Scottish Chess

Issue 294 June 2021

Scottish juniors strike gold at £10,000 Edinburgh Chess Academy online event!

Csaba Balogh

Greatest 440 puzzles

The best online tactics of 2020

Chess Evolution

Scottish Chess Magazine

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Issue 294 June 2021

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Cover photo: Edinburgh Chess Academy students enjoy a photoshoot to promote the Scottish Junior Online Championships

Welcome! June 2021

It's a junior-focused issue of Scottish Chess magazine for June, arriving a little late (apologies) as I wanted to include the Edinburgh Chess Academy event in these pages.

Huge kudos are due to Andrew Douglas for the ECA junior tournament, and hopefully you'll enjoy the report and games included.

Summer may have arrived which would usually herald a spot of travel and events to report on, but online chess is still dominating the chess calendar, at least in Scotland.

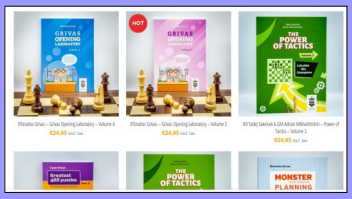
For the next issue I'd be eternally grateful if readers could send me games, reports, pics and results - the more the merrier!

Andrew Burnett *Editor*

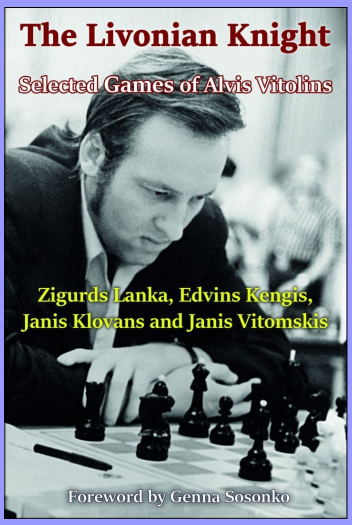
Contents

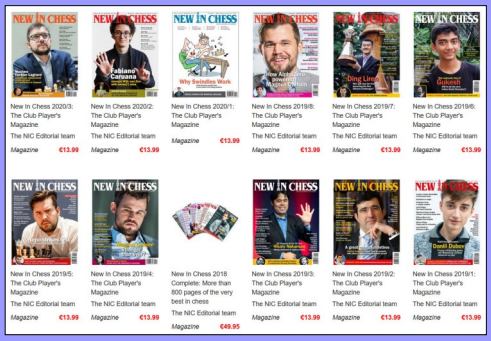
How do you run a massive online junior chess event with huge prizes across all levels? all Just ask Edinburgh Chess Academy's Andrew Douglas who did just that! Our in-depth report brings you the whole amazing story.

There was no shortage of junior chess on the calendar recently and Harry Marron once again ran a successful CS Primary Championships. Report, results and games? We have them all!



Chess Scotland have been fortunate to have so many publishing houses providing prizes across the years, hence a big focus on chess books in recent issues. Check out the best of the most recent releases with our excellent reviews and exclusive excerpts!





Edinburgh Chess Academy

Scottish Junior Online Championships

It was easily the most lucrative junior chess event ever held in Scotland and hundreds of kids took part in the chase for a share of £10,000 and online chess glory.

With Skyscanner providing unrivalled sponsorship, qualifying rounds across five sections saw 100 players surviving to battle out the finals.

A TwitchTV stream meant parents, friends and chess fans could also follow the action with commentary from ECA founder Andrew Douglas.

In the end, as we will see, there were plenty of winners and also lots of great games played along the way. Let's take a closer look at how the event came about, followed by the thrills and spills of competitive junior chess!

Andrew Douglas has been a junior chess coach for many years now, founding the Edinburgh Chess Academy along the way.

When he announced earlier this year that a huge online tournament was to be held for children in Scotland, it raised eyebrows, but that was mostly due to the incredible sponsorship he'd found for the event.

Edinburgh-based travel search giants, Skyscanner, were putting up £10,000, making the Edinburgh Chess Academy Scottish Junior Tournament (ECASJT) perhaps the nation's best-funded junior event of all time.

"I have just launched an online Scottish junior chess tournament through Edinburgh Chess Academy. The goal is to get more children playing chess. Please help spread the word," was the clarion call from Andrew, and it didn't fall on deaf ears.

When the plaudits for the remarkable event came in afterwards, Andrew took a typically self-effacing tone. "All I would say was that it really was a joint effort. All the junior organisers across Scotland came together to tell children about it and couldn't have been done without them."

It also couldn't have been done without Skyscanner, the company's co-founder Gareth Williams describing chess as "a combination of skills that are useful in life: analysis; biding your time; making risky decisions and such-like."

Gareth also pointed out another very positive aspect of using chess to engage children: "Above all, while technology is going towards micromoments of stimulation, where you need a reward every 5 seconds (to raise) the dopamine levels, playing a proper game of chess is a feat of concentration that kids, less and less, are required to show."

Andrew also explained some of the thinking behind the event, with "the aim of getting more children to play chess in Scotland."

To that end the entry was free, with unrivalled prizes on offer and across all playing levels.

Andrew explained: “There are lots of good players out there who don’t necessarily play serious tournaments.”

For those unused to competitive online play, the ECASJT event ran practice sessions in the run-up to the qualifiers, which in turn led on to the Championship events.

LiChess was the online chess platform of choice and a total of 455 players vied for 100 qualifying spots across the weekend of June 12 and 13th.

Everyone who participated received a certificate in recognition of their efforts and as a reminder of the event, while those who made it through the first stage had the Championships proper to look forward to a fortnight later.

With an Open section and four grading sections of u1800, u1500, u1200 and u900, and £10,000 to be shared across the five tournaments, the action was non-stop.

Let’s start by taking a look at how the Open section played out...

Open

1= Anish “Anishananth” Subramaniam , Sanjith “duckling234” Madhavan 4/5 £1200 each

3-6 Benjamin “Benjamin_Ridge” Ridge, Freddie “FREDERICKtheMATE” Gordon, Jake “jake_sanger26” Sanger, Daniel “Hyper_Dragon” Kitaev

3.5/6 £150=

For those who know some of the players in the list above, the hot favourites were almost certainly Freddie “FREDERICKtheMATE” Gordon and Jake “jake_sanger26” Sanger. Both have tasted the top level of junior chess and have experience of playing big events.

However, there was an upset on the cards early on as Anish “Anishananth” Subramaniam defeated Jake in the opening round and followed it up with this see-saw victory in the second round against top seed Freddie!

Anishananth (2104)

FREDERICKtheMATE (2443)

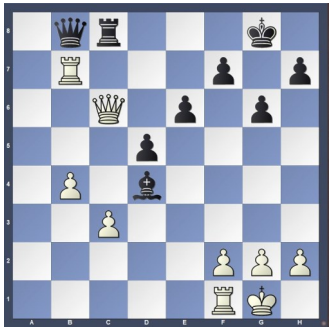
ECASJT Open

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 ♗g7 6.♗e3 ♘f6 7.♘xc6 bxc6

8.♗d3 8.e5 is the more common follow-up to the capture on c6. White's choice takes us into positions first seen almost a century and a half ago, your editor currently writing a book covering the history of the Dragon variation and discovering the earliest recorded games revolded around similar positions to our current game.

8...♘g8 *(8...♘d5* involves a pawn sacrifice with one high-level blitz encounter continuing *9.♘xd5 cxd5 10.♕xd5 ♖b8 11.♗c4 0–0 12.0–0*

♖xb2 13.♗b3 d6 14.♗d4 ♗e6 15.♕e4 ♗xb3 16.axb3 ♗xe5 17.♗xb2 ♗xb2 18.♖xa7 e6 19.♕c6 d5 20.b4 ♗d4 21.♖d7 ♕b8 22.c3 ♖c8 23.♖b7



(analysis diagram)

and 1–0 in Dubov - Shirov, Moscow 2013.*)* 9.♗d4 ♕a5 10.♗c4 ♘h6 11.e6 f6 12.exd7+ ♗xd7 13.0–0 e5 14.♗e3 ♘f5 15.♘e4 ♕b4 16.b3 ♖d8 17.♗c5 ♕b8 18.g4 ♗c8 19.gxf5 ♖xd1 20.♖axd1 ♗xf5 21.♘d6+ 1–0 Sychev,K (2861)-Secheres,A (2657) Chess.com INT 2020

8...0–0 9.0–0 d5 10.exd5 cxd5 11.♗d4 ♖e8 12.♖e1 e6 13.♕f3 ♗d7 14.♖e3 ♖b8 15.♖b1 a5 16.♗e5 ♖b6 17.♕e2

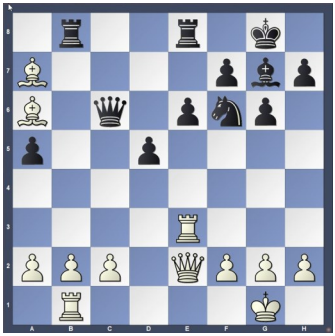
(see diagram next column)

17...♗c6?!

