

En Passant

The magazine for Norfolk's chessplayers



November 2019
Volume 25 No 1

Another New
Norfolk Champion

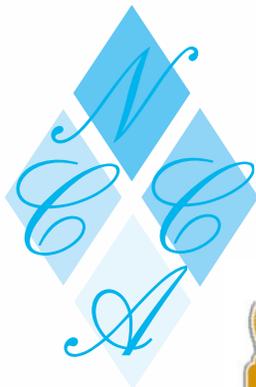


A Great New Book
By Norfolk Author

The Last Ten Years:
Facts And Figures

...plus lots more
**TEN YEARS "UNDER
NEW MANAGEMENT"!**





En Passant

Founder: John Charman

Volume 25 No 1

November 2019

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£30 for printed version
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En Passant is edited by David LeMoir on behalf of **Norfolk County Chess Association**. He also circulates the email version, and the printed version is printed and circulated by **Gowisprint** (see advertisement on back page).

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En Passant

The magazine for Norfolk's chessplayers

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What's Going On?

Back in 2008, John Charman told me that he had a choice: to give up Controlling the Norfolk League or to give up editing En Passant. As his main contributor, he knew that I would not let the former happen, and I duly agreed that I would take on the editing and publishing task as of the beginning of Volume 15, starting with the issue to be published November 2009. I decided to keep most things the same, at least for the time being.

The main problem at the start was the fact that he used a non-standard computer which did not use normal PC software. I had to start the design from scratch, trying to emulate his design and type-faces. I also decided that, unlike John, I would not print the magazine myself. I decided that a large number of subscribers would be very happy to receive the magazine as a PDF file and, if they wanted to, print it out themselves. Others, however, were bound to want a nice printed copy, as they had received from John over the years.

I got in touch with Nick Gorvin, former Norfolk first team skipper and manager of his family's printing business, Gowiseprint. He agreed to print at a cost which meant that I only had to increase the annual subscription by a few pounds, and he also helped me with emulating John's design elements and familiarised me with Desk-Top Publishing. Nick has stuck by us ever since, and has never once increased the printing cost. Postage has nearly doubled since then, so I now make a small loss on each issue, but the profit on the email issue easily covers that loss, so I have been able to keep the price steady ever since.

I thank him and, particularly, my trusty proof-checker and mega-contributor Mike Read, without whom this would not be half the magazine that it is (quite literally!).

View From The Chair

John Wickham

As I write this, we have had another successful Norfolk Championships and the chess season has started. Also, our U160 team has had their first match and, while they narrowly lost against Herts, they managed a well-deserved draw against a strong Suffolk side. If the other matches go their way then there is a chance that they could go through to the final stages of the County Championships, but that is a long way off.



In the report on the Norfolk Championships in this issue, the weather on Sunday 6 October is mentioned. There was a month's-worth of rain in 8-10 hours which caused flooding in some areas. The weather led to damage at the Gas Club, the home venue of Norwich DONs, where the roof collapsed. The damage is so severe that it may not be until next summer that the Gas Club is repaired. This was a disaster for the DONs.

Fortunately their equipment, that was stored at the Gas Club, was not damaged and they were able to rescue it. Impressively, the DONs found a new venue at the Norwich Hotel on Thorpe Road. They have this until the end of the year and may extend it or seek a more permanent venue. They should be congratulated on finding a new venue within days.

Also impressive was the way other clubs took steps to assist. My own club had an away match and were able to host the Cavaliers at Fakenham. I know other clubs are also working with the DONs to help them.

This also meant a change of venue to the DONs Christmas Allegro and the Norfolk Rapidplay. Both are to be held at Roxley Hall on Yarmouth Road, Thorpe St Andrew. Revised entry forms are available with this issue. In addition, the NCCA committee had to postpone its meeting on 10 October and that will now be on 20 November in Aylsham.

The entry forms for the Great Yarmouth Chess Congress have been delayed due to difficulties in securing sponsorship. Only one of our long-standing supporters has committed and there does not appear to be an appetite from others to provide financial assistance. I hope to have the entry forms ready during November.

