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# Chess



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**Glorious Godinn - Simon Williams on his favourite tournament**

**Frank Marshall - Ben Graff looks back at "The amateur's friend"**

# Chess

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This final round win put me on 7/9, sharing first equal with Santiago, Grigoryan, Wirig and IM Leya Garifullina. Steven and Peter finished on 5½ and 5 points respectively, both gaining rating and enjoying successful tournaments. Meanwhile, Robert Stern and Tim Spanton were the standout English performers in a very strong Senior section, which was ultimately won by German IM Dieter Pirrot on 7½/9. Elsewhere, the top two places in the B Open were taken by Timur Yrysov of Kyrgyzstan and Israel Cohen of

Israel, who were born in 2015 and 2014 respectively – definitely ones to watch for in the future!

I concluded the event with a 2556 rating performance and gained 8.9 rating points, enough to put me on 2500 after thankfully being rounded up from 2499.9 on the April rating list. I won't officially receive the title until the summer, but it does feel humbling to join such a select group of players, both in England and the entire world.

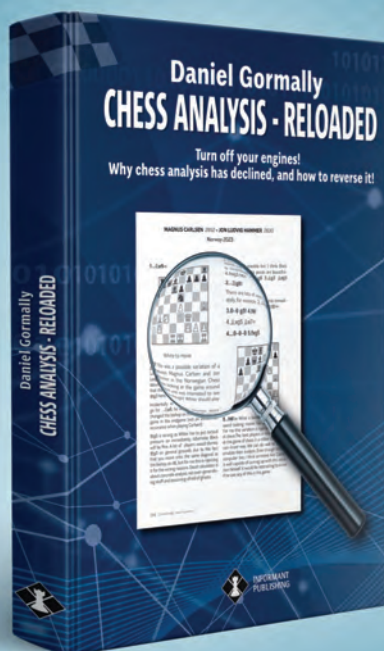
It is a journey that began with me learning

the rules of the game aged 5. I have had several ups and downs since then and would never have made it to where I am now without the help and support of so many people. The most important contributions were made by my parents, followed by coaches in my younger years – Andrew Martin, Nick Pert and Glenn Flear. I would also like to thank the ECF for their continued support, particularly over the last 12 months with the DCMS funds allocated towards support for norm seekers.



The podium at Bad Wörishofen reminded us that chess truly is a game for all ages. Matthew Wadsworth can be seen fifth from the left of the photo, between the overall winner on tiebreak, the Brazilian GM Yago De Moura Santiago, and Russian WGM and IM Leya Garifullina.

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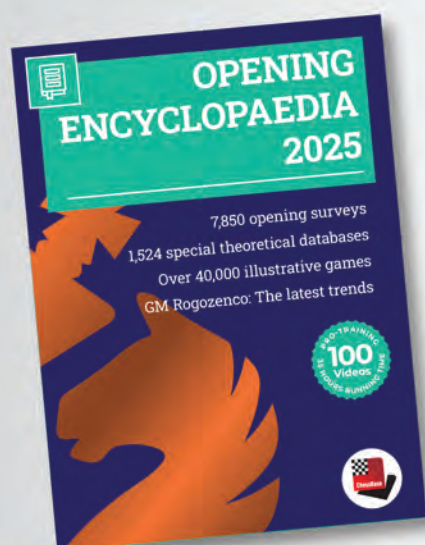
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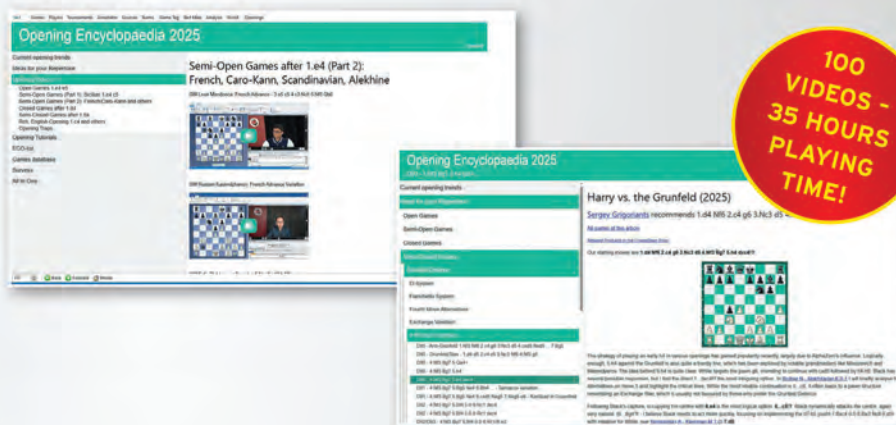
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# 60 Seconds with... Roger Williamson



**Born:** Liverpool, 9th May 1980.

**Place of residence:** Liverpool.

**Occupation:** Chess coach, both in a private capacity and for Chess in Schools and Communities. Currently assisting the fledgling Merseyside Junior Academy run by Rob Steele.

**Enjoyable?** Equal parts enjoyable and frustrating.

**Home life?** Expecting a son in June.

**But sometimes good to escape to:** My own chess club, John Littlewood CC, currently in third place on Merseyside behind the strong Liverpool and Atticus sides.

**Sports played or followed:** Cricket and football, once, but our contemporary versions of those games have taken away much of their lustre.

**Favourite novel?** Many. No particular favourite, but I do keep returning to Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales*.

**Favourite piece of music?** Again, many. Anything Beethoven.

**Film or TB series?** I watch far too much of

*Gomorra* the series to be considered healthy. If I want to feel better about the world, a film like Whit Stillman's *Metropolitan* (1990).

**The best three chess books:** *Mastering the Endgame: Volume 1* by Shereshevsky, *Imagination in Chess* by Gaprindashvili, and the book for chess players who don't like chess books, *Chess for Zebras* by Rowson.

**What's the best thing about playing chess?** The beauty of the game itself.

**And the worst?** The fear of doing something basic wrong.

**Your best move?** 17...dxe3 versus John Redmond of Atticus in the Merseyside League, giving up the knight on c6 for the initiative. John has historically the better of me, so it was pleasing to be able to sacrifice a piece in such a fashion while recording a rare win.

**J.Redmond-R.Williamson**  
Liverpool 2020



17...dxe3! 18 ♖xc6 e2 19 ♜fe1 ♜xf4 20 ♜e4 ♜f6 21 ♜ce5? ♜d5 22 ♜d7 ♜d6 23 ♜a4 ♜g6 24 ♜h4 ♜g4 25 ♜xf8 ♜h3+ 26 ♜h1 ♜xf2+ 27 ♜g1 ♜h3+ 28 ♜h1 ♜xg2+ 29 ♜xg2 ♜xa4 30 ♜e6 ♜g4 31 ♜xc7 ♜f8 32 ♜d5 ♜f3 33 ♜de3 ♜f2 34 ♜ac1 ♜g1+ 0-1

**But less memorable than your worst move?** Having a few too many drinks before talking to Ulf Andersson in 2006.

**And a highly memorable opponent?** How many people say Mike Surtees? I remember being impressed by IM Kalle Kiik both during and after he dismantled me in 2014.

**Favourite game of all time?** Morozevich-Topalov, Melody Amber Rapid 2004.

**A.Morozevich-V.Topalov**  
Monaco (rapid) 2004  
*Sicilian Najdorf*

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 a6 6 ♜e3 e5 7 ♜b3 ♜e6 8 ♜d2 b5 9 0-0-0 ♜bd7 10 f4 ♜e7 11 ♜b1 ♜c8 12 f5 ♜c4 13 g4 ♜xg4 14 ♜g1 ♜xe3 15 ♜xe3 g6 16 ♜xc4 bxc4 17 ♜d2 ♜f6 18 ♜h3 ♜d7 19 ♜f1 gxf5 20 ♜e3 ♜xe4 21 ♜cd5!



21...♜f2 22 ♜h5 ♜xd1 23 ♜xd1 ♜c5? 24 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 25 ♜xf5 e4 26 ♜g7+ ♜f8 27 ♜h6 ♜e5 28 ♜f5+ ♜e8 29 ♜xd6+ ♜e7 30 ♜f5+ ♜e8 31 ♜g5 ♜c7 32 ♜g7+ 1-0

**Is FIDE doing a good job?** I try to stay out of geopolitics.

**Or your national federation?** No other to compare it to.

**Any advice for either?** It's an improbable ask, but some kind of state-assisted initiative that would enable more chess clubs to own their own venues. The impermanence and general crumminess of playing venues is detrimental to the growth of the game.

**Can chess make one happy?** Not on its own, but it can help.

**A tip please for the club player:** When analysing your own games on a site like Lichess, consult its master games database before using *Stockfish*. Human beings are easier to imitate than machines.

*Ed. – Roger will be involved in the myriad of activities around the British Championships this summer and we've an enlightening take by him on chess fiction later in these pages.*





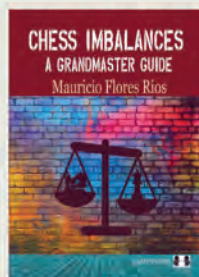
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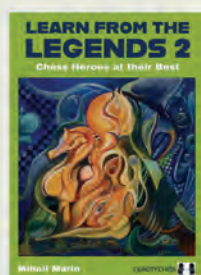
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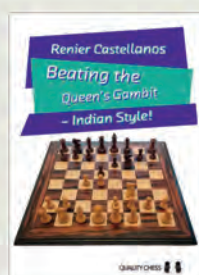
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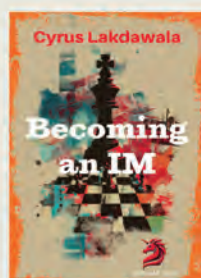
### Beating the Queen's Gambit - Indian Style! by Renier Castellanos

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could still survive the storm.

**28 ♖g5?!**

However, Raj now makes a materialistic mistake. Instead 28 ♖h7+ ♜f7 29 ♙xe5 (29 ♙h6 is also pretty good) 29...dxe5 30 ♖h6 ♜f8 31 ♖xg6 gives White an overwhelming advantage.

**28...b4 29 axb4?!**

29 ♖h7+ was still strong: for example, 29...♜f7 30 dxe6+ ♙xe6 31 exf5 gxf5 32 ♖h6 ♜f8 33 ♙xd8 ♖xd8 34 axb4 cxb4 35 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 36 ♔d5 gives White a substantial advantage, and if Black then tries a counterattack by 36...♖g5, he loses quickly after 37 ♖xa6 ♖d2 38 ♖xf5+.

**29...cxb4 30 ♙xd8?**

A bad mistake as the game enters the time-trouble phase. 30 ♖h7+ was again good.

