

# *New Zealand Chess*

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**Alexei Kulashko and Mike Steadman share the New Zealand  
Championship – Devonport 2016**

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### **On the Cover:**

Gawain Jones won the tournament but not the silver rook **photo credit:** Helen Milligan

## **Crowd Sourcing**

At the New Zealand Open this year your editor made two appeals to the players to contribute game analysis for the magazine. The readers will need to judge for themselves whether that worked out well in this issue. Perhaps some other players will be inspired to contribute some coverage of the Rapid and Major Open for the next issue?

Congress saw a changing of the guard at the top of NZCF. The magazine would like to acknowledge out-going president Paul Spiller for his rock solid support over the years. New president Murray Chandler has big shoes to fill but will no doubt do a first rate job.

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## Letter to the Editor

**This letter was inadvertently omitted from the October issue of *New Zealand Chess*. The editor apologises to Anton Reid for this unfortunate lapse.**

Dear Sir,

I read with interest Bob Smith's note in the July *New Zealand Chess* on the 38th Trusts Open. Hopefully they have some reserves to cover the loss! I'm sure the numbers will stabilise in future years.

How times have changed over the last 40 years or so.

Back then we decided to introduce a new type of tournament to New Zealand. We called it the 40-40 tournament, with 5 rounds in one day. In the first year 36 players entered. A bit disappointing but we decided to carry on. In 1974, 79 entered and the players had to play in the Supper Room in Upper Hutt's Civic Hall. A bit squashed, but that's how it goes when you don't know the numbers in advance. For the 1975 tournament the committee made a decision to think BIG and we hired the entire Civic Hall. It was a huge undertaking but we thought the numbers will keep increasing and we need a bigger place. We were aiming to get a hundred players and we kept the tournament to 3 grades as in the previous 2 years. Well we got a huge shock! 146 entered (67 more than in previous year) and the entries closed 10 days before the tournament started. (Players were coming from as far as Auckland and Christchurch!). I was the

club captain at that time and making draws for each grade. The first year was okay, the second year a bit hectic with 79 players. 1975 was the year to remember, as it would be impossible for one official to be in charge in making draws MANUALLY!!! So I had to get 4 of our committee members trained in a few days. We had a lot fun but managed to get through! Of course with such a huge number of players, we had no option but to create an extra grade and of course extra money in prizes. The 4 committee members were looking after each grade and at last I had my hands in my pockets, no longer worrying about the draws!

One year we put a limit of number of players. The highest number we ever had was 176. In the 1980s the numbers started slipping and we had to give away the Civic Hall, the cost was a bit too much for the club to absorb!

With the introduction throughout NZ of 25+5 tournaments, we decided to change our tournament to 25+5. These days we only manage about 20/26 players a year, although this year we had 32 players, very encouraging.

Quite a few young children played this year (from Scott Wastney's classes). From my point of view, the Registration fee of \$20 is bit too steep to enter a child into a single one day rapid.

For the good of future Chess tournaments in NZ, I feel the NZ Council should revisit the \$20 Registration fee without any further delay for one day tournaments. It's really unfair, that a parent is required to pay a \$20

fee for his boy who has just turned 7 years of age – and we had more than 10 children whose ages varied between 7 and 12! I suppose it's good revenue for the NZCF! In my view, the Registration fee should be reduced substantially say to a maximum fee of \$5 – preferably less and also what's wrong with charging \$2? It's a radical proposition and ALL GOOD for chess. If the council is in favour of the review, this

should not be left to the next AGM. I'm sure the Council can implement reductions in their next monthly meeting with new fees applied immediately. I don't think it's necessary to do a remit for the next AGM to reduce the fee, that only prolongs the agony.

Anton Reid, Upper Hutt  
24th August 2015

## The 2016 New Zealand Open

After a very successful debut in 2015, the Devonport National Chess Centre hosted a second consecutive congress this year. Some of the details changed, most noticeably a Major Open option was available for players under NZCF 2100. But otherwise this year's event was largely a repeat performance of a very successful formula put on by the same experienced and successful organisational team as last year.

The showcase event of the 123<sup>rd</sup> Congress was of course the New Zealand Open. Just like last year a gaggle of overseas stars with giant reputations and Elo scores were on hand. This meant that the New Zealand champion was always likely to be decided by a tournament within a tournament, whilst the serious cheques were destined for offshore. Fortunately, there was no nine-way tie for New Zealand Champion this year! *New Zealand Chess* is pleased to present annotated games by both the tournament winner and one of the (only two this time!) New Zealand champions.

A couple of other players accepted the invitation to annotate games for our journal.

But to start us off tournament winner Gawain Jones annotates an attractive win against French GM Matthieu Cornette from round 6.

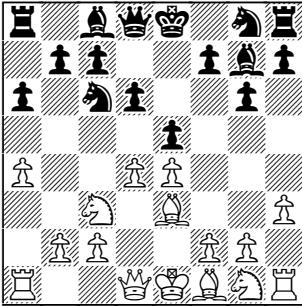
### **Cornette, Matthieu (2591) - Jones, Gawain (2625) [B06]**

**1.d4** I was in combative mood and had spent the morning preparing the Modern. It was a bit of a surprise when he opened with the d-pawn but I decided to stick to my guns. **1...g6 2.e4** Back into it! **2...Bg7 3.Nc3 d6 4.Be3 a6 5.a4** This came as a surprise but he told me afterwards he'd prepared this for Mike Steadman the previous day. **5...Nc6!?** I was feeling creative and wanted to avoid simply transposing back into the Pirc with **5...Nf6. 6.h3** (6.d5 would try to refute my last move but now the a pawns have moved Black can play **6...Nb4** as long as the knight doesn't

## 2016 New Zealand Open

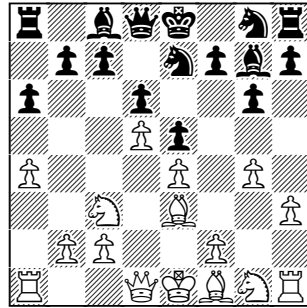
1	Jones, Gawain C B	GM	2625	ENG	7.5	+B39	+W20	=B14	+W11	+W2	+B6	+W8	=B3	=W5
2	Ju, Wenjun	GM	2548	CHN	7.0	+B42	+W25	+B19	+W4	-B1	+W13	=B5	+W11	=B7
3	Ma, Qun	GM	2606	CHN	7.0	+B32	+W40	+B13	=W6	=B5	=W4	+B15	=W1	+B14
4	Short, Nigel D	GM	2684	ENG	7.0	+W41	+B23	+W7	-B2	+W10	=B3	+W6	=B5	+W8
5	Fier, Alexandr	GM	2607	BRA	6.5	+W26	+B17	+W8	=B9	=W3	+B18	=W2	=W4	=B1
6	Cornette, Matthieu	GM	2591	FRA	6.5	+W28	+B38	+W10	=B3	+W9	-W1	-B4	+W19	+W13
7	Daulyte, Deimante	IM	2378	LTU	6.5	+B53	+W24	-B4	+W25	-B13	+W20	+B12	+W10	=W2
8	Kulashko, Alexei	FM	2341	NZL	6.0	+B51	+W30	-B5	+W31	+B20	+W14	-B1	+W9	=B4
9	Steadman, Michael	FM	2252	NZL	6.0	+B50	+W43	+B11	=W5	-B6	+W22	=B13	-B8	+W18
10	Maisuradze, Nino	WGM	2288	FRA	6.0	+B45	+W48	-B6	+W16	-B4	+W31	+B29	-B7	+W22
11	Koop, Thorben	IM	2417	GER	6.0	+W47	+B22	-W9	-B1	+W26	+B30	+W18	-B2	+W20
12	Drummond, Matthew		2255	AUS	6.0	-W65	+B50	=W33	+B41	=W30	+B17	-W7	+B26	+B24
13	Dive, Russell J	IM	2311	NZL	5.5	+W49	+B33	-W3	+B38	+W7	-B2	=W9	+W15	-B6
14	Wastney, Scott	FM	2345	NZL	5.5	+W35	+B27	=W1	=B18	=W15	-B8	+W16	+B21	-W3
15	Ker, Anthony F	IM	2283	NZL	5.5	=B36	+W46	=B31	+W45	=B14	+W21	-W3	-B13	+W34
16	Dowden, R Anthony	NM	2088	NZL	5.5	=W54	=B29	+W49	-B10	+W44	=B38	-B14	+W47	+B32
17	Smith, Robert W	FM	2208	NZL	5.5	+B44	-W5	-B32	+W36	+B45	-W12	=B31	+W43	+B35
18	Richards, Heather	WIM	2165	AUS	5.0	=B46	+W36	+B21	=W14	+B19	-W5	-B11	+W39	-B9
19	Hague, Ben	FM	2287	NZL	5.0	+W34	+B65	-W2	=B32	-W18	+B52	+W33	-B6	=W28
20	Garbett, Paul A	IM	2250	NZL	5.0	+W60	-B1	+W43	+B44	-W8	-B7	+W27	+B30	-B11
21	McLaren, Leonard J	NM	2236	NZL	5.0	=W29	+B37	-W18	+B33	+W32	-B15	+W23	-W14	=B25
22	Schaefer, Reyk		2134	GER	5.0	+B61	-W11	=B51	+W39	+B47	-B9	=W34	+W29	-B10
23	Noble, Mark F	FM	2241	NZL	5.0	+B55	-W4	=B39	+W42	+B48	=W29	-B21	-W24	+B40
24	Moskow, Eric		2127	USA	5.0	+W57	-B7	=W47	=B29	+B5	+W32	=B39	+B23	-W12
25	Gao, Hans		2183	NZL	5.0	+W56	-B2	+W28	-B7	-W29	+B51	+W41	=B34	=W21
26	Rains, Edward	CM	2016	NZL	5.0	-B5	-W44	+B62	+W46	-B11	+W45	+B48	-W12	+B39
27	Duness, John		2110	NZL	5.0	+B58	-W14	-B45	-W34	+B46	+W55	-B20	+W53	+B42
28	Perry, Roger L		2005	NZL	5.0	-B6	+W59	-B25	=W57	-B52	+W61	+B55	+W31	=B19
29	Timergazi, Layla	WFM	1915	NZL	4.5	=B21	=W16	=B48	+W24	+B25	=B23	-W10	-B22	=W30
30	Zhang, Leo		2087	NZL	4.5	+B66	-B8	=W65	+W51	=B12	-W11	+B40	-W20	=B29
31	Ang, Alphaeus Wei	CM	2136	NZL	4.5	=W37	+B54	=W15	-B8	+W49	-B10	=W17	-B28	+W41
32	Li, Shenyue		2007	CHN	4.5	-W3	+B52	+W17	=W19	-B21	-B24	+W56	+B38	-W16
33	Vincenti, David	CM	2061	MLT	4.5	+B62	-W13	=B12	-W21	+B36	+W42	-B19	-W35	+B47
34	Milligan, Helen	CM	1957	NZL	4.5	-B19	=W62	=B46	+B27	=W38	+W48	=B22	=W25	-B15
35	Klyszcz, Michael		1979	GER	4.5	-B14	=W58	-B44	+W61	+B57	+W37	+B33	-W17	
36	Macdonald, Paul		1946	NZL	4.5	=W15	-B18	+W54	-B17	-W33	+W57	-B43	+B52	+W53
37	Fan, Allen Chi Zho		1825	NZL	4.5	=B31	-W21	-B42	+W62	+B53	-W39	-B35	+W55	+B48
38	Reilly, Tim	FM	2203	AUS	4.0	+B59	-W6	+B53	-W13	=B34	=W16	=B47	-W32	=B43
39	Chan, Kim Yew		2019	MAS	4.0	-W1	+B60	=W23	=B22	+W56	+B37	=W24	-B18	=W26
40	Thornton, Giovanni		2207	NZL	4.0	+W52	-B3	=W41	=B47	=W51	+B49	-W30	+B54	=W23
41	Li, William Xiang		2030	NZL	4.0	-B4	+W55	=B40	-W12	+B59	=W47	-B25	+W50	=B31
42	Zhu, Karl Kai		1996	NZL	4.0	-W2	=B56	+W37	=B23	+W54	-B33	=W52	+B51	=W27
43	Gong, Daniel	CM	2055	NZL	4.0	+W64	-B9	B20	=W52	-B55	+W44	+W36	-B17	=W38
44	Watharow, Sean		1913	AUS	4.0	-W17	+B26	+W35	-W20	-B16	+B43	+W49	=B60	+W54
45	Bennett, Hilton P	CM	1958	NZL	4.0	-W10	+B64	+W27	-B15	-W17	-B26	-W51	+B63	+W52
46	Jackson, L Ross		1884	NZL	4.0	=W18	-B15	=W34	=B26	=W27	=B60	+W58	=B49	+W51
47	Goodhue, Nathan		1990	NZL	3.5	-B11	+W61	=B24	+W40	-W22	=B41	=W38	-B16	=W33
48	McNabb, Matthew D		2083	NZL	3.5	+W63	-B10	=W29	+B65	=W23	-B34	=W26	+B56	=W37
49	Yee, Stanley		1975	NZL	3.5	=B13	+W66	-B16	+W58	-B31	-W40	=B44	=W46	=B50
50	Hair, Philip I		1932	NZL	3.5	-W9	-W12	=B61	-B54	=W58	+W62	+B59	-B41	=W49
51	Forster, William	CM	1975	NZL	3.0	-W8	+B63	=W22	-B30	=B40	-W25	+B45	-W42	=B46
52	Nicholls, Leighton		1910	NZL	3.0	-B40	=W32	+B66	=B43	+W28	-W19	=B42	=W36	=B45
53	Zhu, Leo Lei		1989	NZL	3.0	-W7	+B57	=W38	=B56	=W37	+B58	=W54	-B27	=B36
54	Yan, Caroline		1672	NZL	3.0	=B16	=W31	=B36	+W50	=B42	+W59	=B53	=W40	=B44
55	Benson, Christopher		1920	NZL	3.0	=W23	=B41	=W63	+B64	+W43	=B27	=W28	=B37	=W58
56	Taylor, Richard		1888	NZL	3.0	=B25	=W42	=B58	=W53	=B39	+W66	=B32	=W48	=B57
57	Qin, Joy Shu Yan		1685	NZL	3.0	=B24	=W53	+W60	=B28	=W35	=B36	=W63	=B62	=W56
58	Zhang, Jasmine	WCM	1674	NZL	3.0	=W27	=B35	=W56	=B49	=B50	=W53	=B46	+W66	=B55
59	Power, P Wayne		1889	NZL	3.0	=W38	=B28	=W64	+B63	=W41	-B54	=W50	+BYE	=B61
60	Carpinter, Bernard(W)		1928	NZL	3.0	=B20	=W39	=B57	=W66	=B62	=W46	+B61	=W44	
61	Wolstencroft, Alan		1796	AUS	3.0	=W22	=B47	=W50	=B35	+W63	=B28	=W60	+B64	=W59
62	Punsalan, Vyanla M		1356	NZL	3.0	=W33	=B34	=W26	=B37	=W60	=B50	+B66	=W57	=B64
63	Oka, Hikaru		1449	AUS	3.0	=B48	=W51	=B55	=W59	=B61	+W64	=B57	=W45	+B66
64	Laouenco, Eva		1306	NZL	2.0	=B43	=W45	=B59	=W55	=B66	=B63	+BYE	=W61	=W62
65	James, Jack	(W)	1935	NZL	1.5	+B12	-W19	=B30	-W48	-BYE				
66	Wei, Louie		1669	NZL	1.5	=W30	=B49	=W52	=B60	+W64	=B56	=W62	=B58	=W63

get trapped Black is doing pretty well: 7.a5 (7.Nce2 a5 8.c3 Na6∞) 7...e6=) 6...e5