Finally, dates for your diaries:

17 November County First team match; *24 November* Lowestoft Rapidplay; *1 December* U160 County match, *7 December* Norfolk & Norwich One-Day Chess Congress; *22 December* DONs Allegro; *26 January* Norfolk Rapidplay.



Junior News

Stephen Orton

Update on Norwich Junior Chess Club

There have been a few changes at NJCC lately – first of all, they have moved! They now meet at Colman Junior School on South Park Avenue, still at the same time of 10-12 on Saturday mornings. Of course, some players have had to leave the club, partly through not being Junior any more (Ben Sadler, Samson Magesh) and some through pressure of A levels and changes of school (Jack Gibson, Hayden Perry, Kian Moghaddas). But to counter this, the club has

had a total of fifteen new members just this term already so that there is a total of over 60 on the register, of whom between 30 and 40 show up each Saturday..

The coaching team of Stephen Orton, Matthew Perry, David Elsey, Mark Jackson and occasionally Martin Walker have their work cut out most Saturdays to keep everyone busy as well as giving instruction to the beginners and helping the more advanced.

The players are divided up into seven different leagues (Premier and Division 1 down to Division 6) and the winner of each League receives a small trophy each half term.

The players in the top leagues are expected to notate their games so that some detailed scrutiny can be given to them, while more general coaching is given to the less advanced players.

The next stage for many of the new players will be to enter one of the Junior events coming up: The Norfolk Junior Championships on 9th November or the Norfolk and Norwich One-day event on 7th December.



Norfolk Has A New Champion

John Wickham with game analysis by your editor

We had 38 entrants this year, but a late withdrawal meant just 37 playing. With the top 24 going into the Championship that left 13 in the Challengers. Numbers were down on previous years and the reason was a 4NCL Congress that drew some of our stronger and regular players [including last year's Champion, Gerald Moore - Ed.].

It was suggested that I had moved the date, but we have traditionally held this on the first weekend in October. With Calendar creep, the date moves back until – like last year – it is the 30th September/1st October and thus this year had to be 5th/6th October. It is inevitable that other events will move in and clash, but it does not help with the numbers. As a result, we had some players with grades in the 130's, who in previous years would have been in the Challengers, moving up to the Championship. Most of them played well and were not overawed by their experience.

In the Championship, the first round went to the higher-rated players apart from Trevor Ansell losing to Ben Sadler and Johnny Danger drawing with Ryan Barnes. In round two Ben drew with Roy Hughes, another good result, and Stephen Pullinger and David Owen both won against higher-graded opponents (Jonathan Wells and Andy Hartland respectively).

Game Analysis

The best game from the opening round was an excellent positional win by Roy Hughes against Graham Blowers. The game deserves more space and attention than I can allow here, so I have passed it to Mike Read to give it the full treatment.

The game of the second round was Stephen Orton's tactical slugfest against Michael Gibbons. In the end, he ran out of time to work out the win that he was sure was there (he was right!) and sensibly took a draw by perpetual check. Had he found the win, then this game would probably have won the Best Game Prize. Again, there is insufficient room to give any but the most basic variations here, so I will analyse it in the December issue.

Trevor Ansell played a nice tactic against Johnny Danger in this round, which will feature on this month's Tactics page. Meanwhile Ben Sadler, playing against former Champion Roy Hughes, played a nice exchange sacrifice which allowed him, many moves later, a fairly comfortable draw.



18.Rxe6! fxe6 19.Bxe6+ Kh8 20.Bxd5 Nb6 21.Bxb7 even gave him a temporary material advantage, and he tried manfully to make something of it, but without success. The draw was agreed after 44 moves later.

Round Three saw just six games played, with half the Championship players taking byes. It was noticeable that eight of those playing were members of the Norwich DONs. The only notable result was Jonathan Wells losing again, this time to Jeff Dawson.

Game Analysis

Phil Bonafont - Ben Collinson

1.d4 d6 2.c4 Nf6 3.Nc3 e5 4.Nf3 Nbd7 5.e4 Be7 6.Be2 0-0 7.0-0 c6 8.Qc2 a6 9.Rd1 Qc7 10.h3 b5 11.a3 Re8 12.Be3 Bb7 13.Rac1

We are still in the books. 13.cxb5 used to be played here, but now the text move, keeping the tension and lining up against the black queen, is almost always played in master chess. White soon resolves the tension, but gives himself a sizeable space advantage in the process. Even with a few exchanges in the sequel, Black still suffers badly from a lack of manoeuvring room.

