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Puchen Wang, New Zealand Champion

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Triumphant Treble

On the cover: IM Puchen Wang after completing a rare Championship / Rapid /

Lightning treble at the 121st New Zealand Chess Championships.

Photo Credit: Helen Milligan

In this issue we feature extensive coverage of the recent Congress in Auckland. Plus 2013 New Zealand Champion Scott Wastney introduces two brand new columns ! His first Openings column provides a really meaty, in-depth look at an interesting variation in the Pirc Defence. His first Puzzles column brings back a perennial favourite to the New Zealand Chess Magazine.

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121st NZ Championship – by FM Mike Steadman

Auckland Chess Centre put their hand up for this again, we had a format that we had run before, the venue sorted and we could stomach the losses. We tried to minimise these by reducing the championship to 9 rounds, cutting 2 days off the room hire fee. We also experimented with putting the rapid and lightning first during the statutory holidays then the main event running from a Saturday through to the following Sunday. Upon reflection this was not a great experiment.

Rapid and Lightning

Due to the arbiter not wanting the lightning to go too late, we had a new format this year. Previously we had played in three all play all round robin groups. Then the top two players from each group qualified for a six player double round robin final while the rest played a nine round swiss for the “reserve” – about twenty games for all. The new format was a nine round Swiss. The numbers were well down on previous years, a number of people would not play with the new format and there were grumbles from people who did play saying that the pairing process took far too long. Using electronic boards this time also slowed things down. When you play lightning events, you expect many games and hardly any downtime.

In contrast the rapid went well. However, not paying the prizes out till the end of the championship meant some people would

have to return on the last day or get their cheques mailed to them. All in all, not a great experiment – I guess we go back to the old way if we host it again.

As to the rapid event itself, well it was really always a fight for 2nd place, Puchen Wang is easily our strongest player (next to Murray Chandler) and he really mowed the field down in both quick play events. He managed to get held for a couple of draws, but he was really in a class of his own. As usually happens, those players who don't play Puchen effectively get an extra round. Daniel Shen and Hans Gao avoided him and scored 2nd= and 4th respectively. Another beneficiary of the draw was Anthony Ker, he lost to me early and dropped in the field, later lost to Puchen and then cleaned up some bottom boards before beating Noel Pinic in the last round.

All the other contenders were merrily beating each other up. All in all a fun event and no grumbles from the participants. On a personal note, my son played in his first event, only had a few lessons previously and managed to win a game, I was very proud of him and he had fun – so who knows.

The lightning followed the rapid. Puchen proceeded as before to clean up the field, but the result was only a half point win and Ben Hague was on fire as well. Anthony came through for 3rd and this time no Swiss draws effected the top placings, they all played each other.

Rapid Crosstable

Pos	NAME	Rtg	Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Wang, Pu Chen	2420	8.5	+B34	+W37	+B12	+W6	+B15	+W3	+B20	=W5	+B7
2	Shen, Daniel	2231	7.0	+W56	+B22	+W4	=B5	-W8	=W9	+B11	+W17	+B6
3	Ker, Anthony F	2357	7.0	+W41	+B43	+W16	-B15	+W22	-B1	+W14	+W20	+B5
4	Gao, Hans	2280	6.5	+B19	+W31	-B2	+W37	=B9	-B5	+W51	+W21	+B16
5	Pinic, Noel	2228	6.0	+B32	+W13	+B20	=W2	-B6	+W4	+W8	=B1	-W3
6	Dive, Russell J	2390	6.0	+W45	+B39	+W10	-B1	+W5	=W17	+B15	=B7	-W2
7	Hague, Ben	2367	6.0	+B28	+W26	=W24	=B8	+B13	+W23	=B17	=W6	-W1
8	Smith, Robert W	2274	6.0	+W51	=B46	+W21	=W7	+B2	=W15	-B5	+B33	=W9
9	Green, Ewen M	2201	6.0	+W40	-B10	+W35	+B39	=W4	=B2	=W33	+B22	=B8
10	Goodhue, Nathan	1978	6.0	+B38	+W9	-B6	=W27	-B11	+W53	=B25	+W18	+B23
11	Lam, Daniel King-wai	2002	6.0	+W47	-B16	+W45	-B33	+W10	+B44	-W2	+B31	+W24
12	Ansell, Alan	2086	6.0	+W59	+B29	-W1	+B30	+W24	-W20	-B21	+B48	+W25
13	James, Jack	1979	6.0	+W64	-B5	+W34	+B38	-W7	-B14	+W39	+B28	+W21
14	Rains, Edward	1867	6.0	+B61	-W23	-B27	+W57	+B31	+W13	-B3	+W38	+B20
15	Steadman, Michael V	2232	5.5	+B42	+W18	+B23	+W3	-W1	=B8	-W6	-W16	+B33
16	Thornton, Giovanni	2178	5.5	+B49	+W11	-B3	+W42	-B20	+W40	=W24	+B15	-W4
17	Carpinter, Anthony	2129	5.5	+W53	=B21	+W46	=B24	+W33	=B6	=W7	-B2	=W19
18	Tanoi, T Edward	1917	5.5	+W58	-B15	-W30	+B53	+W43	=B26	+W29	-B10	+W34
19	Fan, Allen Chi Zhou	1645	5.5	-W4	+B66	+W29	-B22	+W41	-B33	+W44	+B26	=B17
20	Hart, Ralph	2257	5.0	+B27	+W36	-W5	+B40	+W16	+B12	-W1	-B3	-W14
21	Runcan, Daniel I	1986	5.0	+B50	=W17	-B8	+W46	+B27	=W25	+W12	-B4	-B13
22	Duffin, Mike	1903	5.0	+B57	-W2	+B31	+W19	-B3	+W28	=B23	-W9	=B30
23	Lukey, Stephen G	2239	5.0	+W35	+B14	-W15	+W52	+B25	-B7	=W22	=B24	-W10
24	Barlow, Matthew J	2121	5.0	+B52	+W25	=B7	=W17	-B12	+W38	=B16	=W23	-B11
25	Zhang, William Jiew	2023	5.0	+W44	-B24	+W41	+B26	-W23	=B21	=W10	+W27	-B12
26	Carpinter, Bernard	1841	5.0	+W48	-B7	+B36	-W25	+B34	=W18	=B27	-W19	+W39
27	Ang, Alphaeus Wei Er	1632	5.0	-W20	+B62	+W14	=B10	-W21	+B35	=W26	-B25	+W37
28	Gong, Daniel Hanwen	1698	5.0	-W7	+B65	-W33	+B47	+W29	-B22	+B42	-W13	+B38
29	Lim, Benjamin U	2003	5.0	+B60	-W12	-B19	+W65	-B28	+W36	-B18	+W41	+B43
30	Gilmour, Mark	1825	5.0	+W65	-B33	+B18	-W12	=B32	=W42	=B52	+W51	=W22
31	Timergazi, Layla	1853	5.0	+W66	-B4	-W22	+B58	-W14	+B62	+B40	-W11	+B49
32	Qin, Joy Shu Yan	1520	5.0	-W5	+B64	-W39	+B56	=W30	-B51	=W41	+B44	+W46
33	McNabb, Matthew D	2046	4.5	-B37	+W30	+B28	+W11	-B17	+W19	=B9	-W8	-W15
34	Nicholls, Leighton	1728	4.5	-W1	+W63	-B13	+B45	-W26	=B41	+W35	+W52	-B18
35	Zhan, Judd	1610	4.5	-B23	+W57	-B9	=W55	+B46	-W27	-B34	+W63	+B51
36	Macfarlane, Magnus	1881	4.5	+W62	-B20	-W26	-B43	+W63	-B29	=W47	+B53	+W48
37	Zhang, Jasmine	1274	4.0	+W33	-B1	+W44	-B4	-W40	+B45	-B48	+W57	-B27
38	Pan, Darrick	1031	4.0	-W10	+B56	+B54	-W13	+W39	-B24	+W57	-B14	-W28
39	Hair, Philip I	1819	4.0	+B63	-W6	+B32	-W9	-B38	+W49	-B13	+W56	-B26
40	Li, Jiapeng	1437	4.0	-B9	+W50	+B48	-W20	+B37	-B16	-W31	-W49	+B59
41	Lam, Byron	1687	4.0	-B3	+W67	-B25	+W48	-B19	=W34	=B32	-B29	+W58
42	Chen, Johnson	1575	4.0	-W15	+B58	+W43	-B16	=W51	=B30	-W28	=B46	=W47
43	Rains, Timothy	1838	4.0	+B55	-W3	-B42	+W36	-B18	-W48	+B61	+B45	-W29
44	Qin, Nicole Shu Yu	1238	4.0	-B25	+W49	-B37	+W50	+B52	-W11	-B19	-W32	+B57
45	Gold, Hamish R	1723	4.0	-B6	+W55	-B11	-W34	+B60	-W37	+B54	-W43	+B52
46	Tionko, Efrain	1844	4.0	+B67	=W8	-B17	-B21	-W35	+W55	+B53	=W42	-B32
47	Wang, Aaron Ziwen	1168	4.0	-B11	-W54	+B61	-W28	+B50	-W52	=B36	+W55	=B42
48	Picken, Oliver	0	4.0	-B26	+BYE	-W40	-B41	+W64	+B43	+W37	-W12	-B36
49	Ansell, John	1341	4.0	-W16	-B44	-W53	+B66	+W59	-B39	+W60	+B40	-W31
50	Zhang, Jennifer	1129	4.0	-W21	-B40	+W59	-B44	-W47	-B58	+B66	+W60	+B56
51	Mukkattu, Philip	1642	3.5	-B8	+W61	-B52	+W54	=B42	+W32	-B4	-B30	-W35
52	Wang, Tony	1315	3.5	-W24	+B59	+W51	-B23	-W44	+B47	=W30	-B34	-W45
53	Yan, Caroline	1316	3.5	-B17	=W60	+B49	-W18	+B55	-B10	-W46	-W36	+B63
54	Credo, James	1520	3.5	--	+B47	-W38	-B51	-W56	+B59	-W45	=B58	+W61
55	Starr, Aaron	0	3.5	-W43	-B45	+W66	=B35	-W53	-B46	+W67	-B47	+B64
56	Gothorp, Thomas H T	1548	3.0	-B2	-W38	+B60	-W32	+B54	-BYE	+W62	-B39	-W50
57	Salazar Eyre, Lucas	1008	3.0	-W22	-B35	+W64	-B14	+W58	+BYE	-B38	-B37	-W44
58	Xu, David	1020	3.0	-B18	-W42	+B67	-W31	-B57	+W50	=B63	=W54	-B41

Rapid Crosstable (continued)

Pos NAME	Rtg	Pts		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
59 Dong, Olivia	1282	3.0		-B12	-W52	-B50	+W67	-B49	-W54	+B65	+B62	-W40
60 Yan, Sarah	1217	3.0		-W29	=B53	-W56	+B62	-W45	=W61	-B49	-B50	+W65
61 Su, Danny	914	3.0		-W14	-B51	-W47	=B64	+W66	=B60	-W43	+BYE	-B54
62 Barry, Jacob	968	3.0		-B36	-W27	+B63	-W60	+B65	-W31	-B56	-W59	+BYE
63 Zhang, Leo	0	2.5		-W39	-B34	-W62	+BYE	-B36	+B64	=W58	-B35	-W53
64 McRae, John	1115	2.5		-B13	-W32	-B57	=W61	-B48	-W63	+BYE	+B67	-W55
65 Steadman, Mathew	0	2.0		-B30	-W28	+BYE	-B29	-W62	-B67	-W59	+W66	-B60
66 Qin, Oscar Shu Xuan	893	2.0		-B31	-W19	-B55	-W49	-B61	+BYE	-W50	-B65	+W67
67 Salazar Eyre, Emma	623	2.0		-W46	-B41	-W58	-B59	+BYE	+W65	-B55	-W64	-B66

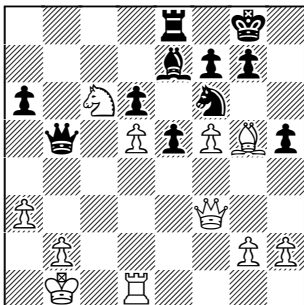
The Championship

Looking at the field before the start of the event we see a typical championship mix. A big disappointment is the absence of 2013 Champ FM Scott Wastney, so dominant in last year's competition. The genuine title contenders are mainly a group of "usual suspects"; IMs Ker, Dive, and Garbett; FMs Steadman, Smith and also the comparative newcomer who has so quickly become a fixture on the podium in top New Zealand tournaments, Ben Hague. But of course the favourite was not a member of this group; IM Puchen Wang has carried all before him since returning from the United States. Given that a much less experienced Puchen won the championship convincingly the last time he competed in 2007, his second seeding here was strictly a nominal numerical glitch while the rating system adjusts to his current strength. The rest of the field comprised the normal mixture of grizzled veterans, hopeful youngsters and a few chess tourists from around the planet. Actually Canadian Gordon Morrell is set to become a local, already he spends eight months of the year in NZ and he intends increasing this.

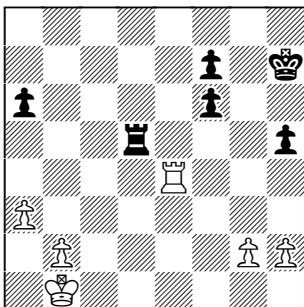
Round 1 had a few of the top players dropping points to the lesser lights. Dive drew against William Li, Smith lost to Daniel Lam from Singapore. Duneas also stumbled against Martin-Buss, so a very eventful round 1.

Daniel King-wai Lam - Smith, Robert W

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.f4 Qc8
 This move I could not find anywhere. The following variation is more in the spirit of the line I believe. [8...exf4 9.Bxf4 Nc6 10.Qe2 g6 11.h3 Nh5 12.Bh2 Bg7; 8...Qc7 9.f5 Bc4 10.Qf3 b5 11.0-0 Nbd7 12.Kb1 b4 13.Bxc4 Qxc4 14.Nd2 Qc7 15.Nd5 Nxd5 16.exd5 This is the closest thing I could find to the Qc8 idea, appears to me that White is better here.] **9.f5 Bc4 10.Bxc4 Qxc4 11.Qf3 h5 12.0-0-0 Nbd7 13.Kb1 Rc8 14.Rc1 b5 15.Rhd1 Be7 16.Nd2 Qb4 17.a3 Qa5 18.Nb3 Qc7 19.Nd5!?** Not sure this is the best idea, it seems to lose most of White's advantage. **19...Nxd5 20.exd5 Nf6 21.c4 bxc4 22.Nd2 Qb7 23.Nxc4 0-0 24.Na5 Rxc1+ 25.Bxc1 Qb5 26.Nc6 Re8 27.Bg5**



27...e4? [27...Nxd5 28.Qxd5 Bxg5 29.Qxb5 axb5 Just the kind of position Bob should be going for] **28.Qg3** [28.Nxe7+ Rxe7 29.Qg3 Qe2 30.Re1 Qg4 31.Qxd6 White will torture Black now, only he can win from here, as per the game. 31...Rd7 32.Qb8+ Kh7 33.Bxf6 gxf6 34.Qe8 Qxf5 35.Qxe4 Rxd5 36.Qxf5+ Rxf5 37.Re2] **28...Qe2** [28...Qb7 Mistakes follow mistakes, this move gets Black back to level again, Qe2 is a bad move. 29.Nxe7+ Qxe7 30.Re1] **29.Re1 Qg4 30.Nxe7+ Rxe7 31.Qxd6 Rd7 32.Qb8+ Kh7 33.Bxf6 gxf6 34.Qe8 Qxf5 35.Qxe4 Qxe4+ 36.Rxe4 Rxd5**



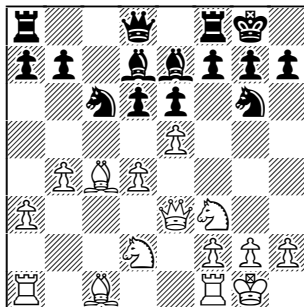
37.Kc2 Kg6 38.b4 a5 39.bxa5 Rxa5 40.a4 Rg5 41.g3 Rf5 42.Kb3 Rf2 43.Rh4 Rf1

44.a5 Rb1+ 45.Kc4 Rb2 46.Kc5 Rc2+ 47.Kb5 Rb2+ 48.Rb4 Rxh2 49.a6 Ra2 50.Kb6 f5 51.a7 f4 52.Rxf4 Rb2+ 53.Ka5 1-0

Round 2 and the new weird pairing system being recommended by FIDE showed it's colours today. The top rated winners from round one were in many cases paired against each other, whilst the much lower rated Barry Martin-Buss and Hilton Bennett were paired together. Ker-Steadman came to a remarkable conclusion, Anthony winning an apparently impossibly drawn opposite coloured bishop ending. One of the observers on the Chess Chat website put the win down to White "having an extra King" as that piece penetrated decisively.