**30...♖xd8 31 ♔d1?!**

Objectively not good, but Raj was hoping his prestigious opponent would make a mistake under time pressure. Instead, 31 ♖h7+ ♜f7 (31...♜f8 is also possible, but White continues 32 dxe6 ♙xe6 33 ♔d5 ♙xd5 34 exd5 ♖xc2 35 ♖he1 and the position is dynamically equal) 32 f4 bxc3 33 fxe5 cxb2 34 exf5 was the best option, when the only way for Black to survive is by 34...gxf5! 35 ♖h6 ♜f8 and now after 36 ♖e1 the position is totally unclear. Just for fun I played it on against *Stockfish*

and the line continued 36...♖f7 37 exd6 ♙b7 38 c4 exd5 39 ♙h5 dxc4+ 40 ♙h3 ♖d5 41 ♖xg7+! ♜xg7 42 ♖g6+ ♙h8 43 ♖h6+ ♜g7 44 ♖g6+ ♜f8 45 ♖f6+, with a draw by perpetual check.

**31...♖xc2 32 ♜f1 fxe4?!**

Better was 32...exd5 as after 33 exf5 Black has the strong move 33...♖e8 when the game might continue 34 f6 ♙xf6 35 ♖h7+ ♜f8 36 ♖h6+ ♙g7 37 ♖c1 ♖f5 38 ♔e3 ♖e6 39 ♔g2 ♔c4 - Black is clearly better. I suspect Raj was going to try 33 f4, but Black can then play 33...♔c6 34 ♖h7+ ♜f7 35 ♖h6 ♔e7 when the attack comes to a halt and Black is winning.

**33 f4!**



**33...♔f7?**

The final mistake, after which it is all over. Instead, the active 33...♔f3 leads to a draw: 34 ♖h7+ ♜f7 35 ♖h6 ♔d2+ 36 ♜f2 e3+ 37 ♔xe3 ♔e4+ 38 ♜f3 ♔d2+ 39 ♜f2 ♔e4+, etc. If White tries to avoid the perpetual, he risks losing: 40 ♙g1 ♖xe2 41 dxe6+ ♙xe6 42 ♖xg6+ ♜f8 43 ♖xe4 ♙d5! 44 ♖f5+ ♙f7 45 ♔g4 ♖xb2 and Black is at least equal.

**34 ♖h7+ ♜f8 35 ♖xg6+ ♔d7 36 dxe6 ♔h8 37 ♖f5+ ♙e8 38 exd7+ ♙xd7 39 ♖xh8+ 1-0**

Black resigned because after 39...♙xh8, 40 ♖h5+ wins more material.

An incredible game, full of various tactics and quite a few errors, but didn't it make for exciting chess!

After this win Raj went through the tournament undefeated, playing a decent field of another GM, a WGM, three IMs, one FM and one untitled player like himself. His score of 4½/8 on board 1 was the best performance by a Scottish player in the tournament and he proved an inspiration for the rest of his team. Meanwhile if you have won a game against a strong player then please send it to me (plittl@hotmail.com), and I will try to publish it in this column.

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# Mighty Manx

**Manx Liberty have continued to set the pace with one weekend to go in the 4NCL**

Shortly after this magazine arrives with subscribers, the leading lights of the 4NCL will return to Daventry to do battle in the final rounds of the season over the first May bank holiday weekend. Monday 5th May will see Manx Liberty and Wood Green face off in the very last round, but will the title already have been decided by then? Manx will certainly want to pull off overall victory as a fitting tribute to their former captain and sponsor IM Dietmar Kolbus, who sadly passed away while at the Biel Open last summer.

Currently the gap between the top two sides is two points, with Manx also holding a five-and-a-half-point lead on game points. They have been even more ruthless than normal this season, while Wood Green are likely still reflecting on their 5-3 defeat to Cheddleton in round six.

At the fourth weekend of the season in Peterborough, the big two both scored crushing 7-1 victories in round seven, Manx outclassing Barbican and Wood Green destroying bottom side, The Sharks II. The next day Manx defeated Barnet Knights 6-2, while Wood Green overcame Blackthorne 5-3, as an overly ambitious Marcus Harvey was outplayed by Danny Gormally on top board.

Hungarian GMs Gergely Kantor and Miklos Galyas both scored 2/2 for Manx, as did Shreyas Royal. Galyas now has 7/8 for the season, an impressive score matched only by his team-mates, IM Harry Grieve and WIM Julianna Terbe.

## G.Kantor-A.Merry

Manx Liberty vs Barbican  
*Queen's Gambit Accepted*

**1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♟f3 d5 4 ♟c3 dxc4 5 e4 b5!?**

A trendy move, one recommended in two recent books: Fernando Peralta's *The Modernized Vienna of the Queen's Gambit Declined* and *Beating the Queen's Gambit – Indian Style!* by Renier Castellanos. Play now transposes from the Vienna into the QGA.

**6 e5 ♟d5 7 ♟xb5 ♟b6 8 ♟e2**

Another direction is 8 ♟c3 ♟c6 9 ♟e3 when 9...♟b7 10 ♟e2 ♟e7 11 b3! cxb3 12 ♟xb3 ♟f5 13 ♟b5+! c6 14 ♟d3 was perhaps slightly better for White in Fedoseev-Gukesh, Wijk aan Zee 2025.

**8...♟c6 9 ♟e3 ♟e7 10 a3!?**



White leaves the knight on b5 for now, rather than quickly regroup it as Fedoseev did.

**10...♟b8**

This may well not be necessary and 10...♟b7!? 11 ♟c2 ♟d7 (threatening ...♟xe5) 12 ♟c3 ♟a5 doesn't look too bad for Black.

**11 ♟c2 ♟a5 12 ♟c3**

Retreating before ...♟d5 forces the issue.

**12...♟d5**

Black doesn't equalise after this and neither did he following 12...♟b7 13 ♟d1 ♟d7 14 h4! in Fier-Tari, Florianopolis 2025.

**13 ♟d2**

13 ♟d1!? also looks fairly pleasant for White, and if 13...♟xe3 14 fxe3 0-0 15 d5 when it seems that Black would have to resort to 15...♟e8! to stay afloat.

**13...♟b3 14 ♟d1 ♟a6 15 0-0 ♟d7**

The knight is left a little stranded on b3 after this, but even 15...0-0 16 ♟e4! ♟xd2 17 ♟xd2 should supply an edge, when perhaps Black might fight on the queenside with 17...♟b3!? 18 ♟xc4 ♟xc4 19 ♟xc4 ♟b8.

**16 ♟e3! h6?!**



Daniel King's least favourite move, an unnecessary advance of a rook's pawn in front of the king. 16...0-0 was a somewhat better defensive try.

**17 ♟e4?!**

But this rather lets Black off the hook, especially in contrast to 17 ♟e4! 0-0 18 ♟g4 ♟h7 19 ♟h4!? with a fairly dangerous attack for White.

**17...♟c6 18 ♟g3 ♟xe3?**

A bad misjudgement. Rather than open the f-file, Merry should have calmly played 18...0-0 when, for example, 19 ♟e4 ♟h8 20 ♟g4 c3! 21 ♟xa6 ♟xa6 22 bxc3 ♟xc3 23 d5!? is pretty sharp, and roughly equal.

**19 fxe3 0-0 20 ♟h5!**



A powerful leap. Now White would clearly love to bring the queen over to the g-file and also has a fairly strong regrouping plan in the shape of h2-h4, ♟h2 and ♟g4.

**20...♟a5?**

Trying to bring the knight back into play, but something like 20...♟b6!? 21 h4 ♟b7 would have been more prudent.

**21 b4!**

One of two dangerous and pretty strong advances, the other, likely even more dangerous one being 21 d5! exd5 22 ♟d4 ♟g6 23 ♟f5.

**21...♟b3**

21...cxb3!? 22 ♟xc6 ♟xc6 23 ♟xa6 b2 24 ♟d2 ♟xa3 25 ♟f4 surely can't give Black enough for the piece, but might still have been a better practical try.

**22 ♟d3!**

A neat and effective way to regroup.

**22...♟b5?**

22...♟b5 23 ♟e4 ♟b7 was grim, but really had to be tried.

**23 ♟e4 ♟b6 24 ♟f2**

And so the queen will make it to the g-file. The end is already nigh.

**24...♟h8**

Black would also have been highly unlikely to survive after 24...f5!? 25 exf6 ♟xf6 26 ♟b1. **25 ♟g3 ♟g8 26 ♟h4!**





Threatening ♔g6+ followed by mate.  
**26...♙xh4 27 ♖xh4 ♙e8 28 ♜f6!**  
 Finishing in style. It's a mating attack.  
**28...g6 29 ♖f4 1-0**

Wood Green's top scorer so far for the season, with 6/8, features elsewhere in these pages, Matthew Wadsworth. He won both games at the Peterborough weekend, as did team-mate and fellow IM James Jackson.

### M.Wadsworth-S.Ansell

Wood Green vs Blackthorne  
*Reti Opening*

**1 ♖f3 d5 2 g3 ♘d7!?**

A topical line and one which Wadsworth has a fair amount of experience in, from both sides of the board.

**3 d4 ♗b6 4 ♖c3**

Deviating from his earlier 4 ♗bd2 ♙f5 5 ♗h4 when 5...e6 6 ♗xf5 exf5 7 ♙g2 c6 8 a4 a5 9 ♗f3 ♗f6 10 ♙f4 ♙e7 11 ♖c1 ♗e4 seemed fine for Black in Wadsworth-Navara, European Individual Championship, Petrovac 2024, as well as 4 a4!? a5 5 ♗c3, after which 5...♙f5 6 ♗h4 ♙g4 7 h3 ♙h5 8 ♗g2 e6 9 ♗f4 ♙g6 10 h4! echoed our main game and was slightly better for White in Wadsworth-Cabezas Ayala, Roquetas de Mar 2025.

**4...♙f5 5 ♗h4**

Hunting down the bishop-pair is a key motif in this variation, as, indeed, we've already seen.

**5...♙g4**

5...e6!? 6 a4 a5 7 ♗xf5 exf5 à la Navara might not be too bad for Black.

**6 h3 ♙h5 7 ♗g2!**



White is determined to hunt down the light-squared bishop and without weakening his kingside, as 7 g4 e6 8 ♗g2 ♙g6 9 ♗f4

would do.

**7...e6 8 ♗f4 ♙g6 9 h4!?**

A tricky novelty and now the experienced IM playing Black underestimates the danger.

**9...♙f5?**

9...♗f6! would have been sensible and after 10 ♗xg6 hxg6 11 ♙g2 ♙b4 nothing too bad should be happening to Black.

**10 e4! dxe4**

Likewise, 10...♙xe4 11 f3 ♙f5 12 g4 is rather awkward for Black.

**11 g4! e5 12 gxf5 exf4 13 ♙xf4?**

Allowing Black a reprieve. Instead, 13 ♗xf6 14 ♙g2 would have left White's bishops ruling the roost and supplied a clear advantage.

**13...♙f6?**

Missing his chance which lay in 13...♙b4! 14 a3 ♙xc3+ 15 bxc3 ♗d5 16 ♖b1 when White might still be slightly better, but it's clearly got rather messy all of a sudden.