13...Rac8 14.b4 Bf8 15.dxe5 dxe5 16.c5 Rcd8 17.Qb3 h6 18.Nh4 Nb8 19.Nf5 Bc8 20.g4 Be6 21.Qc2 Bxf5 22.gxf5 Rxd1+ 23.Qxd1 Rd8 24.Qf1!



On the way to the g-file. Black is still OK, but in the sequel White handles the kingside play well and Black finds it hard to defend effectively.

24...Be7 25.Qg2 Kh7 26.Kh1 Rg8 27.Qh2 Nfd7 28.Rg1 Bf6 29.Bd1 g6?! 30.Bb3 Rg7 31.fxg6+ fxg6 32.Qg3 Nf8 33.Qf3 Qe7 34.Rd1!

The switch to the d-file causes Black to collapse at once. I imagine that Ben was in time trouble here.

34...Ne6?



35.Bxe6! Qxe6 36.Rd6 Qc4 37.Qxf6 Qxc3 38.Qh4 1-0

38...h5 39.Qg5 is curtains.

So, into Round four we had several on 2½ and giving us, as in previous years, a close contest. There was another great performance by Ben Sadler against a higher graded opponent,

Michael Gibbons, which gave him another point and moved him onto 3 points. Other notable results were Colin Payne beating much higher graded Steve Moore and Mervyn Hughes beating Trevor Ansell.

Game Analysis

This was the round of the tournament as far as the quality of the games was concerned. First Stephen Orton dangled his c-pawn in front of Jeff Dawson's bishop until finally the latter was damned if he did take it and damned if he didn't.

Stephen Orton - Jeff Dawson

1.e4 d5 2.exd5 Qxd5 3.Nc3 Qa5 4.d4 Nf6 5.Nf3 Bf5 6.Bc4 e6 7.Bd2 c6 8.Qe2 Qc7

Capturing on c2 is dangerous: 8...Bxc2 9.d5! breaking through on e6, and 9.Rc1 Bf5 10.d5 may be even better.

9.Ne5 Be7?

He must challenge the knight on e5 with 9...Nbd7, as now White can seriously inconvenience Black's light-squared bishop.

10.g4! Bg6

Now 10...Bxc2 loses, to 11.Bf4! Bg6 12.Nxg6.

11.h4 b5

Now 12.Bb3 b4 13.Na4 Be4 allows the bishop to settle on d5. But White can ignore the attack on his bishop.

12.h5!



12...bxc4

White is probably winning already. The point is that 12...Bxc2 allows 13.Nxf7! and now:

- a) 13...bxc4 14.Nxh8 Qd6 15.g5 followed by 16.g6 and the knight escapes from h8.
- b) 13...Kxf7 14.Bxe6+ Kc8 15.g5 with a very strong attack. E.g. 15...Nfd7 16.Rc1 b4 17.Nd5! cxd5 18.Bxd5 Nb6 19.Be4

N8d7 20.Rxc2 Qd8 21.g6 h6 22.Bxa8 Qxa8 23.0-0 with a material advantage and the attack continues against the exposed black king.

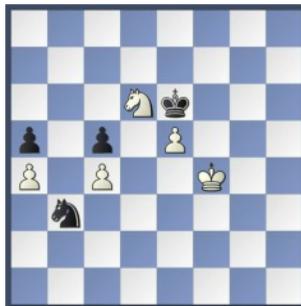
- c) 13...0-0 14.Bxe6 Rxf7 15.Bc1! spells disaster for Black. E.g. 15...b4 16.g5 bxc3 17.Bxf7+ Kxf7 18.gxf6 Bxf6 19.Qxc2 with a material advantage and an attack.

13.hxg6 fxg6 14.Qxc4

14.Nxg6 Rg8 15.Nf4 is also horrible. After the text move, the e6 pawn goes and Black doesn't last long.

