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# Chess

## MAGNUS AT THE DOUBLE!

Magnus Carlsen completes a  
World Rapid & Blitz Championship  
double for the fifth time despite  
a few mishaps along the way

ISSN 0964-6221



Jonathan Hawkins - Danny Gormally pays tribute to the late British Champion



Classic Masterclass - Michael Adams and Nikita Vitiugov's detailed annotations



Hikaru Nakamura - Daniel King continues his 2026 Cyprus Candidates preview



# Chess

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# The 'Mysterious' King Tuck

Junior Tay explains why on occasion moving the king to the second rank can be wise

For those who grew up watching the titanic Kasparov versus Karpov matches in the 80s and 90s, we were not only enthralled by the former's attacking prowess and the latter's subtle pressurising and defensive acumen, we were also given a treat of their strategic flair. One particular finesse associated with Kasparov, which ended up in some excellent wins for him, is the quiet king tuck amidst a sustained attack on Karpov.

## G.Kasparov-A.Karpov

World Championship (Game 16),  
Leningrad 1986



Karpov had made serious inroads on the queenside and the knight on a3 is dead meat, but Kasparov calmly uncorked:

**31 ♔h2!!**

The idea is 31...♖xa3 32 ♘h6 ♘7e5 33 ♖f6 ♖b2 34 ♖xg6 with a sustained attack. Karpov was unable to defend accurately under the relentless pressure and went down in flames.

**31...♖b3! 32 ♗xd3 cxd3?**

32...♖xa3 or 32...♖xd3, keeping the rook active on the third rank, gave better survival chances.

**33 ♖f4! ♖xa3 34 ♘h6! ♖e7 35 ♖xg6 ♖e5 36 ♖g8+ ♗e7 37 d6+!! ♗e6 38 ♖e8+ ♗d5 39 ♖xe5+ ♗xe5 40 d7 ♖b8 41 ♗xf7 1-0**

This king tuck prior to a massive pummelling became a hallmark Kasparov concept. The theme resurfaced in yet another K-K match four years later.



In 1986 and 1990 a quiet ♔h2 really helped to strengthen Kasparov's attack on Karpov's king.

## G.Kasparov-A.Karpov

World Championship (Game 20),  
Lyon 1990



Here, Garry uncorked the sublime:

**31 ♔h2!**

The idea is to introduce the e1-rook and knight into the final attack with 32 ♗f6!. Karpov pinned the g3-rook, but it was not enough to quash Kasparov's assault.

**31...♖e5 32 ♗g5**

There's no good way to meet the threats of ♗f7+ and ♖e8. This is a forceful example of a king tuck which sets up unstoppable threats.

**32...♖f6 33 ♖e8 ♗f5 34 ♖xh6+ ♖xh6 35 ♗f7+ ♗h7 36 ♗xf5+ ♖g6 37 ♗xg6+ ♗g7 38 ♖xa8 ♗e7 39 ♖b8 a5 40 ♗e4+ ♗xf7 41 ♗xd5+ 1-0**

FM Andrey Terekhov, a Correspondence IM and winner of the 2020 FIDE Book of the Year for *The Life and Games of Vasily Smyslov: Volume 1*, wrote on his Chess.com blog of a similar motif, albeit a less forceful example.

## A.Terekhov-N.Ibrayev

Internet (blitz) 2018



Andrey had sacrificed a knight on e6

against the Kazakh GM to open up the kingside. He commented thus:

**20 ♖xe6!**

"Black is vastly outnumbered in the center and on the kingside, so I didn't hesitate with this sacrifice."

**20...fxe6 21 ♔xe6+ ♕h8 22 ♖c7**

Threatening ♖xg6+, followed by ♖h3+ and ♖h7#.

22 ♖xg6+! hxg6 23 ♖xg6 ♖f7 24 ♖f6+ ♕g8 25 ♕h1! is another beautiful finish. Black cannot prevent ♖g1+ followed by mate.

**22...♖f6 23 ♖h3 h5**



**24 ♕f1!**

As Andrey explained, "It is not often that a piece sacrifice is followed by a 'quiet' king move (a similar motif appeared in Kasparov's games, but mostly as a preparation for the sacrifice). The point of ♕f1 is that after the impending ♖xg6+ the knight would not be taken with check. Given that half of Black's pieces are cramped in the opposite corner of the board, it is not entirely surprising that Black is completely helpless to prevent the final breakthrough."

**24...♖a6 25 ♖xg6+ ♖xg6 26 ♖xh5+ 1-0**

The king tuck on the h-file followed by ...♖g8 and a g-pawn charge is typical in the Sicilian Maroczy Bind with Black or certain English/Reti set-ups with White. The sheer chutzpah of such a build-up can be quite terrifying to deal with, as seen in the following classic example.

### A.Yusupov-J.Rubineti

Toluca Interzonal 1982



**13 ♕h2!**

Clearing the path for the battering ram on the g-file.

**13...♔d8 14 ♖g1 ♖b6 15 ♖b1 ♖a7 16 g4**  
Here we go...

**16...♖f8 17 ♖f1 ♖e8 18 ♖g3 f6 19 ♖f5**

Unnerved by the massive build-up, the Argentinian IM now gave White just what he wanted, direct access on the g-file.

**19...♔xf5?? 20 gxf5 ♔b6 21 ♔h5!**

Ensuring there's no chance of the black king scuttling to away.

**21...♔d8 22 ♔h6 ♖d7**



Now Yusupov comes up with a combination to end resistance.

**23 ♔xe8! ♖xe8 24 ♖h5 ♖b8 25 ♔xg7! 1-0**

There's no point playing it out with 25...♔xg7 26 ♖xg7+ ♕xg7 27 ♖g1+ ♕h8 28 ♖f7 ♖g8 29 ♖xf6+ ♖g7 30 ♖xg7#.

Strong king moves are most frequently seen in endgames where the king's placement may be very significant in attaining draws or wins in the long run. However, it is less common in the early stages of the game. One very stunning example can be seen in Boguslaw Boder and Jacek Bielczyk's *The Magic and Beauty of Quiet Chess Moves*, which showed this position.

