

# Scottish Chess

Issue 313

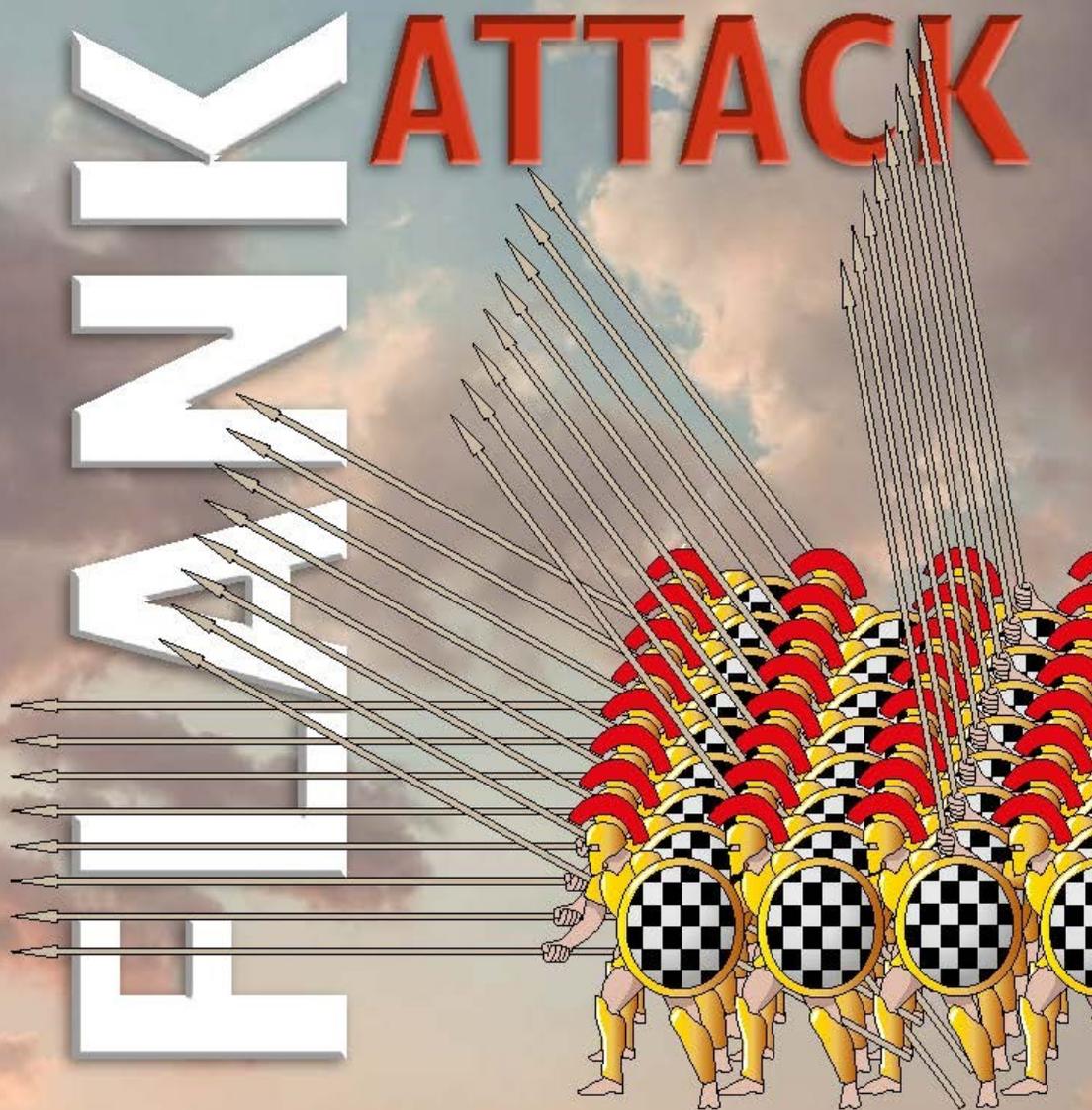
August 2024



**Andrew Greet Wins Second  
Scottish Championship title!**

**Plus: British Championships – Scotland's Seniors in  
Krakow – The Dragon Lives – and much more!**

# THE MODERNIZED ATTACK



CHRISTIAN BAUER  
PIERRE LAURENT-PAOLI



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**Cover photo:** Andrew Greet receives the Scottish Championship trophy from Gonzalo Forero of Kingsbarns Distillery

# Welcome! August 2024

It has been a memorable summer of chess as evidenced by the bumper 116 page issue of the magazine! Not only do we have in-depth reports on the Scottish and British Championships, but also a host of other material to whet your appetite.

I have been pleasantly surprised to receive so many contributions: articles, games, reports and photos. Given our 'unlimited' capacity to

produce *Scottish Chess* content, please keep it

coming. Don't worry what standard you are – the more the merrier!

Deadline for the October issue (with a bumper Olympiad report guaranteed) is September 30th.

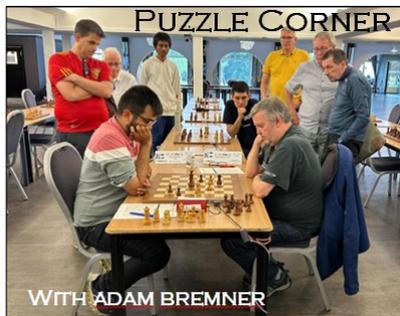
Contact me via [abburnett@hotmail.com](mailto:abburnett@hotmail.com)

Andrew Burnett *Editor*



## Contents

This year's Scottish Championship returned to a week-long international Open but who would emerge as Scotland's 2024 national champion? Read the full report with annotated games and photos to see how it all came about!



It's all very easy from the side of the board, but it's a different game when you are behind the pieces. Adam Bremner brings you puzzles based on the Scottish Championship games to test your ingenuity and tactical awareness!

**It's the Year of the Dragon in the Chinese calendar, but also for your editor. GM Paul Motwani shares an appreciation of the latest book on the fiercest Sicilian variation of all!**



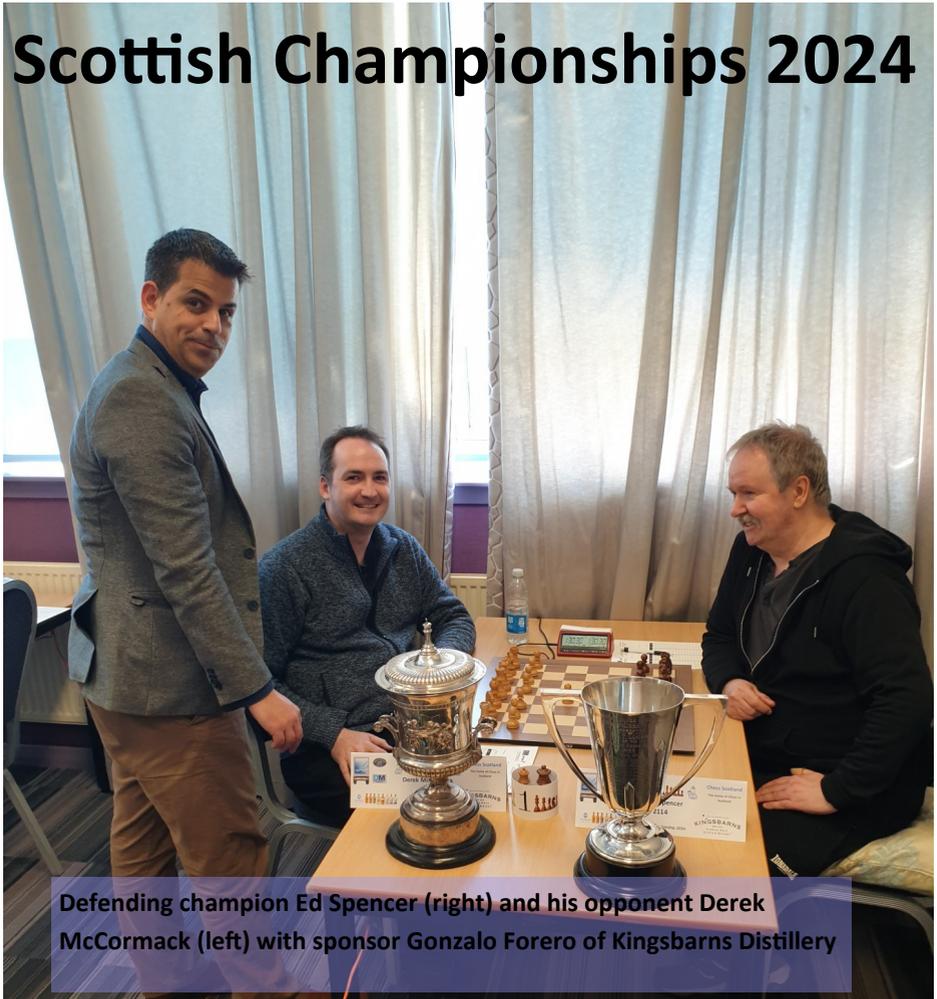
**The recent passing of former Scottish Champion, FM Graham Morrison, inspired IM Craig Pritchett to share one of Graham's best efforts—a thrilling tussle in both players' favourite Scheveningen Sicilian!**

**The historic Polish city of Krakow was the latest destination for our intrepid seniors, two full teams of Scots taking on the World Senior Team Chess Championships.**



**The British Championships has long been a tumbleweed event for Scots. This year, however, more than two dozen of our own swooped on Hull. There would be riots, but would there be successes as well? Read our in-depth report...**

# Scottish Championships 2024



Defending champion Ed Spencer (right) and his opponent Derek McCormack (left) with sponsor Gonzalo Forero of Kingsbarns Distillery

**T**he Scottish International Open got off to a pleasant start, from my perspective at least, when I realised the organisers had put defending champion Ed Spencer on board 1 – a nice touch that many others also appreciated.

For those who play the SNCL, the venue – the Carnegie Conference Centre in Dunfermline – was a familiar spot. My own worries that the SNCL analysis room might be too small for the Open section proved to be mostly unfounded, or at least nothing a few weeks of dieting wouldn't have fixed!

## Let's get on with the chess!

### Round 1

There were few real upsets, although Ed was held to a draw by Derek, as was former Scottish champion Jonathan Grant by Sanjith Madhavan.

Top seed, Norway's Kristian Stuvik Holm, and his father failed to appear, causing a couple of unexpected byes, but things settled down somewhat after this somewhat typical beginning to a tournament.

♖b5 20.♘a6 0-0 21.♞d7 ♖e5  
22.♞hd1 ♘c8 23.♞xc7 fxe4 24.f4  
♙a5 25.♘b4 ♘b6 26.♞xc6 ♔g7  
27.♞c7



### Round 2

Round two saw the first big clashes, a result of the Baku Accelerated Pairings that were in use for the first 5 rounds. All five of the top boards were decisive. Here are two snapshots...

White is slightly better here but there was no need for Black's position to go south so quickly...

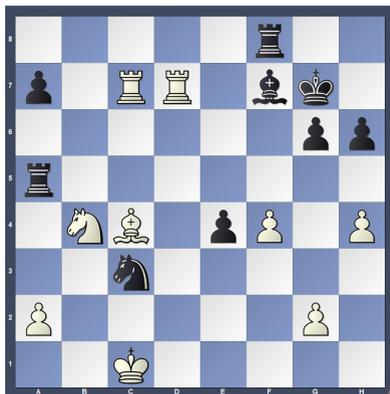
27...♘a4?? 28.♞xc4 ♘xc3  
29.♞dd7

♣ Greet, Andrew N (IM 2400)

♣ Dunnington, Angus (IM 2281) A42

Scottish International Open  
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1.c4 g6 2.♘f3 ♙g7 3.d4 d6  
4.♘c3 e5 5.e4 exd4 6.♘xd4 ♘c6  
7.♘xc6 bxc6 8.♞d3 ♘e7 9.h4 h6  
10.♞e3 ♞e6 11.♞d2 ♞d7 12.f3 d5  
13.♘a4 dxc4 14.♞e2 ♞xd2+  
15.♞xd2 f5 16.♘c5 ♞f7 17.♞c3  
♞xc3+ 18.bxc3 ♞b8 19.0-0-0



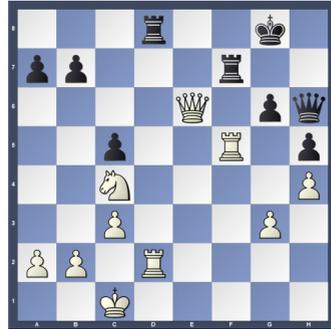
and Angus resigned. 1-0

A possible end might have been  
29...♞f5 30.♞xf7 ♞8xf7 31.♞xf7+  
♞xf7 32.♞xc3

♣ Mckay, Roddy M (2174)

♣ Porat, Ido (2322) A03

Scottish International Open  
Dunfermline 2024



(analysis diagram)

1.d3 d5 2.f4 c5 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.c3  
g6 5.♙c2 ♕g7 6.e4 e5 7.♘a3  
♘ge7 8.♙e2 0-0 9.h4 ♕g4  
10.♘g5 ♕xe2 11.♙xe2 h6 12.♘f3  
f5 13.fxe5 fxe4 14.dxe4 ♘xe5  
15.♙d2 dxe4 16.♘xe5 ♕xe5  
17.0-0-0 ♙d3 18.♙g4 e3  
19.♙e6+ ♜f7 20.♙xe5 exd2+  
21.♜xd2 ♙f5 22.♙e3 h5 23.♘c4

...exploits another pin, this time laterally.

25...♜xd6 26.♙xd6 ♙xd6  
27.♜xd6



Roddy was already clearly better  
but Black's last move is a blunder.

White is the exchange up and  
Black soon resigned.

25.♘d6 25.g3! is even stronger.  
Black has to keep the pin on, else  
Rxd8, but this allows White to uti-  
lise his own pin with 25...♙h6 26.  
♜f1 and now 26...♘f5 27.♜xf5

27...♜f2 28.♜e1 ♙f8 29.♜d8+

1-0

(see diagram next column)

## Round 3

Round 3 saw yours truly hold Andrew Greet to a draw on top board (and miss a golden chance to win after Andrew pushed too hard).

Meanwhile, Irish youngster Jason Liu took down Roddy McKay and England's Peter Large staked his claim to top spot by felling the only GM in the field...

🏆 Large, Peter G (IM 2311)

🏆 Arakhamia-Grant, Ketevan  
(GM 2292) B30

Scottish International Open  
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1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♙b5



This is Peter's pet line against the Sicilian. The basic idea is to capture on c6 as in the Rossolimo (1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 g6/e6 4.Bxc6) but with the option of f4

still available afterwards. Scotland's first-ever GM Paul Motwani and IM Andrew Greet have also dabbled in this line.

3...e6 4.♘f3 But now White switches to an old line that I have also used on occasion.

4...♘ge7 5.0-0 a6 6.♙xc6 ♘xc6  
7.d4 cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♙e7 8...♙c7  
9.♙e1 ♙d6



(analysis diagram)

... is another set-up when the violent 10.♘d5 exd5 11.exd5+ ♘e5 is just about playable with f4, but not 12.♘f5 0-0 13.♙h6 as I once played (against Ziheng Hu in the Serbian town of Novi Sad in 2019).

9.♘xc6 bxc6 10.e5 ♙c7 11.♙e1

(see diagram next page)



Sponsor David Mulholland (left) of DM Pension & Investment Solutions Ltd with top seed IM Kristian Stuvik Holm and Peter Large (right)



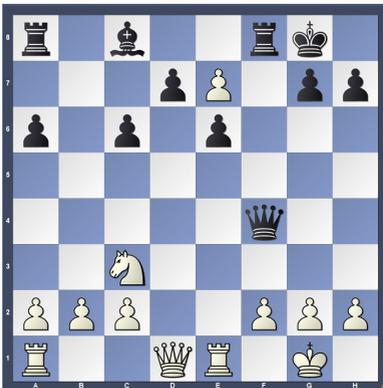
♖xe7 17.♘d3 ♔d6 18.♘e5 White plans ♖g4 followed by the rook lift with Re3. 18...c5 19.♖g4 ♘b7 20.♖e3

15.♔h1 ♖e8 16.♘e4 ♖h4 17.♘d6



11...0-0? The engine says 11...d5 is the only way to claim equality of sorts.

12.♘f4 f5 13.exf6 ♖xf4 14.fxe7



17...♖xe7 18.♖e4 ♖f6 19.♖d3 a5 20.♖f1 ♘a6 21.c4 ♖xb2 Keti is two pawns up but Peter has a deadly grip on the position. His next, however, is a blunder...

22.♖g3?



14...♖xf2+? The problem with this is that the queen gets hit with tempo when the knight comes to e4.

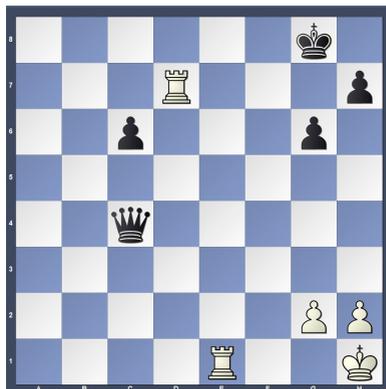
14...♖e8 was forced although it doesn't look like much fun for Black. However, the engine's knight tour route to an advantage is instructive: 15.♘e4 d5 16.♘c5

Better was 22.h3 ♖f8 23.♖xf8+

♔xf8 24.♖e1 wins, the idea being a rook switch after 24...a4? 25.♖b1.

**22...g6** 22...♖f8! 23.♖xf8+ ♔xf8 would offer Black some hope. White's forces are temporarily less coordinated, and his back-rank more vulnerable, than the similar line we have just seen.

**23.♖g5 ♖g7 24.♖xa5 e5 25.♖fe1??**



**27.♖xa8! ♖xa8 28.♖xe7 ♖xa2 29.♖xc4 ♖xc4 30.♖xd7**

Choosing two rooks or the queen is often a thorny question, but here Black's king is in too much danger.

**30...♔f8 31.♖a1 ♔e8 32.♖xh7** and mate or loss of the queen is inevitable. A big boost to Peter's tournament hopes but a painful body-blow to Keti's aspirations.

**32...♖b5**

**1-0**

The following super-sharp sacrificial game also caught the eye (notes by IM Dougie Bryson).

♖ McKay, Jonathan (1977)

♙ Bryson, Douglas (IM 2311)

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**25...♖f8?!** 25...♖e6! saves the day, as after 26.c5 ♖f8 again White's backrank proves problematic, e.g. 27.♖xe5?? ♖xe5 28.♖xe5 ♖f1#

**26.♖xe5 ♖xc4??**

**(see diagram next column)**

A game-losing blunder in time-trouble.

26...♖xe5 27.♖xe5 ♖g7 holds the balance.

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 ♞f6 3.d4 ♟g4  
4.f3 ♟f5



10...♞xe3 There are over 40 games in Chessbase after ...♞xe3 including a Magnus Carlsen game from 2018.

5.c4 5.g4 The comp move 5. g4 could be more of a threat to the viability of the line but humans might find the airy king position not to their liking.

11.♟xe3 ♟c2

5...e6 6.dxe6 ♞c6 7.exf7+ Almost certainly too greedy but White already has issues of how to develop.



7.♟e3 ♞b4 8.♞a3

7...♟xf7 8.♟e3 A completely natural move but the bishop becomes a tactical target. The computer tries to defend with 8.♞e2 and allows 8...♞b4 9.♞g3 ♞c2+ 10.♟f2 ♞xd4 11.c5 and reckons this is =

The flashiest move but Black has several wins here. Carlsen went for 11...Nxd4. The alternative 11...Bc2 was played as long ago as 1997 in an email game, presumably with some computer assistance.

8...♟b4+ 9.♟f2 ♞e8 10.♞c3

(see diagram next column)

12.♞d2 ♞g4+ 13.♟f4

13.fxg4 drops the queen to 13...<sup>♔</sup>  
g5+ 14.♕e2 ♖e8+

13...♗d6+ 14.♔xg4 ♗f5+ 15.♔xf5  
♕h4 16.g4 ♖e8



0-1

## Round 4

Top board saw Peter Large put in a good defensive effort to hold Andrew Greet, Scotland's top board for the upcoming Olympiad in Budapest. Worth playing through if you have a habit of losing simple-looking 'worse' endings – see the attached pgn file.

On board 2 it was my turn to face Jason Liu, who appears to be a 'pandemic shark' as Gormally would term it – someone who used the lockdown to improve by leaps and bounds.

♣ Liu, Jason (2125)

♣ Burnett, Andrew B (FM 2174)  
B62

Scottish International Open  
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I had started the tournament very well, a win over IM Dougie Bryson and the aforementioned draw with IM Andrew Greet included. However, having seen Jason run over Roddy McKay in the previous round, I was well aware of the possible danger facing me.

1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4  
4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 ♗c6 I decided against playing my beloved Dragon, partly because Jason had previously shown his deep knowledge of theory in the mainlines. In addition, I had spotted a flaw in his handling of the Classical...

6.♗b5 ♗d7 7.♗g5 e6 8.♔d3  
8.♕d2



...was Jason's choice in an earlier game but it's really not very good due to 8...h6 9.♘h4?? (9.♘xf6 is better but after 9...♙xf6 Black is well-placed. ) 9...♞xe4!

8...h6 9.♘h4 ♘e7 10.0-0-0



10...♞e5?! 10...♖c8 would be normal. For some reason, with the text I had completely overlooked the simple retreat of the queen to e2.

11.♙e2 a6? Having realised I had basically given White the f4-advance for free, I panicked slightly.

11...0-0 12.f4 ♞c6 13.e5 isn't actually a problem for Black.

12.♘xd7+ ♞exd7 13.f4 g5!