**14 ♗e2!**



**14...♙e7**

14...♖xd4!? would have been more combative (14...♙b4?? now runs into 15 ♖b5+), although as both players may have realised, the precise sequence 15 ♗b5! ♖xb2! 16 ♗xc7+ ♗e7 17 ♗d1 ♗d8 18 ♖h3! leaves White with a strong initiative and more than enough for his pawn(s).

**15 0-0-0 0-0**

15...♗f5!? 16 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 17 ♙b1 0-0-0 was still bad, but also arguably the last real try.

**16 ♗g1**

White's attack is extremely strong and almost plays itself, especially after Black's misguided next, moving a defender away from the kingside.

**16...♗fd5? 17 ♖g4 g6 18 ♗xd5 ♗xd5**

18...♖xd5 19 ♙b1 ♗a4 20 h5 would have been one-way traffic too.

**19 ♙h6 ♗f6 20 ♖h3 ♗e8 21 ♙c4**



Or just 21 h5. In any case, Black isn't long for this world.

**21...♙f8 22 ♙g5 ♗d6 23 h5 1-0**

Last season The Sharks ensured that a thrilling three-way title fight went right down to the wire, but this campaign has often seen them without some of their star players, as well as but the latest club to suffer when having two teams in the top division, which requires completely separate squads. In round seven, they were defeated 5-3 by CSC/Kingston, who thereby took a huge step towards securing their Division One status for next season. On board 3 FM Roland Bezuidenhout was tactically alert, while Peter Finn, WFM Luisa Bashyline and young Supratit Banerjee all scored crucial wins too.

### R.Bezuidenhout-D.Fernandez

CSC/Kingston vs The Sharks



The black rook has just landed on a2 and it looks like anything might be happening after 36 ♖c3 ♖f8, but Bezuidenhout found something stronger.

**36 ♗g4! ♗xg4**

Unfortunately for Black, after 36...♖xe1+? 37 ♙xe1 ♖xb2 38 ♗xf6+ ♙g7 39 ♗xd5 ♖b1 40 ♙f1 the b4-pawn is overprotected, so instead he had to take on g4.

**37 ♖xa2 ♖c6??**

Far, far too ambitious a winning try. After 37...♖xe1+ 38 ♙xe1 ♙xa2 39 ♙xg4 ♙e6 White is clear pawn ahead, but such a generally strong endgame player as Fernandez would have had good chances to hold.

**38 ♖b2**

Or even 38 ♙g2!?. In either case Black doesn't have anything scary.

**38...h5 39 ♗d4**

Decisive centralisation.

**39...f6 40 ♙xg4 hxg4 41 ♖xf6 1-0**

The Sharks recovered with a 5-3 win over Alba, IM Peter Roberson, who now has a fine 6/8 for the season, and Liam Varnam winning on both days for them. In contrast, 5-3 was the score by which CSC/Kingston were largely outclassed by Chessable White Rose, despite Banerjee winning once more, attacking with aplomb against IM Gavin Wall. While after a superb season thus far CSC/Kingston have an excellent chance of survival, being on 6 points, Alba appear



doomed. They also lost 5½-2½ to White Rose, although at least on top board in Peterborough 14-year-old Freddy Gordon had a weekend to remember, holding solidly against Gawain Jones no less before getting the better of GM Daniel Fernandez.

### D.Fernandez- F.Waldhausen Gordon The Sharks vs Alba



We join play following a time scramble in which White likely displayed a little too much ambition in breaking with d3-d4 after a hard fight in a Giuoco Piano. With the healthier structure and superior minor piece, Black is definitely for choice, although White should have good chances to draw.

**41 f3 g7 42 h5 g5 43 xg5?**

Underestimating the latent dynamism within Black's position, even at this late stage of the game. Instead, 43 h1! and then, for example, 43...dxc8 44 d2 d7 45 f4 d6 46 d3 b6 would have left Black pressing, but White still with reasonable drawing chances after 47 axb6 cxb6 48 b1.

**43...hxg5 44 e3 xd4+!**

A big decision. Gordon has correctly realised that he can effect a powerful transformation on the queenside. The alternative was 44...dxc6 when 45 dxc6 dxc6 46 d3 b5! 47 axb6 dxb6! and only then ...c5 would have left White in serious trouble too.

**45 xd4**

Allowing the pawn break, but 45 dxd4 dxc6 would only have given White a choice of lost endings, after trading knights or allowing 46 dxc2 d5.

**45...c5+!**



Frederick Waldhausen Gordon recently crossed the 2400 barrier, so is now an IM at the age of 14!

**46 c3 d6 47 bxc5 dxc5 48 e1!**

With a5 falling, White must quickly obtain some counterplay if there's to be any chance of saving the game.

**48...xa5 49 f3 d6**

Bringing the knight back into play, but it wasn't so badly placed on the rim and 49...b5! 50 cxb5 axb5 51 d5 e5 would have been winning with the connected passed pawns.

**50 e5! b5?**

Tempting, but misguided, whereas 50...e7! 51 d3 (instead, 51 d5 e5 52 d4 b6 is a key point and 51 d2 d8! 52 d5 f7 53 f3 f8 54 e3 g7 55 f4 b6 also winning for Black) 51...b5 would have been well-timed, since now 52 cxb5 axb5 53 d5 e5+ is check and 54 c3 b4+ 55 b3 d6 56 d4+ d5 57 f6+ d4 58 g5 d6 a fairly straightforward win for Black.

**51 d5 e5 52 d4 c6 53 g5!**



An only move and not 53 cxb5+? axb5 54 g5 b4+ 55 b3 d5 when Black is winning.

**53...bxc4!**

The best try, since after 53...dxc4 54 g6 d3 55 g7 d5+ 56 c2 d7 57 f6 a5 58 g8 d8 59 d8 g8 d6 60 f6 a4 61 g4 the extra knight and g-pawn leave White with enough counterplay to draw.

**54 f6 a5 55 h5?**

A strange move, as well as the decisive mistake. 55 d4! would have put the knight on a much better square, helping to keep the black king restricted and after 55...a4 56 b2!

d6 57 d3 a draw would have been likely.

**55...a4! 56 f4**

After 56 c2 d6 57 f6 Black would have had to find 57...d7!, but this wins following 58 d4+ e5 59 d3 a3 60 d5 a2 61 b2 f5 62 xa2 xg5 63 d3 e5 64 b2 g4.

**56...d6! 57 g6**

The best try, since 57 b2? d3+ would be all too easy for Black and 57 d2 a3 58 c2 d6! 59 d3 d4+ 60 b1 e7! wins too.

**57...e7 58 g7 f7 59 xe6**



The point of White's play, but as Black had likely planned in advance, there's a narrow path to victory.

**59...a3! 60 c2**

The black pawns would be just far enough apart after 60 dxc5 a2! 61 b2 d3+ 62 dxd3 cxd3.

**60...d3 61 g5+**

There's simply no good defence as Black would queen after 61 b1 c3.

**61...xg7 0-1**

Of the bottom three teams, don't write off Barbican just yet from pulling off a great escape come the final weekend. This season they've been strengthened by the welcome return to chess of Jonathan Parker, who has only lost once on top board. Barbican have plenty of experience to draw on, but will need to play much better in Daventry than they did when outpowered by Wood Green Youth in round eight, who thereby secured an impressive 6½-1½



win to go with butchering Barnet 7-1 the day before. Svyatoslav Bazakutsa won in both matches for Wood Green Youth, as did fellow IMs Jonah Willow and David Fitzsimons, as well as Jack Liu and GM Ketil Arakhamia-Grant.

Wood Green Youth are currently a narrow third and may well finish there, although there's all to play for in that battle, with Cheddleton very much in the mix too, as might even be White Rose. Cheddleton suffered a number of surprise defeats on the lower boards as they drew with Blackthorne in round seven, Laurence Webb claiming the scalp of Nick Pert, while Zoe Varney and Steve Ledger defeated Max and Nina Pert, respectively. However, Cheddleton were aided at the top end by a crushing victory for Simon Williams on board 1 over Andrew Ledger, while Max and Nina's father, Richard, got the better of Danny Gormally on board 2 and has racked up an impressive 6/8 so far this season.

Both Williams and Richard Pert won again the next day too, while the younger Perts continued to struggle as Cheddleton overcame The Sharks II 4½-3½. Indeed, it's been great in recent months to see the Ginger GM, Simon Williams, back at the board and still as dangerous as ever.

### S.Williams-T.Rendle Cheddleton vs The Sharks II

**1 ♖f3 d5 2 d4 ♜f6 3 c4 c6 4 ♜c3 dxc4 5 e4 b5 6 ♟e2!?**

This modern take on the Geller Gambit (6 e5 ♜d5 7 a4 was the old main line) has been deployed on several occasions by both Richard and Nick Pert, team-mates and old friends of Williams.

**6...e6 7 a4 ♟b7**

This is sensible. Black can also go in for 7...b4!? 8 e5 bxc3 9 exf6 cxb2 10 fxg7, which is a truly crazy line. After 10...bxa1 ♖11 gxh8 ♜ ♖a5+! 12 ♜d2! c3 13 0-0 cxd2 14 ♟xd2 ♜xd1 15 ♜xd1 White is a whole piece down, but Black's position is far from a thing of beauty and 15...♜f5! (15...♜d8? 16 d5! is very nasty, threatening ♟b4) 16 d5! ♜g6 17 ♜e5 highly unclear.

**8 0-0 a6 9 ♟g5**

Developing the final piece in aggressive fashion, but this is by no means definitely best. Instead, 9 b3!? b4 10 e5 ♜d5 11 ♜xd5 cxd5 12 bxc4 dxc4 13 ♟xc4 is likely about equal.

**9...♜bd7 10 d5?!**



Simon Williams had a busy few weeks, sharing first (yes, Bjorn!) at the Godinn Open, as we've enjoyed, then scoring 2/2 at the 4NCL ahead of returning to Iceland for the Reykjavik Open.

After 10 e5 h6 11 ♟h4 g5 Black is at least OK, so Williams tries the other central push...

**10...♜b6?**

...and is immediately rewarded. Now White is doing very well, whereas after 10...cxd5! 11 axb5 (or 11 exd5 b4 12 dxe6 fxe6!) 11...dxe4 12 ♜d4 axb5 13 ♜xa8 ♜xa8 14 ♜dxb5 ♜b8 (Pein) he likely doesn't have quite enough compensation.

**11 dxe6 fxe6 12 e5!**

Establishing a powerful bridgehead ahead of seizing the initiative.

**12...♜d5 13 ♜d4! ♜c5**

The relatively best try. Of course, Black would like to go 13...c5?, but after 14 ♟h5+ g6 15 a5! ♜c7 16 ♜xe6 he would be quickly cleaned up, as shown by 16...♜xe5 17 ♜e1 and 16...♜c6 17 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 18 ♜c7+.