### W.Duer-K.Petschar

Austrian League 1993



White played the in-your-face...

**13 ♕e2!**

...and there was no way for Black to avoid losing material to 14 g4. The game ended nicely for White too with a rook sacrifice to force mate.

**13...e5 14 g4 ♔xg4 15 hxg4 ♖xg4 16 ♔h4 ♖e6 17 ♖g5 ♖e7 18 ♖xh7 exd4+ 19 ♕f1 ♖fe8 20 ♔g5 ♔e5 21 ♖xf6+ ♔xf6 22 ♖h8+! 1-0**

Boder and Bielczyk also referenced the following famous example where the former world champion nudged his king forward.

### G.Kamsky-A.Karpov

Dortmund 1993



Karpov was obviously not going to castle kingside with White's pieces looming there, so:

**11...♔e7!? 12 ♖e5 ♔xe5 13 dxe5 ♖a5+ 14 c3 ♖xe5+ 15 ♔e3 b6...** After more adventures, Karpov won in 46 moves.



Gata Kamsky was stunned when Karpov didn't castle, but rather moved his king to e7!

A more refined example of a king tuck can be seen in a training position given by Alexey Dreev in *The Art of Quiet Moves*. In this position White's queenside is collapsing and thus he has to set problems on the other flank.





### 31 ♖g1!!

Dreev – “The first quiet move! White is looking to take on g4.”

### 31...♜f7!

“The best option for Black. If White takes on g4 here, then Black can transfer his second rook to h8, after first recapturing on g4.”

### 32 ♜xd6 ♜xb3 33 ♜e6!!



As Dreev puts it, “Another great quiet move. If it were White to move here, for example, he could take on e5, slide the queen over to g5, and look to play the knight to f5.” The game was eventually drawn as White’s activity was sufficient to fend off Black’s extra pawn and queenside passers.

So far we have seen the Kasparov silent king shift, which prefaced a second wave of attack, an audacious king jump on to the second rank to prepare a tactic against the opponent’s queen, and a positional pressure type of king return (to g1) to keep the game complicated and tense.

My own contribution to the king tuck is in the realm of the desperate amateur swindle. First up, in the 1992 Commonwealth Championships in Malaysia in a must-win game (for the top unrated player medal, as well as a cash prize by finishing in the top-15).

### R.Tia-J.Tay

Commonwealth Championship,  
Bangi 1992



I have been positionally outplayed. My pawn structure is awful, my attack is running out of gas and my opponent’s pieces operate very harmoniously. The upside for me is my opponent had less than a minute to reach



Junior Tay himself has perfected the crafty art of the king tuck as preparation for a swindle.

move 40 (in those non-increment clock times, we played at two hours for 40 moves and then one hour for the rest of the game), so I had to keep things as complex as possible.

There is almost nothing to play for here. All my pieces have no scope. My queen is in danger of being trapped and I have no tricks. Well almost... White obviously wants to play ♜b1 at some point, but first he will have to defend the knight on d3 with ♙f1. Here it suddenly occurred to me to try for a swindle.

### 32...♖g7!?

What is with the king saunter? The reason why I needed my king off the back rank will be revealed on move 34.

### 33 ♙f1 ♙g4 34 ♜b1 ♜a8!



I immediately swept the rook here with a flourish and my opponent literally turned red in anguish. The point of 32...♖g7 is revealed. I needed to make him burn his time by calculating both 35 ♜xa8 and 35 ♜xb3, and it is difficult to do so with mere seconds on the clock. White had no time calculate deeply, but somehow he managed to edge closer to time control with his next move.

### 35 ♜a7+ ♜xa7 36 ♜xb3 ♜a1

Having to play instantaneously with less than 10 seconds on his clock, he now failed to defend the back rank.

### 37 ♖g2??

An instinctive move to prevent ...♙h3, but unfortunately for White, this was what I was hoping for.

By now even 37 ♜c3! bxc5 38 dxc5 ♜d2 39 ♜c1 ♜a3 gives Black reasonable chances to hold.

### 37...♜d2

Suddenly it’s all over.

### 38 cxb6 ♙f3+ 39 ♖h3 ♜xf1 40 b7

With a heavy heart, White made the time control, but by now he cannot avoid mate.

### 40...g4+ 41 ♖h4 ♜h1 42 h3 ♜xh3# 0-1

A distraught Rudy did not speak to me after the game, which was perfectly understandable given the way things had turned out.

For my final example, here is a shameless example from a recent online blitz game against an Indonesian IM.

### A.Pitra-J.Tay Internet (blitz) 2025



I’m a piece down and White has been fending off my desperate kingside intentions without too much trouble. I want to play ...♜xf3 and ...♙xg4, but it does not work because White’s back rank is secure even when I manage to put my bishop on f3, so I need to lure the rook away from the back rank.

### 25...♖h7!

A helpless looking ‘waiting-move’, which attempts to show White that my attack has run out of gas. I need his rook to invade a certain b7-square....

### 26 ♜b7??

Lucky me! Instead, 26 ♙e3 wins hands down.

### 26...♜xf3!!

Now the combination works.

### 27 ♜xf3 ♙xg4 28 ♜g3 ♙f3+ 29 ♖g1 ♙xe4 0-1

The stinger at the end of the combination. Black simultaneously threatens mate on d1, as well as the rook on b7. White has no back-rank check to get the rook out of danger because of Black’s 25...♖h7, so he resigned.

My apologies for offering up amateur level swindles for the strategic theme of the ‘quiet king move’, but I think they do demonstrate an important psychological impact in the form of luring the opponent into complacency with a pass-since-I-have-nothing-better move.





