

Chess



OLYMPIAD SPECIAL

India establishes itself as the new superpower of world chess

ISSN 0964-6221



Talent at the Board – Ben Graff discusses the elusive nature of chess talent

Trailblazing Vera – Julian Way on the life and legacy of Vera Menchik

Damaged Alekhine – Roger Williamson on Alekhine's actions in World War II

Chess

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The Global Chess League



There were several fine performances when the chess elite rolled up in London

As we'll see later in these pages where he reports, Jonny Pein was closely involved with the day-to-day running of the Global Chess League. The big-buck event certainly delighted chess fans, largely young but also some fairly old, at Friends House on Euston Road last month.

The final between Triveni Continental Kings and PGB Alaskan Knights was certainly gripping. Playing with the white pieces first, the Kings won 9-7, Alireza Firouzja outplaying Anish Giri and Alexandra Kosteniuk overcoming Tan Zhongyi to outweigh Nodirbek Abdusattorov's successful grind as Black over Wei Yi. A bloodthirsty return saw the Kings win 14-7. Giri received a fair dollop of good fortune as he got his revenge on top board and Shakhriyar Mamedyarov smoothly outplayed Teimour Radjabov, but Kosteniuk was to eventually win again, with Wei Yi and Valentina Gunina, who defeated Alina Kashlinskaya, also bringing home four points.

A.Giri-A.Firouzja PGB Alaskan Knights vs Triveni Continental Kings



Black would be winning after 52...♖g5 53 ♖b4+ ♘e8 54 ♖e4+ ♖e7, but frantically blitzing, Firouzja was to blunder into a perpetual...
52...♖cg6? 53 ♖d8+ ♘f7 54 ♖d7+ ♘f6 55 ♖d6+ ♘f7 56 ♖d7+ ♘f6
 ...and then picked the wrong square for his king after a different check from Giri:
57 ♗h4+! ♘e5??



57...♗g5 was necessary when one path to a repetition would have been 58 ♗h6+ ♗7g6 59 ♗h5 ♖f4+ 60 ♘g1 ♖c1+.

58 ♗h5+ 1-0

Ouch. If 58...♗g5 then 59 ♖xg7+ wins the house.

The Kings thereby managed to retain their Global Chess League title, even though the Knights had dominated the group stage, winning eight of their ten matches to finish on 24/30, some six points ahead of the Kings and Alpine SG Pipers, for whom, in classical scoring, Magnus Carlsen made '+1' on top board, including a painful loss on time with queen and bishop to Firouzja's lone knight. Carlsen's team-mates Richard Rapport and Hou Yifan amassed 6½/10, which was half a point less than the '+4' scored by three of the Alaskan Knights, Abdusattorov, Tan and Kashlinskaya.

As well as her lengthy battles with Tan, former women's world champion Kosteniuk also reached the following instructive endgame.

A.Kosteniuk-R.Vaishali Triveni Continental Kings vs Ganges Grandmasters



Here the recent Olympiad gold medallist was too be too materialistic and ambitious.

59...d3?

To draw, Black must activate the rook, as with 59...♖b2! 60 ♗xd4 when the simplest defence is 60...♖b7 61 ♗d6 ♘h7. After 62 ♘e6! (62 ♘f6 ♗g7 is another important point, and if 63 ♗d4 ♗a7) 62...♘g7! 63 ♗d7+ ♗xd7 64 ♘xd7 Black loses after 64...♘f6?? 65 ♘e8! ♘g5 66 ♘f7 ♘xg4 67 ♘g6, but draws with 64...♘f7! 65 ♘d8 ♘f8!.

60 ♘g6 ♘f8 61 ♘xh6 ♗g2 62 g5!

As is so often the case, the connected passed pawns now outclass the more advanced but lone pawn.

62...d2 63 g6 ♘e8 64 ♗d3 ♘e7 65 ♘g7 ♘e6 66 h6 ♘e5 67 h7 ♘e4



68 ♗xd2! 1-0





60 Seconds with... Alan McGowan



Geoff Chandler writes: Recently chess historian Alan McGowan paid a fleeting visit to Scotland and the Edinburgh Chess Club. I asked Alan if I could do an interview based on the '60 seconds with...' format. He kindly agreed.

Hi Alan, so where and when did it all begin?
"Born: 14th August 1954, Glasgow."

Let's get this bit quickly out of the way so we can get on to the chess! Your favourite film, book and musical taste?

"So many to choose from, but... Films: *Don't Look Now*, *The Lives of Others*, *They Might Be Giants*; Books: *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *Riotous Assembly*; Music: Average White Band, The Blue Nile, Cocteau Twins, Bruce Cockburn and Django Reinhardt."

How did you become interested in chess?

"A pal taught me the game in primary school; I quickly forgot about it, but re-learned it in first year at Queen's Park Secondary. Soon after, I joined Cathcart Chess Club. The local library offered a great selection of chess books and I acquired my own collection, including volumes about Alekhine, Capablanca, Nimzowitsch, Petrosian and Tal. And general works by Chernev and Reinfeld threw up interesting names and games."

Any favourite players?

"Aside from the world champions, I was particularly taken by the games of Spielmann, Marshall, Keres, Tartakower and Richter. However, I was easily drawn to games by other interesting players, such as Rossolimo, Canal and Soultanbeieff."

And any memorable early tournaments?

"My first tournament was at Easter 1968. I won my first four games and imagined a bright future, but lost the last four which brought me back to earth. However, winning the Under-16 event at the 1969 Glasgow Congress was encouraging, as was the atmosphere at Cathcart Chess Club."

How did your chess abilities progress?

"In a decidedly average way; I was all over the board, so to speak. I was disinclined to study reams of analysis on modern openings, choosing instead to follow less-played lines, emphasising how I was already stuck in the past: the Vienna Game, because of Spielmann's use of it, an example being 1 e4 e5 2 d3 f6 3 f4 d5 4 fxe5 ex4 5 f3; or after coming across a 1908 Marshall-Spielmann game, 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 d3 c5 4 cxd5 exd5 5 e4. I also had some success as Black with an old line revived by Tartakower: 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 d3 f6 4 g5 e7 5 e5 de4, mainly because it caused confusion in the fast time controls of the Glasgow League."