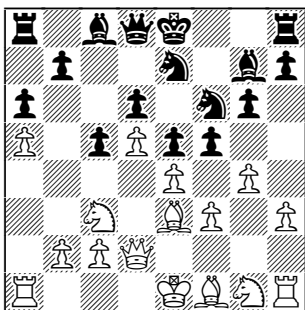
**7.d5** (7.Nf3 exd4 8.Nxd4 Nf6 would reach some sort of Philidor structure. The pawn moves on the a-file favour Black as it is now very dangerous for White to castle queenside. Black has a simple plan of putting pressure on the e4-pawn. Often White would defend with f2-f3 but that's not really compatible with h2-h3 as g3 would become very weak.; In the post-mortem Matthieu said he recalled the engine preferred 7.dxe5 but during the game he wasn't convinced. 7...Nxe5 (7...Bxe5 8.Nf3 Bxc3+ 9.bxc3 looked interesting but rather double-edged.) 8.f4 Nc6∞ White is in danger of over-extending. Black's ...Nb8-c6xe5-c6 is one tempo slower than the normal ...e7-e5xd4 but White doesn't really want to have played either h2-h3 or a2-a4.(8...Qh4+ looks tempting but 9.Kd2 Nc6 (or 9...Ng4 10.hxg4! Qxh1 11.Nd5) 10.Nf3 both give White the initiative. Developing with tempo is probably more important than the misplaced king.) ) 7...Nce7 (7...Nd4 was the alternative but I felt the knight exchange favoured White. 8.Nge2 Nxe2 9.Bxe2 f5 10.exf5 gxf5 (10...Bxf5 My engine thinks recapturing with the bishop is

close to equal but Black would really be suffering here with his lousy g7-bishop and White's wonderful outpost on e4.) 11.Bh5+ Kf8∞ with a very complicated position.) **8.g4?!**



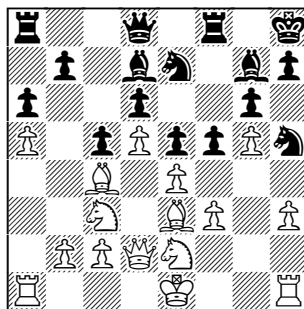
This isn't an aggressive move. Instead Matthieu wants to block up the kingside before attacking on the queenside. This is quite a usual plan in the King's Indian but doesn't quite work here as Black is very flexible. (8.Nf3 f5 9.Ng5 was what I was expecting. However after 9...Nf6 my engine prefers Black. Apparently White can't utilise the scary knight jump here. (9...fxe4 10.g4∞ (10.Ncxe4 Nf5) ) ) **8...f5 9.f3** (9.gxf5 gxf5 10.Qh5+ Kf8 You can compare this position with the line after 7.Nf3 and 8...Qh4+. The check doesn't seem to achieve very much and now I would be able to gain time on the queen.) **9...c5!** I think this was a good move. I need to play this before he's ready to capture en-passant and put pressure on the d6-pawn. Now I have more control of the centre and can fight back on the queenside. (9...Bh6 10.f4!/? worried me.) **10.a5** The pawn now becomes a target but otherwise I don't know what plan he should adopt. White's main problem is that he has nowhere safe for his king. Black's king, on the other

hand, is perfectly safe on the kingside. (Perhaps White should have changed the nature of the position with 10.dxc6 bxc6 Black's centre looks formidable but with 11.Bc4 Bb7 12.Qe2 d5 13.0-0 Black's position looks very impressive but at least White has some active piece play and a safer king.) **10...Nf6** Putting pressure on e4 and so preventing Na4-b6 ideas. (In these structures Black's g7-bishop is blocked in by its own pawns. Therefore I considered 10...Bh6 but after 11.g5 Bg7?! feels very slow. It's not clear how I ever develop my g8-knight. This would actually be a dream scenario for White as he can successfully keep the kingside closed. (I wanted to get 11...f4!? to work but here White can play 12.Bxc5) ) **11.Qd2**



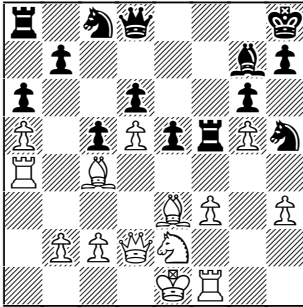
Surprisingly after this logical developing move White's position feels almost strategically lost. (In the post-mortem we came to the conclusion that White has to try 11.Bc4 0-0 12.Qd3 Now White is threatening to play Na4 as the e4-pawn is defended. (12.Bxc5? isn't as scary if he hasn't yet moved his queen as now it'll take him longer to castle. 12...dxc5 13.d6+ Kh8 14.dxe7 Qxe7 15.g5 Nh5 16.Qd2 Nf4+) 12...Kh8 (12...Bd7 is also fine as 13.Bxc5?! dxc5 14.d6+ Kh8 15.dxe7 Qxe7 still isn't

very convincing. I can meet 16.0-0-0 with 16...Bb5! $\mu$ ) 13.Na4?! This was the tactic I was desperately trying to avoid, while Matthieu was frantically analysing at every opportunity. The idea is that after 13...Qxa5+ 14.b4! My queen will be trapped whichever way I take the pawn. However my engine pours cold water on the entire line as 14...Qd8 15.bxc5 dxc5 16.Nxc5 b6! is very good for Black. White's pieces are actually really clumsy, in particular the c4-bishop is close to being trapped.) **11...0-0 12.Bc4 Kh8** Getting out of the way of Bxc5 ideas. **13.Nge2 Bd7** My plan is to put a piece on b5, either my bishop or f6-knight via ...Ne8-c7-b5. **14.g5?!** Taking pressure off the e4-pawn but the price is too high. (14.Bg5 was a better plan, although it's still not clear how White ever manages to get his knight into b6.; 14.0-0 h5 looks extremely scary for White. Black has a fantastic version of a normal King's Indian; his kingside play is in full swing while White hasn't really started his queenside counterplay.) **14...Nh5**

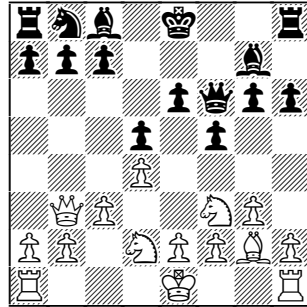


Look at that fantastic outpost on f4. **15.Na4?** This was the point of the previous move but White had overlooked a tactic. **15...Nc8** Stopping the knight and

threatening ...f5-f4 picking up the g5-pawn. **16.exf5 Rxf5 17.Rf1** So the g5-pawn is safe. **17...Bxa4!** My other threat. **18.Rxa4**



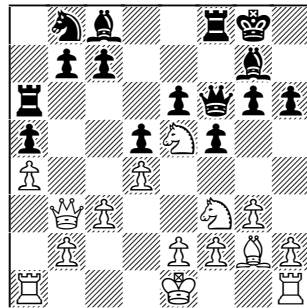
just like to get the 2 bishops and get on with it. I had a plan :-). **7...h6 8.Bxf6 Qxf6 9.Nbd2 d5**



**18...b5 19.axb6 Nxb6** White drops the exchange. **20.Bb3 Nxa4 21.Bxa4 Nf4** Disgusted White threw in the towel. He's the exchange down and Black also has the initiative. **0-1**

So here is the idea, I have reverted to the Stonewall and there is a key difference. The black squared bishop has been swapped for a knight. This means White has the e5 square as usual, but Black can pick the best moment to give the bishop up for this knight. We are on our own as I can't find anything like this played before. **10.Ne5 0-0 11.Ndf3 a5 12.a4 Ra6**

Mike Steadman and Alexei Kulashko were the highest placed New Zealanders with 6 points, and they share the New Zealand Championship. Mike has kindly annotated two key wins for the magazine.



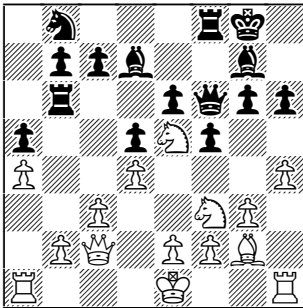
**Koop, Thorben (2417) - Steadman, Mike (2252) [A81]**

I had looked at Thorben's games and he really just seemed to sneak up on players to me. Just perfect for a Leningrad Dutch to be played, he would need to do something quickly, if not then Black would get on top. **1.Nf3 d6 2.d4 f5 3.g3 Nf6 4.Bg2 g6** I had seen his games and he a tendency to play Korchnoi's line and this has been refuted by Black switching plans. The time he was taking I got the feeling he does not face this too often at the level he plays at. **5.c3 Bg7 6.Qb3 e6 7.Bg5** This has a good reputation with only a small number of games, but I

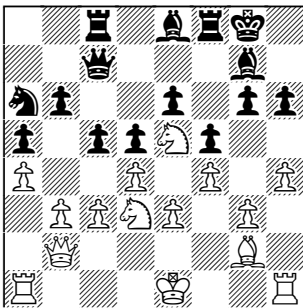
Confusion was definitely showing on his face when I am playing moves like this. But seemed to me the knight and bishop are doing a good job where they are currently. **13.h4** (13.Nh4 g5 14.Nhg6 Rd8 15.0-0-0 Nd7 This is what the machine is



suggesting, just shows it has no idea of these kinds of positions.) **13...Rb6 14.Qc2 Bd7**

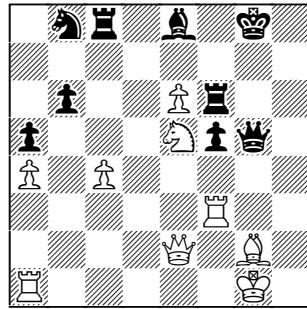


This Bishop will do its best work on e8 and will free up the Queen which currently has to guard g6. **15.Nd2** (15.c4 c6 16.h5 g5 17.e3 Rc8 18.c5 Ra6 19.Qb3 Rc7 20.0-0-0 b5 21.cxb6 Rb7 22.Qc3 Raxb6 Again, the computer does not understand. 23.Nd3 Bf8) **15...Rd6 16.Nb3** This showed me, he also did not understand. Black intends Be8, Rd8, b6, Rc8, Qc7, Na6 and c5. This knight dancing is planless and just getting me to play moves that I need to. White needs to be playing c4. **16...b6 17.Nc1 c5 18.Ncd3 Be8 19.f4 Na6 20.e3 Qd8 21.b3 Qc7 22.Qd2 Rd8 23.Qb2 Rc8**

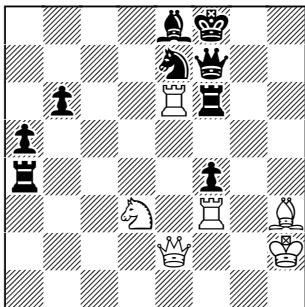


So Black has completed his plan and White

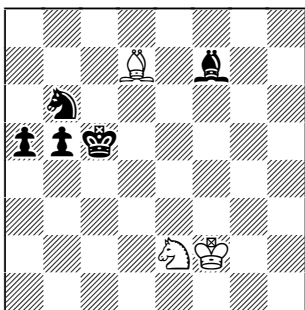
has shuffled like a possum in the headlights. I think Black is just better here. (Ed: The editor does not quite understand the utility of Black's Ra8-a6-b6-d6-d8-c8 plan I must admit). **24.0-0 g5** Maybe a tad early, but he was in bad time trouble now, just the best time to slip the bomb. **25.hxg5 hxg5 26.fxg5 Bxe5 27.Nxe5 Qg7 28.Qe2 Nb8 29.c4 cxd4 30.exd4 dxc4 31.bxc4 Qxg5 32.d5 Qxg3 33.dxe6 Rf6 34.Rf3 Qg5**



**35.Qf2?** This is just time pressure. White has to get active or will lose. (35.Raf1 Nc6 (35...f4 36.Qe4 Nc6 37.Nd7 Bxd7 38.exd7 Rcf8 39.Rd1) 36.Nd7 Rg6 37.Rxf5 Nd4 38.Rf8+ Kg7 39.Qf2 Qg4 40.Rf6 Rg5 41.Re1 Nf5 Couple of out there variations, but with him down near 30 seconds per move, tough to find. Things start to go wrong now.) **35...f4 36.Nd3 Rxc4** one pawn up for the good guys, time to harvest. **37.Re1 Nc6 38.e7 Rxa4** I Couldn't see how to improve my position, so just took a second pawn. **39.Kh2?** And here was the gift from heaven, mistakes follow mistakes. Third pawn for the good guys. **39...Nxe7 40.Bh3** (40.Rxe7 Rh6+ 41.Rh3 Rxh3+ 42.Bxh3 Qxe7 43.Nxf4 Black will win with ease.) **40...Kf8 41.Re5 Qh6 42.Qe2 Qh7 43.Re6 Qf7**



44.Qe5 Another slip, but I think this is driven by depression that this 2200 mug had done the business on him. 44...Rxe6 45.Bxe6 Qh5+ 46.Qxh5 Bxh5 47.Rxf4+ Rxf4 48.Nxf4 Endgames may not be my forte, but even I could win this, 48...Bf7 49.Bd7 Nd5 50.Ne2 Ke7 51.Bb5 Kd6 52.Kg3 Kc5 53.Bd7 b5 54.Kf2 Nb6

