

Scottish Chess

Issue 296

October 2021

A man with grey hair, wearing a dark maroon polo shirt and a blue and white patterned face mask, sits at a table covered with a white cloth. In front of him is a chessboard with wooden pieces. The room has a high ceiling with wooden beams and several large national flags hanging from the ceiling, including the Scottish Saltire, the Spanish flag, and the Swedish flag. In the background, other tables with chess sets and a person standing near a speaker are visible.

**Scotland's seniors
take centre stage
in Sardinia**

**Plus: Success at the British - The French Connection
- Chess in the Community - and more!**

Csaba Balogh

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Issue 296 October 2021

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Cover photo: A masked Rob McAndrew flying the flag for Scotland's seniors in Sardinia (Photo: Andrew Burnett)

Welcome! October 2021

Live chess is back and, if not yet quite happening in Scotland itself, there has been no shortage of Scots prepared to travel to end the year and a half of chess starvation.

Hamish Olson's excellent second place finish at the OTB British Championships should have taken pride of place in this issue, but deadlines are there for a reason! Nevertheless, his report and annotated games are well

worth a few hours of study.

The older generation was also back at the board as our cover pic reveals, your editor among those braving the Euro Senior Individuals in Sardinia. Hopefully this is the start of a return to 'normality' - whatever that may be.

Andrew Burnett *Editor*



Contents

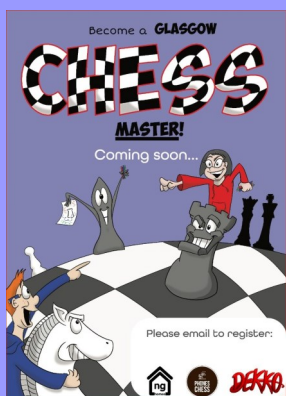
Sardinia played host to the first Seniors event to re-emerge on the chess calendar after lockdown.

Three Scots made their way to the Italian island, but would their chess skills match the beauty of the destination?

Find out with our in-depth report starting on page 5!

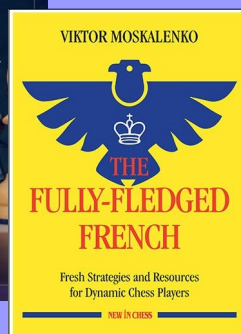


It has been a while since a Scot ran deep in the **British Championship Open event**, but this year **FM Hamish Olson** did just that. Read all about his exploits in Hull on **page 25**



Colin Paterson has been heavily involved in a number of charity and **community chess projects in Glasgow** over the years. Find out why a **comic book**, the **Lord Mayor of Glasgow** and a **brass band** feature in his latest adventures in our news round up starting on **page 61**

If **opening books** are your cup of tea, then **Ian Marks' reviews** of the most recent **French Defence** offerings could be just the thing. Check out **page 67** to find out what all the fuss is about!



European Senior Individual Championships 2021

News that Sardinia was to host the European Senior Individual Championships came at just the right time for me, looking to venture out into the world after a long Covid lockdown and personal health issues, writes **FM Andrew Burnett**.

Some big questions remained as to how both would greet me, having been warned by a fellow Scottish senior that time pressure and heart attacks were rather occasional though entirely unwelcome bedfellows, but I felt well enough to at least attempt some chess!

Restrictions were (and are) still in place around the globe, meaning all manner of tests and paperwork had to be navigated, a rather expensive exercise in box-ticking that saw two of my mandatory antigen tests go completely unchecked as I travelled from Manchester to Olbia in the north of Sardinia, and afterwards from Rome to Prague. And there was more in store at the tournament itself, as it was announced there would be temperature checks as we entered the playing hall, while mandatory mask-wearing throughout the games was the policy. Not unduly problematic, except for when your spectacles steam up at inopportune moments during the games.

There were two age groups as usual, catering for the 50+ and 65+ players, although the women's events were subsumed into the Open sections due to too few entries. By the time the tournaments began, there were 36 entrants to the "junior" event and 29 for the more "senior" seniors.

Players had arrived from 22 nations, with Ian Aird and Rob McAndrew joining myself under the SCO banner, while England, Wales and Ireland were also represented from among our nearest neighbours.

The venue was, a resort near the coast - The Janne e Sole Family Resort in Budoni, close to Olbia on the north-eastern coast of Sardinia. Any worries about the "family" aspect noisily disrupting the chess were quickly allayed, the end of season vibe more of a relaxed, older age group.

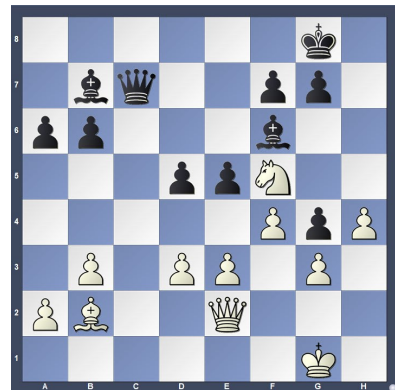
The playing hall for the chess itself was very good, and - mask wearing aside - there were few if any issues, although as you will read in Ian's part of the report, the event wasn't entirely incident-free.

The actual chess-playing itself was another matter entirely, many players (myself included) seemingly having forgotten how the pieces move despite, or perhaps because of, more than a year of mouse-clicking dominating our chess practice.

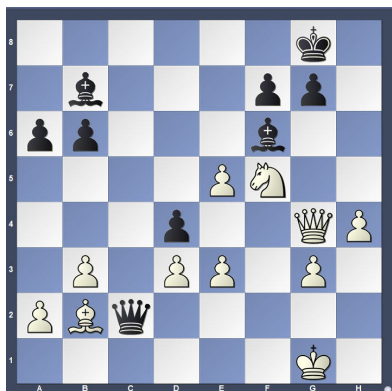
♣ **Burnett, Andrew (2163)**

♣ **Sirletti, Sonia (1805)**

Euro Senior Individual (1)



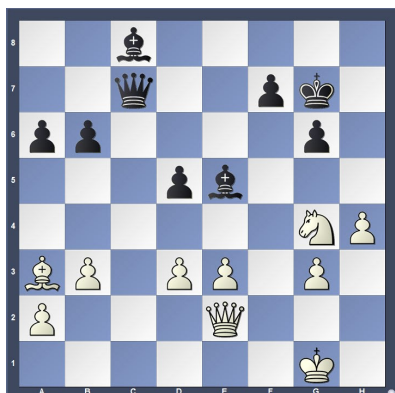
We had both rather stumbled into this position, believing that Black had messed up a good position. However, as I was about to play my planned 29.♖xg4 I spotted a remarkable "save" for Black. 29...d4!! Opening up the light-squared bishop, but surely White is quicker? Unfortunately not, as can be seen after 30.fxe5 ♖c2!



Black ignores White's threats and not only sets up a mate on g2, but attacks the bishop on b2 as well. Eventually, I decided that I couldn't risk my opponent finding this resource, and opted instead for...

29. **fxe5** **Qxe5** and here I had another long think as 30. **Qxe5** **Rxe5** 31. **Rxg4** **g6** or 31... **Ra1+** seemed fine for Black.

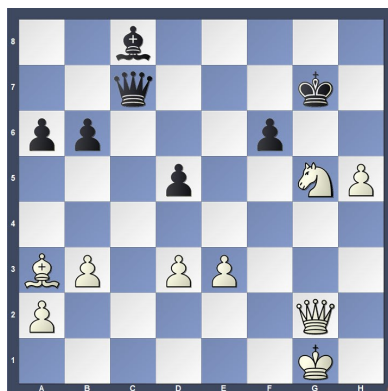
30. **Qa3** **g6** 31. **Qh6+** **Qg7**
32. **Qxg4** **Qc8??**



A game-losing blunder and one that I was obviously delighted to see, as I have nothing after a move such as 32... **Qc3=**

33. **Qxe5** **f6** 33... **Rxe5** 34. **Qb2** is the problem.

34. **Qf3** **Rxg3+** 35. **Rg2** **Rc7** 36. **h5** **g5** 37. **Qxg5!**



Not the only route to the full point, but it was relatively easy to calculate.

37... **fxg5** 38. **Rxg5+** **Qf7** 39. **Rg6#**

1-0

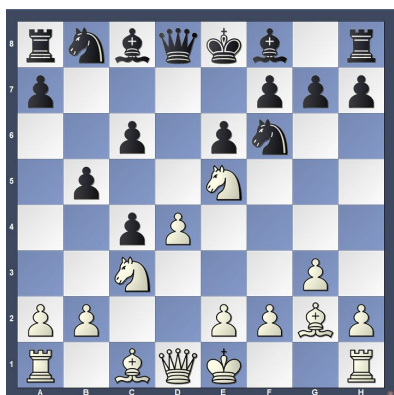
A slightly fortunate start, but no such luck in round 2, which saw me waste several tempi as Black against one of the top seeds and I fully deserved to lose. Round 3, however, brought the following curious miniature....

Burnett, Andrew (2163)

Hoffmann, Michael (1951)

Euro Senior Individual (3)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♗c3
c6 5.g3 dxc4 6.♙g2 b5 7.♗e5 I
have played this gambit line many
times and with considerable success.



7...♙b6 A rather famous encounter,
by Scottish standards, continued
instead 7...♗d5 8.e4 ♗xc3 9.bxc3
♙b7?? when after 10.♙h5! g6 11.
♗xg6!



White is winning due to 11...fxg6
being met by 12.♙e5 and went on
to convert an excellent game en
route to lifting the Scottish Cham-
pionship crown in Berry, Neil -
Korneev, Oleg Edinburgh 2015.

8.0-0 ♙b7 9.e4 9.b3!? a la
Kramnik is a good option here.

9...♙e7 10.♙e3 0-0 11.d5 ♙c5N
12.dxe6 fxe6 13.♗xc4



Here, having completely overlooked
my last move and not enjoying his
position, my opponent resigned!

1-0

It does indeed look rather bleak for
Black, until you realise that he can
simply give up his queen for three
pieces!

13...bxc4 14.♖a4 ♕xe3 15.♗xb6
♕xb6



I had seen this in advance and thought the queen might prove itself superior after 16.♔d6 with ♕h3 to come, but it really is much easier to play with the pieces in the resulting positions.

Anyway, a win is a win and on to round 4, which saw me face a long-standing member of the English national team.

♣ **Lauterbach, Ingrid (2038) -**

♣ **Burnett, Andrew (2163)**

Euro Senior Individual (4)

1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♕g7 3.♗c3 d6 4.f4
a6 5.♗f3 ♗d7 6.♕c4 e6

See diagram next column



At this point it occurred to me that perhaps I had walked into the same line as I had in my last game before lockdown, against IM Neil McDonald in the Scotland-England clash at the 2020 World Senior Team Championships in Prague. A match that Ingrid and I had briefly discussed before the current game! Naturally, I could recall nothing of my previous analysis from that game. Ingrid now thought for a long time before playing the solid...

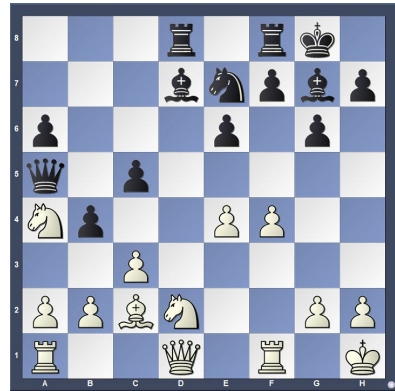
7.0–0 McDonald had attempted to blow me away immediately with 7.f5!? although I eventually managed to draw a ridiculously bad game.

7...♗e7 7...b5!? was likely better, e.g. 8.♕b3 c5.

8.♗h1 Again f5 is critical.

8...b5 9.♙d3 c5 10.dxc5 ♘xc5
 11.♙e3 b4 12.♙xc5 dxc5 But not
 12...bxc3 13.♙xd6 cxb2 14.♖b1 0-
 0 15.e5+-

13.♘a4 ♔a5



17...♙xa4 and White resigned in
 view of 18.♙xa4 bxc3 19.bxc3
 ♙xc3 and Black wins a lot of
 material.

0-1

14.c3? 14.b3 offering the exchange
 on a1 (which Black would do well
 to ignore) was the only playable ap-
 proach.

14...♙d7 15.♙c2 ♖d8 16.♘d2 16.
 ♖f2 ♙c6 17.♖d2 was what I had
 expected, but after 17...0-0 White
 is still in serious trouble. For exam-
 ple, on a "pass" move such as 18.h3
 ♙xa4 19.♙xa4 ♖xd2 20.♘xd2
 ♖d8 and the d-file issues have not
 been resolved and Black is winning.

16...0-0 17.♖f3 This loses immedi-
 ately, but 17.♘c4 ♔c7 is also very
 bad for White, e.g. 18.♔e2 ♙b5
 19.♙b3 ♘c6+- (19...♘c8)

In round 5 I was up against another
 of the pre-tournament favourites,
 Dutch IM Mark Van der Werf, and
 it proved to be my third miniature
 in a row!

♘ Burnett, Andrew (2163)

♙ Van Der Werf, Mark (2393)

Euro Senior Individual (5)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘c3

See diagram next column

A spur of the moment decision,
 though I doubt I will repeat it!