"To avoid mainline Sicilians as White and having played over and been impressed with Pietzsch-O'Kelly, Madrid 1960, I started using 2 d3 and 3 f4 against the Sicilian. I also dug out a line that Fischer – yes, Fischer – had used as Black against Evans at Buenos Aires 1960 with 1 e4 e5 2 f3 d6 3 b5 d5 4 0-0 d7 5 c3 b6 6 d4 exd4 7 cxd4 d5 that helped win a significant game."

W.Pietzsch-A.O'Kelly de Galway
Madrid Zonal 1960
Sicilian Grand-Prix Attack

1 e4 c5 2 d3 d6 3 f4 g6 4 f3 g7 5 b5 d6 6 0-0 d7 7 ex6 ex6 8 d3 f6 9 e1 b6 10 h1 c7 11 d2 e6 12 h4 d5 13 f5 d4 14 fxe6 fxe6 15 g5 e7 16 e5 h6



17 xe6! dxc3 18 xg7+ xg7 19 exf6 xg2+ 20 g1 f7 21 fe1+ d8 22 xc3 c6 23 e7 d5 24 g3 c8 25 ae1 h5 26 e6 1-0

"I was never more than a reliable club player, though there were the occasional reasonable results in weekend events as my opening choices matured."

Your favourite game by any player, your best move, a move you are proud of playing, and the blunder that sometimes keeps you awake at night?

"Too many favourites, but have a look at Foltys-Michel, Buenos Aires Olympiad 1939. Alekhine said about it: 'In my opinion this game, on account of the purity of style, is one of the finest productions of the 1939 tournament.' (*107 Chess Great Battles*, Dover Press, 1980.)"

J.Foltys-P.Michel

Buenos Aires Olympiad 1939
Tarrasch Defence

1 f3 d5 2 g3 c5 3 g2 d6 4 d4 e6 5 0-0 f6 6 c4 e7 7 dxc5 xc5 8 cxd5 exd5 9 bd2 0-0 10 b3 b6 11 bd4 e8 12 e3 g4 13 xc6 bxc6 14 h3 h5 15 b3 e4 16 b2 d6 17 g4 g6 18 c1 c7 19 e1 f6 20 f1 d8 21 d4 c5 22 b5 a6 23 e2 b6 24 a4



24...d4! 25 ed1 d3! 26 f3 d2 27 a1 a5 28 g1 e6 29 ab1 g5 30 c6 xb1 0-1

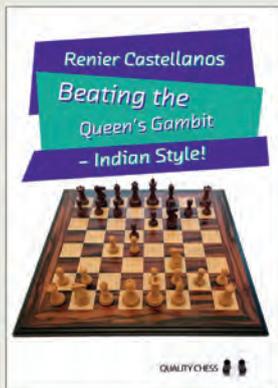
"My best move was likely devoting more time to chess history than chess playing. No blunders kept me awake at night; they were all instantly forgettable."

Favourite chess books?

"*Chess Secrets*, by Edward Lasker, *Chess*



NEW FROM QUALITY CHESS

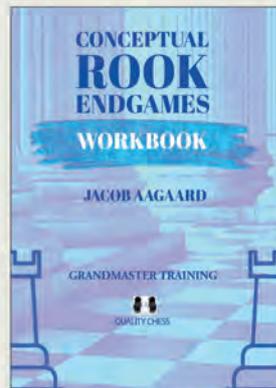


This book advocates the 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 d5 move order for Black – with 3.Nc3 Bb4 having been covered in the sister volume *Playing the Nimzo-Indian*. By waiting for the knight to appear on f3 before transposing to a Queen's Gambit, Black reduces White's options.

Spanish GM **Renier Castellanos** completes his cutting-edge repertoire for Black against 1.d4, with the Vienna Variation (4.Nc3 dxc4) and Catalan (4.g3 dxc4) the biggest topics. This book also provides thorough guidance against all of White's significant alternatives on moves 2-4.

With thoughtful explanations backed up by precise analysis, *Beating the Queen's Gambit – Indian Style!* provides everything you need to handle 1.d4 Nf6 variations where White avoids the Nimzo-Indian Defence.

Renier Castellanos is a newly crowned grandmaster, who earned his final GM norm shortly after completing work on this book. He is also an experienced chess trainer.

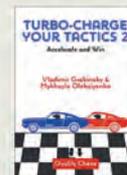
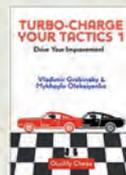


Rook endgames are the most frequently occurring endgames, as well as one of the most exciting and challenging areas of chess. In 2023, Quality Chess published *Theoretical Rook Endgames* by GM **Sam Shankland** and its sister volume *Conceptual Rook Endgames* by GM **Jacob Aagaard** – a dazzling dyad of domination in endgame literature. This new book tops off the

triumphant trio by presenting 208 instructive exercises of varying difficulty, testing and reinforcing the reader's skill and understanding. *Conceptual Rook Endgames Workbook* will skyrocket your endgame abilities, whether used as a standalone workbook or as the last step in the Aagaard-Shankland Rook Endgames trilogy.

Grandmaster **Jacob Aagaard** won the British Championship in 2007, but is mostly known for his multi-award-winning books and his work with students who have won club, state, national, continental and world championships, as well as Olympiad individual golds and team golds, the World Cup and Candidates tournament.

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Global Drama

Jonny Pein reports from the star-studded Global Chess League on Euston Road



The Global Chess League brought together many of the world's best players for 10 days last month in Central London for a spectacle of guillotine time control rapid chess – 20 minutes per player without increment. The interesting dynamic of a black win being worth four points, while a white win only earned three, made for some cagey early round encounters and team strategies, as well as encouraging some rather risky opening play from both sides.

My role at the event was that of 'Spotter'. Simply put, I had to keep an eye on all the games, instructing the commentators and production team (a 30 man film crew with a combined Elo of about 400 and a knowledge of chess that extended only as far as "The horse moves in a weird shape, doesn't it mate?") where the action was and where to point the cameras.

There were many ups and downs with the double-round final eventually being won by the Triveni Continental Kings, spearheaded by Firouzja who gained an impressive 14 rapid rating points. Alireza scored 7½/12 and in the process overtook fellow 2700+ Frenchman Maxime Vachier-Lagrave to become the new French number one across all three formats of the game.