The surprising 17...♘h5! would have set White difficult problems. Black wouldn't usually offer this exchange, but here there are tactical reasons for doing so. 18.♗xg7 ♔xg7 and now White has to deal with the threat of ...d4, while ...Nf4 and ...e5 possibilities also have to be taken into account.

18.♘b5 ♕d7 19.♘d4 ♕b7 20.♘xc6 White takes the bishop pair but 20.c3 was equally good.

20...♕xc6 21.♗d4 ♖b7 22.♗a6 ♖bb8 23.♗a7



23...♘e4 Black could also have played 23...♖a8 because after 24.♗b5 ♕c7 25.♗xe8? loses to 25...♘xe8 when the bishop on a7 has no safe retreat square.

24.♗xb8 ♖xb8 25.♖b3 ♖xb3 26.axb3 ♗d4 27.♖f1 ♗xb2 28.♗d3 ♘f6 29.♖e1 ♗d4 30.♖f1 h5 White has a slight material edge but such positions are generally much easier to play as Black, who can advance his central majority.

31.♕f3 White really ought to play 31.c4 which gains some breathing space and nullifies Black's central pawns somewhat.

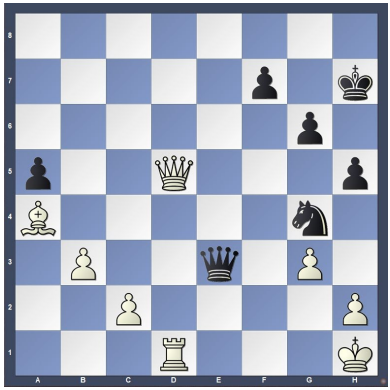
31...♔g7 32.♕f4 e5 33.♕d2 ♕c5 34.♕e2 e4 35.♗b5 ♘g4 36.♗d7 ♘e5 36...f5 looks very natural and also strong.

37.♗a4 ♕c7 38.♕d2

38...♘g4?? A terrible blunder that costs Black the game and perhaps even the tournament. Instead 38... ♗b6 retains all the advantages of the position, and White has to be careful not to lose instantly e.g. 39.h3?? ♘f3+

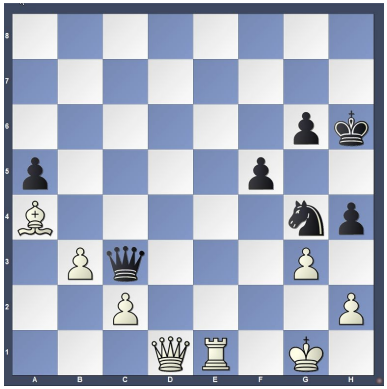
40.♔h1 *(40.gxf3 ♕g3+ 41.♔h1 ♕xh3+ 42.♔g1 exf3 43.♕g5 ♗c7* and Black soon mates *.)* 40...♕h2#

39.♕xd4+ ♔h7 40.g3 ♕d6 41.♖d1 ♕e7 42.♕xd5 e3 43.fxe3 ♕xe3+ 44.♔h1



44...♕f2 44...♘f2+ 45.♔g2 ♘xd1 46.♕xd1 still wins easily enough for White.

45.♕d2 ♕f3+ 46.♔g1 ♘e3 47.♖e1 ♘g4 48.♕g2 ♕c3 49.♕e2 f5 50.♕e7+ ♔h6 51.♕e2 h4 52.♕d1??



Now it is White's turn to blunder horribly!

52...♕c5+ 53.♔h1 ♘f2+ 54.♔g1 ♘xd1+ 55.♔g2 and here, in a completely winning position, Black ran out of time!

1–0

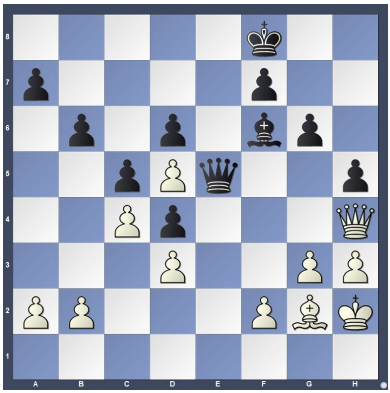
Freddie hit back with a win over Benjamin Ridge, but Ben himself bounced back into contention with a 4th round victory...

Benjamin_Ridge (2364)

Lancelot06 (2056)

ECASJT Open

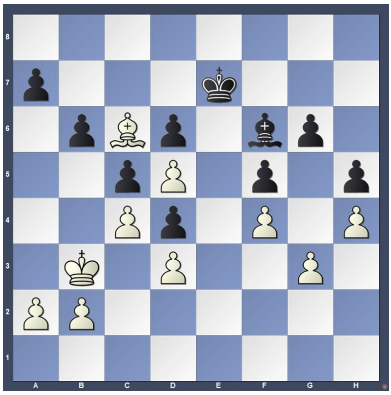
1.c4 c5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.g3 g6 4.♗g2 ♗g7 5.d3 d6 6.e4 e5 7.♘ge2 ♘ge7 8.♗e3 0–0 9.0–0 ♘d4 10.♘d5 ♘xd5 11.exd5 ♗g4 12.♗xd4 exd4 13.h3 ♗xe2 14.♕xe2 ♖e8 15.♕d2 ♕d7 16.♖fe1 ♖xe1+ 17.♖xe1 ♖e8 18.♔h2 b6 19.♖e2 ♖e7 20.♕e1 ♔f8 21.♖xe7 ♕xe7 22.♕d1 ♕e8 23.♕g4 h5 24.♕f4 ♕e5 25.♕h4 ♗f6



White is finally forced into exchanging queens and the game will become an instant draw with the opposite-coloured bishops and symmetrical pawn structure...or will it?

26.♕e4 ♕xe4 27.♗xe4 ♔e7 28.♔g2 ♗e5 29.f4 ♗g7 30.♔f2

f5 31.♗f3 ♗h6 32.h4 ♔d8 33.♗d1 ♔c7 34.♗a4 ♔d8 35.♔e2 ♗f8 36.♗c6 ♗e7 37.♔d2 ♗f6 38.♔c2 ♔e7 39.♔b3

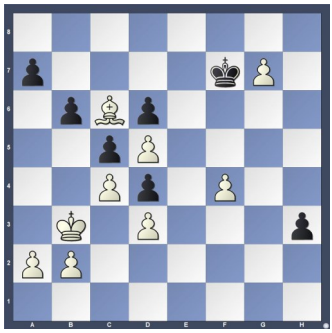


39...♔f7?

Black has to realise he is actually losing and take extreme measures to gain counterplay. White's pieces are 'offside' so now is the perfect time for the sacrifice...

39...g5!? when White has a narrow and study-like route to the win... 40.hxg5 (40.fxg5 ♗e5= *(40...♗xg5 41.hxg5 f4 42.gxf4 h4 43.f5 h3 44.f6+ ♔f7 45.♗d7 h2 46.♗e6+ ♔g6 47.♗f5+ draws)*) 40...♗xg5 41.fxg5 f4 42.gxf4 h4 43.g6! *(43.f5* is a draw as seen above.*)* 43...h3 44.g7 ♔f7

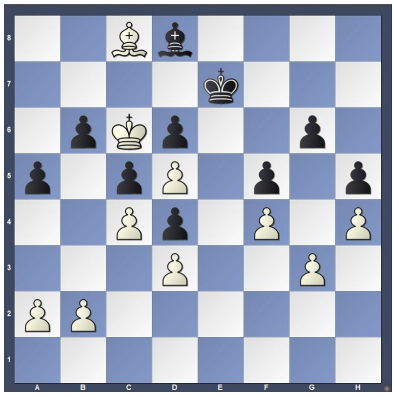
(see diagram next column)



(analysis diagram)

45.♗e8+!! This is the trick that you have to either know (or somehow find over the board, and in advance!) to catch the h-pawn. 45...♔xg7 46.♗h5 h2 47.♗f3 ♔f6 48.♔a4 a6 *(48...♔f5 49.♔b5 ♔xf4 50.♗e4 ♔e3 51.♔c6* wins easily enough.*)* 49.♗e4

40.♔a4 a6 41.♗b7 a5 42.♔b5 ♗d8 43.♔c6 ♔e7 44.♗c8



Black is in zugwang and Benjamin goes on to mop up the pawns and the game.