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16

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2...d5 3.♙f4 e6 4.e3 ♘b4 5.♘ge2
0-0 6.a3 ♙e7 7.♘g3 c5 8.dxc5
♙xc5 9.♙d3 ♘c6 10.0-0 h6
11.♘h5 ♘xh5 12.♚xh5 f5



13.g4!? I seriously considered taking the draw with 13.♙xh6 gxh6 14.♚g6+ ♔h8 15.♚xh6+ ♔g8 16.♘e4 ♙e7= but I thought the game continuation would be good for me and felt bad about the idea of "chickening out".

13...d4 13...e5 14.♙xh6=

14.♘a4? 14.♘b5 was better, but I had completely failed to spot Black's idea.

14...♙e7? 14...♙d6 15.♙xh6 ♘e5

15.gxf5 exf5 16.♙xh6?? 16.♙ad1 is playable. 16...♙e6 (16...♚a5?? 17.♙c4+ ♔h7 18.♔h1!+- ♚xa4 19.♙g1)



16...♘e5! I'm not sure what I did expect, but this wasn't it! Black is now just winning and I went down quickly.

17.♙xg7 17.f4 ♘xd3 18.cxd3 ♚d6 (18...gxh6 19.♚g6+=) 19.♙g5 ♙d7 20.♙f3 ♙e8 21.♚h4 ♙f6 22.b3 dxe3+-

17...♔xg7 18.♔h1 ♙h8 19.♙g1+ ♘g4 20.♙xg4+ fxg4 21.♚g6+ ♔f8 22.♙c4 ♚e8

0-1

We'll take a break from your editor's travails to have a look at how Scotland's other two representatives fared, starting with my fellow 50+ section combatant, Ian Aird.

My trip to Sardinia for the European Senior Championships got off to an inauspicious start, when my flight from Glasgow to Bristol, was delayed by two hours and landed 15 minutes after my connecting flight to Olbia had taken off. Stranded at Bristol airport, I assessed my options and determined that a direct flight the following day from Gatwick was the best choice.

So, three buses and 7 and a half hours later, I checked in to the Premier Inn at Gatwick north terminal and immediately emailed the organisers to inform them of my flight issues and request a bye for round 1. I received a reply saying that they would contact me the following day.

The next morning, prior to checking out of my hotel room, I emailed the organisers to ask

about a transfer from Olbia airport to the Janna & Sole resort. On not receiving a reply, I sent a further email from the departure lounge. No response either, so I sent a final email from the gate just prior to boarding which read "Please acknowledge my existence".

Their lack of response confirmed my status as persona non grata. I was further disappointed to learn that, despite having requested a bye, I had been included in the round 1 draw. It was left to Andy Burnett to inform my opponent, just prior to the start, that I would not be appearing for the game.

The following day, on complaining to the arbiter, he denied receiving my original email, which would have been convincing if I had not received a reply.



The resort was very nice and the buffet meals were excellent; they even catered to my request for sugar-free dessert options. The playing conditions were good, if a little warm at times, and wearing a face mask at the board was a bit awkward and took some getting used to.

My play during the tournament was disappointing, the 18 month absence of over the board chess having a more detrimental effect on my chess than I had hoped...I won't bore you with my many blunders and instead focus on a couple of missed opportunities.

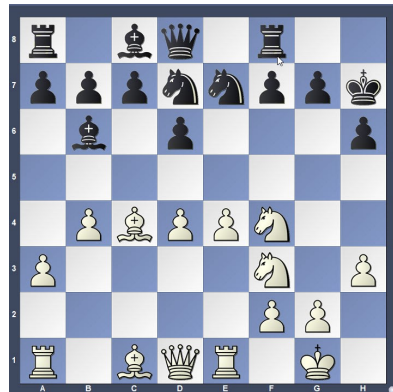
First up, a missed opportunity:

♣ **Aird, Ian (1776)**

♣ **Mirza, Gabriel (1776)**

European Seniors 50+ (9)

After 14 moves, the following position arose in round 6 against my Irish opponent, where an attractive double knight sacrifice was possible.



15. ♖g5+ hxg5 16. ♗e6!!



16... ♜e8 16... ♜xe6 17. ♜h5+ ♔g8
18. ♜xe6+ ♜f7 19. ♜xf7+ ♔h7 20.
♜h5#

17. ♜h5+ ♔g8 18. ♗xg7 ♔xg7
19. ♜xg5+ ♖g6 20. ♜h6+ ♔g8
21. ♜xg6+ with mate to follow soon.

1-0

My final round game was against Tomasz Sielicki from Poland. We had played twice before in previous senior events. In Rhodes, at the 2019 European Senior Championships we had drawn. In Bucharest, at the 2019 World Senior Championships, having suffered three consecutive losses, I shamelessly played for a draw in a Rubinstein four knights, and deservedly lost.

with ...Nbd7 followed by ...c5 equalises comfortably.



This game was typical of my difficulties throughout the event where I struggled to calculate anything and even when I intuitively found the best move, I would convince myself, for reasons I don't understand, to play a weaker alternative.

5...0-0 6.e3 ♖bd7 Alternatives are the immediate 6...c5, which was the most popular reply for many years, and 6...b6, which was advocated by Ntirlis in his excellent *Playing 1.d4 d5 - A Classical Repertoire* (Quality Chess 2017)

♣ **Sielicki, Tomasz (1875)**

7.♙c2 c5 is more testing and puts more pressure on Black.

♣ **Aird, Ian (1776)**

7...c5 8.dxc5 ♖xc5 9.♞d1 ♙a5 10.a3 Threatening b4, so the knight has to move.

European Seniors 50+ (9)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♞c3 ♙e7
4.♞f3 ♞f6 5.♙f4

10...♞ce4 11.♞d2 ♞xc3 12.♞b3 ♙a4 13.♙xc3 dxc4?! Better was 13...♙d7 followed by ...Rac8, which gives Black a clear advantage.

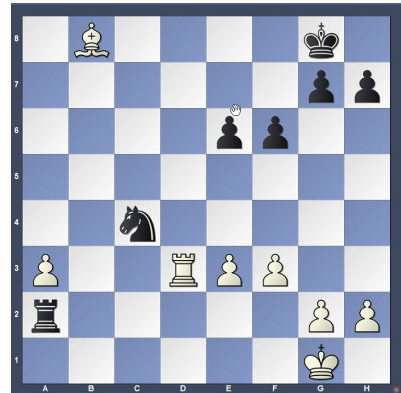
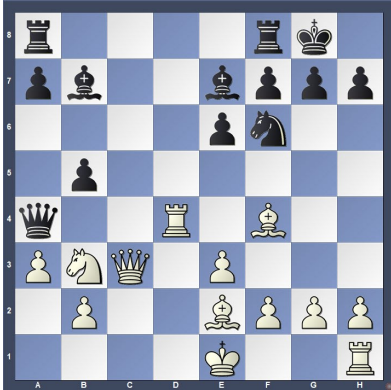
See diagram next column

This has almost completely replaced the ♙g5 lines, where Kramnik's treatment of the classical QGD

14.♙xc4 b5 15.♙e2 ♙b7? The first opportunity to play the obvi-

ous ...Nd5, e.g. 15...♘d5 16.♙d3
 ♜xf4 17.exf4 b4+

16.♞d4



Whites a-pawn will fall and we reach a completely equal endgame.

½–½

16...♞ac8?! Again 16...♘d5 is the obvious and best move. I have no idea why I rejected this and played the weaker rook move. 17.♙d3 ♜xf4 18.exf4 b4 19.0–0 ♔d5+

17.♞xa4 White starts a long, forced line with multiple exchanges. I won't pretend I saw this to the end, but having missed 15.Nd5 and 16.Nd5, I just got lucky that a draw was still possible.

17...♞xc3 18.♞xa7 ♞xb3 19.♞xb7 ♞xb2 20.♞xe7 ♞d8 21.0–0 ♞xe2 22.♞b7 ♜e4 23.♞xb5 f6 24.♞b8 ♞xb7 25.♞xb8 ♞a2 26.f3 ♜d2 27.♞d1 ♜c4 28.♞d3

Rob McAndrew was the third Scottish musketeer and provided the following short report, having followed up his Sardinian sojourn with a visit to the Schach Senioren Cup in Tegernsee. There he scored 4/7, gaining a rating prize, and some rating points, but how did he fare in Sardinia?

“Being in Struga, North Macedonia, for the European Club Cup as non-playing captain, and therefore a privileged spectator, seems to have improved my chess. I left Struga early, on 24 September, at the same time as Magnus Carlsen, though not with Magnus Carlsen, in order to have a PCR test at Lux-

embourg airport early on Friday morning. The result being negative, I flew to Sardinia on Saturday 25 September, the first round being on Sunday 26.

I drew with Mira Kierzek in the second round after a very eventful 93 moves and over five hours, giving up my bishop for her last 'good' pawn, to leave her only a rook pawn and wrong colour bishop. Her husband took revenge two rounds later, asking me before the game if I knew Craig Pritchett. Only by reputation, I said, I have some of his books. I then showed how little I had learnt from them. Still, there was only one game, fortunately against a Swedish IM, when I blundered a piece.

I didn't mind wearing a mask in Sardinia, in fact once the games got started, I wasn't even conscious of it.

I played seven higher rated players in the nine rounds in Sardinia, and against five higher rated players in the seven rounds in Tegernsee. Chess has taken me to some wonderful places over the years, and Sardinia and Tegernsee rank very highly among them.

Tegernsee, which is stunningly beautiful at this time of year, reverts to the usual Spring week, 26 March to 3 April 2022, for next year's tournament when, alas, the colours of autumn will be absent.

Only 2 hours by S-bahn and train from Munich Airport. I was the only Scot there, though introduced as der Luxemburger Schotte at the prize-giving, I have to say. It was a great pleasure to have the company of Andy Burnett and Ian Aird in Sardinia, I hope the pandemic will allow more Scots chess players abroad next year!



Rob McAndrew: One of Scotland's Masked Musketeers in Sardinia

Back to your editor's travails, and round 6 saw me facing a clubmate of Rob's from Luxembourg

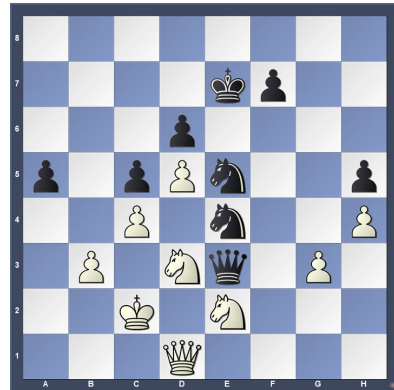
♠ Favier, Alain (2061)

♣ Burnett, Andrew (2163) A56

Euro Senior Individual (6)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5 4.♘c3
 d6 5.e4 ♘bd7 6.♙d3 a6 7.h4 h5
 8.g3 g6 9.♘h3 ♙e7 10.♘g5 ♘f8
 11.f4 ♘g4 12.f5 ♘h7 13.♘f3 ♖g8
 14.♚e2 ♙d7 15.♙d2 ♖b8 16.a4
 ♚c8 17.♖f1 gxf5 18.exf5 ♙xf5
 19.♘xe5 ♙xd3 20.♘xd3 ♘hf6
 21.0-0-0 ♚d7 22.♙g5 ♙d8
 23.♖de1 ♖e8 24.♚d2 b6 25.♙e2
 ♙c7 26.♚e1 ♙d8 27.♖f4 ♖b7
 28.b3 ♘h7 29.♙xe7+ ♖xe7
 30.♖fe4 ♖xe4 31.♖xe4 ♘hf6
 32.♖e2 ♚f5 33.♙d2 ♖d7 34.a5
 bxa5 35.♚a1 ♖e7 36.♚xa5+ ♙e8
 37.♖xe7+ ♙xe7 38.♚c7+ ♘d7
 39.♘e2 ♚f3 40.♘dc1 ♘f2
 41.♚a5 ♘e4+ 42.♙c2 ♘e5 43.♚
 e1 ♚e3 44.♚d1 a5 45.♘d3

Gladly skipping over the first 40 or so moves, suffice to say I had somehow survived a most horrendous position and now found myself with excellent attacking chances. The double knight ending with queens is one that I can't recall ever having had.

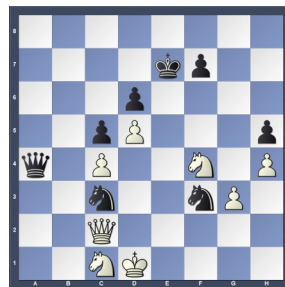


45...♘f3 Keeping pieces on the board of course.

46.♘ef4 a4! Black needs to open up the white king just a little more.

47.bxa4 ♚d4 48.♚e2 ♚c3+
 49.♙d1 ♚a1+ 50.♙c2

Although this walks into a mate in one, I was really hoping for 50.♘c1 ♚xa4+ 51.♚c2 (51.♘b3 ♚xb3+ 52.♙c1) 51...♘c3#



Instead the game ended 51...♘d4#

0-1

Round 7 continued my yo-yo run of losing to higher-rated opponents, and again I could have no complaints despite missing a saving resource late on in the game.

♣ **Burnett, Andrew (2163)**

♣ **Druckenthaner, Andreas (2275)**

Euro Senior Individual (7)

1.d4 g6 2.♘c3 ♕g7 3.e4 ♘c6
 4.♘f3 d5 5.♙b5 a6 6.♙xc6+ bxc6
 7.h3 ♘f6 8.♖e2 ♘xe4 9.♘xe4
 dxe4 10.♖xe4 ♖d5 11.♖xd5
 cxd5 12.0-0 0-0 13.♖e1 ♖e8
 14.c3 f6 15.♙f4 c6 16.b4 g5
 17.♙d6 ♖f7 18.♙c5 h5 19.a4 ♙h6
 20.♖a2 g4 21.hxg4 ♙xg4 22.♘h2
 ♙f5 23.f3 e5 24.dxe5 ♖xe5
 25.♖xe5 fe5 26.♖e2 ♖e8 27.g4 ♙
 d3 28.♖g2 h4 29.g5 ♙g7 30.♘g4
 ♖g6 31.♙e3 e4

Here I played...
32.f4?? relying on tricks which don't work.