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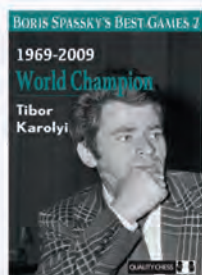
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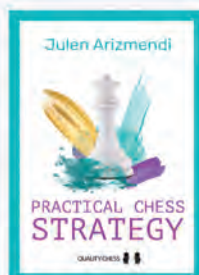
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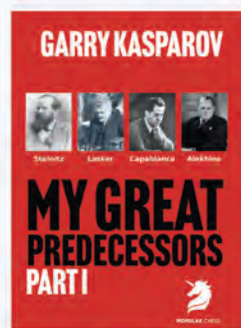


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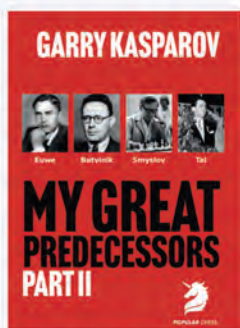
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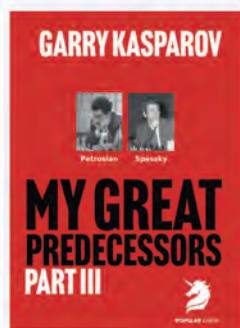
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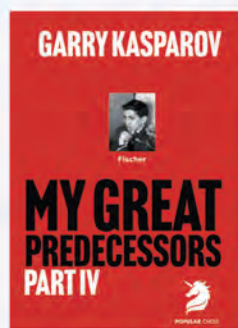
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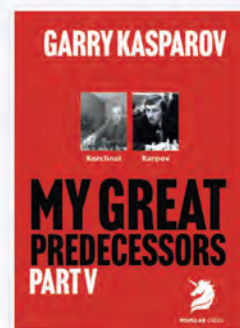
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# Jonathan Hawkins

## Danny Gormally pays tribute to his friend and two-time British Chess Champion

The first time I encountered Jonathan Hawkins was at the Scarborough Chess Congress, which typically takes place on the last weekend in October. If I'm honest, I can't recall the exact year, but it was probably 2006 because by then I was already a GM.

According to the historical information I could find on the Scarborough Congress, it first began in 1977 and took place in The Corner in the North Bay area, but moved to its present location of the Spa complex in 1999. The tournament looks out on to the North Sea, a forbidding body of water in late autumn.

Make your way down from the town towards the venue, across a high bridge and a walkway, the sea on your left. Eventually you see your final destination as the last of the evening has long since faded away and only darkness pervades.

There it stands, the Ocean Room where the main playing hall of the tournament resides. Croucher of British Chess Championship dreams. Julian Hodgson's second British in 1999, Joe Gallagher narrowly avoiding a play-off in 2001, and Jonathan Rowson winning the first of his three British titles in a row in 2004. So much promise, so much potential. All of it ancient history now, as I approach to play the weekend congress that Friday night in 2006 (and other years).

A cluster of chess players, no doubt all icily cold, congregating on the steps outside. Brilliant light comes from the warm hall inside, a welcoming cathedral to chess lovers. Check your pairing if you haven't already done so, and take your seat.

If you are lucky enough to win in the first round, you might be rather happy as you stumble back to your hotel. Perhaps it will be too late to eat anything other than a greasy kebab or fish and chips from the local takeaway, although as it is Scarborough and they are world leaders in this kind of thing – it is likely you won't taste a better fish and chips anywhere. On the Saturday night you probably have more time, so you might meet up with some friends for drinks, or go for a meal at the excellent Chinese restaurant that lies on the road to the North Bay, and has the same decor inside as it had twenty years ago.

It was in the last round in 2006 where I faced Jonathan. As usual I was skint, and in my mind I needed a win to justify the money spent on the congress. A win would get me outright first and £500. A draw would mean the horror of tying for first place with about a



*Jonathan Hawkins (1983–2025) sadly passed away after battling an aggressive form of cancer.*

million people and subsequently winning only about enough to cover my expenses. A loss would get me nothing (as this is a chess tournament, always expect the worse to happen).

We eventually drew and after the game Jonathan told me how I could have won. It was a sharp line of the Grünfeld and I realised he had seen a lot more than I did. I thought, how is this guy graded 190 (in those days we were using the old system of ratings), and yet he sees more than I do, when I'm a grandmaster? It doesn't make sense! As you get older you are not impressed by anything – life has ground you down to a nub – but I remember being shocked by this brief conversation. Indeed, I bored everyone to death for many months and years afterwards by relating how

impressed I was that a 190 player could calculate much better than a grandmaster.

It wasn't long until I encountered Jonathan again and that was at the 2008 British Championships in Liverpool. A young Gawain Jones was the top seed, but the playoff was fought out by an older generation in Keith Arkell and Stuart Conquest. I stayed in the same apartment building as Jonathan and Keith, and I remember getting into an argument with Graham Marshall, who was also staying there. Graham seemed to think that Jonathan was already stronger than I was, as he had a higher BCF grade (my FIDE rating was still higher). I balked at this suggestion of a new and emerging pecking order, which I considered a sting to my pride

(clearly I had already forgotten about the game with Jonathan in Scarborough).

But looking back, Graham was probably right. Jonathan's FIDE rating had not yet caught up with his true strength. He displayed his clear potential by drawing with a number of strong players in that year's British Championship, and dispatched Simon Knott in crisp attacking style.

### J.Hawkins-S.Knott

British Championship,

Liverpool 2008

Grünfeld Defence

**1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 ♙g7 7 ♙c4 c5 8 ♘e2 0-0 9 ♙e3 ♘c6 10 ♙c1**

This was turned into a fearsome attacking weapon by players like Alexei Shirov in the 1990s. Eventually ways were found to draw its venom; perhaps why it has fallen out of fashion. White keeps the king in the center for now and very much wants to attack Black on the kingside with h4-h5, arguing that Black hasn't enough pressure on the center to distract White from these intentions.

The fact that Jonathan was willing to play such an aggressive line showed that he was working hard on his chess during this period. If you are studying chess a lot, you should go for the most critical lines! I guess he also spent the whole morning preparing to play this line. Simon Knott is someone who was known to stay religiously loyal to his beloved Grünfeld when facing 1 d4.