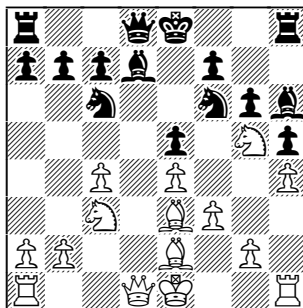


55.Bxb5 Desperation, but there is no way he can get both pawns and force me to show I could mate with the 2 pieces (I sure I could have worked it out :-)) 55...Kxb5 56.Ke3 Kb4 57.Kd2 Nc4+ 58.Kc1 Bg6 The key move, locks the king out of b1, White could calmly resign. 59.Nf4 Be4 0-1

## Steadman, Mike (2252) -

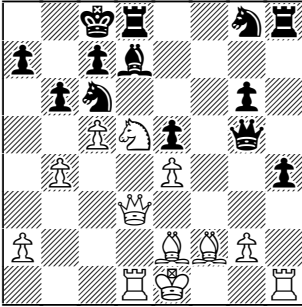
### Richards, Heather (2165) [E61]

This was the key game, I needed to win, so played my d4. I saw that she played Anthony's d6 and Bg4 line. This is not too threatening, so I thought I'd take it on. 1.d4 d6 2.Nf3 Nf6 OK, so prep gone, I assumed a King's Indian and I would just give it a go. 3.c4 g6 4.Nc3 Bf5!? I have never seen this move and am now completely on my own. It just looked bad to me. I like to play g4 type lines against the castled Black King, so my next move is explained. 5.h3 h5 (5...Bg7 6.g4 Bd7 7.e4 0-0 8.Be3 Na6 9.Be2 c5 10.d5 If this is the plan, it just looks like a bad Benoni to me.) 6.Ng5 I was confused by h5, maybe I should have just gone Bf4 and e3 etc. But putting a knight out on g5 in the hole just created, seemed OK. 6...Bh6 7.f3 Bd7 8.h4 e5 9.e3 Nc6 10.Be2 Ne7 11.dxe5 dxe5 12.e4 Nc6 13.Be3

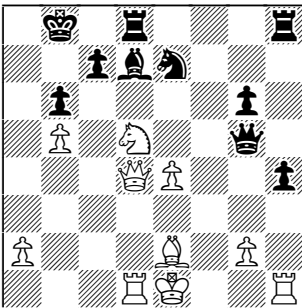


White has to be a little better here, Black has to come up with a plan. 13...Ng8? 14.Qd5 Qe7 (14...Qf6 15.Nb5 0-0-0 16.Nxa7+ Nxa7 17.Qa5 Bxg5 18.hxg5 Qa6 19.Qxa6 bxa6 20.Bxa7 White is a pawn up and has the 2 bishops on an open board - easy win) 15.Bc5 Qf6 16.Rd1 0-0-0

17.Qd3!? (17.Qd2 I had seen this move, but I thought that by saccing the pawn I would drag the queen away and get a huge attack. 17...b6 18.Nd5 Qg7 19.Be3 f6) 17...Bxg5 18.hxg5 Qxg5 19.Nd5 f5 20.b4 fxe4 21.fxe4 b6 22.Bf2 h4 23.c5

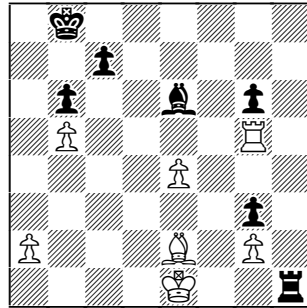


This is the kind of position I had seen, I thought it had to be worth a pawn. 23...Kb8 24.cxb6 axb6 25.b5 Nd4 26.Bxd4!? (26.Qc3 Rc8 27.Rxd4 exd4 28.Qxd4 Be6 29.Nxc7 Kxc7 30.Qxb6+ Kd7 31.Qd4+ Ke8 32.Qxh8 Rc1+ Did not look like enough to me.) 26...exd4 27.Qxd4 Ne7

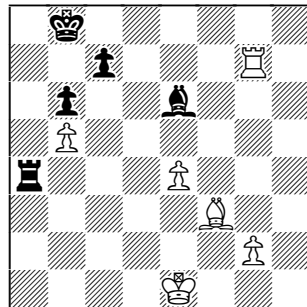


28.Qf6? Qg3+? (28...Qxg2 I had just forgotten she could take this pawn first, White is in trouble now. 29.Qf3 Qxf3 30.Bxf3 Nxd5 31.Rxd5 Rdf8 32.Ke2 Be6 33.Rg5 Bxa2 34.Rxg6 Bc4+ 35.Ke3 Bxb5)

29.Qf2 Nxd5 30.Qxg3 hxg3 31.Rxh8 Rxh8 32.Rxd5 Be6 33.Rg5 Rh1+



Heather was in bad time trouble now, she is close to drawing, but moving the Rook from the back rank helps White with mating options. (33...Bxa2 34.Kd2 Re8 35.Bd3 Rg8 36.Rxg3) 34.Kd2 Bf7 35.Rxg3 Ra1 36.Rf3 Rxa2+ 37.Ke1 Be6 38.Rf6 Bd7 39.Rxg6 Ra4 40.Rg7 (40.Rg8+ Kb7 41.Rd8 Bc8 42.Bf3 c5 43.bxc6+ Kc7 44.Rg8 Ra5 45.Re8 b5 46.e5 b4 47.Kd2 Ra2+ 48.Kd3 Ba6+ 49.Kd4 b3 50.Re7+ Kb6 51.Kc3 b2 52.Be4 Other option type line, but I saw no reason to free up her pawns.) 40...Be6 41.Bf3



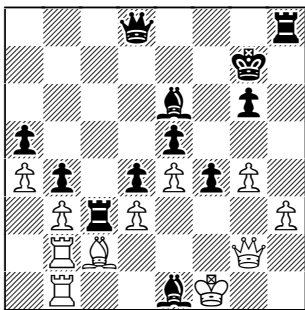
41...Rb4? (41...Kc8 42.e5 Kd8 43.Bc6 Rf4 44.Rg5 Rc4 45.Rg6 Ke7 46.Rg7+ Kd8 47.Kd2 Rc5) 42.Re7 Bc8 43.Re8 Rxb5

44.Bg4 Rb1+ 45.Kf2 Black can calmly resign now, she will lose a piece and the e pawn will queen. 45...Rb2+ 46.Kg3 c5 47.Rxc8+ Kb7 48.Rf8 c4 49.Rf3 Kc6 50.e5 b5 51.Re3 c3 52.Rxc3+ Kd5 53.e6 Kd6 54.Rd3+ Ke7 55.Rd7+ Kf6 56.e7 Rb3+ 57.Kf2 Rb2+ 58.Ke3 Rb3+ 59.Kd2 Rb2+ 60.Kc3 A game that could have swung either way, but the time pressure saved me. 1-0

Ben Hague describes the gruesome finish to his second round game with Jack James.

### James, Jack – Hague, Ben

I can't say that I played any really good games at Congress, however if you ever wanted to know what a bad bishop looks like, then the one on c2 provides the answer. Frankly, it's bad enough it could be Roman Catholic. Now that White has been forced to tie his pieces up on the queenside in order to defend the b3 pawn and c2 bishop I can use the classic plan of opening up the kingside, as my reinforcements get there faster than his. 36...h5 37.Ne1 Rh8 38.Qg2 He needs to put queen or king on g2 to defend h3, but now the knight isn't too happy. 38...Qd8 39.Kf1 hxg4 40.fxg4 Bxe1



41.Qf3 (41.Kxe1 Qh4+ or; 41.Rxe1 Qh4 both lose the h-pawn, so he tries to create a fortress.) 41...Bg3 42.Kg2 Rxe3 Sadly for his king the fortress is made of sand and collapses at the first touch.(42...Rxe3 43.Kxe3 Qh4+ 44.Kg2 Bxe4 45.Qf1 Qh2#) 0-1

Finally Richard Taylor accepted the challenge to contribute. With characteristic eccentricity his main game is in fact from the *previous* congress! Never mind, it's an entertaining read and really constructed as a separate article with its own theme ....

## The Age-Youth Factor – to Chess or not to Chess?

by Richard Taylor

Should I give up chess? Going into the NZ Open this had been my question in November and December as I got a result of 1 and 1/2 from 7 in the (fortunately unrated) Spring Cup (B Grade). Even the game I won was depressing as I felt for my opponent losing in the way he did. I blundered or mis-evaluated in all the other games and even my draw with Rodney Li came from a dubious position. So I was starting to think it was time to pack it in, after all, I am approaching 68. However I had paid my \$200! And chess is addictive, it was in my mind I might do quite well as the time control is better than our club's and so on. It would also be interesting to play amongst GMs and so many strong players. Last year I did well (my target was a sensible 50% which I achieved), and in round one nearly beat GM Allan Stig

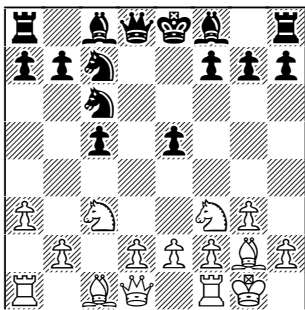
Rasmussen. The first GM I have ever played in standard chess.

In that game I headed for the Rubinstein variation of the English which I had studied briefly in Gambit's 'The English Explained'. I like Rubinstein's games and felt that the reversed 'Maroczy' and the game went well for me, with Rasmussen and I refusing pawn sacrifices. My 2 Ns and 2 Bs and pawn formation were all strong and Rasmussen couldn't make progress. Then his time dropped below 1 minute, sometimes as low as 15 seconds only. It was excruciating! I kept watching his clock. I was almost mesmerised by it. Here is my game:

**Taylor, Richard (1891) - Rasmussen, Allan Stig (2526)**

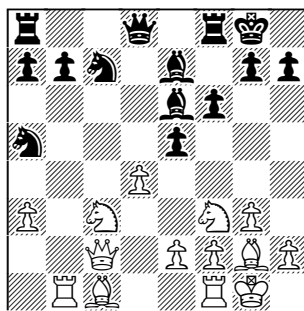
NZ Open 2015 Devonport, 01.01.2015

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 e5 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.g3 Nc6 6.Bg2 Nc7 7.0-0 e5 8.a3

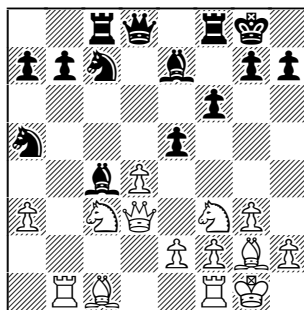


8...Be7 (8...Rb8 9.d3 (9.Rb1 f6 10.d3 Be7 11.Be3 0-0=) 9...Be7 10.Rb1 0-0 11.Be3 Be6; 8...f6 9.e3 Be7 10.d4 cxd4 11.exd4 exd4 12.Ne2 Ne6 13.b4 d3 14.Nf4 Nxf4 15.Bxf4 0-0 16.Qb3+ Kh8 17.b5 Nd4 18.Qxd3 Ne6) 9.b4 f6 10.bxc5 Bxc5 11.Qa4 Bd7 12.Qc4 Be7 13.Rb1 Na5

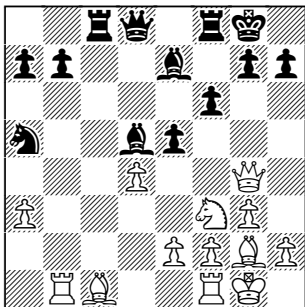
14.Qa2 Be6 15.Qc2 0-0 16.d4!



16...Rc8! (16...exd4? 17.Rd1 d3 18.Rxd3) 17.Qd3 (17.dxe5 fxe5 18.Nxe5 Bf6 19.Qe4 (19.Qa4 b6 20.Rd1 Qe8 21.Qxe8 Nxe8 22.Bd5 Bxd5 23.Nxd5 Rxc1 24.Nxf6+ gxf6 25.Rbxc1 fxe5 26.Rd7 Nb3 27.Rc8 Nd4) 19...Qe7 20.Bf4 Qxa3 21.Qd3 Rfd8) 17...Bc4



18.Qe4?! (18.Qd1 Rasmussen said, after the game, that he should have played this and it seems best here. 18...exd4 19.Nxd4) 18...Nd5 19.Nxd5 Bxd5 20.Qg4

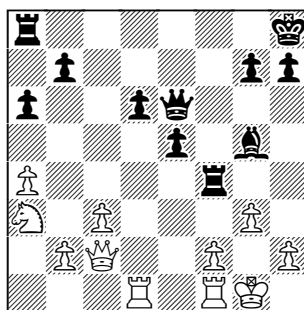


Black is now better, but now I went wrong. **20...Bxf3?** (20...f5! The move I intended. The GM was now down to less than a minute on the clock but for some reason I started to fear he might have an attack with Ng5. I had never played a grandmaster in standard chess so I was quite nervous, although I had found the right moves up to now, more or less. And now after f5 Black has a winning position in theory. Rasmussen said after the game he might have had to give up a piece somewhere here. 21.Qh5 e4 22.Ng5 h6 23.Nh3 Qd7 24.Nf4 Ba2 (24...Bf7? 25.Ng6 Qd6 26.Qxf5) 25.Rb2 Bf7 26.Qh3 Rxc1 27.Rxc1 Bxa3 28.Rbb1 Bxc1 29.Rxc1 Nb3 30.Rb1 Nd2 31.Re1 b5 32.g4 Qxd4 33.gxf5 b4 and Black should win.) **21.Qe6+!** Of course. Missed this. Now it all falls apart although Rasmussen still was very short of time but now he gains time via the increments. (21.Bxf3?! f5 22.Qh3 e4 23.Bg2 Qd5) **21...Kh8 22.Bxf3 exd4 23.Rd1** Here it is still equal except that my opponent was about 4 times the Danish Champion and a GM so.... **23...b6?!** (23...f5 24.Bd2 b6 25.Bxa5 bxa5 26.e3 Bxa3) **24.e3 d3?!** (24...Qd6) **25.Be4 f5?** Trying to set a trap I start to lose. **26.Rxd3 Qc7 27.Bxf5 Bf6 28.Rd1 Rce8 29.Qa2**

**Qe5 30.Rd5 Qc3 31.Bd2 Qc4 32.Qxc4 Nxc4 33.Bb4 Rf7 34.Rc1 Ne5 35.f4 Ng6 36.Rd7 Rxd7 37.Bxd7 Rd8 38.Bf5 a5 39.Be1?!** (39.Bc3) **39...Ne7** (39...Bb2 40.Rb1) **40.Be4 Nd5?** (40...Bb2 41.Rb1 Bxa3 42.Rxb6 Bc5 43.Ra6 Bxe3+ 44.Kf1 a4 45.Rxa4) **41.Kf2 g6 42.Rc6 Kg7 43.a4 g5 44.Ke2 gxf4 45.gxf4 0-1**

I had intended 20. ... f5 but suddenly thought there were plots unseen. There weren't. But after Rasmussen checked me on e6 I was still watching his time dipping as it had been for some moves, into 45 seconds or 20 seconds and I put my hands to adjust two Rooks, which Rasmussen shished away. I apologized. I was made increasingly nervous by his time trouble!