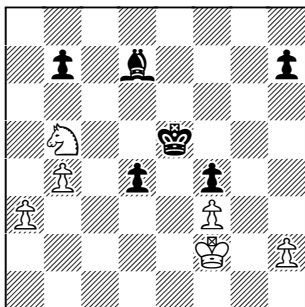
Leonard McLaren – Paul Garbett

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.c3 Nf6 4.e5 Nd5 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 d6 7.a3 Nc6 8.Be4 This is certainly not a popular move, a more typical continuation would be [8.Bd3 Be7 9.0-0 0-0 10.Qe2 Bd7 11.Qe4 f5 12.exf6 Nxf6 13.Qh4] **8...Be7 9.0-0 0-0 10.Qe2 Bd7 11.Nbd2 Nf4 12.Qe3 Ng6 13.b4?**



This move just loses a pawn and Paul shows us how to wrap these games up from

here. 13...dxe5 14.dxe5 Ncxe5 15.Nxe5 Nxe5 16.Be2 [16.Qxe5? Bf6] 16...Ng6 17.Ne4 Qb6 18.Qxb6 axb6 19.Be3 Be6 20.f3 f5 21.Nc3 Bf6 22.Rfc1 Rfc8 23.Ra2 Ne7 24.Bc4 Bd7 25.Ne2 b5 26.Bb3 Rxc1+ 27.Bxc1 Nd5 28.Bxd5 exd5 29.Rd2 Bc6 30.Nd4 g6 31.Bb2 Kf7 32.Kf2 f4 33.Rd3 Re8 34.Bc1 g5 35.Bd2 Bd7 36.Ne2 Be6 37.Bc3 Rc8 38.Bxf6 Kxf6 39.Rc3 Ke5 40.g3 Rxc3 41.gxf4+ gxf4 42.Nxc3 d4 43.Nxb5 Bd7

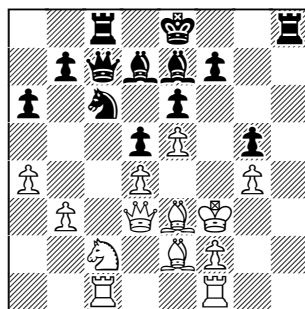


44.Na7? The last chance to stay in the game, this loses the Knight. [44.Nc7 Kd6 45.Na8! Surprisingly the knight can't be trapped here, if 45...Kc6 the a pawn advances to secure b6 45...b5 46.Nb6 Bf5 47.a4 bxa4 48.Nxa4 Still bad for White, but he at least he keeps the knight] 44...Kd6 45.Ke2 Kc7 46.Kd3 Kb6 47.Kxd4 Kxa7 Now it is over, the Bishop will easily win this battle. 48.Ke5 Kb6 49.Kxf4 Kb5 50.Ke5 Ka4 51.Kd6 Bc6 52.f4 Be4 53.Ke5 Bb1 54.f5 b5 55.f6 Ba2 56.h4 Kxa3 57.Kd6 Kxb4 58.h5 h6 59.Ke7 Kc5 60.f7 Bxf7 61.Kxf7 b4 62.Kg7 b3 63.Kxh6 b2 64.Kg7 b1Q 65.h6 Qb7+ 66.Kg8 Qc8+ 67.Kg7 Qd7+ 68.Kg8 Qe8+ 69.Kg7 Qe7+ 70.Kg8 Qg5+ 71.Kh7 Kd6 0-1

Round 3 and the top players had good hard draws – Hague with Wang and Garbett with Ker, Dive ended Martin-Buss's party as did the other seeds.

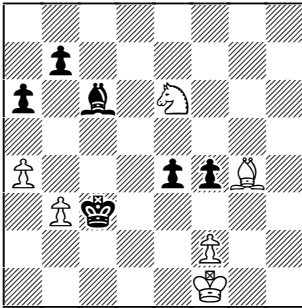
Ben Hague – Puchen Wang

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6 5.Nf3 Bd7 6.Be2 Nge7 7.Na3 cxd4 8.cxd4 Nf5 9.Nc2 Qb6 10.0-0 Rc8 11.g4 Nfe7 12.b3 [12.Nfe1 f6 13.Be3 Ng6 14.exf6 gxf6 15.f4 Bd6 16.Nd3 Qc7 17.Rc1 0-0 This is the kind of mess that the GMs get into, hard to say what is happening, a perfect French position :-)] 12...h5 13.h3 Ng6 14.Be3 Be7 15.Kg2 Nd8 16.Qd3 a6 17.a4 Nc6 18.Nd2!? Not a good idea to take the knight away from guarding h4. 18...hgx4 19.hgx4 Nh4+ 20.Kg3? This is wrong, he needed to retreat. 20...g5 [20...Qc7 21.Rh1 Nxe5 22.dxe5 Qxc2] 21.Nf3 Qc7 22.Rac1 Nxf3 23.Kxf3

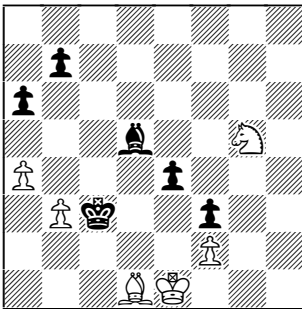


23...Nxe5+! 24.dxe5 Qxe5 25.Rh1 Qe4+? Missed the chance, and this gives away all the advantage. [25...d4! 26.Kg2 Rxh1 27.Rxh1 dxe3-+] 26.Qxe4 dxe4+ 27.Kg2 Rxh1 28.Kxh1 f5 29.gxf5 exf5 30.Bh5+ Kf8 31.Nd4 Rxc1+ 32.Bxc1 Kg7 33.Kg2 Bf6 34.Bb2 g4 35.Bc3 f4 36.Kf1 Be5 37.Ne6+ Kf6 38.Nc5 Bc6 39.Bxe5+ Kxe5 40.Bxg4 Kd4? Wrong way. [40...Kd6

41.b4 a5 42.Nxe4+ Bxe4 43.bxa5 Should be an easy draw.] **41.Ne6+ Kc3**



42.Bd1? Just when the win is in sight, White lets it slip away. [42.Nxf4 Kxb3 43.Bd1+ Kb4 44.Ke2 Bxa4 45.Bxa4 Kxa4 46.Ke3 b5 47.Kxe4 b4 48.Nd3 And the f pawn queens.] **42...f3 43.Ke1 Bd5 44.Ng5** ½–½



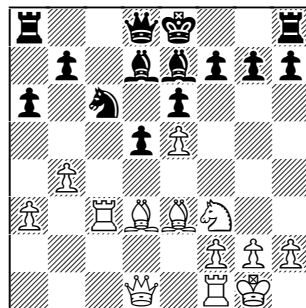
Ed: The draw agreement was a disappointment to at least one keen online viewer in Wellington. White's king and bishop are stalemated (Kf1? is met by Kd2) and presumably that was enough to convince Ben he couldn't win. The comp wants Black to try for a win with; 44... a5! 45.Nh7 but White holds comfortably, eg 45...Bxb3 46.Bxb3 Kxb3 47.Nf6 Kxa4 48.Nxe4 Kb3 49.Nd2+ Kc2 50.Nxf3 a4

51.Nd4+ Kb2 52.Nb5 a3 53.Nxa3 Kxa3 54.f4 Kb4 55.Kd2=

Round 4 saw the plot thicken nicely as Dive landed a powerful blow, defeating Puchen, his first loss since returning to New Zealand. Ker also took care of Hague. These 2 results put the Wellingtonians out into a half point lead.

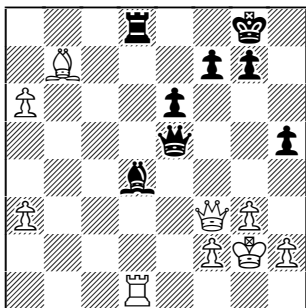
Anthony Ker – Ben Hague

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Qb6 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Bd3 cxd4 7.cxd4 Bd7 8.0–0 Nxd4 9.Nbd2 This was a favourite of Smerdon's, it has good surprise value, and worked well here. **9...Nxf3+** [9...Nc6 10.Nb3 Nge7 11.Be3 Qc7 12.Rc1 Ng6 13.Nc5 Bxc5 14.Bxc5 Nxe5 15.Nxe5 Qxe5 16.Qb3 Na5 17.Qa3 Nc4 18.Bxc4 dxc4 19.Rfe1 Qd5 White has compensation, but 2 pawns is 2 pawns.] **10.Nxf3 Ne7 11.Be3 Qd8 12.Rc1** [12.Ng5 h6 13.Nh7 Rxh7 14.Bxh7 g6 15.h4 Bb5 16.Re1 h5 17.Bg5 Bg7 18.g4 hxg4 19.Qxg4 Bd3 20.h5 Bf5 21.Qh4 Rc8 22.Rad1 White is going to get that Bishop out in the end and the game will be won.] **12...Nc6 13.a3 Be7 14.b4 a6 15.Rc3**

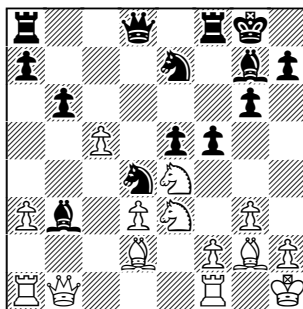


The extra pawn means nothing here. White's game is easy to play. **15...d4 16.Nxd4 Nxe5 17.Be4 Rc8 18.Qc2 Rxc3**

19.Qxc3 Qb8 20.Bf4 Bd6 21.Qg3 0-0
 22.Bxb7 Nf3+ 23.Qxf3 Bxf4 24.g3 Be5?
 Gives White his chance, the ending
 becomes difficult as the queenside pawns
 drop. [24...Bg5 25.Nc6 Qc7 26.h4 Bf6
 27.Rc1 Qb6=] 25.Nc6 Bxc6 26.Qxc6 a5
 27.bxa5 Bd4 28.a6 h5 29.Kg2 Qe5 30.Qe4
 Qf6 31.Qf3 Qe5 32.Rd1 Rd8?



(2559)/Voronezh 2006/CBM 112 ext/1/2-
 1/2 (49)] 14...Nd4 15.b4 [Δ15.Nc4!?= is
 worthy of consideration] 15...Bb3 16.Qb1 I
 didn't fancy the passive 16.Qe1, so I relied
 on active counterplay instead. 16...Nxe2+
 17.Kh1 Nd4 18.bxc5 f5



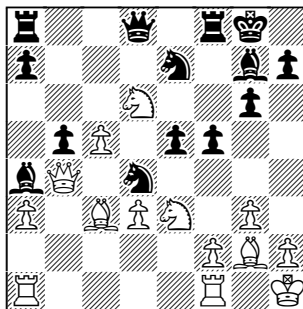
33.a7 A good move. French players
 beware, maybe this is Anthony's new
 French weapon. 1-0

Russell Dive – PuchenWang

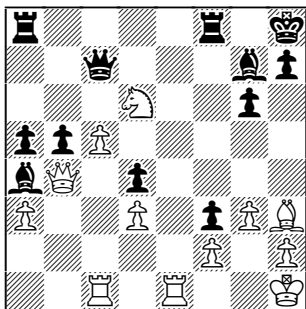
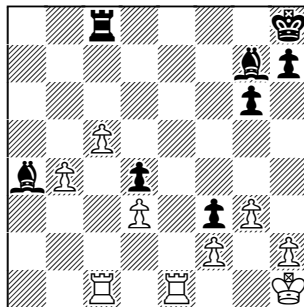
Notes by Russell Dive

1.Nf3 c5 2.c4 Nc6 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.0-0
 e5 6.Nc3 d6 7.d3 Nge7 8.Ne1 Be6 9.Nc2
 d5 10.cxd5 Nxd5 11.Ne3 Nde7 12.Ne4 b6
 13.a3 [13.Ng5 Bd7 14.f4 exf4 15.gxf4 0-0
 16.f5 gxf5 17.Kh1 Rc8 18.Nc4 Be6 19.Qe1
 Ng6 20.Qg3 Nd4 21.Qh3 h6 22.Nxe6 fxe6
 23.Bxh6 Qh4 24.Bxg7 Kxg7 25.Qxh4
 Nxh4 26.e3 Nxe7 27.Kxg2 Nc6 Guddahl,V
 (2159)-Tjoelsen,K (2081)/Gausdal
 2007/CBM 117 ext/1/2-1/2 (53)] 13...0-0
 14.Bd2N [14.Ng5 Bd7 15.Bd2 h6 16.Ne4
 a5 17.a4 f5 18.Nc3 Be6 19.Rc1 Kh7
 20.Nb5 Rb8 21.Bc3 Qd7 22.Nc4 Nd5
 23.Bd2 Bg8 24.f4 exf4 25.gxf4 Ndb4
 26.Bc3 Rfe8 27.Bxg7 Qxg7 28.e4 Rbd8
 Lutsko,I (2471)-Bocharov,D

The game really starts to open up now, with
 thrust and counter-thrust from both sides!
 19.Bc3 Ba4 [Δ19...Nec6!?! 20.Nd2 Be6
 21.Bxd4 Nxd4 (21...exd4 22.Nec4 Bd5
 23.cxb6±) 22.Bxa8 Qxa8+ 23.f3 bxc5+]
 20.Qb4= Pu Chen misses this strong
 follow-up to 19.Bc3, which may explain
 his next move. 20...b5? [Δ20...Bd7 and
 Black hangs on 21.Nd6 Nec6 22.Qc4+
 Be6=] 21.Nd6±



21...f4 22.Bxd4 [22.gxf4 Rxf4 23.Bxd4 Rxd4±] 22...exd4± 23.Nd5 [23.Bxa8 dxe3 24.Bf3 Bxa1 25.Rxa1 f3g3] 23...f3 24.Nxe7+ [24.Bh3 Nc6 25.Qe1 Kh8±] 24...Qxe7± 25.Bh3 Kh8? [25...a5 26.Qe1 Qe2 27.Be6+ Kh8 28.Nf7+ Kg8 29.Bd5±] 26.Rfe1 [26.Nxb5 Bxb5 27.Qxb5 Rae8+-] 26...Qc7 [26...Qg5 27.Rac1 a5 28.Qb2±] 27.Rac1 [Δ27.Nxb5!? Bxb5 28.Qxb5+-] 27...a5±