**10...cxd4 11 cxd4 ♖a5+ 12 ♙f1 ♖a3 13 ♙c3**

The tactical point of Black's previous move is shown in the line 13 h4 ♙g4! 14 f3? ♖xe3. **13...♙d6**

I believe this follows the same direction as my game against Jonathan in Scarborough, although I have sadly lost the scoresheet of that game. Black prepares ...♙d8, putting pressure on the d4-pawn.

**14 h4 e5 15 d5 ♘a5 16 ♙b5 b6**



**17 ♙c1!**

Showing the flexibility of thinking that marks out strong chess players. White threatens ♙a3.

17 h5 ♙d7 18 ♙xd7 ♖xd7 19 hxg6 fxg6 20 ♙d2 also favours White, who has the



Jonathan Hawkins pictured at Hastings 2014/15, between his two British Championship titles – the first shared with David Howell at Aberystwyth, before he won outright at Coventry.

intention of playing ♙c3-h3 and attacking down the h-file.

**17...♙d8 18 ♙a3 ♖f6?**

Put under pressure by Jonathan's strong preparation and early middlegame play, Simon blunders.

It was essential to play 18...♖b8 19 ♙e7 a6 20 ♙a4 when White is still clearly better.

**19 ♙f3!**



To save the queen, Black must give up material.

**19...♙f5 20 exf5 e4 21 ♙g3 ♙xd5 22 ♖xd5 ♙d8 23 ♙d7 ♘c4 24 ♖xc4 ♙xd7 25 ♙g1 ♙d1+ 26 ♙h2 ♖xh4+ 27 ♙h3 ♙e5+ 28 ♙g3 ♙xg3+ 29 fxg3 ♙xh1+ 30 ♙xh1 ♙d8 1-0**

As a chess player Jonathan was a very clean calculator, had deep opening preparation based around an attacking repertoire, and he also had excellent technical skill. His fellow chess players could learn a lot from the way he played. Certainly the last of those is often missing in strong players, who find the endgame phase 'boring' and subsequently never improve on their skills or

their knowledge in this area, and as a consequence throw many points away during the course of their tournament career. Like yours truly, for example. Not Jonathan, who was good at that part of the game.

You could fill a book with Jonathan's endgames and in fact he already did, with the book *Amateur to IM*. Despite numerous attempts to do so, I have yet to write a chess book that is even as half as good as Jonathan's magnum opus (or Magnus opus, as we should probably call it as is a chess endgame book).

In this book Jonathan explains why he showed great improvement in his late teens and early twenties. Eschewing traditional methods of improvement that focus more on learning opening by rote, instead he would fill many notebooks with variations based on endgame play. This had the effect of greatly improving his calculation, which became a weapon that he used to ascend the English chess scene.

It should be stated that Jonathan was far from a weak chess player when he started on this quest. A chess player rated in the 170s BCF would have been in top 90 odd percent of the chess playing population back then. It can often be small margins that separate your average chess player from someone who has just had a profound breakthrough.

Given the success of the book, why did Jonathan only write one? I suspect the truth lies in his character. I believe there was a misconception about Jonathan that he was a workhorse. Although he could work hard, I think fundamentally he was a lazy and unmotivated person. He only worked hard when he had to, and didn't really enjoy it. At some point he had to work hard on chess if he



wanted to stay in the chess world, so he resolved to do so. In short, he was a lazy but talented person, like so many chess players.

I remember playing Jonathan in the Scottish Championships – at chess, but I also played him at pool. We played in the student union bar the day before the first round, at the university where the chess tournament was due to begin the very next day. He potted every ball and the black ball without my potting a single ball. I remember being so angry that I picked up the cue ball and threw it dangerously close to the watching Mark Hebden, who didn't seem that impressed.

Jonathan also had an excellent memory. Myself, him and Mark were sharing an apartment during the tournament. Jonathan remembered many years later an argument I had with Mark after one of the rounds. After Mark had won, I jealously said something to him about how he was lucky in that game. Mark said something back about how I was an idiot and I didn't have a clue. I had forgotten about this interlude completely, but Jonathan remembered it, like he remembered most things.

There were happier times too during this event in Scotland. What I do remember is how good the local curry restaurant was, just down the road from the university campus where we were staying. Happy memories of sitting there with two chess friends, eating this great food cooked up by the Sikh chef in the kitchen working with a huge pot. Both Mark and Jonathan were and are very funny people. Jonathan had an anarchic sense of humour – no target was immune.

It was about a year or two after this event in Scotland that Jonathan won the tournament he was always fated to win and will now always be associated with, the British Chess Championship. In golf it is often those who are mentally strong who win the most important tournaments, the majors. You need to possess a lot of self-belief to wear the green jacket, or lift the claret jug. And it is the same in British chess – you need to have a strong mind to win the British Championship, a typically tense event that is often decided in the final few rounds and where a win at the right moment can make all the difference.

Jonathan shared first with David Howell in 2014 in Wales, but it was 2015, at Warwick University campus near Coventry, where he followed up and won it for the second time that will always stick in my mind. I remember I beat Jonathan in round six. At that point I think he's gone, he can't possibly win. I'm a point and a half ahead of him at this moment.

What happened in the second week summed up why I haven't won a British Championship and yet Jonathan won two. That week I shrivelled up, drawing every game. Jonathan locked in and scored  $4\frac{1}{2}/5$ , winning the title without even having to go to a playoff. I think one of the reasons why Jonathan played so well in that second week (2015 was the last year that the British took place over 11 rounds) was because he was forced into a position that he enjoyed.

Jonathan liked being the underdog and



*'The Hawk' tackles Vladimir Kramnik at the 2014 London Chess Classic Super Rapidplay. He would narrowly lose a hard-fought battle, but did in general enjoy much success with 1 d4, 2 c4.*

being written off. He revelled in the role, and was a natural underdog really from the early stages of his chess career, the up-and-coming 2200 battling to take on much better-known and higher-rated professional players. Often succeeding.

Jonathan grew comfortable with that role, but something curious happened after he won the British Championship for the second time. From that point on you would have expected him to win many more British titles, but such a thing did not transpire. In fact he played few British Championships after this and retired only about five years later. He also turned down an invitation to play for the England in the Olympiad. Why exactly did this happen? Who would turn down a chance to play for England?