(see diagram next column)

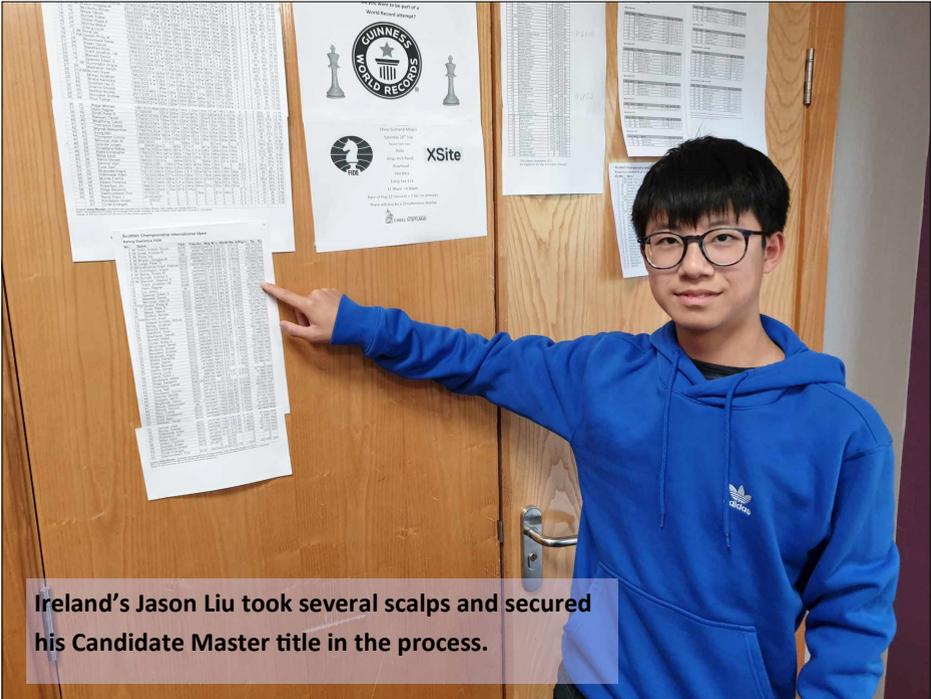


This was a very good practical try in a difficult position. It is thematic in many lines; Black wants to secure the e5-square, even at the cost of a pawn.

14.fxg5 hxg5 15.♙xg5



15...♞xe4?? 15...♖c8 16.h4 ♖xc3 was my initial plan and despite the engine saying 'no', it gives Black good practical chances. Unfortunately, I decided that the text won the pawn back and I might not be getting mated. A horrible piece of analysis and... untrue!



Ireland's Jason Liu took several scalps and secured his Candidate Master title in the process.

16. ♖xe4 ♗xg5+ 17. ♔b1 ♘e7



18. ♗xe6! Not so difficult to find but still, a brave decision and a pretty way to win the game.

18...fxe6 19. ♗xd6+ ♔f8 20. ♗xe6

♖h7 21. ♗xb7 and here, having made it to the safety of 20 moves, I resigned.

1-0

### Round 5

Liu's great run came to an end at the hands of Large, but he'd go on to bag his Candidate Master title. Meanwhile Greet used an interesting opening idea (see below) against Henrik Meyer, a young German player who had defeated Keti Arakhamia to reach the top boards.

♣ Meyer, Henrik (2023)

♣ Greet, Andrew N (IM 2400)

Scottish International Open  
Dunfermline 2024

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♙f4 c5 3.e3 ♘d5



My badly-out-of-date database says this position has been recorded 70 times, but I certainly haven't seen it before. (Andrew went on to win an interesting battle and you can play through the whole game in the pgn and CB files included with the magazine download.)

Meanwhile, if you're wondering what our own talented juniors were up to, they were snapping at the heels of the leaders but not quite able to shake up the old guard yet, who still had some tricks left up their sleeves...

♣ Burnett, Andrew B (2174)

♣ Munshi, Aryan (1982) E07

Scottish International Open  
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1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♘f6 3.♘f3 e6 4.g3  
♙e7 5.♙g2 0-0 6.0-0 c6 7.♘c3  
b6 8.b3 ♘bd7 9.♙d3 ♙b7 10.e4  
dxe4 11.♘xe4 c5 12.♘xf6+ ♘xf6  
13.♙d1 cxd4 14.♘xd4 ♙xg2  
15.♙xg2 ♙c7 16.♘b5 ♙c6+  
17.♙f3 ♙fc8 18.♙f4 ♙xf3+  
19.♙xf3 a6 20.♘d6 ♙c6 21.g4  
♙f8 22.a4 ♘e8 23.♘xe8 ♙xe8  
24.♙e4 ♙b4 25.♙d3 ♙a7 26.♙ad1  
♙e7 27.g5 ♙b7 28.♙h3 f5+  
29.gxf6 ♙xf6 30.♙d6 ♙xd6  
31.♙xd6 ♙d7 32.♙e5 ♙c6  
33.♙xh7 ♙xe5 34.♙xe5 ♙f7 35.f4  
♙f5+ 36.♙e4 g5 37.fxg5 ♙xg5



An interesting rook and pawn endgame that I thought should be winning. My only concern was the potential weakness of my queenside pawns.

38.♖h3? I wasn't sure about 40...e5! is perhaps an even easier way to hold. 38.♖h8 b5 (38...♖g4+ 39.♔e5 ♖c5 40.♔xe6 ♔b4



(analysis diagram)

...but now is the time for 41.♖h3 ♖g2 42.♔d6 ♖b2 43.♔c6) 39.axb5+ axb5 40.h4 ♖g3 41.cxb5+ ♔xb5 42.h5 looks quite straightforward.

38...♔c5 38...♖g2 should also keep things within the drawing zone.

39.♖e3 ♖h5 40.h3



40...♖h4+

41.♔e5 ♖h6 42.♖g3 a5 43.♖e3



43...♔c6?? 43...♖h8! was the drawing trick. White can't round up the e-pawn AND keep the h-pawn. For example: 47.♔xe6??? ♖e8+ or 44.♖f3 ♖h6.

44.♔f4 ♔d6 45.♔g5 ♖h8 46.h4



Now the win is straightforward.

46...♖g8+ 47.♔f6 ♖h8 48.♖xe6+

**FROM BOY  
TO MAN  
TO  
CHALLENGER**

**THE FIERCEST  
BATTLES  
OF  
GUKESH D**



**Elk and Ruby**

**Cyrus  
Lakdawala**

♔c5 49.♖e5+ ♔b4 50.♖b5+ ♔c3  
 51.h5 ♔d4

1-0

40.♔f2 ♖h2+ 41.♔e3 ♖xc2  
 42.♖3f6+ ♖g6 43.♖xg6+ ♔xg6  
 44.♖d7 ♖xc3+ 45.♔f4 ♖xc4  
 46.♖xd6+ ♔h5 47.♖d7 ♖a4  
 48.♖xb7 ♖xa2 49.e5

Not everyone had found a way through the kids, as evidenced by Daniel Kitaev's draw with IM Angus Dunnington and Rithvik's draw against Jonathan Grant and while **round 6** was mostly draws on the top boards, 'tragedy' was to strike when young Rithvik found himself on top board in round 7.

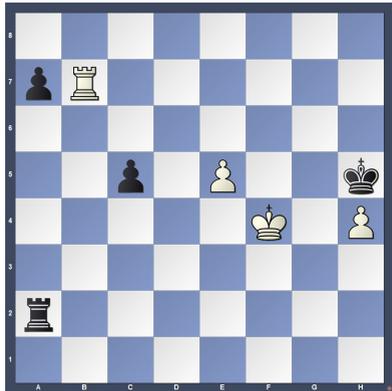
### Round 7

♠ Large, Peter G (IM 2311)

♣ Deepak, Rithvik (1978) B23

Scottish International Open  
 Dunfermline 2024

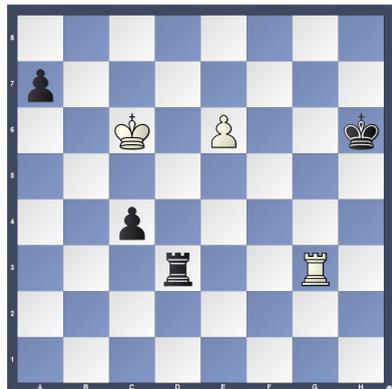
1.e4 c5 2.♘c3 d6 3.f4 ♘c6  
 4.♘f3 g6 5.♙c4 ♙g7 6.0-0 e6  
 7.d3 ♘ge7 8.♚e1 0-0 9.f5 gxf5  
 10.♗h4 ♘g6 11.♗h5 f4 12.♘g5  
 h6 13.♘h3 ♘ce5 14.♘xf4 ♘xc4  
 15.dxc4 ♗h4 16.♗xh4 ♘xh4  
 17.♘h5 ♙d4+ 18.♔h1 ♔h7  
 19.♙f4 ♙xc3 20.bxc3 e5 21.♙e3  
 ♙e6 22.♖ad1 ♖ad8 23.♘f6+ ♔g7  
 24.♘h5+ ♔h7 25.♘f6+ ♔g7  
 26.g4 ♘g6 27.g5 ♘f4 28.♙xf4  
 exf4 29.♖xf4 hxg5 30.♖g1 ♔h6  
 31.♖f3 ♖h8 32.h4 g4 33.♘xg4+  
 ♙xg4 34.♖xg4 ♖hg8 35.♖gf4  
 ♖de8 36.♔h2 ♖g6 37.♔h3 ♖g1  
 38.♖xf7 ♖h1+ 39.♔g3 ♖g8+



Rithvik had held his own throughout the previous 50 moves and here the draw is fairly straightforward.

49...♖f2+ 50.♔e4 ♔xh4 One of many moves that hold.

51.e6 ♔g5 52.♖g7+ ♔h6 53.♖g3  
 ♖e2+ 54.♔d5 c4 55.♔d6 ♖d2+  
 56.♔c6 ♖d3??



A blunder that can probably be put down to inexperience: if the best case scenario is a draw anyway, you should stick to the simple drawing method.

56...♖e2 57.♔d7 ♖d2+ 58.♕e8 ♖d3 Now, with the e-pawn blocked, this move is ok. 59.♖g1 c3 60.e7 c2 61.♖c1 ♖d2 62.♔f7 ♖f2+ 63.♕e6 ♖e2+ 64.♔d7 ♖d2+ 65.♕c7 ♖e2 etc.

57.e7 57.♖xd3 cxd3 58.e7 d2 59.e8♖ d1♖ 60.♖h8+ ♔g6 (60... ♔g5 61.♖g7+ ♔f5 62.♖xa7) 61. ♖g8+ ♔f6 62.♖f8+ ♔e5 63.♖c5+ ♔e4 64.♖xa7

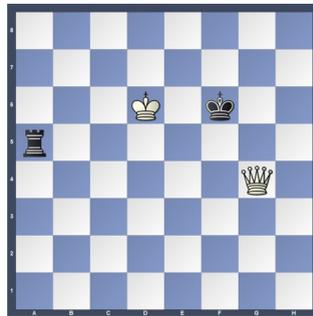
57...♖xg3 58.e8♖ c3 59.♖e4 ♔h5 60.♔b5 ♖g5+ 61.♔a6



...and Rithvik didn't wait to be shown the winning technique of Q v R (the pawn(s) are irrelevant as White can always zugzwang Black and pick them up.) If you're interested, here's a (long) possible winning line:

61...♖g3 62.♔xa7 ♖g6 The win is much simpler if Black tries to hold on to the c-pawn, viz: 62...♔g5 63.♔b6 ♔h5 64.♔c5 ♔g5 65.♔d5 ♔h5 66.♔e5 ♖g5+ 67.♔f6 ♖g3 68.♖f4 ♖g6+ 69.♔f5 ♖g2 70.♖f3+

63.♖f5+ ♖g5 64.♖h3+ ♔g6 65.♖xc3 ♖f5 66.♔b6 ♖f6+ 67.♔c5 ♖f5+ 68.♔d6 ♔g5 69.♖g3+ ♔f6 70.♖g4 ♖g5 70...♖a5



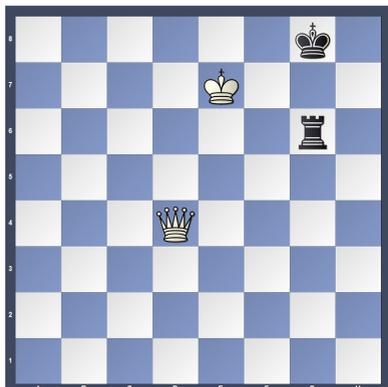
(analysis diagram)

This is the 'longest' defence in theory but in practice the game tends to be lost quite quickly as the rook is widely separated from its king!

71.♖e6+ ♔g7 72.♔e7 ♖g6 73.♖e3 ♖g4 74.♖f3 ♖g6 75.♖c3+ ♔g8 76.♖d4

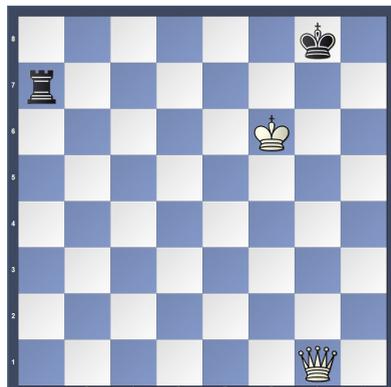
(see diagram next column)

Waiting moves are the key to winning this ending; eventually Black must give way.



76...♖g5 Or 76...♖g7+ 77.♔f6  
♜f7+ 78.♔g6

77.♔f6 ♜g7 78.♚d8+ ♔h7



The rook falls and mate follows.  
Practice this against your computer  
from both sides and good luck  
scoring 50%!

### 1-0



79.♚e8

And another.

79...♖a7 80.♚h5+ ♔g8 81.♚d5+  
♔h7 82.♚h1+ ♔g8 83.♚g1+

(see diagram next column)

On board 2, Andrew Greet set out  
his claim for a second Scottish  
Championship crown in a phe-  
nomenally well-annotated game  
by Andrew himself that serves as  
our newly-reintroduced Game of  
the Month/Issue column **on page  
98.**

Meanwhile, yours truly couldn't  
quite keep up the pace, missing a  
lovely winning idea and then per-  
haps being fortunate not to lose...

♖ Maxwell, Daniel (2116)

♚ Burnett, Andrew (FM 2174)

Scottish International Open  
Dunfermline 2024

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d3 d5  
 4.♗bd2 ♗f6 5.g3 ♕g4 6.h3 ♘xf3  
 7.♚xf3 e6 8.♖g2 ♖e7 9.0-0 ♚c7  
 10.exd5 exd5 11.♗b3 0-0  
 12.♕e3 b6 13.♞fe1 ♞ad8 14.♖f4  
 ♖d6 15.♕e3 a5 16.a4 ♘b4  
 17.♚d1 ♞fe8 18.c3 ♘c6 19.♚c2  
 h6 20.♞ad1 ♚d7 21.d4 c4  
 22.♗d2 ♗e7 23.♗f3 ♗g6 24.♗e5  
 ♖xe5 25.dxe5 ♗xe5 26.♖xb6  
 ♗d3 27.♞xe8+ ♚xe8 28.♕d4 ♘e4  
 29.♖f1 ♗g5 30.♕e3

31.♔h2 ♗g5 32.♖xg5 ♗e1  
 33.♖h3 I was hoping for 33.♞xe1  
 ♞xe1 34.♖h3



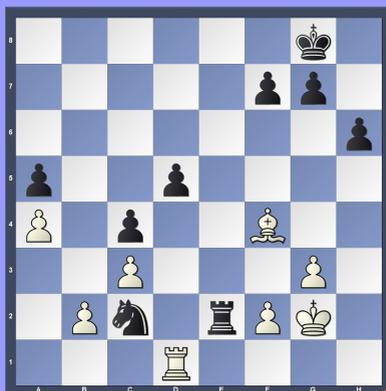
(analysis diagram)

... when I had spotted 34...♞h1+  
 35.♔xh1 ♚xh3+ but it is only a  
 draw after 36.♔g1 hxg5 37.♚d2  
 ♚f5 38.♚e3.

33...♚xh3+ 34.♔xh3 ♘xc2  
 35.♖f4 ♞e2 36.♔g2



30...♗xh3+? 30...♗f3+ is the win-  
 ner but I had completely missed  
 the killer idea of ...d4 31.♔h1 ♚c6  
 32.♖xd3 (32.♖d4 ♗fe1 33.♚b1  
 ♚e6 also wins.) 32...d4 winning.



36...g5? I had yet to realise I was  
 no longer better.

37.♖d2 d4 38.cxd4 ♗xd4



39. ♖f1? 39. ♙xa5 was winning. important factors.

39... ♖e6 40. ♙xa5 ♘b3 41. ♖d8+ 41. ♙c3 was stronger.

41... ♔h7 42. ♖a8 ♘xa5 43. ♖xa5 ♖c6 44. ♖a7 and here a draw was agreed.

1/2-1/2

### Round 8

The pace was heating up, both for the Scottish title and the overall winner of the Open, with £1000 up top if anyone could grab it solely. Peter Large's great run came to a shuddering halt against the top seed who showed a rare glimpse of his abilities.

♠ Holm, Kristian S. (IM 2491)

♜ Large, Peter G (IM 2311) A50

Scottish International Open  
Dunfermline 2024

1. c4 b6 2. ♘c3 ♙b7 3. d4 e6 4. a3 ♘f6 5. d5 ♙d6 6. ♘f3 0-0 7. ♙g5 ♖e8 8. h4 exd5 9. cxd5 ♘a6 10. e3 c6 11. ♙c4 ♘c7 12. dxc6 dxc6 13. ♚b3 ♚e7 14. 0-0-0 ♖ad8 15. ♘d4 ♙e5 16. ♘f5 ♚f8 17. ♖xd8 ♖xd8 18. ♙xf6 ♙xf6 19. ♘e4 ♘d5 20. ♙xd5 ♖xd5 21. ♘xf6+ gxf6

In this position material is level but Black's kingside weaknesses and White's piece activity are the most



22. e4 ♖c5+ 23. ♔b1 ♙c8 24. ♚g3+ ♔h8 25. ♘d6 ♙d7 26. ♖d1 Bringing the final piece to the party.

26... ♚e7 27. f4 ♙e6 28. ♘b7!



A deflection sacrifice prompting instant resignation: if

28... ♚xb7 29. ♖d8# and if the knight is refused the rook lands on d8 anyway. Clinical finishing from Holm.

1-0

Meanwhile, the following epic struggle all but decided the destination of this year's crown...

🏆 Greet, Andrew N (IM 2400)

🏆 Grant, Jonathan I M (2139)

Scottish International Open  
Dunfermline 2024

1.♘f3 d5 2.g3 ♘f6 3.♙g2 ♘c6  
4.d4 e6 5.0-0 ♙d6 6.c4 0-0  
7.♘bd2 a5 8.b3 ♘e4 9.♙b2 f5  
10.a3 ♙d7 11.♖c2 ♙e8 12.♞ad1  
♙h5 13.♞fe1 ♗f6 14.e3 g5 15.♞c1  
♞ad8 16.c5 ♙xf3 17.♘xf3 ♙e7  
18.♘e5 ♘xe5 19.dxe5 ♗g6 20.c6  
b6 21.f3 ♘c5 22.♙f1 ♞a8 23.♙d4  
f4 24.b4 ♗xc2 25.♞xc2 axb4  
26.axb4 ♘b3 27.♙h3 ♘xd4  
28.exd4 ♙f7 29.♞b1 ♞a4 30.♞cb2  
♞fa8 31.♙f1 ♞a1 32.♙d3 h6  
33.♙g2 ♞xb1 34.♞xb1 ♞a4  
35.♙h3 fxg3 36.hxg3 ♞xb4  
37.♞a1 ♞b3 38.♙h7 ♞a3 39.♞f1  
♙g7 40.♙b1 ♞c3



Black is 'completely' winning here – a pawn up and about to increase that with c6 hanging and d4 so weak. White's only hope is to somehow use the opposite coloured bishops to launch a desperate attack on the black king...

41.♙g4 ♞xc6 42.f4 ♞c4 43.f5  
♞xd4+ 44.♙h5 exf5 45.♙xf5



45...♞d2! The danger in Black's position is best illustrated by inserting 'random' moves for the second player and seeing what happens, viz: 45...b5?? 46.♙e6 ♙a3 47.♞f7+ ♙h8 48.♞d7 b4 49.♙g6 b3 50.♞h7# Jonathan's move defends against this threat.

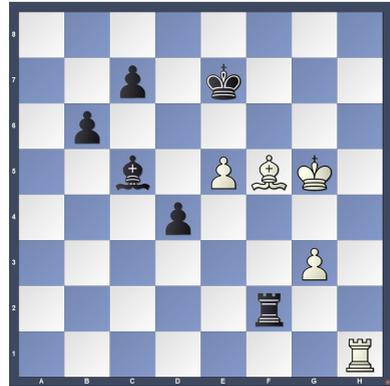
46.♙e6 ♞h2+ 47.♙g4 h5+ 48.♙f5  
♞d2 So far so accurate from Black.

49.♙d7

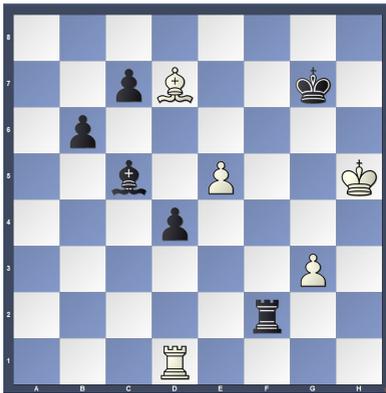
(see diagram next column)

49...♙c5? Not disastrous, yet, but the cold-blooded 49...♙f7 is the most accurate path to victory. 50.e6+? excludes the bishop from the game (50.♙e6+ ♗e8 and White's pieces block each other's attempts to break through to the black king.) 50...♙g7

♖b2 56.♖h1! ♖f2+ 57.♙g5



50.♙xg5 ♖f2 51.♖d1 d4  
52.♙xh5?!