44...a4 45.♗e6 a3 46.bxa3 ♔e8 47.♔xd6 ♗e7+ 48.♔c6 ♗d8 49.d6 ♔f8 50.♔d7 ♗f6 51.a4 ♔g7 52.♔e8 ♔h6 53.d7 b5 54.axb5 ♔g7 55.d8♕ ♗xd8 56.♔xd8 g5 57.hxg5 h4 58.gxh4 ♔g6 59.b6 ♔g7 60.b7 ♔f8 61.b8♕ ♔g7 62.♕c7+ ♔g6 63.♕f7#

1–0

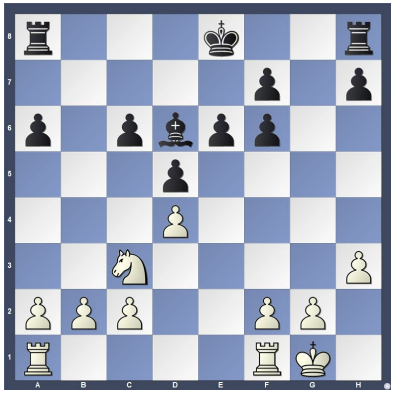
Entering the final round and Anish "Anishananth" Subramaniam had a full point lead over his nearest rivals, but he had to play one of them. A draw would be enough for the title and £1500, but his opponent, Sanjith "duckling234" Madhavan, had other ideas...

⚀ Anishananth (2159)

⚂ duckling234 (2157)

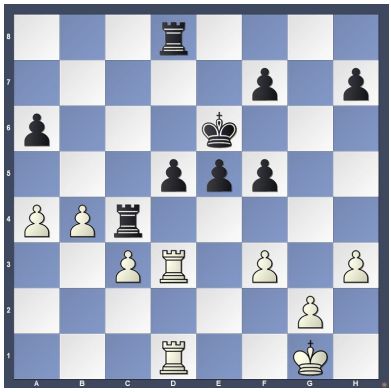
ECASJT Open

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.♘c3 ♘f6 5.♘f3 ♘c6 6.♗b5 a6 7.♗xc6+ bxc6 8.0–0 ♗g4 9.♗g5 e6 10.h3 ♗xf3 11.♕xf3 ♗d6 12.♗xf6 ♕xf6 13.♕xf6 gxf6



White may have thought all these exchanges offered him decent drawing chances, but they also offer Black decent winning chances! Black has two open files to work along and plenty of pawn breaks, as well as a bishop against a knight with play on both sides.

14.♖fe1 ♖b8 15.b3 ♔d7 16.♘a4 ♖hc8 17.♖e3 c5 18.dxc5 ♗xc5 19.♘xc5+ ♖xc5 20.c3 ♖bc8 21.♖c1 e5 22.b4 ♖c4 23.♖d1 ♔e6 24.♖ed3 ♖d8 25.f3 f5 26.a4



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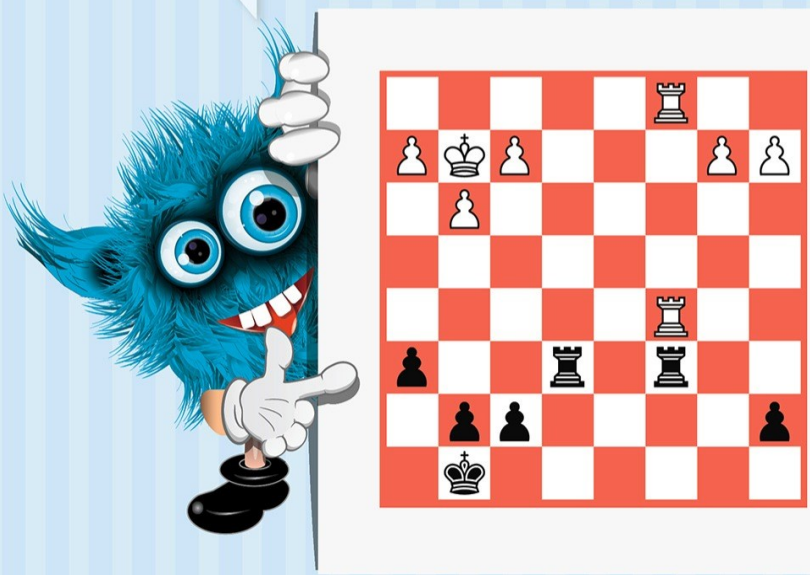


Chess Evolution

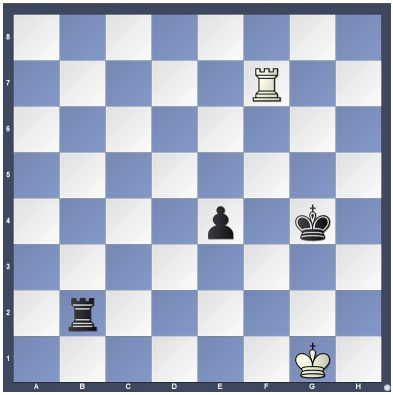
26...a5!? 26...f4 with ...f5 to come and a central pawn roller is another route to victory.

27.♖b1 ♖b8 27...d4 is even stronger.

28.b5 ♖xa4 29.b6 e4 30.fxe4 dxe4 Again 30...fxe4 is a bit better.

31.♖dd1 ♖c4 32.b7 ♖xc3 33.♖b6+ ♔e5 34.♖b5+ ♔e6 35.♖a1 ♖c7 36.♖axa5 ♖cxb7 37.♖xf5 f6 38.♖f4 ♖b4 39.♖f1 ♖8b5 40.♖a8 f5 41.♖e8+ 41.g4 Reducing the number of pawns is the easiest route to holding such positions, a plan that White plays later.

41...♔f7 42.♖c8 ♔g7 43.♖c7+ ♔g6 44.♖c6+ ♔g5 45.♖c7 ♖b7 46.♖c5 ♖f7 47.g4 ♔h4 48.gxf5 ♔xh3 49.f6 ♖b6 50.♖h5+ ♔g4 51.♖xh7 ♖xh7 52.f7 ♖xf7 53.♖xf7 ♖b2



White has done excellently to reach this position and the draw is just a matter of technique. Unfortunately, perhaps by now short of time, he goes astray...

54.♖f1?? 54.♔f1 is the simplest move, as whenever Black advances the pawn, White can check from behind at a distance. 54...e3 55.♔e1 ♖h2 56.♖g7+ =

54...e3 55.♖e1 Now 55.♖f8 ♖b1+ wins as 56.♖f1 *(56.♔g2 e2)* 56...♖xf1+ 57.♔xf1 ♔f3 and Black has the opposition.

55...♔f3 56.♔h1 ♖f2 57.♔g1 ♖c2 57...e2 is much simpler. 58.♖a1 ♖g2+ 59.♔h1 ♔f2

58.♔f1 ♖c4 59.♔g1 ♖h4 60.♔f1 ♖h1#

0–1

A remarkable finale to the Open section, meaning that both players finished on 4/5, winning £1200 each and Anish edging the tiebreak!

Four players, Ben, Freddie, Jake and Daniel "Hyper_Dragon" Kitaev, tied for 3rd spot and won £150 each.

The other four sections were all hard-fought affairs as well.

The **u1800 Championship** section saw a tie between **Sophie "SavoryPawn" Heron** and **Bob "bobissocool" Davis**.

They pocketed £1000 each for their excellent runs, drawing with each other in round 4, while 3rd spot went to Pranav "pranav378" Arcot on tiebreak, though the £500 was shared with Angelo "angelolynn123" Lynn.

In the **u1500 Championship** there was a clean sweep for **Louis "louischeng 0528" Cheng.**

His 5/5 score won him £1000, a clear point ahead of his nearest rivals, Patrik "Patrik_Tomcisak" Tomcisak and Nikunj "BlueAthleticKnight" Nagar who took £500 apiece for their excellent play.

The **u1200 Championship** was a triumph for George Watson's pupil **"adavis15"**, a last round draw from a position of strength securing the title and £750.

The enigmatic "FirestarW" and Campbell "CampbellMackay" Mackay took £350 each.

That brings us to the **u900 Championship** and there was a clear winner in this section also, with **"Ishaanh"** scooping the £500 top prize, ahead of "ZakariyahCheng" and "ZoobaWin".