28.Nxb5?? with this move White loses his initiative. [Δ28.Qd2±] 28...Qc8 This was a very unpleasant surprise in time trouble! [Weaker is 28...axb4 29.Nxc7 Ra7 30.Ne6+-] 29.Bxc8 [29.Qxa4 fails to the following pretty mating combination 29...Qxh3 30.Rg1 Rf5 31.g4 Be5 32.Rg3 Bxg3 33.Qxd4+ Re5 34.Qxe5+ Bxe5 35.c6 Qxh2#] 29...axb4 30.Nd6 Rfx8 [Δ30...Bh6 31.Ra1 Bd2] 31.Nxc8± Rxc8 32.axb4

The smoke is starting to clear from the chaos in the position. Both players have been short of time on the clock for a few moves now, so good quick decisions need to be made in this tricky endgame. 32...Kg8 33.Re7 Bf8 [33...Bb5!? should be considered 34.Rd1 Ba4±] 34.Rb7± Bc6 35.Rb6 Kf7 [Δ35...Bd7!? 36.c6 Bh6+-] 36.b5+- So often in endgames two bishops are stronger than a rook. Here however the two bishops have to contend with two connected, passed pawns and this proves too much. 36...Bd5 37.c6 Bd6 [37...Ke6 38.Ra6 Bd6 39.c7+-] 38.Rb7+ Rc7 [38...Kf6 39.Rxh7 Bc7+-] 39.Rxc7+ Bxc7 40.b6! The breakthrough is finally achieved. 40...Bxb6 41.c7 Be6 [41...Bxc7 does not help much 42.Rxc7+ Kg8 43.Rd7+-] 42.c8Q Bxc8 43.Rxc8 Ba5 44.Rc4 Bb6 45.Rb4 Bc5 46.Rb7+ [46.Rb7+ Be7 47.Rd7+-] 1-0

Round 5 and the half way mark – Ker pressed and tried to squeeze a win against Dive, when he got close, he missed the opportunity and the game ended in a draw. Garbett was better against Gino, but one lazy move let him off the hook, a draw followed. For the second day in a row Puchen was playing an exchange down

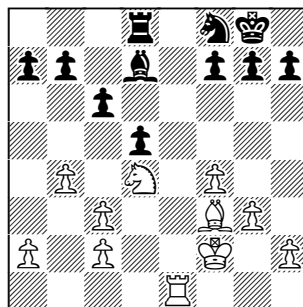
after he sacked or perhaps just lost material. The audience was buzzing as the hitherto unthinkable prospect of two consecutive Puchen losses loomed, but this time at least Puchen did have compensation. McLaren moved his King to the wrong side and got mated instead of getting a perpetual. Steadman played a nice g3 Kings Indian and beat Smith. Hague bounced back with a win over William Li. So the field had squeezed up again, but Ker was looking good as he had played more of the top players.

Anthony Ker – Russell Dive

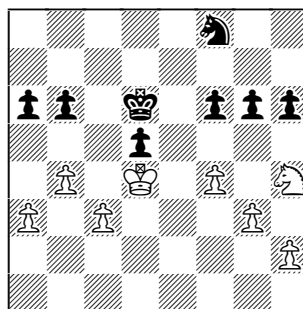
Notes by the Editor based on the players' post-mortem

This game was more for the purist than the adrenaline addict. White gets a tiny edge from the opening and maintains it for the whole game as he probes for something tangible. **1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Nxe5 d6 4.Nf3 Nxe4 5.Nc3 Nxc3 6.dxc3 Nc6 7.Bf4 Qf6!?**

Russell explained that this Ivanchuk idea attempts to avoid a common problem with these positions - finding a role for the Black queen. So forget Chess 101 and develop it in front of the bishops! **8.Bg5 Qe6+ 9.Be2 Be7 10.Qd2 0-0 11.Bxe7 Nxe7 12.0-0 Qf6 13.Rfe1 Ng6 14.Qd4 Qxd4 [14...Ne5 Is more thematic, Black would love to recapture dxe5 because then he is the only player with a healthy majority] 15.Nxd4!?** A surprise for Russell who assumed White would straighten out his pawns **15...Bd7 16.g3 Rfe8 17.f4 Nf8** White has pressure. **18.Bf3 c6 19.Kf2 d5 20.Rad1 Rxe1 21.Rxe1 Rd8 22.b4**



Cementing the good knight's position **22...h6** Initiating an interesting regrouping. Black's pieces are struggling regrouping for air. **23.Nb3 b6 24.Nd4 Nh7 25.c4 Nf6 26.cxd5 cxd5 [Not 26...Nxd5 27.b5!] 27.Ke3 Re8+ 28.Kd2 Rxe1 29.Kxe1 Kf8 30.Kd2 Ke7 31.Kd3 Kd6 32.c3 g6 33.a3 a6 34.Ke3 Bg4 35.Kd3 Bxf3 36.Nxf3 Nd7 37.Kd4 f6 38.Nh4 Nf8**

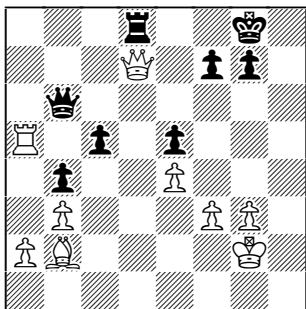


39.Ng2 [The players thought that 39.f5 instead was very strong but the Comp shows that Black holds after 39...g5 40.Ng2 Nd7 41.Ne3 Ne5 42.Nxd5 Nf3+ 43.Ke4 Nd2+ with a perpetual] **39...Ne6+ 40.Kd3 g5 41.fxg5 fxg5** Russell found my suggestion of capturing toward the centre very amusing. "Not in the ending - that would give White the opportunity to create

a passed h pawn". Of course, defending knights hate h pawns. **42.Ne3 h5 43.c4 Nc7** [Russell avoids 43...dxc4+ 44.Nxc4+ Kc6 45.Ke4 Kb5 46.Nb2 when only White's king penetrates. Of course the computer finds a viable defence even then.] **44.Kd4 Ne6+ 45.Kd3 Nc7 46.Kd4 ½-½**

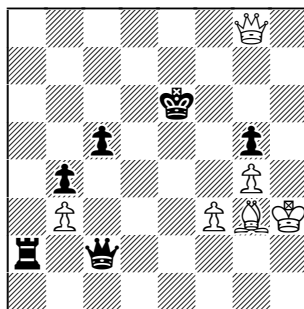
Puchen Wang - Leonard McLaren

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Nf3 Be7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.0-0 b6 7.Nc3 Bb7 8.Ne5 c6 9.e4 dxc4 10.Nxc4 Ba6 11.b3 b5 12.Ne5 [12.Ne3 b4 13.Ne2 Bxe2 14.Qxe2 Qxd4 15.Bb2 Qb6 16.g4 Rd8 17.g5 Ne8 18.h4 Korchnoi used this to win a nice game against Godena] **12...b4 13.Ne2 Bxe2** [13...c5 14.d5 exd5 15.exd5 Bd6 16.Nc4 Bxc4 17.bxc4 White is better here also.] **14.Qxe2 Qxd4 15.Bb2 Qb6 16.Rac1 a5 17.Qc2 Rc8 18.Rfd1 Ra7 19.Nc4 Qb5 20.Nd6 Bxd6 21.Rxd6 Rd7 22.Bf1 Qh5 23.Be2 Ng4 24.Bxg4 Qxg4 25.Rxd7 Nxd7 26.Qd3 Nf8 27.Rc5 h5 28.Rxa5 h4 29.f3 Qg6 30.Kg2 c5 31.Qe3 hxg3 32.hxg3 Nd7 33.Qf4 e5 34.Qd2** [34.Bxe5 Nxe5 35.Qxe5 Qb6 36.Ra4 Qb5 37.Qf5 Qe2+ 38.Kh3 Rf8 39.Ra7 White is a safe pawn up, the win is a long way away, but there's no risk.] **34...Qb6 35.Qxd7 Rd8**



36.Qe7? [36.Ra6 Rxd7 37.Rxb6 Rd2+

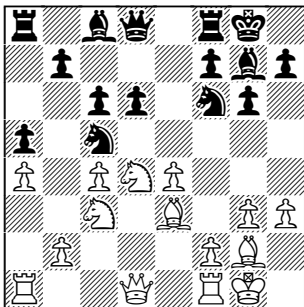
38.Kh3 Rxb2 39.Ra6 A draw would be a fair result. White should lose after the move played.] **36...Qxa5 37.Qxe5 f6 38.Qe6+ Kf8 39.Kh3 Qc7 40.Qc4 Qd7+ 41.g4 Qd6** [41...Qd1 42.Qxc5+ Kf7 43.Kg3 Qe1+ 44.Kf4 Qd2+ 45.Kg3 Qxb2 And the Rook would win comfortably, no perpetual here.] **42.Bc1 Ke7 43.Kg2 Ra8 44.Qc2 Qd4 45.Bf4 g5** This is not good, no need to weaken the kingside pawns. Black is losing the thread. **46.e5 Kf8 47.Bg3 Qc3 48.Qf5 Rxa2+ 49.Kh3 Qc2 50.Qxf6+ Ke8 51.Qe6+ Kf8 52.Qh6+ Ke8 53.Qh8+ Kd7 54.e6+ Ke7 55.Qg7+ Kxe6 56.Qg8+**



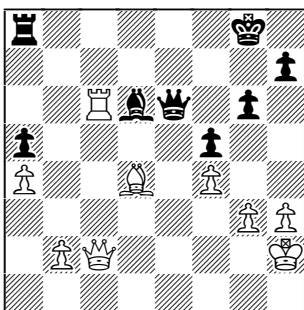
56...Kf6? Wrong way, he had to get over to the Queenside and accept the draw, White now can (gradually) force mate!. **57.Qf8+ Kg6 58.Qe8+ Kh7 59.Qf7+ Kh6 60.Qh5+ Kg7 61.Be5+ Kf8 62.Bd6+ Kg7 63.Be5+ Kf8 64.Qh6+ Ke8 65.Qc6+ Ke7 66.Qc7+ Ke8 67.Qc6+ Ke7 68.Qd6+ Ke8 69.Qe6+ Kf8 70.Bd6+ Kg7 71.Qe7+ Kg6 72.Qe8+ Kh7 73.Qf7+** A tough loss for Leonard, he must have been shell shocked after this. **1-0**

Michael Steadman – Bob Smith

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.g3 0-0 6.Bg2 Nbd7 7.Nf3 e5 8.0-0 c6 9.h3 a6 10.a4 exd4 11.Nxd4 a5 12.Be3 Nc5?



There is a reason the Re8 is the move. **13.e5! Ne8 14.exd6 Na6 15.c5 Nxc5 16.Nxc6 bxc6 17.Bxc5 Bd7 18.Qd2 Rb8 19.Rfe1 Nf6** Now it's a question of how to make use of the extra pawn. **20.Ba3 Re8 21.Rxe8+ Qxe8 22.Re1 Qc8 23.Kh2 Rb7 24.Nd1 Ra7 25.Ne3 Be6 26.Rc1 Ra6 27.Nc4 Bxc4 28.Rxc4 Nd7** White has added the two Bishops to his plus column. **29.f4 Bf8 30.Bf3** Lazy, always be on the lookout for combinations, the c pawn is pinned, attack it again! [30.Qd5 c5 31.Bxc5 Nxc5 32.Rxc5] **30...c5 31.Bg4 f5 32.Bf3** [32.Qd5+ Kh8 33.Bxc5 Nxc5 34.Rxc5 Qd8 35.Qd4+ Bg7 36.Qc4 Ra8 37.Bf3] **32...Bxd6 33.Bd5+ Kg7 34.Be6 Qe8 35.Bxd7 Qxd7 36.Bxc5 Qe6 37.Bd4+ Kg8 38.Qc2 Ra8 39.Rc6**



39...Qd5? A mistake in a bad position. Always be on the lookout for combinations. **40.Rxd6!** Game over - the continuation would have been:[40.Rxd6 Qxd6 41.Qc4+ Kf8 42.Bc5] **1-0**

Mike's annotated games for the final four rounds will appear in the next issue

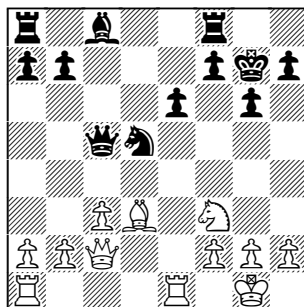
Round 6 and Dive wasted a good opportunity and lost against Hague. Ker beat Yang who had sneaked through the field, it was one of those Pircs that becomes an endgame that Anthony proceeds to win, horrible to watch. Puchen beat Garbett and Steadman defeated McLaren to effectively end his challenge, a side variation against his c3 Sicilian killed White off quickly. Gino got himself into the mix by beating Lam in a messy English.

Puchen Wang - Paul Garbett

Notes by Puchen Wang

1.d4 e6 2.e4 after having achieved a bad position against Leonard McLaren in the previous round with the Catalan, I decided to try my luck in the French defense against Paul **2...d5 3.Nd2 Be7 4.Bd3 Nc6** An unexpected move, normal would be **4...c5 5.Ngf3** [5.c3?! is more dubious due to 5...dxe4 6.Bxe4 (6.Nxe4 e5!=) 6...Nf6 7.Bf3 Nd5 planning e6-e5 looks comfortable for black] **5...Nb4 6.Be2 dxe4** [6...Nf6 is bad as white can consolidate the center with a few tempos 7.e5 Nd7 8.c3±] **7.Nxe4 Nf6 8.Nxf6+ Bxf6 9.0-0 0-0 10.c3 Nd5 11.Bd3 Qe7** [Adams-Seirawan, Bermuda 2000 continued 11...b6 12.Qc2 g6 13.Re1 Bb7 14.Bh6 Bg7 15.Bxg7 Kxg7 16.Be4 Qc8 17.Bxd5 Bxd5 18.Ne5±;

11...c5!? 12.dxc5 Qe7 13.Qe2 Qxc5 looks like an interesting alternative for black to exchange white's central pawn] **12.Qc2 g6** [If 12...Kh8 This move does not allow white to play Bh6 but then 13.Qe2!? planning Qe4 and forcing black to play g6 anyway.(13.Bxh7? g6 14.Bxg6 fxg6 15.Qxg6 Qh7 the piece is more important than the 3 pawns at this stage of the game)] **13.Bh6 Bg7 14.Bxg7 Kxg7** At this stage of the game, I was quite happy thinking I managed to exchange the dark-squared bishop and slightly ahead in development. However, Paul proved black's position is quite resilient and can quickly equalize given a few moves **15.Rfe1 c5 16.dxc5 Qxc5**

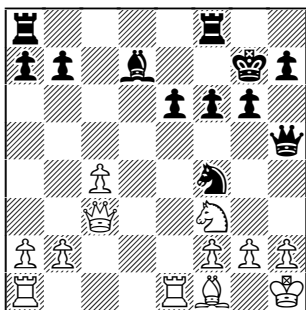


If black manages to develop the light-squared bishop, the position would be equal. Here I thought the way to increase the pressure for black is by advancing the queenside pawns **17.c4 Nf4!?** When Paul played this during the game, I was quite