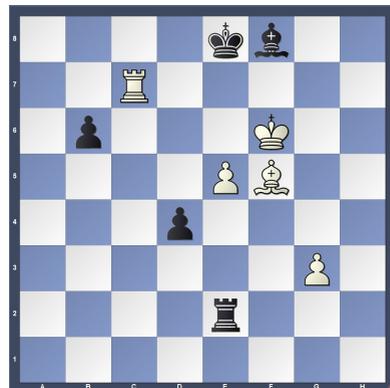
57...♖e2?? How often do we see the correct defensive idea played at the wrong time or too late?

Black can defend with the painful (it's never easy to give up on winning chances after having had such a position) 57...d3 58.♖h7+ ♙f8 59.♙xd3 ♖f7.

52.♙e8 is better but the move played is enough to make Black err badly.

58.♖h7+ ♙e8 59.♙f6 ♙f8  
60.♖xc7

52...♙f7? 52...♖e2 Again, Black should be forcing the e-pawn to advance, thus limiting White's piece mobility.



Of course, this is all very clear from the side of the board (as I was) and even more so afterwards with an engine running. During the game, as so often, nerves and clock pressure are the sworn enemy of logic and accuracy.

53.♙g4 ♙e7 54.♙f5 ♖e2 55.♙f4

1-0

A tragic end to a good game by Jonathan and a victory for Andrew that almost certainly ensured that the Scottish Championship trophy would be heading back with him to Glasgow.

## Round 9

I knew before this game that a win wouldn't be enough for the title even if Andrew Greet lost to Kristian Holm (his tiebreaks were so much better) but I reasoned it was worth taking some chances to perhaps bag some cash and a few extra Elo points.

♠ **Murdochy, Shivan (1932)**

♣ **Burnett, Andrew B (FM 2174)**

Scottish International Open  
Dunfermline 2024

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♙g7 4.e4  
d6 5.f3 0-0 6.♙e3 ♘c6 7.♘ge2  
a6 8.♚d2 ♘a5 9.♘c1 ♘d7  
10.♘b3



We reached this position quite quickly and it dawned on me that Shivan was following the game Berry - Burnett from the Edinburgh Chess Club BiCentenary IM event in 2022.

10...c5 There I played 10...♘xb3 11.axb3 e5 but the text is likely better. However, after...

11.dxc5 ♘xb3 12.axb3 I got confused and thought the Berry game had reached this position (it was, in fact, in my notes to the game) and that following 12...♘xc5 13.♚a3 I'd had few if any winning chances. One's memory is undoubtedly an enemy the older one gets (!) and here it 'forced' me to choose what I knew fine well was an inferior choice.

12...dxc5? 13.♙e2



13...♙xc3!! You can give this move any amount of question marks or exclaims that you like – complete 'beginner's error' or a

finely-judged attempt to change the course of the game? The latter is what I am claiming! The knight coming in to d5 was just too troublesome and I will somehow make it up to my dark-squared bishop with a slew of Dragon games in the future!

**14.bxc3** Shivan spent a long time on his reply, doubtless sensing there was at least some method to my apparent madness. **14.♖xc3 ♜e8** Black's plan is to play ...e5, followed by some version of ...Nf8–e6–d4. Later analysis shows that White can prevent all this, but at least I had a plan! (**14...e5 15.0–0–0 ♖e7 16.♞d5 b6 17.♞hd1 ♜e8 18.♞b1 ♞f8**) **15.0–0–0 ♖c7 16.h4 e5 17.h5 a5 18.g4**

**14...b6 15.0–0 ♖c7 16.f4?! This** could have waited; now Black has a target.

**16...♞b7 17.e5 ♜ad8 18.♖e1 f6?**



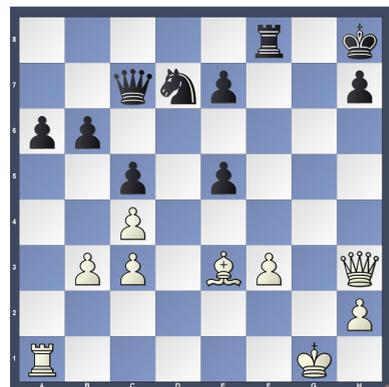
Typically overenthusiastic but I was by now keen to indulge in some hand-to-hand combat.

**19.♖h4 19.e6!** looks natural and is in fact quite strong, but there is always the fear that the pawn may later be lost or that Black can simply play around it.

**19...fxe5 20.f5 gxf5 21.♞xf5** Here **21.♞h6!** would have posed me some serious questions.

**21...♞xf5 22.♖g4+ ♔h8 23.♞xf5 ♞g8 24.♞f3 ♞f8 25.♖h3? 25.♖e6** keeps the damage to a minimum according to the engine (Stockfish 16) but it's perhaps more human to include the queen in the defence by now. **25...♞xf3 26.gxf3 ♞g8+ 27.♞h1**

**25...♞xf3 26.gxf3**

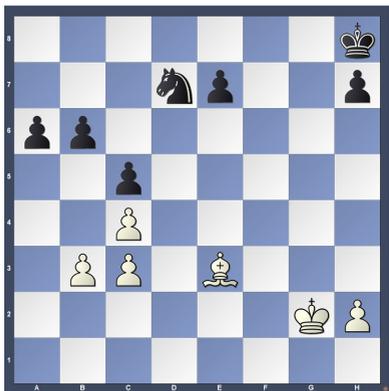


**26...e4!** I was very proud of myself for finding this move in advance. Black has the initiative and should try to open the position quickly.

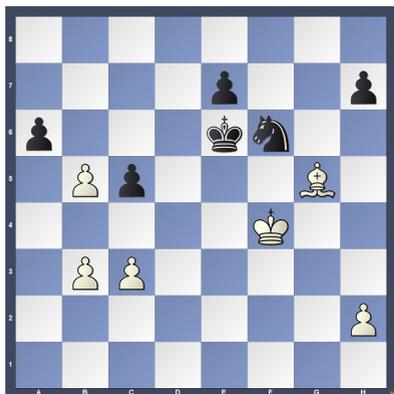
27.♖f1 27.f4 buries the bishop and Black can infiltrate via d3 and also g4.

27...♖g8+ 28.♔h1 exf3 29.♙xf3 ♖f8! 30.♙g2 ♖xf1+ 31.♙xf1 ♖c6+ 32.♙g2 ♙xg2+ 33.♔xg2

This is the position I was aiming for: A passed pawn up, Black ought to be winning this.



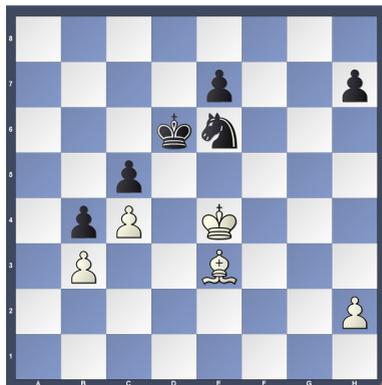
33...♔g7 34.♔f3 ♔f6 35.♔e4 ♔e6 36.♙g5 ♖f6+ 37.♔f4 b5 38.cxb5



38...axb5?

38...♖d5+ was much stronger, e.g. 39.♔g4 axb5 when my knight is better-placed than in the game. But my focus was on leaving White with a vulnerable pawn on b3 (or c3, after 40.♙d2 c4 41.bxc4 bxc4).

39.c4 b4 40.♙h4 ♖d7 41.♔e4 ♖f6+ 42.♔f4 ♔d6 43.♔f5 ♖h5

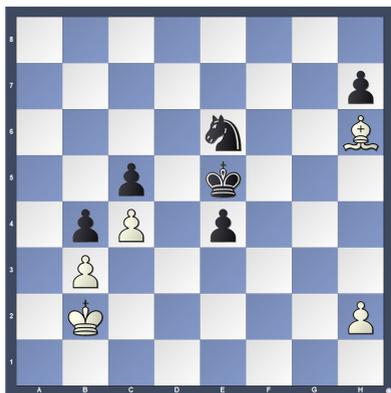


44.♙g5 ♖g7+ 45.♔e4 ♖e6 46.♙e3

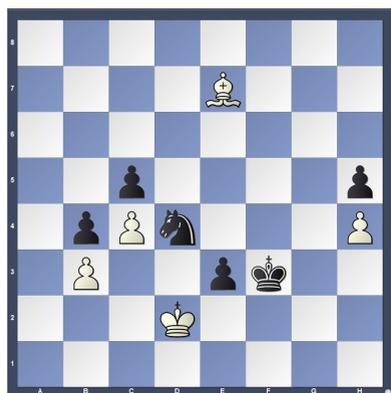
46...♖d8 The plan is very simple: manoeuvre the knight to a5/d4 to tie down White's king; advance the king and e-pawn through the centre; drag White's forces too far apart to defend.

47.♙f4+ ♔c6 48.♙g5 ♖b7 49.♔d3 ♔d6 50.♙f4+ e5 51.♙g5 ♖a5 52.♔c2 ♖c6 53.♙h6 ♖d4+ 54.♔b2 e4 55.♙f8+ ♔c6 56.♙h6 ♖e6 57.♔c2 ♔d6 58.♔b2 ♔e5

(see diagram next column)



59.♙e3 ♚f5 60.♚c2 ♜g4 61.♚d2  
 ♙f3 62.h4 h5 63.♙g5 ♞d4  
 64.♙e7 e3+



and White gave up the ghost.

**0-1**

While I was grinding out this win, Andrew Greet had accepted a draw from a position of strength, winning the Scottish Championship title for a second time.

Congratulations to Andrew who will soon be striding out as top board for Scotland's Open team in the upcoming Olympiad in Budapest.

He would, however, have to share top spot in the Open category with Peter Large, who defeated Roddy McKay, while your scribe had somehow taken outright 3<sup>rd</sup> place on the podium.

### International Open

#### Final results

1= IM Peter Large ENG 7/9

IM Andrew Greet SCO 7/9

**2024 Scottish Champion - Andrew Greet**

3. FM Andrew Burnett SCO 6.5/9

#### Grading Prizes

**U2000** Rithvik Deepak Ambattu SCO 5.5/9, Ross Blackford SCO 5.5/9

**U1850** Yannick Woods IRL 5/9, Devesh Sharma SCO 5/9



**Kingsbarns Distillery's Gonzalo Forero presents Scottish International Open winner, IM Peter Large, with his trophy**



**Nothing would happen without organisers, arbiters, live boards experts and other volunteers! From l-r: IA Alex McFarlane, David Clayton, Thor Saemundsson, Jenny Wilson, Ruairidh McKay and Glynis Grant**

There were plenty of other events going on throughout the week-long festival, with the weekday tournament being prominent.

It was won by Irish player Vjekoslav Novak on 6/7. Here is one of his most interesting games...

♣ **Novak, Vjekoslav (1776)**

♣ **Kerridge, Simon (1698) A00**

Scottish Weekday U1800  
Dunfermline 2024

1.f4 g6 2.e4 ♘g7 3.d4 c6 4.♞f3  
d5 5.e5



Black has played a Gurgenzidze system, though it usually also involves playing ...h5. White stakes out space but Black hopes to play around the White pawn structure and snipe away at it when allowed.

5...♞g4 6.♞d3

6.♞e3 e6 7.♞bd2 is the recommended setup for White. Not having played Nc3 has its advantages.

1.e4 g6 2.d4 ♞g7 3.♞c3 c6 4.f4  
d5 5.e5 h5 6.♞f3 ♞g4 7.♞e3 ♞h6  
8.h3 ♞xf3 9.♞xf3 ♞f5 10.♞f2 h4



(analysis diagram)

... is the standard way of playing this system as Black, although White is of course still somewhat better after 11.♞d3 e6 12.0-0

6...e6 7.0-0 ♞b6 8.c3 ♞e7 9.h3  
♞f5 10.g4 10.♞xf5 ♞xf5 11.g4  
♞e7 12.a4 a5 13.b3 is similar to  
the game.

10...♞xd3 11.♞xd3 ♞d7 12.a4  
0-0 12...a5 preventing White's  
queenside expansion is likely better.

13.a5 ♞c7

(see diagram next column)



Ireland's Vjekoslav Novak: convincing winner of the Weekday tournament but edged into second in the Weekend Open



**14.b3** 14.b4 is another way to play, with the main idea being a rook swing from a2 to the kingside.

**14...fxc8** Black should try one of his thematic pawn breaks, 14...c5 or 14...f6

**15.f3** 15.b4! again makes sense.

**15...c5** **16.f3** **17.a3** **18.fxc5** **19.b4** **20.cxb4** **21.d8** **22.fg5** **23.c6** **24.d6** **25.f8**



The all-seeing engine (SF16) says that this position is roughly equal, with Black's extra pawn balanced by White's kingside initiative.

**21.fxf7!?** This shouldn't really work says the engine but fortune often favours the brave in games between humans!

**21.f3** **22.fxd6** **23.exd6** **24.f8** **25.e5** **26.fxe5** **27.dxc4** is one of its logical 0.00 suggestions (perhaps proclamations is a better description!).

**21...fxf7** **22.f5** **23.gxf5** **24.gxf5** **25.g5+** **26.fh1**



**24...f7??** **24...fxd6** was apparently forced and after **25.fxe6+** **26.c4** White should find the attack against the black king going.

**25.fxe6+** **25.f3** was better, e.g. **25...g3** **26.fxe6+** **27.fxe6** **28.fh7**

**25...fxe6** **26.fh7** **27.fg6??**



... and here the game ended, either by resignation or a loss on time (someone please let me know!).

**1-0**

One potential finish would be: 26...♙g7 Covering the f6-square is Black's only attempt at defence. 27.♚h4 ♘f5 28.♖xf5 ♚xf5 29.♖f1 winning.

### Weekday U1800

1. Vjekoslav Novak IRL 6/7
2. Jordan McNaught SCO 5.5/7
3. James Graham SCO 5/7

### Grading Prizes

**U1700:**

Simon Kerridge SCO 4/7, Humam Al Dakl Alla SCO 4/7, Nigel Collins ENG 4/7

**U1450**

Aiden McNally SCO 4.5/7

There was also a weekender on the schedule, which many players tacked on to their Weekday involvement. Mr Novak was one of those, but this time he had to settle for 2nd= alongside Jordan McNaught, behind winner Prateek Wadhwa from India.

### Weekend Congress

- 1 Prateek Wadhwa IND 4.5/5
2. Jordan McNaught SCO 4/5
3. Vjekoslav Novak IRL 4/5

### Grading Prizes

**U1780:**

Laurentiu Archip SCO 3.5/5

**U1650:**

Matthew Dougherty IRL 3/5



India's Prateek Wadhwa was another visitor who triumphed, here receiving his Weekend Open winner's bonus prize from Kingsbarns Distillery's Gonzalo Forero



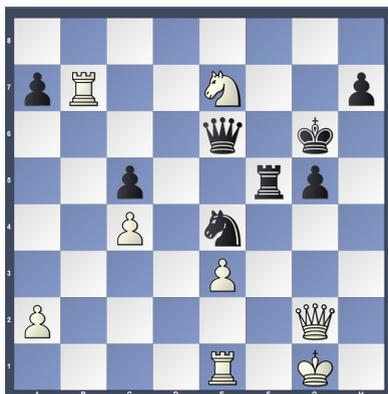
Prizewinners in the Scottish Boys and Girls Championships

Wadhwa, Prateek (1785)

Innes, David

Scottish Weekender  
Dunfermline 2024

Position after 34...g5



and that's a nasty fork that ends all serious resistance.

38...♔f6 39.♘xf5 ♔xf5 40.♙h3+  
g4 41.♙xh7+ ♕g6 42.♖f7+ ♘f6  
43.♖f1+ ♔g5 44.♙xg6+

1-0

Fine play has given Prateek a winning advantage; all that remains is to find a way to simplify matters to avoid any unpleasant surprises.

**35.f5!** This avoids any silliness involving the opening of the g-file against White's king and queen.

**35...♖xf5 35...♙xf5 36.♖f1** wins.

**36.♖b8+ ♔g7 37.♖b7+ ♔g6 37... ♔f8 38.♖e7** wins the knight, and **37...♖f7 38.♖xf7+ ♔xf7 39.♖b1** also wins.

**38.♘e7+**

(see diagram next column)

### Boys/Girls Championship

**Top Boy:** Nikodem Ford POL 5/5

**Top Girl:** Anika Munshi SCO 3/5,  
Netra Gaikwad SCO 3/5

2nd: Alan Kovalevskij SCO 4/5

3rd: Prithvi Nathan SCO 3/5,  
Maksymilian Skarlosz POL 3/5

### Grading Prizes

**U800:** Ross Warcup SCO 3/5

**U500:** Ainesh Prabhu SCO 2/5



**Nikodem Ford (and not Connor Thompson as the nameplate might suggest!) scored a perfect 5/5 in the Scottish Boys Championship.**

According to Edinburgh Chess Academy on their FB group: “A big well done to Nikodem Ford who won the Scottish Boys/Girls Championships with a perfect score of 5/5! Nikodem has been joining our online group classes from Poland each week and it was lovely seeing him visiting Scotland and competing during his summer holidays.”

As with Peter Large in the Open, however, Nikodem was ineligible for the title itself, which instead goes to Alan Kovalevskij, who finished on 4/5. Anika Munshi and Netra Gaikwad share the Girls title with 3/5 and hopefully we will see them both play in the Scottish Women’s Championship, which makes a reappearance on the calendar later this year!

# Forgotten Genius

The Life and Games of Grandmaster  
Dragoljub Velimirovic

Volume 2

Georg Mohr

Ana Velimirovic - Zorica



Thinkers Publishing

# PUZZLE CORNER



WITH ADAM BREMNER

**W**atching the Scottish Championships, safe from the comfort of my sofa, [writes Adam Bremner](#), there were some games and positions that seemed quite instructive to me. So here is the first in perhaps a few articles where I can share some thoughts that might be of use to players looking to improve, or failing that, at least give a few puzzles to solve.

The idea is I will give some positions here, and your task is to find the best move. Not necessarily the winning move, not necessarily a stunning combination, but just simply the best move. Try and spend some time to get to an answer, then we will discuss

a theme. Armed with this, you can then reattempt the positions if you didn't solve them at first, hopefully making things easier second time around, before we go on to the solutions.

1

**Wilson - Cook**  
**(SCO champ 2024, round 7)**



Black is clearly winning, but what's the best way to continue?

3

**Thompson - Nield**  
**(SCO champ 2024, round 9)**



What is Black's correct path to equality?

2

**R.Giulian - Holm**  
**(SCO champ 2024, round 2)**



How can Black show an advantage?

One of the very first things we learn in chess is to always first consider checks, captures, and moves that threaten stuff. I'm sure this is not revolutionary to anyone reading, but sometimes we tend to do this very well for ourselves, but badly for our opponent. Why is that?

Well, generally all the tactics we do are "to play and win", which not just tells us to look for some forcing line, but also that there is going to always be a solution to every defence. If you take all these puzzles back a move, they could be instead called "White/Black to play and blunder the game".

But I don't think a collection of those would sell very well.

Essentially, when we make a move, we need to make sure and consider our opponent's checks, captures and forcing moves. Sometimes, their best move won't be any of these, but it's important to at least exclude them. Let's have a look at this theme in practice.

♣ **McCusker, Andrew**

♣ **McGillivray, Calum**

(SCO Champ 2024, round 1)



The game so far has been well played by both sides. White is certainly the one pressing, having sacrificed a pawn on h5 to split the structure. Ra1 or Rh1 look decent moves to continue, but unfortunately all the hard work is about to be for nothing.

### 37. Bxf5 Bxf5 0-1

Wait, what? Suddenly it's clear that White can't recapture, because of ...Rf8 mate! So what happened here? Well, it's most likely that White assumed after 37.Bxf5 that Black would reply with 37...Rf8 first, allowing e4. Of course, White will have considered Black just taking back as in the game, but probably just stopped there, agonisingly missing the mate coming out of nowhere. When the game is all one way traffic, it can be hard to remember our opponent can still carry a real threat. Now it wouldn't be fair to only give other people's examples here, so why not have one of my own more painful recent examples.

♣ **Pein, Jonathan**

♣ **Bremner, Adam**

(Psyon Chess 2023, round 4)





games often, make sure to slow down at the critical moments and consider the forcing moves, so one of them doesn't come as a nasty surprise.

Finally, one last example which was internet famous recently at the highest level.

♣ **Caruana, Fabiano**

♣ **Firouzja, Alireza**

**(CrunchLabs Masters 2024)**



Now this was a rapid game between two of the world's best, which in part explains the following. Caruana here, to play, currently has a rook hanging on h1.

**8. dxc6 Bxh1? 9. Rxa7!**

**1-0**

9 moves and it's all over. The problem is when Black takes back on a7, White pushes the pawn, makes a queen and the game comes quickly with it.

What I find most odd, is did Firouzja really believe that Caruana had just hung a rook? If you take the position after ...Bxh1 and apply our checklist, you find only 4 moves:

- cxb7 (a capture),
- Nxf7 (a capture),
- c7 (a move that threatens stuff) and
- Rxa7 (a capture).

It's quite easy to dismiss the first 3, and then when you look at Rxa7... oh wow, that stings. Obviously I wouldn't dream of trying to tell Firouzja how to play chess, but it just shows the power of fully checking our opponent's forcing moves.

So, back to the puzzles above. In all of them there was some forcing line, but the big question is, did you fully check your opponent's replies, and did you come to the correct conclusion? There was something hidden in each of them, so the main goal is to have correctly considered the opponent's moves.

Feel free to go back and have another look at the positions above before looking at the solutions if you want to double check things...



**Adam Bremner: our new columnist challenges you to find the 'best move'**

## Puzzle Corner Solutions

1

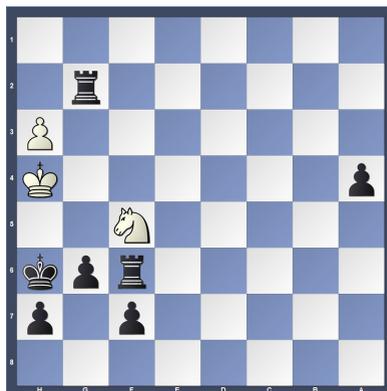
**Wilson - Cook  
(SCO champ 2024, round 7)**



To understand the "best" move, we first need to consider the most obvious move Rxf6. In theory, we would

be further simplifying a winning position, but is it good?