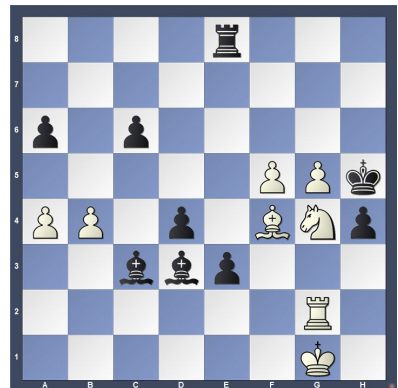
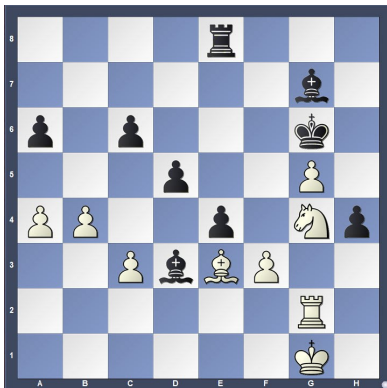
Instead 32.♘f6! saves White, as Black will be forced to allow opposite-coloured bishops and/or a blockade. 32...♙xf6

a) 32...♖h8 33.f4 ♙xf6 (33...h3
 34.♖h2 ♙xf6 35.gxf6 ♖h5 36.♘f2
 ♘xf6) 34.gxf6+ ♘xf6 35.♙d4+;

b) 32...exf3 33.♘xe8 fxg2
 34.♘xg7 ♖xg7 35.♘xg2+;

33.gxf6+ ♖xf6 34.f4= What happens in the game is rather interesting, with Black choosing the most difficult route to victory and then, rather fortunately it should be said, finding the only winning move!

32...♙xc3 33.♘h6 d4 34.f5+
 ♖h5?! 35.♙f4 e3 36.♘g4





Komodo Dragon 2

NEURAL NETWORK CHESS EVALUATION

DVD
RECYCLED

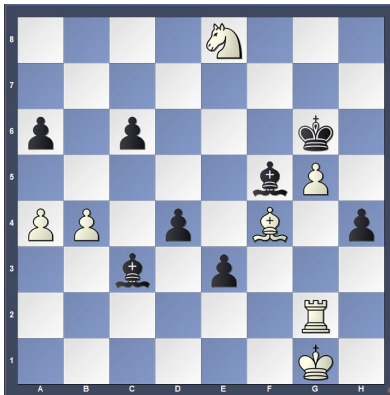


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White threatens mate in one and the rook is hanging to a knight fork on f6.

36...♙xf5! After much thought, having finally spotted his 38th move!



37.♘f6+ ♔g6 38.♘xe8

38...♙d3! The winning concept! The bishop simply returns to d3 and White will have to give back the rook for the e-pawn.

39.♙e5 e2 40.♖xe2 ♙xe2 41.♙f2 ♙xg5 42.♘d6 ♙d3 43.♘b7 ♙f5 44.♙g7 h3 45.♘c5 ♙c4 46.♙g3 ♙e1+ 47.♙xh3 d3

0-1

With a fairly straightforward victory in round 8, I was back on the live

boards for the final round, against my good friend Oleg Boricsev from the Ukraine, though he was representing Hungary at these championships.

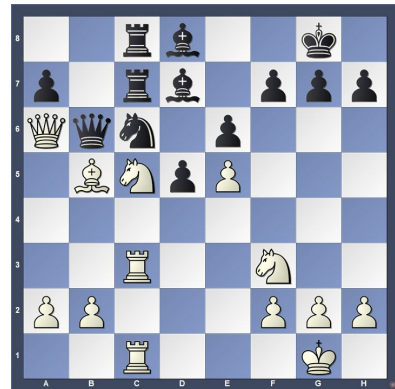
The game was decided by some back-and-forth miscalculations, but the final one came in this position...

♣ **Burnett, Andrew (2163)**

♠ **Boricsev, Oleg (2242)**

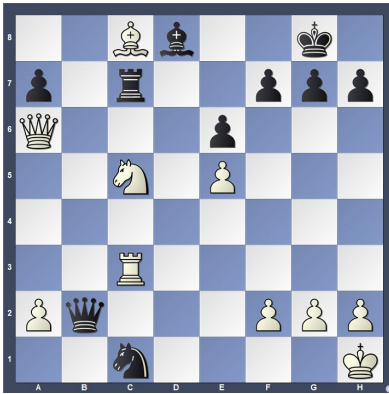
Euro Senior Individual (9)

Position after 20.♘c5



20...♘xe5?? 20...d4! would have kept the balance because after 21.♘xd4? (21.♖c4 is better.) Black can play 21...♘xd4 and now 22.♙xd7 (22.♗xb6 axb6 23.♙xd7 ♘e2+) 22...♗xb2 23.♙xc8 and the

same knight check on e2 decides.
 23...♞e2+ 24.♔h1 ♞xc1



...when White's pieces can't defend each other well enough. The game move simply loses a piece and I eventually mopped up.

21.♔xb6 ♞xf3+ 22.gxf3 axb6 23. ♞xd7 ♖xc3 24.♖xc3 ♖xc3 25.bxc3 f6 26.c4 dxc4 27.♙xc4 ♔f7 28.♙f1 ♙c7 29.h3 ♔e7 30.♙b5 g5 31.♔e2 h5 32.♔d3 h4 33.♔d4 ♔f7 34.a3 ♔e7 35.a4 ♔f7 36.♙c6 ♔e7 37.♔c4 f5 38.♔b5 ♔d6 39. ♞xb6 ♔e5 40.a5 ♔f4 41.♔a6 e5 42.♔b7 e4 43.fxe4

1-0

Final results

50+ Open

IM Bellia Fabrizio (ITA, 2431)

7.5/9

GM Bischoff Klaus (GER, 2495) 7

IM Krizsany Laszlo (HUN, 2397) 7

50+ Women's title

WIM Krasenkova Elena (RUS,

2123) 5.5/9

65+ Open

IM Birnboim Nathan (ISR, 2375)

7/9

FM Chapman Terry P D (ENG, 2236) 6.5

Hammar Bengt (SWE, 2130) 6/9

65+ Women's title

WIM Wagner-Michel Annett

(GER, 1998) 5.5/9

So, I finished on 6/9 and gained a few welcome rating points, as well as a few Euro apparently, though I had been unaware that there were financial prizes!

NEW IN CHESS

A close-up portrait of Manuel Bosboom, a middle-aged man with short brown hair and a light beard, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. He is wearing a blue collared shirt under a dark jacket. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a chess tournament setting with blue and white elements.

Chess Buccaneer

PETER BOEL &
MERIJN VAN DELFT

The Life and Games of MANUEL BOSBOOM



I recently played **the British Chess Championships in Hull**, writes **FM Hamish Olson**. Hull is not the easiest place to get to from Aberdeen and I had to take the day off work the day before to get down in time. My accommodation was less than ideal as well but everything else about the event for me could not have been better.

It was a 9 round event with 22 entrants (see <https://chess-results.com/tnr581778.aspx?lan=1> for all the details) The venue was very spacious (partly due to the low turnout) and all the boards were spread out. Every game was on live boards and all the organising and arbitering seemed to go very smoothly ,from my perspective at least.

Natasha Regan did an excellent Twitch commentary every round, ably assisted by an assortment of other English titled players.

Matthew Sadler and Peter Wells were particularly interesting to listen to after the games. All of this made it feel like a really high quality event, even though it wasn't the strongest British Championships by a long way.

Playing chess in Covid times is a bit different from before. In particular there was the issue of masks. They weren't obligatory but I wore one every game in this event and also during a 9 round event I played in Newcastle [which we will likely feature in the

December issue of Scottish Chess]. Everyone has their own opinion on this however, and I told those players who asked me whether I wanted them to wear a mask that it was their own personal choice. There was also one incident related to Covid, with a player having to self-isolate due to Covid-like symptoms. However he had tested negative on his lateral flow test by the time we all found out, and he subsequently tested negative on his PCR, but still withdrew as he was quite unwell.

All of the juniors (and some of the other players) were even more underrated than usual as they had ratings that were a couple of years out of date. I think this contributed to a few withdrawals by some of the titled players as there were more than a few upsets. I had an excellent result by my standards and came joint second (sixth on tiebreak), half a point behind the eventual winner Grandmaster Nick Pert.

My round 9 game was pivotal for the final standings of the event as I was White against one of the two leaders, IM Andrew Ledger. I was a bit lucky as I was only playing for rating (or so I thought, not having read the prize money on the entry form before the event) whereas Andrew would be the 2021 British Champion if he won.

I gained 23 rating points. I also got to play (and win) the endgame of two knights vs a pawn in round 8 which was a bit lucky but a real pleasure for an endgame nerd like me! I think part of my success was that I got into a very relaxed tournament routine, reading a book in the same lovely cafe each morning and going for a run before lunch. The first two rounds I didn't quite follow this routine and was a bit nervy.

Freddy Gordon was the other Scottish participant at Hull. He had some excellent games including a model win in the Carlsbad pawn structure with the ...b5 plan against an FM that I enjoyed play-

ing through. Onto the games themselves and I have annotated all nine of my British efforts! I hope you enjoy and perhaps even learn something from them

♞ Khoury, Theo

♠ Olson, Hamish C45

British Championship 2021 (1)

I didn't have much to go on before this game. It was a tough pairing against a clearly underrated junior who gained 100 rating points at a 5 round event the month before, but I didn't expect him to play quite as well as he did in this game. He had clearly seen more than me in the post-mortem too.

The only bright side was he was one of the very few other players wearing a mask. That was also a thought I was using to console myself when I was nervously checking the draw each evening to see if I was getting paired with Freddy Gordon or not - he was wearing a mask too!

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 exd4 4. ♘xd4 ♙c5 5.♘b3



Koury-Olson: a tough opening game for Bon Accord's Hamish Olson

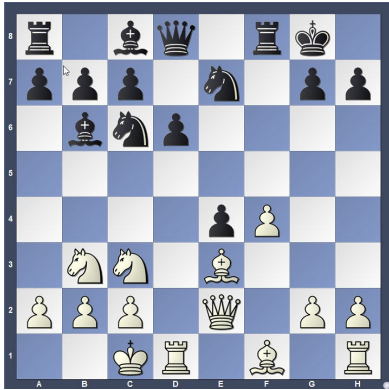
This used to be considered dubious but is now almost a main line.

5...♙b6 6.♘c3 d6 7.♙e2 ♘ge7 8. ♙e3 0-0 9.0-0-0 f5

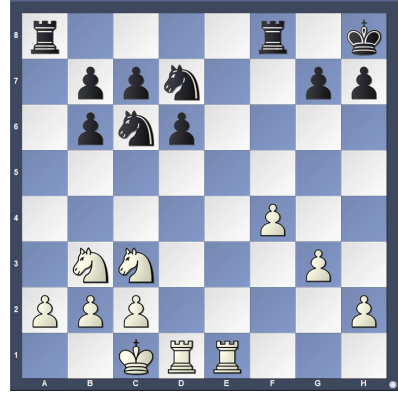


I was a bit hesitant playing all of these first moves (from ...d6 onwards) as I knew it was potentially going to get rather sharp and I wanted to find an exit to something dry. I didn't succeed so had to go down this line anyway.

10.f4 fxe4



18...♖xd7



11.♙xb6 I only knew about 11.g3 but he told me this was in his book that he had consulted before the game. It seems like quite a good line as White is clearly a bit better.

11...axb6 12.♖xe4 ♔h8 13.♙c4 ♜g6 14.g3 ♙h3 My idea went without comment if they were behind ...♜g6 but White is quite a bit better now.

15.♞he1 ♔d7 16.♙e6 ♙xe6 17.♖xe6 ♜ge5 18.♖xd7 We discussed 18.♖xe5 in the post-mortem. He avoided it as it was giving me undeserved counterplay and that is probably correct. 18...♜xe5 19.♖xe5 dx5 20.♖xd7 exf4± This is pretty unclear in practice. Rooks grow in strength as the game goes on and there are quite easy moves for Black.

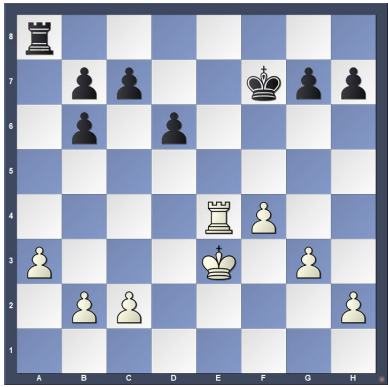
19.♜d5 19.♜b5! This was Sadler's suggestion commenting and he drew parallels with a KID variation. It was a real privilege getting to hear Sadler's real-time thoughts on my games each evening although it was mostly rather humbling. My moves went without comment if they were good and were surprising if they were bad!

19...♞ac8 20.♜d4 Exchanging off the worst piece. Castling queenside sometimes gives an advantage in the endgame as the king is closer (this is not the only advantage White has, but it is a factor).