...and with that, the incredible event was done and dusted, hundreds of content children who had enjoyed a month full of chess fun and games mixed with serious competition.
Andrew took to the Edinburgh Chess Aacademy Facebook page to announce: "The Scottish Junior Chess Tournament is officially over! A huge thank you to everyone who helped organise the event or took part, and congratulations to our 2021 winners."

He added a well-earned plug for the ECA: "If you want to improve your chess skills, sign up to Edinburgh Chess Academy for online courses."

Of course, it wasn't entirely a "one-person show", with a number of helpers behind the scenes as Andrew indicated.

In the world of online chess there is still a need for arbiters and "fair-play watchdogs", with CS Vice-President Andy Howie taking on both roles.

If you want to check out all the games and results, you can do so via the link below on lichess...

https://lichess.org/swiss/RfYQlAJA

...and your Scottish Chess magazine download includes both pgn and .cbv files that allow you to play through all the tournament's games as well as others from this issue.

Andrew Douglas deserves huge credit for organising such a huge and successful event, and Skyscanner's Gareth Williams also deserves praise for putting his money where his heart lies to raise the profile of the junior game in Scotland. Many thanks!

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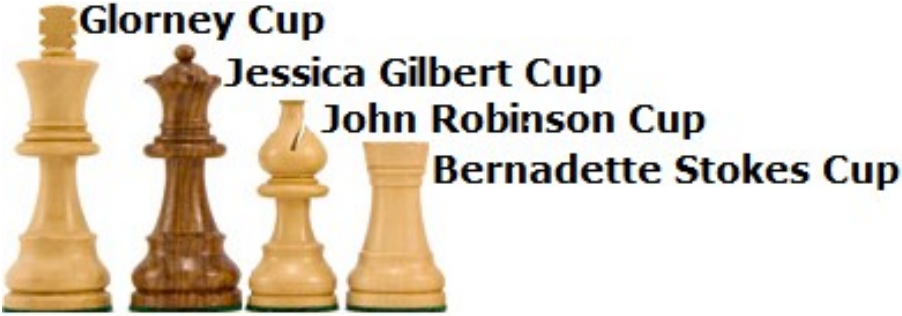
Glorney Festival 2021



The Glorney Festival 2021 will take place online on Lichess from the 19th to 23rd of July in the evenings. As per usual every summer, this will pit Scotland's top junior chess players against the other nations in the British Isles and beyond.

As last year, there is the option of squads with reserves and the ability to rotate the team. There will hopefully be details on the website closer to the time about how you can watch the games and cheer on Scotland.

The selected squads are as follows:

Glorney (under-18 open)

Jake Sanger
Frederick Gordon
Anish Subramaniam
Jonathan McKay
Luaidh Williams
Ross Blackford
James Hartman

Gilbert (under-18 girls)

Jennifer Feng
Ashley Tandon
Nivedita Suyal
Florence Wilson

Robinson (under-14 open)

Sanjith Madhavan
Ananth Subramaniam
Rishi Vijayakumar
Aryan Munshi
Oliver Whalley
Matthew Willder
Morvin Gera
Daniel Kitaev

Stokes (under-12 open)

Raghav Palanivel
Jainill Vadalia
Drisith Palaniswamy
Georgios Tsagkarakis
Jonathan Turner
Neev Lukhi
Unnabh Shrestha
Srinivas Rath

Scottish Chess magazine will bring you all the results and the best of the action in our August issue!

Upcoming International Events

European Senior Team Chess Championships 2021
29th August – 8th September
Prague, **Czech Republic**

Detailed regulations can be found from 5th July 2021 at the event website

From the organisers: "AVE-KONTAKT was commissioned by the European Chess Federation to organize this important chess event. With this event, we want to follow up on the successful World Championship of senior teams from last year.

"This year, the event will move to the beautiful Hotel Don Giovanni (where the 3 years of the prestigious Prague International Chess Festival have taken place here), which offers great conditions for play, accommodation, meals and leisure activities. We also managed to negotiate interesting prices for accommodation (eg 1 bed in a 2-bed room with breakfast for 30 EUR, etc.) Take advantage of the unique opportunity to play with chess legends."

European Senior Chess Championships 2021
25th September – 5th October
Budoni (Sardegna), **Italy**

European Senior Chess Championship 2021 – Official regulations (europechess.org)

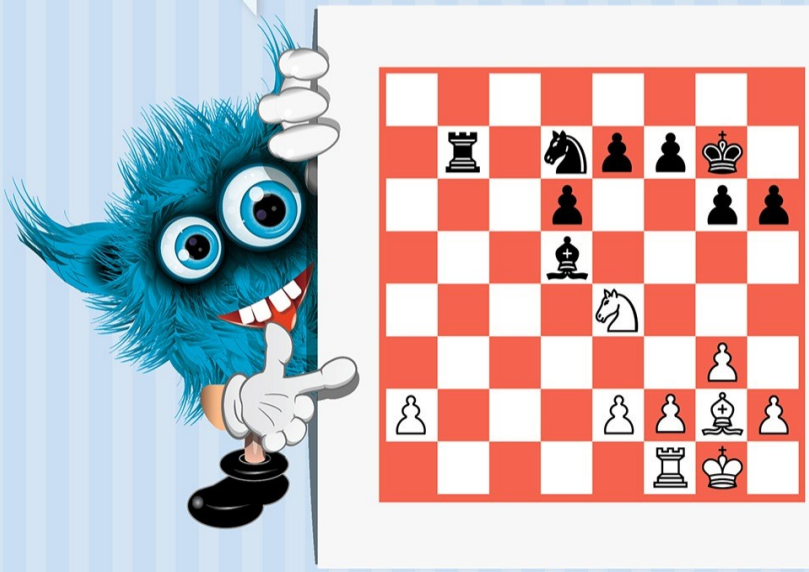
European Team Chess Championship and European Women's Team Chess Championship 2021
11th-22nd November
Terme Olimia, **Slovenia**

EUROPEAN TEAM CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP 2021 – Official Regulations (europechess.org)

Efstratios Grivas

MONSTER YOUR ENDGAME PLANNING

Volume 2



Chess Evolution

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Chess Scotland
Primary Individual 2021

This year's event (similar to last year's) was played as a 6-round swiss pairings online event using the Lichess platform, reports Harry Marron, CS Home Director (Juniors)

There were 99 participants (including 17 girls) and the time control was 15mins + 5 secs from move 1.

The 4th round game between ***Fit-Bison (*Rithvik Ambattu) and *ChessEqualsLife* (Joseph Zhao)** saw 2 of our more promising juniors play an Italian game that was quite a close affair until White blundered a rook late on!

FitBison (2043)

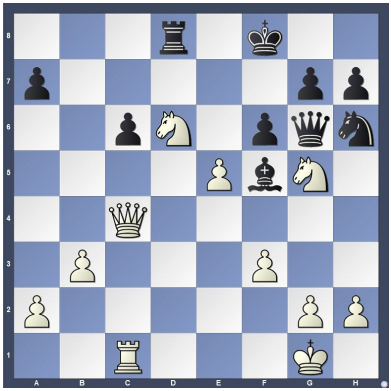
ChessEqualsLife (1804)

CS Primary Championships 2021
lichess.org

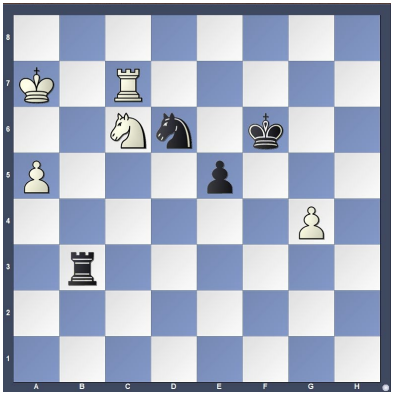
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♗c5 4.c3 ♘f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♗b4+ 7.♗d2 ♗xd2+ 8.♘bxd2 d6 9.♕b3 0–0 10.0–0

10...♘a5 11.♕e3 ♘xc4 12.♘xc4 ♖e8 13.♘cd2 ♗f5 14.e5 dxe5 15.dxe5 ♘g4 16.♕f4 ♘h6 17.♖ac1 c6 18.♘c4 ♗g4 19.♘d6 ♖e7

20.♖fe1 ♕d7 21.♖cd1 ♕e6 22.b3 ♖d8 23.♘g5 ♕g6 24.f3 ♗f5 25.♘xb7 ♖xd1 26.♖xd1 ♖e8 27.♘d6 ♖d8 28.♖c1 f6 29.♕c4+ ♔f8