Here I have selected some moments from the tournament that had the commentators screaming into their microphones (and directly into my headset) slightly louder than usual...

A.Giri-M.Carlsen

PBG Alaskan Knights
vs Alpine SG Pipers
Catalan Opening

**1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 g3 ♙e7
5 ♙g2 0-0 6 0-0 c6 7 ♖c2 b6 8 ♙f4**

The first deviation from this very old main line, and it would appear to be a reasonable try to generate a decent and potentially unknown position, away from the opponent's

opening book and *Stockfish*-generated preparation. I have seen this move in several norm tournaments across Eastern Europe with the continuation 8...♗h5 9 ♙c1 ♘f6, followed by a raised eyebrow and a swift exit to the hotel bar. This was not what Carlsen had in mind.

8...♙a6 9 cxd5

9 ♗bd2 ♗bd7 10 ♖fe1 ♘h5 11 ♙e5 scores very well for White in a small sample of games, though 11...♗c8 looks to be fine for Black.

9...♗xd5

9...cxd5 is also perfectly playable, but perhaps Carlsen was worried about a very dull game after 10 ♗c1 ♗bd7 11 ♘c3 ♘h5! (if 11...b5!? 12 a4! b4 13 ♗b5 ♖b6 14 ♖c6 ♗ac8 15 ♙c7; with great control of the c-file, this feels like everything White had hoped for when playing ♙f4) 12 ♖a4 ♘xf4 13 ♖xa6 ♘xg2 14 ♙xg2 ♖c8.

10 ♗c3

Giri is following all the top engine moves to this point.

**10...♗xf4 11 gxf4 ♗d7 12 ♖fd1 ♗c8
13 ♗ac1 ♖c7 14 e3**



Catalan positions with the doubled f-pawns are becoming more popular and can cause practical problems for black players with ♗h1 and ♗g1 ideas coming into play, and Black's light-squared bishop can be left slightly ineffective.

14...♖b8

A wise decision to remove the queen from any c-file pressure and prepare for a ...c5 break. Giri had reached a similar position in an online tournament and now continued in the same fashion.

15 a3 ♙b7 16 b4 ♖fd8 17 ♖b3 c5 18 bxc5

18 d5 look natural and might yield an edge after 18...cxb4 19 axb4 exd5 20 ♗xd5 ♙xd5 (and not 20...♙f8? 21 ♗g5 when f7 cannot be held) 21 ♖xd5.

18...bxc5 19 ♗b1

19 d5!? c4 20 ♖c2 ♖a8 21 dxe6 fxe6 22 ♙h3! ♙xf3 23 ♙xe6+ ♗h8 24 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 25 ♙xd7 was unclear.

19...♙xf3 20 ♙xf3 cxd4 21 ♗xd4??

Instead, if 21 exd4 ♖xf4, but 21 ♖xb8 ♗xb8 22 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 23 exd4 ♗d7 24 ♗b7! ♗xc3 25 ♗xd7 ♗xa3 26 ♙g2 should save the game.



Now it's Black to play and win! A quick move follows with a quick end to the game, which was the fastest decisive game of the tournament, taking less than eight minutes for Black to emerge victorious. A pupil of mine, who was running late to the event, was a lucky beneficiary of Carlsen's tactical prowess as he managed to intercept the Norwegian on the street on his way back to the hotel shuttle bus and get his board signed.

21...♗xc3!

A simple tactic wins a piece (if 22 ♖xc3 ♖xb1+), and a valuable four points, though the PBG Alaskan Knights still went on to win this match thanks to wins from Tan Zhongyi and Nodirbek Abdusattorov.

22 ♖xb8 ♗xb8 0-1

V.Murzin-J.Bjerre
Ganges Grandmasters
vs American Gambits
Jobava-Prié Attack

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♗c3 d5 3 ♙f4

The ♗c3 London system, commonly referred to as the Jobava London system, was as popular as any opening in the Global Chess League. It was not only popular, but extremely effective as shown by this game.

3...c5 4 e4

This looks a little bit like an Albin Counter-

Gambit or a Blackmar-Diemer Gambit. One commentator at the event I got to know very well was James Canty III, a prolific content and course creator, as well as a hyper bullet and aggressive chess aficionado. He has created courses on this opening variation and insists it is called the 'Jar Jar Binks London'. I am still unsure as to why this is the case, but perhaps it is due to the seemingly amateurish white play, behind which lies some masterful plans and complexity...

4...dxe4

4...dxe4 is perhaps the best continuation for Black with the following Hans Niemann game being the most well known in the variation: 5 dxe4 dxe4 6 dxc5 ♖a5+ 7 c3 ♜xc5 8 ♖a4+ ♗c6 9 ♖xe4 g6 10 ♗f3 ♗g7 11 ♗e2?? (11 ♗d1 is totally fine for both sides) 11...♗xc3+! 12 ♗d2 ♗f5 0-1, Niemann-Vokhidov, World Rapid Championship, Almaty 2022.

5 dxc5 ♜xd1+?

5...♗bd7 6 b4 e5 7 ♗g5 ♗e7 looks OK.

6 ♗xd1

Suddenly White has three developed pieces to Black's one.

6...♗g4 7 f3 exf3 8 ♗xf3 ♗xf3?! 9 gxf3 a6



So often in games we see that the move we want to play, we actually can, as here.

10 ♗b5! axb5 11 ♗xb8! e5

11...♗xb8 12 ♗xb5+ ♗d7 13 ♗xd7 wins with a windmill-style tactic following.

12 ♗xb5+ ♗e7 13 ♗xe5

Resigning was an option, as if 13...♗xa2 14 ♗d6+ ♗e6 15 ♗c4+, but not in a team match.