20...♜xd4 21.♖xd4 ♜f6 22.♜xf6 ♖xf6 23.♞e7?! I was a bit relieved and was hoping he would start drifting in the endgame like a lot of juniors. The rook looks good here,

but it can be evicted so this is just giving Black a tempo to centralise the king.

23...♔g8 24.♞de4 ♔f8 25.♔d2 ♞f7 26.♞xf7+ ♔xf7 27.♔e3 ♞a8 28.a3 28.a4 is definitely the right way to play - space is useful in rook endgames if you can control it.

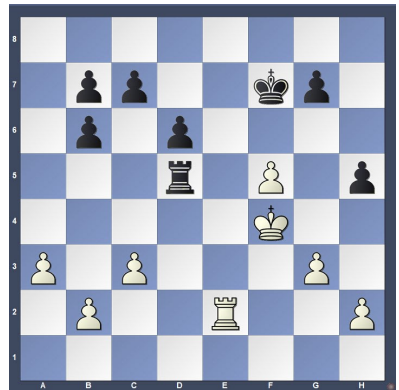


28...h5?! I was getting too optimistic here and missed his next until after I played ...h5. Unfortunately he took the chance. Instead, Black can play 28...g6. Despite White having a slight edge objectively, this is fine for a game against a dangerous junior after a bad opening. They often struggle in endgames and there's enough play to try and get a win without too much risk.

29.f5± After this Black can't really stabilise things ever.

29...♞a5 30.♔f4 ♞c5 During the game I was regretting not playing 30...♞d5 having played ...♞c5, but I'm not sure why; I should probably be looking for ways to bail with 30...g6.

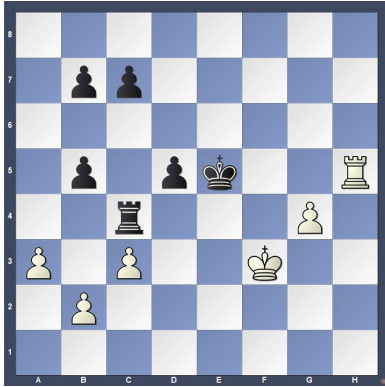
31.c3 ♞d5 32.♞e2= 32.♞d4±



32...♔f6 33.♞e6+ ♔f7 34.♞e2 g6 Deciding to play on rather than take the repetition. This was probably a bit risky as he's demonstrated he's a good player already and the advantage for White is a bit bigger than I realised.

35.fxg6+ ♔xg6 36.♞e7 ♞c5 37.h3 ♔f6 38.♞d7 ♞c4+ 39.♔f3 b5 40.g4 hxg4+ 41.hxg4 ♔e6 42.♞h7 d5 43.♞h6+ ♔e5 44.♞h5+ ♔e6 44...♔d6 Black's only alternative to the repetition is a bit risky :) 45.♞h6+ ♔c5 46.b4+

45. ♖h6+ ♔f7 46. ♖h5 ♕e6



½–½

♣ Olson, Hamish (2246)

♣ Sucikova, Svetlana (2175)

British Championship 2021 (2)

I didn't know my opponent at all before this game but apparently she studied at Glasgow University and just graduated. She was clearly going to be a tough opponent who had gained a lot of rating in her previous tournament and beaten some strong players in her most recent games in the database, including GM Zigurds Lanka. I was quite nervous before the game, and the convent (don't ask!) that I was staying at had no hot or cold water that morning, so I had to shower at the gym on campus just before the game.

1. ♖f3 d5 2. g3 ♗f6 3. ♕g2 c6
4. 0–0 ♕g4 5. d4 e6 6. ♗bd2
♗bd7 7. ♖e1 ♕e7 8. e4 dxe4
9. ♗xe4 ♗xe4 10. ♖xe4 ♗f6
11. ♖e1



11... ♖b6 Slightly odd to do this before ...0–0 but it is fine, just slightly committal.

12. c3 0–0 13. ♖b3 ♖ad8 14. ♗e5
♕f5 15. ♗c4 ♖xb3 16. axb3 ♚
White has a very pleasant position out of the opening.

16... a6 17. b4 ♗d5 18. ♗a5 ♖d7
19. ♗b3 Pavlovic, Milos - Cox,
John J, 1–0, Monarch Assurance
13th, 2004, <https://lichess.org/RxpH9h1D>

19... ♕d6 A bit funny-looking but actually a very solid idea.

20. ♗c5



20...Re7 This was the idea behind ...d6. Instead, 20...xc5 21.bxc5 is the computers recommendation for Black and it is very solid but White is obviously for choice with the bishop pair. Obviously, this was not her idea with ...d6.

21.g3 fe8 22.d2 I wasn't sure whether to provoke ...f6 or not with 22.g5 (I expected her to play it sooner or later).

22...b6?



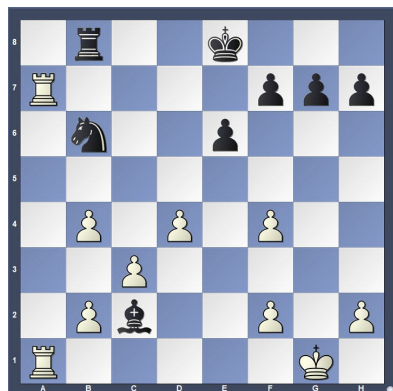
Simply missing White's next move. R + 2 pawns vs 2 minors is not really an advantage in the middlegame but in the endgame it's a big deal. I knew this theoretically, but as the course of the game shows I didn't have a good feel for this position. It is not something I've had often so I will have to study it more.

22...xc5 23.bxc5 (23.dxc5 e5f Black is very co-ordinated here.)

23.xb7 Rxb7 24.xc6 Re8 25. xb7 Rxb7 26.Rxa6 d3 27.Ra5 Bb8 28.Rea1 28.b3 This is the way to play and the pawn mass will roll.

28...c2 29.Ra7 f8 30.f4 Not 100% necessary but halving her bishop pair is a well-motivated idea.

30...xf4 31.gxf4 e8



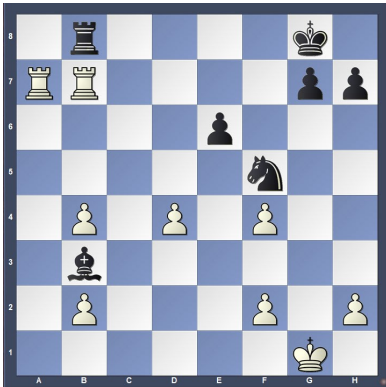
32.c4??= This is just ghastly.

There was zero need to rush but I was a bit less confident in my advantage than I should have been so I tried too hard to make the forcing moves work. Perhaps there were more nerves than usual due to the slightly dodgy game the day before.

32...♖xc4 33.♖c7 ♘b3 34.♖aa7 ♜d6 35.♖e7+ ♔f8 36.♖ed7 ♜f5

37.♖xf7+ ♔g8 This was where I had got to in my calculations with c4 but I overestimated the rooks on the seventh.

38.♖fb7



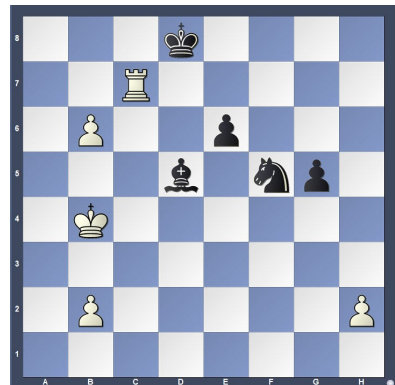
38...♖xb7? 38...♖c8= is definitely the right move - the side with only one rook in these situations (whether they are rook vs 2 minors, or exchange down situations) almost always needs to keep one rook.

39.♖xb7± Sadler and I were both very optimistic for White here. Svetlana gives me only one brief chance I think, which is pretty decent going considering it is +1. It was only after watching the commentary to this game that I discovered she had a reputation as a tough defender.

39...♙d5 40.♖c7 ♜xd4 41.f3 Rushing is appropriate now; I must get my king in. I considered 41.f5! but wasn't sure.

41...♙xf3 42.♔f2 ♙d5 43.♔e3 ♜f5+ 43...♜b5 Sadler and I were only expecting this approach and blocking on b7 with the knight, but Svetlana has an interesting alternative plan

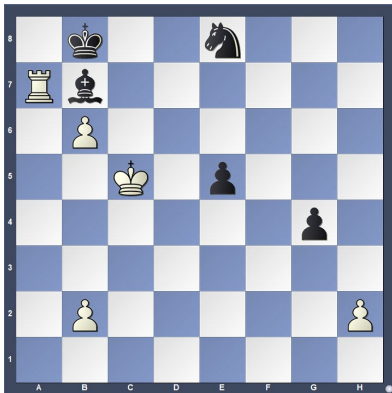
44.♔d3 ♔f8 45.b5 ♔e8 46.♔c3 ♔d8 47.b6 h6 48.♔b4 g5 49.fxg5 hxg5



50.♔a5 50.h3! is the only way to win and wasn't on my radar at all. After my c4 lemon I had played impeccably up till now, but this was my only chance.

50...g4 51.♔a6 ♖d6 It was only now that I realised to my dismay that there was no way through. I could perhaps have made more of my position from now but there is no win objectively.

52.♔a5 ♕f3 53.♔b4 ♖e8 54.♖c3 ♕d5 55.♖a3 ♔c8 56.♖a7 ♕b7 57.♔c5 e5 58.♖a1 ♕f3 59.♖a3 ♔b8 60.♖a7 ♕b7



61.♖xb7+ I thought I would have some small chances based on my h-pawn, but she refuted this pretty easily.

61...♔xb7 62.♔d5 ♖g7 63.♔xe5 ♖h5 64.♔f5 The database has

♔e4 but I'm pretty sure that didn't happen. On the whole I played pretty well but was just a bit too nervy, and my opponent also defended very solidly and is quite underrated. She made her WIM title in this event and I believe she was winning against Arkell but took a draw to secure the title.

½–½

♖ Starley, Robert (2057)

♜ Olson, Hamish (2273)

British Championship 2021 (3)

This was one of my most accurate games ever, partly because it was such a quiet position. Robert had won a very convincing game against me in an online rapid event due to good preparation, so I was a bit nervous when preparing for him. Once the game got going I relaxed completely though and this marked a turning point in the event. The nunnery got hot water again, and I started going for runs after lunch.

1.e4 e5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.♕b5 ♖f6 4.0–0 ♖xe4 5.d4 ♖d6 6.dxe5 It did cross my mind he might go for this notorious drawing line, as he is somewhat lower-rated and he

would expect me to deviate with an inferior choice.

6...♖xb5 7.a4 ♖bd4 8.♗xd4 ♗xd4 9.♙xd4 d5 10.exd6 ♙xd6 11.♙e4+ He might have been intending to play 11.♙e3+ after flicking in one repetition but I wasn't interested in finding out.

11...♙e6 12.♙d4 ♙b6



One of the lines I had prepared against this variation in the past. Robert is a good attacking player so I wanted an endgame.

13.♙e5+ ♗e6 14.♗e3 ♙d6 15.♙b5+ ♙c6 16.♙xc6+ 16...♗c3 is a much better move (despite the computer not really caring) when after 16...a6 17.♙xc6+ bxc6 White is a full tempo ahead of the game although it is still fine for Black.

16...bxc6= 17.♗d4? Now I was completely relaxed and ready to torture him. The bishops now outweigh the pawn structure.

17...c5 17...0-0-0 was also tempting, e.g. 18.♗xa7? c5

18.♗e5 ♖d7 19.♗d2 ♖c6 This is a standard place for the king in the Berlin and seemed appropriate here too.

20.♙fe1 ♗d5 (See photo)

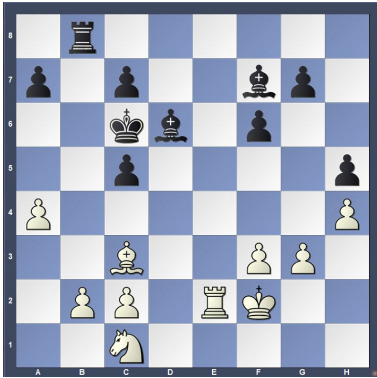


21.♙ad1 f6 22.♗c3 ♗d6 23.f3 ♙he8 24.♗f2 ♗f7 25.♗e4 ♗f8 26.♙d2 ♗g6 27.h4 ♙e6 28.♗g3

29.♗xe1 ♙e8+ 30.♗f2 h5 31.♗e2 ♗d6 32.g3 ♗f7 33.♗c1 All very sensible, manoeuvring the knight to a solid central square.

This is the main problem with my f7 where it may one day go to g6 and f5. I can't expand on the queenside with my pawns and deprive his knight of squares like English - Steinitz.

33...♖b8 34.♞e2



How to win such a sterile position? Wrong question, just play and enjoy. The result will come. (Or it won't).

34...♔d7 35.♘d3 a6 36.♘f4 ♞g8 A feint.

37.♘g2 ♞h8 Contemplating...♞h6 and ...g5.

38.♘e3 ♙e6 Restricting his knight.