Championship Crosstable

Pos	NAME	Rtg	Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Wang, Pu Chen	2440	7.5	+W18	+W11	=B4	-B2	+W13	+W5	+B3	+B6	+W7
2	Dive, Russell J	2441	7.0	=B7	+W12	+B22	+W1	=B3	-W4	+W10	+B8	+W6
3	Ker, Anthony F	2423	6.0	+B19	+W6	=B5	+W4	=W2	+B14	-W1	-W7	+B13
4	Hague, Ben	2387	5.5	+W29	+B26	=W1	-B3	+W7	+B2	-W6	=B5	=W9
5	Garbett, Paul A	2339	5.5	+W16	+B13	=W3	=B8	=W10	-B1	+W9	=W4	=B11
6	Steadman, Michael	2291	5.5	+W23	-B3	+W29	=B10	+W8	+B13	+B4	-W1	-B2
7	Li, William	2116	5.5	=W2	=B17	+W16	=B26	-B4	+W22	+W14	+B3	-B1
8	Smith, Robert W	2348	5.5	-B12	+W28	+B27	=W5	-B6	+W11	+B26	-W2	+W16
9	Duneas, John	2185	5.5	-W22	+B24	-W13	+B21	+B20	+W27	-B5	+W10	=B4
10	Thornton, Giovanni	2202	5.0	=B15	=W20	+B18	=W6	=B5	+W12	-B2	-B9	+W21
11	Morrell, Gord	2159	5.0	+W24	-B1	=W14	=B17	+W16	-B8	+W15	=B13	=W5
12	Lam, Daniel King-wai	2100	5.0	+W8	-B2	+W23	-B13	+W15	-B10	=W17	+W22	=B14
13	McLaren, Leonard J	2326	4.5	+B25	-W5	+B9	+W12	-B1	-W6	+B27	=W11	-W3
14	Yang, Scott	2150	4.5	=B20	=W15	=B11	+W22	+B26	-W3	-B7	=W17	=W12
15	Kumar, Vinod	2021	4.5	=W10	=B14	=W17	=B29	-B12	+W19	-B11	=B23	+W26
16	Rains, Edward	2086	4.5	-B5	+W25	-B7	+W28	-B11	=B18	+W20	+W27	-B8
17	Stuart, Peter W	2118	4.5	=B28	=W7	=B15	=W11	=B22	=W26	=B12	=B14	=W18
18	Lim, Benjamin U	2109	4.5	-B1	+W21	-W10	+B30	-B27	=W16	=B19	+W26	=B17
19	Huang, Alex	2103	4.5	-W3	-B23	+W30	=B25	=W29	-B15	=W18	+W24	+B22
20	Rains, Timothy	1998	4.0	=W14	=B10	-W26	+B23	-W9	+BYE	-B16	-B21	+W30
21	Jia, Hao	1995	4.0	-B27	-B18	+W25	-W9	+B28	=W23	=B24	+W20	-B10
22	Martin-Buss, Barry	2009	3.5	+B9	+W27	-W2	-B14	=W17	-B7	+W30	-B12	-W19
23	Milligan, Helen	2062	3.5	-B6	+W19	-B12	-W20	=W24	=B21	=B25	=W15	=W28
24	Gong, Daniel Hanwen	2000	3.5	-B11	-W9	+B28	-W27	=B23	=W25	=W21	-B19	+BYE
25	Meyer, Marany	2062	3.5	-W13	-B16	-B21	=W19	=W30	=B24	=W23	=B28	+B27
26	Goodhue, Nathan	2165	3.0	+B30	-W4	+B20	=W7	-W14	=B17	-W8	-B18	-B15
27	Bennett, Hilton P	2137	3.0	+W21	-B22	-W8	+B24	+W18	-B9	-W13	-B16	-W25
28	Nicholls, Leighton	1985	3.0	=W17	-B8	-W24	-B16	-W21	=B30	+BYE	=W25	=B23
29	Krstev, Antonio (W)	2103	2.0	-B4	+W30	-B6	=W15	=B19	-BYE	--	--	--
30	Zhang, William Jiewe	2007	2.0	-W26	-B29	-B19	-W18	=B25	=W28	-B22	+BYE	-B20

happy thinking naively that the knight would be in trouble. However, things weren't so simple... [17...Nb4 18.Qc3+ f6 19.Be4± Then a3, b4 is coming with tempos and white should be slightly better] **18.Bf1** getting ready to play g3 **18...f6** [18...Qh5 preventing g3 runs into 19.Qc3+ f6 20.Kh1 transposes to the game] **19.Qc3 Qh5** [19...e5!? I spent a lot of time calculating the complications after 20.Nxe5 fxe5 21.Rxe5 Nh3+□ 22.gxh3 Qxf2+ 23.Kh1 Qf3+ 24.Qxf3 Rxf3 25.Re7+! (25.Re8 Rf2 26.Kg1 Rxb2 27.Rd1 Bg4!⚡) 25...Kh6 26.Kg1 Bxh3 27.Rxb7 Rd8 white has an extra pawn but black definitely has his chances due to the exposed nature of the white's king] **20.Kh1?** This move is a mistake, better was [20.Rad1 b6 (20...e5? 21.Nxe5 fxe5 22.Rxe5+-; 20...Kg8 planning e5 21.Nd4 e5 22.Ne2 Ne6 23.c5±) 21.Rd4 g5 22.g3±] **20...Bd7**



An unfortunate blunder [20...b6!?!; 20...Kg8!? planning e5] **21.Qd2 Nxb2 22.Bxb2 Bc6 23.Qe3 Rad8 24.Rad1?! e5 25.Rxd8 Rxd8 26.b3 a6 27.Ng1 Bxb2+ 28.Kxb2 Rd4 29.h3 Qf5 30.Ne2 Rd3 31.Ng3 Qd7 32.Qe4** Paul has been making the position very difficult for me to convert and through some dubious moves, black

obtained some very good counterchances **32...h5 33.Kh2 Rd4 34.Qg2 h4 35.Ne4 b6 36.Re3?! f5 37.Nc3 e4 38.Qg5 b5 39.cxb5 axb5 40.Qxh4 b4 41.Ne2 Rd2 42.Nf4 Qd6 43.Kg2 Qb6 44.Qe7+ Kh6 45.Re2** [45.Ne6!?! would have been faster as Qxe3 runs into Qh4+♯] **45...Qc6 46.Rxd2 e3+ 47.Rd5** Overall, a very interesting game where Paul definitely had his chances. I believe the key moment of the game was on move 19 where the pawn sacrifice would have provided black with serious counterplay. 1-0

So with 3 rounds to go, Ker had a half point lead and only had Wang, Smith and McLaren remaining to play so looked favourite if he could hold out Puchen in round 7. Wang only had Ker, Smith and Steadman remaining of the top players. Steadman had Hague, Wang, Dive and Garbett remaining. Hague had only Steadman, Smith and Garbett. A clutch of players were a further half point back, so round 7 would be a key round.

Round 7 and the game of the round was Ker vs Wang. Predictably Ker played his c3 Sicilian, Puchen had done some deep preparation the isolated pawn fell in due course, the attack was turned away, more pawns fell and the white game collapsed. Hague came horribly unstuck against Steadman, played a reasonably new line in the Advance but continued badly, the queenside pawns fell and his game shortly after. Dive bounced back by grinding Thornton down in the same line Gino tried against Garbett and was lucky to draw – not wise to go to the well twice with dodgy openings.

Round 8 and Steadman v Wang was an Exchange Slav, was only a matter of time before the brain explosion occurred and Puchen calmly showed the folly of my ways and calmly pocketed the point. The reinvented Dive used his new e5 Black opening, took Smith's offered pawn and progressed through to convert for a nice win. The surprise result was Ker v Li, another c3 Sicilian and William was very prepared, sacrificed a pawn and got Ker into all kinds of trouble. Giving the pawn back got into a losing Rook and pawn ending which William convincingly won. Ker's 13th title is looking a tough nut to crack.

So to the last round, Puchen needed a win to be champion and had William Li after the latter's win over Ker from round 8. William got to play the leader and eventual champion on board 1 in the final round last year as well. This year that reflected a good tournament (last year it was something of a quirk in the draw). Puchen played a controlled system, gave William no chance and pounced when he had the chance. Dive v Steadman was for 2nd place, Dive played a d4 line, landed into a Slav and proceeded to out calculate Steadman – White was crushing through with an attack at the end and Steadman was forced to resign. McLaren v Ker was Anthony's Pirc showing it's robustness, he defended off Leonard's attack and pocketed the booty on the way to score a nice win. Various others drew and won to get into the share of 4th.

So the events were really a chance for Puchen to demonstrate how much better than the rest of us he is. Apart from the rocky loss to Russell, and a dodgy moment

against Noel Pinic in the rapid, these events were convincingly won by him. In the championships, Russell really came back into the frame. Looks like he has done a rework on his openings (long time coming :-), and therefore he could use his skills to basically outplay everyone else. Anthony needs to follow in Russell's footsteps, he is wide open for computer opening preparation and in my opinion will struggle to get that 13th title until he does a rework. The rest of us are only pretenders to these 3, we can only dream of getting photo'd with the Silver Rook. We had our champion, someone else's turn to host the event, no doubt we would do it again.

The Major Open

Forty nine competitors fought out the Open event, including some on-the-day entrants whose email entries had been lost (or something). Keong dealt with that by drawing the latecomers against each other and giving the 3rd player the bye due to odd number of players – sorted.

Before the tournament a fair number of the entrants would have had genuine title aspirations, including some very experienced competitors (Ross Jackson, Ian McNally, Paul Macdonald, Henry Vital, Don Eade, Nigel Cooper, Hamish Gold, Richard Taylor, Efrain Tionko from Australia and others). Of course traditionally this event sees rapidly improving juniors emerge. Sean Martin-Buss, Alphaeus Ang (son of arbiter Keong), Layla Timergazi and Brian Liu were looking likely from that group.

In the end the title was shared by one player from each group. Sean Martin-Buss has not been playing seriously for very long, but is already rapidly catching up to his dad Barry's rating. Barry was a regular

competitor back in the day and it was good to see him competing in the championship this year , apparently invigorated by his son's interest.

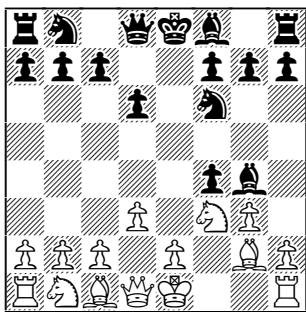
Major Open Crosstable

Pos	NAME	Rtg	Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Martin-Buss, Sean	1983	7.0	+B39	+W25	+B2	+W7	+B3	+W4	-B5	+W6	-B8
2	Macdonald, Paul	1967	7.0	+W24	+B15	-W1	+W33	+B12	=W7	+B26	+W5	=B4
3	Ang,Alphaeus Wei Er	1993	6.5	+W22	+B34	+W10	+B6	-W1	+W9	+B4	=W7	-B5
4	Cooper, Nigel	1719	6.5	+B12	+W35	+W16	+B13	+W10	-B1	-W3	+B11	=W2
5	McNally, Ian	1913	6.5	=W30	=B29	+W11	=B15	+W16	+B13	+W1	-B2	+W3
6	Timergazi, Layla	1952	6.0	+B33	+W32	+B8	-W3	-B9	+W17	+B12	-B1	+W19
7	Jackson, L Ross	2000	6.0	+W40	+B11	+W17	-B1	+W23	=B2	+W31	=B3	-W10
8	Al-Muhaisen,Neethea	2055	6.0	+W19	+B27	-W6	-W9	+B32	-B11	+W21	+B18	+W1
9	Kong-Lim, Qi Le	1506	6.0	=W16	=B44	+W24	+B8	+W6	-B3	-W11	+B23	+W15
10	Vital, Henry	1997	6.0	+B21	+W23	-B3	+W31	-B4	-W12	+B39	+W32	+B7
11	Fan, Allen Chi Zhou	1745	6.0	+B45	-W7	-B5	+W43	+B39	+W8	+B9	-W4	+B17
12	Eade, Don	1929	5.5	-W4	+B46	+W30	+B19	-W2	+B10	-W6	=B16	+W24
13	Tionko, Efrain	1966	5.5	=B28	+W36	+B29	-W4	+B25	-W5	=B17	+W26	=B14
14	Liu, Brian	1965	5.5	-W29	+B37	=W34	-B36	+W42	+B24	+W23	=B15	=W13
15	Smith, Vivian J	1837	5.0	+B20	-W2	+B35	=W5	-B17	+W25	+B30	=W14	-B9
16	Cotty, Richard	2049	5.0	=B9	+W28	-B4	+W27	-B5	=W30	+B35	=W12	=B26
17	Taylor, Richard	1862	5.0	+B47	+W31	-B7	=W25	+W15	-B6	=W13	+B33	-W11
18	Holdo, Karl	1665	5.0	=B43	=W26	-B25	+W21	-B30	+W20	+B34	-W8	+B35
19	Qin, Joy Shu Yan	1545	5.0	-B8	+W49	+B39	-W12	+B34	-W26	+B29	+W31	-B6
20	Qin, Nicole Shu Yu	1129	5.0	-W15	-B22	+W46	=B24	+W41	-B18	+B27	=W25	+B29
21	Lee, Ryan	1425	5.0	-W10	+W38	-B31	-B18	+W43	+B44	-B8	+W37	+BYE
22	Yan, Sarah	1384	5.0	+B3	+W20	-B33	-W39	-B35	+W48	+B44	+W34	+B31
23	Knightbridge, Wayne	1600	4.5	+BYE	-B10	+W44	+W26	-B7	+W33	-B14	-W9	=B25
24	Holdaway, Steven	1337	4.5	-B2	+W47	-B9	=W20	+B27	-W14	+B42	+W30	-B12
25	Li, Jiapeng	1655	4.5	+W46	-B1	+W18	=B17	-W13	-B15	+W41	=B20	=W23
26	Gold, Hamish R	1848	4.5	=W44	=B18	+W40	-B23	+W36	+B19	-W2	-B13	=W16
27	Michael, Andrew	1633	4.5	+B49	-W8	=B32	-B16	-W24	+B28	-W20	+B41	+W33
28	Wang, Aaron Ziwen	1278	4.5	+B13	-W16	-W36	-B41	+B48	-W27	+BYE	+B40	+W39
29	Kong-Lim, Yu Le	1273	4.0	+B14	=W5	-W13	=B34	+W37	-B31	-W19	+B36	-W20
30	Dong, Olivia	1236	4.0	=B5	+W43	-B12	=W32	+W18	=B16	-W15	-B24	=W38
31	Pakenham, John	1748	4.0	+W41	-B17	+W21	-B10	+W40	+W29	-B7	-B19	-W22
32	Mukkattu, Philip	1678	4.0	+W42	-B6	=W27	=B30	-W8	+B38	+W36	-B10	-BYE
33	Yan, Caroline	1255	4.0	-W6	+B41	+W22	-B2	+W44	-B23	+W40	-W17	-B27
34	Kay, J Bruce	1782	4.0	+B38	-W3	=B14	=W29	-W19	+B45	-W18	-B22	+W44
35	Laughland,Alexander	1561	4.0	+W48	-B4	-W15	=B37	+W22	=B36	-W16	+B45	-W18
36	Roberts, Michael H	1814	4.0	=W37	-B13	+B28	+W14	-B26	=W35	-B32	-W29	+B43
37	Li, Rodney	1077	4.0	=B36	-W14	+B48	=W35	-B29	-W39	+W46	-B21	+W45
38	Su, Danny	957	4.0	-W34	-B21	+W47	-B40	+B49	-W32	+B43	=W39	=B30
39	Zhang, Jasmine	1347	3.5	-W1	+B42	-W19	+B22	-W11	+B37	-W10	=B38	-B28
40	Garland, Mana	1471	3.5	-B7	+W45	-B26	+W38	-B31	=W42	-B33	-W28	+B48
41	Barry, Jacob	954	3.5	-B31	-W33	=B43	+W28	-B20	+W47	-B25	-W27	+W46
42	Li, Leo Xiang Yu	777	3.5	-B32	-W39	+B45	+W49	-B14	=B40	-W24	-W43	+BYE
43	Zhang, Jennifer	623	3.0	+B18	-B30	=W41	-B11	-B21	+BYE	-W38	+B42	-W36
44	McRae, John	1147	3.0	=B26	=W9	-B23	+W48	-B33	-W21	-W22	+BYE	-B34
45	Zhang, Leo	912	3.0	-W11	-B40	-W42	+B47	+B46	-W34	+B49	-W35	-B37
46	Ryu, Rosa	599	2.5	-B25	-W12	-B20	+BYE	-W45	+W49	-B37	=W47	-B41
47	Rudkins, Linton R	1175	2.5	-W17	-B24	-B38	-W45	+BYE	-B41	=W48	=B46	=B49
48	Lee, Dylan	507	2.0	-B35	+BYE	-W37	-B44	-W28	-B22	=B47	=W49	-W40
49	Lee, Amy	578	2.0	-W27	-B19	+BYE	-B42	-W38	-B46	-W45	=B48	=W47

Paul Macdonald has taken the initiative and provided an impressively detailed analysis of the critical last round game with Nigel Cooper that helped decide the fate of the title this year. Paul addresses not just positions and variations but also the psychological aspects of competitive play.