42... Rxf6? as played by Black in the game. 43. Nxf2? Unfortunately missing the same move as Black missed... which was 43. Nf5+!



At first it looks ridiculous, until you realise that White can only move the knight, Black's king is stuck, and however Black recaptures, it's stalemate.

So the real aim of this puzzle was to notice this stalemate trick by checking your opponent's replies. Once you see that, any move that doesn't allow this trick is good, but best is probably **42... Kg7**. It's the most human way to continue as it stops Nf5+ ever being a problem as in theory Black would no longer only have to capture a knight landing on f5, but also let Black move the king, limiting the tricks.

**14... Ng4!** A great move laced with too many threats to handle. Notice that the queen on e5 and the bishop on f4 are attacked, and if White tries to save the queen while defending the bishop with Qc7, Black can just take with Qxc7 Bxc7, and f2 now falls.

But part 2 of the puzzle is to make sure and consider White's forcing replies, which would be:

- Bxh7+ (a check and a capture),
- Qh5 (a move that threatens stuff).
- Bxh7+ is met by just Kxh7 and after Qh5+ Nh6, Black is material up.

This only leaves what we had in the game.

**15. Qh5 Rxf4 16. Qxh7+ Kf8 17. Qh8+ Ke7 18. Qxg7+ Kd6**

## 2

### R.Giulian - Holm (SCO champ 2024, round 2)



There are two parts to this puzzle really. The first part is to see Black's best move, and the second is to have considered White's replies correctly.



and the king escapes, leaving Black with a winning position.

Again, the point of this is that to play 14...Ng4, we need to have considered both of these lines, and Qh5 looks particularly scary. However, if we follow the forcing line through a few moves, we can play ...Ng4 comfortable that it is winning, rather than leaving the result to chance.

3  
**Thompson - Nield**  
 (SCO champ 2024, round 9)



There are a lot of captures going on here. If you said 13...Nxe6 then yes, that is a decent move. White would respond with g3, blunting the bishop on d6 and retaining a small advantage through having the bishop pair and better structure. However, Black can fully equalise here with some precise moves.

**13... Bxh2+ 14. Kh1** A nice intermezzo, textbook stuff really. There are now three ways to recapture on e6, but does it matter which?

**14... Rxe6?** Unfortunately, yes. 14... Nxe6 would completely equalise here as after 15. Bxh7+ Kh8



16. Bd3 Bf4 we are level on material and the dark squared bishop will be exchanged rather than blunted. There's obviously still play left, but Black is not worse.

**15. f4!** The problem. Indirectly threatening the bishop on h2. This move needs to be seen when playing ...Bxh2.



**15... Bg3 16. Rf3 Bh4 17. g3 Bxg3 18. Rxg3** and White went on to win. 1-0

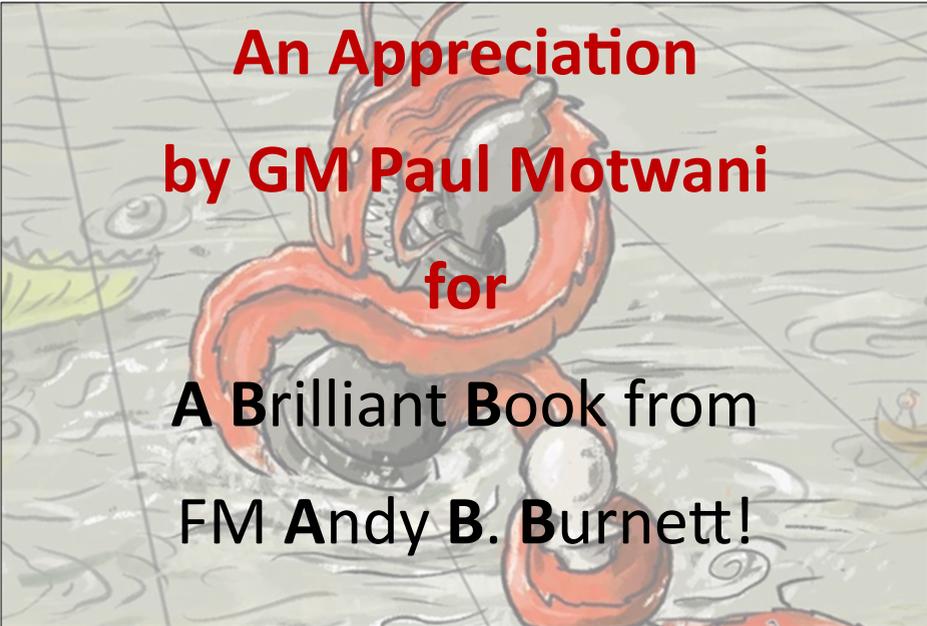
# DRAGON MASTERS

The Life and Times of the Fiercest Opening in Chess  
Volume 1



Andrew Burnett

  
Thinkers Publishing



**An Appreciation**  
**by GM Paul Motwani**  
**for**  
**A Brilliant Book from**  
**FM Andy B. Burnett!**

**D**ear Chess Enthusiasts,  
I have always loved Chess games showing beautiful positional play leading up to elegant finishes involving crisp combinations and sizzling sacrifices!

Andrew Burnett's *Dragon Masters* (Volume 1, released this year by Thinkers Publishing, Belgium) is a mega-treat of just over 400 pages packed with 73 wonderful games, flowing annotations, lucid ideas, and captivating historical details that let readers see how the Sicilian Dragon 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3

d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6 has evolved since the first recorded appearances of it dating back at least 173 years to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

In the late 1990s, I devoted a whole chapter of *S.T.A.R. Chess* to the Sicilian Dragon, but for personal and stylistic reasons I have so far only really played the opening for Black in the accelerated form 2...Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 g6 or the hyper-accelerated form 2...g6!?. I have literally dozens of unpublished games that were pri-

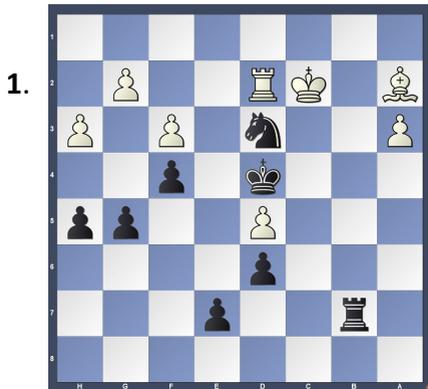
vate training, sparring encounters at home involving top engines. Andy's super book may well help me to play the Dragon in some league matches and tournament games...If so, I hope that the moves will be good ones! Phil Giu-lian swears that he saw someone else playing some of 'my' moves at this year's British Champion-ship!



**Paul Motwani, Scotland's first GM**

For now, I offer you three fun puzzles based on positions which arose in a trio of my training games. **2.**

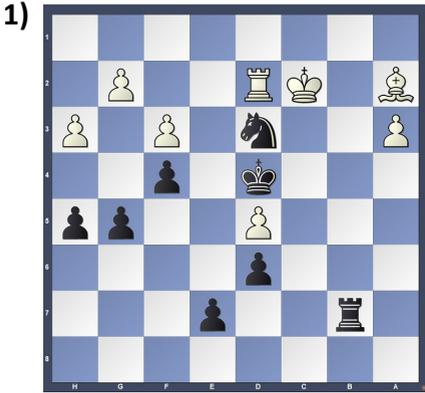
**In all cases, it's Black to play and win by force.**



**3.**



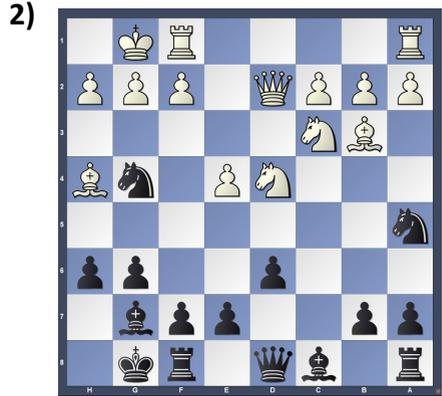
# Chess Puzzle Solutions



1...Rc7+ 2. Kb3 (2 Kd1 Rc1+ 3 Ke2 Re1#) 2...Rc3+ 3. Ka4 Ke3!



4. Rd1 Nb2+, a fatal fork.



1...Bxd4! 2. Qxd4 Nxb3 3. axb3 e5!



4. Bxd8 exd4 wins for Black because White's pieces on c3 and d8 are simultaneously *en prise*.

3)



1...Qa8+! 2 Kb1 Qxe4+ 3 Kc1 (3  
Ka2 Ra8+ mates) 3...Rc8+



... branches principally into 4 Kd1  
Bg4 or 4 Nc3 dxc3 5 Rxd7 cxb2++  
6 Kxb2 Qc2+ 7 Ka3 Ra8+ 8 Kb4  
Rb8+ with typically decisive  
attacks when the Dragon is on  
fire!

If you get into adventures with  
the Dragon, you can be sure that  
your games won't drag on!

**An important cautionary note to**

**finish:** In the Yugoslav Attack  
main line 1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4  
cxd4 4 .Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 g6 6. Be3  
Bg7 7. f3 Nc6 8. Qd2 0-0 9. Bc4  
Bd7, Black needs to be particular-  
ly alert if White (instead of 10. 0-0  
-0) starts attacking immediately  
with 10 h4!?, which Scotland's IM  
Craig Pritchett employed to notch  
up a cracking win over GM Jan  
Plachetka at Decin 1974. Black  
should play 10...h5, but in the  
game 10...Qb8?! was answered  
powerfully by 11 h5!. I include the  
full game for you to enjoy. At  
move 14, modern chess engines  
show that 14. g4 Nf6 15 .Qh2 is  
even stronger for White than the  
actual continuation, but Craig's  
performance was still rather im-  
pressive...

♣ Pritchett, Craig

♣ Plachetka, Jan

Decin 1974

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4  
4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 g6 6.♙e3 ♙g7  
7.f3 ♘c6 8.♚d2 0-0 9.♙c4 ♙d7  
10.h4



10...♚b8?! 10...h5! The Soltis variation, one of the sharpest opening lines in chess.

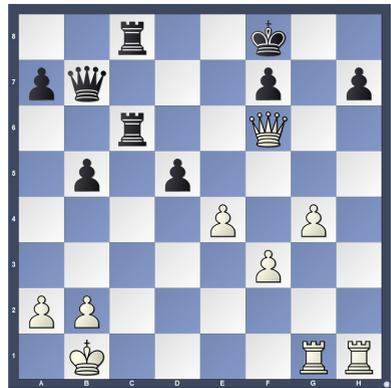
11.h5! ♗xh5 12.0-0-0 b5 13.♙d5  
♜c8



14.♗xc6 ♙xc6 15.♙xc6 ♜xc6  
16.♗d5 ♚b7 17.g4 ♗f6 18.♙h6  
♜ac8 19.♗b4 ♜c4 20.♙xg7 ♙xg7  
21.♚h6+ ♙g8 22.♗d5



22...♙xc6+ 23.♙b1 ♜c6 24.♜dg1  
g5 25.♚xg5+ ♙f8 26.♗xf6 exf6  
27.♚xf6 d5



28.♚h8+ ♙e7 29.♚e5+ ♜e6 30.♚g5+  
♙e8 31.♜xh7 1-0

With very best wishes as always,

Paul Motwani.



**L**ike so many, I was greatly saddened to learn of Graham Morrison's all too early passing earlier this year, writes [IM Craig Pritchett](#). On checking the databases, I was surprised to learn that we had first played in the 1977 Scottish Championship, in Glasgow. I last played him at the 2022 Scottish Championship, in Edinburgh. Quite a timespan!

Fulsome tributes were paid to included a deeply researched and Graham in the June issue of the sound grasp of chess openings. CS Magazine. Let me add a further memory. What better than to celebrate another of his many excellent games, on which I was on the receiving end! Graham was a fine player, whose many strengths

He worked extremely hard especially on this aspect of his game, which made him a tough opponent at all times. He was equally personable and always pleased to discuss his games in lengthy, al-

ways completely friendly and objective post-mortems. We shared and both learned a lot from our discussion of the following game.

♠ Pritchett, Craig William (2291)

♣ Morrison, Graham (2326) B84

4NCL  
Birmingham 2005

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4  
4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 ♔c7 6.♙e2  
a6 7.0-0 ♘f6 8.♖h1



This may not be a critical line but it often deters opponents from playing 8...Bb4 (because of the possible, though perhaps not objectively dangerous reply 9.Bg5), an ambitious move that still has a sound reputation after the more theoretically usual 8.Be3. Graham lost little time in transposing into a main line of the Classical Scheveningen, which is also, of course, perfectly playable.

8...♙e7 9.f4 d6 10.a4 0-0 11.♙f3  
♘d7 12.♘b3 b6 13.g4



There are a great many alternatives for both sides in this complex early middlegame. White needn't attempt to play ambitiously like this in an attempt to commandeer early oodles of kingside space but may also develop his forces more cautiously to reinforce a certain grip in the centre.

13...♖e8 14.g5 ♙f8 15.♙g2 ♘b7  
16.f5



And I'm no longer at all sure about the wisdom of playing this move so early. While it does gain space and often occurs in such positions (gaining control of e5, on its own, doesn't always compensate fully, for a certain cramp in Black's game), White's plan won't necessarily lead to a wholly convincing kingside breakthrough either. With best play, Black's defence is likely to be extraordinarily tough.

I rather prefer the more flexible plan of playing Rf3–h3, with the idea of Qh5 (sometimes Qe1–h4), which goes very far back, at least to the late-1970s and early-1980s. Even though Anatoly Karpov lost the famous final 24th game against Garry Kasparov, with a similar plan, in their 1985 world championship match, matters are still not entirely transparent.

16...♘de5 17.♙f4 g6 18.♚e2  
 ♖ac8 19.♗ae1 ♞a5



One of my problems, moreover, was psychological. Going back to the 1970s, I've been more commonly associated (and not unsuccessfully) with the defence in such positions. Graham was certainly aware of that.



IM Craig Pritchett was the author of one of the first books focusing on the Scheveningen variation of the Sicilian.

The text-move is a common resource, based on many well-worn examples where an exchange of knights on a5 both lightens Black's defensive load and opens up lines of potential queenside counterattack that fully compensate for Black's doubled a-pawns (which cannot easily be got at by White).

20. ♖xa5 bxa5 21. ♖f2!?



21... ♗g7!? Engines (don't they always, these days!) draw attention to the interesting, dynamic alternative 21...exf5 22.exf5 ♖g4 and if 23. ♖g3 gxf5 24.h3 ♖xe1 25. ♖xe1 ♗xg2+ 26. ♖xg2 ♖e5 Graham's move aims at drawing White's pawn to f6, thereby evading a possible future fxe6, which might (not at all guaranteed) offer a vulnerable point of attack for White, on e6.

22.f6 ♗f8 23. ♗c1 ♖c5 24. ♖g3 ♖b4 25.h4 h5



This move, in conjunction with Black's next move, is another important resource, which ironically I've also often played myself. Black creates a powerful defensive blockade that, even at the nominal cost of a pawn, makes White's attacking plans difficult. I no longer trusted my game, though I can surely still 'defend', and Graham was playing with what seemed to be a calmly, well-informed nonchalance.

Some engines may give White an edge in such positions, due to White's extra material and space. Don't necessarily trust them!

26.gxh6 ♖h7 27.h5 ♖c5  
28.hxg6+ ♖xg6 29. ♗f3 ♖ec8 30.  
♖e2 ♖xc3



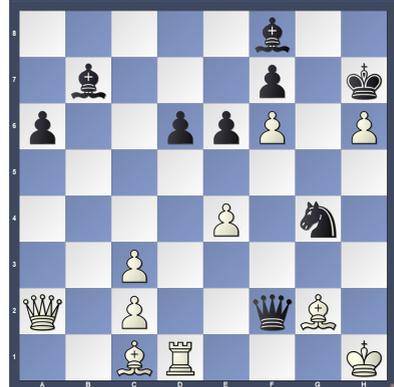
Such exchange sacrifices are also always in the air in such positions. Black wrecks White's queenside pawns and obtains doubled, passed a-pawns. It isn't so much whether such sacrifices lead to 'forced wins' as how much easier they tend to be to play for the at-

tacker. Graham was completely within his element. I flounder!

31. bxc3 ♖xa4 32. ♖e1 ♖c4  
33. ♖g1 ♖c6 34. ♙d2 a4



35...a3 36. ♖a5 ♖a4 37. ♖xa4 ♖xa4  
38. ♖a1 a2 39. ♙c1 ♘e5 40. ♙g2  
♖b5 41. ♖e1 ♘g4 42. ♖xa2 ♖h5+  
43. ♙g1 ♖c5+ 44. ♙h1 ♖f2  
45. ♖d1



35. ♖g5? I had also run too short of time. This rather desperate attempt to stop Black's advancing a-pawn from a5 only ends up tying my queen in most abject queenside defensive knots and leaving my kingside bereft. I should probably have tried 35. ♖g3 and if 35...a3 36. ♖ee1 a2 37. ♙h5 which (at last!) poses a serious threat, which may be enough to slow Black's attack down and offer some chances of holding.

45...d5 Black actually wins most quickly by playing 45...♖h4+ 46. ♙g1 ♖h2+ 47. ♙f1 ♖g3 and if 48. ♖d2 (or if 48. ♙g1 ♙xe4) 48...♖h2+ 49. ♙g1 ♘f3+ and mates. But the text-move, enabling Black's erstwhile dormant, dark square bishop to enter the final attack, is equally deadly. White will be mated.

46. ♖a5 ♙c5 47. ♙g5 ♖g3

0-1



# World Senior Team Chess Championships 2024



The historic Polish city of Krakow played host to this year's WSTCC, with Scotland once again sending teams to both sections of the increasingly-popular event. The 50+ team reports were a daily topic on the Chess Scotland website – you can find them [here](#). Meanwhile, our 65+ team kept their daily efforts for the magazine. Read on..!

## 65+ Krakow Team Report

by Rob McAndrew

The Scotland 65+ team, Alastair White, Raj Bhopal, Alan Scrimgour, Ian Marks and Rob McAndrew, started with a 0.5 - 3.5 loss in Round 1 to a very strong German team, Board 4 rating 2100.

Raj lost to Hans Joachim Vatter, who after long thought found two successive only moves to win. Alan lost his

only game in the tournament to Gerhard Kiefer, who went on to score 7/8, as against Alan's 5.5 out of 8. (Alan's score would have been even better had he not missed a mate in two in Round 6). Alan maintained an edge as White in a c3 Sicilian until move 25, when he could have sacrificed a bishop to win, but instead gave up the exchange, and he then slipped from a complicated but level game into a lost ending.

As reported by Tim Harding, Scotland salvaged a draw on Board 4. A fuller story is that having earlier defanged his opponent's Four Pawns Attack, your scribe, Rob, sacrificed a rook, but then missed a mate in one, and both players were relieved to see the game end with perpetual check.

In Round 2, Scotland beat Poland Women 2.5 - 1.5, the only loss being Alastair, who stood better against his WFM opponent, but failed to cope with the tactics of a relentless attack.

In **Round 3** against Sweden, Rob again averted a whitewash, by holding an endgame a pawn down. Alastair lost on Board 1 to the Swedish IM Nils-Gustaf Renman (former two-time European Senior individual champion). Alastair played creatively and had at one point a winning attack, but could not overcome his opponent's resolute defence. Result 0.5 - 3.5.

In **Round 4**, we lost 1-3 to another strong German team, Board 4 rating 2089. Alastair drew on Board 1 against GM Lothar Vogt, and Alan

drew on Board 2, but Ian and Rob both lost. On Board 4, Rob played Nd4 against the e4 of the reverse Alapin, and both players went astray as soon as they were out of theory. Rob failed to follow up a correct exchange sacrifice, and lost his only game of the tournament.



**Scotland's 65+ team captain Rob McAndrew**

**Round 5** was a tragedy for Alastair, in his first game against a non-titled player. Alastair's sacrificial attack against Black's kingside castled king drove it into a mating net on f3,

where Alastair had a forced mate in four, but he played too quickly and blundered to allow an exchange of queens, and the mating net vanished. As Alastair said, this game could have been his 'immortal'.

♠ White, Alastair F (2022)

♣ Fletcher, John T (2007)

WSTCC 65+  
Krakow 2024

1. ♖f3 d5 2. d4 ♘f6 3. e3

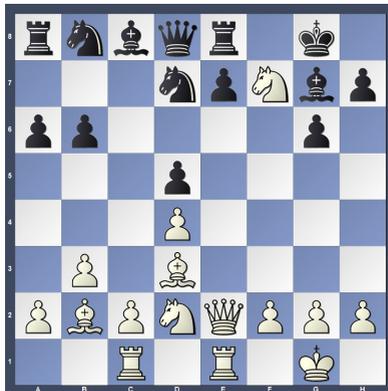


Not my usual style but I had prepared this well for this particular opponent.

3...g6 4. ♘d3 ♘g7 5. 0-0 0-0  
6. ♘bd2 ♘bd7 7. b3 c5 8. ♘b2  
cxd4 9. exd4 b6? Rather pointless  
and creating white square weaknesses

10. ♖e1 ♘b8 11. ♙e2 ♖e8 12. ♘e5

a6 13. ♖ac1 ♘fd7? 14. ♘xf7!



14... ♙xf7 15. ♙e6+ ♙f8 16. ♙xd5  
♖a7 17. ♘c4 e6 18. ♖xe6 ♘f6



19. ♘a3+? Not best. Re7! is a much better way to win.

19... ♙g7 20. ♖ce1 ♖xe6 21. ♖xe6  
b5 22. ♖xf6! ♙xf6 23. ♙g8+

(see diagram next column)

All Black's moves are now forced and mate is inevitable (theoretically).