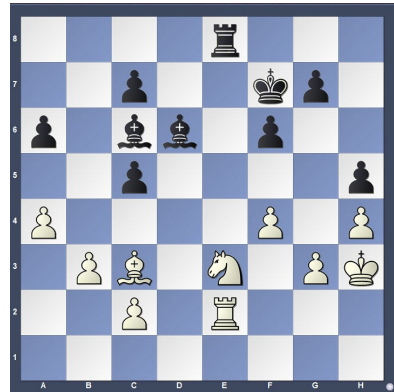
39.f4 ♔d8 Considering ...♙d7 and ...♙c6

40.♞d2 Now I can put my king on

f7 where it may one day go to g6 and f5. 40...♔e7 41.♘d5+ ♔f7 42.♘e3 ♙g6 43.♘d5 ♞e8 44.♞e2 ♔f7 Unpinning.

45.♘e3 ♞g8 Again considering ...g5, but there is no rush.

46.♔g2 ♙d7 Switching tack. 47.b3 ♙c6+ 48.♔h3?



Looks harmless but the e2 rook is now undefended. On 48.♔f2 the game would continue in much the same way as the past 20 moves.

48...♞e8? This is very awkward for White now. This is why having a small advantage (the computer gave me around 0.2 for most of the game) is meaningful in practice - there is ample margin for error for Black, and much less for White.

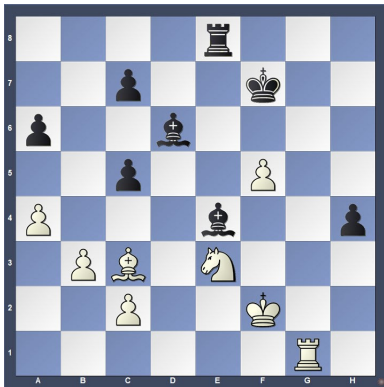
49.♖e1 ♘e4 50.♙h2 Trying to rectify the mistake

50...♖e6 This is the right square for the rook and I have a good idea against the move in the game.

51.♙g1 g5 White is in a lot of trouble now.

52.hxg5 fxg5 53.f5? Now White's position is past the point of no return. 53.♖f1 This is the computer's last stand but it looks precarious and the -1.4 evaluation does not inspire confidence.

53...♖e8 54.♙f2 h4 55.gxh4 gxh4 56.♖g1



56...♖g8 I was happy to find this very controlled move which is the first choice of the engine, at the end of a hard game.

56...♙g3+ This wins too, and I suspected as much, but 57.♖xg3 hxg3+ 58.♙xg3 ♘xc2 (I can't remember if I saw this or not, but I think I did) 59.♙f4 is still more counterplay than my choice in the game 59...♙xb3 60.♙g4 It is conceivable to imagine a blunder from Black in this position.

57.♙g4 57.♖xg8 ♙xg8 58.♙g4 ♙f8 Harry the h-pawn will not be stopped. (58...h3?? 59.♙f6+)

57...♙g3+ 58.♖xg3 hxg3+ 59.♙xg3 ♘xf5 White resigns.

0-1

♣ Olson, Hamish (2273)

♠ Arkell, Keith C (2380)

British Championship 2021 (4)

I was excited when I saw the pairing the night before. Keith is one of my favourite players, whose games I have studied for years. He is a fantastic grinder and it is partly his fault my White openings are so feeble - I was inspired by his choices against the KID in particular (1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.b4, although I primarily use the 3.Nbd2 move order).

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♗f3 e6 3.g3 b5!?



A trademark of his that clearly parallels his 1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 g6 3.b4.

4.♙g2 ♗b7 5.0-0 c5 6.♗a3 a6
6...♖b6 7.c4 b4 8.♗c2 ♗a6
(8...♙e7 9.d5 exd5 10.♗e3 dxc4
11.♗f5!?) 9.d5 exd5 10.♖e1 I was
really hoping to get this in against
Keith (or similar - all these ...♖b6
moves are really fraught in my
opinion) (10.cxd5)

7.c4



7...cxd4 I hadn't analysed this in my home preparation and unfortunately, it's quite good

8.cxb5 ♙xa3 9.bxa3 ♖xa6
No thank you.

9...axb5 10.♖b1 Missing Black's next. I didn't see 10.♗xd4 but it's what happens in all the games in the database; it's hard for either side to push for a win in this line. Black can at least hope for a better endgame (for example a double rook endgame).

10...d3!?



I was annoyed at allowing this. It's not so much that it's bad for me, it's more that now I am taking on a lot of obligations - most endgames will be really horrible for me now so I constantly have to take care.

11.exd3 ♖c6 12.♗b2 I didn't consider 12.♗d4 at all but it makes perfect sense as soon as you see it. It is quite hard to even register as a possibility because it halves the bishop pair voluntarily - neither Keith nor I considered it in the post-mortem.

12...0-0 13.♖d2 ♗a6 14.♖fc1 ♖e7 15.♖e3 Now I am falling slightly behind due to my worse structure. I have to keep finding active moves or I am much worse. It is quite an interesting idea as it threatens ♗d4-f5.

15.♖g5 is the way to maintain the balance.

15...♗d5 is what I expected, and I hoped ...f6 would be weakening

15...♗c7 would allow me to demonstrate my idea 16.♗d4 ♗xg2 17.♗f5 ♖d8 18.♗xg7



The computer shows the position is still in balance after 18...♗g4 19.♖d4 ♖a4! 20.♗xe6 ♖xd4 21.♗xd8 ♖xd3 22.♗xg2 ♖xd8 23.♖xc7=

16.♖d4?! The queen is exposed to getting trapped here with ...♖a4.

16...f6? 17.♗d2 ♗ac7 18.f4? This is too weakening.

18...♖f7 19.♖f2 ♗e7 20.♗e4 ♖g6 21.♖c5 ♗f5 22.♗d6 This unappealing move is the only way to keep my head above water.

22...♗xg2 22...♗d5 is the best way to keep all the advantages. It's a bit counterintuitive as Black instinctively wants to trade the light-squared bishops.

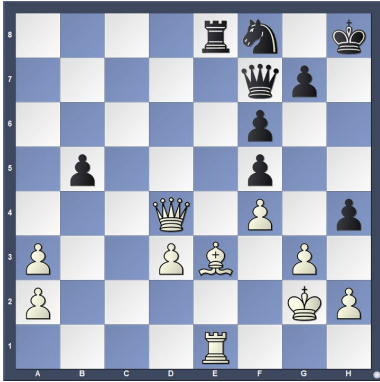
23.♗xf5 exf5 Over the course of the following moves, Black's advantage slips away.

24.♗xg2 ♗e6 25.♖d5 ♗h8 26.♖f1 ♖ac8 27.♖bc1 h5 28.♖xd7 ♖xc1 29.♗xc1 ♖e8 30.♗e3?! Keith pointed out 30.h4± to me after the game and he's right, despite how ugly it is.

30...♗f8 31.♖d4?!? 31.♖a7= is not an easy move to find but it

makes sense in some ways as it is ready to leap into f7 or attack the queenside pawns.

31...h4 32.♖e1 ♔f7 This switch round caused some consternation.



33.♖e2??+ I had a very dodgy moment here and completely missed that he could go to f3 after ...♗b7+ ♔g1. I had not expected his ...♗f7 move at all, attacking from another angle.

33...♗b7+ I had a big think here and pulled myself together.

34.♔f2 ♔h1 35.gxh4 This is definitely the best practical try, eliminating as much of the kingside as possible before it is overrun.

35...♔g6? Now the win is gone.

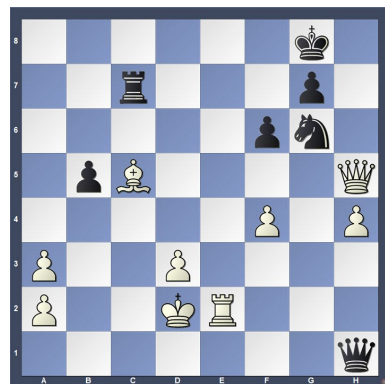
35...♗xh2+ 36.♔e1 ♗h1+ (36...♗

xh4+ 37.♔d2= and the open h-file gives me just enough counterplay.) 37.♔d2 ♖c8 38.♖e1 ♗c6 Another deft switch and Black would have got a well-deserved win as my king is too exposed and there is no counterplay.

36.♗d7! ♗xh2+ 37.♔e1! ♗h1+ 38.♔d2 ♖e7 I was expecting 38...♖a8 but it's 0.00 too, apparently.

39.♗c8+ 39.♗xf5 holds too but pinning seemed much more natural

39...♔h7 40.♗xf5 ♖c7 41.♗h5+ ♔g8 42.♔c5



42...♔e5! The only drawing move. Keith looked very disappointed just before he played this move but we had a great post-mortem afterwards.



Hamish in action against legendary English GM Keith Arkell in round 4.

I was pretty exhausted by this stage and somehow hallucinated that 42...♘f8 was still ok for Black, but 43.♖e8 is a trivial win
 Quite a risky approach from White, although not without merit. The c4-pawn is truly gambitted now.

43.♖e8+

½–½

9...dxc4 10.a4 a5 11.e4

♠ Bradbury, Neil H (2265)

♜ Olson, Hamish (2273) D30

British Championship 2021 (5)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.g3
 ♙b4+ 5.♙d2 ♙e7 6.♙g2 0–0



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11...♖b6?!± Sadler immediately pointed out 11...e5♞ in his commentary and it is my main regret of the game.

12.♞fd1 ♔d7 13.♙f4 ♞c8 14.♘e5 ♞d8 15.♞e2 I think I would have really suffered if White had found 15.b3. It is a classic Catalan theme but I never considered it.

15...♙e8 16.♙e3?!± I'm not sure what this move was for (possibly f4). Now Black's disadvantage is a normal one.

16...♘fd7 17.♘xc4 ♘xc4 18.♞xc4 e5 19.♞e2?! Again a bit soft. 19.d5 was White's last chance to maintain a plus.

19...exd4 20.♙xd4 ♘c5 21.♞c4?! ♞e6♞



22.♞xe6 ♘xe6 This endgame is deceptively bad for White.

23.♙b6 ♞xd1+ 24.♞xd1 ♙c5?!♞ It was within my capabilities to see 24...♞a6♞ I considered this idea later but not here. 25.♙e3 ♙c5 and the rook will be phenomenal on b4

25.♙xc5 ♘xc5 26.♙f1?! If I recall correctly, I was hoping he wouldn't go for 26.e5, preventing ...f6 and staying within the bounds of equality.

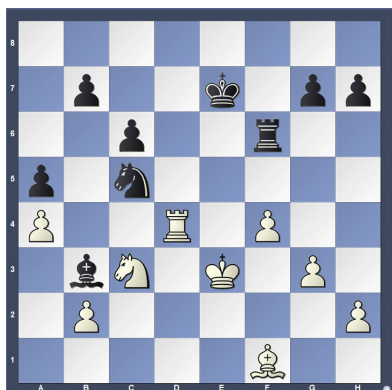
26...f6 27.f4 ♙f7 Those queenside pawns are very tender.

28.♙f2 ♙f8 29.♙e3 ♙e7 30.♞d4 ♙b3 31.e5 ♞f8 I didn't want to activate his rook horizontally with 31...fxe5 but it's hard to argue with Stockfish. 32.fxe5 There is a weak pawn on e5, compared with on f4 in the game.

32.exf6+ ♞xf6

(See diagram next page)

33.♘e4?! 33.♙d3 This is the most challenging move although it's still a bit unpleasant for White. He found this idea in a few moves time but it's much better here.



33...Qxe4 34.Qxe4 The rook is the only defender of a4 now and it can easily be dislodged.

34...Rd6 35.Qd3 Rh6 Not the cleanest way to do it according to Stockfish but it does work.

36.Qc2 Rxb2 37.Qg4 Qd5+ White resigns.

0-1

♠ Olson, Hamish (2273)

♣ Gormally, Daniel W (2480)

British Championship 2021 (6)

1.d4 Qf6 2.Qf3 g6 I expected Danny to be out for blood in this game, so this was no surprise.

3.g3 Qg7 4.Qg2 0-0 5.0-0 d5 6.c4 dxc4

I don't really like these approaches for Black (I believe in centre pawns) but it is playable. Perhaps for this reason I neglected to consider it in my preparation, although in any case I kept my preparation to a minimum in this event, preferring to read books and go running before the round to keep my mind fresh.

7.Qa3 c3 8.bxc3 c5 9.Ra1 Qc6 Already I wasn't sure if e4 or Bb2 was best. Eventually I recognised the positions after Bb2 Qb6.

10.Qb2 Qb6 11.Qc4 Qa6 12.Qcd2 Qg4 I was pretty sure this was not a line and it is indeed a new move.

13.h3 I believe in bishop pairs too.

13...Qxf3 14.Qxf3



14...cxd4?!± I was a bit worried when Danny played this as it is a concession unless he has some tactical point based on ...Nb4, so I was worried that I'd missed something that he had spotted.

Once I navigated through the next few moves I relaxed a bit and figured he had just misjudged things.

14...♖fd8± would still be pretty normal.

15.cxd4 ♜ac8 16.e3?!± 16.e4± ♞b4 17.♙f1 ♚a5 18.♞e2 is similar to the game but my pawn is on e3. I guess I was just a bit nervous after he surprised me with ...cxd4.

16...♞b4 17.♞e2 A bit ungainly but this is the high tide mark for Black, he is going to get pushed back next.

17...♞fd5 17...♞d3 18.♞d2 This was what I had seen (18.♙f1 is even stronger) and is obviously very nice for White with lots of pressure on the queenside. The f2-e3-d4 pawn chain blots out the g7-bishop.

18.♞e1 ♞fd8 19.a3 ♞c6 20.♞d3 e5 20...♞a5? 21.♙xd5.