14...Rf8 15.Qxe6 Qd6 16.Qc8+ Qd8 17.Qb7 Nxg4 18.Nxg4 Qxd4 19.0-0-0 Qxg4 20.Rhe1 Qd7 21.Qxa8 Kf7 22.Bf4 1-0

Against Michael Gibbons, Ben Sadler went into a knight ending with a slight initiative and tortured his opponent until he missed a long drawing line and lost a pawn instead. Then, just as it was looking like the win might be awkward, Ben found something rather nice.



If White plays 56.Ke4 then after 56...Nd2+ 57.Kd3 Nf3, the e5 pawn goes and a draw is in sight for Black. Instead White played...

56.Nb7!

...and suddenly Black was in complete

*Zugzwang.***56...Nc1**

He lets a pawn go at once and White wins easily. His alternative was to give way with his king and allow the white e-pawn to run: 56...Kd7 57.Kf5 Kc7 58.e6! Nd4+ (not 58...Kxb7 59.e7 and the pawn promotes) 59.Kf6 Nxe6 60.Kxe6 Kxb7 61.Kd6 Kb6 62.Kd5 and Black will lose the king and pawn ending.

57.Nxc5+ Ke7 58.Ke4 Ne2 59.Kd5 Nc3+ 60.Kc6 Ke8 61.Kb6 Kd8 62.Kxa5 Kc7 63.e6 Kd8 64.Kb6 Ke8 65.a5 1-0

Dave Hall treated us to a typical game where the octopus's tentacles were squeezing David Owen's position to death.



Here, Dave eyed the queen's position on f1 and the fact that ...Bd3 would trap it (winning the exchange) if only he could get a pawn to c4 with gain of time. So he played...

22...Qb6! 23.Nd2 c4!

...and White had to perform an awkward shuffle.

24.Bf3 Bd3 25.Qg2 Ne4 26.Bxe4 dxe4 27.b4 Re5

White can hardly move a muscle, and Dave brings his rooks up the board to give him options on the kingside and in the centre. Unsurprisingly, David tries (with 29.f4) to give himself some air, but it leads to weaknesses on both the f- and e-files and a nice combinative finish.

28.Nf1 Rc6 29.f4 exf3 30.Qxf3 Rf6 31.Qg2



32...Rxf1+! 32.Rxf1 Rxe3!

Threatening mayhem on the g1-a7 diagonal. The king cannot escape from the diagonal without losing the queen (33.Kh1 Be4) and if the rook blocks the diagonal it loses more than its own life because after 33.Rf2 Re2 34.Rf1, Black can stop and capture the bishop on e2 before continuing.

33.Qf2 Re2 0-1

It's mate after 34.Qxb6 Bxb6+ 35.Kh1 Be4+ 36.Rf3 Bxf3.

Steve Moore v Colin Payne was a very difficult game, well-played by both sides.



In the diagrammed position, Steve realised that he could easily be driven into passivity, so he decided to give his queen some room and to expand further with his pawns on the queenside.

16.Bxg6 hxg6 17.Qd3 Rde8 18.g5 Bd8 19.h4 Re4 20.b4!? Ne7 21.Rde1 Qf5 22.Qa3?!

There are obvious risks involved in White's approach. The exchange on g6 has exposed his h-pawn, his king is potentially more exposed than Black's and he must be careful not to lose his d4 pawn. In fact, he should

have remained fairly solid with something like 22.Re3 because here Black could have played the nice switch-back 22...Nc6!, attacking the d4 pawn, and after 23.Qd3 (23.Qc3 allows 23...Nxb4! 24.Qxb4 Qxf3 while 23.Rxe4 also loses a pawn to 23...dxe4 24.b5 Qxf3 25.Qxf3 exf3) Black can win the d4 pawn neatly with 23...Rxe1+! 24.Nxe1 Qxd3 25.Nxd3 Nxd4.

22...Kb8 23.b5?! c6 24.Rxe4!?

24.bxc6 Nxc6 merely exposes his d-pawn again, so White sharpens the play.

24...dxe4 25.Ne5 cxb5 26.Qb3 Qxf2 27.Be3 Qg3 28.Nxf7 Rf8 29.Rf1?