23...♔h6 24.♘e4 ♕f4 25.g3 ♕xe4  
 26.♙c1+ ♔h5 27.♕xh7+ ♔g4  
 28.♗h4+ ♔f3



Now it should be simple. Be2+ or Bd5 both force mate in 5. But with plenty of time I unaccountably made the biggest blunder of my life.

29.♙f1?? ♕xh4 30.gxh4 ♘f6  
 31.h3

0-1

Raj and Alan both won. As White in a Panov Botvinnik, against Anthony

Hughes, Alan obtained a classic aggressive position... with Bb1, Ne5, Qd3 and Bg5. When Alan moved his queen to h3 and Black played ...h6, the Bxh6 sacrifice was killing. Black had to give up too much material to avoid mate. Let's see it in full...

♘ Scrimgour, Alan (1979)

♙ Hughes, Anthony (1905)

WSTCC 65+  
 Krakow 2024

This game was played in Round 5 of the World Seniors Team event. Having lost 3 of the previous matches a win against Wales looked necessary to avoid the bye.

1.e4 c6 Previously I had met Tony Hughes playing for Wimbledon.

2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 ♘f6 5. ♘c3 ♘c6 6.♙g5 dxc4



This knocked me off my stride, as although this is as common as e6, I had never faced this move before. I spent a lot of time trying to remember the lines after giving up a pawn with Bxc4:

7. ♖xc4 e6 8. ♘f3 ♙e7 9. 0-0 0-0  
 10. ♖e1 a6 11. ♖c1 b5 12. ♙d3 ♘b7  
 13. ♙b1



13... ♘b4 Tony was critical of this move after the game as it allowed Ne5, preferring Rc8.

14. ♘e5 ♘bd5 15. ♙d3 Now I am almost threatening to take on d5 and f6 except that the queen recapture on d5 threatens mate on g2.

15... ♖c8 16. ♙h3 Now I have covered g2. If 16. ♘d5 ♙xd5 17. ♙xf6?? ♙xg2#

16... h6 16... g6 17. ♙h6 Tony had spotted the mate after Re8 but didn't want to give up the exchange. 17... ♖e8?



(analysis diagram)

(17... ♘xc3 18. bxc3 ♙a3 19. ♖cd1 ♖e8 (19... ♙a5 20. ♙h4 ♙e7 21. ♙xf8 ♖xf8 22. ♖d3 is slightly better for White) 20. ♙g5±) 18. ♘xf7! ♙xf7 19. ♙xe6#.

17. ♙xh6 At this stage in the match two of my team seemed to be clearly winning. I was sure that I had a perpetual at least which would win the match for us.

17... g6 18. ♙xh6



There are a lot of nice winning lines after Black's various at-

tempts. I don't claim to have seen them all.

**18...♗xc3** 18...♖e8 Is the best defence but still loses 19.♖g5+ ♕h8 (19...♕f8 20.♗d7+!! Clears the e5 square 20...♖xd7 (20...♗xd7 21.♖h6+ ♕g8 22.♖h7+ ♕f8 23.♖h8#) 21.♖h6+ ♕g8 22.♖e5 ♗e4 23.♖xe4 wins) 20.♗xf7#; 18...b4 19.♗c6!! Clearing e5 square 19...♗c6 20.♖e5 ♗e4 21.♖h5 wins; 18...♖a5 19.♗c6!! ♗xc3 20.♗xe7#

**19.♖xc3** 19.♖g5+ ♕h8 20.♖xc3 ♖xc3 21.♖h6+ ♕g8 22.bxc3 ♖d5 23.♖g5+ ♕h8 24.f3 is similar to the game.

**19...♖xc3 20.bxc3 ♖d5** At this point in the match one of our 'wins' became a loss and I now needed to win.

**21.♖g5+ ♕h8 22.f3**

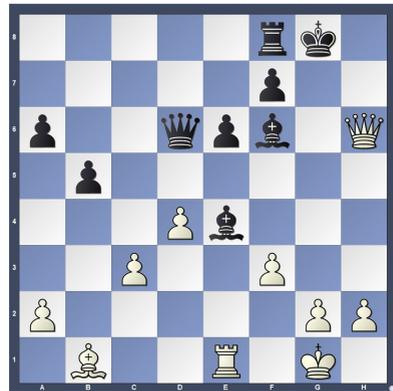


This is the clearest win, threatening to use the e4-square.

**22...♖d6** 22...♗g8 23.♖h5+ ♕g7 24.♖h7+ ♕f6 25.♖h8+ ♕g5 26.f4+ ♕xf4 27.g3+ ♕g5 28.♖h4#; 22...♗c6 23.♖h6+ ♕g8 24.♗g4 ♖h5 25.♗xf6+ wins.

**23.♖h6+ ♕g8 24.♗g4 ♗e4** 24...♗e4 25.♗xe4 f5 26.♖g6+ (26.♗xb7 also wins) 26...♕h8 27.♗xb7 fxg4 28.♖xe6 wins.

**25.♗xf6+ ♗xf6**



**26.♗xe4** 26.♖xe4 is quicker: 26...♗xd4+ 27.cxd4 e5 28.♖g4+ ♖g6 29.♖xg6+ fxg6 30.♖xg6+ ♕h8 31.♖h7#.

**26...♗xd4+ 27.cxd4 ♖xd4+ 28.♖e3 ♖f6 29.♖c1 ♖d8 30.g3 ♖d4 31.h4 ♕f8 32.♖g5**

1-0

Scotland won the match 2.5-1.5 and continued to avoid the bye till the end.



**Scotland's 65+ team: (l-r) Alastair White, Raj Bhopal, Ian Marks, Rob McAndrew (c), and Alan Scrimgeour.**

Rob secured the 2.5 - 1.5 win against Wales Silures by agreeing the draw in a winning ending (taking into account the match situation, as his Swedish opponent had doubtless done in Round 3).

**In Round 6**, we drew 2-2 against another good but rather weaker German team.

**In Round 7**, in what we thought was a must-win-to-avoid-the-bye match against England 4, Ian lost very quickly to Edinburgh's Bob Kane. Under pressure, Alastair spilled a bottle of water over Raj's score sheet and board, and the arbiters were called in to stop the clocks, mop up, and

provide Raj with a dry score sheet. Alan held his concentration on resumption of play and pressed home his advantage to win against Stewart Reuben. Alastair lost a sharp Scandinavian. He could have sacrificed his queen for knight and rook with an advantageous position, but in his words "chickened out" and played a losing move. That left Raj to save the match by winning an equal game. After five hours play, Raj had almost achieved the miracle of having a winning advantage, but just missed the win at the last. His opponent Peter Wood gave up his rook for Raj's last pawn, while his own far

advanced h pawn was supported by his king. Result 1.5 - 2.5.

In **Round 8**, having somehow missed the bye, we beat New Zealand, 3.5 - 0.5, Raj drawing on Board 1, Alan, Ian and Rob winning.

Having again avoided the bye, Alastair, Alan, Ian and Rob all agreed quick draws in **Round 9** against Latvia Women, so Result 2-2, and we later watched them collect the Women's Gold medal at the closing ceremony.

After a strong performance in Slovenia, Alastair had been reluctant to play in Poland. Having agreed to do so, he suffered against consistently strong opponents on Board 1. Both Alan and Raj turned in well above rating performances. Rob scored 3.5 from 7 games, and Ian 2.5 from 7 games.

We all enjoyed the tournament. Krakow is a beautiful city, the hotel was excellent, and the event was very well organised.

Scotland's 50+ team finished an incredible 13 spots above seeding – 14th in a field of 32 teams, when seeded 27th! Here's one of Martin Mitchell's contributions to that fine result, with notes by the winner...

♣ **Mitchell, Martin (2159)**

♣ **Schuster, Karsten (2307)**

WSTCC 50+  
Krakow 2024



1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.♙f4 b6 4.e3 ♙b7 5.♙d3 ♙e7 6.h3 0-0 7.0-0 ♘e4 A surprise. Black goes for a Dutch setup.

8.c4 f5 9.♘fd2 Black cannot reasonably resist exchanges.

9...♘xd2 10.♘xd2 d6 11.♙e2 ♘d7 12.♙f3



**12...c6** Simply 12...♙xf3 is best. In that case it's unclear if White can benefit from his queen hitting b7 and c6.

**13.b4 e5 14.♙h2 ♖c7 15.♙b3 ♙h8 16.♖ac1 ♙f6 17.c5 bxc5 18.bxc5 dxc5**



**19.dxe5** The computer thinks 19.dxc5 is even stronger.

**19...♙xe5 20.♙xe5 ♘xe5 21.♖xc5 ♙a6 22.♖a1** Played after much thought and rejecting 22.R1c1, 22.Rd1, 22.Rb1, and 22.Re1!

**22...♙d6?** 22...f4 limits the damage. Then 23.exf4 ♘xf3+ 24.♘xf3 ♙xf4 25.♖e1 preserves some advantage for White due to his superior structure.

**23.♙c3**



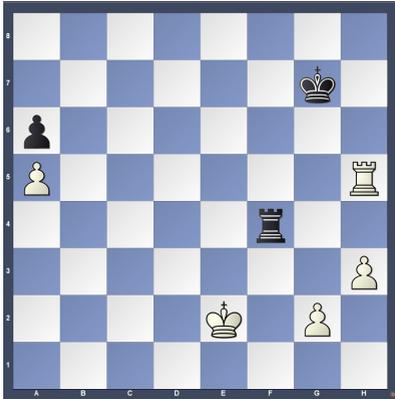
The computer now reckons I'm winning. It didn't seem so simple at the time!

**23...♖ae8 24.♖a5 24.♙xc6** is also strong.

**24...c5 25.♖xc5 ♖c8 26.♖c1 h6 27.♙d4 ♘xf3+ 28.♘xf3 ♙xd4 29.♘d4 ♖xc5 30.♖xc5 ♙d3 31.♖c7 a6 32.♘e6 ♖g8 33.a4 g5 34.♘c5 ♙e2 35.♖c6 ♙h7 36.♖f6 f4 37.exf4 gxf4 38.♖xf4** And with two extra pawns White finally chalked up the whole point at move 66.

**38...♖g5 39.♘e4 ♖g6 40.♘c3 ♙d3 41.♖d4 ♙c2 42.♖d7+ ♙h8 43.♖c7 ♖d6 44.♙h2 ♙g8 45.f4 ♖d4 46.a5 h5 47.♙g3 ♙b3**

48.♖c5 ♔g7 49.♔f3 ♕c4 50.♘e2 52...♖a4 53.♔f3 ♖a3+ 54.♔g4  
 ♕xe2+ 51.♔xe2 ♖xf4 52.♖xh5 ♕g6 55.♖c5 ♖a4+ 56.♔g3 ♔g7  
 57.h4 ♔h7 58.♔h3 ♔g7 59.g3 ♔h7 60.h5 ♔g7 61.g4 ♔h7  
 62.♔h4 ♔g7 63.♔g5 ♔f7 64.h6 ♖a1 65.♖c7+ ♔e6 66.♖c6+ ♔d5



1-0

Full results are available at  
[Chess-Results Server Chess-results.com](http://Chess-Results Server Chess-results.com) - FIDE World Senior  
 Team Chess Championships 65+



Scotland's senior squad in Krakow: If you want to get involved in the senior international set-up, please contact Chess Scotland's International Director – Andrew Burnett – on [abburnett@hotmail.com](mailto:abburnett@hotmail.com)



**T**he 2024 British Chess Championships were notable for a few reasons, writes **your editor**, not least of which was the temporary ‘lockdown’ imposed by rioting and looting in Hull during the event! The other, more positive, factor was the number of Scots making the trip after a couple of decades in the wilderness...

Hull City Hall played host to the main British Championship events, including two senior tournaments and the Major Open, as well as the full Championship itself.

Weekday, weekend and junior championships events were held at the nearby DoubleTree by Hilton hotel, ensuring the large number of entries could be accommodated.

Scotland was represented in the main Championship by six players, led by Scotland's first-ever Grandmaster, Paul Motwani. It was a pleasure catching up with Paul who has been living in Belgium for many years and only rarely has the opportunity to return to the UK.

Paul got off to a cracking start with the following victory...

♣ **Motwani, Paul (IM 2414)**

♣ **Bradbury, Neil H (IM 2153)**  
**B10**

British Chess Championships  
 Hull 2024

1.e4 c6 2.c4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5  
 4.cxd5 ♘f6 5.♘f3 g6 6.♘c3 ♙g7  
 7.♙c4 0-0 8.0-0 ♘a6 Paul has had plenty of experience in the mainline alternative here 8...♘bd7 with good wins against Susan Arkell and Agust Karlsson.

9.d4 ♘c7 10.♙g5 a6 11.♖e1 b5  
 12.♙b3 ♙b7 13.a4 13.h4 may be a better way to stake claim of an advantage.

13...b4 14.♘e2 ♘cxd5 15.♘g3  
 h6 16.♙d2 a5 17.h4 e6 18.h5 g5

(see diagram next column)

The ugly 18...♘xh5 was the en-



gine's choice but good luck playing chess that way! After 19.♘xh5 gxh5 20.♖e5!? is an interesting way to introduce kingside threats. If Black takes the rook, his dark squares are horribly weakened, but otherwise the rook captures on h5 with a quick introduction to the attack.

19.♘xg5! Paul has never waited to be asked twice if he'd like the initiative.

19...hxg5 20.♙xg5 ♔d6 21.h6  
 ♙h8 22.♘h5 ♘h7??



A natural defensive try but it has a huge hole in it.

23.♙f4! ♘xf4 24.♚g4+ ♘g5 24...  
♘g6 is met by 25.♖xe6!!



(analysis diagram)

25.♚xg5+ ♖h7



26.♘xf4!? 26.♙c2+! This is the real killer. 26...♘g6 27.♘f6+ ♙xf6 28.♚xf6 ♖xh6 (28...♖g8 29.♚xf7+ ♖xh6 30.♖e3 (30.♚xb7+--)) 29.♖e3 ♙xg2 30.♖xg2

26...♙xd4 27.♖xe6 ♚c5 28.♚xc5 ♙xc5 29.♖f6 ♙d4



30.♖xf7+? Now Paul has to attempt to win the game all over again. More accurate was 30.♙c2+ ♖g8 31.♖f5 keeping the attack going, though it's just unclear to human eyes at this stage. (The engine's eyes see it as +2.3 or so!)

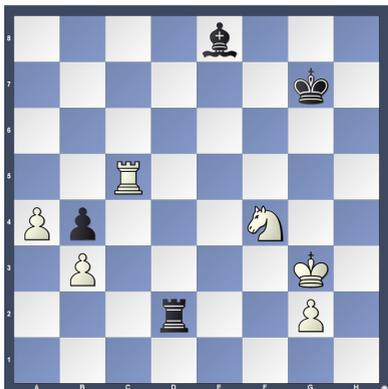
30...♖xf7 31.♙xf7 ♖f8 31...♙xb2 was a fairly critical pawn grab but it's easy to see why Black might balk at lines such as 32.♖d1 ♖c8 33.♖d7 ♖c1+ 34.♖h2 ♙c6 35.♙g8+



(analysis diagram)

... when 35...♔xg8 (35...♔xh6!) 36.h7+ ♕h8 37.♖g6# is enough to put any defender off their dinner.

32.♖e6 ♕xf2+ 33.♔xf2 ♖xf7+ 34.♔g3 ♖f6 35.♖f4 ♖d6 36.♖e1 ♕c6 37.b3 ♔xh6 38.♖e5 ♔g7 39.♖xa5 ♖d2 40.♖c5 ♕e8



The time control has been reached and the smoke has cleared. White is simply winning and Paul converted cleanly.

41.♖c4 ♕f7 42.♖xb4 ♖b2 43.a5 ♖a2 44.♖a4! ♖b2 44...♕xb3 45.♖xa2 ♕xa2 46.a6 and the pawn is unstoppable. It is always pleasing to my eye to see a knight dominate a bishop when the reverse is more often seen.

45.a6 ♖xb3+ 46.♔f2 ♖b8

1-0

Jake Sanger was another brave soul taking on an extremely strong Championship field that was led

by England's Olympiad stars David Howell, Michael Adams and Gawain Jones. Jake also got off to an extremely good start...

## ♣ Taylor, Adam A (2281) Sanger, Jake M (2026) D32

British Chess Championships  
Hull 2024

1.♖f3 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.b3 d5 4.♕b2 c5 5.e3 ♖c6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.♖c3 ♕e7 8.d4 0-0 9.♕e2 a6 10.0-0 ♕g4 11.dxc5 ♕xc5 12.♖c1 ♕a7 13.h3 ♕e6 14.♖a4 ♖e4 15.♕xa6 ♖b4 16.♕e2 ♖e8 17.a3 ♖c6 18.♖c3 ♖e7 19.♖b5 ♕b8 20.b4 ♖d7 21.♖bd4 ♕xh3 22.♖xc6 bxc6 23.♖d4 ♖d6 24.f4 ♕d7 25.♕g4 ♕a7 26.♖e1 ♖ac8 27.♖c2 f6 28.♖f3 c5 29.bxc5 ♖xc5 30.♖ec1 ♖b8 31.♖xc5 ♕xc5 32.♕xd7 ♖xd7 33.♖c2 ♔h8 34.♖e2 h6 35.♖f3 ♖a4 36.♖e2 ♕xd4 37.exd4 ♖g3 38.♖d1 ♖e8 39.♖d3 ♖e4 40.♕c1 f5 41.♕d2 ♖e6 42.♕b4 ♖g6 43.♖c1 ♔h7 44.♖c2 ♖a7 45.♕c5 ♖c7 46.♖f1



Black stands much better here, mainly thanks to his beautifully untouchable knight. White's only trump, the passed a-pawn, doesn't present any danger. Jake finishes things off with a quick and decisive rerouting of the queen.

46...♔d8! 47.♖f3 ♕h4 48.♗b3 ♗e1+ 49.♔h2 49...♖f1 is met by 49...♗xf1+ 50.♔xf1 ♘d2+

49...♘f2



50.♖xf2 ♗xf2 51.♗xd5 ♗xf4+ 52.♔g1 ♗e3+ 53.♔f1 ♖f4 54.♗f5 ♗c1+ 55.♔f2 ♗d2+ The g2-pawn strides to victory.

0-1

Jake struggled a bit over the next few rounds but finished off with a hatrick of victories (including wins over IM Chris Beaumont and WGM Katarzyna Toma) to put in an excellent 2200+ TPR.

Declan Shafi found his head rather stuck in the lion's den in the opening round...

♣ Shafi, Declan (2222)

♣ Jones, Gawain (GM 2640)

A58

British Chess Championships  
Hull 2024

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 e6 6.♘c3 exd5 7.♘xd5 ♖e7 8.♗f4 ♘xd5 9.♗xd5 ♘c6 10.e4 0-0 11.♘f3 ♖xa6 12.♖c4 ♖b7 13.♗d2 ♘a5 14.♖xa6 ♖xa6 15.0-0-0 ♗b6 16.♗c3 ♖b5 17.h4 ♖a8 18.h5 ♗e6 19.h6 f6



Declan has built up a nice position against the 2nd seed but unfortunately after...

20.♘g5?? 20.b3 is a lot safer than it perhaps feels. 20...♘c6 (20...g6 21.♗d2 is just winning.) 21.a4 when the sacrifice



Sanjith Madhavan was another of our young players who put in an excellent performance, picking up 65 Elo points, including this tactical spot...

♣ Madhavan, Sanjith (1950)

♣ Toma, Katarzyna (2241) [B91]

British Chess Championships  
Hull 2024

21...♙xa4 22.bxa4 ♖xa4 doesn't really work if White finds 23.♔d2 ♜a2+ 24.♕e1 ♚xe4+ 25.♙e3 Two pawns for the rook is not enough, particularly as White's extra rook can enter the game via h4.

20...♚xa2 21.♘h7 ...he fell to a brutal counterattack.

21...♞b3+ 22.♔c2 ♜a3 23.♞g5 gxf6 24.♞e6 ♞d4+



25.♞xd4 ♜xc3+ 26.♔xc3 ♚c4+ 27.♔d2 cxd4

0-1

1.e4 c5 2.♞f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4 ♞f6 5.♞c3 a6 6.g3 e5 7.♞de2 ♙e6 8.♙g2 ♙e7 9.a4 ♞bd7 10.h3 ♞b6 11.b3 d5 12.a5 d4 13.axb6 dxc3 14.0-0 ♚c8 15.♔h2 0-0 16.♚e1 ♙b4 17.f4 ♚c5 18.fxe5 ♞d7 19.♞f4 ♞xb6??



19...♚xb6 was fine but the text move is a blunder.

20.♞d3 ♚e7 21.♞xb4 ♚xb4 22.♙a3 That's an exchange gone and Sanjith mopped up the full point without much trouble.

22...♚d4 23.♜d1 ♚xe5 24.♙d6

**♔a5 25.♖a1 ♕b5 26.♙xf8 ♖xf8**  
**27.♗xc3 ♜c8 28.♗d2 ♘d7**  
**29.♖a4 h6 30.♖d4 ♜c7 31.♖f2**  
**♗e5 32.♖d3 b5 33.♗f4 ♗c5 34.b4**  
**♗a7 35.♖d6 ♜c4 36.♖xe6 fxe6**  
**37.♗f7+ ♔h8 38.♗e8+ ♔h7**  
**39.♖f7 ♜c7 40.♗xe6 ♗d4**  
**41.♗f5+ ♔g8 42.e5 ♖a7 43.c3**

**16.♘e6??** White may have thought his attack was good or may just not have wanted to retreat, after which Black must be fine. Whichever the reason, Black has enough defensive resources.

**16...fxe6 17.dxe6 ♘e7 18.♖g4**  
**♖f6 19.♖e3 ♗f8 20.♖eg3 ♙xe6**

1-0

The following game was IM Stephen Mannion's best effort...