21.e4?!± 21.♞c2 is definitely something I can see and is a big advantage. Tactics... 21...exd4? 22.♙xd5 ♞xd5 23.♞b4.

21...♞b6 Black is fine in a weird way. All of his pieces have started co-ordinating again

22.d5 ♞a4 23.♙f1 ♞d4 The only way to justify his position.

24.♙xd4 exd4 25.♞e1 ♚a5 26.♙g2 ♞c3



27.♙b3? Sadler immediately thought this queen would be missed on the kingside.

Sadler wanted to go 27.♙f3 or 27.♙g4 (I forget which); 27.♙d2 is even better than ♙f3, pinning the knight and keeping an eye on both sides of the board rather than committing to one or the other.

27...♙a6 28.♙f1 b5 29.♘b4 ♙d6 30.♙d3 ♙d7 31.♚h2?! My intuition said ♚g2 but I wanted to have ♙h3 available and overruled it

31.♘c6 ♞e8 32.♙xb5 I would be a bit scared to sacrifice a pawn in front of my king but the computer has no fear; 31.♚g2 wouldn't give him ...h5 & ...g5 ideas and is better if I'm too scared to go 31.♘c6. Now on 31...h5 32.h4 g5 I have ♞h1 resources after 33.hxg5 h4 34.♞h1 and White is attacking Black's king.

31...♞e8 32.♞ac1 h5 33.h4?! I was a bit nervous here but wasn't sure what he could do. My intuition was right, however ,as he has a dangerous initiative with ...g5.

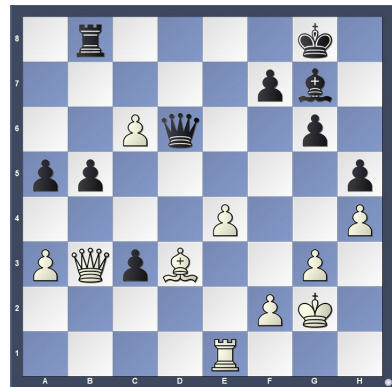
33.♘c6 h4 I am less than thrilled about my king safety here.

33...a5 This just forces me to make the move I should have played last time. 33...g5↑ would have been a tough move to face.

34.♘c6 ♙d6 35.♚g2 ♞xc6 36.dxc6 ♞b8 36...a4.

37.♞xc3 A decent move but the calculation was abysmal. 37.♚h2!? ♙xc6 38.e5 was how to do it. I don't know what I missed.

37...dxc3



38.♙xb5?! 38.♙d5 had been my original idea with ♞xc3 but it is only good for a draw. If I had seen the problem with my game move I would have gone for this. 38..♙e5 39.♙xb5 ♙xd5 40.exd5 ♞xb5 41.♞xe5 c2 42.c7 c1♙ 43.♞e8+ ♚g7 44.c8♙ ♙xc8 45.♞xc8 ♞xd5= I got this far but missed a simple pin in the game continuation...

38...♞xc6 I missed this move - embarrassing.

39.a4 c2?! I was really surprised by this one. Danny thought 39...♞c5 40.♞e2 was just fine during the game but after the game he regretted it. This is definitely a position where White suffers and hopes for a draw. (40.♞c2 ♞d8)

40.♞c1 ♞xe4+ I was confusing Sadler by thinking for ages in this position but I wanted to make absolutely sure I wasn't missing anything after trading queens - I thought Danny might have seen something I hadn't.

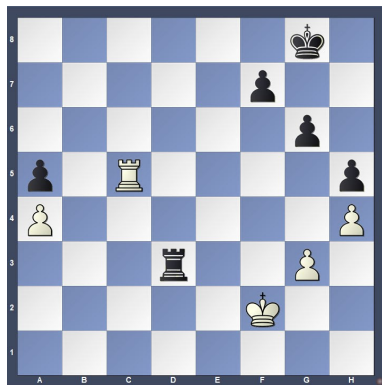
41.♞f3 I was also aware of the possibility of 41.f3 if there was something wrong with ♞f3. The computer gives this 0.00 but I feel it's something to be avoided as it gives me a weak king forever. It's better not to make any concessions in positions like this if it can be avoided.

41...♞xf3+ 42.♔xf3 ♞c8 43.♙d3! ♞d8 43...♞c3 was the move I was calculating when deciding on ♞f3: 44.♔e2 ♞a3 45.♙b5 (I had 45.♞xc2 as a backup as I know that the counterplay against f7 will be more than sufficient in this kind of

position, but I didn't want to have to make that concession.) 45...♞a2 46.♔d3 ♔h7 47.♞xc2 ♞xc2 48.♔xc2 ♙d4 49.f3 ♙f2 50.g4 This is a fairly easy draw.

44.♔e2 ♞e8+ 45.♔f3 ♞d8 46.♔e2 ♙d4 47.♞xc2 ♙xf2 I figured this was the idea with ... ♙d4 but saw no reason to prevent it.

48.♔xf2 ♞xd3 49.♞c5



This is an easy draw. White never has winning chances in this kind of endgame. Black sometimes does if his king has chances of getting to g4 but this is far from the case here.

49...♞a3 50.♞xa5 ♔g7 51.♞a6 Blocking the black king. There is no point in giving any ground to Black. I think one of the secrets to playing equal endgames well is to enjoy them and find all the best

moves even when every move is easily drawing. If I had an f2-pawn then I have seen endgames where this motif is enough to win for White.

51...f6 52.♖a7+ Either a perpetual or Black's king gets stuck on h6.

52...♔h6

½-½

♣ Olson, Hamish (2273)

♣ Harvey, Marcus R (2465)

British Championship 2021 (7)

1.d4 f5 A complete shock, but not an entirely unpleasant one. King safety is important.

2.g3 ♘f6 3.♙g2 g6



Probably the ugliest main line opening in chess.

4.♘f3 ♙g7 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 d6 7.♘c3 c6 8.♗b3 ♖a6 9.♙f4 ♘h5

The first new move. I had analysed 9...h6 10.♗ad1 g5 before.

10.♙g5 ♔h8 10...h6 11.♙d2?! objectively I should go to e3 or f4 but this was my (bad) idea during the game. 11...e5 No idea what my idea is or why Marcus didn't go for it.

11.♗ad1 ♗c7 12.♗a3± I was pretty sure my advantage was objectively pretty big here, especially after I saw my next move.

12...f4 13.♘h4 Quite a nice idea to get to play.

13...♗d7 14.e3 fxg3



I wasn't sure at all which capture to make but opted for the safe one which is perhaps something of a theme to my mistakes recently against 2400+.

19. ♖b3 Apparently 19. ♘e4+– is crushing. The knight on h5 no longer has any squares. 19... ♗g7 20. h3 A simple variation but not that easy to spot, I think.

15. fxg3 After 15. hxg3 Marcus was optimistic about Black's chances here in the post-mortem but the computer loves White. I don't think I had any concrete reason to avoid this move (which keeps my pawn structure intact) other than cowardice.

19... ♗g7 20. ♖c2 ♘f6 My next two moves are decent but in the wrong order.

15... ♖e8 16. ♖xf8+ ♗xf8 17. ♖f1 I'm not sure why I didn't go for 17. e4.

21. ♘e2 ♔g8 21... b5= 22. a4 ♗d7 23. b3 ♖d8?! The product of a big think but overcomplicating things. 23... ♘g4 24. ♗e4 He was quite concerned about this idea but the computer sees right through it. 24... ♗f6±

17... ♘c7 17... ♗g7; 17... h6?? 18. ♖xf8+

24. h3 ♖f7 25. g4 ♖f8 26. ♘g3 ♖e8 27. e4 ♗c8 28. e5 This is timely or Black would go ... ♘d7. It is about +2 but Marcus is a tricky customer.

18. d5 Again 18. e4



18... c5

28... dxe5 29. ♖e2?! 29. ♖d2

29... ♘a6 29... ♖d7! This idea of coming to d6 was not going to occur to either of us in time trouble.

30. ♗d2?! 30. ♘f3 is a better order to do things in, which makes sense as the h4-knight was much worse placed than the g5-bishop.

30...b6?! 30...♖b4

31.♙c3



Lots of weird moves from Marcus over the following moves, but somehow despite the computer hating them he manages to bamboozle me.

31...♖d7 32.♗f3 ♖ab8 33.♗e4 ♗f6 34.♗ed2?! 34.♙xe5 was my best chance 34...♖bd7 35.♙g3 ♗xe4 36.♙xe4 ♗f6 37.♙e2+ White is much more co-ordinated than the game and the computer evaluation skyrockets.

34...e6 35.d6?! 35.♗xe5 It seems a bit unnatural to let the e-file open but in the game allowing his knight to c6 proved even worse

35...♙d8 36.♙xe5 ♗c6 37.♙h2 ♗e8± Suddenly it's a position

where his pieces make sense and in the time scramble I didn't manage to reorient myself and collapsed.

38.♗e4 The computer's suggestion is 38.♙d1 and it makes sense when it's pointed out 38...♗d4 39.♗xd4 ♙xd4+ 40.♙h1 ♗xd6 41.♗f3 This is the idea behind ♙d1.

38...e5? 39.♗fg5 39.♙d1 What I didn't appreciate was that ♗d4 actually gives me dynamic options based on c5 if he goes ...cxd4, and allows me to keep my d6-pawn if he goes exd4. 39...♗d4 40.♗xd4 cxd4 (40...exd4) 41.c5

39...h6 40.♗c3?! Last move of the time control. Compared with the game, 40.♙xf8+ is obviously the right way to go.

40...♙xf1+



I had a big think here having made the time control. On the one hand, this was good time management because it would have been easy to just recapture with the queen like I had intended beforehand, and this would have been a big mistake.

On the other, I didn't need to think for quite so long - I should have accepted I was worse after about 5 mins and gone for the game continuation, rather than desperately trying to make tactics based on ♙xf1 and ♕d5+ work. The extra time would have been very useful in defending the worse position that ensues - defending is much harder when short of time.

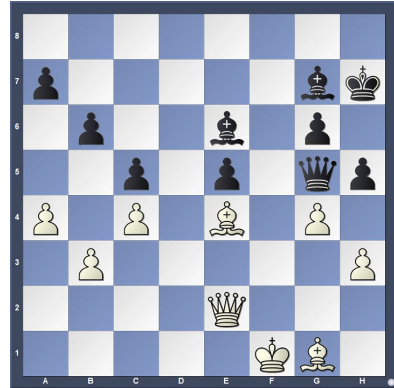
41. ♖xf1 41. ♙xf1 ♙xg5 41. ♙xf1 ♙xg5 41. ♙xf1 ♙xg5 The queen is needed for covering the e3 square; I can't take c6 without losing c3 now.

41... ♙xg5 42. ♕xc6 ♖xd6 43. ♕d5+ ♖h7 44. ♖e4 ♖xe4 45. ♕xe4 I was actually quite optimistic that I could hold here. If I can coordinate my pieces a bit (for example with the bishop on e3) then it would be easy to hold as the bishop on e4 dominates the board.

45... ♕e6 46. ♕g1?! 46. ♖f2 is a nice

computer suggestion that solves most of the problems, I think. Next is ♙e3; 46. ♙f3 would have been the way to execute the ♕e3 idea that I tried in the game.

46... h5



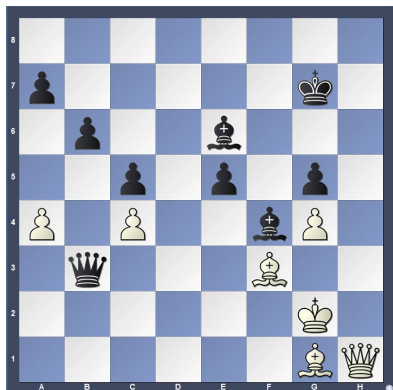
I got this sinking feeling now. I can't get my bishop to e3 any more as his bishop gets to h6 first.

47. ♕f3 hxg4 48. hxg4 ♕h6

49. ♕h2? I think the problem is that it just encourages Black to put his bishop on f4. In theory I would still be holding after e.g. 49.a5

49... ♙c1+ 50. ♖g2 ♕f4 51. ♕g1 ♙b1 52. ♙f2 ♖g7 53. ♙h4 I was hoping to get some counterplay but Marcus has this completely under control unfortunately.

53... g5 54. ♙h1 ♙xb3



♣ Head, Louise (2090)

♣ Olson, Hamish (2273) D53

British Championship 2021 (8)

I was still feeling a bit disappointed after my loss the day before, but I got a few great messages of support from people I'd not heard from in a while. This definitely gave me a boost, for which I am grateful.

I was hoping to do ♔e4 here but of course that gets squashed right away by ...♚g3+. At least the abject state of my pieces mirrors how I felt after this game. Marcus took on a lot of risks to beat me which in some ways is a compliment.

This kind of game is not exactly my comfort zone, so it was encouraging to be more than competitive for 30 moves. Perhaps if I improve my time management I would do better as it was only when we were both short on time that things went to pieces.

0-1

It was tricky to know what to play against Louise. It was a morning game after having had afternoon games the first 7 rounds, so there wasn't much time to prepare. I just decided to stick with the QGD and if it was a draw then that would be ok.

All I really knew about her was that she'd had a great result at the Czech Open a few years ago (around 2400 with a win against a GM), and that she was a time-trouble addict. It turned out she is a Physics PhD student whose supervisor was my director of studies when I did my undergraduate - small world.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6
4.♙g5 ♙e7 5.e3 0-0 6.♚c2 Quite a nuanced move order by Louise. Delaying ♘f3 gives her options.