He should have taken the opportunity to get rid of the dark-squared bishop with 29.Nxd8 Rxd8 and only then play 30.Rf1 Ka8 (not 30...Qxh4 31.Qe6) 31.Rf4 with great complications.

29...Bc7 30.d5?

This loses another pawn and the game, but in any case Black was threatening 30...Nd5!.



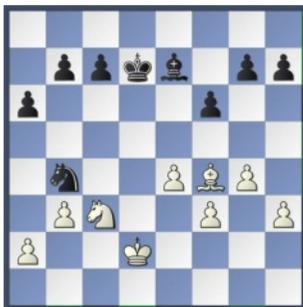
30...Nxd5! 31.Qxd5 Qxe3+ 32.Kb1 Qd3+ 33.Qxd3 exd3 34.Kc1 Ba5 35.h5 gxh5 36.g6 d2+ 37.Kc2 Re8 38.Nd6 Re1 39.Rf8+ Kc7 40.Nxb5+ Kc6 41.Nd4+ Kd5 42.Rd8+ Kc4 0-1

Going into the last round we had six players, Ben Sadler, Stephen Orton, Stephen Pullinger, Phil Bonafont, Martin Walker and John Anderson, all tied on 3 points and playing each other. Stephen Pullinger lost to Martin and Stephen Orton beat Ben Sadler leaving the game between John Anderson and Phil Bonafont the last to finish. Phil converted the endgame in masterly style to a win, leaving the three winners on 4 points tying for first place. The tie breaker is Sum of Opponents Scores and on this Phil is the new Norfolk Champion. Incidentally, Phil's grading performance for the event was 226.

Ben Sadler, graded at 150, had a 194 grading performance. This also won him the U165 grading prize. Ben has been improving season by season and perhaps one day his name may be on the trophy.

Game Analysis

The three tournament winners fully justified their prize money by playing excellently in this final round. Martin Walker had a fairly short win against Stephen Pullinger but Phil Bonafont, as Black, had to play a long



endgame against John Anderson. He won a pawn from this position.

32.a3??

An innocent-looking move, but ultimately a fatal error. 32.Be3, by covering the d4 square, leaves things equal.

32...Nc6

Uncovers an attack on the a3 pawn. Now blocking the attack with 33.b4 can be met by 33...Nd4 when protecting the f-pawn with 34.Ke3 loses the a3 pawn to 34...Nc2+. On the other hand, moving the a-pawn out of harms way with 33.a4 allows 33...Nd4 to fork the b- and f-pawns.

White counters by attacking the black c-pawn...

33.Nd5 Bxa3 34.Bxc7 Nd4

...but there goes the knight fork again. White must lose either f- or b-pawn (he chose the b-pawn) and some fine technique landed Phil the point and the title of Norfolk Champion.

Ben Sadler had enjoyed a great debut in the Championship, but he blundered early on against his mentor, Stephen Orton. He had to give up his queen for rook and knight, but was about to get a pawn back as well when the poor position of his king gave Stephen the idea for a fine winning manoeuvre.



26.Qb5!!

Probably the move of the tournament. The queen aims mainly at the b4 square (and from there to d6) but if Black plays 26...a5 then White crashes through with 27.Bxg4! f5g4 28.f5. Then 28...exf5 allows 29.Qxd5 with threats to check on e6 or g8. If instead Black defends the e6 pawn with 28...Ra6, then after 29.fxe6 Rxe6, White traps and wins the bishop on c8 with 30.Rc1!

26...a6 27.Qb4 b6

There is no defence, but this lets White carry out his main threat.

27...Rxg6 can be met by 28.Qd6 with the slow-motion threat of 29.Rc1, 30.Rc7! (which cannot be captured in view of mate on e7), 31.Rxd7! Bxd7 32.Qf8 mate. But more direct and certain is 28.Rh1 Rh6 29.Rxh6 gxh6 30.Qd6 Kf7 31.Bxg4! f5g4 32.f5 which tears the black position apart.

28.Qd6! Rxg6 29.Rh1! 1-0

After 29...Rh6 30.Rxh6 gxh6, White mates with 31.Qxe6+ Be7 32.Qxe7.