13...♗e6 14 ♗d4 ♗f5 15 a3 ♗d8 16 c3 ♗e7 17 0-0 ♗h5 18 ♗d3+ ♗g5 19 ♗e4 ♗h6 20 ♗xb7 ♗f4 21 ♗h1 ♗e6 22 ♗e3+ g5 23 c6 ♗d6 24 a4 ♗c7 25 b4 ♗xd1 26 ♗xd1 ♗e8 27 a5 ♗f4 28 ♗b6 ♗xb6 29 axb6 ♗h3 30 ♗f1 1-0

Perhaps the craziest moment of the whole event was the final moves of the match-up between Firouzja and Nakamura in round 7. Alireza had been on a five-game unbeaten run and had leapfrogged Nakamura in the world rapid rankings. He was seemingly playing the position on out of hope, rather than expectation to achieve anything, until he created a quite instructive 'White to play and lose' puzzle for all chess coaches. The mistake had no impact on the match outcome, but



Two top board players were definitely worthy of being labelled as 'Icons', as we watch Magnus Carlsen holding his predecessor as world champion, Vishy Anand, to a draw with the black pieces. Carlsen would win the return game as White to net the Alpine Pipers three points.



Triveni Continental Kings won the Global Chess League for a second year in a row! Alireza Firouzja holds the trophy next to a delighted looking Alexandra Kosteniuk and Teimour Radjabov.

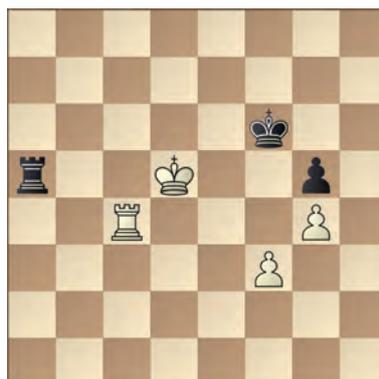
definitely brought the young superstar back to planet Earth.

68 ♗c5?? ♗xc5+

A signature raised eyebrow double-take from Nakamura and a bemused shake of the head from Firouzja in light of the Black's king. **69 ♗xc5 ♗e5 70 ♗c4 ♗f4 71 ♗d3 ♗xf3 72 ♗d2 ♗xg4 73 ♗e2 ♗h3 0-1**

The black king can reach one of the squares two ranks in front of the passed pawn and the game is won.

A.Firouzja-H.Nakamura
Triveni Continental Kings vs American Gambits



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Overseas News

AZERBAIJAN – Sadly the Vugar Gashimov Memorial is no longer the classical, world-class tournament it once was, although it is still pretty strong. The 10th Gashimov Memorial was a rapid and blitz event in Shusha (September 26–28). Overlapping with the Julius Baer online event (see below) cannot have been ideal for Ian Nepomniachtchi, but he still won the rapid with 5/7, finishing half a point ahead of Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, with Vladislav Artemiev and Nodirbek Abdusattorov a further half-point back. Nepomniachtchi then came second with 9/14 in the blitz, a point behind Abdusattorov. That left the Muscovite top overall with 19/28, a point ahead of Abdusattorov in what was a fairly hard-fought event, with the exception of Richard Rapport, who presumably hadn't fully recovered from the Olympiad in his home country and unusually straggled in last on just 9/28.

FRANCE – As mentioned in last month's Editorial, Magnus Carlsen crushed Alireza Firouzja 23½–7½ to win his fourth Chess.com Speed Chess Championship in Paris (September 6–8). The final was streamed on YouTube, attracting an impressive 1.2 million views, while in the third-place play-off Hikaru Nakamura largely outclassed Hans Niemann as he ran out a 21–9 winner.



Alireza Firouzja looks slightly stunned as Magnus Carlsen celebrates a crushing win.

HUNGARY – Colombian GM Jose Cardoso won with 7/9 the Kluger Memorial in Budapest, the GM norm top section at the latest Vezerkepzo event (August 28 – September 5). However, it was the IM norm section on which British interest was focussed. Ukrainian GM Valeriy Neverov finished first with an unbeaten 7/10, which included a win over Ethan Pang. The 9-year-old Londoner had begun extremely well, racing to 4/5, which included largely one-sided wins over Slovakian GM Milan Pacher, as well as the Hungarian grandmasters Attila Czebe and

Zoltan Varga. Impressive stuff, although, perhaps unsurprisingly, Pang then tired, losing two of his next three games before having to forfeit his last two.

E.Pang–A.Czebe Budapest 2024



36 d5! ♖xd5?

Black is put to the sword after this, although even 36...f5 37 dxe6 fxe4 38 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 39 ♖xe4 ♗e7 40 h3 should be lost in the long run.

37 ♗xf6! ♖xf6 38 ♗xd5 ♖xf1+ 39 ♗xf1!

Remaining alert to avoid 39 ♖xf1?? ♗d4+. 39...♗f8+ 40 ♗f3 1-0

ISRAEL – Against the backdrop of war, the Jerusalem Masters and Open were just two-day rapid events (September 24–25),

with the former attracting a number of world-class players: Daniil Dubov, Pavel Eljanov, Vasyil Ivanchuk, Peter Svidler and Jordan van Foreest. Despite losing to Dubov in the final round, Svidler demonstrated his lasting class as he took clear first with 6½/9 in the Masters, which left him a point clear of Dubov, van Foreest and Israeli GM Avital Boruchovsky, who were followed home by the Ukrainians, Ivanchuk and Eljanov.

P.Svidler–P.Eljanov Jerusalem (rapid) 2024



White has been outplayed and is losing the exchange. Svidler decided it was high time to go for activity and into swindle mode.

27 d5!? ♗xc1

The calm 27...exd5! 28 e6 ♗d6 29 e7 ♖fe8 was even stronger, and if 30 g3 ♗xa1



The day after the rapid in Jerusalem, 50 leading Israeli players, including GMs Boruchovsky, Postny and Rodshtein, gave a joint simul at Safran Square, each taking on 20 opponents, with the 1,000(!) boards arranged in the shape of the yellow ribbon that represents the Israeli hostages in Gaza.

31 ♖g5 ♜f6!.

28 ♜xc1 exd5 29 e6 ♜d6 30 e7 ♜fe8 31 g3!

Essential. White must free his king's knight for action.

31...♙b6 32 ♜d3 ♜ac8??



Gravely underestimating the danger. The prophylactic 32...g6! 33 ♖g5 (or 33 ♖xb4 ♜xe7 34 ♖xd5 ♜f7) 33...♙g7 would have been prudent, and clearly better for Black, including with 34 ♖d4 ♜e5 35 ♖de6+ ♙g8 36 ♜c6! ♙xf2+!? 37 ♙xf2 ♜xe7 followed by relying on the queenside passed pawns.

33 ♖g5! g6 34 ♜f3

A vicious blow. All of a sudden there's no good way to cover f7.