**14 ♟g4**



Taking aim at the vulnerable point on e6 and now the grim 14...♟c8 pretty much had to be tried.

**14...h6? 15 ♟e3!**

Threatening ♜xe6 and White also has a certain check on h5.

**15...♜xe3 16 ♟h5+ ♜d7 17 fxe3**

With the f-file now open for the rooks, the black king will swiftly be put to the sword.

**17...♜d3**

Likewise, 17...♟c8 18 ♜f7 b4 19 a5 ♜d8 20 ♜a4 ♜xa4 21 ♜xa4 is pretty crushing.

**18 ♜g4 c5 19 ♜f7+ ♟c8 20 ♜af1!**



The final piece joins the party and it's all over in view of 20...cxd4 21 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 22 ♜xf8+ ♜d7 23 ♜xg7+ ♟c6 24 ♟f3+ ♟c5 25 ♜e7+.

**20...♟e7 21 ♜xe7 1-0**



4NCL Division One - 2024/2025 Season															
Team		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	MP	GP
1	Manx Liberty			6-2	5-3	5½-2½		6-2	6½-1½	6-2	7-1		7½-½	16	49½
2	Wood Green			6-2	3-5	6-2		5-3	5-3		5-3	7--1	7-1	14	44
3	Wood Green Youth	2-6	2-6				5½-2½	5-3	6½-1½	7-1	6½-1½	6½-1½		12	41
4	Cheddleton Savills Catering	3-5	5-3				5-3	4-4		4½-3½	6½-1½	4-4	4½-3½	12	36½
5	Chessable White Rose	2½-5½	2-6				2½-5½	4½-3½	5-3	5-3		5½-2½	4½-2½	10	31½
6	The Sharks II			2½-5½	3-5	5½-2½			3-5	3-5	4-3	5-3	6½-1½	8	32½
7	Blackthorne	2-6	3-5	3-5	4-4	3½-4½			4½-3½		4-4		6-2	6	30
8	CSC/Kingston	1½-6½	3-5	1½-6½		3-5	5-3	3½-4½		5½-2½		5-2		6	28
9	Barnet Knights	2-6		1-7	3½-4½	3-5	5-3		2½-5½		4½-3½		5-3	6	26½
10	Barbican 4NCL	1-7	3-5	1½-6½	1½-6½		3-4	4-4		3½-4½		4½-3½		3	22
11	Alba		-1-7	1½-6½	4-4	2½-5½	3-5		2-5		3½-4½		4½-3½	3	20
12	The Sharks II	½-7½	1-7		3½-4½	2½-4½	1½-6½	2-6		3-5		3½-4½		0	17½



# Home News

**BIRMINGHAM** – Peter Large continued his good form from the World Senior Teams as he shared first with a rising local star at the Birmingham Rapidplay on March 30th.

**Open:** 1-2 Peter Large (Kingston), Finlay Bowcott-Terry (Halesowen) 5½/7, 3-5 Tomasz Sygnowski (Wolverhampton), Luke Honey (Exeter), Jonathan Arnott (Sheffield) 4½.

**Major:** 1-4 Joshua Pink (Stockport), Michael McDonagh (Chester), Pranav Mathur (Birmingham), Paul Colburn (Rugby) 5.

**Intermediate:** 1 Paul Leonard (Atherton) 6½, 2 Daniel Jones (Stourbridge) 6, 3 Rhys Edwards (Coventry) 5½.

**Minor:** 1-6 Carl Lawrence, Evaldas Navickis (both Birmingham), Alain Chandler-Hurst (Walsall Kipping), Santhoshkumar Ravisankar (Solihull), Rishab Murthy (South Birmingham), Nigel Foster (Shirley) 5½.

**BOURNE END** – The Bourne End One Day Congress took place on April 13th.

**Section A:** 1-2 Jon Ady (Guildford), Andrew Ram (Pinner) 4/5, 3 Nigel Fleming (Kings Head) 3½.

**Section B:** 1 Evan Pitts 4½, 2 Mithran Subbarj (both Maidenhead) 4, 3-4 Ian Gilders (Witney), Philip Roads (Yeovil) 3½.

**Section C:** 1 Ashley Melvin (Bourne End) 5, 2 Alen Biju (Maidenhead) 4, 3 Vijay Srao (High Wycombe) 3½.

**BOURNEMOUTH** – Danny Gormally made the long journey worthwhile as he scooped the £1,000 first prize at the Bournemouth Grand Congress (March 28-30).

**Open:** 1 Danny Gormally (Alnwick) 4½/5, 2-3 Jonathan Underwood (Seaton), Roland Bezuidenhout (Fareham) 4.

**Major:** 1 Mark Potter (Dorchester) 4½, 2-3 Daniel Goodlad (Southampton University), Hugo Melling (Ringwood) 4.

**Intermediate:** 1-4 Malcolm Probert (Llanelli), David Fowler (Glossop), Alex Dore

(Southampton), Stephen Williams (Cwmbran) 4.

**Minor:** 1-2 Ramganes Sridharan, Bugra Arslan (both Bournemouth) 4½, 3 Terence Greenaway (Torquay) 4.

**BOVEY TRACEY** – The 2nd Bovey Tracey Rapidplay featured two sections on April 5th.

**Maestros:** 1-2 Umut Temizer (Newton Abbot), Paul Hampton (Seaton) 5/6, 3-4 Martin Goldschmidt (Totnes), Ellis Manning (Newton Abbot) 4½.

**Improvers:** 1-2 Trevor Hurt (South Hams), Joe Forty 5, 3 Ben Darlington (both Torquay) 4½.

**BRISTOL** – There was a four-way tie for first at the 91st Bristol Open Championship (March 28-30).

**Open:** 1-4 Keith Arkell (Paignton), Oliver Stubbs (Downend), Kai Hanache (Hammersmith), Aditya Vaidyanathan (Birmingham) 4/5.

**Under-1950:** 1 Mohammad Mozaffari (Coulson) 4½, 2-4 Tony Harvey (South Bristol), Oliver Thornley, Vasyi Lopatko (both Bath) 4.

**Under-1750:** 1 Martin Jones (Llanelli) 4½, 2-4 Alexander Photiou (Plymouth), Judd Chidwick (Redland), Thomas Gerrard (Ashby) 4.

**Under-1550:** 1 Joseph Newland 5, 2 Sam King (both Bristol) 4, 3-9 Santosh Murali (Portishead), Ashish Antony (Redland), Chris Smith (Thornbury), Chris Thompson (Cwmbran), William Taplin (Keynsham), Kevin Markey (Stroud), Benjamin Zhang (Bath) 3½.

**COVENTRY** – The 7th University of Warwick Rapidplay took place on March 1st.

**Open:** 1 Javier Valdepenas Octavio (Kenilworth) 6½/7, 2 Sam Chow (Leamington) 6, 3 Damirali Magzumov (Warwick University) 5.

**Major:** 1 Alex Zhou 6½, 2-4 Hongxin Zhen (both Warwick University), Sahil Kohli

(Sutton), Jonathan Lee (Bristol) 5½.

**Minor:** 1 Alexander Wicks (Warwick University) 6½, 2 Mohanaditya Poluru (Newport) 5½, 3-6 Jim Gillespie (Olton), Elliot Long (Milton Keynes) Mira Ajeet Singh, Sidharth Panicker (both Warwick University) 5.

**EASTLEIGH** – Ivan Georgiev won the Hampshire Rapidplay at Eastleigh on April 5th.

**Open:** 1 Ivan Georgiev (Chandler's Ford) 5/6, 2-4 Paul Northcott (Emsworth), Piotr Mikolajczyk (Portsmouth), Martin Buckmaster (Southampton) 4½.

**Major:** 1 Jack McBurnie 5½, 2 Simon Redmill (both Fareham) 5, 3-4 Itmam Ekram (Portsmouth), Hamza Ozcali (Southampton) 4½.

**EXETER** – Devonian IM Jack Rudd triumphed at the East Devon Congress at the Mercure Exeter Rougemont Hotel (March 21-23).

**Open:** 1 Jack Rudd (Barnstaple) 4½/5, 2-3 Qixiang Han (Streatham), Dominic Mackle (Devon) 4.

**Major:** 1 Mohammad Mozaffari (Coulson) 4½, 2-6 Stephen Quartey (Exeter University), Andrew Waters (Rainham), Charles Howard (Totnes), Raman Kumar (Exeter), Reyansh Saxena (Petts Wood) 4.

**Minor:** 1 Joe Dornan (Devon) 5, 2-6 Geoff Ainsley (Calderdale), Shreyas Pasupulety (Newton Abbot), Joy Fursman (Clevedon), Christine Constable (Bude), William Taplin (Keynsham) 3½.

**FAREHAM** – The latest Castle Chess event was the Fareham Congress (March 14-16).

**Open:** 1 Tony Wells (Athenaeum) 4½/6, 2 Daniel Sullivan (Sheffield) 4, 3 Tim Spanton (Battersea) 3½.

**Major:** 1 Alikhan Menseitov (Chandler's Ford) 5, 2-3 Derek McGovern (Staines), Remel Ramirez (Chichester) 4.

**Minor:** 1 Nick Spearing (Reading) 4½, 2-3



David Archer (Godalming), Aiden Graham (Southampton University) 4.

**FOLKESTONE** – Satish Gaekwad was responsible for staging the 1st East-Kent FIDE Congress at the Grand Burstin Hotel, Folkestone (March 8-9).

**Under-2250:** 1 Robert Starley (Sandwich) 4½/5, 2 Lishoy Dildarav (Camberley) 3½, 3-4 Justinas Stojanas (London), Robert Collopy (Bridge) 3.

**Under-1850:** 1-2 Michael Stanners (Guildford), Edgar Pack (Tonbridge) 4, 3-4 Aditya Gupta (Brighton), Alan Prince (Brentwood) 3½.

**Under-1500:** 1 Max Dinley (Kent) 5, 2 Robert Twigg 3½, 3-4 Harrison Pitchford, Thomas Milligan (all Folkestone) 3.

**GLASGOW** – Two strong IMs and the main editors at Quality Chess shared first place at the Glasgow Congress, which took place at the Annie Lennox Building, Glasgow Caledonian University (March 28-30).

**Open:** 1-2 Andrew Greet, Kostis Megalios (both Bellshill) 4½/5, 3-5 Craig Thomson (Edinburgh), Jamie Malkin (Kilmarnock), Yevgeni Sprenger de la Iglesia (Glasgow Polytechnic) 4.

**Major:** 1 Jonathan Livingstone 4½, 2-6 Scott Kilgour (both Queen's Park), Joe Galbraith (Musselburgh), Richard Warcup (Stirling), Simon Kerridge (Bearsden), Kevin Maguire (Paisley) 4.