♠ Verbytski, Oleg (2076)

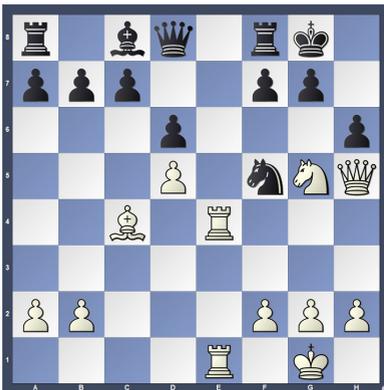
♣ Mannion, Stephen R (IM 2139)

British Chess Championships  
Hull 2024



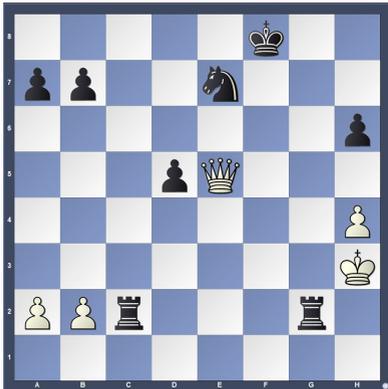
**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5**  
**4.c3 ♘f6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 ♙b4+**  
**7.♘c3 ♘xe4 8.0-0 ♙xc3 9.d5 ♙f6**  
**10.♖e1 ♘e7 11.♖xe4 d6 12.♙g5**  
**♙xg5 13.♘xg5 h6 14.♗h5 0-0**  
**15.♖ae1 ♘f5**

**21.♖xg7+ ♗xg7 22.♖xg7+ ♔xg7**  
**23.♙xe6 ♖xe6 24.♗g4+ ♔f7**



That's too much material for the queen. Steve took his time but eventually found the route to victory.

25.h4 d5 26.♙f4+ ♜f6 27.♙xc7  
 ♜c8 28.♙e5 ♜c1+ 29.♚h2 ♜c2  
 30.♙h5+ ♚f8 31.♙e5 ♜xf2  
 32.♙h8+ ♞g8 33.♙e5 ♜xg2+  
 34.♚h3 ♞e7



Black's knight performs an excellent defensive role.

35.♙b8+ ♚f7 36.♙f4+ ♚e8  
 37.♙b8+ ♚d7 38.♙xb7+ ♚e6  
 39.♙b8 ♜xb2 40.♙e8 ♜xa2 41.h5  
 ♜g5 42.♙h8 ♚d7 43.♙b8 a5  
 44.♙a7+ ♚e8 45.♙b8+ ♚f7  
 46.♙f4+ ♚e6 47.♙e3+ ♚d6  
 48.♙f4+ ♚d7 49.♙b8 a4



The pawn inexorably advances...

50.♙b7+ ♚e8 51.♙b8+ ♚f7 52.♙  
 f4+ ♚e6 53.♙e3+ ♚d6 54.♙f4+  
 ♚d7 55.♙b8 a3 56.♙b7+ ♚e8  
 57.♙b8+ ♚f7 58.♙b1 ♜ag2 59.♙  
 h7+ ♚e8 60.♙h8+ ♚d7 61.♙f8  
 a2 62.♙f6 a1♙ 63.♙f5+ ♜xf5 64.  
 ♚xg2 ♙g7+ 65.♚h1 ♜xh5#

0-1

Last but not least, Martin Mitchell, who struggled after some good senior showings this year but continued to put up strong resistance, as in the following game...

**Pal, Rohan (2077)**  
**Mitchell, Martin (2159) B07**  
 British Chess Championships  
 Hull 2024

1.e4 d6 2.d4 ♞f6 3.♞c3 g6 4.g3  
 ♞g7 5.♞g2 0-0 6.♞ge2 ♞bd7  
 7.0-0 c5 8.h3 ♜b8 9.♞e3 b6  
 10.g4 cxd4 11.♞xd4 h6 12.♞g3  
 ♞b7 13.♙d2 a6 14.a4 ♚h7  
 15.♞e3 ♙c7 16.f4 ♜bc8 17.♜f2  
 ♞e8 18.♞ge2 ♞c5 19.♞f3 e5  
 20.f5 ♞f6 21.♞g3 d5 22.exd5 e4  
 23.♞f4 ♙d7 24.♞gxe4 ♞fxe4  
 25.♞xe4 ♞xe4 26.♞xe4 ♞xb2  
 27.♜b1 ♙xa4 28.fxg6+ fxg6  
 29.♙d3 ♞d4 30.♞xg6+ ♚g7  
 31.♞e3 ♞xe3 32.♙xe3 ♜xf2  
 33.♙xf2 ♞xd5 34.♜f1 ♙c6 35.♞f5  
 ♜e8 36.♙d4+ ♚g8 37.♞d3 ♙d6  
 38.♞h7+ ♚xh7 39.♜f7+ ♞xf7  
 40.♙xd6 ♜e6 41.♙d3+ ♚g7  
 42.♙xa6 ♜c6 43.♙d3 ♜c4 44.♚f2



Martin Mitchell (courtesy of Dennis Dicen)

b5 45.c3 ♔g8 46.♔e3 b4  
47.♚d8+ ♔g7 48.cxb4 ♖xb4



My instinct tells me this should be drawn but that Black will have to suffer a bit for the half point.

Unfortunately I don't have access to 8-piece tablebases to determine the absolute truth of this position, but the engines here are quite clear that only two moves don't lose immediately.

49.♔f2 ♖e4 50.♔g3 ♖e6 51.♚d4+ ♔g8 52.♔f4 ♖g6 53.h4 ♗e6 54.♚d8+ ♔g7 55.♚e7+ ♗f7 56.♚e5+ ♔g8 57.♔f5

57...♖c6?? Black should have played 57...h5!? 58.gxh5 ♖h6 when the presence of h-pawns only should guarantee a draw, or

57...♔h7 when 58.h5 here obviously fails to 58...♖g5+ **59...hxg5 60.♔xg5**

**58.h5 ♖a6**



**59.g5??** The winning method involves transposing to a king and pawn endgame.

It appears that Black can't avoid this AND keep the fortress. For example: 59.♖c7 ♖e6 (59...♔g7 60.♖c3+ ♔h7 61.♖d3! This breaks the defence. 61...♖e6 62.♖d7 ♔g8 63.♖xe6) 60.♖c8+ ♔g7



(analysis diagram)

61.♖xe6 ♔xe6+ 62.♔xe6 and White wins quite simply.

Now we do have tablebases to give us an exact verdict: draw! (6-piece Nalimov and 7-piece Lomonosov tablebases are really very interesting when you delve into positions!)

**60...♖e6** Of course, now there is no win after giving up queen for rook and bishop. However, Black's rook shouldn't stray from the third rank more than momentarily.

**61.♖b8+ ♔g7 62.♖b2+ ♔h7**  
**63.♖c2+ ♔g7 64.♖c3+ ♔h7**  
**65.♖d3+ ♔g7 66.♖d4+ ♔h7**  
**67.♖c5 ♔g7 68.♔g4 ♖e4+**  
**69.♔g5 ♖e6 70.♔g4**

It often feels like winning more than a half-point when drawing such games.

$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

There was plenty of other chess being played of course, with Scotland well represented in the two Seniors tournaments, for 50+ and 65+ age categories respectively.

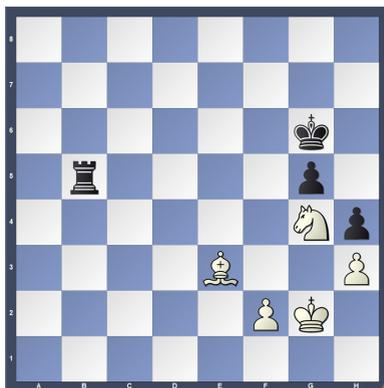
Your scribe, seeded 3rd, had high hopes after a decent Scottish but I couldn't really get anything going. I did have a rather interesting endgame, however, which shows the power of infinite resistance. This chess theme was, I believe, espoused by Australian GM Ian Rogers and followed closely by

our own (sadly now retired from competitive play) GM John Shaw. Let's see how it worked for me in Hull...

**♣ Regan, Natasha (WIM 2013)**

**♣ Burnett, Andrew (FM 2174) B27**

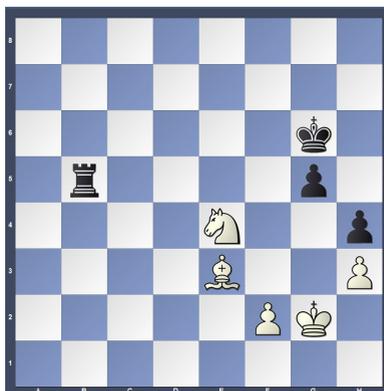
British Championships Senior 50+ Hull 2024



1.♠f3 g6 2.e4 c5 3.c3 ♗g7 4.d4 cxd4 5.cxd4 d5 6.e5 ♘c6 7.h3 a6 8.♘c3 ♘h6 9.♙f4 f6 10.♙e2 0-0 11.exf6 exf6 12.♖b3 ♘f5 13.♗d1 ♘fe7 14.♘a4 b5 15.♘c5 ♗e8 16.0-0 ♘f5 17.♗fe1 ♗a7 18.g4 ♗ae7 19.♖c2 ♘d6 20.♘xa6 ♘c4 21.♘c5 ♘b4 22.♖b3 ♗xe2 23.♖xb4 ♗xb2 24.♗xe8+ ♖xe8 25.♗e1 ♖c6 26.♖c3 ♗xa2 27.♗e7 ♙f8 28.♗c7 ♖e8 29.♖e1 ♗e2 30.♖a1 g5 31.♖a8 ♙xg4 32.♖xd5+ ♙e6 33.♘xe6 ♖xe6 34.♖xb5 ♗c2 35.♙g3 ♗c1+ 36.♙h2 ♘d6 37.♖d7 ♖xd7 38.♗xd7= ♘f5 39.♘d2 h5 40.♘e4 ♙e7 41.d5 h4 42.♙c7 ♙f8 43.d6 ♙e8 44.♗xe7+ ♘xe7 45.♘xf6+ ♙f7 46.dxe7 ♙xe7 47.♙e5 ♙e6 48.♘g4 ♙f5 49.♙g2 ♗b1 50.♙d6 ♙g6 51.♙c5 ♗b5 52.♙e3

52...♙h5?? 52...♖b1! It is crucially important to be able to attack the h3-pawn with ...Rh1 whenever White's king attempts to join the party. 53.♘e5+ ♙h5 54.♘f3 (54.♘g4 ♙g6 55.♙f3 ♗h1) 54...g4=; 52...♖b2 53.♘e5+ ♙f5 (53...♙h5 54.♘g4 ♙g6 55.♙f3) 54.♘f3

53.♘f6+ ♙g6 54.♘e4



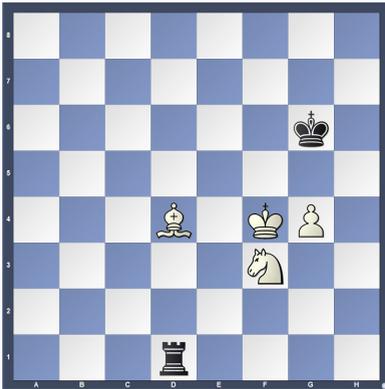
I had pushed a little too hard and found myself in this difficult but just about holdable position. My next move, however, was a bit of a clanger...

By now I had realised my error and sank into thought. If I could somehow force all the pawns off,

even at the cost of my rook, Natasha would have to deliver mate with B&N with likely only the increment as company. Simple enough if you know what you're doing and/or have recently reviewed it, but as one strong titled player discovered in Hull, it can be rather embarrassing if you forget how to do it.

**54...g4!?** 54...Ra5 55.hxg5 Rxg5+ 56.gxg5 Qxg5+- is losing: 57.Qf3 Qf5 58.Qe3 Qe5 59.f4+ Qf5 60.Qf3 Qf6 61.Qg4 Qg6 62.Qxh4

**55.hxg4** Rb4 **56.f3** h3+ **57.Qxh3** Rb3 **58.gxc5** Rxf3+ **59.Qh4** Rb3 **60.hd6** Rb1 **61.Qg3** Rc1 **62.gxe3** Rf1 **63.hc4** Qf6 **64.hd2** Re1 **65.Qf4** Qg6 **66.hf3** Rf1 **67.gd4** Rd1

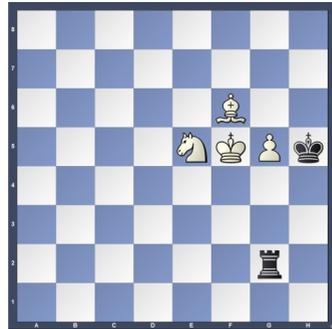


**68.g5??** This doesn't look too bad but in fact it is a terrible blunder that throws the win away. Much simpler is to advance all the pieces and then the pawn, for example:

68.h4+ Qf7 69.g5 Rf1+ 70.Qg5 Rg1 71.hf5 Rg2 72.h3 Rg1 73.Qf5 with g5 to follow.

**68...Qh5** 68...Rg1 69.gxc5 Rxcg5 70.hxg5

**69.gf6** Rf1 **70.Qe4** Rf2 **71.h3e5** Rg2 **72.hf3** 72.Qf5



(analysis diagram)

Black's defence relies on a couple of stalemate traps. 72...Rxg5+ 73.gxg5

**72...Rf2** 73.Qe3 Rg2 **74.Qf4** Rg4+ **75.Qe3** 75.Qf5 Rg3

**75...Rg2** 76.gd8 Rg4 **77.Qf2** Rf4 **78.Qg3** Rg4+ **79.Qh3** Rh4+! and this is the second trick!

**80.Qg3** It is stalemate after 80.hxh4

(see diagram next column)



Pretty direct, but White has a plan of simply putting his queen on d4 his knight on c3 and when Black pushes d5 this pawn will become a target. 8.Nc3 has served the strong German grandmaster Rasmus Svane well.

8...d5 9.♔d4 ♕e7 10.♞c3 0-0 11. ♕e2?! 11.Be3 followed by 0-0-0 looks more straightforward.

11...♕e6 12.♕f4 ♔e8 13.♞b5 ♜xc6 14.♔e5



This was the idea, the position is becoming very sharp and I had started to use up a lot of time on the clock. However I was rewarded when Black went into a big think and played a poor move.

14...♕g4? 14...♞g4 The only move that I spent any time on.  
 15.♜xc7 ♔e8 (15...♜xc7? 16.♞xc7 ♜xf4 17.♞xe6 ♜xf2 18.♕xg4 ♜xg2 19.♕e2 ♕h4+ 20.♕d1+—) 16.♕d6 ♕d8



(analysis diagram)

I had got this far when playing Qe5 and had no idea what was going on. But I believed in my position and decided to give it a go.  
 17.♕xg4 ♕xc7 18.♞xc7 ♔c6  
 19.♕xe6+ ♔h8 20.♕g3 ♜ad8  
 21.0-0-0±

15.♜xe7 ♕xe2 16.♞d4 ♔b6



17.♜e6+!? Short of time I decided to take the queens off. I was sure I was much better. Of course I considered Nxe2 and this is what the computer wants to play.

17. ♖xe2 ♜xb2 18. 0-0 ♜xc2 19. ♗ of time but his position is deteriorating. He is fishing for tricks.  
 d4 ♜a4 20. ♗e6 ♜f7 21. ♜c5 ♜d7  
 22. ♗d4

17... ♜xe6 18. ♗xe6 ♙a6 19. ♗xf8  
 ♜xf8 20. ♙e3 20. 0-0-0 c6 21. ♙e3  
 ♗g4 22. ♜d2 ♗xe3 23. fx3  
 (Looked tricky to convert. )

20... c5 21. ♙xc5 ♜c8



22. ♙d4 22. b4 I never seriously considered playing this move. I had visions of the black bishop controlling all those white squares. Again the computer laughs at this human intuition. 22... ♗d7 23. ♙d2 ♗xc5 24. bxc5 ♜xc5 25. ♜he1 (stopping d4) 25... ♙f7 26. ♜e3 (with ideas of Ra3) 26... ♙f6 27. ♜a3 ♜c6 28. f3+-

22... ♜xc2 23. ♙d1 ♜c4 24. ♙xa7 ♗g4 25. f3 ♜c7 26. ♙d4 ♜c4 27. ♙a7 ♜c7 28. ♙g1 Repeating a couple of moves to get the 30 second increment on the clock. I was down to seven minutes. Zeidler was playing quickly and had lots

28... ♗e5 29. ♜c1



And I walk into one!

29... ♙e2+ I had only considered 29... exf3 30. gxf3 ♙e2+ 31. ♙d2 ♜xc1 32. ♙xc1 ♙xf3 33. ♙d4 ♙xh1 34. ♙xe5 when I thought this opposite colour bishop ending was very good for me.

30. ♙d2 ♜xc1 31. ♙xc1 exf3 Now I saw that on Bd4 Black has ...Nc6!

32. ♙d4 32. gxf3 ♙xf3 33. ♙d4 ♗c6 34. ♜f1 ♗xd4 35. ♙d2 ♙h5

32... f3 33. ♜e1 ♗d3+ 34. ♙d2 ♗xe1 35. ♙xe2 ♗c2 36. ♙g1 ♙f7 37. ♙f2 ♗b4 38. a4 ♙e6 39. ♙xg2 ♙e5 40. ♙c5 ♗a6

(see diagram next column)



The time control and a chance to think! I now spent a couple of minutes and convinced myself I had good chances here but there was yet another twist.

41.b4 d4 42.♙f8 d3? 42...♙d5□  
 43.b5 ♖c5 44.♙xc5 (44.a5 d3 45.  
 ♙f2 d2 46.♙e2 ♖b3 47.a6 ♖d4+  
 48.♙xd2 ♖xb5 49.♙xg7=) 44...♙  
 xc5 45.♙f2 g5 46.♙e2 h5 47.♙d3  
 g4 48.b6 ♙xb6 49.♙xd4 h4=

43.♙f3 ♙d4



44.♙xg7+??

Finally throwing away the win. I did not appreciate the strength of a black knight on c5.

44.b5! ♖b8

a) 44...♖c5 45.♙xc5+ ♙xc5  
 46.♙e3+—;

b) 44...♖c7 45.b6 ♖a6 46.♙xg7+  
 ♙c4 47.a5 ♙b3 (47...♙b5 48.♙c3  
 ♙c4 49.♙d2 ♙c5 50.♙e4 ♙c4  
 51.♙e3 ♖b8 52.♙e1 ♖a6 53.b7  
 ♖b8 54.♙g3 ♙c3 55.♙xb8 d2 56.  
 ♙e5+ ♙c2 57.b8♙ d1♙ 58.♙b2#)  
 48.♙h6 ♙c2 49.♙e4 d2 50.♙xd2  
 ♙xd2 51. 52.♙d4! (51.b7?? only  
 draws after 51...♙c3).

45.♙xg7+ ♙c4 46.♙h6 ♖d7  
 47.♙d2 ♙d4 48.b6

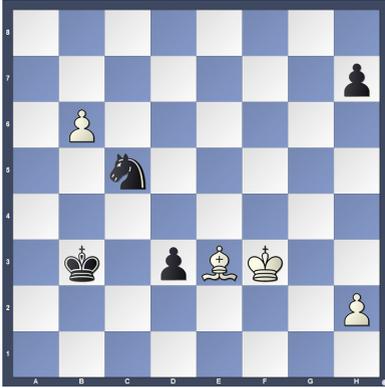


(analysis diagram)

48...♙c5 49.a5 ♙c6 50.♙e4+—

44...♙c4 45.b5 ♖c5 46.b6 ♙b3  
 Threat d2 and queen.

47.♙h6 ♙xa4 48.♙e3 ♙b3



Neil Farrell was also having a fine tournament, losing only to eventual champion, GM Keith Arkell. Here Neil dissects his encounter with a famous opponent.

 **Regan, Natasha**

 **Farrell, Neil**

British Championships 50+  
Hull 2024

49. ♖g4

49. ♖xc5 d2 50. ♖e2 ♔c2 would have been a disaster.

49... ♔c2 50. h4 d2 51. ♖xd2 ♔xd2  
52. h5 ♔e3 53. ♖g5 ♔f3 54. h6  
♔e4 55. ♖f6 ♔d5 56. ♖g7 ♔e6  
57. ♖xh7 ♔f7 58. ♖h8

1/2–1/2

My opponent is WIM Natasha Regan. She's famously co-authored Game Changer with Matthew Sadler – the book about Alpha Zero. I'm sure one of its recommendations is when in doubt push your h-pawn. But she didn't take her own advice – the h-pawn remained firmly rooted to h2 for the whole game. Is that where White went wrong?

1. ♖f3 d5 2. c4 e6 3. b3 ♖f6 4. g3  
♔e7 5. ♖g2 0–0 6. 0–0 d4

A tough result to take at this stage of the tournament. I really wanted to have a big game in round 6 against one of the leaders. I finished undefeated on 4.5/7 but another near miss in the last round against another FM left me knowing I could have finished so much better.

I enjoyed Hull before the tournament hall was surrounded by right wing rioters on the second Saturday! I hope to play again next year.



The Reverse Benoni. White is potentially two tempi up on a normal

Benoni: one tempo for being White, and a second tempo for Black taking two moves to play ...e5. But that's less dangerous than it seems. One of the spare tempi is used up on the not very helpful b3, and it's not clear whether White's ♕ will enjoy being on b2. Also, Black can aim to sort out his development before giving White a potential target with ...e6-e5. Stockfish says fine for both sides, just play an interesting game.

6...c5, delaying the choice about what structure to adopt, is more usual.

**7.e3 c5 8.a3 a5** The move a3 is unusual – White normally takes on d4, plays ♖e1 and then ♜e5. The inclusion of a3 and ...a5 may help Black slightly.