Nigel Cooper – Paul Macdonald

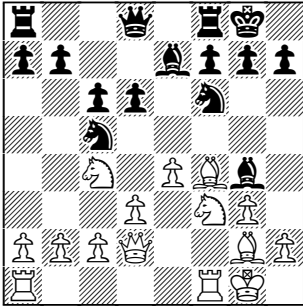
1.f4 Birds Opening. Nigel looked at my previous games in this event and saw I had been playing 1...d6 against both 1.e4 and 1.d4. So he came upon 1.f4 as a way of preventing 1...d6. **1...d6** anyway! Nigel was of the opinion that this didn't end up very well for me - I have a different opinion and feel 1...d6 had every opportunity to secure equality. **2.g3 e5** Taking advantage of White not playing 2.Nf3 **3.d3 Nf6 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Bg2** [5...fxe5 Bxf3 6.exf3 dxe5 is fine for Black] **5...exf4**



A surprising concession - giving up the centre and developing my opponents pieces. The point is that the bishop isn't very secure on f4 and there is also a tactical point. After ...c6 White will be prevented from castling due to the weakness of the b2 square. [5...Nc6 offers easy equality in my opinion but I wanted to play something

interesting in the last round. Play might proceed 6.0-0 Qd7 7.Nc3 Be7 8.e4 0-0-0 9.Be3 (9.f5 d5) 9...exf4 10.Bxf4 d5 11.exd5 (11.e5 Bc5+ 12.Kh1 Nh5) 11...Nxd5 12.Nxd5 Qxd5 13.Qd2 Rhe8] **6.Bxf4 c6 7.e4 Nbd7 8.Nbd2** A good move - as Nigel quite rightly pointed out, c4 will be a nice square for the knight. **8...Be7 9.Nc4** I could have played an early break in the centre here however I felt White would retain the advantage. I was attracted to the idea of rerouting the knight from c5 to e6 to put pressure on the f4 bishop. Admittedly this takes time but I thought it wasn't easy for White to open lines into Black's position. **9...Nc5!** [9...d5 10.exd5 cxd5 11.Ne3 (11.Nd6+? Kf8+ as White's knight is trapped with ...Qb6 coming) 11...Qb6 12.0-0-0 (12...Qxb2 13.Nxg4 Nxg4 14.Rb1 Qxa2 15.Re1+) 13.d4 and White keeps a slight advantage due to his active pieces and control of f5. Grabbing material doesn't help Black's cause 13...Qxb2?! 14.Rb1 Qxa2 15.Nxg4 Nxg4 16.Rxb7 Ngf6 17.Ne5! Nxe5 18.dxe5 Bc5+ 19.Kh1 Ne4 20.e6! White is in a commanding position here 20...fxe6? 21.Bxe4 dxe4 22.Qd7] **10.0-0** [The critical move here was 10.e5 This attempts to directly refute Black's play however in the end it achieves little 10...Nd5!? (10...dxe5? would be a mistake psychologically. I have gained a little understanding of the great Emanuel Laskers methods. 11.Nxe5 This would be a position Nigel would be very comfortable with. My intention was to attempt to keep the position dynamic and complex posing difficult problems for both players rather than giving Nigel a game that is relatively easy to understand) 11.exd6 (11.Nxd6+? Bxd6 12.exd6 Nxf4 13.gxf4 0-0!+ as Black will regain the d6 pawn and the f4 pawn

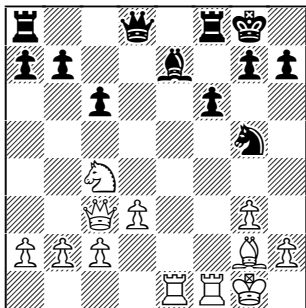
will be weak) 11...Nxf4 12.dxe7 Nxc2+ (12...Qxe7+ 13.Kf2 Nxc2 transposes to the main line) 13.Kf2 Qxe7 14.Kxc2 0-0-0 15.Re1 Qf6 and Black has no difficulties to speak of] **10...0-0 11.Qd2**



A good move from Nigel. Completing his development but more importantly making it clear that when the f4 bishop comes under fire, Nigel will allow it to be captured by bringing the queen to the active f4 square. **11...Ne6** Immediately after I played ...Ne6 I realised ...d5 instead would achieve equality. My conviction to the ...d5 idea encouraged me to play it next anyway but I didn't feel it was as good as when the knight was on c5 [11...d5! 12.exd5 (12.Ne3? Bxf3 13.Bxf3 dxe4± as the pawn cannot be recaptured) 12...cxd5 13.Ne3 Qb6! 14.Ne5 (14.Be5 Ncd7 15.Bd4 Bc5) 14...Be6!=(14...Ne6 allows some tricky tactics by White 15.d4! Nxd4 16.N5xc4 Nxc4 17.Kh1 Nf6 18.c3 Nc6 19.Nxd5 Nxd5 20.Bxd5± due to White having the two bishops in an open position)] **12.Rae1** [12.e5 dxe5 (12...Nd5 doesn't work as well now 13.exd6 Bf6 14.Be5 b5! 15.Bxf6 Nxf6 16.Nce5 Qxd6 17.Rae1± and White has a nice easy game) 13.Nfxe5 Bh5= and Black has some good active moves coming with ...Bc5+, ...Nd5 and

...Nd4] **12...d5** [The move that fought for my attention was 12...b5! In hindsight I wish I had played it 13.Ne3 (13.e5 again is critical but doesn't offer White anything useful 13...bxc4 14.exf6 Bxf6 15.dxc4 Qb6+ 16.Kh1 Qxb2 A complex position arises where I think Black has the better of it due to the weak queenside pawns e.g. 17.Bxd6 Rfd8 18.Ne5 Bxe5 19.Bxe5 Rxd2 20.Bxb2 Rxc2) 13...Nxf4 14.Nxc4 Nxc4! 15.Nxf6+ Bxf6 16.Kxc2 Bxb2 17.d4! a5!± I think this shows the soundness of Black's opening strategy and vindicates 1...d6 as being a perfectly acceptable way of meeting 1.f4(17...Ba3?! 18.Qc3 b4 19.Qxc6 Rc8 20.Qa4=)] **13.exd5 Nxd5** [13...cxd5 was equally as good, but again I chose the more dynamic option against Nigel] **14.Be5?!** [14.Be3 acknowledging Black has achieved equality was probably better] **14...f6** Hunting down the dark squared bishop and again keeping the position complex [I could have won a pawn here but I am not sure I could have won the game 14...b5 15.Ne3 Bxf3 16.Bxf3 Nxe3 17.Qxe3 Bc5 18.d4 Nxd4 19.Kg2 Nxf3 20.Qxf3 Qd5 21.Qxd5 cxd5 22.Rd1 Rad8 23.Bd4 Rc8] **15.Bc3 Nxc3?!** [I should not have rushed to take the c3 bishop. After all it isn't going anywhere! 15...Re8 was simple. The game is of course still very complex but I don't see any significant advantage for White.] **16.Qxc3** [16.bxc3 was slightly better, doubling pawns but retaining control of the d4 square] **16...Bxf3** Unnecessary. At this stage I had around 4 minutes left on my clock to make 24 moves. Time management is a critical skill in Chess and one, at times, I am yet to master. [16...Re8 was simplest] **17.Bxf3 Ng5!?** An unusual place for a knight. I think it is the first time I have ever put a

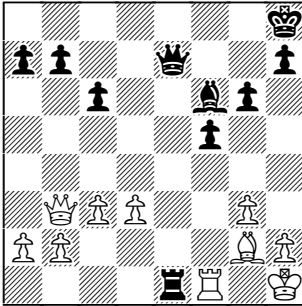
knight on g5 so it did make for a interesting spectacle. My idea was it could find a home on h3 but it also can come back to f7 to block the a2-g8 diagonal and then come into e5. [17...Re8 again was simple and good; 17...Nd4 was ok too 18.Rxe7?? Nxf3+] **18.Bg2**



[18.d4 not worrying so much about the f3 bishop but rather taking hold of the centre was a reasonable option too.; 18.Bg4 eyeing up the key e6 square doesn't quite work 18...Bc5+ 19.Kg2 Qd5+ 20.Bf3 Nxf3 21.Rxf3 Rfe8] **18...Qd7** [The tempting 18...Bc5+ 19.Kh1 Bd4? is answered by (19...Qd7 is better) 20.Qb3! Now if Black attempts to hold the b7-pawn White gains a strong initiative 20...Rb8 21.c3 Bc5 22.d4 Be7 23.Rf2 Nf7 24.Rfe2 Re8 25.Qa4! a6 26.Na5!± threatening Nxb7] **19.Kh1** [19.d4 gains space in the centre and offers White a good game] **19...Rad8** Played to prevent d4, but due to the hanging bishop on e7, it doesn't prevent anything [19...Bc5 introduced complications after 20.Ne5 Not a good strategy when you are short on time!] **20.Ne3?!** Planning to arrive into the f5 square [20.d4! again was good for White] **20...g6?!** Introducing more weaknesses [20...Rfe8 21.Nf5 Bf8 22.Qb3+ Kh8 was fine] **21.Rf4** I think Nigel played

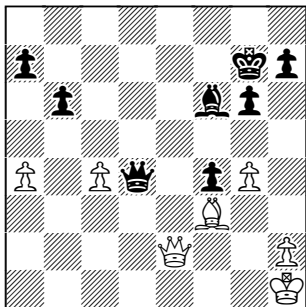
this with the idea of getting the knight into the h6 square. [The interesting thing is 21.Ng4 was possible immediately due to the hanging bishop on e7. 21...Kg7 22.h4 Ne6 otherwise the f6 pawn drops 23.h5 (23.Ne5 is also possible 23...fxe5 24.Qxe5+ Rf6 25.Rxf6 Bxf6 26.Qxe6 After 26...Qd4 Black is still holding) 23...Nd4 24.h6+ Kh8 Black still has strong defensive resources e.g. 25.Kh2 Qxg4! 26.Rxe7 Nf5 27.Rf3 Qh5+ (27...Nxe7 leads to a crazy position 28.Rxf6 Qh5+ (28...Kg8? 29.Rf4 Qh5+ 30.Rh4 wins the Black queen) 29.Bh3 Kg8 30.Rxf8+ Kxf8 31.Qg7+ Ke8 32.Qh8+ Kf7 33.Qxh7+ Kf8 34.Qg7+ Ke8 35.h7 Qe2+= and Black has a perpetual) 28.Kg1 b6 and it isn't clear how White makes progress; 21.b4! intending b5 was very strong as the knight can then get access to the d5 square should Black capture] **21...f5!**= I breathed a sigh of relief now. I felt very comfortable. I knew the knight would come into e5 after this move, but I was confident I could hold everything. And I was reassured because the rook on f4 looks a bit silly now. **22.Qb3+** [22.Ra4 a6 Both Nigel and I weren't confident in the future on the rook on this square. Experience I guess.] **22...Kh8** I had plans for the g7 square **23.Nc4 Bf6 24.Ne5 Qg7** I really liked this move. Black now secures the initiative. Nigel's defence now is highly instructive and shows how important tenacity is in Chess. [24...Qc7 was also good] **25.Nf3** [25.d4? Rfe8 26.c3?! Bxe5! 27.dxe5 Rxe5 (27...Ne6 followed by ...Rd2 is also possible) 28.Rxe5 Qxe5 29.Qxb7 Qe2 30.Bf1 Rd1 31.Qb8+ Kg7 32.Qxa7+ Kf6! (32...Nf7 33.Qf2) 33.Qf2 (33.Qd4+ Ke6) 33...Qxf2 34.Rxf2 Ne4 35.Rf4 (35.Rf3 Nd2-+) 35...g5!-+; 25.Nc4 may have been White's best] **25...Nxf3 26.Rxf3 Rfe8**

27.Rxe8+ [27.Rff1 Bxb2] 27...Rxe8
 28.c3 Re1+ 29.Rf1 [29.Bf1] 29...Qe7!