**Minor:** 1 Wayne Lee (Kirkintilloch), Charlie Rees (Stepps) 4½, 3 Callum McCue (Bearsden) 4.

**HAMILTON** – Hamilton Chess Club celebrated the 90th anniversary of GM Bent Larsen's birth with an Allegro on Saturday 8th March 2025.

**Open:** 1 Derek McCormack (Paisley) 5/5, 2-3 Andrew McCusker (Hamilton), Rob Colston (Bearsden) 4.

**Under-1500:** 1-2 Charlie Rees (Stepps), Ross Samuel (Lothians) 4½, 3-7 Donald McGregor (Cathcart), Samuel Abiodun (Nigeria), Eve Clark (Glasgow Polytechnic), Ian Fanning (Edinburgh), Henry Udeogu-Osita (Aberdeenshire) 4.

**HORWICH** – The The University of Bolton Arena hosted a strong Manchester Rapidplay on March 23rd.

**Open:** 1 Danny Gormally (Alnwick) 5½/6, 2-3 Bogdan Lalic (Lewisham), Maksym Larchikov (Hull) 4½.

**Under-1950:** 1 Morgan French (Newcastle) 5½, 2-3 Paul Leonard (Atherton), Shyam Murugesan (Huddersfield) 4½.

**Under-1630:** 1 Andy Yang (Bolton) 5½, 2-3 Dyfan Steele (Shrewsbury), Dheer Bhatia (Ashton-under-Lyne) 5.

**HUDDERSFIELD** – Organised by the Ilkley Chess Centre, the Huddersfield Congress (April 5-6) took place at the same venue used by the 4NCL earlier this year, the Cedar Court Hotel.

**Open:** 1 John Potter (Belper) 4½/5, 2-4 Srivathsan Sasikumar, Toby Quaithe (both Leeds), Shriaansh Ganti (Ilkley) 3½.

**Major:** 1-4 Richard Sanger (York), David Robinson (Meltham), Charlie Wainwright (Ilkley), Mohammad Abdulhamid (Bradford) 4.

**Minor:** 1-2 Rob Jarvis (Ashfield), Robert Oldfield (Meltham) 4, 3-5 Jake Howard (Oldham), Vidhyuth Sudagar (Leeds), Benjamin Findlay (Sheffield) 3½.

**JERSEY** – The Jersey International took place at the Hotel Ambassadeur, St Clement Bay (April 5-12), and saw a legendary Lithuanian Grandmaster win the £1,500 first prize at the age of 51.

**Open:** 1 Eduardas Rozentalis (Lithuania) 7½/9, 2 Georg Mohr (Slovenia) 7, 3 Tom O'Gorman (Oxford University) 6, 4-5 Katarzyna Toma (Worcestershire), Koby Kalavannan (Cambridge University) 5½.

**Holiday:** 1-2 Ali Imam-Sadeque (Oxford University), Anzel Laubscher (South Africa) 7½, 3-4 Sydney Jacob (Lewisham), David Hunn (Dagenham) 6.

**LEICESTER** – The British Universities Chess Association (BUCA) Championships saw UCL (Aaravamudhan Balaji, Wenxiang Li, Jacob Yoon and Dmitry Minko) claim their first ever Championship title as they pipped Oxford (Tom O'Gorman, Jun Wei Lee, Daniel Gallagher and Ashvin Sivakumar) on tiebreak after both had finished on 15/18 in Leicester (February 22-23). The nine-round rapid event also involved four other sections: Oxford II won the Plate, LSE dominated the Bowl, Queen Mary took the Shield and Reading II won the Cup.

**LONDON** – 14-year-old Harry Bryant racked up an impressive perfect score at the latest Golders Green Rapidplay on March 29th.

**Open:** 1 Harry Bryant (Hammersmith) 6/6, 2 Max Turner (Warwick University) 5, 3 Roman Kovalskyi (UCL) 4½.

**Under-1900:** 1 Michael Inzani (Kings Head) 6, 2 Orest Stus (Kent) 5, 3 Mikael Belay (Romford) 4½.

**Under-1600:** 1-2 Andrew Dugdale (Thornbury), Guillaume Soumier (Bloomsbury) 5½, 3-7 Marcel Bodereau (north London), Lara de Boer (Barnet), Jan Vanbiervliet (London), Alice Degrassi (Battersea), Jake Round (Rushden) 4½.

**Under-1100:** 1-2 Sharin Islam (Barking), Daniel Dugdale (Woodbridge) 5, 3-5 Julia Bednaya (Barnet), Noah Wang (Barnes), Jing Zhe Lim (Maidenhead) 4.

Over at Muswell Hill, Peter Large (Kingston) and Bogdan Lalic (Lewisham) shared first with 4½/5 on March 11th. A week later, on March 18th, the in-form Large would claim sole first with 5/6, which left him half a point clear of Michael Inzani (Kings Head) and Ashvin Sivakumar (Oxford University).

Michael Fernandez dominated the Open at the latest Southall Congress (March 22-23).

**Under-2400:** 1 Michael Fernandez (Little Heath) 5/5, 2-3 Josh Sharma (Maidenhead), Henry Adams (Lewes) 3.

**Under-1900:** 1-2 Julian Llewellyn (Muswell Hill), Timothy Watson (St Albans) 4, 3-5 Alan

Hayward (Coulsdon), Caelan Gopaldas (Pimlico), Shivam Sahoo (Milton Keynes) 3½.

**Under-1600:** 1-2 Mithran Subburaj (Maidenhead), Aditya Sengupta (Camberley) 4, 3-5 James Peel (Rugby), Aviraj Bhaduri (Charlton), Chandra Prakash (Southwark) 3½.

Peter Large also triumphed at the Ealing Rapidplay on March 2nd, scoring 5/5 to finish a point ahead of Michael Inzani (Kings Head), with Lam Vy Le Nguyen (Petts Wood) a further half-point adrift. With Large at the European Senior Teams, there was a three-way tie in the latest Ealing Rapidplay on April 6th: Ayush Ganbold (Ealing), Yicheng Ding (Barnes) and Vineet Sood (Greenwich) all scoring 4/5.

Sainbayar Tserendorj is also responsible for the Earlsfield events, including the Earlsfield Congress (March 28-29).

**Under-2400:** 1-2 James Scarry (Dulwich), Henry Cronin (Battersea) 4/5, 3-5 Alfred Soulier (Wimbledon), Hubert Bates (Barnet), Robin Haldane (Streatham) 3½.

**Under-1800:** 1 Avinash Reddy (Bloomsbury) 5, 2-5 Arjan Verdi (Wimbledon), Elijah de Lange (Guildford), Julian Llewellyn (Muswell Hill), Nika Istratova (Estonia) 2½.

Who else but Peter Large (Kingston) would score 100% to win the Earlsfield Rapidplay on March 15th? There Ayush Ganbold (Ealing) and Mikael Belay (Romford) shared second, back on 3/5. Then on April 5th it was the turn of Alfred Soulier (Wimbledon) and Benedict Keohane (Coulsdon) to tie for first on 4/5 in the Open, finishing half a point ahead of Constantin Mueller (Imperial College) and Edmond Andal (Lewisham). There was also an Under-1700 section that day, where Adam Neale (Ealing), Aarav Gujarathi (Coulsdon) and Gustavo Astolfi (Richmond) all scored 3½/5.

There was a Coulsdon Rapidplay on April 6th, in which Robin Haldane (Streatham) won the Open with 6/7, finishing a point ahead of Mark Smith (Coulsdon), while in the other section Henry Smith triumphed with 6½/7, which left him a half-point ahead of Coulsdon club-mate Aaron Fernandes.

Another popular event is the London Chess League Weekender, the latest of which took place March 14th to 16th at the London MindSports Centre.

**Open:** 1-2 Stanley Badacsonyi (Muswell Hill), Dylan Wastney (Reading) 4/5, 3-7 Zoltan Kovacs (Hackney), Matthew Dignam (Berkhamsted), Ethan Sanitt (Barnet), Wiktor Przedlacki (West Sussex), Luohe Wang (Chelmsford) 3½.

**Under-2000:** 1 Mohammad Mozafarri (Coulsdon) 4½, 2-3 Naavya Parikh (Harrow), Tom Balmond (Hammersmith) 4.

**Under-1650:** 1 Chris Soltysiak (Metropolitan) 4½, 2 Alice Degrassi (Battersea) 4, 3-9 Alex Lever (Watford), Jake Conyard (Camberley), Marcus Gordon (Muswell Hill), Djad Ben-Eshak (Barnet), James Sweetnam (north London), Euka Athukorallage (Horsham), Carol Taban (King's College) 3.

Finally, there was an Uxbridge Rapid on April 13th. Karanvir Singh (Uxbridge) and



Fahim Nasiri (Birmingham University) both scored 4/5 in the Open. In the somewhat larger Major section, Shlok Parakh (Uxbridge) top-scored with 5½/6 to finish half a point ahead of Aviraj Bhaduri (Charlton) and Aarav Gujarathi (Cambridgeshire).

**READING** – The 1st University of Reading Rapidplay was a definite success on March 8th.  
**Open:** 1-2 David Collyer (Isle of Wight), Sebastien Chua (Oxford University) 5/6, 3 Forbes Welford-Ranson (Reading Uni.) 4½.  
**Challengers:** 1-2 Jake Conyard (Camberley), Omar Balushi 5, 3-5 Hande Donmez, Luigi Sacco, Blaise Welch (all Reading University) 4½.

**SHEFFIELD** – Thomas Carroll triumphed at a hard-fought Darnall & Handsworth Rapidplay on March 22nd.

**Open:** 1 Thomas Carroll (Sheffield University) 4½/6, 2-3 Ayodeji Jeje (Hillsborough), Srivathsan Sasikumar (Leeds) 4.  
**Major:** 1 Gary Hinchcliffe (Barnsley) 5, 2 Andrew Stoker 4½, 3-7 Jack Virgin (both Stockport), Zak Tomlinson (Doncaster), George Swanson (Stannington), Ved Boganadham (Ashton-under-Lyne), Sebastian Griffin-Young (West Nottingham) 4.  
**Intermediate:** 1 Paul Wheatley (Sheffield Nomads) 5½, 2 Rico-Bradley Ellis (Scunthorpe) 5, 3 Vidhyuth Sudagar (Leeds) 4½.  
**Minor:** 1 Mohammed Rohman (3Cs) 5½, 2 Mohanaditya Poluru (Newport) 5, 3 Raphael Stamolampros (Leeds) 4½.



Sheffield student Tom Carroll has become a White Rose first team 4NCL regular this season.

**ST ALBANS** – One of our regular columnists didn't have to face Michael Adams on this occasion as he won the St Albans Congress (April 5-6), to become Hertfordshire Champion.