Perhaps it was because Jonathan was a shy individual who wasn't comfortable with being in the spotlight. If you just look at the elite players in English chess – Michael Adams, Gawain Jones, David Howell and Luke McShane – they are all comfortable with being the dominant player, being the overdog. They accept that when they turn up to a typical tournament in England, even a strong one, they are likely to be the heavy favourite and that they will have to carry extra pressure. It helps that they are used to winning from an early stage in their careers. They were all successful juniors, and have won at every stage of their careers, from junior championships into adulthood, but Jonathan had gone on a different path.

Jonathan wasn't a natural winner in that sense and wasn't in general a very competitive or insecure person. He wasn't very driven. He also wasn't comfortable with being in the spotlight, with carrying around the pressure of being a favourite. He had developed an underdog mentality early in his career, and had never really grown out of that.

That's why I wasn't very surprised to see him coaching chess in the playing hall and not actually playing in the tournament, when I ran into him at the 2022 British Championships in Torquay. He had already moved to Torbay by

this time after his partner, Angela Eyton, helped to set him up in an apartment. You would think, surely if you live in the same area, it's great the British Championships are coming there, and you have the advantage of already being there, meaning you'll spend nothing on accommodation? And you'll be top seed? Surely it's madness that you don't play?

But I think by this point Jonathan had regressed into himself and didn't enjoy playing anymore. He vaped to relieve the stress, while eating junk food as he spent hour after hour sitting in front of the computer, doing online chess coaching. And he was good at that as well of course, like he was good at most things. He helped much younger chess players like Stanley Badacsonyi, Zain Patel and Harry Byrant, honing them into mini-versions of himself, his 'hawkings', or 'baby hawks'. They took on his ethos of accurate and clean calculation, combined with targeted opening preparation while using an attacking repertoire, and like Jonathan before them, began to make rapid inroads into the chess world.

I know that Jonathan was fond of these hawkings of his, like he was fond of all his students, and he thought they were talented chess players and bright people, which they are. And perhaps it was this lazy, unhealthy lifestyle, where he spent all his time helping others that really summed up Jonathan. He wasn't self-obsessed like your typical chess player and because of this lack of self-regard, he lapsed into bad habits, with the inevitable consequences.

But still you wouldn't expect someone to be diagnosed with an aggressive form of prostate cancer at the age of 42. In any case it wasn't linked to any lifestyle choice and this bad diagnosis was caused by a genetic mutation. What helped him during his brief chess career worked against him this time, that mental strength and unwillingness to buckle, because a more anxious individual with the same symptoms would surely have gone to the doctor much earlier.

Jonathan had worrying symptoms for months, ignored them at first and when he



Jonathan pictured in 2018, the last year he was especially active as a competitive player.

eventually went to the doctor things were already desperate because the cancer had spread to his lungs. I only learned of this much later because as was typical of him, Jonathan didn't want to burden others with his problems. It was while I was playing a tournament in Sitges, near Barcelona, that I got the bad news. Shenaz Nasim sat me down on the steps outside the hotel and told me that Jonathan had passed away.

Later I walked down to a cafe in the town centre and we sat there, myself, Shenaz, and Jonathan's good friend who lived close to him in Paignton, Keith Arkell, all of us in a bit of a daze as we digested the news. I reflected on how short life is, how fragile. I only had seen Jonathan about a year earlier and he had seemed perfectly healthy, and then just like that he's gone. I thought that it doesn't matter how long you live, there is no big truth that is revealed to you along the way. You can live to 30, 40, 50, and no one will tell you anything by that point that you didn't know already. The only thing that matters is that you keep on living, and that you spend your life making the best out of any time that you have left available.

In losing Jonathan, English chess has lost one of its brightest stars. He was also the strongest chess player ever to emerge from the North-East of England.

**J.Tan-J.Hawkins**  
British Championship,  
Aberystwyth 2014  
*Ruy Lopez*

**1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 b5 g7**

I'm not sure if this was part of Jonathan's regular repertoire at this point of his career, but it is exactly the sort of tricky, risky, but essentially sound variation that he specialised in. It is also true that many white players are not that well-prepared against this line.

**4 c3 a6 5 a4 d6**

5...g6 6 d4 exd4 7 cxd4 b5 8 b3 g7 is another line that has been played by Nakamura, amongst others, and seems to score quite well for Black according to the database. I believe another British Champion in David Howell has had some success with 5...d6!?



**6 d4 d7 7 O-O g6 8 e3 e7 9 d5**

9 d5 is more popular and arguably more flexible, not fixing the pawn structure just yet. After 9...O-O 10 e1 exd4 11 cxd4 b4 Black has sufficient counterplay and the game is more or less equal.

**9...b8 10 xd7+ dxd7 11 c4 O-O 12 c3 f5 13 exf5 fxf5 14 e4**



Remarkably this is still theory. Clearly both players were very well-prepared.

**14...f4**

Although this is Black's most popular choice here, I'm not quite sure why as the knight just gets driven back. I guess Black is arguing that ...g3 is a weakness, but I'm not convinced it is.

One alternative is 14...a5!?, shutting down White's idea of playing b2-b4 and attacking on the queenside. 15 fd2 c8 16 g3 f8 is the main point of all this, putting the queen on c8, to be able to meet White's very natural g4 move with ...f6 when Black should be fine.

**15 g3 g6 16 g2**

16 fd2 b6 17 b4 looks like a clear advantage for White.

**16...f8 17 fg5 xg5 18 xg5 f6 19 e6 df8 20 xc7 c8 21 e6 xe6 22 dx6 xe6**



Black has solved his problems and now it is turning technical, where Jonathan was always very strong.

**23 b3 e4!**

With the very clear (and difficult to prevent) idea of playing ...e5, targeting the holes on d3 and f3.

**24 d4**

If 24 d4 d5 White will be forced to make a concession, and Black is winning if 25 c5? f3.