6...♖bd7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♙d3 ♜e8
 9.♗f3 9.♗ge2 used to be the bane
 of the QGD player's existence.

9...c6 10.0-0 h6



The modern approach. In the past this would have been frowned upon as weakening. It actually makes perfect sense, though, as it avoids putting the d7-knight on the passive f8-square.

11.♙h4 ♖e4 12.♙xe7 12.♙xe4
 ♙xh4 If there was a pawn on h7
 Black would be toast.

12...♞xe7 13.b4 One of White's
 best options against this system.

13...a6 14.a4 ♗df6 15.b5 axb5
 16.axb5 ♞xa1 17.♞xa1 c5 This is

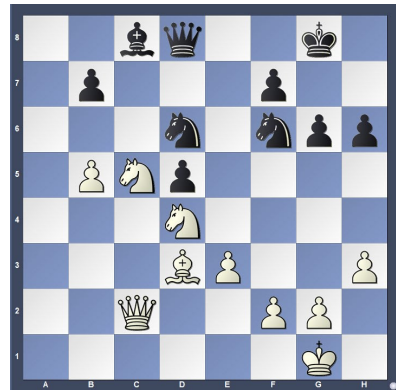
one of the standard ways of dealing
 with the minority attack. Read Sad-
 ler's fantastic QGD book if you

want to know all the main ones. It's
 a bit passive but I just wanted to
 play solidly after a bad loss.

18.dxc5 ♗xc5 19.♙e2 ♙e6
 20.♞c1 ♞c8 21.♞d1 ♞e8 22.h3
 ♗cd7 23.♗a4 ♗e4 24.♗d4
 ♗df6 25.♙d3 ♞d8 26.♞xc8 ♙xc8

I didn't want to play 26...♞xc8 be-
 cause I felt ♞c2 would lead to an
 endgame with no winning chances

27.♞c2 g6 28.♗c5 ♗d6



My last two moves were a bit of a
 bluff. She was very short on time
 and I could tell she wanted to take
 on g6. I was half hoping she would,
 because it would make the position
 very wild with little time for her to
 navigate it.

I was also half hoping she wouldn't
 - three pawns is a lot and the posi-
 tion is quite good for her.

29.♖cb3 ♔g7 30.♚c5 b6 31.♚c2 I was hoping 40.f3 ♘d3 would be an achievement for Black, cutting her king out. Stockfish doesn't care though. She offered me a draw here with about a minute on the clock.

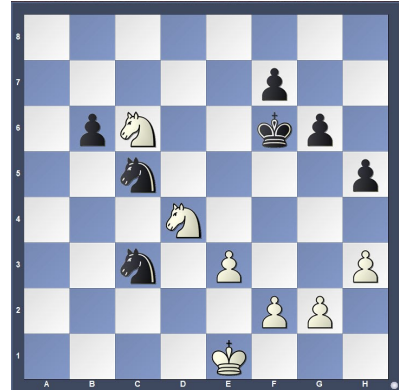
35...♙d3 36.♚xd5 I sunk into thought for about 20 minutes here, having either miscalculated or forgotten my earlier calculations. Eventually I found...

36...♙xf1 37.♖xf1 ♘xb5 38.♚f3 38.♘xb5 ♚a1+ 39.♔e2 ♚b2+ 40.♔f3 ♚xb5 41.♚e5+ ♖h7 42.♘e7 I was pretty sure this sort of thing would be fine for me. Still a bit of imbalance too.

38...♘c3 38...♘xd4 is actually quite a pleasant advantage. I was hoping for a trick when I went for the game continuation. Even if the trick worked (see 40.f3 note) it wouldn't be worth it. I just misjudged the double knight endgame. Not sure I've ever had an endgame with 4 knights on the board and just pawns. 39.♚xf6+ ♔xf6 40.exd4 (40.♘xd4 ♔e5) My king is very fast!

39.♚xf6+ ♔xf6 40.♔e1 Preventing ...♘d3, which seems sensible.

40...h5



I thought I was at least a bit better here. If the rooks were on the board, I knew White would be better, all other things being equal - minority attack-type position. If there was just one knight, Black would generally be a little better. I thought it was more like the latter situation, but it was more like the former. Black has to be careful and over the following 10 moves Louise systematically pushes me back.

41.f3 g5 42.g3 Very patient and systematic - good words for this kind of endgame.

42...♘d5 43.♔e2 ♘c7 I offered a

draw around here, and not from a position of strength.

54...♔f7 55.♕h6 b4 56.♖xb4
Heading straight for the draw

44.e4 Rightly declined. I was getting nervous here.

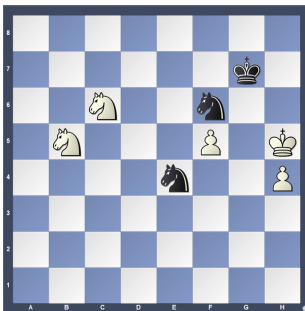
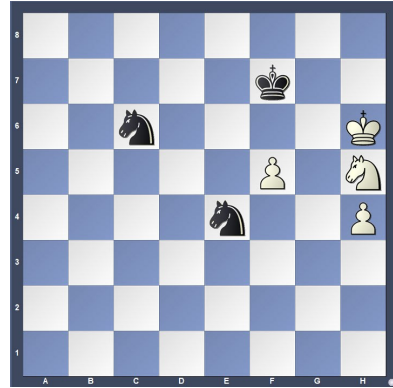
56...♖xb4 57.♗f4 ♖c6 58.♗xh5
♗e4

44...♗d7 45.f4 gxf4 46.gxf4 b5
47.♕e3 ♗b6 48.h4 ♗d7 I spotted a trick...

49.e5+ ♔g6 50.f5+ ♔g7 51.♔f4
♗d5+ 52.♔g5? This is what I was hoping for

52...f6+ 53.exf6+ ♗7xf6
54.♗e6+ She offered me a draw here and most people would take it but I generally play on to bare kings against lower rated players, to make up for my quiet Black repertoire.

54.♗xb5?? is what I was really, really hoping for! 54...♗e4+ 55.♕xh5
♗df6#.



I've seen situations where two knights beat one knight if the king is in the corner, and also situations like the game, so I was hoping to exploit her time trouble. The wikipedia article on these kinds of endgames is fantastic https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two_knights_endgame.

I wasn't worried about trying to find some forced win or anything. Just enjoying playing the position. I had plenty of time and she was in time trouble. I also enjoyed checking the game between Harvey and Hebden which went on even longer than this 100-move game.

Ironically this was the one day the organisers needed to vacate the venue promptly for a wedding.

58...♖xh5 This would be the choice of most people I think, followed by a handshake.

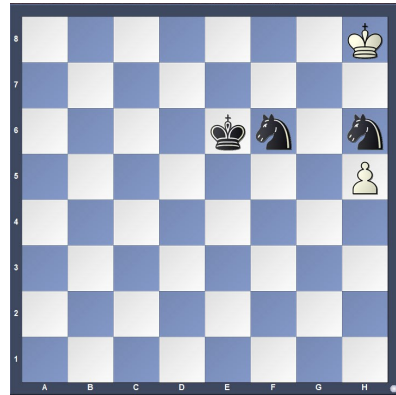
59.♗f4 ♖d4 60.♗h3 ♔f6
61.♔h7 ♗xf5 62.♗f4 ♔f7
63.♗d5 ♗eg3 64.♗f4 ♗e4

65.♗d5 ♗c5 66.♗f4 ♗d7 67.h5 ♗f6+ 68.♔h8 ♗h6 Without the h-pawn 68...♗e7 would be winning. I was hoping to get this kind of situation as I expected to win the h-pawn. Of course, it shouldn't happen: in particular, when I do take the h-pawn, she might be able to get her king out, perhaps using her knight as a decoy at that stage. 69.♗e2?? ♖xh5 70.♗f4 (70.♔h7 ♗f5 71.♗f4 ♗f6+ 72.♔h8 ♗e7) 70...♗f6+

69.♗e6? Oh no! This is not a good idea when there is a pawn still on the board. I did not know for sure at the time but the pawn is on the famous "Troitsky Line", so this is a tablebase win.

69.♗e2?? ♔f8-+; 69.♗d3=

69...♔xc6



It's an interesting moment here from a practical perspective. I knew this MIGHT be winning. I also knew it would be very difficult to win against best play if it was. I could have spent a lot of time calculating at this stage.

Or I could do what I did in the game and play pretty quickly (in fact I gained 2 minutes over the course of the next 31 moves). I decided to play fast to put her under pressure and induce mistakes, and I think it was the correct decision. I had studied these endgames a long time before so I was confident I would be able to drive her king to a corner.

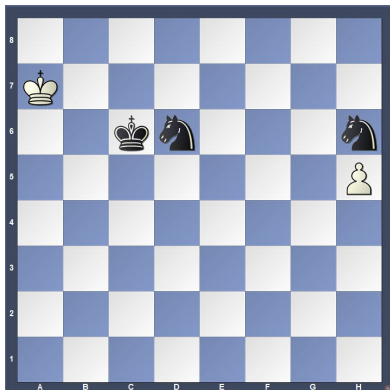
As we'll see on move 95, this decision paid off handsomely. If she had played the right 95th move I would have had to drive her king

back to h8, and then h1, and unblock the h5 pawn then re-block it again immediately on h6. I don't think I'd have managed, at least against tablebase-level defence

70.♔g7 ♖fg4 71.♔g6 ♔d5 72.♔g5 ♕e5 73.♔g6 ♕f4 74.♔g7 ♕f5 75.♔f8 ♕e6 76.♔g7 ♕f5 77.♔f8 ♕f6 78.♔e8 ♕e6 79.♔d8 ♖e5 80.♔c7 "Loss prevented by 50 move rule" according to tablebase if best play is followed.

80...♔d5 81.♔b6 ♕c4 82.♔c7 82.♔b7 was apparently the move to maintain the 50-move draw.

82...♔c5 83.♔b7 ♖d7 84.♔c7 ♖b6 85.♔b7 ♖d5 86.♔a6 ♔b4 87.♔b7 ♔b5 88.♔a7 ♖f4 89.♔b7 ♖e6 90.♔a7 ♖c5 91.♔b8 ♕c6 92.♔c8 ♖b7 93.♔b8 ♖d6 94.♔a7 ♔b5



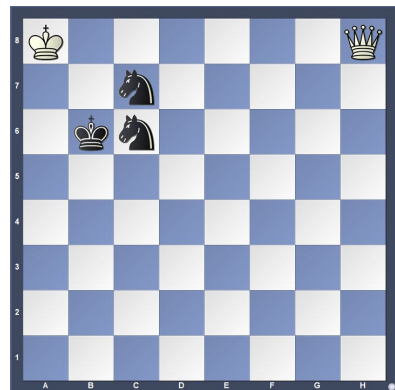
Which square should White put her king on? Not an easy decision to make on move 95 of the 8th round.

95.♔a8? In practice this was the losing move, as next move she has to go to b8 which is nearer my knight. 95.♔b8 ♔b6 Distance to mate is 101 moves according to the tablebase. The 50-move rule would not be violated as the h-pawn moves from h5 to h6 at some stage during that process.

95...♔b6 96.♔b8 Now we come to why having a pawn is such a problem for White - without the pawn this would be easily drawn.

96...♖hf7 97.h6 ♖e5 98.h7 ♖c6+ 99.♔a8 ♖b5 Stalemate, if no pawn.

100.h8♙ ♖c7#



Exactly 100 moves and just in time after she promotes - very satisfying! She was sporting to play on till mate.

The lichess computer gave me 0 inaccuracies, mistakes or blunders for this game and yet Louise was +1 in the middlegame for a while and also before ♔g5. Clearly she has very good positional skills to do that without me making any big mistake.

0-1

♣ Olson, Hamish (2273)

♣ Ledger, Andrew J (2329) D02

British Championship 2021 (9)

This was a very special moment for me. Andrew was tied with GM Nick Pert for 1st place so this game would decide who was British champion this year.

I was quite savvy with the psychology for this game. I more or less convinced myself that it was just a normal game. It helped that I was completely oblivious to the fact that the prize for second was pretty substantial. Consequently, I was pretty re-

laxed whereas he was definitely very nervous - understandably!

It was amusing watching Nick Pert's very candid interview about the event on Chessbase (<https://en.chessbase.com/post/pert-s-path-to-winning-the-british-otb-championship-2021>). He was a bit jealous of Andrew Ledger getting to play some 2270 while he had Black against Marcus Harvey. I would feel the same way in his situation.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.g3 3.c4 is a bit more principled but the move in the game seemed to cause him some problems, and he was very hesitant over his next few moves.

3...♙f5



I had expected a Grunfeld but perhaps he didn't fancy the line I

played. It is a tricky situation for him because he doesn't want to burn his bridges, but at the minimum he does want to keep the option of playing for a win alive. I just approached it like I would any other game and played a line I am comfortable with. It helps that I am quite solid so he will have to work hard to mix things up.



4.♙g2 c6 There are various nuances between doing c4 first or castles.

5.c4 e6 6.♘c3 h6 7.♚b3 ♛c8 12 minutes spent on this move by him.

7...♚b6 8.c5 ♛c7 9.♙f4 ♛c8 would perhaps have been my choice in his tournament position as it is imbalanced but still solid.