**Open:** 1 Paul Littlewood (St Albans) 4½/5, 2-3 Qixiang Han (Streatham), Yichen Han (Oxford) 4.

**Challengers:** 1-2 Michael Botteley (Bedford), Anusweud Sasikumar (London) 4½, 3 Matthew Peat (Battersea) 4.

**Major:** 1 Richard Weston (Cowley) 4, 2-6 Hugh Fenwick (Mushrooms), Jack Hale (Bedford), Paul Kenning (Braintree), Timothy Watson, Noah Mosley (both St Albans) 3½.

**Intermediate:** 1 Bartosz Cieslik (Uxbridge) 5, 2-4 Russell Goodfellow (Tunbridge Wells), Joseph Stringer (Letchworth), Stephen Williams (Cwmbran) 4½.

**Minor:** 1-2 Lee Bullock (Hackney), Patrick Sartain (Harrow) 4½, 3-6 Charlie Ball, Oliver McWilliams, Peyman Owladi (all St Albans), Alan Borgars (Letchworth) 4.

**STOKE GIFFORD** – Haroon Majeed defeated a living legend, 91-year-old IM James Sherwin, as he racked up a big score at the Stoke Gifford Rapidplay on March 15th.

**Open:** 1 Haroon Majeed (Nottingham) 6½/7, 2-4 Tom Shepherd (Bicester), Chris Beaumont (Bristol), James Sherwin (Bradford-on-Avon) 5.

**Major:** 1-4 Dimitar Dinev, James Guest (both Bristol University), Rayyan Mussa (Bristol), Hayden Griffiths (Thornbury) 5½.

**Minor:** 1 Max Ridley (Bristol University) 7, 2-3 Ashish Antony (Redland), Noah Taylor (Bristol) 5.

**WELLS** – Keith Arkell drew with 13-year-old Daniel Udovenko in the final round en route to triumphing at the Wells Congress (March 7-9).

**Open:** 1 Keith Arkell (Paignton) 4½/5, 2-3 Daniel Udovenko, Jan Murawski (both Oxford) 4.

**Major:** 1-2 James Thomas (Bristol), David Egginton (Clevedon) 4½, 3-4 Leon Nelson (Wells), Andrew Swales (Wanstead) 4.

**Intermediate:** 1-2 Anay Misra, Alexis Malibiran (both Bristol) 4, 3-6 Carter Knight (Somerset), Nicholas Stout (Purbeck), Gregory Roome (Wells), Miheli Gunaratne (Nottingham) 3½.

**Minor:** 1 Dillon Harle (Frome) 4½, 2 Rene Butler 4 (Market Harborough), 3-7 William Taplin (Keynsham), Louis Mallender (Taunton), Tarun Pamunwa, Graham Strickland (both Bristol), Cameron Gregg (Somerset) 3½.

**WEYMOUTH** – Some rare non-chess news, but those who also take their draughts seriously might wish to know that an occasional contributor to Readers' Letters, Richard Pask, a grandmaster and noted authority on the game, has recently had his monumental *Complete Checkers: Insights* published in hardback.

**YORK** – The 12th ChessMates International took place in the inspiring setting of York Guildhall (March 21-23). This European junior team tournament is designed to foster friendship across the board, as well as provide strong competitive chess, and certainly delivered under the guidance of organiser Ben Rich. When the dust had settled, Sachsen-Anhalt from Germany emerged victorious, winning all five of their matches, although they were slightly fortunate to turn things round to prevail 5½-4½ against England in the final round.

Led by Stanley Badacsonyi, England took the silver medals, with Rotterdam third. There were also several very impressive individual performances: Zack Norris (England), Gustav Polzin (Sachsen-Anhalt) and Luka Wink (Rotterdam) all scored 5/5, while Anton Belin

and Christian Haubold (both Sachsen-Anhalt) amassed 4½/5. With such strong teenage talent on display, it was no surprise that guest of honour for the weekend, Gawain Jones, had his work cut out in a 20-board simul on the Friday evening, where he did well to only lose two games. There was also the Yorkshire Cup for northern juniors held alongside on the Saturday and Sunday, won with 4/5 by Daniel Sewart (Newcastle), which left him a half-point ahead of Daniel Meredith (York), while IM Richard Bates's nephew, Daniel Patterson (York), won the under-1400 section with 4½/5.

The ChessMates Best Game prize went to Monaco's Clovis Kien for his win over Yorkshire's Benedikt Pitel.

### C.Kien-B.Pitel

ChessMates International, York 2025  
*Semi-Slav Defence*

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♙f6 4 ♘c3 e6 5 e3 ♙d6 6 ♖c2 0-0 7 ♙d3 dxc4 8 ♙xc4 b6?

Black's sixth move was already a little unusual and here the standard policy of 8...♗bd7 was definitely required, enabling Black to meet 9 e4 with 9...e5.

9 e4 ♙e7 10 e5 ♙d5 11 ♗e4

Keeping pieces on to attack. There was also 11 ♙d3!?, intending 11...♗b4 (11...h6 12 ♖e2 is rather awkward for Black) 12 ♙xh7+ ♗h8 13 ♖b1 g6 14 ♙xg6 fxg6 15 a3! ♙d5 16 ♖xg6, with three pawns and an attack for the piece.

11...h6 12 h4!

Not only preparing g2-g4-g5, but also ♗h3-g3, as well as even ♗eg5 in conjunction with ♙xh6.

12...♙b7?

Far too slow. Black absolutely had to go 12...♙a6! to swap off an attacker when 13 ♙xh6? (the calm 13 b3! maintains a clear advantage) 13...♗b4! 14 ♖e2 ♙xc4 15 ♖xc4 gxh6 16 ♗h3 ♖d5 17 ♖e2 would only have left White with just about enough for the bishop.

13 ♙xh6!



13...gxh6 14 ♗eg5!

A second and very powerful blow as now 14...hxg5? 15 hxg5 ♙b4+ 16 ♙f1 ♗e8 17 ♖h7+ ♙f8 18 g6 would wipe Black out.

14...♙xg5 15 hxg5?

Allowing Black a reprieve. Instead, 15 ♙xg5! f5 (15...hxg5 16 hxg5 is devastating, as per our previous note) 16 exf6 ♗xf6 17 ♖h7+



♔f8 18 ♖xb7 would have won.

**15...♗e7?**

Missing his chance which lay in 15...♗g7! to facilitate ...♖h8. After 16 0-0-0 ♗d7 17 ♖e4 c5 18 ♖xh6 ♖h8 19 ♖h4 ♗e7! 20 ♗d3 White retains full and dangerous compensation, but clearly anything might have happened.



**16 0-0-0!**

Inviting the final piece to join the party.

**16...♗g6**

Now 16...♗g7 can be met by 17 gxf6+!? ♗h8 18 ♗g5 ♗f5 19 f4 then g2-g4 with a crushing attack.

**17 ♖xh6 ♗g7 18 ♗xe6!**

Olé! Clearly the game is up for Black.

**18...♖e7 19 ♖dh1 ♖g8 20 ♖h7+ ♗f8**

**21 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 22 ♗xf7 ♗xf7 23 ♖h7+**

Plenty good enough, but 23 ♖f5+! ♗e8 24 ♖h7 would have forced a quick mate.

**23...♗g7 24 ♖f5+**

The unopposed queen is far, far too strong.

**24...♗g8 25 ♖xg7+ ♗xg7 26 ♖f6+ ♗g8**

**27 ♖xg6+ ♗f8 28 e6 ♗e7 29 ♖f7+ 1-0**

Alongside proceedings at the Guildhall, chess also took place in the adjacent St. Helen's Square in central York, featuring a giant set and several boards for the public to play on, or even receive some tuition.



Pictured with ChessMates President Jurriaan Kien, England captain Stanley Badacsonyi lifts the second place trophy at the end of a highly competitive weekend's chess at York Guildhall.



York Town Crier Ben Fry announces the start of a special challenge game on the giant set in St. Helen's Square between York Central MP Rachael Maskell and British Champion Gawain Jones.

## Readers' Letters:

**Boris Spassky**

John Henderson provided a wonderful article about Boris Spassky last month, but there is a major flaw. On p.33, at the foot of column three, he refers to Boris's "only visit to Scotland was in 1988." It is hard to understand how he could forget Spassky's visit to Glasgow for a simultaneous performance on 25th September 1987. And it was Tron Marketing, mentioned by John re the Glenrothes event, that was responsible for that success.

It all stemmed from the Glasgow September Congress, 18-20 September, the winners of the various sections being entitled to a board against Spassky in the simul. All of this only happened, however, because Tron Marketing distributed an impressive proposal that was immediately picked up by the *Sunday Mail* newspaper. So, for once, organisers had some money to work with. *The Sunday Mail Chess Challenge* – the weekend tournament – received great coverage, and resulted in a record entry of 481.

And the simul result? 30 boards, with Spassky scoring +18, =11, -1. His loss was to 26-year-old IM Paul Motwani, who, would you believe, defeated Spassky's King's Gambit.

## B.Spassky-P.Motwani

Glasgow (simul) 1988

*King's Gambit*

**1 e4 e5 2 f4 d5 3 exd5 c6 4 ♖e2 cxd5 5 fxe5 ♗c6 6 ♗f3 ♗c5 7 c3 d4 8 d3 ♗ge7 9 ♗bd2 0-0 10 ♗b3 ♗b6 11 ♗d2 ♗e8 12 0-0-0 dxc3 13 bxc3 a5**



**14 d4 a4 15 ♗a1 ♗e6 16 ♗g5 h6 17 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 18 ♖b2 a3 19 ♖c2 ♗d5 20 ♗b5 ♗xc3 21 ♗xe8 ♖c8 22 ♗d2 ♗a5 0-1**

It was because of the coverage of the weekend congress and the later simul that Glenrothes approached Tron Marketing.

Alan McGowan  
Waterloo, Ontario

time, with the game likely to end as a draw after **6 ♖xb7** (if **6 ♖a3 g2 7 ♖g3 ♖e1 8 ♖xg2 ♖xe4!**) **6...g2 7 ♖b6+** (7 ♖b8!? ♖c1+ 8 ♖xc1 g1♖+ 9 ♖c2 should lead to a fortress) **7...♖g7 8 ♖f3 ♖f1 9 f6+! ♖h6** (or **9...♖h7 10 ♖g5+ ♖g6 11 ♖h3 ♖h1 12 ♖b8**) **10 ♖b8 ♖f2+ 11 ♖c1 ♖xf3 12 ♖h8+ ♖g6 13 ♖g8+**.