34...♜f8 35 exf8♙+ ♜xf8 36 ♜xd5+!

Without this further blow, White wouldn't be winning, but now he will reach an endgame a piece up.

36...♜xd5 37 ♖e7+ ♙h8 38 ♖xd5 ♙xf2+ 39 ♙g2 ♙d4 40 ♖e6 ♜f2+ 41 ♙h3 ♙c3 42 ♖xc3 bxc3 43 ♜xc3 1-0

In the 300-strong Open, 18-year-old Yahli Sokolovsky tied for first on 8/9 with his 50-year-old compatriot and fellow GM Dan Zoler, who back at Duisburg in 1992 won bronze in the world under-18 championship, at the same time as which a certain Luke McShane was making hay in the under-10s – see page 35. Talking of Luke, he was in action as a new Bundesliga season got under way in Germany, having two hard-fought draws for Werder Bremen at the start of October.

ITALY – IM Yang-Fan Zhou continued his comeback by competing in the Trieste Open (August 31 – September 6), scoring 50%. Slovenian GM Marin Bosicic defeated Zhou in a topsy-turvy encounter en route to top-scoring with 7/9, finishing half a point clear of a chasing pack that included Sergei Tiviakov, while back on '+2' was Sohum Lohia.

SLOVAKIA – Along with Shreyas Royal's GM title, the FIDE Congress in Budapest confirmed Aaravamudhan Balaji's IM title and whilst he was in action at the Slovakia Open in Bratislava (September 14-22). Slovak GM Jergus Pechac edged out Israeli FM Yuval Yaniv on tiebreak after they had both finished on 7½/9, while Balaji and fellow IM Matthew Wadsworth finished back on 6/9, a point in front of Simon Roe and Ian Thompson, with

Connor Clarke a further half-point back.

SWITZERLAND – The Budapest Olympiad unsurprisingly had an impact when the FIDE Office in Lausanne released the latest rating list on October 1st. Magnus Carlsen is now down to 2831, if still some way clear, leading Hikaru Nakamura by 29 points. Back in third place on 2797 was Arjun Erigaisi, although by the time we were writing these pages, he'd lost eight points and was down to 2789, solely due to failing to hold a tricky queen ending against 15-year-old Turkish GM Ediz Gurel in the Bundesliga. That allowed Fabiano Caruana on 2796 to reinherit third place on the live list. Man of the moment Dommaraju Gukesh is up to 2794, Nodirbek Abdusattorov is 2783 and then there's a small gap back to seventh-place Alireza Firouzja on 2767. Will 2025 be the year that one of the young talents really closes the gap to Carlsen?

USA – He might have been defeated by Maxime Vachier-Lagrave and Ian Nepomniachtchi back in the July at the CrunchLabs Masters, but Magnus Carlsen made no mistake at the fourth leg of the Champions Chess Tour, running out a convincing winner of the Julius Baer Generation Cup (September 27 – October 1). Carlsen overcame Nepomniachtchi 3-2, winning an armageddon decider, then Levon Aronian 2½-1½ before defeating Alireza Firouzja by that same score in the winners' final. Sent into the losers' bracket, Firouzja crushed Aronian 2-0 to reach the Grand Final, but there again found the world no.1 too good and went down 2½-1½ to Carlsen.

On his second match with Firouzja, Carlsen commented, "I felt like I was rarely in a lot of danger today, even though I guess I was lost in the second game, but I don't think any of us actually realized that. I felt like this was my best match so far and it feels really good to finish off with that." Let's see that second game and then Carlsen's win in Game 4.

M.Carlsen-A.Firouzja
Julius Baer Generation Cup (rapid) 2024



Black is winning, with care. First, he should activate the king: 38...♙f6 39 ♙h4+ ♙f7 40 ♙g3 ♙g6! 41 ♙f2 ♙g5 42 ♙f3 (trying to involve the king in the defence, since the

bishop will be outclassed if it fights alone, as shown by 42 ♙e1? ♙g4 43 ♙f2 ♙h4 44 ♙c5 ♙g3! 45 ♙e7 ♙f4 followed by ...♙g5 and ...h4) 42...♙f5! (taking an important step towards the queenside) 43 ♙e1 h4! 44 ♙xh4 ♙xh4 45 ♙e2 ♙e4 46 ♙d1 ♙d3 47 ♙c1 ♙c3. Unlike in the game, Black is winning as his a-pawn is still on a4: for example, 48 ♙b1 ♙g5! 49 ♙a1 ♙c2 50 a3 ♙b3 51 ♙b1 ♙d2 and it's mate in five.

Instead, Firouzja was to advance his main asset without delay, but that enabled Carlsen to set up a study-like draw.

38...h4? 39 ♙xh4! ♙xh4 40 ♙d4 ♙e7 41 ♙c4 a3

41...♙e5 42 ♙b5 a3 43 ♙c4 is similar. 42 ♙d3 ♙d5 43 ♙c2 ♙c4 44 ♙b1 ♙c3

Black has the right-coloured bishop, but also no way to flush the white king out of the corner.

45 ♙c1 ♙g5+ 46 ♙b1 ♙d2 47 ♙a1 ♙d1 48 ♙b1 ♙c1 49 ♙a1 ♙h6 50 ♙b1 ♙g7 ½-½

M.Carlsen-A.Firouzja
Julius Baer Generation Cup (rapid) 2024



39...♜xg4?

Missing White's next. Instead, after 39...♜e5! 40 ♙d6 ♜xa2+ 41 ♙h3 ♜c2! play would likely have ended in perpetual check, as after, for instance, 42 ♜d5+ ♙h7 43 ♙d7+ ♜xd7 44 ♜xd7+.

40 e6!

Commentating, David Howell described this as "almost superhuman", although once you see the move, it shouldn't be too hard to grasp that White wins after 40...♜xe6? 41 ♜xg6+.

40...♜g7 41 f5!

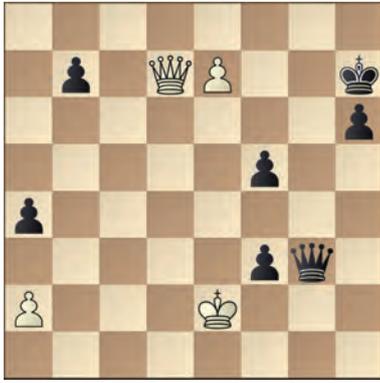
A second and decisive hammer blow, cutting the black queen off from the key pawn on e6 (41 ♙d8+ ♙h7 42 f5! also works, in view of 42...♜xf5 43 ♜xf5 gx5 44 ♙d7).