In the Challengers, the lead switched a few times but going into the last round we had two on 3 points, David Moore and John Bradley, with three on 2½, Chris Tuffin, Bodo Rissman and Biran Shah. Chris won against John Weston to move onto 3½ and John beat Bodo to move onto 4. That left the game between David and Biran which ended in a draw. John Bradley thus won the Challengers with Chris Tuffin and David Moore coming joint second. John's grading performance of 147 meant it was no surprise that he won the U125 grading prize. David Moore had a 144 grading performance and won the Austin McDonnell trophy for the best improvement on grade of those graded under 150. Chris won the U150 grading prize.

Game Analysis



Mike Read will be annotating the best game from the Challengers section on pages 23-25 of this issue. Meanwhile, he sent me another game that was entered for the Best Game Prize, along with a nice little story about it.

This was David May v Joseph Grant from Round 4. David had lost his first three games and, understandably, wanted to make some impression on the scoreboard. So, as he played his next move, he offered a draw.

18.Nxe5 dxe5

Yes, Black declined. He soon lived to regret it as White demonstrated the superiority of his position with a natural, but tactically very strong, move.

19.Rd1!

White threatens nasty discoveries on the d-file. The most obvious is 20.Nf6+ gxf6 21.Bxh7+ winning the queen by discovered attack. If the queen moves out of danger to c7, then White simply wins the exchange with (19...Qc7) 20.Nd6! because 20...Qxd6 loses the queen again to 21.Bxh7+.

Black spots all of that, but allows something far worse for him.

19...Ng6?

The only good defence is to block the d-file with 19...Nd5!. Against that White can win

two pawns with 20.Ng3 g6 21.c4 Nf4 22.Bxg6 Qe7 23.Bxh7+, but White's g- and c-pawns are attacked, so Black regains one of them and still has counterplay. In fact, the simplest way to win material is 20.Qa2! (threatening to win the knight with 21.Bc4) and after 20...Qe7 21.Bxa6 Bxa6 22.Qxd5 White is a clear (and safe) pawn ahead.

Now Black loses the exchange and a pawn and White continues to press, eventually winning more material by a further tactical trick.

20.Bxa6 Qe7 21.Bxb7 Qxb7 22.Nd6 Qc6 23.Nxc8 Rxc8 24.Qd3 h6 25.Qd7 Qc4 26.Qb7 Qe6 27.Rd7 Rc4 28.Rd8+ Kh7 29.Qd7 Qf6 30.Qd3 Rf4 31.Rd6 Qg5 32.Rxb6 e4 33.Qg3 Qe7 34.Rxg6! 1-0

The event went well but you will not be surprised, having read my report of the British Championships, that there were some incidents. During round two we heard someone using the speakers in the room, apparently testing them. This was solved by finding the power to the sound system and turning it off. The Sunday was a day of exceptional rainfall with flooding in many places, including the car park of the Tithe Barn, which meant that we could not use the main entrance. After Round 4 had finished, the fire doors were used to allow people to leave and enter. Fortunately, the rain abated by the end and the flood eased to allow exit by the main entrance.

A more serious issue occurred during the final round when a spectator abused one of the players and me. He does have mental health issues but as his behaviour was unacceptable and disruptive, I had to ask him to leave which he did with a lack of grace, suggesting I was making the rules up. Spectators are always welcome at our events, but we expect them to act in an appropriate manner.

We were able to have a reasonable prize fund, as we had several donations, and I would like to thank all those who supported us. Also, I thank Mike Read who came with me to set up and who also helped during the event, provided coaching and judged the Best Game Prize. I would also like to thank Greg Tebble who dropped out of playing in the Challengers to even up the numbers. He did get two games against the byes in the Championship doing well in scoring 1 out of 2.

About the best game prize: Mike was up all night into Monday Morning and rang me at around 11am to advise that it was won by Jeff Dawson for his win against Graham Blowers in the last round. The game will appear with Mike's notes later in this issue.

Next year the event will be on 3rd/4th October, once again at the Tithe Barn.