This year I didn't play a GM in the first round but Hans Gao. That was also interesting and I reached a good position. Hans didn't play his normal Closed Sicilian, after being told by William Li that I played the Najdorf. This is true but I had decided to give other Sicilians lines a go and we got into a variant of the Svesnikov.



In this position I played **22...Rf6** Instead of **22...Raf8!** when Hans said after the game (which he won in good style after my

move) that he would have bailed out with 23.gxf4 Then it is of course perpetual check but I think White can afford not to take the rook. After some time Komodo finds that White can defend the position.

But even though I lost, this game showed me that I wasn't heading for dementia. Ok, I know there are many who would disagree, including probably my daughters etc, and Wayne Power my old chess playing cobbler from my schoolboy 1960s! (At least he knows I have always been a bit of a worry!).

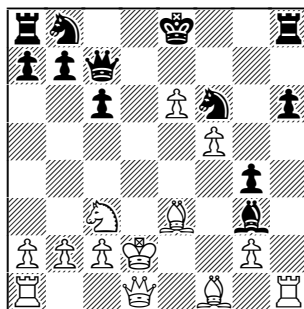
I lost to two other younger players, one was Shenyue Li. She played well, and won as she deserved, she's clearly talented, and I think at the time she was also, like Hans, playing in the NZ Junior Champs. Sure I missed a devastating check by her, but before that I backed myself to essay a From's Gambit which I had played a few years back against Ben Hague. The day before Mike Steadman was on fire after beating an IM and was advocating active chess, this inspired me somewhat. What had I to lose?

### Li, Shenyue (2007) -

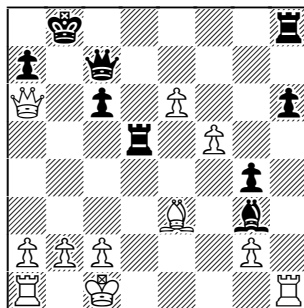
#### Taylor, Richard (1888) [A02]

1.f4 e5 2.fxe5 d6 3.exd6 Bxd6 4.Nf3 g5 5.d4 g4 6.Ng5 f5 7.d5?! This is not best. The main move runs 7.e4 h6 8.e5 Be7 9.Nh3 gxh3 10.Qh5+ Kf8 11.Bc4 Rh7 And results are mixed. I am not sure what other theory there is on the From Gambit but I thought it would be an exciting game. 7...Nf6?! I had thought that White couldn't play the Ng5 line so hadn't thought about it much and here I needed to play h6 (7...h6 embarrasses the knight eg 8.Ne6 Bxe6

9.dxe6 Qh4+) 8.Nc3 h6 9.Ne6 Bxe6 10.dxe6 c6? Now Shenyue takes over. I thought I was winning! Okay, that's not old age, I have thought that in many positions since I started chess 2000 years ago. (10...Qe7 11.Nb5 Be5 12.e4 Qxe6 13.Nd4 Bxd4 14.Qxd4 Nc6 15.Bb5 Qxe4+) 11.e4 Qc7 12.exf5 Bxh2 13.Be3 Bg3+ 14.Kd2



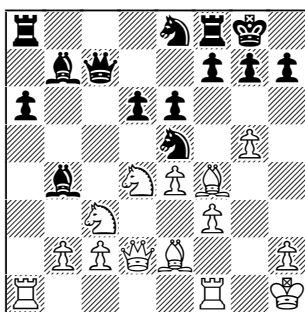
14...Na6 (14...Bf4 15.Qe2 Na6 16.Re1 Qe5 17.Kc1 Bxe3+ 18.Qxe3 Qxe3+ 19.Rxe3 Nc7 20.g3 Rd8 21.Ne4 Ke7 22.Nxf6 Kxf6 23.Rh5 Nd5) 15.Bxa6 bxa6 16.Qe2 0-0-0+ 17.Kc1 Nd5 18.Nxd5 Rxd5 19.Qxa6+ Kb8



20.f6 (20.Rf1 Bd6 21.Qc4 Rf8 22.f6) 20...Qe5?? Busily calculating combinations I forgot to check up on my own King! But my "advantage" now is

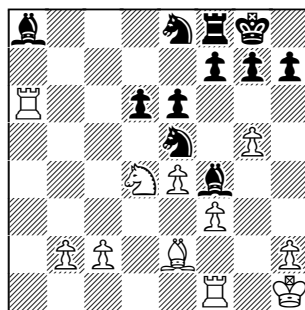
illusory. (20...Bf4 21.Qa3 Ka8 22.Re1 Rhd8 23.e7; 20...Re5 21.Bd4 Rxe6 22.Qc4 Qf4+ 23.Kb1 Re4 24.Qb3+ Ka8 25.Qc3 Rxd4 26.Qxc6+) **21.Bxa7+!** W-w-w-what was that?!! Ooops!! Well, Shen Yue now mops up in style and soon goes home. She also beat poor Bob Smith who has had some tough times in chess recently. But even to beat Bob at all is a sign of some ability for sure. **21...Kc7 22.Qb6+ Kd6 23.Bb8+ Rxb8 24.Qxb8+ Kxe6 25.Qxe5+ Kxe5 (25...Rxe5 26.a4) 26.Rh5+ Kxf6 27.Rxd5 cxd5 28.a4 h5 29.a5 Bf2 30.a6 Ba7 31.Kd2 h4 32.Rh1 Kg5 33.Ke2 d4 34.Rf1 g3 35.Kf3 Bc5 36.b4 Bb6 37.Ra1 Ba7 38.b5 1-0**

Against Karl Kai Zhu I reached this position:

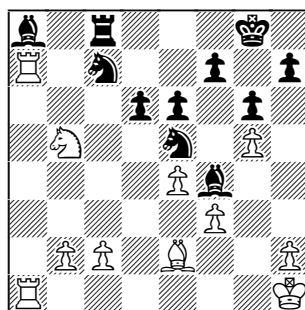


Here I thought I was in difficulty. I had pushed Karl's knight back not to attack the K-side but to split his rooks. So now 17. Ra4 and doubling rooks to attack the 'a' pawn is logical and my machine agrees. But in the game I felt I was losing ground. So I found one of my "combinations". I knew that it would have surprise value, but I also judged it to be better for me. I had overlooked some defences, but overall I thought at the time I could win. As it

happens there are a lot of complexities and I got a winning position (both players missed 20...Bd7! which is probably a bit better for Black, but it is critical Black finds that), this was a line that required judgement and calculation and overall my brain didn't let me down. **17.Ncb5!?** Enterprising but not sound. However this apparently had a psychological impact that was all but winning. **17...Bxd2 18.Nxc7 Bxf4 19.Nxa8 Bxa8 20.Rxa6**



**20...Nc7?** Better is the move we both missed (20...Bb7! 21.Ra7 Bc8) **21.Ra7 Rc8 22.Rfa1** Now there is a terrible threat of mate looming! So... **22...g6 23.Nb5**



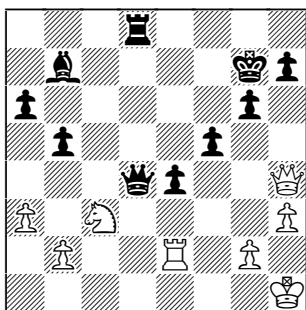
**23...Bc6?** (23...Bxe4 24.Nxd6 Nb5 25.Nxc8 Nxf3 26.Bd3 Nxe4+ 27.Bxe4 Nxa7 28.Rxa7 Nxe4) **24.Nxc7!?**



(24.Rxc7!) 24...d5 25.exd5 exd5 26.R1a3 Bxg5 27.c3 Be7 28.R3a6? Bc5! 29.Kg2 Bxa7 30.Rxa7 Draw agreed. ½-½

Karl defended well and I misplayed the end. But even so, I still felt good about my game.

Against his brother, Leo Lei Zhu, I played for an attack but misplayed it and came under attack myself. Then I lost pawns and was, in reality completely lost in this position:



My last move 44. Qh4 is at least fighting (in a few other games in the tournament I failed to do this, and gave up too easily in difficulty) but here I was looking for any way to escape. But Black only has to play 44. ... Qf6 ( there are other moves) and he is easily winning, in fact I should resign. But, and it is no reflection on my opponent who played well, while I had played a lot of the game quite badly, now my doggedness paid off as now Leo played the natural 44...Qd6?? when I took my chance, and after checking that I wasn't on another planet, played 45.Rd2! This forced 45...Qxd2 and after 46.Qe7+ I escaped with a perpetual check. 45.Rd2 is one of

those problem like moves such as the cross pin that perhaps for those who are winning should be banned. They are beautiful to the observer and the perpetrator but tragic for the player on the receiving end. ½-½

Young Leo obviously doesn't have my age and alertness problems, and it must have been a great disappointment for him. But for me, the craven old codger, it vindicated, somewhat, myself in the chess and age sense. Some of my cogitation cells are still working it seems, and I feel that I can continue with this terrible addiction commonly known as “Chess”, at least for a year or two!

## Something New in the Nimzo

*Chess Openings with FM Scott Wastney*

### Introduction

I considered several options for this article. My overriding requirements were to (A) cover an opening that would actually be of interest to a good number of the readers and (B) and not go down the off-beat openings path. So my short-list was soon narrowed down to ideas in the Ruy Lopez, Queen's Gambit or Nimzo-Indian. Considering my articles have previously only looked at 1.e4 openings, it seemed that I should go for a 1.d4 opening. Initially I had thought of covering a variation that I

have played often myself as Black against the Queens Gambit. This would let me use my own games, and it satisfies my (B) criterion, but I am not sure about the (A) criterion. The Indian defences are definitely more popular in the wider NZ chess community. Mental note to myself: “Play more interesting openings in future!”.

Luckily (for you the reader) at the time of sitting down to write the article, two recent experiences drew my attention to an interesting option for Black against the Classical Nimzo-Indian:

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2**

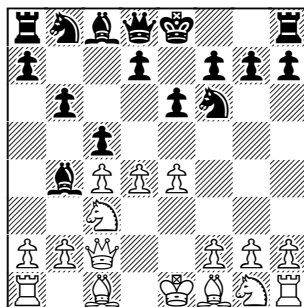
This is known as the “Classical” or also sometimes called the “Capablanca” variation.

**4...b6!?**

The main moves are 4...0-0, 4...d5 or 4...c5. Although the move 4...b6!? has been around for the past hundred years it hasn’t been taken too seriously until relatively recently. For example it is not mentioned at all in Ivan Sokolov’s 1995 book on the Classical Nimzo-Indian, unless you count indirectly within his sweeping statement “Other moves do not deserve serious investigation”. But this move has increasing become more popular in the past few years, with Vallejo Pons playing it in 2013 then other strong players such as super GM’s Alexander Morozevich and Liren Ding adopting it.

The critical line now goes:

**5.e4 c5!**



My first experience leading me towards this subject was watching the video series “Juega la Nimzoindia” by Spanish super GM Vallejo Pons on Chess24.com. Against 4.Qc2 he advocates 4...b6!? with analysis around one of his own games from 2013. Watching the video coincided closely with the time I happened to play through Kanan Izzat’s impressive win against NZ player Luke Li in the Australian Masters. For those not familiar with the name Kanan Izzat, he was the recent winner of the Australian Championship. I thought a review on this variation would be interesting, not just for myself, but also hopefully for readers of this magazine. If you would like to watch the Vallejo Pons video but are put off by it being in Spanish, then panic not...there is an accompanying e-book “Spiele Nimzo-Indisch”.

Joking aside, I recently joined Chess24.com and it has a lot of content in English. Also I found the foreign language videos not too much of a handicap to following the chess material. Chess is it’s own language!

I should point out that White has other 5<sup>th</sup> move alternatives such as 5.a3 or 5.Nf3,

but please forgive me for narrowing the topic down a little bit and only consider 5.e4 here. In practice 5.a3 is just as popular as 5.e4, so the interested reader will need to do his own research into this. Or it could be a topic for a follow up article.

I will quickly point out that Black's idea isn't to transpose to main lines with 5...0-0, although that remains an option, but to continue with Bb7. For example 5.a3 Bxc3 6.Qxc3 Bb7 (6...0-0 and we are back in mainline territory) 7.Bg5 h6 8.Bh4 Black has ideas of 8...g5 9.Bg3 Ne4 available to him since he has not castled.

### Theory

#### PART 1 5.e4 c5! 6.e5 The Stem Game

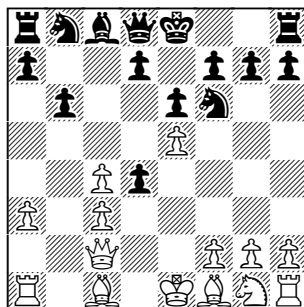
Vallejo Pons video coverage is built around his game against Marc Narciso Dublan in 2013. More games have been seen since then and I will summarise this using Vallejo Pons' stem game.

**Narciso Dublan, Marc (2549) - Vallejo Pons, Francisco (2694) [E32]**  
Catalunya-chT Honor Catalunya (4.1),  
09.02.2013

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 b6 5.e4 5.c5! 6.e5 cxd4 7.a3**

It would be a blunder to continue 7.exf6?? dxc3 8.bxc3 (8.fxg7 cxb2+ -+) 8...Qxf6-+

**7...Bxc3+ 8.bxc3**



#### 8...Ng8!

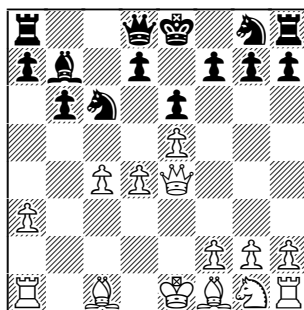
It seems tempting to use an intermediate move to keep White's pawns doubled with 8...d3? 9.Qxd3 Ng8 but after 10.Qg3! White has a strong initiative.

