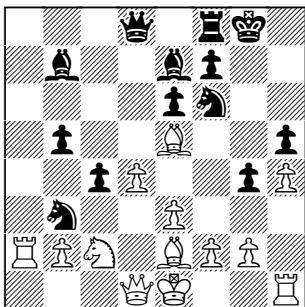
Speaking of attractive chess a recent game that made a strong impression on me was that between Lev Aronian, the world's number 2, and “amateur” Luke McShane at the recent Tal Memorial event in Moscow. This elite 10 player event was hard fought with nearly half of the games decided, and many of the draws dramatic and combative. In case you haven't followed the event world number one, Magnus Carlsen, was victorious overtaking Fabio Caruana in the last round for a slender victory. But it was Luke McShane's masterpiece against Aronian that reminded of why I love chess.

Levon Aronian - Luke McShane

Tal Memorial 2012

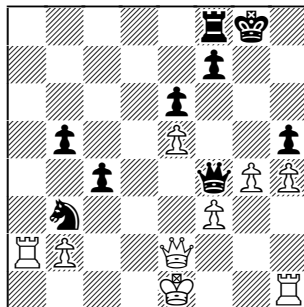
1.d4 This game was played in round three of the Tal Memorial. Aronian had started strongly with a win over Nakamura and a draw with Tomashevsky, while McShane, a relatively inactive GM, had had a disastrous start losing first to Grishuk and then to Radjabov. **1...d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.c4 c6 4.Nc3** The Slav appears to be the most popular opening in modern chess practice. No doubt this is because it has a wide range of possibilities, like a Sicilian, for both players, and these possibilities range from the quiet and unambitious to the outright aggressive. **4...a6 5.Bg5?!** White has a number of standard responses in this position including c5 and e3, but the move

of Aronian's is not so common. Still for a player with his reputation for preparation it is hard to believe that it is a mistake. **5...dxc4 6.a4 h6 7.Bh4 b5 8.axb5 cxb5 9.Nxb5 axb5!?** I love this move. The computer initially rates it as poor for obvious reasons. Black drops an exchange for no apparent compensation. But after some time it is ranked no worse than Qb6 or Bb7. The idea behind the move is relatively profound. The cramping effect of the advanced pawns on the queenside, the misplaced black-squared bishop on h4 that prevents White from blocking a check on b4 to displace the White king all contribute to a strong initiative for Black and good compensation for the exchange. **10.Rxa8 Bb7 11.Ra1 g5 12.Bg3 e6 13.e3** [The only way to prevent the king being displaced is 13.Nd2 Bb4 14.f3 Qxd4 when after 15.Bxb8 Qxb2 16.Rc1 c3 White's position is wretched. So White must acquiesce to his king being pushed to the awkward e2 square.] **13...Bb4+ 14.Ke2 Nc6 15.Ne1 Na5** [15...Ne4 16.f3 Nxc3+ 17.hxc3 Na5 18.Ra2 Nb3 19.Nc2 Bd6 20.g4 is an alternative way forward but Black is struggling to find active play in my view.] **16.Be5 0-0 17.h4 g4 18.Nc2** [18.f3 is certainly more aggressive but the opening of the position seems to be to Black's advantage. There might follow 18...Nc6 19.Bxf6 Qxf6 20.fxg4 e5 when the centre is about to dissolve and the Black bishops become fearsome. An amusing finish would follow after 18.Bxf6?! Qxf6 19.Nc2?? Bf3+ 20.gxf3 gxf3#] **18...Be7 19.Ke1 Nb3 20.Ra2 h5 21.Be2**



[21.f3 is again more critical. The potential opening of the g file is highly double-edged, so Black's best response is not altogether clear. 21...gxf3 22.gxf3 Ng4 23.Bg3 f5 24.Be2 f4 25.exf4 Nh6 leads to a very obscure position where it is anybody's guess who is better.] **21...Bd6!?** [The computer doesn't like this move, suggesting that White is now much better. Instead 21...Bxg2 22.Rg1 Bh3 is unclear. Black has gained an extra pawn but at the same time he has slowed his initiative by putting his light squared bishop offside on h3. Objectively this is best for Black but McShane decides instead to eliminate White's only really active piece and make White work hard to unravel his passive position.] **22.f3 Nd5 23.fxg4 Bxe5 24.dxe5 Qb6!** Black is suddenly on the brink of breaking through on e3 and he has the potential to bring his rook to the d file with difficult threats. **25.Bf3** [25.Rh3 look plausible to buttress the e3 pawn but after 25...Rd8 26.Qb1 Nf4 27.Rg3 Nxe2 28.Kxe2 Rd2+ 29.Kf1 Qd8 White is utterly lost.] **25...Nxe3** [25...Rd8 26.Bxd5 Rxd5 27.Nd4 Nxd4 28.exd4 Rxd4 is also extremely strong. Black is effectively a rook and bishop to the good as the two

White rooks are no more than spectators watching the demise of their monarch.] **26.Nxe3 Qxe3+ 27.Qe2 Qc1+ 28.Qd1 Qe3+ 29.Qe2 Qc1+ 30.Qd1 Bxf3 31.gxf3 Qe3+ 32.Qe2 Qc1+ 33.Qd1 Qe3+ 34.Qe2 Qf4**



Through straightforward play Black has taken complete control of the position. The threat of the rook coming to d8 and d2 is very hard to meet and at the same time the knight on b3 has the potential to join the attack via d4. White's material advantage is of no significance. **35.Qh2** [35.Kf2 Rd8 36.Rd1 Qh2+ 37.Ke3 Qxe5+ 38.Kf2 Qh2+ 39.Ke3 Qxh4 still leaves Black with a strong initiative and the material deficit has been eliminated.] **35...Qxf3 36.Rf1 Qe4+ 37.Kf2 Nd2** [Even more destructive is the straightforward 37...Rd8! 38.Kg1 Rd2] **38.Rg1 Qf3+** While White's defence may have not been exact at times it is hard not to feel real admiration for the way in which McShane first sacrificed the exchange for long term pressure and then found ways to continually add to White's woes without releasing his control of the position. A masterpiece of the very highest quality. **0-1**

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