Black now has command of the game, controlling the only open file but can Black secure the win? **30.Qc2** ...Qe2 was threatened [30.Qc4 Re2 31.b4 Re2 32.d4! was a promising defensive approach] **30...Re2 31.Qc1 Bg5! 32.Qb1 Qe3** ...Qd2 was threatened **33.Bf3 Rd2! 34.d4 f4?** Weakening the e4 square unnecessarily **35.g4?** [35.Qe4! offered drawing chances for White 35...Rxb2 36.Re1 Qxe4 37.Rxe4 fxg3 38.hxg3 Rxa2 39.Re8+ Kg7 40.Rb8 b6 (40...Rb2 41.Bxc6!) 41.Bxc6 and it would be extremely difficult for Black to make any headway due to the opposite coloured bishops] **35...Kg7** A good move, improving the position of the king. It is important to be patient when in control of a position **36.a4** Moving some of the pawns off the vulnerable 2nd rank **36...Rf2** The problem with this natural continuation is White retains drawing chances due to the opposite coloured bishops [Due to being in significant time trouble, I found it difficult to work out all the details of a wonderful opportunity for attack, and instead opted for the safest route 36...Bh4!? Nigel was intuitively afraid of this move 37.Qe4! **a)** 37.Bg2 Rxg2! (37...Bg3 is also possible but

unlikely to win after White's best reply 38.Qe4 everything else loses 38...Qxe4 39.Bxe4 Rxh2+ 40.Kg1 Rxb2 and White retains good drawing chances) 38.Kxg2 f3+ 39.Kh1 Qe2 40.Rg1 f2-+; **b)** 37.a5?? Bg3!! and mate cannot be prevented! I will leave it for the reader to work out the details; 37...Rxb2 and again it is unclear if Black can win; 36...a5 is probably the technically correct move] **37.Rxf2 Qxf2 38.Qd1 Qxb2 39.c4** [39.Qe1 planning h4 was good] **39...Bf6** Not the best as White could have created a powerful passed pawn **40.d5 cxd5 41.Qxd5?** [41.cxd5 was simple and good. Creating a passed pawn would have secured a draw for White e. g. 41...a6 42.d6 b5 43.d7 Qf2!? 44.axb5 axb5 45.Qe2 Qxe2 46.Bxe2 b4 47.Bd1 Kf8 48.Kg2 Ke7 49.Kf3 g5 50.Ba4=] **41...Qf2!** I have a few more threats up my sleeve **42.Qd1 b6** Now White has two weak pawns on a4 and c4. Regardless, it is still extremely difficult to win this game due to the opposite coloured bishops and Black's king being a little drafty. [42...Bd4! would have been a better try. The point is this move prevents Qe2 due to Qg1# and furthermore Black plans to significantly improve the position of his king, when even the exchange queens doesn't help White. Nigel would have to find the only saving move 43.g5! (43.Bxb7? Kh6-+ 44.Bg2 Kg5 45.h3 Kh4 46.Qf1 Qxf1+ 47.Bxf1 Kg3 48.a5 f3 49.a6 g5-+ and White is in zugzwang) 43...b6 and we are back in something similar to the game continuation(43...h6 doesn't work unfortunately 44.gxh6+ Kxh6 45.Bxb7 Kg5 46.Bf3 Kh4 47.c5 Kh3 48.Bg4+= and the Black monarch must retreat)] **43.Qe2** [43.Qd7+? Kh6 44.Qd1 Bd4 gives Black a winning position as per the previous note] **43...Qd4**



Threatening ...Qa1+ picking up the weak a4-pawn **44.Kg2** Here I pondered into thought. Despite being a pawn up and White having pawn weaknesses, there didn't appear to be any way to secure a win so I made a decision to exchange queens. Of course this isn't logical, but I thought I may be able to run my king to a6 and a5 and put some pressure on White's bishop to defend. My intuition is that a master would continue to play with the queen's on hoping to provoke some sort of weakness. My intuition tells me this game is already drawn. **44...Qe3 45.Qxe3** The right decision **45...fxe3 46.Be2** [46.Bd5 was good too] **46...Bd4 47.Kf3 Kf6 48.Ke4 Bc5 49.h4!** An excellent move. If I am going to attempt my plan it is important the White king cannot attack my kingside pawns. h4 ensures I cannot achieve the ideal setup on my kingside pawns. **49...h6** [49...Ke6 50.g5=] **50.Bf3** [50.Kd5 Be7 51.Kc6? Ke5!-+] **50...g5 51.h5** [I had one last hope 51.hxg5+ Kxg5 So that the black bishop can come to g5 later and defend the h6 pawn whilst the black king can move across on the queenside. Even so, even this is drawn. Alas Nigel gives me nothing to work with.] **51...Ke6 52.Be2** There is no way for Black to make progress so I

offered the draw. Nigel accepted with the comment, "It was drawn a long time ago" ;-). This was a great game by Nigel who by his own admission had his best tournament ever. There were so many occasions in this game where Nigel had to find the only move to hold the position and he just kept on finding that one move. Congratulations Nigel on a great tournament and a great game. You were in my mind the best defender I came across during the tournament. On my side, in hindsight I was disappointed I didn't play 36...Bh4 or 42...Bd4. Admittedly it would have been extremely risky to play 37...Bg3!! so close to the time control - some of the variations are quite complex. However it is important to maximise the pressure on your opponent. I can only blame myself for getting into severe time trouble in the first place. It would have been a wonderful way to finish the tournament in style and secure clear 1st. While I was playing this game when 36...Bh4 was on the table, I looked up and saw Sean Martin-Buss approaching who was hoping I would only attain a draw so he could secure 1st equal with me. I smiled and he returned my smile. I thought at that moment, I would love Sean to share 1st equal with me - he thoroughly deserves it. Perhaps this kindness psychologically prevented me from executing 36...Bh4. Now that's a pleasant thought ;-). ½-½

Openings – by *FM Scott Wastney*

I suggested to the editor that I could write a regular column on chess openings. Why? Well I thought sharing my experiences may help those who wish to improve their own play. Plus it is nice to have variety in a magazine and opening analysis would be something new. Until the last few years my approach to openings was a combination of learning from repertoire books, and then usually just before a game searching on Chessbase for any grandmaster games I could follow. Any analysis I would do, would soon quickly be forgotten after the game or if jotted down on paper then that would soon be lost or throw out just as my game score-sheets would be.

Several years ago I read an article by Yasser Seirawan (a former world junior champion and well-known grandmaster from the USA). He was saying, that by some stroke of luck, he stumbled upon the secret to chess improvement from the time he first started chess. And what was that secret? That he wrote everything down. This prompted me to become a lot more diligent - I started using 50-page scorebooks to record all of my games, including rapid games. Also I started writing down any chess opening preparation in an indexed notebook. At first the pages were rather empty, but it is surprising after a few club tournaments how quickly it starts filling up. I'm sure many others have had this approach all along, but for me I only started doing this in an organised way from about 2010, and in a less organised way probably for a few

years earlier. I'm sure most people put their notes in a chess database (which makes the most sense), but I like the old fashioned pen and paper method. Also at about the same time, I came across the full set of ECO's (encyclopaedia of chess openings – a 5 volume set of books) at a very reasonable price. I know these are old, and I must have been too young to be part of the ECO generation. But for me these are a great discovery. An ECO table is concise enough to learn a lot in a short time. The structure of the table helps create an overview of the opening in my mind.

So my first port-of-call is the ECOs. Then I supplement that with recent games using Chessbase which I update regularly from TWIC (<http://www.theweekinchess.com/>). Plus any relevant information from other books I've bought over the years. But most of the time is playing around analysing new (or old) lines. Whatever I discover, I write down in my notebooks (by now I've filled up several of these). Of course using chess engines is invaluable. Often I use Deep Rybka 4, though for variety sometimes one of the free engines such as Critter, Stockfish, Komodo etc. It seems strange now, but when I previously won the NZ Championship (way back in 2001) I had never used a chess engine for analysis.

I thought for my first article I would write about my experiences playing White against the Pirc Defense. This may seem a strange choice (a sub variation of a sub variation as Bill calls it). But it is one small area of opening theory that I can

make an original contribution. I have, to date, nine games with a particular line against International Master Anthony Ker. I hope Anthony doesn't mind my writing of this article - I'm sure he will benefit more from this article than anyone else.

In future please email me (wastneys@xtra.co.nz) if you have any particular openings you would like to see discussed. I have thought of letting people vote for the next opening topic, but then feared I might be lumbered with something like the c3 Sicilian. My thoughts are along the lines of White against the Caro-Kann, or if not too suspicious, then my revival of Black side in the Fried Liver.

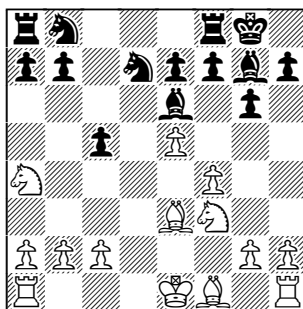
The Pirc Buster

Part 1: Illustrative Games

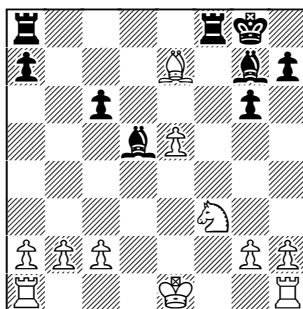
Savchenko,B (2642) - Selbes,T (2263) Turkey 2010

This is a good game to show the main ideas behind this system. White loses time with his queen in order to provoke 7...dxc5. He then plays his pawn to 9. e5. Before White can complete his development Black starts active play against the white centre with 12...f6 and 18...Rxf3!?. **1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 c5 6.dxc5 Qa5 7.Qd4 dxc5** The straight forward attempt. Black gains a tempo against the Queen, but has made a concession that White will soon be free to play pawn to e5. **8.Qc4 0-0 9.e5 Be6** Gaining another tempo against the

queen. **10.Qa4 Qxa4 11.Nxa4 Nfd7 12.Be3**



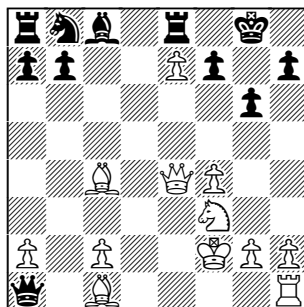
12...f6!? Black is counting on his lead in development to attack White's formidable centre. The question is should he do this now, or after both sides develop further. **13.Nxc5 Nxc5 14.Bxc5 Nc6 15.Bb5** White is a pawn ahead and must focus on catching up on development. **15...fxe5 16.Bxc6 bxc6 17.fxe5 Bd5** Black needs to use his more active pieces to break the White centre. **18.Bxe7**



Black will need to exchange the bishop for knight to win the e-pawn, but then White will safely castle into an endgame with an extra pawn. **18...Rxf3!?** **19.gxf3 Bxe5 20.Kf2 Bxb2 21.Rad1 Bxa2 22.Rd8+ Rxd8 23.Bxd8** The game enters an unbalanced endgame in which the higher

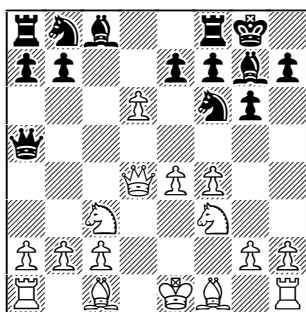
rated player prevails. 23...Bc3 24.Rd1 Bc4
 25.Ke3 a5 26.Rd6 Bd5 27.Bf6 Bb4
 28.Rd7 Bc5+ 29.Bd4 Bxd4+ 30.Kxd4
 Bxf3 31.Ra7 h6 32.Ke5 h5 33.Kf6 Be4
 34.c4 a4 35.c5 a3 36.Rxa3 Kh7 37.Kg5
 Kg8 38.Re3 Bf5 39.Re7 Kf8 40.Kf6 Kg8
 41.h4 Kh8 42.Rg7 Be4 43.Rxg6 Bf3
 44.Kg5 Kh7 45.Rh6+ Kg7 1-0

**Hirneise, T (2481) - Lorscheid, G
 (2348) Pardubice 2008**

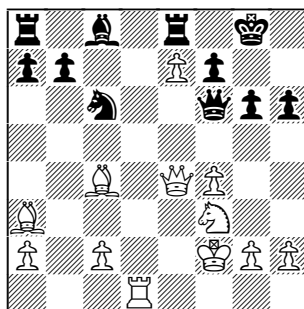


1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3
 c5 6.dxc5 Qa5 7.Qd4 0-0 Black takes a
 different approach here. White's queen is
 in-line with Black's fianchetto bishop and
 black intends to use tactics to take
 advantage of this. 8.cxd6

The dust settles and both sides have their
 trumps. White has a dangerous pawn on e7,
 while Black has a material advantage. It is
 easier to play White and in this game a fatal
 slip comes quickly. 13...Qf6 14.Ba3 h6?
 14...Be6 or 14...Bf5 are better, see the
 theory section 15.Rd1 Nc6



The game enters a long tactical line where
 there is no going back. 8...Nxe4 9.Qxe4
 Bxc3+ 10.bxc3 In a Wellington Club game
 Ross Jackson did try to “go back” and
 played 10.Bd2 against Anthony Ker here to
 avoid giving up the exchange. This did
 not go well and can't be recommended.
 Qxc3+ 11.Kf2 Qxa1 12.dxe7 Re8 13.Bc4



16.Rd6! Utter devastation 16...Rxe7
 17.Qxg6+ Qxg6 18.Rxg6+ Kh7 19.Rxc6
 1-0

Part 2: Theory

In the ECO-style table below all game
 references are provided (using FIDE ratings
 for consistency). Otherwise the analysis
 and assessments are all my own. I wish I

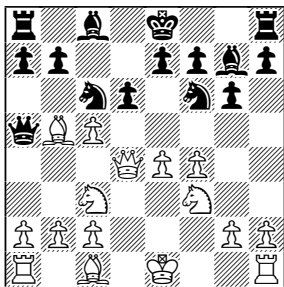
had the time and resources to address a couple of short-comings: Firstly, I would review the opening looking more at it from Black's perspective to give equal effort to finding his resources. Secondly, I would have liked to read the recent publications on the Pirc Defence to see what they

recommend.

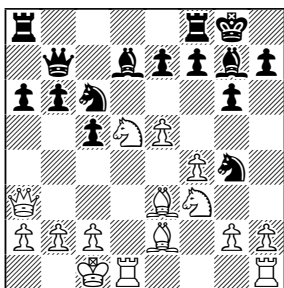
Ed: Even if you aren't interested in this particular Opening, you can benefit by comparing your positional judgement of the diagrammed positions with Scott's evaluation at the end of the table rows

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.f4 Bg7 5.Nf3 c5 6.dxc5 Qa5 7.Qd4

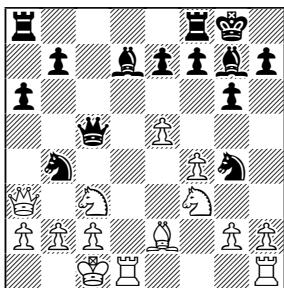
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
1	...	Bb5	Qa4	Be3	0-0-0	Be2	Qa3	e5	Nd5	
	Nc6	0-0 ¹	Qc7	Bd7	a6	dxc5	b6	Ng4	Qb7 ²	±
2							...	e5	Bxc5	
							Nb4	Ng4	Qxc5 ³	±
3			...	Bxa4	Nd5	Bxc6	Nxe7 ⁺	e5	exd6	
			Qxa4	Nd7 ⁴	Nxc5	bxc6	Kh8	Bb7	Rad8 ⁵	±
4		...	Qa4	Bxa4	Bb3	Ke2 ⁶	Rd1	cxb3		
		Bd7	Qxa4	Nb4	Be6	dxc5	Bxb3			±
5	...	Qc4	e5	Qa4	Nxa4	Be3	0-0-0	Nc3	Nd5 ¹⁰	
	dxc5	0-0 ⁷	Be6	Qxa4	Nfd7	b6	f6 ⁸	Nc6 ⁹		±
6						...	Bb5	0-0-0	Rhe1 ¹¹	
						Nc6	Rac8	Bh6		±
7						...	Nxc5	Bxc5	Bb5	
						f6	Nxc5	Nc6	fxe5 ¹²	±
8					...	Be3	0-0-0	Bd3	exf6	
					Ne4	b6 ¹³	Nc6	f5	Nxf6	=
9		cxd6 ¹⁴	Qd2	Bd3	0-0	a3	Nd5	exd5	Qf2	
	0-0	Nc6	exd6	Re8	a6	b5	Nxd5	Qb6 ⁺	Qxf2 ¹⁵	±
10					...	Qf2	h3	a3	cxd3	
					Bg4	Nb4	Bd7	Nxd3	Bc6 ¹⁶	±
11		...	Qxe4	bxc3	Kf2	dxe7	Bc4	Ba3	Qd4 ¹⁹	
		Nxe4	Bxc3 ⁺	Qxc3 ⁺	Qxa1	Re8	Qf6 ¹⁷	Bf5 ¹⁸		±
12								...	Bxe6	
								Be6	Qxe6 ²⁰	=