**9.exd4 cxd4 10.♞e5?!**



A typical idea in the Reversed Benoni. White has a slight space disadvantage and three sets of minor pieces is optimal. (Black does not

get to do this in the normal Benoni). But in this particular position – specifically with Black's ♞ still on b8 – it's sub-optimal. White's helping Black's development, and Black reaches a very comfortable position.

**10...♞bd7** I could have squeezed slightly more out of the position with 10...♞d6 11.♖e1 ♚c7 12.♗e2 ♞c6♯

**11.♖e1?!** 11.♞xd7 ♞xd7 seemed fine for Black. And I didn't think she'd play it. However, it was better to avoid this possibility for a couple of moves at least by playing 10...♞d6 as above.

**11...♞xe5 12.♖xe5 ♞d6 12...♞d7!** helping the ♞ gets to its best square with tempo was best. Look at what happens if the ♖ retreats: 13.♖e1 ♞c5 14.d3 ♚b6!♯ as b3 falls, because White can't play ♞d2 without dropping the d-pawn. But 13.♖b5 creates a target to play against, similar to the game.

**13.♖b5 ♚c7** Defending the b-pawn, stopping c5, and preparing ...♞d7 in two moves, when White will lose the exchange. A good plan!

**(see diagram next column)**

**14.♖a2?** This looks strange but creative. White is trying to prepare c5 next, but it doesn't work.



...which looked like counterplay. But when you get here it's easy to see Black can lose back his ♖, but should win the ♔ and minor piece endgame with his passed d-pawn.

**20.a4!** The most forcing: White eyes long diagonal counterplay and that strangely-placed ♖.

**20...♘c3 21.♔xd4 ♘xa2 22.♙b2!**  
A very useful tempo gain. Now White can keep her material deficit to a single exchange, and she still has that lovely light-square ♙.

**22...f6** If you go to move 26, you can see that it's better to play ...f6 here than ...e5.

**23.♔xa7**



At first sight, it looks like White has play here, as b7 and a5 are weak.

**23...b5?!** This is on the right lines, but I had better: 23...b6! worked very well as Black would love to swap ♔s and the b6 ♖ for the b3 ♙.

Then Black would be completely winning. I was getting short of time here, and played the first move that I thought about that dealt with the b7 and a5 issues satisfactorily enough.

**24.♔xc7 ♙xc7 25.axb5 ♖b8 26.♙c6 ♘b4**



Black has recovered coordination, remaining an exchange up. In evaluating exchange up positions, it's always worth checking the prospects of the extra minor piece (in this case, the light square ♙) compared to the ♖. Here the light-square ♙ has been relegated to the role of a defender that can readily be exchanged (and exchanging it might be important, as White would no longer have 2♙s).

By contrast, the ♖ has switched roles from defence to attack, and has great prospects on the b-file. Also Black has a better structure, and has controlled b6, which seems like White's only source of

play. So it's no surprise that Black is winning.

**27.♙d7 27.♙c3 ♘xc6 28.bxc6 ♖xb3 29.♙xa5 ♙xa5 30.♘xa5 ♖xd3** is an illustration of the type of position Black can reach. The c6-pawn would drop off once my ♙ attacked it, and the ♖ will attack the ♘, making sure not to allow any fork.

**27...♙f7 28.♙d4 ♙e7 29.b6 ♙xd7 30.bxc7 ♙xc7 31.♘xa5**



**31...♘xd3** I also thought about **31...♘c6 32.♙c3 ♖b5 33.♘xc6 ♙xc6** This would have been better technique – if we continue this line slightly we can see Black invades on the light squares with **34.b4 ♖d5! 35.d4 ♙b5** when the ♙ is looking weak, as well as the d4- and b4- pawns.

**32.♙f1 ♖b5 33.♙c3 ♘c1 34.b4 ♘a2** ...but this was all simple enough, as White is losing her b4-pawn.



I was happy with this effort. The opening was good, I took material, kept my head when it got messy, and converted the technical win without allowing White back into the game.

## 0-1

Scotland also had several players in the 65+ section, and here Phil Giulian shares his round 3 encounter...

♣ Giulian, Philip M (2070)

♣ Vickery, Jim E (1923) B04

British Championships 65+  
Hull 2024

I have played Alekhine's defence for over 50 years. In round 3 of this year's British Over 65 Championships I was due to play Jim Vickery. When I looked at his openings I discovered that he always plays Alekhine's defence

and he had nearly 40 games with it on my database. So I just had to go for it.

### 1.e4



I don't play 1.e4! Now my opponent thought for 2-3 minutes, obviously realising something was wrong. Then he played

**1...♞f6** Almost any other move would have left me in trouble.

**2.e5 ♞d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 ♞b6** The main line here is Nf3 but that leaves Black with an array of choices, some of which I know nothing about.

**5.exd6 cxd6** The alternative is 5...exd6 6.♞c3 ♞e7 7.♞d3 ♞c6 8.♞ge2 0-0 9.0-0 ♞f6 10.♞e3 with a playable position for Black but he is a bit cramped.

**6.♞f3 g6 7.h3 ♞g7 8.♞e2 0-0 9.0-0**



**9...e5?** I have chosen a quiet line and Black should continue developing with ...Nc6 and ...Bf5. The game would probably continue 9...♞c6 10.♞c3 ♞f5 11.♞e3 d5 12.c5 ♞c4 with a complex position where chances are level.

**10.♞e3?** Better is simply 10.♞c3.

**10...♞c6?** Black misses the chance to play ...e4 followed by ...f5.

**11.♞c3 f5?** The errors are mounting up and becoming more serious. Black has to play

11...exd4 12.♞xd4 d5 13.c5 ♞c4 14.♞xc4 dxc4 15.♞xc6 bxc6 16.♞a4 After the game my opponent reckoned this position was equal but I thought White was slightly better.

**12.dxe5 ♞xe5** Better is 12...dxe5 but 13.♞b3 gives White a clear advantage.

**13.c5!**



Believe it or not this position had occurred before and in that game a 2620-rated Grandmaster played Rc1 but my move is much better and now Black is losing.

13...dxc5 14.♘xe5 ♗xe5 15.♗xc5 ♜xd1 16.♖axd1 ♖f6

The alternative is 16...♖e8 17.♗b5 ♖e6 18.f4 ♗g7 19.♗xb6 ♖xb6 20.♖d8+ followed by Re1 and Black must lose material.

17.♖d8+ ♔g7 18.♗f3 ♗c7 19.♖e8 ♖e6 20.♖e1



20...♖xe1+ I was hoping my opponent would fall for 20...♗f7?? 21.♖e7+ winning.

21.♖xe1 ♗d8 22.♗d4+ ♔f7  
23.♘b5 ♗e7 24.♘c7 ♖b8



25.♘d5? The silicon beast says 25.a4 is the move and then gives volumes of analysis to justify it. However I was very short of time and saw that all moves after Nd5 won for me... or so I thought.

25...♗e6 The move played loses a piece, while

25...♗d6 loses at least a pawn to Nxb6. More complex is; 25...♘d5 26.♗xd5+ ♔f8 27.♗g7+ ♔xg7 28.♖xe7+ ♔f6 29.♖xh7 What could go wrong?

26.♘xe7 ♔xe7 27.♗xb6

(see diagram next column)

Obviously winning the bishop on e6 and so my opponent resigned.



However... I am not winning the bishop! The game should have continued with...

**27...axb6 28.♙d5 ♖d6 29.♖xe6+**  
 Not 29.♙xe6?? when Black plays  
 29...♖e8.

**29...♙xd5 30.♖e7** and I am still  
 winning but there is still work to be  
 done.

**1-0**

Craig Pritchett, seeded second, was clearly a genuine contender for the title. Two early draws, though, meant the pressure was on when he finally faced Irish FM Andrew Smith in round 6, who had thus far won all five of his games.

**Craig sets the scene for a crucial game...**

Following the editor's request for one of my Hull games, here's my most 'chess-dramatic' win, which was also dramatic in an off-the-

board sense, not least because it took place against the background of the quite horrific Hull riots that day. At this point in the tournament, Andrew Smith led the field with 5/5; and deservedly so, even if he had enjoyed a huge slice of luck in his fifth round game, which saw his opponent, who seemed at times close to a win, eventually go on to blunder away an absolutely cast-iron half point in a trivial end-game. I was Andrew's closest rival, on 4/5. I therefore absolutely had to win to remain in title contention. There's no other way of describing what follows. I won 'ugly'!

**♣ Pritchett, Craig (IM 2186)**

**♠ Smith, A P (FM 2037) [C41]**

British Championships 65+  
 Hull 2024

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 exd4**  
**4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 g6**



**6.♙e2** The sharpest and perhaps strongest lines tend to involve the development Be3, followed by Qd2, 0–0–0 and the kingside attacking plan, f3, followed by g4, perhaps also h4, and so on. In a must-win game, I wanted to get out of the mainline book quickly.

**6...♗g7 7.♗g5 0–0 8.♙d2 ♘c6?!**  
**9.♘xc6 bxc6 10.0–0?!** And maybe I could have achieved at least a slight material edge immediately! I 'trusted' my opponent's all too hastily played (generally 'natural') 8th move without even considering 10.e5!



**18.♖e3?!** White has emerged with some slight positional advantages (slightly better pawns and minor piece and a little extra space). But here, I should probably play more directly, by advancing 18.f4! and if 18...a4 19.e5 axb3 20.axb3 d5 21.♙c3.



(analysis diagram)

10...dxe5 11.♙xd8 ♖xd8 12.♘e4 after which Black has to play 12...♖d6 13.♘xd6 cxd6 14.0–0–0 and if, say 14...d5 15.f3 We were both very edgy!

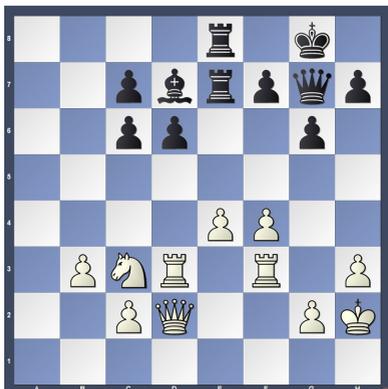
**10...♙e7 11.♖ae1 ♙e5 12.♙d3 ♖b8 13.♘d1 ♘d7 14.♙h6 ♘c5 15.♙xg7 ♙xg7 16.b3 ♘xd3 17.♙xd3 a5**

I instead embark on a lengthy game of manoeuvre, in the hope of achieving a similar central advance (sometimes f5) under possibly even better conditions.

**18...a4 19.♖fe1 axb3 20.axb3 ♖b5 21.♘c3 ♖a5 22.h3 ♙e5 23.♙d2 ♖a8 24.♗g3 ♖e8 25.f4 ♙g7 26.♙h2 ♙h6 27.♗g5 ♙g7 28.♗g3 ♖e7 29.♖ee3 ♙h6 30.♙f2 ♙g7 31.♗gf3 ♙d7 32.♙d2 ♖ae8 33.♖d3?**

(see diagram next column)

**33...♙c8?!** But the possibility of a counter-punch at an appropriate moment is always possible during



such lengthy games of mutual manoeuvre. And here, Black might have played the probably better 33...f5! and if 34.exf5 ♖xf5 35.♖d4!? ♗xc2.

By now, however, both sides had started to run down their clocks rather alarmingly. We both continued to feel extraordinarily tense and began to miss not a few critical tactics.

**34.♗f2 ♗a6?! 35.♖d1 ♖a8?! 36.♔h1?! Here, it seems, 36.e5!** and if 36...dxe5 (36...d5 is positionally much better for White) 37.f5! ♗h6 38.♖c5 would have given White a possibly already decisive attacking advantage.

**36...♗c8?! 37.e5!**

**(see diagram next column)**

At last, White spots a real opportunity. Black should have recentralised his rook from a8 to e8 on

the previous move and with his central defences weakened is now objectively close to collapse.

**37...♗f5** I had expected 37...♖d7 after which White may continue to pile on the pressure, by playing 38.♖fd3 and if 38...♗a6 39.♖3d2 f5 (or else Ne4) 40.♗f3 but with very little time left before move 40, I hadn't worked it all out.

**38.g4** And, whoops! White actually just missed the straightforward 38.exd6 cxd6 39.♖xd6 with a good pawn plus!

**38...♗d7 39.♖fd3?** Even here, however, White can still play 39.♗e4! and if 39...dxe5 40.fxe5 when, as White's e-pawn is inviolable, White's knight will reach f6 with near crushing force. After the text-move, Black might even have played 39...f5!, with no apparent problems. In our mutual time-scramble, both of us just missed that.

39...d5?



40.♖c5!? Not bad for a fortieth move, but the engine spots 40.♘e4 and if 40...dxe4 41.♙xd7 f5 42.♜d8+ ♖e8 43.♙xa8 ♙xa8 44.gxf5 ♖h6 45.♗e3 gxf5 46.♞d7 still with a little extra for White.

40...♙ae8 41.♘e4 dxe4 42.♙xd7 ♖h6 43.♗e3 ♙xd7 While I had, at least, noticed that Black loses, after 43...♙xe5? 44.g5 matters remain distinctly murky. White has a lot of extra kingside space and the more active rook and queen (at least temporarily). But Black can always hope for sudden tactical counterattacking chances, due to the somewhat airy position of White's king. And we now had to complete a still rather difficult game in a half-hour or so each.

44.♙xd7 g5 45.♔g2 ♖e6?! Perhaps Black should have tried to hold the still slightly tricky endgame after 45...gxf4 and if 46.♗xe4 ♖g5 47.♔f3 ♙xe5

48.♗xf4 ♖xf4+ 49.♔xf4 ♙e2 50.c4 ♙h2.

46.♙xc7 ♖d5



47.c4!? Here the engine seems to prefer 47.fxg5 and if 47...♙xe5 48.c4 ♖d6 49.♙c8+ ♔g7 50.h4 ♖e6 51.♗f4 with the idea of ♗f6+, none of which is entirely easy to calculate.

47...♖d1 48.♙xc6!? Now White's last chance to keep the game alive (objectively and with much engine-help) may have been 48.f5!? and if 48...h6 49.e6 fxe6 50.fxe6 ♖d6 (or 50...♙xe6 51.♗f2) 51.♙d7 ♖xe6 52.♖d4.

48...♙a8?! [As 48...♖c2+ and if 49.♔g3 (or if 49.♗f2 ♖xb3) 49...♙b8! may just about hold.

49.f5

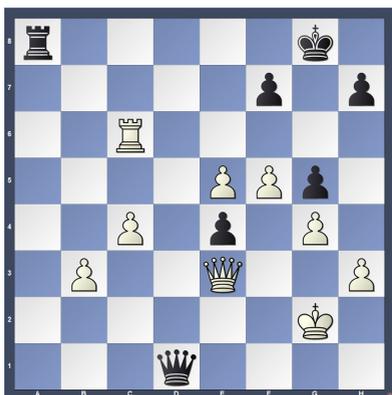
(see diagram next column)



**Above: Hull City Hall, main host of this year's British Chess Championships.**

**Below: Just around the corner, racist protesters face off with police shortly before rioting and looting that led to a venue 'lockdown'**





**49...♔h8?** Although, even here, the clever engine choice 49...h5! (which neither of us mere, clock-rattled humans even spotted) and if 50.♖xg5+ ♔f8 51.♗h6+ ♔g8 52.♔g3 ♖e1+ 53.♔f4 ♗d2+ 54.♔xe4 ♖c2+ offered obvious practical chances and might even still hold.

**50.♖d6 ♖a1** Now it's relatively easy for White, such as after 50... ♖a2+ 51.♔g3 ♖e2 52.♖xd1 ♖xe3+ 53.♔g2 and wins.

- 51.♖xg5 ♖c3 52.♖f6+ ♔g8
- 53.♖g5+ ♔h8 54.♖f6+ ♔g8
- 55.♖d8+ ♖xd8 56.♖xd8+ ♔g7
- 57.♖f6+ ♔g8 58.♖g5+ ♔h8
- 59.♖d8+ ♔g7 60.♖g5+ ♔h8
- 61.♖f4 ♖c2+ 62.♔g3 ♖c3+
- 63.♔h4

**(see diagram next column)**

After gaining time on the clock by playing a number of repetitive checks, White simply brings his

king into safety, via h4. White has too many extra pawns, or as in the game, launches a mating attack.

**63...e3 64.♖h6 ♔g8 65.f6 e2 66. ♖g7#**

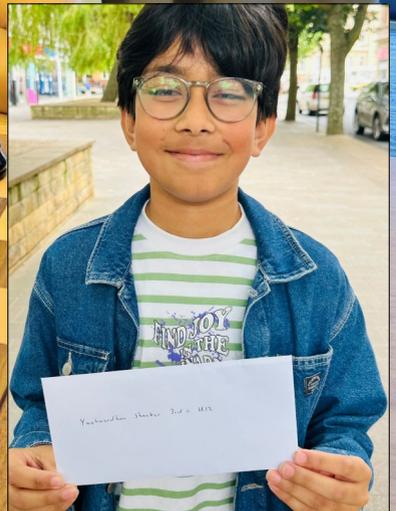
**1-0**

An excellent effort from Craig right when it was needed, but the last round was to provide some disappointment as Craig couldn't find a way through against Geoffrey James as Black, while Andrew Smith stormed through against Terry Chapman to bag gold. Still, a runner-up 'silver medal' for Craig was an excellent achievement.

There was to be more success for Scotland, this time from our juniors, with Yashwardhan Shankar taking a very creditable 3rd= spot in the under 12 event and Louis Cheng grabbing 2nd= in the AM Open, finishing off a fantastic festival.



**Yashwardhan Shankar: 3rd= in the under 12 event and another young talent to look out for in the Scotland ranks!**



# Game of the Month



♞ **Porat, Ido (IM 2322)**

♜ **Greet, Andrew (IM 2400)**

Scottish Championship Open  
Dunfermline 2024

Coming into Round 7, I needed to regain some momentum, having dropped half a point with White against Jason Liu. Jason is clearly a talented kid who played a superb tournament – but still, I felt that it was the kind of game I should be winning if I was to triumph in this event.

As things stood, I still trailed half a point behind Peter Large. All of that made it especially vital to get a good result against Porat – who, by the way, had just drawn with Black against top-seeded Holm.

**1.c4** That's me out of preparation after one move.

I had spent all of my limited prep time looking at 1.d4, which Porat had favoured in the overwhelming majority of his games.

**1...e5** I'll give myself a pat on the back for making a smart choice,

taking into account my opponent's tendencies. I had observed that Porat had a strong tendency to aim for quirky, non-mainstream openings and middlegame structures. With that in mind, I had a think about the different options in my repertoire against the English, and chose something appropriate against my opponent's style.

**2.♘c3 ♕b4 3.♖c2** Already, I felt my choice of opening variation was vindicated. **3.♘d5** is, in my view, the only serious challenge to Black's last move. But it's also the main line, and I successfully played the odds that my opponent would prefer a different direction.

**3...♗f6** It's still early days, but I regard Black's position as comfortably equal. It's a reversed Rosolimo where White's extra tempo is of limited usefulness.

**4.e3 0-0 5.♗f3 5.♗ge2** can be met in various ways, the most logical being **5...♖e8 6.a3 ♕f8** intending ...c6 and ...d5.



**5...♕xc3!?** What's this – shouldn't Black wait for a2-a3 to be played before making this exchange? Ideally, yes, but this move does have the advantage of allowing me to play a quick ...e4 next.

**5...♗c6?! would only invite 6.♗d5**, and I no longer want to exchange that knight because my own knight will have to move again. It's hardly a disaster, but it seems to me that White's whole position makes more sense with the knight on d5; **5...♖e8** is a decent alternative, but I wanted to fight for the initiative and decided I don't necessarily need the rook on that square.

**6.♖xc3 e4 7.♗d4 c5 8.♗b3?!** The knight has no prospects on this square, and it also obstructs the natural development of the dark-squared bishop, which belongs on b2.

**8.♗e2** is a better move, when I was intending **8...♗c6** followed by ...d5, with active prospects.

**8...b6** I can afford to sacrifice one tempo to keep the knight restricted.

**(see diagram next column)**

**9.d4 exd3 10.♕xd3** Porat is a strong player, so of course he didn't just misplace his knight for no reason – his idea was to provoke



### Position after 8...b6

the ...exd3 exchange, so that he could complete his kingside development and get castled, before regrouping his queenside forces in some way. However, Black's fast development proves to be the most relevant factor in the position. By the way, along with his preference for unorthodox positions, Porat's other most obvious stylistic trait was that he was a chronic time-trouble addict. He had already burned an hour of thinking time by now, leaving himself with just 35 minutes (plus 30-second increment) for the rest of the game. I had half an hour more.

**10...d5 11.0-0 ♞c6** I spent some time considering 11...b5?! 12.♞xc5, followed by either 12...-- (12...bxc4 13.♙c2 ♚d6 14.b4 a5 15.a3; or 12...dxc4 13.♙c2 ♚e7 14.b4, with an unorthodox, complicated battle in either case. The engine confirms

that it should be about equal with best play, whereas the game continuation favours Black to some extent, so I was right to avoid taking drastic action... for the moment, at least.

**12.♞d1 ♙e6** I wasn't sure how my opponent would continue, but I was certainly happy with the outcome of the opening. Black's active, harmonious development is worth more than White's bishop pair.

**13.a3** A logical move, stopping any ...Nb4 ideas and preparing to unravel on the queenside. I had seen my next move in advance and considered it an interesting idea, but took quite some time to judge the consequences of it – although I still kept a healthy advantage on the clock.



**13...dxc4!** I'd consider it an exaggeration to call this a "queen sacrifice", as I obtain an almost equivalent amount of material in return.

It leads to a forcing sequence over the next few moves, and we'll discuss the resulting position below.

Although the game continuation is both fascinating and objectively at least equal for Black, it's worth pointing out that other good choices exist. Among them, my favourite idea is 13...♙e7! , intending to meet 14.cxd5 ♞xd5 15.♙c2 with 15...♞ad8! , when Black's lead in development easily justifies the sacrifice of the h7–pawn. If I were to reach the position after 13.a3 again, it would be hard to decide between this and the game continuation. They are both rather promising for Black, which is why I've awarded each move an exclamation mark.