#### 9.cxd4

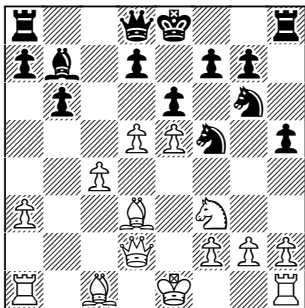
Also tempting is 9.Qe4!? Vallejo Pons gives the variation 9...Nc6 10.cxd4

Now Vallejo Pons suggests 10...d5! 11.Qg4 (11.exd6 Qxd6= or 11.cxd5 f5! 12.exf6 (12.Qe3 Qxd5=) 12...Nxf6 13.Qe3 Qxd5=) 11...Kf8!? with the idea of Nge7 and Ba6.

Also interesting is 10...Bb7!?

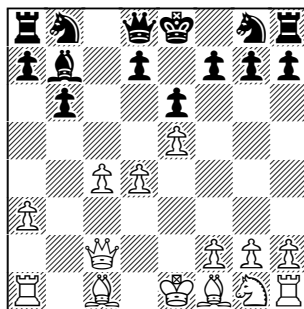


as played by Kanan Izzat, the game continued 11.Nf3 [11.Qg4 Nge7 12.Qxg7? Rg8 13.Qxh7 Nxd4-/+] 11...Nge7 12.Qg4 Nf5 13.Bd3 h5 14.Qf4 Nce7 15.d5 Ng6 16.Qd2



Playing around with variations here with Stockfish7 I can't demonstrate anything concrete for White, although to my eyes it does look quite scary for the Black side. For example 16.Qe4!? Nfe7 17.Qd4 exd5 18.cxd5 Bxd5 19.Bxg6 fxe6 20.Bg5 Bxf3 21.gxf3 Rc8 22.e6 dxe6 23.Qxg7 Rf8 24.0-0= Black is never in danger, apparently. The actual game continued (After 16.Qd2) 16...Nfh4 17.Nxh4 Qxh4 18.Bxg6?! After this the weakness of the pawn on c4 tells 18...fxg6=+/+ I will give the rest of the game because it is impressive play by Izzat 19.0-0 20.f4 Ba6 21.dxe6 dxe6 22.Qc2 Qg4 23.Rf3 Rac8 24.Rg3 Rxc4 25.Rxg4 Rxc2 26.Rxg6 Rfc8 27.Be3 Re2 28.Rd1 Rxe3 29.Rd7 Re1+ 30.Kf2 Rf1+ 31.Ke3 Kh8 32.Rdxg7 Rc3+ 33.Kd2 Rd3+ 34.Kc2 Rf2+ 35.Kc1 Rc3+ 36.Kd1 Rc8 37.Rxa7 Rd8+ 38.Kc1 Bd3 39.Rh6+ Kg8 40.Rc7 Bf5 41.Rxh5 Rf1+ 0-1 Li,Zuhao Luke (2332) - Izzat,Kanan Azar (2456) Australian Masters GM Melbourne (7), 18.12.2015

**9...Bb7!**



**10.h4** Vallejo Pons also considers two other lines here:

(A) 10.Nf3 Bxf3 11.gxf3 Nc6 12.Be3 Nge7 with counter play. 13.Bd3 This position arose in a recent game 13...Rc8 14.Rg1 Ng6 [14...g6=/+ according to Stockfish7] White went onto win, though not as a result of the opening, in Hawkins,Jo (2569) - Roberson,P (2407) London Classic Open 2015 London ENG (4.9), 06.12.2015

(B) 10.Qc3 Ne7 11.Nf3 Nbc6 12.Be2 Rc8 with counter play.

But he doesn't consider:

(C) 10.a4!? soon gave White a decisive advantage after 10...Nc6?!

Black sets his pieces up following Vallejo Pons' prescription to target the c4 pawn, but it just doesn't seem to work here with White having a timely rook lift Ra3 to c3. Maybe Black should play against White's centre in a different way with 10...f6!? This needs some testing but here is a sample line: 11.f4 fxe5 12.dxe5 Na6 13.Ba3 (13.Bd3?? Nb4-+) 13...Nh6 14.Bd3 Nc5 15.Bxc5 bxc5 and I like this position for

Black even though Stockfish7 sticks with its favourite evaluation of 0.00. If White tries to be too greedy with 16.Bxh7? then 16...Rxh7 17.Qxh7 Qa5+ 18.Kf1 Qd2-/+ and Black has more than enough compensation for the exchange sacrifice. Back to the game (after 10...Nc6)...

11.Nf3 Rc8 12.Be2 Nge7 13.0-0 Na5 14.Ra3 Nf5 15.Rd1 0-0 16.Rc3 d6 17.Ba3± [17.d5! dxe5 18.Nxe5+– Clearly this is not the sort of position Black is aiming for Ponkratov,Pavel (2604) - Morozevich,Alexander (2711) Wch Blitz Berlin (14), 14.10.2015. But blitz being blitz and Morozevich being Morozevich Black still went on to win.

(D) 10.Ne2 Nc6 11.Bb2 Rc8 12.Ng3 Na5 13.Rc1 Qh4 14.f3 f5 15.Qf2 Ne7 16.Be2 Ba6=/+ with the usual pressure against White's centre when things are going well for Black, Arnaudov,Petar G (2445) - Volokitin,Andrei (2639) FRM-chT 23rd Struga (3.2), 16.07.2014

**10...Ne7 11.Bb2 Nbc6 12.Nf3 Rc8 13.Nd2** [13.Be2 Na5-/+ 14.h5? Nxc4 15.Bxc4 Bxf3 16.gxf3 b5-+] **13...Nf5 14.d5 Nce7 15.d6 Ng6** [The computer engine prefers 15...Nc6=] **16.h5 Nf4 17.Rh2** [17.Ne4!+/= Stockfish7] **17...Qg5 18.g3 Nxb5 19.Be2 Nhxg3 20.fxg3 Qxg3+ 21.Rf2 Ne3 22.Qc3 Ng2+ 23.Kf1 Ne3+ 24.Ke1 Ng2+ 25.Kf1 Ne3+ ½-½**

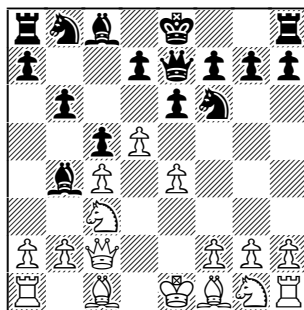
**PART 2                    5.e4 c5 6.d5**  
**Gustafsson's recommendation**

As a result of Vallejo Pons video, fellow Chess24 presenter GM Jan Gustafsson conceded his original recommendation (5.e4 c5 6.a3, see Part 3) against 4...b6!? had some flaws and took a fresh look and produced a new video, this time promoting 6.d5 The video is also available on Chess24 and in English. This was also the choice of Wang Hao in a recent game.

**Wang,Hao (2700) - Ding,Liren (2781)**  
**[E32]**

Shenzhen Celebrity 5th Shenzhen rapid (6),  
21.11.2015

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 b6 5.e4 c5 6.d5 Qe7!**



A key move **7.Be2**

Considered best. Alternatives are:

- 7.e5? exd5-/+
- 7.f3? exd5 8.cxd5 Nxd5=/+
- 7.Bd3? exd5 8.cxd5 Ba6! =/+
- 7.dxe6 Qxe6 8.f3 Nc6 with attack.
- 7.Nge2 exd5 8.exd5 0-0 9.Bg5 h6 10.Bh4 d6 11.0-0-0 Re8 12.h3 Nbd7 13.a3 Ba5 14.f4 Ba6=/+ 0-1 (36) Martinovic,S (2526)-Postny,E (2670) Zadar 16.12.2015

## 7...exd5

Vallejo Pons gives the line: 7...d6 8.Nf3 0-0 and now:

(A) 9.0-0 Bxc3 10.bxc3 exd5 (10...e5 11.Bg5 h6 12.Bh4 Bg4 is unclear) 11.exd5 Bg4 with counter play.

Also 11...Bf5!? 12.Qxf5 Qxe2 13.Bf4? (13.Bh6! Qe4!= or 13.Qf4?! although the following line could do with some further checking, though it really does seem that it is too dangerous for White to go down this path 13...Nbd7 14.Re1 Qc2 15.Bd2 Rae8 16.Qxd6 Rxe1+ 17.Rxe1 Qxa2 18.Re7 Qxc4 19.Rxd7 Nxd7 20.Qxd7 a5 21.d6 a4 22.Qe7 (22.Qa7 Qe4-/+ ) 22...Qe6-/+ ) 13...Qxc4 14.Bxd6 Re8 15.Rad1 Nbd7 16.Bg3 Qxc3-/+ Siva,Mahadevan (2370) - Kobo,Ori (2437) 15th Marienbad GM 2016 Marianske Lazne CZE (1.1), 16.01.2016

(B) 9.Be3!? Gustafsson considers this is more precise than the immediate castles. 9...Bxc3+ 10.bxc3 exd5 11.exd5 Bg4 12.0-0 Nbd7 and White has avoided the option of Black putting his Bishop on f5. After 13.Rae1 Rae8 14.h3 Bxf3 15.Bxf3 Ne5 16.Be2 Qd8 Gustafsson expresses the opinion that White is better with ideas of f4, Bd3, Bd2 or c1 then some future expansion on the Kingside. There is also the option of a4 threatening a5 or tempting Black to play a5 himself. There aren't any practical examples yet, but I guess someone will try this idea one day. Stockfish7 is happy enough to call this position dead equal.

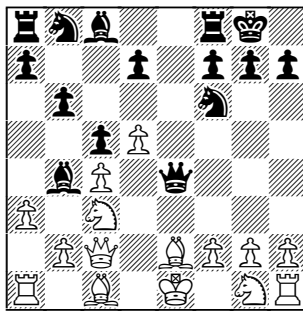
## 8.exd5 0-0

8...Qe4?! 9.Qd2! Qxg2 10.Bf3 Qg6 11.Nge2 with compensation for the pawn.

## 9.a3

9.Nf3 d6 10.0-0 Bxc3 11.bxc3 Bg4 seems to transpose to Vallejo Pons' line.

## 9...Qe4!?



9...Bxc3+ 10.Qxc3! Presumably the point of a3 is to make the Bishop take on c3 while White can recapture with the Queen. (it makes no sense to play 10.bxc3 d6 11.Nf3 Re8-/+ and the tempo lost with a3 leaves White struggling to develop due to the pin on the e-file) 10...Re8 and it is still a little awkward for White to develop.

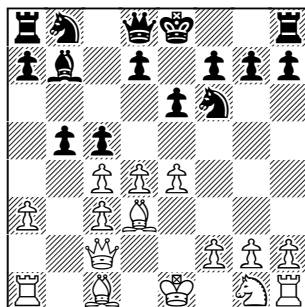
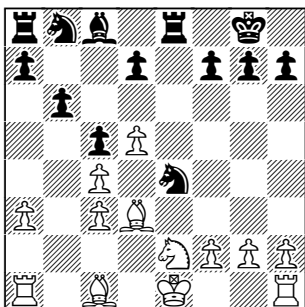
## 10.Qxe4 Bxc3+ 11.bxc3 Nxe4

The White pawns end up doubled after all.

## 12.Bd3

12.Bf4!? Nxc3 13.Rc1 Nxe2 14.Nxe2 with compensation for the pawn.

## 12...Re8 13.Ne2



### 13...Nxc3

13...Ba6! 14.0-0 (14.Bf4 Nxc3 15.Kd2 Nxe2 16.Bxe2 Rxe2+ 17.Kxe2 Bxc4+/-) 14...Nd6=/+

14.Kd2 Nxe2 15.Re1 d6 16.Rxe2 Rxe2+ 17.Kxe2 Nd7 18.f4 Bb7 19.a4 Re8+ 20.Kf2 a5= 21.Bb2 Ba6 22.Rb1 h5 23.g3 Rb8 24.Re1 Kf8 25.Re3 Nf6 26.Bxf6 gxf6 27.Be2 Re8 28.Rxe8+ Kxe8 29.Ke3 Kf8 30.Kd3 h4 31.g4 f5 32.g5 f6 33.gxf6 Kf7 34.h3 Kxf6 35.Bd1 Bc8 36.Kc3 Bd7 37.Kd3 ½-½

### PART 3 5.e4 c5 6.a3 The Planinc Variation

Lysyj,Igor (2671) -  
Morozevich,Alexander (2711) [E32]  
Poikovsky Karpov (8), 06.10.2015

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Qc2 b6 5.e4 c5 6.a3 Bxc3+ 7.bxc3 Bb7 8.Bd3 (8.e5 Ng8= is already a familiar idea) 8...b5!

This move was first played by Slovenian grandmaster Albin Planinc in 1976, but then not repeated until 2013. The idea is 9.cxb5? c4! 10.Bxc4?? Bxe4 and Black is winning due to the fork of the Queen and g2. Better would be to retreat 10.Bf1 but after Bxe4 Blacks position is still preferable. It is best not to capture the pawn and the real test is:

### 9.Qb1

The original Planinc game went 9.Rb1. My guess is that after the Planinc game it was realised that 9.Qb1 was a stronger move and therefore the move 8...b5 was discarded for the next forty-odd years. In fact, an older video by Jan Gustafsson's recommended this move 9.Qb1 but in light of the Vallejo Pons video he commented that "My last video was kind of crap" (his words!) and in part 2 of this article we have already seen Gustafsson's new suggestion.

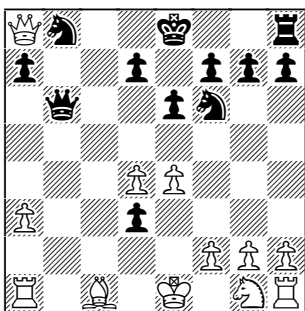
We will soon see the answer to 9.Qb1, but first a recent game with 9.Rb1 went as follows 9...bxc4 10.Rxb7 cxd3 11.Qxd3 0-0 12.Ne2 Qc8 13.Rb1 Qa6 14.Qe3?! (14.Qxa6 Nxa6 15.f3=) 14...Nc6=/+ 0-1 (31) Gongora Reyes,M (2427)-Quesada

Perez,Y (2627) Merida 19.12.2015

### 9...cxd4!

The antidote. Black plans to sacrifice his Rook on a8 and then try and trap the Queen. It is important to throw this exchange in first otherwise 9...bxc4?? 10.Qxb7 cxd3 11.Qxa8 Qb6 12.dxc5 releases the trap.