## 24) Caruana-Sevian

**1 ♖h6+!!** (1 ♖xf6! works too and transposes after **1...gxf6 2 ♖h6**) **1...gxh6** (1...♖f8 2 ♖d3! is a silent killer) **2 ♖xh6 ♖e7** (2...♖e8? 3 ♖g7 would be easy for White) **3 ♖g7+ ♖d6 4 ♖d2!** (going after the black king and bishop; 4 ♖h7!? ♖bc8 5 ♖c1! also wins, the main point being revealed after **5...e4 6 ♖d7+! ♖xd7 7 cxd7**

**♖xd7 8 ♖c6+**) **4...a5** (likewise, **4...♖b3 5 ♖xc7!** (the simplest) **5...♖xc7 6 ♖xa5+ ♖d6 7 c7 ♖d7 8 ♖c1 ♖bc8 9 ♖b6+ ♖d5 10 cxd8 ♖xd8 11 ♖xf6** (White is winning, being two pawns up and with a much safer king) **11...d3 12 ♖f3+ e4 13 ♖h5+ ♖e6 14 ♖c6+ ♖xc6 15 bxc6 d2 16 ♖d1 1-0**

# This Month's New Releases



## Learn from the Legends 2

Mihail Marin, 440 pages

Quality Chess

RRP £25.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £23.39**

This book is a sequel to 2004's highly regarded *Learn from the Legends* (Quality Chess). It was a popular and successful volume which went to three editions. The follow-up has suffered a lengthy gestation period, by anyone's standards, but it has been worth the wait.

The most instructive games of five hugely influential players – albeit all of whom failed to capture the ultimate title, despite their best efforts – are placed under the microscope, and they are: Leonid Stein, Lev Polugaevsky, David Bronstein, Paul Keres and Lajos Portisch.

In the words of the back cover: "Much like the first book, the ambitious student can learn a great deal from studying the legends of yesteryear, aided by the author's expert insights, while more casual readers will enjoy the biographical and best-games compilation of five wonderful chess players."

The author also found a theme with which to connect the chess stars in question: "I started my work free of preconceptions but, as the book progressed, it became clear that tactical abilities and attacking skills were common elements in the styles of my heroes. This discovery gave me the general direction for the book, turning it into a slightly unusual form of tactical and attacking manual, within a biographical framework. At the same time, all the players had their own trademark way of preparing and carrying out their attacks. It is easy to notice certain particularities of the double-edged tactical battles in each case too."

Therefore, readers can rightly expect to enjoy a feast of attacking chess games, backed up by often unusual ideas, especially

in the case of the eccentric David Bronstein, of course. Only one of the players in question is still with us and he is singled out for special praise in the book's introduction.

"Many may be surprised that I dedicated the last chapter to Lajos Portisch, but I had both objective and subjective reasons for doing so. Even though he never came close to challenging for the highest title in chess, Portisch qualified for the Candidates eight times, a record beaten only by Korchnoi. In my opinion, Portisch's style is the hardest to understand. Almost unanimously regarded as a theoretician and positional maestro, he gives me the impression of a very concrete player. His moves and general decisions were hard to anticipate; but after his games were finished, they looked logical overall. Like Polugaevsky and Keres, the classical strategist Portisch rarely missed an opportunity to initiate incalculable complications or attacks. He was also one of the players I was rooting for during my teenage years, a period in which I had the opportunity to play three games against him – all ending in my defeat."

Portisch, a player who "could attack in any phase of the game and irrespectively of the evaluation of the position, as long as this corresponded to the concrete requirements", is shown to let rip in the style of the young Garry Kasparov in the following game.

## L.Portisch-I.Radulov

Nice Olympiad 1974



## 20 ♖xg7!

This looks very powerful, but is not the end of the story.

## 20...♖8e5!?

"This is the defence prepared by Radulov. Black removes the rook from the attacked square, defends the hanging bishop, puts White into an unpleasant pin and leaves the knight trapped. The concept looks brilliant! Black's centralization seems impressive but his pieces are not secure, as will soon become apparent."

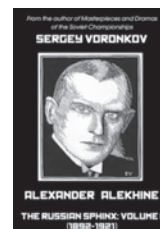
## 21 f4! ♖xf4 22 ♖e8!!

The lovely idea is **22...♖xe8 23 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 24 ♖xd5**, and the game did not last much longer (1-0, 24).

It is good to see the sharper side of Portisch's play highlighted, to help counter the stereotypical view that he was 'just' a positional player.

The deeply-annotated games are followed by test positions, inviting the reader to play like the chess heroes. There are lots of fine photographs too and, of course, biographical material on each of the five players. This book will doubtlessly do well, and it deserves to. It is a timely reminder to the online generation that we all still have a lot to learn from the games of the great chess legends.

Sean Marsh



## Alexander Alekhine – The Russian Sphinx: Volume I (1892-1921)

Sergey Voronkov, 472 pages

Elk and Ruby

RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

Elk and Ruby have definitely come up trumps again with their latest historical chess book. There have been many books written about Alexander Alekhine, who was, of course, without any shadow of doubt, one of



the best players in history. However, this extraordinary book (the first of four volumes) features an incredible wealth of previously unpublished material that anyone interested in Alekhine must surely need to add it to their 'to buy' list of chess books.

The blurb sets the scene very nicely: "This first volume traces his early development through to his departure from Soviet Russia in 1921, while also attempting to untangle the knot of his complex relationships with all his five wives."

Five wives! There is enough intrigue in that aspect alone to pique the reader's interest, but there is more; much more:

"Unpublished or long forgotten memoirs, as well as original newspaper and magazine articles from around the world, are drawn together in forensic research to paint the most extensive picture of Alekhine ever created. Key events in his life are reconsidered, including his release from internment in Germany during World War 1, his escape from execution in Odessa, his service under the Bolsheviks as a detective, his trip to the Urals as a Comintern translator, as well as just how he emigrated."

The author has definitely left no stone unturned to bring the story of Alekhine to life. Memoirs of his classmates (not always showing Alekhine in a good light) are mined for important information and early impressions, and "chess-wise, Voronkov presents over 50 games and fragments with original commentary by Alekhine and his opponents, most of which has not been published in books before. These include eleven completely unknown Alekhine games as well as ten game scores of other players with light commentary by Alekhine from the first Soviet Championship in 1920, found in Alexander Kotov's archive."

Rare photographs abound. Alekhine's appearance changed dramatically over the years, but his attacking flair always remained undiminished, even in correspondence chess.

### A.Vyakhirev-A.Alekhine

1st Prince Shakhovskoy  
Correspondence Tournament 1907



32...♖e8!

"Beginning an elegant mating combination. Black cuts off the white king's escape to the queenside."

33 ♖e3 ♖h1+ 34 ♜g1 ♜h4! 35 ♜h2

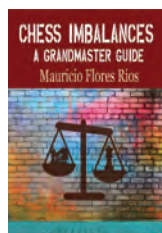
"Now the black queen is trapped. But it sacrifices itself, ordering the pawn to deliver the final blow to the opponent."

35...♜g2+! 36 ♜xg2 fxg2# 0-1

A typical Alekhine attack!

This is a truly extraordinary book and it will very interesting to see what else the author has unearthed for the forthcoming volumes in the series. It doesn't matter how much anyone has already read about Alekhine; this book features so much that will be new to all readers, making it an absolutely essential purchase to everyone interested in the fourth world champion and his extraordinary life.

Sean Marsh



### Chess Imbalances: A Grandmaster Guide

Mauricio Flores Rios, 504 pages, paperback

RRP £25.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £23.39**

When Quality Chess released *Chess Structures: A Grandmaster Guide* by Mauricio Flores Rios in 2015, it quickly became established as a go-to book for coaches and all players serious about improving their own game. This follow-up work has been worth the wait and may well also become a bestseller, with the Chilean GM now turning his attention to unbalanced positions, including a detailed examination of such topics as bishop versus knight and rook against two minor pieces. Those are piece imbalances and unsurprisingly material imbalances also receive a great amount of coverage, ranging from pawn sacrifices right through to learning when it's a good time to even sacrifice the queen for lasting compensation.



### Chess Opening Repertoire: London System

Cyrus Lakdawala, 336 pages, paperback

RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

Cyrus Lakdawala may have become established over the past 15 or so years as a leading chess author, but it's the London System with which he is most commonly associated. Back in 2010 he wrote *Play the London System* and now he returns with a new, up-to-date repertoire with his favourite opening for Popular Chess. A 1 d4 and 2 ♖f4 move order is again advocated, with 1...d5 2 ♖f4 ♜f6 3 e3 c5 countered with the flexible 4 c3 ♜c6 5 ♜bd2 and all Black's other major

defences covered. This might best be described as a steady repertoire for White, one authored by one of the London's leading experts.



### Chess Opening Repertoire: Benoni Mayhem

Andrew Martin, 320 pages, paperback

RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

A world away from the London is 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6 4 ♜c3 exd5 5 cxd5 d6 followed by 6...g6, the dynamic, exciting, if risky Modern Benoni. That receives the most coverage in this new work on the Benoni from Popular Chess and Andrew Martin. The highly experienced English IM and author also looks at the Old Benoni (1 d4 c5 2 d5 e5), the Vulture (1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 ♜e4!?), the Clarendon Court (1 d4 c5 2 d5 f5), and the Snake Benoni (1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6 4 ♜c3 exd5 5 cxd5 ♜d6), with the needs of the club player kept firmly in mind by Martin throughout.

Note that both the Lakdawala and Martin new releases from Popular Chess are available too in hardback format should you prefer, retailing at £24.99 or £22.49 for Subscribers, while from Quality Chess a hardcover version of *Chess Imbalances* is also available: £29.99 or £26.99 for Subscribers.



### King's Indian Attack

Svitlana Demchenko, PC/MAC booklet or download; running time: 6 hours, 37 minutes

RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

Canadian WIM Demchenko returns to the ChessBase studio to advocate the easy-to-learn and hardly unaggressive King's Indian Attack. After considering the most important set-ups to know, Demchenko's detailed coverage begins with 1 ♜f3, although near the end she does also consider the KIA after a 1 e4 move order. Along the way, good use is made of several model games, while users may also enjoy the typical tactics test and the practice repertoire positions.



### Mastering Chess Exchanges

Jacob Aagaard & Renier Castellanos,  
368 pages, paperback

RRP £24.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.49**

Knowing when to carry out, seek or avoid an exchange is a topic which players struggle with, right from fairly low levels up to grandmasters. Thankfully help is now at hand from Quality Chess and two leading chess trainers. The grandmaster authors will help you to better evaluate the difference between two pieces, as well as be guided by the pawn structure when it comes to looking at an exchange. They also devote plenty of space to explaining how to judge positional and dynamic factors, as well as the pivotal role played by exchanges in the endgame, with the whole book rounded off by 365 test positions, ranging from the relatively straightforward to the mind-bogglingly difficult. Note that a hardback version is also available, retailing at £29.50 or £26.55 for Subscribers.



### Mastering Chess Strategy Vol.3

Robert Ris, PC/MAC booklet or download;  
running time: 5 hours, 27 minutes

RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

Dutch IM Robert Ris has become a popular presenter for ChessBase, known for the clarity of his material and explanation. Here his focus is on showing how to “exploit your opponent’s weaknesses”. That means identifying weak spots in the opponent’s camp, then deciding which should be targeted. With the material built around a fair number of interactive exercises, Ris helpfully also explains when calculation is required even in a positional setting, and when it’s best to remain flexible.