30.♘e6+ ♗xe6 31.♕xe6 fxe5 32.♕xg6 hxg6 33.♖xc6 ♔e7 34.♘c4 ♘f7 35.♖xg6 ♔f8 36.♖a6 ♖d7 37.♔f2 ♔e7 38.♔e3 g5 39.♘a5 ♖c7 40.♘c6+ ♔d7 41.♘xa7 ♖c2 42.♖f6 ♔e7 43.♖c6 ♖xg2 44.♖c7+ ♔f6 45.a4 ♖xh2 46.♘c6 ♖h3 47.♔e4 g4 48.fxg4 ♖xb3 49.a5 ♘d6+ 50.♔d5 ♖d3+ 51.♔c5 ♘e4+ 52.♔b6 ♖b3+ 53.♔a7 ♘d6



54.♖b7 ♘xb7 55.a6 ♘c5 56.♔a8 ♘xa6 57.g5+ ♔xg5 58.♘xe5 ♔f5 59.♘c6 ♔e4 60.♔a7 ♘b4 61.♘d8 ♔d5 62.♘f7 ♘c6+ 63.♔a6 ♖a3+ 64.♔b5 ♖a5+ 65.♔b6 ♖a7 66.♘g5 ♖a8 67.♘f3 ♔d6 68.♔b5 ♖b8+ 69.♔c4 ♘e5+ 70.♘xe5 ♔xe5 71.♔c5 ♖c8+ 72.♔b4 ♔d5 73.♔b3 ♔d4 74.♔b2 ♔d3 75.♔b1 ♔d2 76.♔b2 ♖b8+ 77.♔a2 ♔c3 78.♔a1 ♔c2 79.♔a2 ♖a8#

0–1

The final round game **Tubby2010 v PushoverPrincess (Kanishka Bhatia v Chrysa Mitraka)** features 2 of our rapidly improving girls, where Black turns a losing position into a win.

♔ Tubby2010 (1482)

♚ PushoverPrincess (1600)

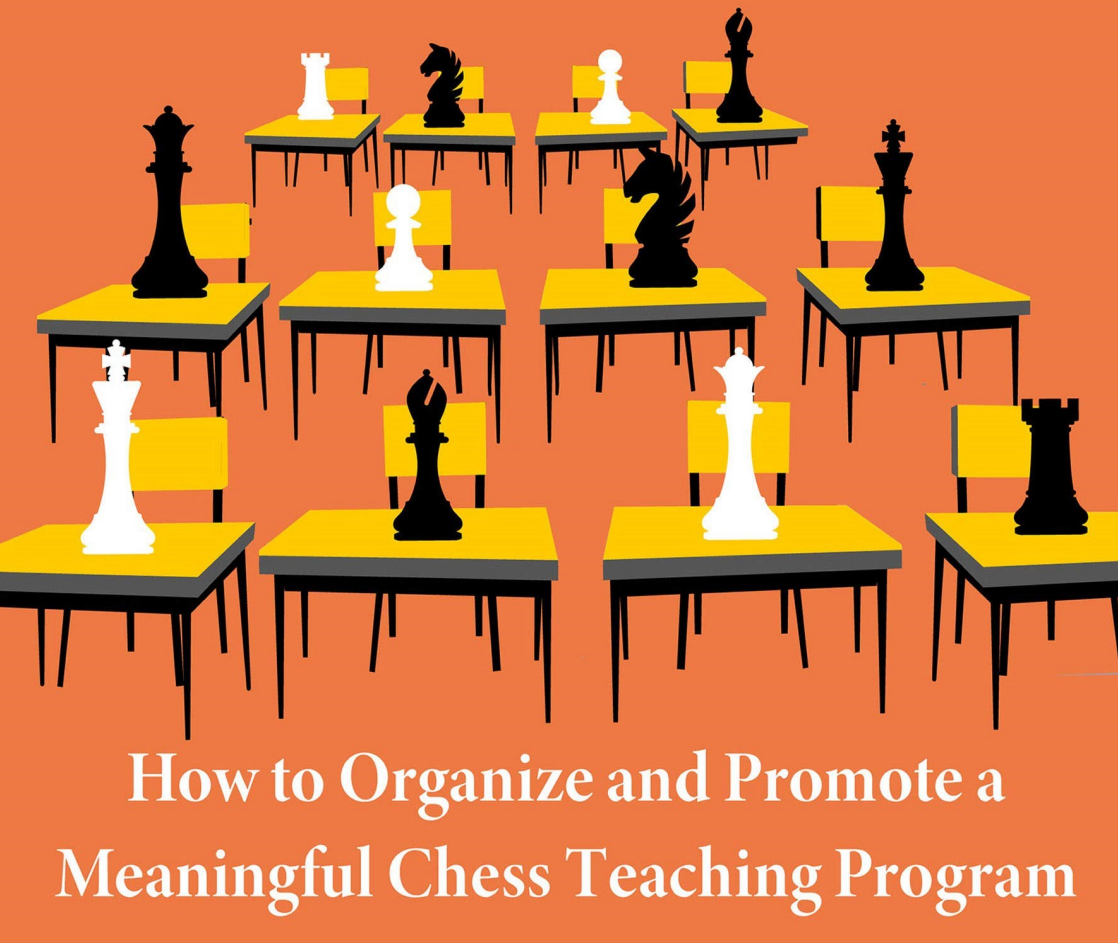
CS Primary Championships 2021
lichess.org

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♗c5 4.c3 ♘f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♗b4+ 7.♘c3 d6 8.h3 ♕e7 9.0–0 0–0 10.♘d5 ♘xd5 11.exd5 ♘a5 12.♗d3 c5

(see diagram next page)

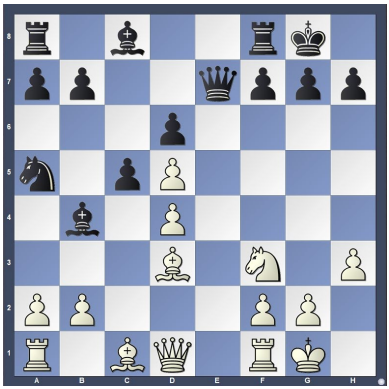
KAREL VAN DELFT

CHESS FOR EDUCATORS

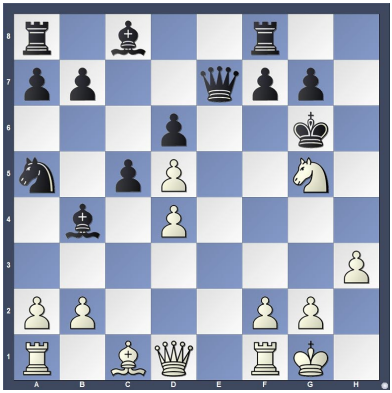


How to Organize and Promote a Meaningful Chess Teaching Program

NEW IN CHESS



13.♗xh7+ ♔xh7 14.♘g5+ ♔g6

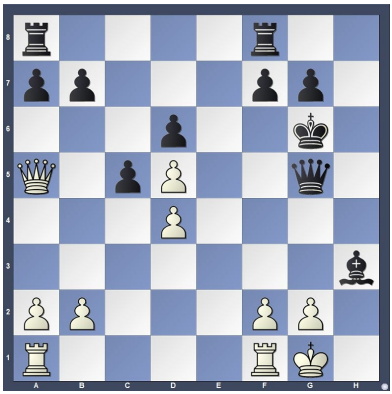


15.♗d2 15.♕d3+ ♗f5 16.♕g3 wins!