### 10.cxd4 bxc4 11.Qxb7 cxd3 12.Qxa8 Qb6



And here we have it - Black is preparing to castle then Nc6 will trap the Queen.

### 13.Nf3?

13.Ra2! is a computer draw pointed out by Vallejo Pons 13...Qb1 14.Ra1 Qb6 15.Ra2 and the crowd cheer! Also possible is 13...0-0 14.Rb2 d2+! 15.Kxd2 Qxd4+ 16.Ke1 Qc3+ 17.Kd1 Qd4+ 18.Ke1= but also with no more than a repetition.

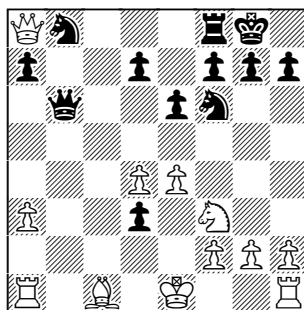
With any other move White will be worse. The computer tells me the second best White attempt is a delayed Ra2 idea. 13.e5?! Nd5 14.Ra2. Now Black can choose the draw by repetition as before, but also has a surprising resource to keep the

game going: 14...Ke7! =/+ 15.Rb2?? Qxd4 -+. Note if Black had played more prosaically with 14...0-0 then 15...Qxd4 wouldn't work because 16.Qxb8! and White comes out on top.

White had success with 13.Be3? 0-0 14.d5 in Esplugas Esteve,V (2220)-Yrjola,J (2356) Sitges 2015. But Black should have taken his chance to exploit White's uncastled King to keep the trap intact with 14...d2+!! 15.Bxd2 (15.Kxd2 Qb2+ -+) 15...Na6 16.Be3 Nc5 17.Bxc5 Qxc5 18.Qb7 Qc3+ and the Queen escape is too costly.

For chess amongst the elite this analysis proves that Black can draw and White needs to look elsewhere. But for the rest of us, it is hardly appealing that all White needs to know is one line with the key 12th move to draw against 4...b6!? But in practice no-one has played 12.Ra2 yet, and recently a couple of strong grandmasters have lost with other moves. But Black can search for ways to continue the fight, with the drawing line 8...b5 always in reserve. So it is not that appealing for White to choose this line either.

### 13...0-0





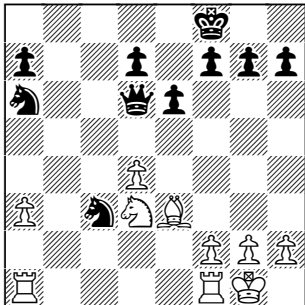
## 14.Be3

The young American star Jeffrey Xiong, as White, lost here in a recent game with 14.0–0 Nc6 15.Qxf8+ Kxf8 16.d5 exd5 17.exd5 Nxd5–+ 0–1 (44) Xiong,J (2544)-Moradiabadi,E (2587) ICC INT 2015

## 14...Na6

14...Nc6! +/- is definitely the computer engine preference. I trust Morozevich would have studied this position beforehand (he wouldn't play into this line with 8...b5 without knowing about the idea of sacrificing his rook). The move 15.d5 is simply met with 15...Qb2 so it's hard to understand why he preferred Na6.

15.Qxf8+ Kxf8 16.0–0 Nxe4 17.Ne5 Qd6 18.Nxd3 Nc3



Black has a queen and pawn for two rooks, which you could argue is material equality, but the rooks are hard to both activate and coordinate.

## 19.Kh1

Preparing Rc1. How else to activate the rooks?

19...f6 20.Rfc1 Nd5 21.a4 g5 22.a5 h5 23.Rc4 g4 24.Bh6+ Kf7 25.Rc8 Nab4 26.Nc5 h4 27.Re1 Nc6 28.Rh8 Nxd4 29.Nxd7 h3 30.Nf8 hxg2+ 31.Kxg2 Qc6

0–1

I hope this article serves as a good introduction to this opening line. As you will see many of the games quoted have been played towards the end of 2015 so it is a topical line and no doubt new ideas will be added in the new future. I look forward to seeing the direction the opening takes at the top level and giving it try myself.

**Scott Wastney is available for private chess coaching via Skype, including if you are looking for assistance in developing your opening repertoire. Please contact me on [kiwichess@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kiwichess@xtra.co.nz) or visit my homepage to find out more about me <http://kiwichess.ediy.co.nz/>**

**Please also remember to contact Scott if you have an opening you would like me to cover in the next issue of NZ Chess.**

## Wellington Open 25th-27<sup>th</sup> March

A 6 round 90 minute + 30 second single group open. Poison Pawn Grand Prix Class 2. Entry fee \$65 (Juniors \$50). B grade, C grade and Junior prizes. Venue: The CQ Hotel, Cuba Street. Email entries to Ross Jackson, [Lrjackson@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Lrjackson@xtra.co.nz)

## European Chess Adventures Part 1

by Gino Thornton

I left for Europe on July the 21st with the main intention of visiting extended family in Italy. However when in Europe one does not avoid the opportunity to play strong tournaments. After three weeks of visiting family and travelling around the south of Italy, my first tournament was set to begin.

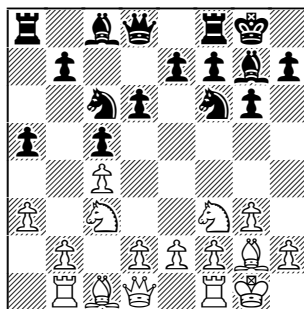
It was held in Pisignano a tiny village town 10km from the city of Lecce. If Italy is a boot Lecce is on the heel. I made my way by train to Lecce and the organiser picked me up from the train station. I stayed at a B&B 200 meters away from the venue. It was really nice but a tad noisy at times. Italians eat dinner really late, having dinner around 10pm is pretty normal. So it was difficult to get to sleep sometimes.

The Venue was in a building inside a courtyard of an old manor that apparently belonged to the old town mayor. It is mostly destroyed but the right side of the building remains. Inside it is completely refurbished and even had air-conditioning. It was a lovely place to play chess.

The tournament was using a different scoring system. 3 points for a win 1 for a draw and 0 for loss. Which obviously shows a few wins in a row can get you back into the hunt. 18 players with 3 grandmasters and 2 IMs contested the A grade and 20 players contested the B grade. Top seed was GM Vladimir Petkov rated 2496 from Bulgaria.

In the first round I was paired against youngster Jacopo Romano rated a modest 1969. My first game in Italy was set to begin. I could feel my opponent was determined and he played his opening moves quickly and confidently.

**Thornton,Gino (2187) -  
Romano,Jacopo (1969) [A38]**  
Festival St'Anna Italy (1), 16.08.2015  
**1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.g3 g6 4.Bg2 Bg7 5.0-0 0-0 6.Nc3 Nc6 7.a3 d6 8.Rb1 a5**



In this position I followed up my Russell Dive inspired 8.Rb1 with **9.d4?** and found myself in a lot of trouble after **9...cxd4 10.Nxd4 Nxd4 11.Qxd4 Bf5! 12.Qd1?!** I didn't like the look of (12.Ra1 Ne4 so I decided it was probably better if I just gave him the exchange in the hope I could fight back. I managed to outplay him, but it was only good enough for a draw. Jacopo Romano went on to have a great tournament and a performance rating of 2222) **12...Bxb1 13.Nxb1 Rc8 14.b3 a4 15.b4 Rxc4 16.Bxb7 Qb6 17.Bf3 Rfc8 18.Be3 Qb5 19.Qd3 Qd7 20.Bc5 R4xc5 21.bxc5 Rxc5 22.Nc3 Ng4 23.Ne4 Rc8 24.Qa6 Ne5 25.Bg2 ½-½**

So I was 0.5 from 1 or 1 from 3 with this

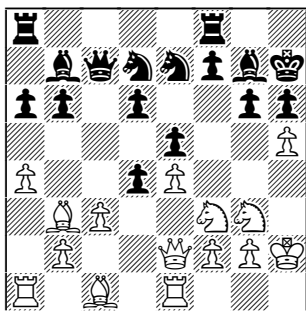
tournament's scoring system. Round 2 I had Samuele Pizzuto rated 2051. I went astray in the middle game and was totally lost but he blundered in a critical position and I won or rather "he lost".

Round 3 brought one of the big boys IM Dragolovic Andjelko rated 2301.

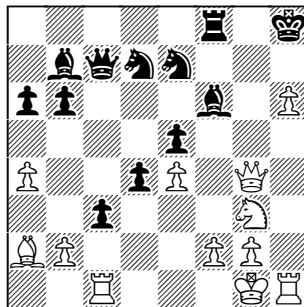
### Thornton, Gino (2187) - Dragojlovic, Andjelko (2301)

Festival St'Anna Italy (3), 17.08.2015

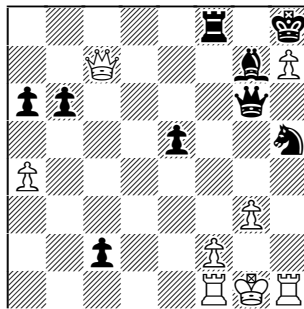
1.d4 g6 2.e4 Bg7 3.Nf3 d6 4.Bc4 e6 5.0-0 Ne7 6.Re1 a6 7.a4 b6 8.Nbd2 h6 9.c3 Bb7 10.Bb3 Nd7 11.Nf1 c5 12.Ng3 Qc7 13.Qe2 0-0 14.h4 e5 15.h5 (15.dxe5 dxe5 16.h5 Kh7 17.Kh2 g5 18.Bxg5 hxg5 19.Nxg5+ Kh8) 15...Kh7 16.Kh2 cxd4



I reached quite a nice position. Here I played 17.Rh1 I was fairly excited to force the issue instead of simply recapturing then playing Rh1 afterwards. I followed up with a speculative sac, and things got exciting. 17...g5 18.Bxg5 hxg5 19.Nxg5+ Kh8 20.h6 Bf6 21.Nxf7+ Rxf7 22.Bxf7 Rf8 23.Ba2 d5 24.Kg1 dxc3 25.Re1 d4 26.Qg4



At this point I was really dreaming of pushing the pawn to h7 and playing Qg8 and wins. But unfortunately that's not what happened 26...Qc6? 27.h7? I missed my big opportunity to win and then quickly lost the thread.. (27.Nh5! wins 27...Qxe4 28.Qg7+ Bxg7 29.hxg7+ Kh7 30.gxf8N+ Nxf8 31.Nf6+ Kg7 32.Nxe4 Bxe4 33.bxc3 d3+-) 27...Bg7 28.Nh5? Qh6! 29.Rf1 Nf6 30.Qe6 Nxh5 31.Qxe7 Bxe4 32.bxc3 dxc3 33.Bf7 Bg6 34.Bxg6 Qxg6 35.Qc7 c2 36.g3



36...Nxg3! 0-1

I was slightly annoyed after this game, but I should have lost round in 2. So what goes around comes around. I drew in round 4 and won in rounds 5 and 6 against local

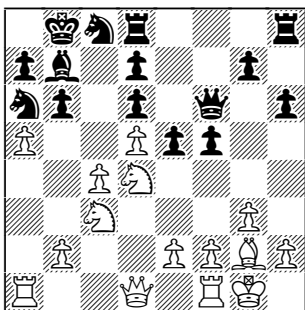
Italian players. Round 6 was nice

**Thornton,Gino (2187) -**

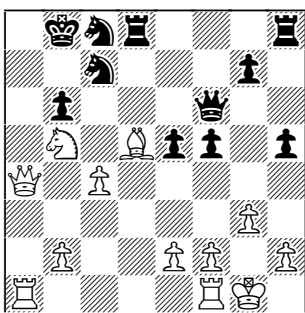
**De Giorgi,Stefano (2118) [A40]**

Festival St'Anna Italy (6), 20.08.2015

**1.d4 e6 2.c4 b6 3.a3 Bb7 4.Nc3 f5 5.d5  
Na6 6.g3 Qf6 7.Bg2 0-0-0 8.Nf3 h6 9.Bf4  
Bd6 10.Bxd6 cxd6 11.0-0 Kb8 12.a4 Ne7  
13.a5 Nc8 14.Nd4 e5**



**15.Nc6+! dxc6 16.dxc6 Bxc6 17.Bxc6 d5  
18.Bxd5 Nc7 19.axb6 axb6 20.Qa4 h5  
21.Nb5!**



**21...Rxd5 22.cxd5 h4 23.Nxc7 hxg3  
24.Qa8+ Kxc7 25.Rfc1+ Kd7 26.Qb7+  
1-0**

Round 7 was the same day as round 6. I was happy to win round 6 quickly and

could rest until the afternoon game. I was paired with my first GM of the tournament Bogdan Lalic. I did a few hours preparation and came to realize this guy doesn't lose often. I only found 2 losses after a few hundred games. He has a ton of draws though against lower rated players. Anyway I prepared an offbeat Grunfeld line. On move 10 he offered me a draw. I thought long and hard as I don't get to play GMs often and playing on and losing didn't sound all that bad either. But when a GM sticks his hand out and offers a draw the temptation is too much.