**24...h5 25 h1 h3+ 26 g1 e8 27 xd6 h8 28 d4 g5 29 xg7+ xg7 30 d4+ h6 31 d1**



**31...h4! 0-1**

After 32 f6+ g6 33 f4+ g7 and White will soon run out of checks.

It was a sad coincidence that I first met Jonathan during the final round of a tournament that was by the sea. And that I learned of his passing after the final round of a tournament next to the sea.





# 60 Seconds with... GM Brian Escalante



**Born:** 20th September 1999 in Tarapoto, Peru.

**Place of residence:** Dallas, Texas.

**Occupation:** Data Analyst for Coca-Cola.

**Enjoyable?** Yes, at least so far.

**And home life?** Relaxed. I mainly spend time with friends.

**But sometimes good to escape to:** Florida.

**Sports played or followed:** I like to play soccer and volleyball occasionally, but don't really follow any sports.

**A favourite novel?** *The Schopenhauer Cure* by Irvin D. Yalom.

**Piece of music?** 'Lover Is a Day' by Cuco.

**Film or TV series?** *Good Will Hunting*.

**What's the best thing about playing chess?** Being able to play creative moves.

**And the worst?** Suffering after being in a better position.

**Your best move?** 13...♖e7 with the idea of rerouting the queen to c5 against Aleksandr Shimanov. It was the first game where I defeated a 2600.

## A.Shimanov-B.Escalante Ramirez

SPICE Cup, St. Louis 2018

*Trompowsky Attack*

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♗g5 ♘e4 3 h4 c5 4 dxc5 ♘a6 5 ♘d2 ♘axc5 6 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 7 ♖d5 ♘xg5 8 hxg5 ♖b6 9 0-0-0 ♖xf2 10 e4 ♖f4+ 11 ♙b1 e6 12 ♖d4 ♖xg5 13 e5



13...♖e7! 14 ♘f3 ♖c5 15 ♖f4 h6 16 ♗d3 g5 17 ♖g3 ♗g7 18 ♖he1 b5 19 ♗e4 ♖b8 20 ♗d3 b4 21 ♖ed1 ♖b5 22 ♗d6



22...♖e3! 23 ♗c6 ♗xe5 24 ♖h3 dxc6 25 ♖xc6 ♗d7 26 ♖c4 ♗d5 27 ♖h1 ♖e2 0-1

**But less memorable than your worst move?** The time I started with 0/2 at the 2024 North American Open, but fortunately was able to finish with 7/9.

**And a highly memorable opponent?** Jeffery Xiong.

**Favourite game of all time?** Rubinstein-Schlechter because of the advanced concept, especially for that time of 13 ♗b5!.

## A.Rubinstein-C.Schlechter

San Sebastian 1912

*Semi-Tarrasch Defence*

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 c4 e6 4 ♘c3 c5 5 cxd5 ♘xd5 6 e4 ♘xc3 7 bxc3 cxd4 8 cxd4 ♗b4+ 9 ♗d2 ♖a5 10 ♖b1 ♗xd2+ 11 ♖xd2 ♖xd2+ 12 ♗xd2 0-0



13 ♗b5! a6 14 ♗d3 ♗d8 15 ♖hc1 b5 16 ♖c7 ♘d7 17 ♗e3 ♘f6 18 ♗e5 ♗d7 19 g4 h6 20 f4 ♗e8 21 g5 hxg5 22 fxg5 ♘h7 23 h4 ♗dc8 24 ♖bc1 ♖xc7 25 ♖xc7 ♗d8 26 ♖a7 f6 27 gxf6 gxf6 28 ♘g4 ♗h5 29 ♘h6+ ♗h8 30 ♗e2 ♗e8 31 ♖xa6 ♗g7 32 ♘g4 f5 33 ♖a7+ ♗h8 34 ♗e5 fxe4 35 ♗xb5 ♘f6 36 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 37 ♘f4 ♘g8 38 ♘g5 ♖f8 39 ♘g6 e3 40 ♖g7+ ♗h8 41 ♘f7+ ♖xf7 42 ♖xf7 e2 43 ♖xf6 ♘g8 44 ♖xe6 1-0

**The best three chess books:** *The Road to Chess Improvement* by Alexander Yermolinsky, *Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual*, and *Practical Chess Defence* by Jacob Aagaard.

**Is FIDE doing a good job?** It's alright.

**Or your National Federation?** Definitely not – the Peruvian Chess Federation has been struggling with corruption for over a decade.

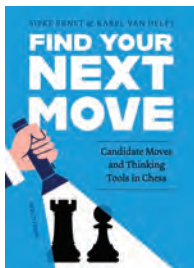
**Any advice for either?** Always put yourself in the shoes of the players.

**Can chess make one happy?** I would think so! Anything that you enjoy can make you happy.

**A tip please for the club player:** Focus more on enjoying and understanding the game than memorising moves.

All the games and annotations from this issue are available in our free PGN database.

# This Month's New Releases



## Find Your Next Move

Karel van Delft & Sipke Ernst, 288 pages  
New in Chess

RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

The world of chess can be confusing at times. There has been a lot of talk recently about the Candidates, but that is, of course, a tournament to determine who will be the next official challenger for the title of world champion. Yet the word 'candidate' may well have a different meaning for long-term readers of chess literature, especially for those who have studied the classics; namely, the candidate move.

As the back cover explains: "The candidate move is perhaps the most elusive concept in chess theory. First introduced by Alexander Kotov in his famous book *Think Like a Grandmaster*, it seems clear and methodical enough: when considering a move, you make a list of 'candidates' in your mind, compare their merits, and make your choice. But how do you determine what a candidate move is, and how do you proceed from there?"

This very interesting and highly accessible tome is another in the series of collaborations between New in Chess and Chessable; the original version was presented as a course by the latter. This time, the page count is much more impressive (improving the biggest weakness of some other Chessable courses which have made the switch to the printed world).

The theme of collaboration is continued by the division of labour: Sipke Ernst provides the first four parts, which promote the art of candidate moves, and Karel van Delft has written the fifth and final chapter, digging into his years of extensive research as an educator to offer numerous thinking tools, complete with references and recommendations for further reading.