15...♗xd2 16.♕xd2 ♕xg5 17.♕xa5 ♗xh3

(see diagram next column)

18.g3 ♗xf1 19.♔xf1 ♕xd5 20.♕c3 ♕h1+ 21.♔e2 ♕xa1 22.♕d3+ f5 23.dxc5 ♕xb2+ 24.♔f3 dxc5



25.♕d6+ ♔h7 26.♕f4 ♕c3+ 27.♔g2 ♕d4 28.♕c7 ♕e4+ 29.♔h3 ♕g4+ 30.♔g2 ♔g6 31.♕d6+ ♔g5 32.♕d2+ f4 33.♕d5+ ♖f5 34.♕f7 f3+ 35.♔g1 ♖xf7 36.♔h2 ♖h8+ 37.♔g1 ♕h3 38.a4 ♕g2#

0–1

Results:

1st Frederick Gordon 6/6
2nd Aditya Srivastava 5.5/6
3rd Laksshana Deepak & Ollie Marenduzzo 5/6

P5 & Under

1st Aarav Srivastava 5/6
2nd Rithvik Ambattu 4.5/6
3rd Vedanth Vikram 4.5/6

Aarav Srivastava scooped the Primary 5 and under title with a score of 5/6

Freddy Gordon added the CS Primary Individual title to his growing collection of trophies

Efstratios Grivas

GRIVAS OPENING LABORATORY

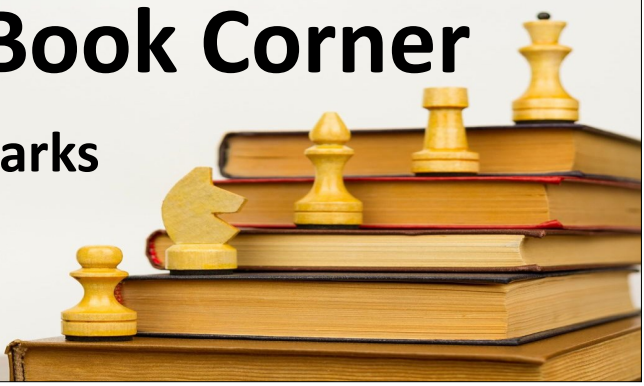
Volume 6

Janowski Defence
Orthodox Defence
Cambridge Springs Defence
Various Slav Systems
Tartakower Defence

Chess Evolution

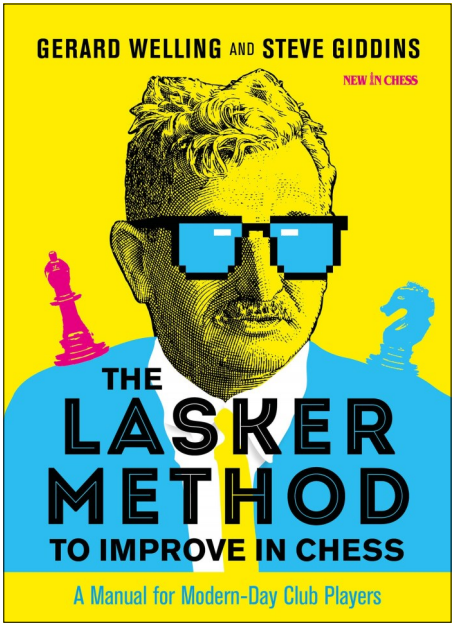
Chess Book Corner

with Ian Marks



This month our resident chess critic and bibliophile, Cumbernauld's very own Ian Marks, looks at a newly-released book that finds its inspiration in the 19th Century...

THE LASKER METHOD TO IMPROVE IN CHESS by Gerard Welling and Steve Giddins, New in Chess, 240 pp., publ. 2021



The idea behind this book can be summed up in one phrase: to make the average player's life a lot simpler. The authors' inspiration comes from Lasker's classic *Common Sense in Chess* (the 'method'), based on a series of lectures the great man gave away back in 1895 (and, as a classic work, essential reading).

In it, the World Champion outlined an approach to the game for

ordinary players based on playing sensibly and adhering to general principles, in the words of the authors *"…an efficient and independent approach to chess, with nothing superfluous, which is diametrically opposed to what many players do in practice, by storing as much information in their brains as they can"*. Chess is perhaps too concrete a game to allow for such an approach exclusively, but the underlying philosophy of keeping things simple is certainly nothing new. As the American philosopher Thoreau put it: *"Simplify, simplify, simplify! * I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumb-nail."*

(*You could argue he could have simplified that by using only one 'simplify'.)

It's easy for ordinary players to become overwhelmed by the sheer volume and range of books, DVDs, courses, downloads, software, online resources etc. etc. available nowadays. The authors seek to redress this information tsunami by indicating how players can try to declutter their chess minds and reappraise their approach to the game. Maybe not quite back to basics, but along those lines.

They do so via chapters on general chess philosophy and common sense, strategy and positional play, the endgame, attack, defence, Ns v Bs, amorphous positions, the opening, then games for study and tactics. Their watchwords are 'simple' and 'sound', an echo of Portisch's *"I can recommend the following: simplicity and economy"*. Good advice is timeless.

In each chapter they illustrate how each aspect of the game can, certainly to an extent, be handled in a no-frills manner. Ask me for my favourite and I think I'd plump for chapter seven which deals with amorphous positions, basically keeping your position flexi-

ble, not committing yourself, and waiting to see what your opponent's up to, which, as the authors point out, can be an excellent way to play for a win.

The authors provide seventy-three games and fragments, many of them by Lasker himself, but featuring an impressive collection of other big (and not so big) names, from Alekhine and Capablanca up to Kasparov and Carlsen. In keeping with the nature of the text, words (sensibly!) take precedence over moves: *"Our approach has been to annotate games largely with verbal explanations, adding concrete detail only when this is essential to understand what is going on"*.

Dutch IM Gerard Welling has now written two books with co-author Steve Giddins

Chapter eight, *An approach to the openings* (sic), is a useful overview of how openings-obsessed ordinary players could trim back their workload. You don't necessarily have to agree with the authors' every word or suggestion, but it should at least set you thinking. Curiously, though, the openings index omits references to those which appear in this chapter! The index would have you believe there's nothing on, say, the Evans Gambit or Vienna, yet they're covered on pp. 98-9 and 103-5 respectively. In similar

vein, the King's Gambit reference is to a game on p.65, not the coverage on pp. 105-7. Talking of the Evans, the authors 'get it out of the way' with the unusual 4…d5!?, rather strangely, since Lasker's no-nonsense suggestion of declining it with 4…Bb6 transposes directly into their line in the Giuoco Pianissimo on p.101, where they even cite a game by… Lasker! Anomaly aside, this is a good illustration of the 'common sense' philosophy at work: spending ages mugging up on the sharp stuff after 4…Bxb4 v. just playing 4…Bb6 and getting on with your G/75 league game in peace.

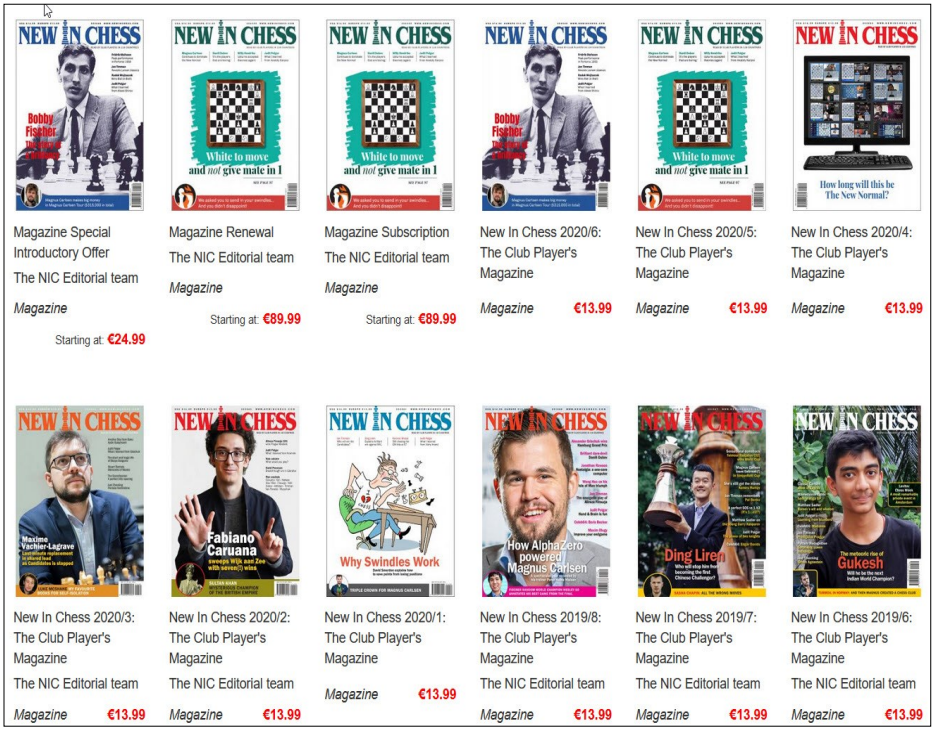
The authors have done a good job of setting Lasker's common sense approach in a contemporary context and bringing it to a new readership. I suspect it will find greater resonance amongst players who learnt their chess with books and a board, rather than the computer generation. The beauty of books like this is that they require you to *think* about chess and

FM Steve Giddins: a prolific chess autor who has covered everything from opening theory to biographies.

hopefully understand the game better. Those whose chess consists of robo-clicking through reams of trainable variations will find much food for thought and no small amount of wisdom between its covers. The target readership – 'average amateurs' – is probably around 1500-2200. At the lower end a certain amount of knowledge is assumed (as the authors write in the endgame chapter, *"…we will assume the reader has mastered these 'essential positions' for himself"*), at the higher end, stronger players will most likely be savvy to this sort of stuff already.