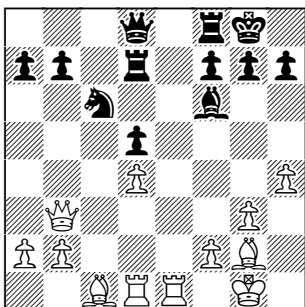
Round 8 I was paired against the top seed Bulgarian Valdimir Petkov rated 2496. He is very active and has a lot of games. I had the black pieces and prepared for a Nimzo. Instead he opted for a Catalan . I've faced difficulty in this line before so I suspect he may have spotted these games. Or maybe not... I don't really know if he prepares for players my strength. Anyway I armed myself for a long game and chose to not get out of my seat and apply full concentration. It seemed to work funnily enough and I drew fairly comfortably. I was very happy with this.... Here is the game

**Petkov,Vladimir (2495) -**

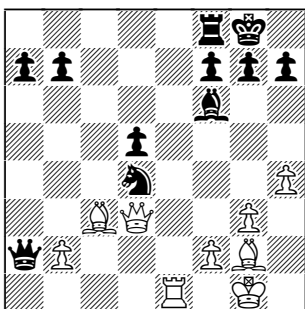
**Thornton,Gino (2187) [E05]**

Festival St'Anna Italy (8), 21.08.2015

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Be7 5.Nf3  
0-0 6.0-0 dxc4 7.Nc3 Nc6 8.e3 Nb4 9.Ne5  
c5 10.Nxc4 cxd4 11.exd4 Nfd5 12.Re1  
Bd7 13.Ne5 Rc8 14.Bd2 Bc6 15.Nxc6  
Rxc6 16.Qb3 Rc7 17.Rad1 Rd7 18.h4 Bf6  
19.Bc1 Nc6 20.Nxd5 exd5**



**21.Bh3!?** Initiating a certain amount of tactical excitement... **21...Nxd4 22.Qd3 Re7 23.Bg2 Rxe1+ 24.Rxe1 Qa5 25.Bd2 Qxa2 26.Bc3**



The game now seems destined to burn out to a draw **26...Qc4 27.Qxc4 dxc4 28.Bxb7 Nc2 29.Re4 Bxc3 30.bxc3 Na3 31.Re7 Nb5 32.Ba6 Nxc3 33.Rxa7 h5 34.Bxc4 Ne4 35.Kg2 g6 36.Rd7 Kg7 37.f3 Nf6 38.Ra7 Ne8 39.g4 Nd6 40.Ba2 hxc4 41.fxc4 Rc8 42.Kf3 Rc2 43.Kf4 ½-½**

Round 9 I was paired with the 3rd GM of the event a Mr Igor Naumkin . He didn't seem too interested in playing and offered me a draw on move 10. He was out of the prize money and had a late afternoon train to catch. I finished with 14/27 or the more

standard 5.5/9. I gained 30 Elo points and finished 5th which was my seed number after all. The tournament was well organised and great fun to play in.



Gino faces GM Bogdan Lalic

*In Part 2 of this article Gino gets to play in the World Rapid and Blitz Championships in Berlin! Look out for this in the next issue of New Zealand Chess.*



Gino in Berlin – Only one of these gentlemen failed to contribute to this issue of New Zealand Chess. GM Yasser Seirawan shame on you!

## Merv Morrison Memorial 2015

*by Mike Steadman*

The centre hosted our under 1800 focused event again in the usual Labour Weekend slot and we had a great turn-out this year – 46 players. Cost recovery occurs after about 38, so quids in this year.

*Ed: We didn't have room for a tournament table this time – you can find one online at [www.newzealandchess.co.nz](http://www.newzealandchess.co.nz).*

The field was headed up by Ben Hague as usual, and looking at the field, unless one of the young guns made an impression, it would really come down to Ben Hague and Mike Steadman to decide if Ben would just take the GP points as usual.

This event is dedicated to Merv Morrison a great stalwart of the club. So again the trophy and prize money fight in the under 1800 area was going to be interesting to watch. As usual this would not be settled until the last round.

Allowing the half point Friday bye has some pluses and minuses. Second equal place getter John Duneas managed to squeeze in under the radar and get the soft last round half point from Ben. What can you do? To ensure six rounds you need to offer this option to those players that can't make it. Each year there appears this Swiss Gambit effort – oh well.

In the first round all the top folks won with a few surprises down the bottom, no big deal. Because of the field, it was going to take a few rounds for the top players to

meet. Round two was no different, the first in the top half to drop any points was Vinod Kumar, he was lucky to get the half – Neil Cruden was crushing him, but he somehow escaped.

Round three and all the seeds are winning again, the perfect scores are getting whittled down but we still have Ben, Mike and two of the young guns Daniel Gong and Alphaeus Ang on three from three. Ben took care of Gong and Mike squeezed Ang, both great anti-junior games.

Finally there were two and Ben Hague did his usual and smashed Mike Steadman. It looked like Black was okay, but there was a terrible hole in the line he chose and he had to resign before he was mated.

This left Ben Hague on five and everybody scrapping beneath him. He took the draw with John Duneas who had been winning his way through after his first round bye. He had crushed Daniel Gong the round before – positionally these juniors still have work to do. Mike Steadman managed to recover and squeeze a win out of Vinod Kumar who was determined to get a draw, but missed a trick and dropped a piece.

Down in the bottom group Jasmine Zhang & Sergiy Kozakevych both had great events and shared the spoils, money and trophy.

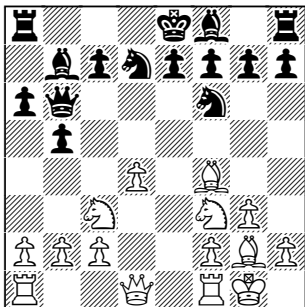
Here are some games from the event.

**Shenyue, Li (2024) -**

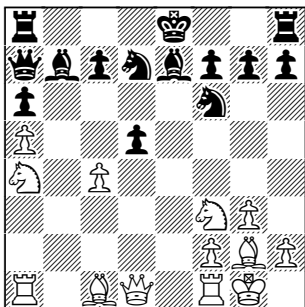
**Steadman, Mike (2304)**

**1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qd6** I did not know much about my opponent. I had

looked at this and lost the only game I had played on the board before with it. Seemed like a perfectly sensible line to play to me then :-> **4.d4 Nf6 5.Nf3 a6 6.g3 b5 7.Bg2 Bb7 8.0-0 Nbd7 9.Bf4 Qb6**

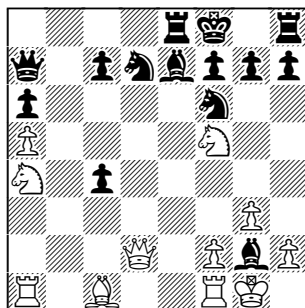


This is supposedly the idea now, hide the queen here and get the king sorted and Black is OK. Things are never that simple... **10.a4! b4 11.a5 Qa7 12.Na4 Nd5 13.Bc1!?** Not sure about this move, Bd2 looks logical and good. The problem for Black is he needs 3 moves to get the king to g8, White sacrifices a pawn and makes this impossible and his game looks very ropery. **13...e6 14.c4 bxc3 15.bxc3 Be7 16.c4 N5f6 17.d5 exd5**

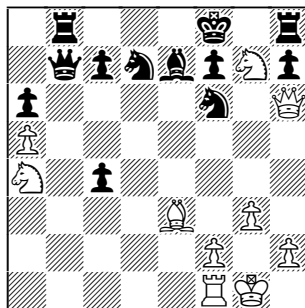


**18.Qe2!?** This is not the best, as Re8 will look at the queen in some lines. (18.Re1!

Kf8 19.Nh4 Re8 20.Nf5 h5 21.Nxe7 Rxe7 22.Ba3 c5 23.Rxe7 Kxe7 24.cxd5 White is just winning, 2 bishops, black king out in the open - horrendous.) **18...Kf8 19.Nh4 Re8 20.Qd2?** White is losing the thread now, Black just needs to be careful... (20.Be3 Qa8 21.Nf5 dxc4 22.Bxb7 Qxb7 23.Nxe7 Qe4 24.Rac1 Qxe7 25.Qxc4 White is still better, but Black is still fighting) **20...dxc4 21.Nf5 Bxg2**

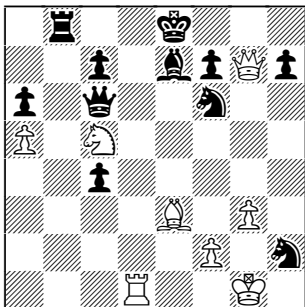


**22.Nxg7?** White has miscalculated. There is no mate, so Black just keeps taking. **22...Bxf1 23.Qh6 Rb8 24.Be3 Qb7 25.Rxf1**

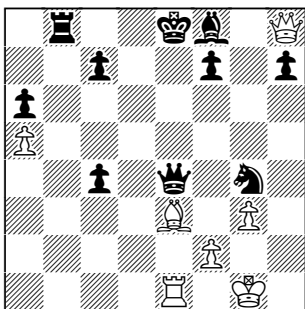


**25...Ne5?** This gives it all away, I saw the error as soon as I moved, luckily my opponent was in time trouble and missed her last chance. (25...Ng8 26.Ne6+ Ke8

27.Ng7+ Kd8 28.Qf4 Ngf6 White can calmly resign a whole rook down) 26.Nc5? (26.Nh5+! Ke8 27.Nxf6+ Kd8 28.Rd1+ Nd3 29.Qg7 Rf8 30.Nxh7) 26...Qc6 27.Rd1 Rg8 28.Nge6+ Ke8 29.Ng7+ Rxf7 30.Qxg7 Nf3+ 31.Kf1 Nxh2+ 32.Kg1



32...Nhg4? Black does it again, a simple win is to be had. (32...Nf3+! 33.Kf1 Bf8 34.Qh8 Ne5 35.Kg1 Ng6) 33.Qh8+ Bf8 34.Re1 Ne4 35.Nxe4 Qxe4



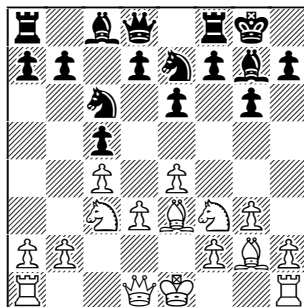
36.Bd2? A time trouble rush of blood, she had missed the winning resource. White had a save. (36.Qxf8+ Kxf8 37.Bc5+ Kg8 38.Rxe4 Nf6 39.Rxc4 Rb5 40.Bd4 Nd5 41.Be5 Rxa5 42.Bxc7 Nxc7 43.Rxc7 If she knew what she was doing, she may have drawn this. No more chances.) 36...Rb1 37.Rxb1 Qxb1+ 38.Kg2 Qe4+ 39.Kf1

Nh2+ 0-1

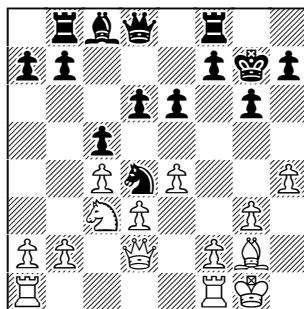
Gong, Daniel (2128) -

Hague, Ben (2455)

1.c4 e5 2.g3 Nc6 3.Bg2 g6 4.Nc3 Bg7 5.Nf3 e6 6.e4 Nge7 7.d3 0-0 8.Be3

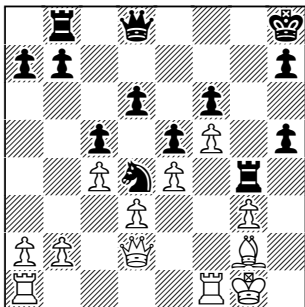


White is playing the Botvinnik system, but Ben has a nice easy game and he proceeds to outplay Daniel. 8...Nd4 9.0-0 d6 10.Qd2 Nec6 11.Bh6 Nxf3+ 12.Bxf3 Nd4 13.Bg2 Rb8 14.Bxg7 Kxg7 15.h4



This is crazy, the threat of h5 does not do anything, White has just loosened his position for no return. 15...e5 16.h5 gxh5 I think this came as a surprise, it looks ugly, but h4 will come and Black is just on his way to winning now. 17.f4 Bg4 18.f5 f6 19.Nd5 Rg8 20.Ne3 Kh8 21.Nxg4 Rxg4





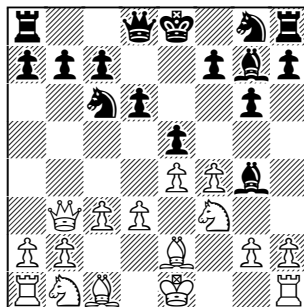
Black's game just plays itself. Look at the poor white bishop vs that knight on d4. Black is also a pawn up... **22.Kf2 Qg8 23.Qh6 Qg5 24.Qxg5 Rxc5 25.Bf3 Rbg8 26.Rg1 h4 27.g4 h5 28.Rh1 Nxf3 29.Kxf3 Rxc4 30.Rh2 Rg3+ 31.Kf2 R8g4 32.Rah1 Rxd3 33.Rxh4 Rxh4 34.Rxh4 Rd2+ 35.Ke3 Rxb2 36.Rxh5+ Kg7** Not all rook endgames are drawn, White could calmly resign, but the juniors these days don't do that. Watch Ben wrap up the point with ease. **37.Rh1 Rxa2 38.Rg1+ Kf7 39.Rh1 Ra3+ 40.Kd2 Rb3 41.Rh7+ Kf8 42.Rd7 Rb6 43.Rd8+ Ke7 44.Ra8 a6 45.Rh8 a5 46.Rh7+ Kf8 47.Rh8+ Kg7 48.Ra8 Ra6 49.Rc8 a4 50.Rc7+ Kh6 51.Kc2 a3 52.Kb1 a2+ 53.Ka1 Kg5 54.Rxb7 Kf4 55.Rf7 Kxe4 56.Rxf6 Kd4 57.Rh6 Kxc4 58.f6 Ra7 59.f7 Rxf7 60.Rxd6 Ra7 61.Rd1 e4 62.Rc1+ Kd4 63.Rd1+ Ke3 64.Rd5 Ra5 65.Rd8 Ke2 66.Re8 e3 67.Re7 Kf2 68.Rf7+ Ke1 69.Re7 e2 70.Re8 Ra4 71.Rb8 Kd1 72.Rb3 e1Q 73.Rb2 Rc4 0-1**

**Steadman, Mike (2304) -**

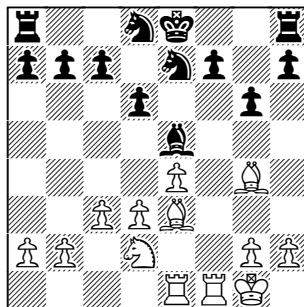
**Ang, Alphaeus (2165)**

**1.e4 Nc6 2.d3** This is just anti-junior stuff. Watch Alphaeus find the wrong plan. **2...d6 3.f4 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Be2 Bg4** This is the

move Alphaeus is prone to making, just heads out there and swaps itself. He will learn what bishops can do today. **6.c3 e5 7.Qb3**

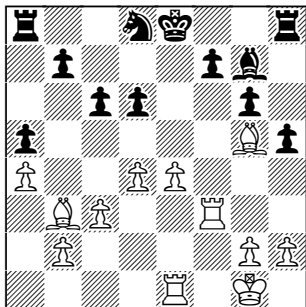


**7...Bxf3** A sad move to have to make, but defending b7 did not work due to the loose Bg4 allowing a Ng5 tactic (7...Rb8 8.Ng5 Be6 9.Nxe6 fxe6 10.Qxe6+). **8.Bxf3 Na5 9.Qa4+ Nc6 10.0-0 Qd7 11.Be3 Nge7 12.Nd2 Nd8** This just shows that Alphaeus does not appreciate how bad this position is. Queens on the board are his only chance (although nothing is attackable in this position). This endgame is lost, he will get a demonstration. **13.Qxd7+ Kxd7 14.fxe5 Bxe5 15.Bg4+ Ke8 16.Rae1**