### Never Mind The Grandmasters

Carl Portman, 244 pages, paperback  
RRP £14.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £13.49**

Our popular columnist has produced a collection of his favourite and most instructive columns in collaboration with Steel City Press. If you’re a fan of Carl’s work and fairly new to the magazine, you may especially enjoy this new book. Even long-term subscribers may well enjoy rereading the best of Carl, with several columns updated and even a little new material included, as well as a foreword from Matthew Sadler no less.

### Opening Encyclopaedia 2025

ChessBase PC/MAC booklet or download  
RRP £149.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £134.95**

The latest version of ChessBase’s famous databases appeared towards the end of last year and now it’s the turn of the annual release of the *Opening Encyclopaedia*. It now contains almost 8,000 opening surveys, as well as more than 1,500 special opening databases, and over 100 videos, including Dorian Rogozenco’s coverage of all the latest trends. For those who really like their theory, the *Opening Encyclopaedia* remains a very handy tool. If you already have *Opening Encyclopaedia 2024*, it’s possible to upgrade for £74.95 (or £67.45 for Subscribers), by supplying Chess & Bridge with your existing serial key.



### Rebel Queen

Susan Polgar, 352 pages, hardback

RRP £25.00 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.50**

Subtitled ‘The Cold War, Misogyny, and the Making of a Grandmaster’, this is the autobiography of one of the game’s most famous female players, Susan Polgar, the eldest of the trio of extremely talented sisters. While not everyone will agree that Polgar has met adversity at every turn, there can be little doubt that she has had to regularly overcome misogyny, while forging successful careers, first at the chess board in her native Hungary and then as a leading chess coach and administrator in the USA. This enlightening read from mainstream publisher Hachette certainly packs a punch.



### Smooth Chess Improvement

Daniel Gormally, 304 pages, hardback

RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

The popular English Grandmaster has again teamed up with Informant Publishing for his latest book, which certainly has an intriguing title. As usual for Gormally, this book is quite wide-ranging, if ever entertaining and often quite instructive or even thought-provoking. He begins by examining what he’s learnt from his own recent games and tournaments, reveals the often unexpected methods by which he’s aimed to remain sharp and improve, and then presents two quizzes: one designed to reveal what sort of chess personality you are and an “impossible” one, which will definitely fully keep the mind busy for a while.



### The Black Sniper

Charlie Storey, PC/MAC booklet or  
download; running time: 9 hours

RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

Geordie FM Charlie Storey is another to have made a return visit to Hamburg, in his case to update his 2017 coverage on his favourite opening, 1...g6, 2...g7 and 3...c5, the Black Sniper, which he considers to be “A hypermodern weapon for attackers”. This detailed recording is entirely new and Storey’s love of Black’s set-up and dynamic chances is once again impossible to miss. 1 e4 g6 2 d4 g7 and then 3 f3 c5 4 dxc5 and 3 c3 c5 4 dxc5 – dubbed respectively the Arsenal variation and the Manchester United variation by football-mad Storey – both ask definite questions of Black, ones which are not shirked on this lively presentation.

### The Carlsbad Pawn Structure Revisited

Christian Bauer, 204 pages, hardback

RRP £32.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £29.65**

This famous pawn structure most commonly arises via 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 f3 c3 f6 4 cxd5 exd5, but can occur in plenty of other settings, including lines of the Nimzo-Indian and, in reverse, the Exchange Caro-Kann. Understanding the key concepts for both sides will help not only all those who play the structure, with either colour, but also further one’s chess education, especially with French Grandmaster Christian Bauer as a guide. He focusses his attention on the two main plans for White in the Exchange QGD, central play and the fabled minority attack, while providing good coverage of the key theoretical variations along the way.



### The Magic and Beauty of Quiet Chess Moves

Bogoslaw Boder & Jacek Bielczyk,  
304 pages, hardback

RRP £35.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £33.35**

The Polish authors are determined to show even the most materialistic and unaesthetic player that chess really can possess a large amount of beauty, with their emphasis especially on quiet moves. These can radically change a position and might be fairly basic, such as improving a badly placed piece, or radical, subtle and even amazing, when in the middle of a tactical sequence or to place the opponent in zugzwang. This Thinkers



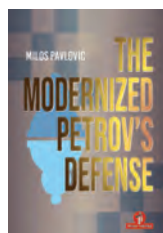
Publishing production is a hard book not to enjoy perusing, whether or not you attempt to solve the 396 exercises.



**The Modernized Bird's Opening**  
Raven Sturt, 584 pages, hardback  
RRP £37.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £34.15**

American GM Raven Sturt likes to surprise some of his opponents with 1 f4 and here sets out a detailed repertoire with it, albeit one aimed squarely at those in the 1200–2000 rating range. Sturt meets the critical 1...d5 with 2 ♖f3 ♖f6 3 e3, intending a queenside fianchetto, as well as a timely ♗b5(+). Good coverage is also given to Black's other set-ups, especially Sicilian style

ones with a pawn on c5, while the whole work is rounded off with a number of instructive games.



**The Modernized Petrov's Defense**  
Milos Pavlovic, 208 pages, hardback  
£32.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £29.65**

This is another release in Thinkers Publishing's 'Modernized' series, here with the highly experienced and leading theoretician Milos Pavlovic's focus on the rock-solid 1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖f6, the Petroff Defence or Petrov's Defence to use a modern spelling. Pavlovic maps out a complete repertoire for Black, taking in both the established main lines as well as recent trends after 3 ♖xe5

d6, with plenty of coverage also given to 3 d4 ♖xe4 and there's even a bonus chapter on the infamous Damiano variation, 3 ♖xe5 ♖xe4!?. Coverage tends to be fairly theoretical in appearance, although the key trends and ideas for each side do receive some textual explanation.

As can clearly be seen, Thinkers Publishing have certainly had a very busy start to the year and they're also responsible for two further new releases. Melvin Chen's *The Thinker's Game* (220 pages, hardback) is subtitled 'Decoding the Chess Universe' and written for the keen beginner, aiming to improve both their grasp and knowledge of the game. There's also *The Modernized Vienna of the Queen's Gambit Declined* by Fernando Peralta (232 pages, hardback), in which the Argentinean Grandmaster maps out a detailed repertoire for Black with 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♖f3 ♖f6 4 ♖c3 dxc4 5 e4 and then not 5...c5, but 5...b5!?. Both these books also retail at £32.95 and so are available for Subscribers at £29.65.



# Forthcoming Events

**May 2–4 Cornwall Spring Congress, Falmouth**  
[cornwallchess.org.uk/congress/spring/spring-2025.shtml](http://cornwallchess.org.uk/congress/spring/spring-2025.shtml)

**May 3–5 4NCL, Daventry & Coventry**  
[4ncl.co.uk](http://4ncl.co.uk)

**May 3 Aberystwyth Rapidplay**  
[aberystwythchess.com/general-information](http://aberystwythchess.com/general-information)

**May 4–5 Livingston Allegro**  
[congress.org.uk/congress/594/home](http://congress.org.uk/congress/594/home)

**May 4 Ealing Rapidplay**  
[londonfidecongress.com/ealing-rapidplay](http://londonfidecongress.com/ealing-rapidplay)

**May 9–11 Durham Congress, Darlington**  
[durhamchesscongress.co.uk](http://durhamchesscongress.co.uk)

**May 10–11 Greater London Congress, Bromley**  
[congress.org.uk/congress/513/home](http://congress.org.uk/congress/513/home)

**May 10–11 Nottingham Congress**  
[congress.org.uk/congress/573/home](http://congress.org.uk/congress/573/home)

**May 10 Welsh Rapid Championship, Bridgend**  
[welshchessunion.uk/WCU Rapid Play 2025/index.html](http://welshchessunion.uk/WCU Rapid Play 2025/index.html)

**May 11 Greenwich Rapid**  
[gpchess.com](http://gpchess.com)

**May 16–18 Frome Congress**  
[congress.org.uk/congress/549/home](http://congress.org.uk/congress/549/home)

**May 17–18 East Midlands Congress, Northampton**  
[chesseventsuk.co.uk](http://chesseventsuk.co.uk)

**May 17–18 Leamington Open**  
[warwickshirechess.org/2025-leamington-open/](http://warwickshirechess.org/2025-leamington-open/)

**May 17–18 Southall Congress**  
[londonfidecongress.com/southall-congress](http://londonfidecongress.com/southall-congress)

**May 17 Oxford Rapidplay, Kennington**  
[congress.org.uk/congress/511/home](http://congress.org.uk/congress/511/home)

**May 23–26 Perth Congress**  
[congress.org.uk/congress/502/home](http://congress.org.uk/congress/502/home)

**May 24–26 Cotswold Congress, Gloucester**  
[cornwallchess.org.uk/congress/cotswold/cotswold-details.shtml](http://cornwallchess.org.uk/congress/cotswold/cotswold-details.shtml)

**May 24–25 City of Belfast Classic**  
[ulsterchess.org/events](http://ulsterchess.org/events)

**May 24 Cheam Rapidplay**  
[congress.org.uk/congress/527/home](http://congress.org.uk/congress/527/home)

**May 24 Medway Rapidplay**  
[invictachess.co.uk/medway.html](http://invictachess.co.uk/medway.html)

**May 24 Sheffield Rapidplay**  
[sheffieldchessinternational.uk/4th-chess-centre-rapid/](http://sheffieldchessinternational.uk/4th-chess-centre-rapid/)

**May 25–26 Coulsdon Late Spring Congress**  
[ccfworld.com/Chess/Adult Competitions/Longplays\\_info.htm](http://ccfworld.com/Chess/Adult Competitions/Longplays_info.htm)

**May 25 Warrington Rapidplay**  
[congress.org.uk/congress/568/home](http://congress.org.uk/congress/568/home)

**May 26–31 Cambridge International Open**  
[englishchess.org.uk/3rd-cambridge-international-open/](http://englishchess.org.uk/3rd-cambridge-international-open/)

**May 30 – June 1 London League Weekender**  
[londonchess.com](http://londonchess.com)

*And for the Online Connoisseur:*

**May 5–17 Superbet Chess Classic Romania, Bucharest**  
[grandchesstour.org](http://grandchesstour.org); Abdusattorov, Aronian, Caruana, Deac, Duda, Firouzja, Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa, So & Vachier-Lagrave.

**May 25 – June 6 Norway Chess, Stavanger**  
[norwaychess.no/en/](http://norwaychess.no/en/); Carlsen, Caruana, Erigaisi, Gukesh, Nakamura & Wei Yi.

*Congress organisers – Don't forget to email [editor@chess.co.uk](mailto:editor@chess.co.uk) to ensure your event is listed, or if you really want to guarantee a good entry, contact [tao@chess.co.uk](mailto:tao@chess.co.uk) to discuss having it advertised.*

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