The authors write smoothly and with a lightness of touch which reads easily without ever drifting off-message, and the book is presented in crystal-clear double column format. The psychedelic cover featuring a funkily beshaded Lasker appealed to me, but I'm a fan of quirky stuff like this. I can imagine it might have others reaching for the paracetamol. Overall, a thoroughly enjoyable, highly readable and highly recommended piece of work.

Ian Marks, May 2021



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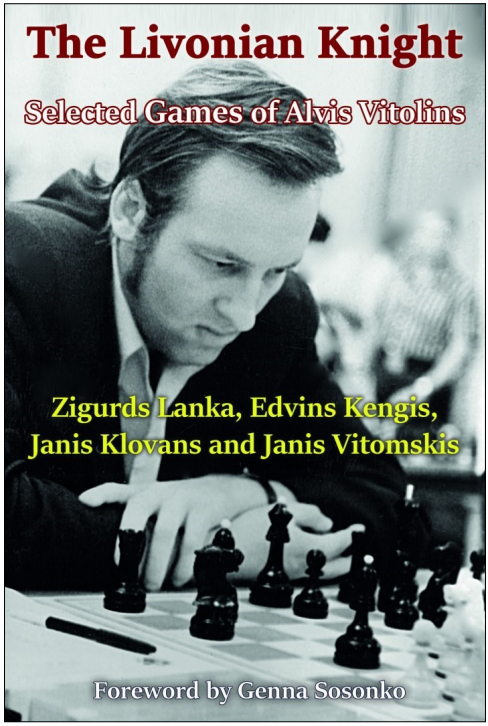
ISBN 978-90-5691-950-4

A Scottish book connection that many likely don't know exists, writes your editor, involves chess publishing house Elk and Ruby, and we are very grateful to founder Ilan Rubin for the following extract from one of their latest books.

The Livonian Knight: Selected Games of Alvis Vitolins, by **Zigurds Lanka, Edvins Kengis, Janis Klovans and Janis Vitomskis** covers the career of Alvis Vitolins (1946-1997) who was a seven-time chess champion of Latvia, a player with a ferocious attacking style, and one of the game's last true openings innovators in the pre-computer age.



Vitolins was a world-class blitz player and was a regular blitz sparring-partner of his friend, world champion Mikhail Tal. Vitolins often deployed gambits, and his attack-minded novelties in the Ruy Lopez, Sicilian, Nimzo-Indian and Bogo-Indian set trends that were copied at top-level chess, including in world championship and candidates matches. He gained the International Master title in 1980.

Through an analysis of 25 of his most exciting games, this book, first published in Latvia in 2008, tells the reader of Alvis's chess legacy, which includes many breath-taking Talesque sacrifices. Additional full games and fragments from Vitolins's career are incorporated in the annotations. Opponents include the authors of this book as well as grandmasters Alexei Shirov, Vladimir Bagirov, Vladimir Tukmakov and other stars of Soviet and post-Soviet chess.

The book contains a new foreword specially written for the English edition by Genna Sosonko, who met Vitolins on several occasions.

⚐ Alvis Vitolins (2455)
⚑ Vladimir Bagirov (2505)

Riga 1981

Notes by Janis Vitomskis and Vladimir Bagirov

1.e4 ♘f6 2.e5 ♘d5 3.d4 d6 4.♘f3 ♗g4 5.c4 ♘b6

6.d5!? A new, bold idea in one of the main lines of the Alekhine Defense.

6...♘8d7 Let's also look at the line where the sacrifice is accepted: 6...dxe5

(see diagram next column)

(analysis diagram)

7.h3 ♗f5 *(*After *7...♗xf3 8.♕xf3* White has enough compensation: the bishop pair and better development.*)* 8.♘c3 ♘8d7 9.a4

As soon as Black gets the knights out, White launches a pawn attack on Black's cavalry that needs to be stopped 9...a5 *(9...e6 10.a5 ♘c8 11.g4 ♗g6 12.a6 bxa6 13.dxe6 fxe6 14.♘g5* Black's pawn structure is irreparably damaged!*)* 10.c5 ♘xc5 11.♗e3 e6 12.♗b5+ ♘bd7

After ...a7-a5 the bishops feels quite at home on the b5 square. There may follow 13.♘xe5 *(13.♗xc5*

Alvis Vitolins' opponent in the current game, Vladimir Bagirov, pictured in 1965

♗xc5 14.♘xe5 exd5 15.♕xd5 ♕e7 16.0–0 0–0–0

(analysis diagram)

17.♘c6!±) 13...♗d6 14.♗xc5 ♗xe5 15.0–0 ♖c8

(analysis diagram)

16.♕f3± Later, at the Jurmala international tournament in 1985, both Bagirov and Kengis played 6...e6

7.e6 fxe6

(see diagram next column)

8.h3 J.V.: Vitolins first used his idea against Palatnik in Jurmala in 1981: 8.♗e2 exd5 9.cxd5 ♘f6 *(9...e5!? 10.dxe6 ♗xe6 11.0–0∞)* 10.♘c3 c6

(analysis diagram)

11.0–0 *(11.dxc6!? bxc6 12.♘g5⩱* with an equal but unclear position*)* 11...♘bxd5 12.♘g5 ♗xe2 13.♕xe2 ♕d7 14.f4 g6 15.f5 and White had a sustained initiative for his pawns!

8...♗xf3 9.♕xf3 ♘e5 10.♕b3

J.V. 10.♕e4!? was an interesting move.

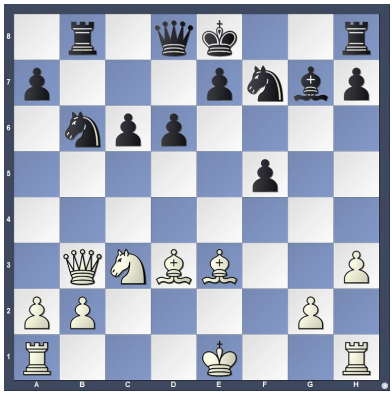
10...exd5 11.cxd5 g6 The white pawn acts like a wedge in Black's position, preventing him from quietly developing… White has the bishop pair, while Black has an extra pawn.

12.♘c3 ♗g7 13.♗e3

13...c5! White is going to castle long, then play f2-f4, Bd3 and h3-h4-h5, putting pressure on the g6 pawn. However, after ...c7-c5, he will have to reckon with c5-c4 and Nd3, with counterplay possibilities for Black.

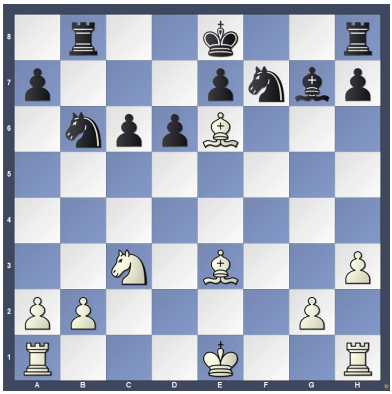
14.dxc6 bxc6 15.f4 ♘f7 16.f5!? gxf5 17.♗d3 ♖b8

(see diagram next column)



Black threatens18... Nd5. I (V.B.) could have played 17...♕d7 18.0–0 e6 but I thought that in this situation it was better to offer a queen exchange rather than try and hang onto the two extra pawns at any price…

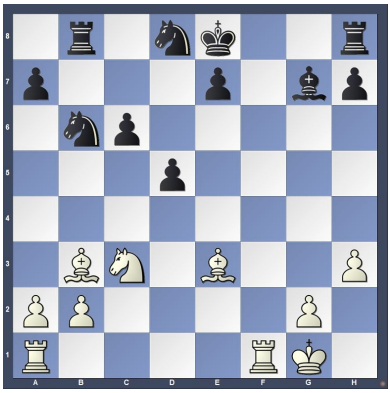
18.♕e6 ♕d7 19.♗xf5 ♕xe6 20.♗xe6



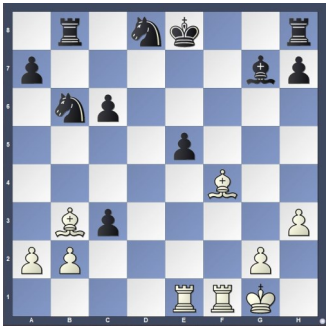
20...♘d8 Perhaps 20...d5 21.0–0 ♘d8 22.♗g4 h5 23.♗f5 0–0 was

better, but I wanted to kick the e6 bishop away as soon as possible. In general, I was satisfied with the opening - the central pawns will have a say on the game eventually!