**16...h5 17.Bd1** This is a good trick to remember, the white squared bishop looked

bad, but it is the key piece, out on b3 it rules supreme and f7 will fall once the doubled rooks hit down the f file. 17...a5 18.a4 Nec6 19.Bb3 Bg7 20.Nf3 Ne5 21.d4 Nxf3+ 22.Rxf3 c6 23.Bg5

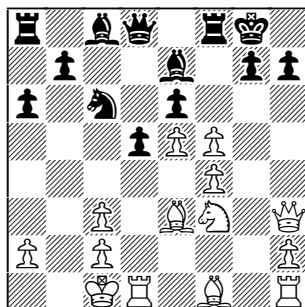


The real point of two bishops against a bishop and knight is that the bishop can swap when the time is right. In this case White will take the d8 knight and crash through and win f7. 23...Rf8 24.Ref1 Ne6 25.Bxe6 fxe6 26.Rxf8+ Bxf8 27.Rf6 Wins a pawn and the game - simple chess. Just watch for tricks and collect the point. 27...b5 28.axb5 cxb5 29.Rxg6 Kd7 30.Rg8 b4 31.cxb4 axb4 32.Kf2 (32.Bh6?? Always watch out for tricks! 32...Ra1+ 33.Kf2 Bxh6 Black wins the piece and the game.) 32...Rc8 33.Kg3 d5 34.e5 b3 35.Kh4 Bb4 36.Rxc8 Game over, but the kids don't resign :- ( 36...Kxc8 37.Bc1 Be1+ 38.Kxh5 Bf2 39.Kg6 Bxd4 40.Kf6 Kd7 41.g4 Bb6 42.g5 Bd8+ 43.Kf7 Bc7 44.g6 Bxe5 45.g7 Bxg7 46.Kxg7 e5 47.h4 d4 48.h5 e4 49.h6 e3 50.h7 e2 51.Bd2 d3 52.h8Q e1Q 53.Bxe1 d2 54.Bxd2 Ke6 55.Qg8+ Kf5 56.Qxb3 Ke5 57.Qe3+ Kf5 58.Qf4+ Ke6 59.Qg5 Kd6 60.Kf6 Kd7 61.Qc5 Ke8 62.Qe7# 1-0

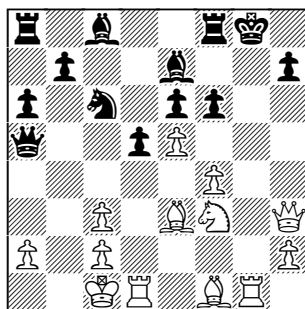
## Hague, Ben (2455) -

Steadman, Mike (2304)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 c5 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Be3 Be7 8.Qd2 0-0 9.dxc5 Nxc5 10.0-0 a6 11.Qf2 Nd7 This is the main move. (11...b6 12.h4 Qc7 13.Kb1 f6 14.Qg3 fxe5 15.fxe5 b5) 12.Qg3 f5 13.Qh3 Nc5 14.g4 Ne4 15.gxf5 Nxc3 16.bxc3



16...Qa5?? Wrong order, it's never a good idea to mix up the moves. (16...Ba3+ 17.Kb1 (17.Kd2 exf5 18.Rg1 Be7 19.Qh6 Rf7 20.Rb1 Kh8 21.Qh5 Kg8 22.Nd4 g6 23.Bd3 Rg7) 17...Qa5 18.Bc1 Bxc1 19.Kxc1 Qa3+ 20.Kb1 Qxc3 21.f6 Qb4+ 22.Ka1 Qc3+ 23.Kb1 with a draw) 17.f6 Black is completely lost now - oops. 17...gxf6 18.Rg1+



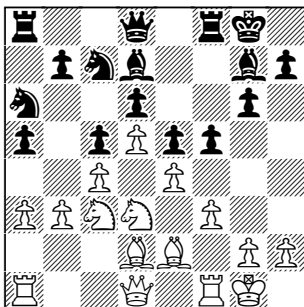
Black resigned. All over, Black can

scramble, but he is well lost, for example(18.Rg1+ Kh8 19.Qg4 Ba3+ 20.Kd2 Qc7 21.exf6) 1-0

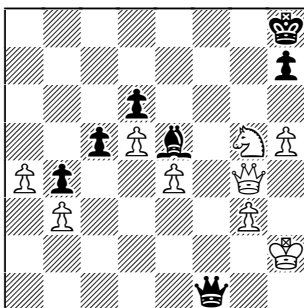
**Duneas,John (2181) -**

**Gong,Daniel (2128)**

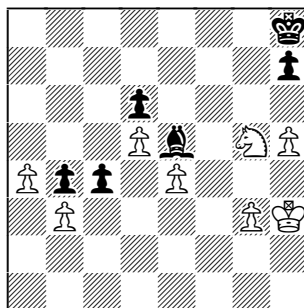
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2 0-0 6.Nf3 c5 7.d5 e5 8.0-0 Ne8 9.Ne1 f5 10.f3 Nc7 11.Nd3 a5 12.Bd2 Bd7 13.b3 Nba6 14.a3



14... b5 15.cxb5 Nxb5 16.Nxb5 Bxb5 17.Nb2 Bxe2 18.Qxe2 Nc7 19.a4 Na6 20.Nc4 Nb4 21.Bc3 Ra7 22.Rad1 Raf7 23.exf5 Rxf5 24.Bxb4 axb4 25.Nd2 e4 26.fxe4 Bd4+ 27.Kh1 Rf2 28.Rxf2 Rxf2 29.Qg4 Qf8 30.Nf3 Bc3 31.h4 Kh8 32.h5 g5 33.Nxg5 Rf1+ 34.Rxf1 Qxf1+ 35.Kh2 Be5+ 36.g3



36...Qf2+ 37.Kh3 Qf1+ 38.Kh4 Qh1+ 39.Qh3 Qxh3+ 40.Kxh3 c4

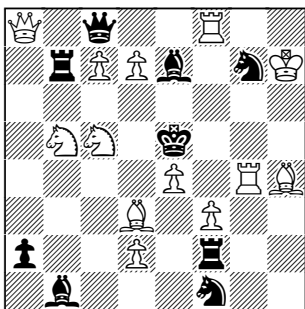


41.Nf3! cxb3 42.Nd2 b2 43.a5 Bc3 44.Nb1 Kg7 45.Kg4 Kf6 46.a6 Bd4 47.Kf4 Bg1 48.g4 Bh2+ 49.Ke3 Bg1+ 50.Kd3 h6 51.Nd2 b3 52.Kc3 Bc3 53.Kxb2 Kg5 54.Nc4 Bd4+ 55.Kxb3 Kxg4 56.Nxd6 Kxh5 57.Nf5 Bb6 58.Kc4 Kg5 59.Kb5 Bf2 60.Kc6 h5 61.d6 h4 62.Nxh4 1-0

**Problem Kingdom**  
by Linden Lyons

- Submissions and comments to: [problem.kingdom@gmail.com](mailto:problem.kingdom@gmail.com)
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**Problem 37**  
Alberto Armeni (Italy)  
Original

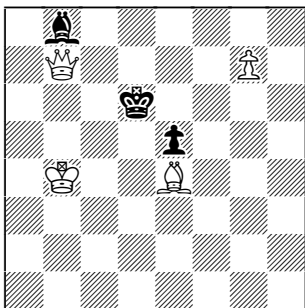


#2

In **Problem 37**, a twomover, all of the black pieces, aside from the king, are actively involved in the variations. Key: **1 Bc4!** (threat 2 d4), then 1 ... Qxd7 2 Nxd7; 1 ... Rxb5 2 Qd5; 1 ... Bxc5 2 Bf6; 1 ... Ne6/Nf5 2 R(x)f5; 1 ... a1Q/a1B 2 Qxa1; 1 ... Rxd2 2 f4; 1 ... Bd3 2 Nxd3; 1 ... Bxe4+ 2 Rxe4; 1 ... Nxd2 2 Bg3.

### Problem 38

Robert Lincoln & Rauf Aliovsadzade  
(USA)  
Original



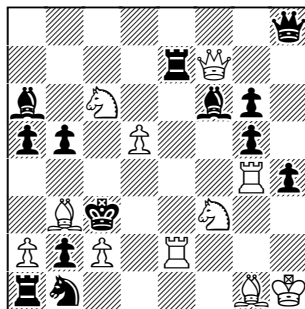
#2

**Problem 38** is a **miniature**, for it has no more than seven pieces. The try 1 g8Q? is thwarted by 1 ... Bc7! The key is **1 g8N!**

(thr. 2 Qe7/Qc6 [A/B]) with the variations 1 ... Bc7 2 Qc6/Qd5 [B/C] and 1 ... Ke6 2 Qd5/Qe7 [C/A]. This composition presents the **Broggi-Maleika theme**, a cycle of dualistic mates (indicated by the letters A, B, and C).

### Problem 39

Daniel Wirajaya (Indonesia)  
Original



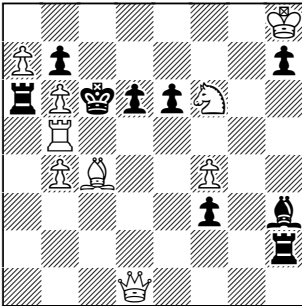
#2

**Problem 39** has the set play 1 ... Be5 2 Re3 and 1 ... Re5 2 Bd4. In this pair of variations, the black bishop interferes with the black rook and vice versa. Such an interference pattern is known as a **Grimshaw**, and it is frequently employed to powerful effect in chess problems. Try: 1 Nfe5? (thr. 2 Bd4) with 1 ... Nd2 2 Re3 and 1 ... Bxe5 2 Qf3, but 1 ... Na3! Solution: **1 Nce5!** (thr. 2 Re3) with 1 ... b4 2 Bd4 and 1 ... Rxe5 2 Qc7. Note that the black moves in the set play have been split between the try and the solution. Meanwhile, the white moves in the set play subsequently take turns at being a threat and a mate.

### Problem 40

Leonid Makaronez (Israel)

Original



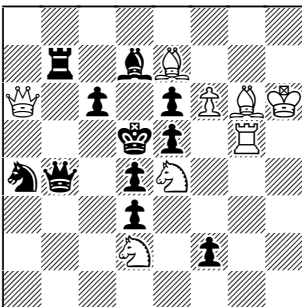
#3

In **Problem 40**, the key is **1 Qd3!**, ensuring that b5 is guarded in the threat 2 Bd5+ exd5 3 Qxd5. Variations: 1 ... Rd2 2 Qxh7 ~ 3 Qd7; 1 ... Rxb6 2 Rc5+ dxc5 3 Qd7; 1 ... d5 2 Qd4 ~ 3 Qc5.

### Problem 41

Hubert Gockel (Germany)

Original



#3

The key of **Problem 41** is **1 Nd6!**

- threat 2 Be4+ Kc5 3 N6~/Rxe5;
- not 2 Nf7? (thr. 3 Rxe5) Qd6 [a] 3

Qc4 [X], but 2 ... Qxd2! [b];

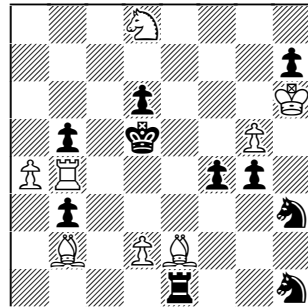
- not 2 Nf3? (thr. 3 Rxe5) Qd2 [b] 3 Qc4 [X], but 2 ... Qxd6! [a]

Black's *second-move defences*, [a] and [b], swap roles, one being a 'bad' defence leading to [X], and the other being a 'good' defence preventing [X]. This is the **Arnhem theme**. However, it turns out that Black's *first-move defences* interfere with the 'good' second-move defences: 1 ... Nc3 2 Nf7! (thr. 3 Rxe5) Qd6 (2 ... Qxd2??) 3 Qc4 and 1 ... Nc5 2 Nf3! (thr. 3 Rxe5) Qd2 (2 ... Qxd6??) 3 Qc4.

### Problem 42

Leonid Makaronez (Israel)

Original

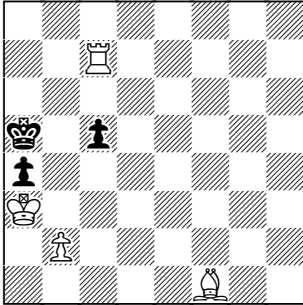


#5

The key of **Problem 42**, **1 Bd3!**, threatens 2 Rxb5#. Black's best defence is 1 ... Re6+ with 2 g6 Rxg6+ 3 Bxg6 hxg6 4 d3 ~ 5 Rxb5. If 1 ... Rc1, then 2 Be4+ Kc5 3 Rxb5+ Kc4 4 d3#.

### Problem 43

Rauf Aliovsadzade (USA)  
Original

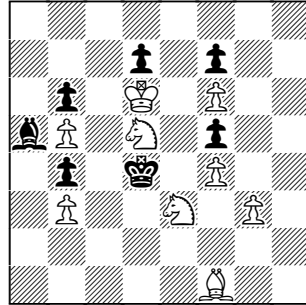


#5

In seeking to deliver mate in five moves in **Problem 43**, White must take care not to stalemate Black. Try: 1 Rb7? c4 2 Bg2 Ka6 3 Kxa4 c3 4 b4 c2 5 b5, but 2 ... c3! 3 b4+ axb3 e.p. Solution: **1 Rc6!** c4 2 b4+ Kb5 (2 ... axb3 e.p. 3 Bxc4 b2 4 Ra6# or 2 ... cxb3 e.p. 3 Ra6#) 3 Bg2 c3 4 Rd6 Kc4 5 Bf1. Whereas an en passant defence succeeds in the try, it fails in the solution.

### Problem 44

Wilfried Neef (Germany)  
Original



#6

In **Problem 44**, a sixmover, the black king shuffles between d4 and e4 whilst White sets up a mating net. Key: **1 Bc4!** Ke4 2 Be2 Kd4 3 Nd1 Ke4 4 N5e3 Kd4 5 Nc2+ Ke4 6 Nf2. If the white bishop were to start on c4, then the key would be 1 Bf1!

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Thanks to Gino Thornton for taking up the challenge this time

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