**14.♞xh7+ ♞xh7!** There was a part of me that wanted to try 14...♙xh7 15.♞xd8 ♞fxd8 16.♙c2+ ♞d3 17.♞d2 ♞ad8 , hoping to find a more active role for my kingside knight. However, I correctly assessed the pinned rook to be of greater relevance, as 18.♞f1 leaves Black unable to prevent White from unravelling the queenside with Bd2.

**15.♞xd8 ♞fxd8 16.♞d2 ♞d3 17.♙c2 ♞ad8**

**(see diagram next column)**

Since move 13, White's moves have been forced and Black's



**Position after 17...♞ad8**

have been obvious, so it was easy to anticipate this position and spend some time assessing it in advance. Black has a slight material disadvantage, with just a rook and a knight versus the enemy queen. As compensation, Black has much more active pieces and a powerful bind on the queenside. My simple plan was to strengthen that bind and keep White's rook and bishop paralysed forever.

**18.h4?** As we will see, this should have been a losing move. What else could White have tried?

If White wishes to develop the queenside pieces directly, then 18.♞f1? is the only try, since other knight moves allow a deadly check on d1. The text move is almost as bad though, as the simple 18...♞d1 leaves White paralysed. For example, 19.♞b1 ♞e1 prepares ...Rdd1, and if 20.♞d2 ♞xd2! 21.♙xd2 ♞xb1 Black wins a

piece and the game. 18.h3! was the correct way to safeguard White's king from back-rank dangers. With that being said, Black has two tempting continuations, both of which demand computer-like precision to save White:

18...♘a5 is the obvious move, and almost certainly the option I would have chosen. After 19.♗h2 ♞b3 20.♞xb3 cxb3 21.♚e2 ♜d1 we reach a remarkable position:



(analysis diagram)

White's position appears desperate, and I'm sure my opponent thought the same. Black's bind is unbreakable, with the a1-rook unable to escape the corner, while White's bishop can never move without losing the rook. Still, after 22.f3 Black has no way of making progress without allowing some sort of counterplay. For example, after e3-e4 is played, Black will need to watch out for bishop jumps to threaten the d8-rook, or sometimes a mate on g7. I left Stockfish running at a high depth, and played around with different

attempts to improve Black's position. The machine thwarted all my efforts, but in a human game I would still lean heavily towards Black.

18...♗f6!? is another idea, intending 19.♞xc4 ♜d1+ 20.♗h2 ♜f1 followed by doubling rooks on the first rank.



(analysis diagram)

Here too, White's position looks desperate, but a route to survival exists: 21.b4! ♜dd1 22.♗b2 ♜h1+ 23.♚g3 ♜xa1 24.♗xa1 ♜xa1 25.bxc5 Once again, Stockfish proves a 0.00 verdict, despite the apparent superiority of Black's active rook, bishop and knight versus White's queen and extra pawns.

18...♘a5 18...♗f6 was also strong. For instance, let's see what happens if White eats the c4-pawn: 19.♞xc4 ♜d1+ 20.♗h2 ♜f1

(see diagram next column)



(analysis diagram)

The placement of the pawn on h4 rather than h3 makes a huge difference. White has no time for 21.b4 here, as 21...Rxf2 wins thanks to the upcoming fork on g4.

19. Qh2 Nb3! 19... Nf6 20. f3 Nb3 21. Nxb3 cxb3 is almost the same thing, but here White has the additional option of 22. Wf2, whereas the game continuation forces the queen to go to e2.

20. Nxb3 cxb3 21. We2



21... Nf6 21... Rd1 is similarly strong. In either case, the situation is almost the same as the 18.h3! line examined above, in the branch where Black opted for 18... Na5 – except that the placement of the pawn on h4 harms White, for reasons that will be explained.

22.a4 22.f3 Rd1 23.e4 (23.a4 transposes to 22...Rd1! 23.f3 in the notes to the game continuation below) 23... R8d4 leaves White desperately paralysed.

22...c4? Missing a win.

22... Rd1! was correct. 23.f3 (23.a5 can simply be met by 23... bxa5, as White cannot recapture.) In the analogous position with the pawn on h3, Stockfish shows that White's position can be held. But with the pawn on h4, Black has a devastating resource:



(analysis diagram)

23... Rh5! The threat is ...Rh1+ with a fork trick, so White only has three possible defences:

- 24. ♖a6 loses to 24... ♜e1 intending ...Rdd1;
- 24.g4 ♜h1+ 25. ♔g2 ♜dd1 26.gxh5 ♜dg1+ 27. ♔f2 ♜h2+ 28. ♔xg1 ♜xe2 Game Over.
- 24. ♖f2 is easy to refute here, as Black simply plays 24... ♜c4 followed by ...Rf1 and later ...Rdd1.



**Position after 24... ♜8d3**

However, this last variation is, in a way, the key to the whole position, as this is where the placement of the pawn on h4 makes a crucial difference! If the pawn were one square further back, White could move the queen to h4, with a double attack against the black pieces on h5 and c4.

As it happened, I was looking for ways to exploit my queenside bind, and the idea of ...Nh5 escaped my attention as a candidate move.

**23.f3 ♜d1 24.e4 ♜8d3** Despite the previous mistake, I still have a strong bind and the better practical chances. With the last move, I enable myself to move the f6-knight (in response to e4–e5, for instance) without allowing a Bg5 trick.

**(see diagram next column)**

**25.a5 25. ♖f2!** was more accurate, keeping a4–a5 in reserve.

**25...bxa5 26. ♖f2 a6?** I thought I was in complete control and could afford to burn a tempo in this way.

**26...a4!** was better, and if **27. ♖xa7 ♜e1 28. ♖b8+ ♔h7 29. ♜xa4** Black wins with:



**(analysis diagram)**

**29... ♜dd1!** The primary threat is ...Nh5, with a mating net. (29... ♜xc1 30. ♖a8 gives White enough

counterplay to hold. Not exactly the easiest lines to figure out, especially with time running low.



**27.e5** 27.h5!! is a brilliant resource, intending 27...hx5 28.♖xa5 when the rook comes into play with gain of tempo. After 28...♖xc1 29.♖xh5 ♔dd1 Black prepares a queenside breakthrough while White goes for counterplay against the king, and the result should be a draw after accurate play.

**27...♘d5?** 27...♘h5! was necessary to keep White's kingside counterplay at bay, and after 28.g4 ♘f4 Black's victory is close.

**28.♔g3!** Threatening Bh6.

**28...♘e7?!** After this latest mistake, Black no longer has any advantage.

28...♔h7! was better, with ...c3 to follow.

**29.♔g5!** Somehow I failed to consider this. The queen attacks my knight while sneakily defending the c1-bishop and thereby threatening Rxa5.

**29...♞c6** 29...♞f5 30.♖xa5 c3 31. ♖xa6 looks dangerous for both sides, but the machine gives several paths leading to a draw.

**30.h5** ♔f8 Technically this could have been a losing mistake, but in a practical game it was almost impossible to see why.

30...♞d4! was objectively the best move, and then:

31.h6?! ♞f5 not only defends against mate, but also sets up threats such as ...Rf1 followed by ...Rdd1, or ...Rd4-h4+. The battle continues, but Black is the favourite;

Correct is 31.♙e3!! ♖xa1 32.♙xd4 ♖xd4 33.h6 when White appears to be winning, but now it is Black's turn to maintain the balance in spectacular fashion:



33...♖h4+!! 34.♗xh4 gxh6 Mate is averted, and White will need to offer perpetual check before Black wins by promoting a pawn.



pieces control the important squares for now, while Black still has that pin along the first rank and far-advanced queenside pawns.

31.h6 31.♗g3!! is one of those moves that looks so easy when the computer suggests it, but in a practical game, with White's queen having moved from g3 to g5 just two moves ago, the chances of spotting it are miniscule – especially with little time on the clock. But anyway, if White does somehow find it, Black is in serious trouble because the threat of h5–h6 just became a lot more serious.

35...c3 I decided that if I played too slowly I would be in danger of allowing a trick involving a move like Be3 or Rxa5, so it was best to force matters.

31...gxh6 32.♗xh6+ ♔e8 33.♗h8+ ♔d7 34.♗a8 Threatening a deadly check on b7.

36.bxc3 ♖xc3 37.♗b2 ♖xa1 38.♗xc3 ♖a2 39.♗b5 a4

34...♔c7 35.♗xa6

(see diagram next column)



It's anyone's game! White's queen has become active but the black

I had approximately three minutes on my clock at this stage: not

loads of time, but a bit of a cushion. Porat, on the other hand, was always around or below the one-minute mark, surviving on his 30-second increment and never really building up any significant amount of reserve time.

**40.f4 ♖c2 41.♙a5+** Since 31.h6 was played, neither of us had made a mistake. My next move was not the best though.

**41...♗d7?** 41...♞xa5 42.♞xa5+ ♔c6 43.♞xa4+ ♔c5 should lead to a draw. If anything, the position might be considered more dangerous for White, due to the passed b-pawn; 41...♔c8 42.♞xa4 ♞xa5 43.♞xa5 b2 leads to something similar.



**42.f5??** Finally, Porat loses the thread. Both he and I have committed some inaccuracies since I traded my queen on move 13, but it seems to me that this is the first time that either of us played a move with completely the wrong

idea in mind. How could he have improved? Here are three suggestions:

42.♞xa4 is an obvious move, which I assume Porat rejected on account of 42...♙d5 – which was indeed my intention. However, it's not as if White is getting mated after the g2-pawn falls. For both positional and tactical reasons, White should preserve the pawn on f4 rather than the one on g2, as the former defends e5 and forces Black to worry about f4–f5 ideas. The position should be a draw if both sides play accurately.

42.♞b7+ ♔e8 43.♞a8+ would have more or less forced a draw if White wanted it. Black has nothing better than returning the king to d7, since 43...♔e7? 44.♙c7 would spell trouble. True, Black is not getting mated yet, but 44...b2 45.♙d6+ ♔d7 46.♞b7+ ♔d8 47.♙a3 leaves White as the clear favourite.

42.♙b4! was the best move of all, intending to install the bishop on the superb d6-square, while keeping the options of Qb7+ and Qxa4, as well as a timely f4–f5. Black has no good defence.

It's not as if I had calculated and assessed the above lines with any precision, but I was certain – following a brief check to make sure I hadn't allowed an instant catastrophe! – that the removal of

White's f-pawn had greatly improved my chances, if only because my bishop could now enjoy total stability on e6. I waited to discover what my opponent had in mind when choosing to give away this important pawn.

**42...♙xf5 43.♖xa4** Not much, as it turns out.

The engine points out that **43.♖b7+** would have been good enough to draw with perfect play, but it would be totally unrealistic to offer this as an improvement: if White wanted to check me in this way, he could have done it under far better circumstances on the previous move. White's 42nd move is the one that deserves all the criticism, as it was played with the wrong objectives in mind.



**43...b2** White has no checks and the b-pawn is unstoppable – another consequence of White's 42nd move.

**44.♖a2 b1♖** The machine prefers **44...♗xa5 45.♖xf7+ ♔c6** but I'll choose the slower-but-simpler win any day.

This is worth elaborating on, as I believe it's vital to emphasize the practical, human aspect of chess over the engine evaluation. Had I switched off my brain and lazily allowed the engine to dictate my thoughts, I would have called White's 43rd move the decisive error – which, technically, it was. But because I'm thinking about the reality of human play, I'll annotate accordingly. I'll condense this into a golden practical tip for opening preparation, game analysis and indeed annotations. The engine is a wonderful tool – but always make sure you are the one operating the engine, rather than the other way round!

**45.♖xf7+ 45.♖xb1 ♖xg2+**  
**46.♔xg2 ♙xb1 47.♙c3 ♖e6** wins White's last pawn and the game. For reasons that I can't understand, the engine offers **45.e6+ fxe6 46.♖xb1 ♖xg2+ 47.♔xg2 ♙xb1** as a path of slightly greater resistance for White. I guess it takes slightly more time and effort to advance an e-pawn than an f-pawn. It makes no great difference though, and I have zero doubts about my ability to checkmate with knight and bishop against a lone king.

**45...♗e7**



Porat could have resigned here, but he limps on for a few more moves.

46. ♖f6 ♙e6 47. ♖f4 ♚a2 48. ♖d4+ ♗d5 49. ♖a4+ ♜c6 50. ♖d4+ ♔e8 51. ♙d2 ♞f5 52. ♖g4 ♖xd2 53. ♖g6+ ♔d7

0-1

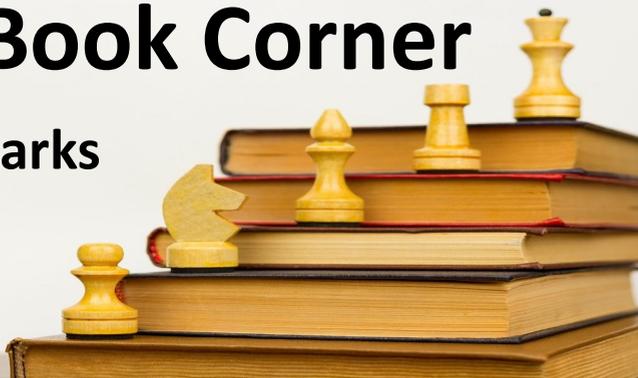
Finally, he'd had enough. It was an interesting game, featuring a most unusual situation after I traded my queen for a rook and knight plus a queenside bind. Just as things looked desperate for White, I failed to capitalize on the situation and Porat whipped up counterplay, even missing a few opportunities to win the game.

Fortunately for me, Porat's chronic time trouble ultimately cost him; he played a lot of good moves while surviving from good move to move on his 30-second increment, but eventually he made one dreadful decision and the win was mine. It would prove to be a crucial victory for my eventual tournament success.



# Chess Book Corner

with Ian Marks



**This month sees Cumbernauld’s finest, Ian Marks, investigate what is described as ‘A Silicon Reappraisal of Thirty-Five Classic Games’. Will he discover a computerised rehashing of old tales or a much more significant addition to chess literature?**

**RE-ENGINEERING THE CHESS CLASSICS** by Matthew Sadler & Steve Giddins, New in Chess, 440 pp., publ. 2023.

Perhaps I should start by saying what this is not. The rather clumsy title might lead one to suspect it’s a collection of engine-dissected games designed to expose the fallibility of chessplayers and how their games are full of mistakes. That would have been an insult to some of the finest minds ever to sit at a chess board. What it is, as the sub-title (*‘A Silicon Reappraisal of Thirty-Five Classic Games’*) suggests, is an attempt to uncover, with silicon

assistance, the hidden subtleties buried within thirty-five well-known and not so well-known games.

The games span the period 1852-1998 and feature most of the big names from that century and a half. Some are genuine classics (e.g. Anderssen-Dufresne, Berlin 1852, Lasker-Napier, Cambridge Springs 1904 and Geller-Euwe, Zürich 1953), while others have justly found their niche in chess history, e.g. Taimanov-Fischer, game 3, Vancouver 1971. Game 15, Barcza-Wikström 1949, though, questions the definition of ‘classic’. This is given merely as ‘*cr 1949*’, but is from the Correspondence Olympiad 1948-50, as per Keene’s *Flank Openings*, which the

**MATTHEW SADLER  
& STEVE GIDDINS**

# **RE-ENGINEERING THE CHESS CLASSICS**

**A Silicon Reappraisal of  
Thirty-Five Classic Games**



**NEW IN CHESS**

authors reference in the text – but don't attribute in the bibliography!\*

Unlike the other games, which were played under tournament conditions with the clock ticking, and without wanting to detract from Barcza's superb handling of a typical Catalan endgame, in this one the players had virtually unlimited time for analysis plus the luxury of being able to move the pieces.

(\*The bibliography is shoddy. It's all over the place, alphabetical by neither title nor author and with both French and English definite articles thrown in at the start.)

Back in the tournament hall, here's a brief, somewhat minimalist, example to serve for the many. It's from game 31, Karpov-Kuzmin, Leningrad Interzonal 1973, a standard IQP position arising from a Tarrasch French, an opening in which Karpov was a true virtuoso.



**Matthew Sadler, author of numerous excellent books investigating engine-focused chess**

Kuzmin played the very natural – and human – 14...Rad8, completing his development and backing up the d-pawn. The engines, however, get all het up about the amazing 14...h5. As the authors say, this is one of the last moves a GM (or anyone else, probably) would consider in this position. *‘How do you even start understanding what the engines want with this move? Well, let's start with 15.Qd2: the engines considered 14.Re1 (Karpov's last move – IM) to be inaccurate and wanted 14.Qd2 instead.*

*So how does 14...h5 dissuade 15.Qd2 ? There is only one thing, and indeed... 15.Qd2 Bxf3 16.gxf3 h4 is the idea, chipping away at White's*



**Steve Giddins, author and translator of numerous chess books**

match. The first few moves saw Steinitz digging in with his own defence to the Ruy: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 d6 4 d4 Bd7 5 Nc3 Nge7, giving Black the passive but arguably weakness-free position of the diagram.



*weakened kingside to create more dark-square weaknesses.* The book is choc-a-bloc with such unconsidered insights which serve to illustrate that chess is far richer than hitherto considered.

While the book certainly achieves its aim of revealing the hidden layers of each game, there's one thing which niggles, viz. that the computer suggestions, often generated from machine v machine matches, are frequently presented as chunks of moves with little or no comment (there's plenty of text otherwise). Sometimes a little elucidation in the machine-generated material wouldn't have gone amiss.

An example: game 3, Lasker-Steinitz from their 1894 world championship

It comes as a surprise, therefore, to learn that the machines think that Black's opening has been a disaster and that he's got a *sair fecht* on his hands after 6 d5. The authors give a block of twenty-nine moves, largely uncommented, from a game between Dragon 3.1 and Stockfish, which White eventually won on move 75.

This begs the question: how disastrous, in human terms, is an opening position which it takes a super-engine seventy-five moves to win against another super-engine? And if the position after 5...Nge7 arose in your average league match, would Black necessarily lose? It's not a gimme!

But the real eye-opener is Black's eighth and ninth moves in the line the authors give from the diagram: 6 d5 Nb8 7 Be2 h6 8 Be3 8...Ng8 ('A silent comment on the value of Steinitz' [sic] 5<sup>th</sup> move! All the engines want ...Ng8 at this point.') 9 h3 Nf6. Unlike in the Karpov-Kuzmin example above, there's no attempt to explain 8...Ng8 or, even more amazingly, its return to f6 on the next move.

As I said, there's enough of this sort of thing to be noticeable, and it rangles a wee bit.

That said, most of the games will be well known, at least to those of us who were playing chess in the last century.

Amongst them are some fabulous battles, e.g.

**Botvinnik-Bronstein, 9<sup>th</sup> game, world championship match 1951**, the game where Botvinnik was a rook up, yet finished up hanging on for a draw.

**Spassky-Tal, USSR championship 1958**, one of the most dramatic and influential games in chess history. How different might world championship history have been if Spassky had converted his winning position, rather than tragically going astray and losing?

**Larsen-Gligoric, Vinkovci 1970**, a tremendous tussle between two of the elite of the day which illustrates the depth of Larsen's undogmatic chess thinking.

The games are presented in such a way that readers can skip the deeper computer stuff if they wish, said passages being marked with a grey line. A rather extreme example is game 10, Euwe-Yates, Hastings 1931 (where, incidentally, the authors become the latest in a long line of writers to fail the accuracy test by calling the player of the black pieces 'Frederick', when a modicum of research will reveal what it really was). Of the ten pages devoted to the game, a good half have the grey line alongside the analysis.

It's up to the reader whether to go through everything, or concentrate on the 'human' stuff. Either way you have a collection of thirty-five inspirational games illustrating pretty much everything the game can throw up – tactics, endings, positional play, squeezes – plus lots of drama, and they in themselves would be well worth a look.

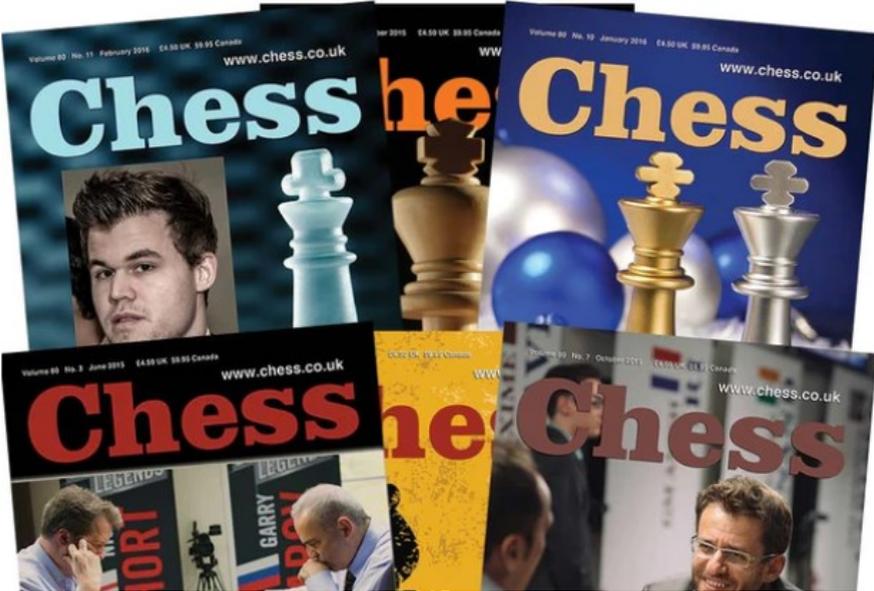
**Ian Marks**

**July 2024**



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[FIDE ratings](#) are updated on the 1<sup>st</sup> 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 [Grand Prix Leaderboards](#) and rules can be viewed here while the [Giant-killing](#) lists are here.

...and finally, **Alan McGowan's** excellent history archive can be found [here](#).

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