Ernst reveals he has changed his thoughts on the usefulness of looking for candidate moves. "I never thought much about the concept of candidate moves. This term, first introduced by Alexander Kotov in his groundbreaking book *Think like a Grandmaster*, seemed outdated to me, as are some of his other views on calculation. Now I believe that using candidate moves is of great

help for structuring our chess thinking. Candidate moves are moves that are worth considering in any given position."

Furthermore, "Research by the Chessable science team has proved that finding candidate moves is a trainable skill. The choice of candidate moves is multifaceted; it is about a concept as well as about methods – about knowledge and trainable skills. Pattern recognition plays a crucial role in recognizing possibilities and limitations when we evaluate positions."

Here is one of the easier examples of the importance of assessing candidate moves.

## E.Prie-D.Svetushkin French Team Championship 2009



"In this well-known line of the London System, Black commits a big error, allowing White to go for a well-known sacrifice."

**10 ♟xd7**

The candidate moves are obvious, but which recapture should Black now make?

**10... ♟xd7?**

"This is a well-known mistake in this line of the London System that has been made by many strong grandmasters! 10... ♟xd7! is the right move."

The game continued **11 ♟xd6 ♟xd6 12 dxc5 ♟xc5** and now we see the famous Greek Gift sacrifice in action with **13 ♟xh7+!**. Strangely, the game is carried through to move 29 and a serious advantage for Prie, but is then cut off with the standard phrase, "and White converted." However, my ChessBase database shows that the game was, in fact, drawn following some seriously robust defence by Black after 62 moves.

The resurrection of Kotov's ideas has been long overdue. It is time to start thinking about candidate moves once more. I like the way that van Delft's mini-essays compliment



Ernst's material on choosing candidate moves and advice on how to improve chess calculation, all backed up by Chessable research. An interesting book, which will repay careful study by diligent chess students.

Sean Marsh



## International Chess Tournament Moscow 1925

Efim Bogoljubow, 226 pages  
Moravian Chess

RRP £29.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.95**

What is the significance of the Moscow tournament of 1925? According to the blurb: "Moscow 1925 was the first state-sponsored international chess tournament, which marked an important step in the development of Soviet chess. It featured ten Soviet masters and eleven foreign stars, of whom the world champion Jose Raul Capablanca and his predecessor Emanuel Lasker were expected to be the main contenders, but it was the Soviet master Efim Bogoljubow who scored an unexpected victory."

To further emphasise just how meritorious Bogoljubow's achievement was, the 21-player field also included plenty of other chess luminaries, including Frank Marshall, Richard Reti and Akiba Rubinstein, but that did not stop the future world championship challenger winning the event with a very impressive one and a half point margin.

The big bonus with this book is that it features Bogoljubow's own annotations, which are very interesting indeed. It is good to see the ongoing rehabilitation of Bogoljubow's reputation. Far from simply being an easy target for Alexander Alekhine to focus upon as a means of avoiding a title rematch with Capablanca, Bogoljubow thoroughly deserved his chance to play for the crown in their 1929 match (admittedly, much less so in 1934).

The rehabilitation was started in Elk and Ruby's fabulous two-part work, *The Creative Power of Bogoljubov*, by Grigory Bogdanovich, and the story of Moscow 1925 continues the process.

Very interestingly, the foreword by Nikolai Krylenko, Chairman of the chess section of



the All-Union Council for Physical Recreation, is included, alongside Bogoljubow's own foreword. Krylenko was a controversial character who was ultimately executed as part of Stalin's infamous purges. Indeed, politics are never far away when it comes to Soviet chess. The tournament book was originally published in two parts, but Bogoljubow had left Russia before he wrote the second installment. This was a major inconvenience, but an explanation by Krylenko as to why they decided to go ahead with the publication of part two is also included in the book.

Bogoljubow arranged the most interesting games of each round to appear first in the text, which follows a round-by-round format. These games receive more substantial annotations, as one would expect.

Moravian Chess have upped their game in terms of paper quality and other editorial standards. For example, the main moves are in black and annotations – plus the many diagrams – are in red. Also, yellow and orange are used for the boxes containing the round numbers and introduction to the current standings.

Ken Neat, the translator, provides a small number of analytical corrections at the end of the book, but mentions that there has not been an extensive check on the variations. This is actually a relief, as one becomes bored with endless notes featuring corrections by strong chess engines, which can take away the original character of books.

Among the many bright moments highlighted by Bogoljubow, there is this vignette, featuring the relatively recently deposed champion of the world against one of the new wave of hypermodernists.

### E.Lasker-R.Retí Moscow 1925



**22 a4**

"A desperate attempt to exchange the weak pawn, which is crowned by success."

**22...♖ae8?**

"Overlooking an opportunity to win by 22...bxa4!, after which White is lost due to the opening of the b-file, for example, 23 ♖xa4 ♖b8 24 c4 ♗d4!! 25 ♕xd4 ♖b1+ 26 ♔g2 ♕f4+ 27 ♔g3 ♔g1+ with mate in two moves, or 23 ♔e4 ♕f4 24 ♗f1 ♖b7! and Black wins easily, or, finally, 23 c4 ♖b7 24 ♕c3



*Despite the crowd, Capablanca looks quite calm against the eventual winner of Moscow 1925, Bogoljubov. Capa would win the game, despite missing a stylish finish – see our December pages.*

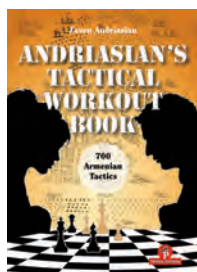
(or 24 ♕c1) 24...♖b6 and White is lost." In the game, after the further moves **23 ♗f5 ♖f6 24 ♗e4 ♗d8 25 axb5 axb5**, Lasker was well-placed to hold the draw, which he achieved on move 33.

22...bxa4 would not have jumped out at me as a very strong move for Black, but this is just one example as to how hard Bogoljubov worked on the annotations.