41...gx5 42 ♙d8+ ♙h7 43 ♙d7

The e-pawn will prove too powerful. 43...♜h5+ 44 ♙g2 ♜g6 45 ♜xg7+ ♜xg7 46 ♜d7 f4 47 g4?

Allowing some counterplay towards the end of this 10+2 encounter. With more time, Carlsen would no doubt have realised that after 47 ♙f1! fxg3 48 e7 g2+ 49 ♙g1 Black is out of tricks and has to resign.

47...f5 48 e7 ♜xg4+ 49 ♙f2 ♜g3+ 50 ♙e2 f3+



51 ♖e3?

Whoops, although in only a couple of seconds, the ice-cool 51 ♖d3! f2+ 52 ♖e2! would not have been trivial to spot.

51...f2+??

Natural, but here Firouzja missed a golden opportunity to take the match to an

armageddon decider: 51...♖e1+! 52 ♖xf3 ♖f1+ 53 ♖g3 ♖e1+ 54 ♖f4 ♖e4+ and White can't escape the checks, since his king can never cross the d-file.

52 ♖e2 ♖e5+

52...♖f3+!? was arguably worth a try, although after 53 ♖f1! there wouldn't have been a perpetual, as is the case too in the game.

53 ♖xf2 ♖f4+ 54 ♖e2 ♖e4+ 55 ♖d2!

Beginning a decisive march and possible now that there's no check from behind to pick up the white queen on d7.

55...♖f4+ 56 ♖c3 ♖e3+ 57 ♖b4 ♖b6+ 58 ♖c4 ♖a6+ 59 ♖c5 ♖a5+ 60 ♖d6 ♖b6+ 61 ♖e5 ♖e3+ 62 ♖f6 ♖g5+ 63 ♖e6 ♖g6+ 64 ♖d5 ♖g2+ 65 ♖c5 ♖f2+ 66 ♖b5 ♖b2+ 67 ♖a5 ♖c3+ 68 ♖b6 ♖b4+ 69 ♖c7 ♖a5+ 70 ♖b8 ♖e5+ 71 ♖c7 1-0

Carlsen added, "For the rest of the year I will only be playing rapid and blitz, so it's good to see that I'm playing myself into shape. The

Finals are going to be awesome, a good field and a rare chance to play a tournament in Oslo!"

Indeed, Norwegian fans will no doubt be delighted to see Carlsen in action at the Tour Finals, as this year they are, indeed, scheduled to be held in Oslo (December 17-21). As well as Carlsen and Firouzja, Nepomniachtchi and Vachier-Lagrave will be in action, with Wesley So, Denis Lazavik, Vincent Keymer and Levon Aronian the other qualifiers.

Sponsored too by Julius Baer, Chess.com have also staged the Women's Speed Chess Championship (August 22 - September 5), an online only event which saw Hou Yifan eliminated 9-8 by Polina Shuvalova in the second round. The 23-year-old Russian IM then defeated Vaishali Rameshbabu 11½-9½ in the semi-finals, where Ju Wenjun crushed Kateryna Lagno 14½-7½ and it was the women's world champion who would then pick up \$15,000 as she defeated Shuvalova 12½-9½ in the final.



Forthcoming Events

November 1-3 Central London Congress
form.jotform.com/62236576074964

November 1-3 Hampshire Congress, Fareham
hampshirechess.co.uk/hampshire-chess-congress-2024/

November 2-3 Cambridge Congress, Whittlesford
congress.org.uk/congress/444/home

November 2-3 Witney Congress
witneychess.co.uk/11thwitney_information.htm

November 2 Coulsdon Rapidplay
ccfworld.com/Chess/Adult%20Competitions/Rapidplay_info.html

November 2 Norfolk & Norwich Autumn Rapidplay
norfolkchess.org/calendar.html

November 2 Wimbledon Rapidplay
londonfidecongress.com/wimbledon-rapidplay

November 3 Ealing Rapidplay
londonfidecongress.com/ealing-rapidplay

November 3 Greenwich Rapid
gpchess.com/events/

Nov 8-10 Torbay Congress, Torquay
torbaycongress.com

November 9 Oxford Rapidplay, Kennington
congress.org.uk/congress/452/home

November 10 Golders Green Rapidplay
goldersgreenchess.blogspot.com or call 07855 036537

November 12 Muswell Hill Rapid
muswellhillchess.blogspot.com

Nov 15-17 Ulster Masters, Belfast
ulsterchess.org/events

Nov 15-17 West Wales Congress, Pontlliw
welshchessunion.uk/WestWales24/

Nov 16-17 Birmingham Open Congress
warwickshirechess.org/2024-birmingham-open/

Nov 16-17 Orpington Congress
congress.org.uk/congress/443/home

Nov 16-17 Southall Congress
londonfidecongress.com/southall-congress

November 16 Jurassic Rapidplay, Axmouth
seatonchessclub.co.uk/index.php/118-2nd-jurassic-rapidplay

November 17 Uxbridge Rapidplay
uxbridgechessclubs.com/about-3

Nov 22-24 Kilkenny Congress
icu.ie/events/1842

Nov 23-24 Derbyshire Congress, Long Eaton
derbyshirechesscongress.org

November 24 Yorkshire Rapidplay, Leeds
yorkshirechess.com

Nov 29 - Dec 1 Canterbury Congress
congress.org.uk/congress/491/home

Nov 29 - Dec 1 London Chess League Weekender
londonchess.com

December 1 Bolton Rapidplay
congress.org.uk/congress/467/home

December 1 Lowestoft Rapidplay
suffolkchess.org/category/events

And for the Online Connoisseur:

Nov 25 - Dec 13 FIDE World Chess Championship, Singapore
fide.com; it's the big one, Ding Liren vs Gukesh

Nov 29 - Dec 7 XTX Markets London Chess Classic
londonchessclassic.com; GM all-play-all, FIDE Open & festival

Congress organisers – Don't forget to email 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 to discuss having it advertised.