21.♗b3 d5 22.0–0



22...e5?! Too optimistic. 22...d4?! 23.♗f4 e5 24.♖ae1 dxc3



(analysis diagram)

25.♖xe5+! ♗xe5 *(RR 25...♔d7!?)* 26.♗xe5 was equally unclear, and the white bishops start to rampage. The most precise move was 22...♖b7! threatening d5-d4, and so, after 23.♖ad1

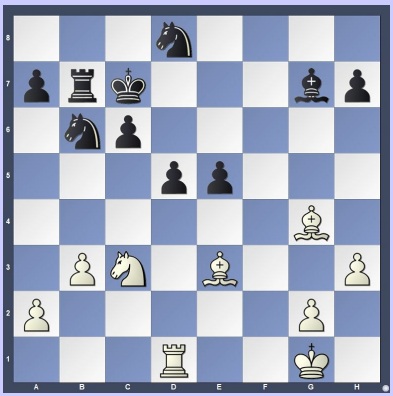
(analysis diagram)

23...♖f8! Black can trade at least one pair of rooks and then push his central pawns. Now White develops his bishops with renewed energy. *(RR 23...e5!?)*

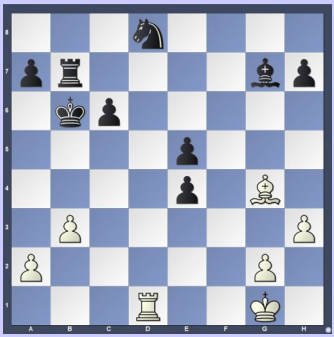
23.♖ae1 ♖b7 24.♗d1

24...♖f8 24...♘c4! was worthy of serious consideration. J.V.

25.♗h5+ ♔d7 26.♗g4+ ♔d6 27. ♖xf8 ♗xf8 28.b3 ♗g7 29.♖d1 ♔c7



30.♗f2 J.V.: White misses a tactical opportunity: 30.♘e4! dxe4 (*30...h5 31.♗f5* changes nothing *31...dxe4 32.♗xb6+ ♔xb6 33.♖xd8=*) 31.♗xb6+ ♔xb6

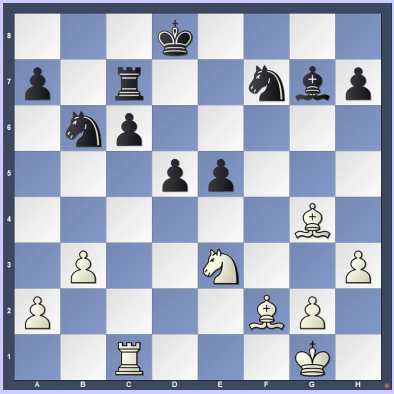


(analysis diagram)

(31...axb6 32.♖d7+=) 32.♖xd8 after which the position is a simple draw.

30...♘f7 The black pawns look impressive, but none of them can move without creating new problems. The b7-rook cannot get into play in a timely manner either, so Black has big difficulties in converting his material advantage.

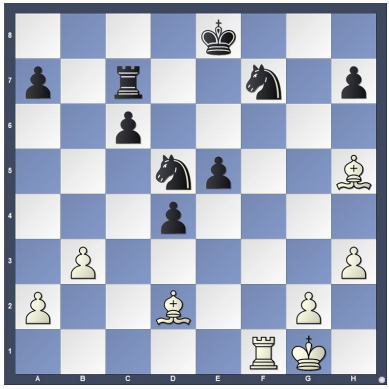
31.♖c1 ♔d8 32.♘d1 ♖c7 33.♘e3



33...♗h6! Black uses every opportunity for trades, otherwise his opponent's initiative might become too dangerous.

34.♖f1 ♗xe3 35.♗xe3 d4 36.♗d2 ♔e8 37.♗h5 ♘d5 Black's weakest piece in the Alekhine Defense, the b6-knight, is finally back in the game, and it's now easier for Black to defend!

(see diagram next page)

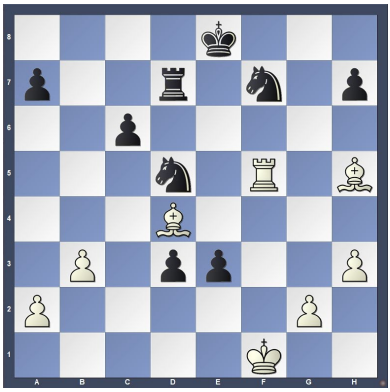


38.♖f5? J.V.: The white rook will be less maneuverable in the middle of the board; 38.♖e1 was more effective, attacking from further away.

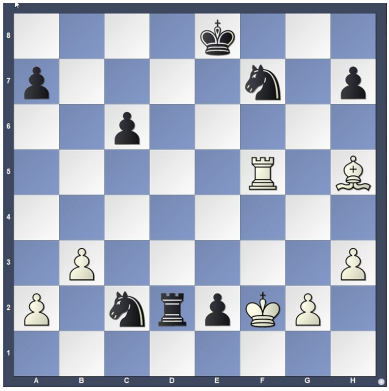
38...e4 39.♗f4 ♖d7 40.♗e5? d3 White has made some mistakes in time trouble. It seems that Vitolins was totally sure that the black pawns didn't "want" to move ahead, and that he hence first needed to apply some pressure, and then destroy the pawns with the help of his bishops! That idea might have worked, but, in any case, it was better to bring the king closer to the center.

41.♗d4 Analysis showed that this move provided the best defensive chances. J.V.: However, the central pawns are rushing towards promotion (remember Bagirov's prophetic comment after the 20th move!), and now White loses a piece.

41...e3 42.♔f1

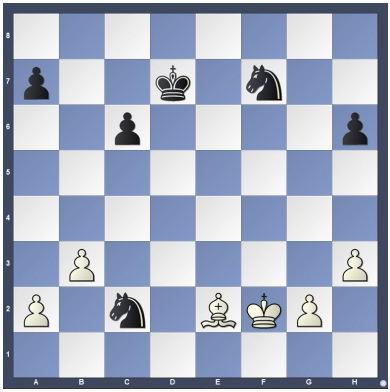


42...e2+! 43.♔e1 ♘b4 44.♗c3 d2+ 45.♗xd2 ♘c2+ 46.♔f2 ♖xd2



47.♖e5+ ♔d7 48.♖xe2 ♖xe2+ 49.♗xe2 h6

(see diagram next page)



50.g4 ♔d6 51.♗c4 ♘e5 52.♗g8 ♘b4 53.a4 ♘d5 54.♗h7 c5 55.♔g3 ♔e7 56.♗e4 ♘c3 57.♗b7 ♘e2+ 58.♔h4 ♔f6 59.♔h5 ♘f7! 60.♔h4 ♔e5 61.♗a6 ♘f4 62.♔g3 ♘g5 63.h4 ♘e4+ 64.♔f3 ♘d2+ 65.♔e3 ♘xb3 66.g5 hxg5 67.hxg5 ♘d4 0–1

Grandmaster Bagirov's annotations were taken from *Sahs* magazine, No. 20, 1981.

About the authors

Zigurds Lanka (born 1960) and Edvins Kengis (born 1959) are Latvian Grandmasters, coaches and multiple chess champions of Latvia (two and eight times, respectively).

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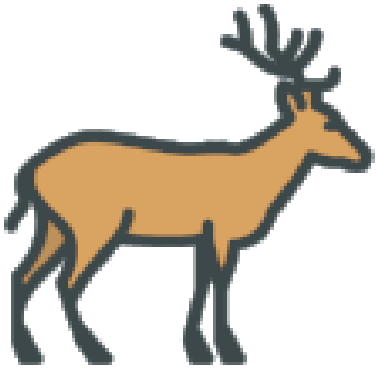

Elk and Ruby

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The **online rating system** has regular updates and allows members to check their rating progress, check links to event crosstables and view several years of previous data.

FIDE ratings are updated on the 1st of every month and give players information on their latest world ranking.

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The **Chessbase Grand Prix Leaderboards** and rules can be viewed here while the **Giant-killing** lists are here. (The virus pandemic has impacted on updates here and we hope to return to more normal times as soon as possible).

…and finally, **Alan McGowan's** excellent history archive can be found **here**.

For more information about CS please feel free to **contact** the relevant officers listed **here**.