Incidentally, the top three players (Bogoljubov, Lasker and Capablanca – in that order) lost two games each, which shows what a bloodthirsty and exciting tournament this really was.

This is the first English language edition of the tournament book, timed to be published exactly 100 years after the event itself. As such, it plugs a significant gap in chess literature and one which we are very grateful to Moravian Chess for their efforts.

*Sean Marsh*

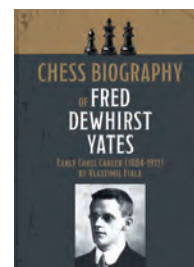


### Andriasian's Tactical Workout Book

Zaven Andriasian, 310 pages, paperback

RRP £36.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £33.25**

Leading Armenian Grandmaster Zaven Andriasian is no stranger to attacking in his own games and here presents "700 Armenian Tactics" to solve, featuring a wide variety of positions, ones which will certainly test and improve your calculation and creativity. If solving more puzzles was one of your new year's resolutions, Andriasian and Thinkers Publishing may well be of assistance.



### Chess Biography of Fred Dewhurst Yates

Vlastimil Fiala, 656 pages, hardback

RRP £36.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £33.25**

Czech chess historian Vlastimil Fiala has certainly been busy of late. Last month we announced the release of his vast, four-volume collection of Alekhine's complete games, *Chess Duels*, and he's also clearly been busy researching the career of Leeds-born Fred Yates, one of Britain's greatest ever players.

The six-time British Champion died prematurely in 1932, but this detailed biography and games collection only covers his life from 1884 until 1911. Inside this lavishly produced volume, there are many previously unpublished games, as well as a wealth of information on the Yorkshire and British chess scenes in the first decade of the 20th century.



### Chess Fun For Little Ones

Mayghal Vijapur, Dhara Vedd & Shantanu Shetty, hardback

RRP £22.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.69**

This new interactive book aims to make chess accessible even for those very young in

age. The Indian authors introduce each piece as a cute character, while making use of LED lights and a rhyme to show how it moves. They've also included 64 sparkly stickers, helping to make this easy non-screen learning for small children.



### Chess Informant 166 – Snowflake

Igor Zvegljic (ed.), 320 pages, paperback  
RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

Suitable for helping while away the long winter hours, the latest 'Informator' features reports on the FIDE Grand Swiss and the US Championships. There are also all the latest most important games and novelties, as well as endgames and combinations.



### Dragon Masters II: Resurrection

Andrew Burnett, 380 pages, hardback  
RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

Lifelong Sicilian Dragon aficionado, Scottish FM Andrew Burnett continues his fascinating account of this complex yet ever popular opening. Beginning in 1975, Burnett chronicles how new life was breathed into the venerable Dragon over the next 20 or so years, as important new ideas for both sides and especially Black sprung up, thanks to the likes of Jonathan Mestel, Tony Miles and Sergei Tiviakov. Combining history with instruction and inspiration, we were delighted not just to see this release from Thinkers Publishing, but to learn that Burnett is currently hard at work on his third and final Dragon volume.



### King's Indian Part 1: Mastering the Sidelines

Felix Blohberger, PC/MAC booklet or download; running time: 6 hours  
RRP £44.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £40.45**

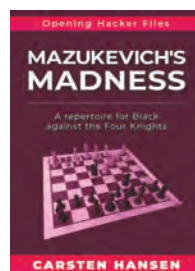
The Austrian Grandmaster Felix Blohberger



*In the first part of his KID repertoire, Felix Blohberger pays special attention to the g3 systems, which have become increasingly popular in practice. You'll learn how to reach a reliable set-up quickly and reliably against them – no matter which move order your opponent chooses.*

has recorded a detailed "Complete Repertoire for Black" with the King's Indian for ChessBase. On these videos, Blohberger pays particular attention to the popular Fianchetto variation, as well as White's various sidelines, including not just the London and Trompowsky, but 1 c4 and 1 ♖f3 move orders.

There's also a companion product, *King's Indian Part 2: The Classical Main Lines*, featuring 6 hours of video, while retailing at £44.95 or £40.45 for Subscribers. Here Blohberger examines the likes of the Sämisch and Four Pawns Attack, as well as the big main lines where White combines ♖f3 and e2-e4. Notably he recommends the move order with 6...♘a6, thereby steering clear of the theory-laden 6...e5 7 0-0 ♘c6.



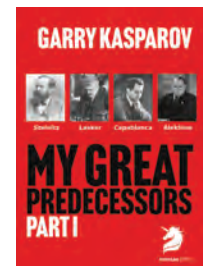
### Mazukevich's Madness

Carsten Hansen, 150 pages, paperback  
RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

Many players struggle as Black to generate winning chances against 1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♘xd4 ♖f6 5 ♘c3, the Scotch Four Knights. But have you ever considered that 5...♗xe4!? could be a move? It is certainly playable, as shown by highly experienced author FM Carsten Hansen in this new self-published work. Helpfully Hansen also examines the move order 3 ♘c3 ♖f6 and then not just 4 d4, but White's alternatives, including 4 ♗b5 and 4 g3, offering repertoire suggestions for Black against all of them.

Hansen has also authored and published *Miniatures in the Benko & Blumenfeld Gambits* (364 pages, paperback), which

retails at £21.99 or £19.79 for Subscribers. This lively book does exactly what it says on the tin, so if you want to enjoy some fun games while enhancing your knowledge of 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 and 2...e6 3 ♗f3 c5 4 d5 b5, solving plenty of puzzles along the way, Hansen's work should fit the bill.



### My Great Predecessors: Part I

Garry Kasparov, 576 pages, paperback  
RRP £29.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.99**

This is the first volume of five in which Garry Kasparov famously chronicled in some detail the careers of all the great champions who came before him. *Part I* is devoted to Wilhelm Steinitz, Emanuel Lasker, Jose Raul Capablanca and Alexander Alekhine. It won the 2003 BCF Book of the Year Award and is now back in print for a whole new generation of chess players. Note that while the text hasn't been updated, this is an entirely new, more user-friendly typeset and design from Popular Chess, the successor of original publisher Everyman Chess.

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