8.0-0 ♜bd7 9.♙f4 ♜h5 This has been played before but seems like a very nervous move to me.

10.♙d2 10.cxd5 exd5 11.♘xd5 ♙e6 (11...cxd5 12.♞ac1 missing this was a bit sloppy although in the only other game with 9...Nh5 the 2524-rated White player missed it too (12.♚xd5 ♜df6))

10...♙d6 11.♞ac1

Again this is a bit sloppy. I was trying to play fast and keep the options open so that he would waste time on them as he was playing very slowly. I didn't think he was likely to go ...dxc4 after ... ♜h5, and it would still be very strong for me.

11.♜h4+- dxc4 12.♚d1 The tactics just work for White here (12.♘xf5 is also fantastic for White).

11...♜hf6 12.♜h4 Finally I slowed down and spotted this one.

12...♙e4 13.cxd5 exd5 13...♙xg2 14.♜xg2 This is the point as the knight can go to f5.

14.♙xe4 ♜xe4 15.♜xe4 dxe4 16.♜f5 ♙f8 17.♙b4 ♜b6 18.♙xf8 ♚xf5 19.♙xg7 ♞g8

(See diagram next page)



I am a pawn up and his king is very exposed. Consequently, there are two different ways to approach this kind of position: I can play quite cautiously and convert the extra pawn, or I can attack aggressively. Of course, there are also various intermediates between those two extremes but basically I decided to think about it as a position with the initiative rather than a position with extra material.

20.♖c5 ♔g6 21.♖e5+ 21.♙e5 would probably give me an easier life.

21...♔d7 21...♔d8 was the toughest defence and the move I was expecting but it's a hard move to play as Black's position is wretched. 22.♙xh6 (22.♖b4 ♖xg7 23.♖d6+ ♔d7 24.♖e7 ♗g4 25.f3

This was my original intention and if I had played it and Andrew found 25...♗g6 then there might have been a different British Champion - oops! (25...♗h3 26.g4 was all I checked before ♖e5+)) 22...♗xh6 23.♖xf7 ♖h8 24.h4 White is going to have 4 pawns for the piece and a permanently safer king, but this was needlessly risky compared with 21. ♙e5. I guess I was still a bit nervous.

22.♙xh6 Black sacrificed a second pawn to at least get some activity on the h-file - potentially a better practical chance than ...♔d8

22...f5 23.a4 Keeping up the initiative as much as possible.

23...♖h8 24.♙f4 ♖h3

(See diagram next page)



25. f3 Just making sure my king will always be safe. Now I was very confident.

25... ♖ah8 26. ♖f2 ♔c8 27. fxe4 fxe4 28. e3 ♘d7 29. ♖e7 ♚h5 30. ♚e6 Black resigns.

1-0

24... ♖xh2 25. ♔xh2 doesn't quite work because the queen has to go to h7 or h5, and then when I go ♚e6 I will force the king to somewhere I can take f5 with check, trading queens. e.g. 25... ♚h5+ 26. ♔g1 ♖h8 27. ♚e6+ ♔d8 28. ♚f6+ ♔c8 29. ♚xf5+



News round-up

European Team Chess Championships 2021

(11th-22nd November, Catez, Slovenia)

The Scotland squad for the European Team Championships (11th-22nd November, Catez, Slovenia) has been announced as follows:

FM Alan Tate

2008 & 2014 Scottish Champion; 2020 Scottish Online Blitz, Rapid and Classical Champion; 1 GM norm; Best win: GM Richard Rapport

IM Andrew Muir

2007 Scottish Champion; 1998 Individual Gold medal winner Olympiad; Best wins GMs Nigel Short, David Bronstein and Gata Kamsky.

FM Graham Morrison

1981 Scottish Champion; 3 IM Norms; Best win GM Allan Stig Rasmussen.

CM Adam Bremner

3 time Richardson Cup winner; U21 British Problem Solving Champion; Best win: IM Gudmundur Kjartansson.

Frederick Waldhausen Gordon

First ever Scottish Terafinal winner (U-12); Best win: GM Mark Hebden

Chess Scotland would like to thank the FIDE Planning and Development Commission for their generous support.

We hope to have a full report with games and photos in the December issue of Scottish Chess.

Links to live games and results will be shared on the website.

18th Scottish Chess Tour Event

(LiChess, 1st-3rd October 2021)

Weekend Standard

Major U1800

1st Thomas Murray 4/5

2nd Jonathan Powles 3.5/5

Saturday Evening U11 Allegro

1st Ollie Marenduzzo 5.5/6

2nd Louis Cheng 5/6

3rd Neev Lukhi 4.5/6

Minor U1300

1st Tillak Ittigi 4/5

2nd= Geoff Stewart, Angelo
Lynn, Mark Smith 3.5/5

Friday Evening Blitz

1st Tushar Roul 8/9

2nd Nye Garston 7.5/9

3rd Muhammad Al Dakl Alla 7/9

Sunday Afternoon Allegro

1st Thomas Murray 4.5/5

2nd Daniel Kitaev 4/5

3rd Aryan Munshi 4/5

Friday Evening Junior Blitz

1st Kanishka Bhatia .5/5

2nd Kai Moroz 4/5

3rd Naman Rampuria 3/5

Sunday Evening U15 Allegro

1st Daniel Kitaev 5/5

2nd Louis Cheng 4/5

3rd Georgios Tsagkarakis 4/5

All results compiled by David Clayton. Grading data by Andy Howie on CS website

Community Chess in Glasgow

Chess played an integral part of several Glasgow community festivals this summer, reports Colin Paterson. First up, there was Chess in Springburn Park on Saturday July 31st as part of 'Make Something Better' afternoon arranged by NG Homes.

The photo above shows Ian Brownlee, Jim Webster, and Colin Paterson in the company of the Lord Mayor of Glasgow.



The attendees in July also included people from the Chinese and Middle East community.

Two months later and it was time for Webster's Family Weekender, chess putting in an appearance on 25th and 26th September, with more than 30 members of the community involved.

Adults, parents and children attended the events and immensely enjoyed themselves, with two lads from Azerbaijan and a couple from

Cyprus. The photo below features Think Circus playing chess while a Brass Aye member passes by.



Finally, a new initiative—a Graphic Chess Comic (see the front cover on the following page) that is being organised in collaboration between North Glasgow Homes, Phones Chess Club and Dekko Comics. The project is primarily designed to further Chess in North Glasgow.

Minority groups like African Challenge, Afghan United, Chinese Community and a good number of schools and youth communities will be involved in the workshop. A launch of the GCC will happen once the project is finished.

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Volume 6

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Orthodox Defence
Cambridge Springs Defence
Various Slav Systems
Tartakower Defence*



Chess
Evolution

Chess Book Corner

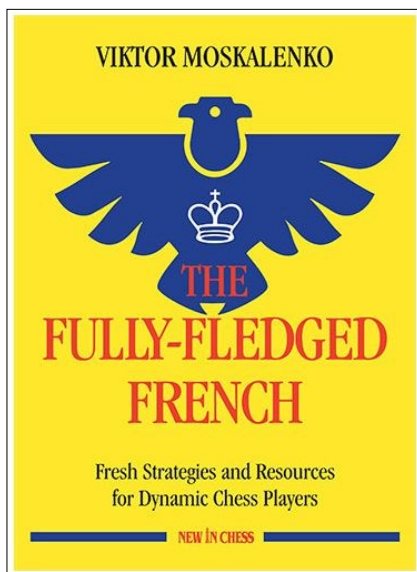
with Ian Marks



This month our resident chess critic and bibliophile, Cumbernauld's very own **Ian Marks**, goes all French on us, with two recent volumes focusing on that most popular of club-players' openings.

THE FULLY-FLEDGED FRENCH by Viktor Moskalenko, New in Chess, 368 pp., publ. 2021.

The author has already written extensively on his favourite opening (*The Flexible French, The Even More Flexible French, The Wonderful Winawer*) so if you're familiar with those you'll have an idea of what to expect from this one. Some of the material appeared in the earlier works, but the new games, up-



dates and improvements galore have resulted in what is essential-

ly a new book. As it happens, a lot of the developments which have taken place are attributable to its predecessors!

Like them, its aim is “to offer a combative repertoire to black players”, and the author’s approach is “more of a strategic nature, with lots

of practical pieces of advice that reveal the key resources of the opening”. ‘Strategic’, however, does not preclude violence, and there is plenty of sharp, tactical stuff to whet the bloodthirstiest of appetites.

While Moskalenko provides lots of analysis – you can’t write an opening book without it – the book is not theory-heavy; as the sub-title *Fresh Strategies and Re-*

sources for Dynamic Chess Players suggests, the focus is on handling the French in an active, dynamic way.



Viktor Moskalenko: The Ukrainian GM shares his fourth book on the French defence

With the help of seventy-two illustrative games (the most recent from 2020 and eighteen the author’s own) he

covers a selection of his favourite lines in each of the main French variations – Advance, Tarrasch, Classical and Winawer – presenting all sorts of new ideas showing where and how Black can create interesting play and enjoy his share of the fun without getting bogged down in a theoretical swamp.

To give a specific example: he indicates that Qg4 systems are

White's best bet for an advantage v. the Winawer, yet shows that there is far more to them than deeply theoretical Qxg7 mayhem and that Black has no reason to be afraid.

Each part of the book is split into a historical introduction to the variation, a presentation of the main ideas, analysis of the most interesting lines, illustrative games and conclusions. As in his previous books, his trademark 'tricks', 'puzzles', 'weapons' etc. pointers both reinforce what he is saying and encourage you to think. His style of writing is light and fluent and his enthusiasm infectious, but he never descends into flippancy or wastes words – his analysis and comments are spot-on. The text is sprinkled with lots of recent references, including 2021, but the author does not neglect older games by French 'greats' such as Petrosian and Uhlmann. As he stresses, "*Focus your attention on the games played by the experts!*".

Like its forerunners, this well-thought-out and well-produced book brings the French alive. Openings books can sometimes be a tad heavy or dry, but *The Fully-Fledged French* is quite simply entertaining.

When a writer puts his heart and soul into his work, as Moskalenko does here, you know you're on to a winner. *The Fully-Fledged French* is worthy of a place on the shelf of all French fans – anyone who owns the author's previous works will probably buy it without any prompting from me!

In addition it would be of interest to newcomers to the opening, and for anyone who has never given the French a thought there is more than enough to inspire you to give it a try. With Moskalenko as your guide you could easily become addicted.

**THE EXCHANGE FRENCH
COMES TO LIFE** by Alex
Fishbein, Russell Enter-
prises Inc., 240 pp., publ.
2021.

You might have raised your eyebrows at the title. You might raise them further if I tell you that the sub-title is *Fresh Strategies to Play for a Win*. Play for a win!? The Exchange has never been considered a variation to strike terror into the hearts of French defenders. It's boring, equal, leads to a draw etc. etc.

Well, that depends.

In this book the American GM looks at 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 exd5 4 Nf3, a line he has been analysing and playing for over thirty years. What he offers here is a distillation of his work. The positions arising are far removed from 'traditional' Exchange lines and in general the play is much richer.

On the white side we find the likes of Carlsen, Kasparov, Grischuk and Anand, not players renowned for their boring play. Sometimes they reached the positions from a different move order,

**US Grandmaster Alex
Fishbein attempts to
sell the Exchange
French as a winning
attempt, but does he
succeed?**





THE
Exchange
French

COMES TO
Life

FRESH STRATEGIES
TO PLAY FOR A WIN

Alex Fishbein

FOREWORD BY JOHN WATSON

e.g. via the Petroff, Queen's Gambit or English, but that's irrelevant. What's important is that they were prepared to play them, and play them for a win. If any of those openings are in your toolbox, it would be worth looking at Fishbein's work. As he says, *'the reason to learn different openings is that some ideas are ubiquitous'*.

The variety of possible move orders suggests that, up to a point, the cliché that understanding the positions and ideas is more important than knowing a load of variations is true. With this in mind, two key chapters (the longest in the book) cover 'IQP-lite' and symmetrical structures. They contain a lot of chess wisdom, and the player who understands them best will score points.

Which leads to the practical consideration of playing the Exchange Variation: because of its 'harmless' reputation, players of Black are less likely to have prepared a response to it (they might

not even think it's necessary).

Denied the chance to play a beefy Winawer, they can get lulled into a false sense of security and wonder where their easy equality went when their position starts to head south after fifteen moves. As French guru John Watson says in his foreword, *'...any player of the Black side of the French will benefit by reading it'*.

This is a refreshing book on what is almost a sideline in the French and the author clearly shows that there is more to it than meets the eye. One feature I particularly liked was chapter 11, Your Repertoire File, a sort of vade mecum providing all you need to know in easily accessible form. I also liked the list of frequently occurring strategic themes, but was surprised at the lack of an index of players. Strange.

All in all, something different and worth considering if you're looking for another string to your white bow.

Tadej Sakelšek
Marko Tratar

DEFENSIVE TOOLS

*A tournament
player's manual*



Chess
Evolution



Chess Scotland
The home of Chess in Scotland

The [Chess Scotland website](#) contains a wealth of information regarding chess activities in our country, so please check out the links below for more information...

The [Calendar](#) is updated regularly and contains details of all forthcoming events and detailed information of how to sign up to play.

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.

The [Chess Scotland 100 Club](#) is a lottery that anyone (over 16) is welcome to join. Half the cash collected every month is returned as prizes, the rest goes into general fund raising for the association.

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](#).