V.Ivanchuk-G.Kasparov
Amsterdam 1994



How should White continue?

One shouldn't expect Ivanchuk to meekly remove the knight from danger. Instead, he played the extraordinary **11 ♖h6!** and eventually went on to win (1-0, 39). One of the points of the move is that 11...0-0? fails to 12 ♖xg7 ♗xg7 13 ♙xf6+! ♗xf6 14 ♘d5+ ♗g7 15 ♘xc7, winning a piece.



Ukraine's Vasyl Ivanchuk - a living legend.

Viktor Moskalenko, more commonly associated with inspirational books on openings (with fans of the French Defence being particularly well-served), has changed tack this time, with a book focusing on this one, specific player. The material is arranged as a series of exercises, starting off with Ivanchuk's battles against seven world champions, from Vasily Smyslov to Ding Liren. Namechecking Smyslov reminds us just how long Ivanchuk's career has so far been.

These exercises are followed by similar ones against FIDE knockout world champions, such as Alexander Khalifman, and then against an assortment of other legendary players, including Viktor Korchnoi. The final two sections offer the reader the opportunity to 'Play Like Ivanchuk!' via a series of assorted chess positions, dealing with topics such as tactics and strategy.

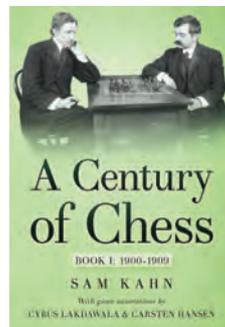
Such is the enigmatic nature of Ivanchuk's

character that we still do not glean any significant information on the man himself, despite the author knowing him "since he was in shorts!" As always, the real Ivanchuk remains tantalisingly out of sight.

Of course, the word 'genius' is bandied around all too frequently and one could cast doubt on whether or not being a genius at chess has any significance anyway. However, few people would bat an eyelid when seeing the word linked to Ivanchuk's name and a book such as this, focusing on a non-world champion, must stand or fall by the quality of the material on offer.

In this particular case, the reader can expect to be amazed, entertained and amused, in equal measure, together with a feeling of learning something from every one of the exercises. However, whether or not anyone would really want to think like Ivanchuk is a moot point...

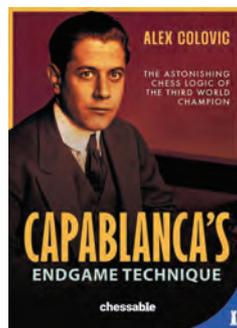
Sean Marsh



A Century of Chess: Book I: 1900-1909

Sam Kahn, 288 pages, paperback
RRP £26.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £24/29**

Sam Khan writes a popular historical blog on Chess.com and based on his work there, now explores in some detail the first decade of the 20th century in the chess world, a time which saw famous tournaments in Cambridge Springs, Monte Carlo, Paris and St. Petersburg. Khan's coverage is supplemented by 40 games from those events, annotated by Cyrus Lakdawala and publisher Carsten Hansen.

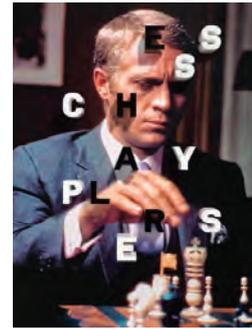


Capablanca's Endgame Technique

Alex Colovic, 120 pages, hardback
RRP £18.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.05**

This is the latest work beautifully produced by New in Chess for Chessable and based on one of their best-selling courses. The highly experienced North Macedonian GM does a good job of explaining how the great Cuban made many endgames appear deceptively simple. The material is highly pertinent to the club player, with Colovic covering such topics

as the principle of two weaknesses, improving the pieces, prophylaxis and how to deepen your intuition in double rook endgames.



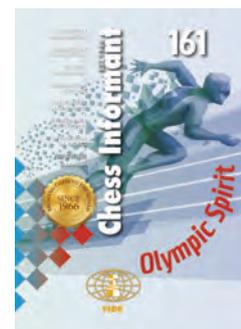
Chess Players: From Charlie Chaplin to Wu-Tang Clan

World Chess, 192 pages, hardback
RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

This is a coffee table book, measuring 24.5 x 18cm, produced by World Chess in conjunction with FIDE. Inside there are a number of striking images of chess being played, from on the street to the world championship, as well as by several celebrities. The former chess columnist for *The New York Times*, Dylan Loeb McClain supplies an introduction, as well as the captions, while there are also contributions from Vishy Anand and the late Martin Amis no less.



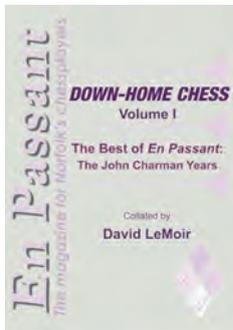
Charlie Chaplin (right) with Douglas Fairbanks and a young Samuel Reshevsky.



Chess Informant 161

Sahovski Informator, 320 pages, paperback
RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

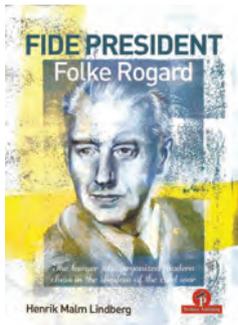
The latest 'Informator' is subtitled 'Olympic Spirit' in celebration of FIDE's 100th anniversary. New contributors include Jonathan Speelman, who looks at "Real-Time Action and British Miscellany", as well as Jon Edwards on why correspondence chess matters. There's also a report on the Dutch Championship from Yochanan Afek, Douglas Griffin's ever-enjoyable dive into the Chess Informant archive and, of course, all the latest novelties, games and studies.



Down-Home Chess

David LeMoir, 262 pages, paperback
RRP £10.00 **SUBSCRIBERS £9.00**

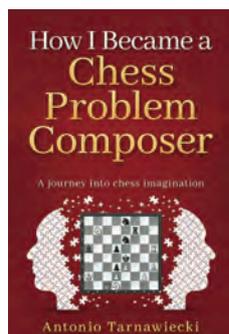
We heard last month from the author of, to give this book its full title, *Down-Home Chess Volume 1 – The Best of En Passant: The John Charman Years*, and there is certainly plenty of fine writing, as well as much good chess to enjoy in this new publication, one which will entertain chess fans who don't have any connection to Norfolk. It was in that county in 1995 that John Charman set up *En Passant*, the award-winning magazine which continues to flourish to this day under LeMoir's editorship.