1. 8...Qxb5? 9.Qxf6 Bxf6 10.Nxb5±; 8...
 dxc5 9.Qa4 Qxa4 10.Bxa4 Bd7 11.e5 Ng4
 12.h3 Nh6 13.Be3 b6 Smerdon(2521)-
 Aabling Thomsen(2370), Politiken Cup
 2013. White could now play 14.0-0-0±

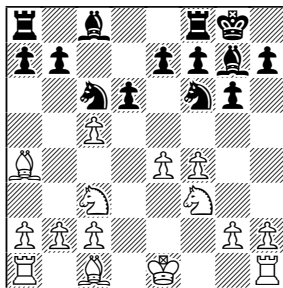


2. 16.Nxb6 Qxb6 17.Rd7 Nxe3 18.Qxe3±

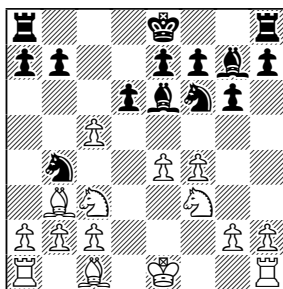


3. 16.Rxd7 Ne3 17.g3± Nexc2?! 18.Qb3 a5
 19.a3 Ne3? 20.Kb1 Qc6 21.Rxe7 Nf5

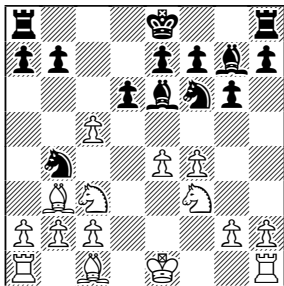
22.Rxf7 Rxf7 23.Rd1+-



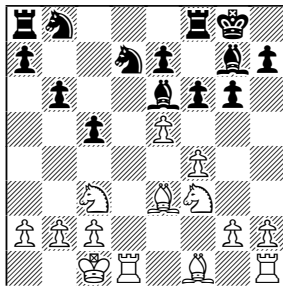
4. 10...dxc5 11.e5 Nd7 12.Nd5 e6 13.Bxc6
 bxc6 14.Ne7+ Kh8 15.0-0-0±



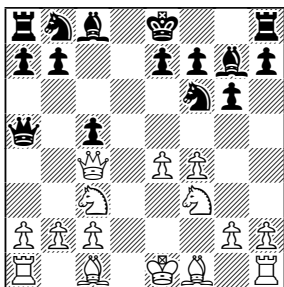
5. 16.Be3 Na4 17.Rd1 Nxb2 18.Rb1 Rxd6
 19.Ne5 Re6 Wastney (2313)-Ker(2324),
 Wellington Autumn Cup, 2012. Now best
 is 20.Kf2! Bxe5 21.fxe5 Nc4 22.Bc5 Rb8
 23.Bxa7±.



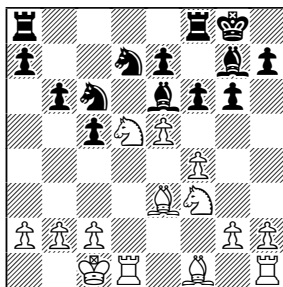
6. 12.Ba4+ if white is happy for a draw by repetition.



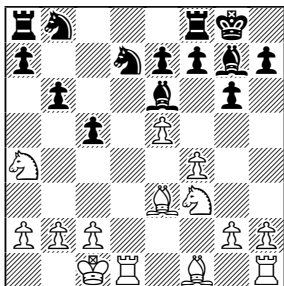
9. 14..fxe5 15.Ng5 Bg4 16.Bc4+ Kh8 17.Nf7+ Rx7 18.Bxf7 Bxd1 19.Bd5+-



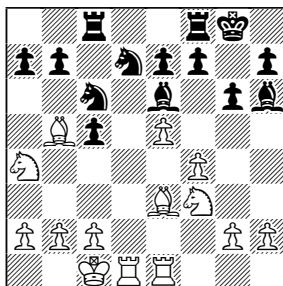
7. 8...Nc6!? But not 8...Nxe4?? 9.Qb5+ Nc6 10.Qxa5 Bxc3+ 11.Qxc3 +- Wastney (2300)-Ker(2348), Kapiti Rapid 2011.



10. Wastney-Ker, Wellington Open 2012; Or (instead of White's last move 15.Nc3-d5) 15.Bb5!?!± Wastney(2300)-Ker(2359), Gordon Hoskyn Memorial Rapid 2011.

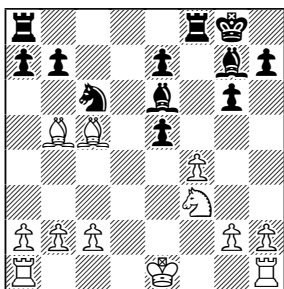


8. 13...Bh6?! 14.Kb1 f6 15.Bc1 ± (Δ15... exf5?? 16.f5+-); 13...Nc6!? 14.Bb5 Rac8 ±

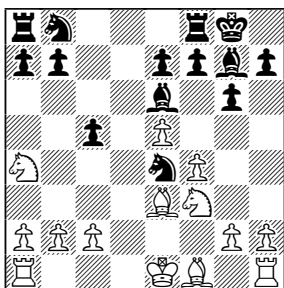


11. 15...a6?! 16.Bc4!± Bxc4 17.Rxd7 b5 18.Nxc5 Nb4 19.g3 Na2+ 20.Kb1 Nb4

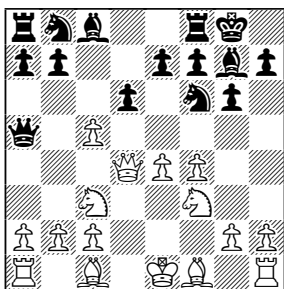
21.b3 (21.c3!?) Wastney (2313)–Ker (2330), NZ Championship 2013.



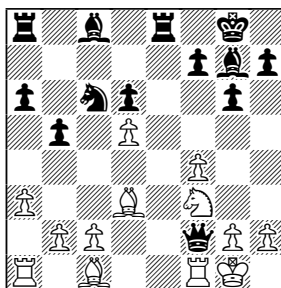
12. 16.Bxc6 bxc6 17.fxe5
Savchenko(2642)-Selbes (2263), Turkish Is Bank League 2010.



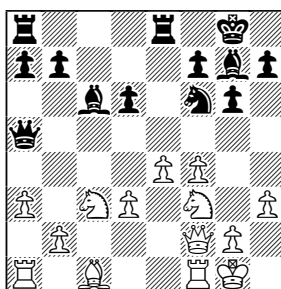
13. 12...c4 13.0-0-0 b5 14.Nd4! Bg4 (14... bxa4? 15.Nxe6 fxe6 16.Bxc4 Kf7 17.Bd3+-)15.Nxb5 Bxd1 16.Kxd1 ±



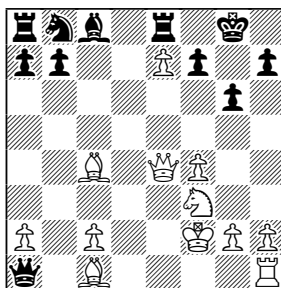
14. 8.Bd2!?



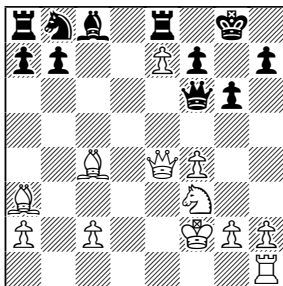
15. Wastney(2300)–Ker(2344), Julian Mazur Memorial 2011.



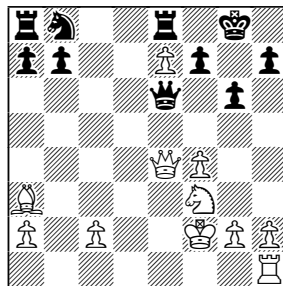
16. Wastney(2300)-Ker(2336), Wellington Summer Cup 2011.



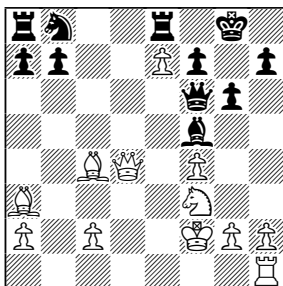
17. 13...Nc6 14.Bxf7+ Kxf7 15.Qd5+ Kg7 16.Qb3 Be6 17.Bb2+ Kh6 18.Qb5+-



18. 14...Nc6 15.Ng5 Bf5 16.Qd5 Re7 17.Be7 Ne7 18.Qf7±; 14...h6 15.Rd1 Nc6 16.Rd6 Rxe7 17.Qxg6+ Qxg6 18.Rxg6 Kh7 19.Rxc6 1-0 Hirneise (2481)-Lorscheid (2348), Czech Chladek & Tintera Open 2008.



20. 16.Qxe6 fxe6 17.Ne5 Nc6 18.Nxc6 bxc6 19.Bd6 c5 20.Rb1 Rac8 21.Rb5 Kf7 22.c3 Rc6 23.Bxc5 a6 24.Ra5 Rec8 25.Bb4 h5 26.Rg5 Ra8 27.Ra5 Ra7 28.Ke2 Rd7 29.Rg5 Rc8 30.Ra5 Rc6 31.Rg5 Rc8 32.Ra5 Rc6 33.Rg5 ½-½ Muzychuk(2598)-Lahno(2546) FIDE Women's GP Kazan, 2012.



19. 15..Nd7 16.Rd1 Bxc2 Wastney (2300)-Ker(2336), Julian Mazur Memorial 2010. Now 17.Bxf7+! Kxf7 18.Qc4+ Kg7 19.Rxd7±; 15...Qxd4 16.Nxd4 Nc6 17.Nxf5 gxf5± Wastney(2350)-Ker(2305), Wellington Teams Rapid 2013

Martin Sims Obituary

— by Michael Freeman

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Martin Sims (1954-2013) after a long illness.



Martin was a high school teacher in History and Geography, and one who installed respect, knowledge and an interest in the subject in all of his students. He worked at Palmerston North Boys High from 1997-2011 and the large number of tributes from past pupils is a testament to his ability to inspire. At the celebration of his life his wide and varied interests were shared.

I knew Martin as a chessplayer, and a man who influenced my chess career, and brought a passion and interest to many of

his chess pupils over the years.

I joined the Otago Chess Club in Dunedin in 1974 where I met Martin. He became a mentor and friend to a small group of young juniors: myself, Tony Love and Tony Dowden. We were all the same age and developed a lifelong love of the sport of chess. All three went on to represent New Zealand.

Tony Love commented ‘Martin became a friend and mentor to you, Tony and me from the mid-1970s. He recognised and nurtured our chess talent and, more importantly, our love for the game. I’ll always remember a visit to his Russell St flat with the hole in the floor. Quite a buzz as a schoolkid to visit a student flat and, even more so, to be treated as an equal. Sorry your flag fell prematurely. To me, you’ll always be IM (Sims).’

For myself, Martin also encouraged me to take up correspondence chess, played several friendly games in those early years, as well as competitive games in the 47th, 48th and 49th NZ Championships in the early 1980’s. He made available his vast and interesting collection of chess literature in the days before computers and databases existed. I owe a large debt of gratitude to Martin for that start. Over the years he has always dropped me notes of congratulations as my successes accumulated.

Martin also started my love of chess theory, and we regularly shared notes on interesting analysis, and on occasion published material on the Bishops Opening.

Martin and his wife Tina were also kind enough to provide a bed for the night in Lower Hutt as I passed through from playing in a schoolpupil chess event, and in later years a cup of tea in Tokoroa on route to yet another chess tournament. He was one of a select group who always addressed me by my nickname and never my given name.

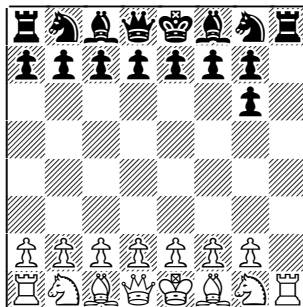
As a chessplayer Martin loved order, the symmetry of the pieces, and a logical development to a conclusion. He promoted the principles of the game. He had a love of puzzles as they demonstrated the power of the pieces, their co-ordination, and the beauty of the patterns. This love of the order of things was also his achilles heel as he sometimes dismissed moves that did not fit with the logical order of the game, yet on occasions they were actually good moves!

His self-biography on a correspondence chess website we both play upon, where he used the handle "PigOnThe7th" read "I learnt to play chess in the 1960s. Sadly my ability at the game does not match my enthusiasm. I love chess biographies and fun/ strange games/ positions/ puzzles.

What does "PigOnThe7th' mean? Rooks are Pigs and we all know Rooks love to invade the 7th rank! Evidently Nimzowitsch called a pair of rooks on the opponent's second rank "blind pigs" because they devour everything indiscriminately."

[Ed: Martin's love of chess curiosities led to a series of articles in this magazine, tragically cut off by his illness. He was

always keen to help out and served a valuable role as proofreader as well. Michael provides another favourite position of Martin's below – and we have received his files with plenty more material for future publication]



How did this position arise?

In later years I recall being told by Martin that his chess book collection was now limited to 500 items, and that every new acquisition had to be carefully weighed against the retirement of an existing item. We discussed his process for determining the value of a book, and did it add to his knowledge, the completeness of his collection, and bring joy in owning it.

He has encouraged generations of pupils who have passed through his schools to play chess and organised national events on behalf of the NZ Chess Federation. His events were always well organised and run, everything started on time, and players just had to turn up and play.

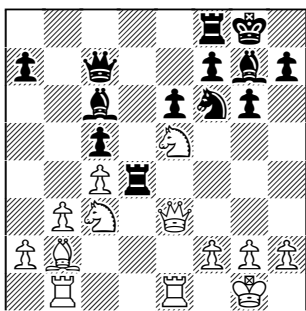
I will miss him as a friend and mentor, and the wider NZ chess community has lost a great servant and supporter of the game.

RIP Martin. After the game, the King and the Pawn go back in the same box.

Martin Sims – Michael Spooner

Pacific Area Teams NZL-Hong Kong 1995

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.Bb5+ Nc6 4.d4 Another way of playing this position is: [4.0–0 Bd7 5.Re1 Nf6 6.c3 a6 7.Bf1 Bg4 8.d3 e6 9.Nbd2 Be7 10.h3 Bh5 11.g4 Bg6 12.Nh4 Nd7 13.Nxg6 hxg6 14.Nf3 Nde5 and white has a small practical advantage in games played so far.] **4...cxd4 5.Qxd4 Bd7 6.Bxc6 bxc6** [more usual is: 6...Bxc6 7.Nc3 Nf6 8.Bg5 e6 9.0–0–0 Be7 10.Qd3 Qa5 11.h4 h6 12.Bd2 Ng4 13.Be1 Qc5 14.Nd4 0–0 with a typical Sicilian position with chances for both sides.] **7.c4 Nf6** [7...e5 is more common theory] **8.Nc3 g6 9.b3 Bg7 10.Bb2 c5 11.Qd3 0–0 12.0–0 Bc6 13.Rfe1 Qc7?!** Maybe not the best square for the queen as it may encourage Nd5 ideas at some point. **14.Rab1 e6 15.e5 dxe5 16.Nxe5** Martin has managed to establish a 3 vs 2 pawn structure on the queenside, which he now sets out to exploit. **16...Rad8 17.Qe3 Rd4?**



18.Nxc6 Ng4 [18...Qxc6 19.Na4 Ng4 20.Qg3 Qd6 21.Qxd6 Rxd6 22.f3 Bxb2 23.Rxb2 Nf6 24.Nxc5 and White is a clear

pawn ahead] **19.Qg3 Qxc6 20.Na4 Nh6 21.Bxd4 cxd4 22.Nb2 Nf5 23.Qf4 Qa6 24.a4 Qa5 25.Nd3 Rc8 26.Re2 h6 27.Qd2 Qc3 28.c5 Ne7 29.b4 Nd5 30.Qd1 Qc4 31.Qb3 Qxb3 32.Rxb3 Nc3 33.Re1 Kf8 34.b5 Nxa4 35.b6** and Black resigned due to [35.b6 axb6 36.cxb6 Ke7 37.b7 Rb8 38.Ra1 Nc3 39.Ra8] **1–0**

Bernard Carpinter adds:

I also knew Martin from about 1974, when I moved to Dunedin, and we kept in touch over the years as we lived in different parts of New Zealand.

He did indeed have a great collection of chess books and materials -- all meticulously listed on his computer, as were his collections of contemporary music and DVDs. He probably had New Zealand's biggest collection of chess ties, which he wore proudly.

The last tournament he organised was the national schools final in Palmerston North 2012, although because of his failing health he brought in Mark Noble to lead the team. The tournament ran very smoothly.

A large number of people attended his funeral, where his coffin was covered in black and white squares.

[Ed: Solution to puzzle (but, really, solve it yourself, it's not difficult but still satisfying) – White plays h4 to get his rook out, then Rg6 allowing h7xg6. This clears a path for White to underpromote his h pawn to a rook and bring it to h1. Meanwhile Black just needs to get his rook out of the way temporarily and waste time with a knight as required]

More NZ Tournament Chess

The extensive coverage of Congress in this issue makes it problematic to cover other recent events properly here. Recent elite level events included an outright victory for Alex Wohl at the George Trundle Masters in Auckland. Puchen Wang set the stage for his Congress heroics with outright victories in the South Island Championships in Nelson, and the Merv Morrison Memorial at the Auckland Chess Centre.

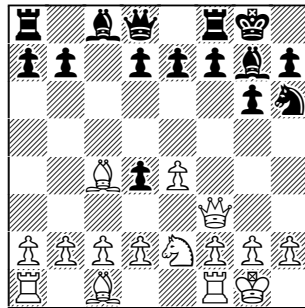
It is possible some belated coverage of these events will feature in the April issue of the magazine. Don't forget that www.newzealandchess.co.nz provides full results of these events and more, often with downloadable games to boot. If you want to see coverage of your favourite tournament in the magazine consider taking the initiative and annotating a game, or even producing a full tournament report.

Here is the brilliant last round game from the Merv Morrison, annotated by Quentin Johnson for the Otago Daily Times.

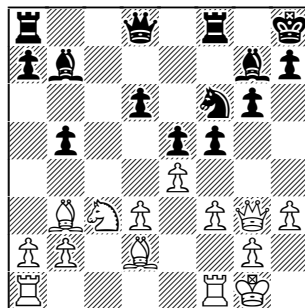
Hans Gao – Puchen Wang

1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Bb5 A combination of the Closed Sicilian with the Rossolimo Variation 3 Bb5. Black has to avoid a few traps. **3...Nd4 4.Bc4 g6 5.Nf3 Bg7 6.Nxd4 cxd4 7.Qf3 Nh6** The safest way to defend the mate threat on f7. [7...e6?! has been played a few times, when 8.Nb5 d6 9.Qa3 Ke7 is awkward for Black.; similarly 7...Nf6 8.Nb5 0-0 9.Nxd4 gives up a pawn, though Black has compensation.] **8.Ne2**

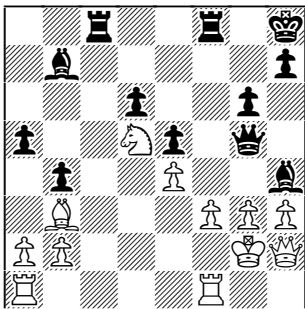
0-0 9.0-0 d6



Previous games had seen the manoeuvre [9...Ng4! bringing the knight to the centre, since 10.Qxg4? d5 11.Qf3 dxc4 is great for Black. White hurries to prevent this move, forcing Black to find another path for the knight.] **10.h3! Kh8 11.d3** An alternative developing idea was [11.c3 dxc3 12.dxc3 with a slight plus for White.] **11...Ng8 12.Qg3 f5 13.f3?!** Accepting a cramped position. White could have crossed Blacks plans to build a big centre by [13.Bg5! when 13...Qc7 (or 13...Qe8 14.Rae1 e5? 15.Nxd4!) 14.Nf4! highlights the weakness of e6 and d5.] **13...e5 14.Bd2 Nf6 15.c3 b5! 16.Bb3** Not [16.Bxb5? Rb8 17.a4 a6 18.Bc4 Rxb2 leaving White defenceless on the queenside.] **16...dxc3 17.Nxc3 Bb7**

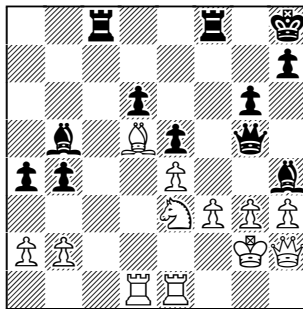


18.Bg5!? An attempt to hold the position by securing the d5 square for his minor pieces. Another idea was [18.exf5 gxf5 19.f4 e4 20.Rac1 b4 21.Na4 a5 22.Be3 when the vulnerable squares left behind the black pawns offers counterplay to the white pieces.] **18...b4 19.Bxf6 Bxf6 20.Nd5 Bh4! 21.Qh2 Rc8 22.g3!?** Understandable given the sorry position of the white queen, but weakening the kingside. The calm 22 Kh1 reserves White's options. **22...Qg5! 23.Kg2!** Trapping the bishop by [23.Kf2 runs into 23...fxe4! 24.gxh4 (24.dxe4 Bxd5 25.exd5 e4! is similar) 24...Rxf3+ with a winning attack: e.g. 25.Ke2 exd3+! 26.Kxf3 Rf8+ 27.Ke4 Qxh4+ 28.Kxd3 Ba6+ 29.Kc2 Qe4+ 30.Kc1 Rxf1+ 31.Bd1 Qxd5 etc.] **23...fxe4!?** Opening the f-file, as there is no win to be found in [23...f4 24.g4 Bxd5 25.exd5 Rf7 26.Qg1 Rfc7 27.Rfc1 controlling the entry point at e2. But the move is not without risk.] **24.dxe4 a5** Diagram



25.Rad1? White misses a chance to round up the trapped black bishop by [25.Rf2! Ba6 26.Rg1 Bd3! 27.Kh1 Qh5 28.gxh4 Rxf3 29.Rxf3 Qxf3+ 30.Qg2 Qxg2+ 31.Kxg2 Bxe4+ 32.Kg3 with a piece for two pawns, although Black can draw

comfortably after 32...Rf8! 33.Nc7 (33.h5? Rf3+ 34.Kh4 Rxb3!) 33...Rf3+ 34.Kh2 Rf2+ with perpetual check.] **25...Ba6 26.Rfe1 Bb5 27.Ne3 a4 28.Bd5**



28...Bf1! An attractive move to force the final breakthrough down the f-file. Black also has a winning attack after [28...a3!? 29.bxa3 Rc3! 30.Kf2 Qf6! 31.Qh1 Bg5 32.h4! Bxe3+ 33.Rxe3 Rxe3 34.Kxe3 Qd8! breaking through on the queenside.] **29.Kf2** After [29.Rxf1 Qxe3 30.Kh1 Black doesn't play 30...Bg5? allowing White to defend successfully by 31 Qg2, but instead plays (30...Rxf3! 31.Rfe1 Qa7! and if 32.gxh4 Qd7 wins due to the threat of ...Rxh3. The move played allows a spectacular finale.)] **29...Rxf3+!! 30.Kxf3 Rf8+ 31.Nf5** It's mate in 3. **31...Rxf5+! 32.exf5 Qxf5+** White resigned, though the final position after [32...Qxf5+ 33.Ke3 Bg5# mate would have been nice to see on the board.] **0-1**

Chess Tactics – by FM Scott Wastney

Here is a collection of puzzles from recent games in New Zealand and overseas. The side to move must force the win of material or checkmate. In some cases it is only winning a pawn, but as we all know, this is enough to win a game. The star rating system is described below:

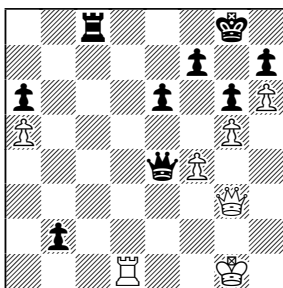
- ★ A clever idea, but not much to calculate
- ★★ A clever idea that requires some calculation, but the calculation is fairly straight forward
- ★★★ A clever idea that needs to be carried out in a precise way to take into account defensive resources, or the forced sequence is quite long.

(Avert your eyes now until you've had a go at the puzzles, starting on the next page !)

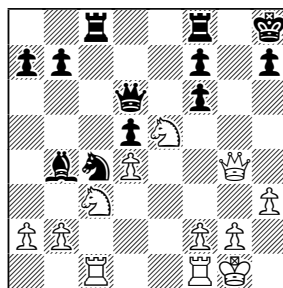
Solutions

- No.1** 1.Qc3 1-0
- No.2** 1.Nxf7+ Rxf7 2.Qxc8+-
- No.3** 1.Nxd5+- (... 1...cxd5 2.Qxc8+)
- No.4** 1.Rxg6+- (... 1...Rxg6 2.Rxh7# The Arabian Mate)
- No.5** 1...Bxg2 wins a pawn
- No.6** 1.Ng6+ hxg6 2.Rh2#

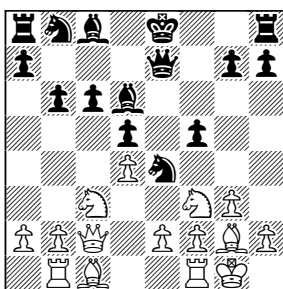
- No.7** 1.Qxf8 Kxf8 2.Rd8+ Ke7 3.Re8#
- No.8** 1.Bc8 wins material because of the pin. The game continued 1...Rxe2 2.Bxb7 Rxf2 3.Bxd5 Rd2 4.Qxf7+ Kh8 5.Qf4 +-
- No.9** 1.Nxd5 wins a pawn. The game continued 1...Rxe3 2.Qxa5 Rxa5 3.Nxe3±
- No.10** A combination has two parts: The “idea” and the “correct way” of carrying out the idea. Here the white player had the right idea, but carried it out imprecisely. 1.Rxb7! Rxb7 30.Qg5? [Correct was 30.Qh4! Kg7 31.Rd8+- (... Qc6 32.Rg8#)] Kg7 31.Rd8 f4!= the saving move 32.Rd7+ Qxd7 33.Qxe5+ Kf8 34.Qh8+ and the game eventually ended in 3-fold repetition.
- No.11** 1...Rxd6! 2.Qb3 [2.Qxd6 Qe4 3.f3 (3.Bf3 Nxf3+ 4.gxf3 Qxf3+-) 3...Qxe3+ 4.Rf2 Neg4! 5.fxg4 Ne4 6.Qf4 Qxc5+-] 2...Bd5 3.Qc3 Re8 4.Rc8 Rde6 5.Rd1 Neg4 0-1
- No.12** 1...Bxh3 2.Qe2 [2.Rxf4 Bxc2+ 3.Kxh2 Bxf4+ 4.Kg1 Bf3+ winning the queen; 2.gxh3 Qxf1+ 3.Bxf1 Rg1#] 2...Qg3 3.Rf2 Bc5 0-1



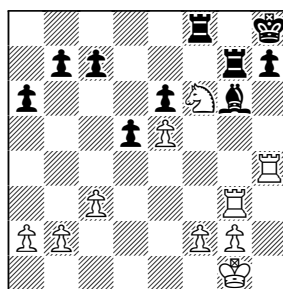
No. 1 *White to move* ★
 Tuulik - Kulaots (2567), Estonia 2013



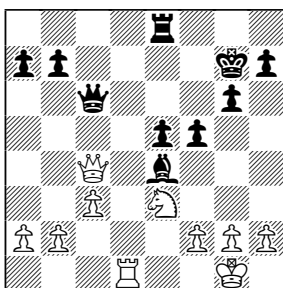
No. 2 *White to move* ★
 Li (2116) - Yang (2150), NZ Ch 2014



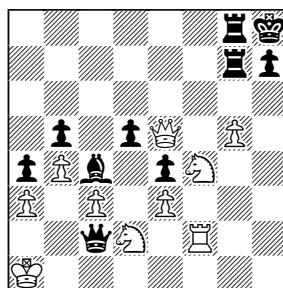
No. 3 *White to move* ★
 Croad (2272) - Pettersen (2013), 2014



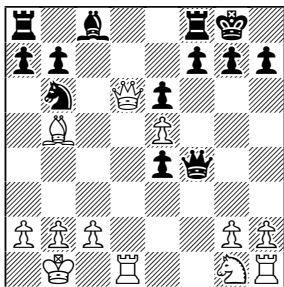
No. 4 *White to move* ★
 Smith,V (1837) - Li,J (1655) NZ, 2014



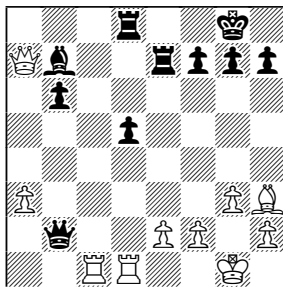
No. 5 *Black to move* ★
 Goodhue (2165) - Smith (2348), NZ
 Champs 2014



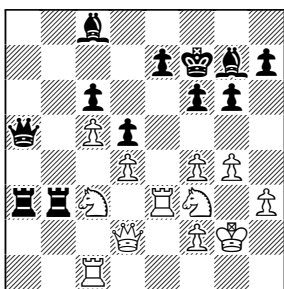
No. 6 *White to move* ★
 Rains (1998) - Zhang (2007), NZ
 Champs, 2014



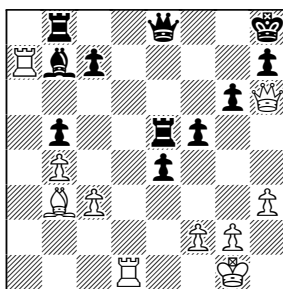
No. 7 *White to move* ★★
 Lim (2003) - Hart (2257), NZ Blitz 2014



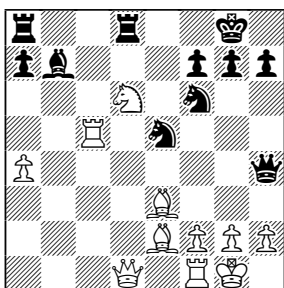
No. 8 *White to move* ★★
 Cheng (2433)– Sukandar (2369), 2014



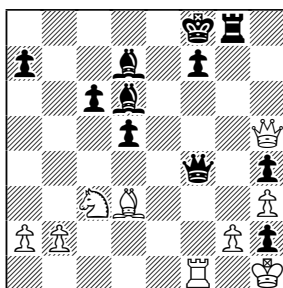
No. 9 *White to move* ★★
 Zhao Xue (2567) - Bok (2560), 2014



No.10 *White to move* ★★★
 Faizulaev (2314) -Narayanan (2414)



No. 11 *Black move* ★★★
 Aronian(2803)-Mamedyarov (2757),
 Beijing 2013



No. 12 *Black to move* ★★★
 Sveshnikov (2394) -EhIvest (2579),
 Estonia

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