FIDE President Folke Rogard

Henrik Malm Lindberg, 336 pages, hardback
RRP £42.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £38.65**

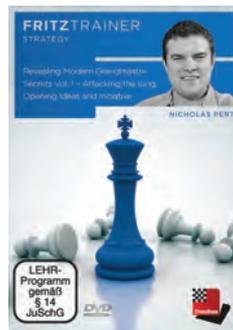
The latest work from Thinkers Publishing tackles one of the trickiest of several balancing acts in FIDE's chequered history, the reign of Folke Rogard as FIDE President from 1949 to 1970, at the heart of the Cold War. Swedish lawyer Rogard did his best to work with both the Soviets and the West, at the same time as reshaping and expanding the world body. Swedish academic Lindberg draws on many unpublished sources, as he tells an often fascinating story, not just of Rogard's life and the politics he had to battle on an almost daily basis, but how, for example, he did his best to handle several tricky characters, not least Bobby Fischer.



How I Became A Chess Problem Composer

Antonio Tarnawiecki, 216 pages, paperback
RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

The world of chess composition can at times delight the over-the-board player, but can also be seen as a separate entity, with its own rules and nomenclature. Peruvian composer Antonio Tarnawiecki aims to shine a light into that world, while explaining how he went from composing simple problems to fully appreciating many facets of chess composition, as well as working with other composers and even winning several awards.

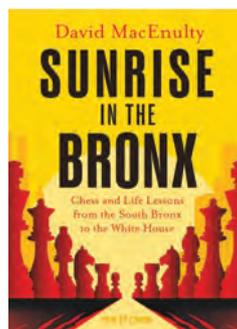


Revealing Modern Grandmaster Secrets Vol. 1

Nicholas Pert, PC-DVD; running time: 6+ hours
RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

Nick Pert makes a welcome return to the ChessBase studio to reveal several grandmaster secrets on "Attacking the King, Opening Ideas and Initiative", according to the DVD cover. For those who aspire to seriously improve their game, Pert has plenty of suggestions, a few of which may raise eyebrows, not least on trying offbeat openings. Pert does, however, make a good case for that, while also presenting much clearly explained and instructive material on attacking and seizing the initiative.

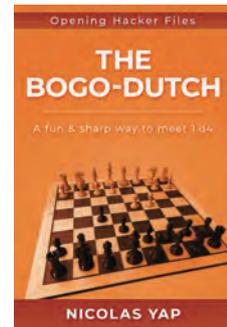
While in Hamburg, Pert also recorded a companion DVD, *Revealing Modern Grandmaster Secrets Vol. 2*, which also runs to over six hours of coverage while retailing at £34.95, or £31.45 for Subscribers. This time his emphasis is on "Calculation, Countering and Defence, Positional Play and the King", which includes fighting in bad positions and improving the pieces, as well as advice on how best to calculate at the board.



Sunrise in the Bronx

David MacEnulty, 224 pages, paperback
RRP £18.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.05**
Subtitled 'Chess and Life Lessons – From the South Bronx to the White House', David

MacEnulty takes the reader on quite a journey from his early days as a pioneer, teaching chess in state schools in the Bronx. He was faced by poverty, racism and even crime, but persisted, becoming a legendary chess coach – as portrayed by Ted Danson in the 2005 film *Knights of the South Bronx* – instilling not just chess wisdom, but life lessons into his students. MacEnulty's school teams were phenomenally successful, winning endless titles, and now, post-retirement, he tells his story for New in Chess, relaying plenty of useful coaching tips along the way.



The Bogo-Dutch

Nicolas Yap, 122 pages, paperback
RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

Several English players have enjoyed success with 1 d4 e6 2 c4 f5 over the years, including Simon Williams. This move order does, of course, allow White the option of 2 e4 and a French, but also allows Black a fair amount of flexibility after 2 c4 f5, while side-stepping plenty of annoying second move options for White against 1 d4 f5. Black may follow up by angling for an early ...♗b4(+), often in conjunction with ...♘e4 and a set-up with either ...d6 or ...b6, as explained in fair detail by Anglo-American FM Nicolas Yap in this work appropriately subtitled 'A fun & dynamic way to meet 1.d4'.

Carsten Hansen is the publisher of *The Bogo-Dutch* and has certainly been busy of late, also releasing *Chess Endings from Modern Master Play* (104 pages, paperback, RRP £11.99, Subscribers £10.79), an algebraic modern edition of Jacques Mieses's work from 1901, as well as *Chess Studies and Endgames* (184 pages, paperback, RRP £17.99, Subscribers £16.19). That is, of course, Bernhard Horwitz and Josef Kling's famous 1851 book, an expanded edition of which appeared in 1889, thanks to the efforts of William Wayte, and on which this updated modern version is based.

Hansen has also published a new version of Jacques Mieses's acclaimed 1947 work *Manual of the Endgame in Chess* (156 pages, paperback, RRP £13.99, Subscribers £12.59), as well as his own *Origins: Ruy Lopez – Book III: Main Lines after 3...a6* (164 pages, paperback, RRP £21.99, Subscribers £19.79). That was written in conjunction with Cyrus Lakdawala and covers all those famous variations of the Spanish which arise after 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♗e7 6 ♗e1 b5 7 ♗b3, including the Breyer, Marshall and Zaitsev.

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[XTX] 2024 LONDON CHESS CLASSIC

MARKETS

Friday 29th November to Saturday 7th December @ The Emirates Stadium

WATCH & PLAY

Watch the top four English players battle it out against some of the best in the world - with live grandmaster commentary. Play starts at 4pm each day. See website for full details and player line-up

Spectator tickets available:

£15 per day

Season ticket £60 (All 7 Days)

Or play in any number of Festival events that run - with a total prize fund of £60,000. PLUS simuls & lectures! All participants get free entry to watch the main event and grandmaster commentary.

9-Round FIDE Swiss Events (FIDE Masters & U-2000)

7-Round FIDE Rated One-Day Rapdiplays

9-Round SuperBlitz Evening Events

See Website for Full Details and Online Entry

www.LondonChessClassic.com