The N&N v DONs 100 Board Match

Stephen Orton (Photo by Greg Tebble)



Norfolk & Norwich Club and Norwich DONs started their seasons with a warm-up 100-match on Monday 16th September. Ten players from each club played each other at blitz, rotating the teams so that every member of each team played every opponent, making 100 games in all. It was controlled by Greg Tebble of the DONs Club, who also took some very good photographs.

Here you can see the line of players stretching out into the distance.

The result was immaterial, as it was all good fun, although the top scorer for DONs was Martin Walker with 9/10, unbeaten, while for N&N it was Prof. Ganesan and Ben Collinson who both scored 8½. Ganesan amused himself during the evening with the plan of playing 'geographical' openings – French,

Scandinavian, Scotch, Sicilian etc., although his plan was foiled when some faced him with the Grünfeld!

Happily everyone scored something, although there was a tense moment when two players, both on zero after 8 rounds, faced each other; fortunately it was a draw.



Neil Hickman's New Book

Back around the year 2000, an amateur chess player named Jonathan Hinton self-published a book entitled *A Gnat May Drink*. It was a rarity for modern times – a simple collection of good chess games by various players, each of which he annotated fully. He presented one game from each year of the twentieth century (i.e. 1900 to 1999). He advertised in *CHESS* magazine (and, presumably, *British Chess Magazine*) which I assume was at his own expense.

The book was received to critical acclaim and sold out quickly. About ten years later, it was reprinted and this time seems to have been published (or at least marketed) by *CHESS* magazine.

Another decade later, our own Neil Hickman (Wymondham Chess Club) has self-published an important games collection, entitled *Memorable Games Of British Chess*. The book grew out of a project to assemble significant British games of chess for the website of Bedford Chess Club, where Neil used to be a member before coming to God's Own County.

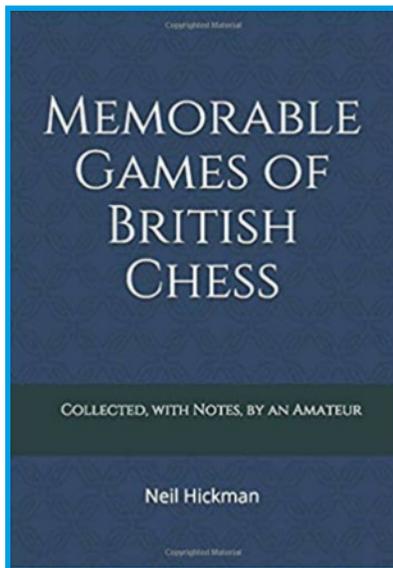
Neil is no stranger to writing and publishing books, but this is his first foray into chess books.

As you can see from the cover, Neil unashamedly makes it clear that this is a book written by an amateur (never graded more than ECF 154) – and that should make it especially attractive to fellow amateurs. Each of the ninety games is prefaced by an introduction which puts it into its historical context. Despite my large collection of chess books, on their own

these introductions told me many things I didn't know. Then Neil gives a list (often quite long) of sources that he consulted in creating the annotations. Here is one very well-read chessplayer!

Regular readers of everyone's favourite magazine will be familiar with Neil's easy and engaging writing style which, for a book of this type, is an absolute prerequisite. Hinton's book was good in this respect, but Neil's is probably even better – and the layout is also more attractive. There is absolutely nothing in his annotations which goes over the head of the rank-and-file player, and yet they manage to avoid insulting the ego of higher-graded players. Having read and absorbed so many chess books, Neil knows what good chess annotations should look like.

The games are spread across many years, 1788 to 2016, covering nearly all of the significant British players – and some who are distinctly obscure. There are many cases, especially up to the 1970s, of huge giant-killing acts by British players in international tournaments. Many games are sparkingly brilliant. In short, there is everything the armchair chess enthusiast would want.



For many of the more recent games Neil has been given permission to use the winner's own annotations from around the time when the games were first published. He has added his own comments, especially where the current computer programs can find significant improvements on their analyses.

I really enjoyed it and, at £14.99 for 271 big pages, the book offers great value. It is published through Amazon and, at least for now, is therefore only available on the Amazon websites.



Norfolk Championship Best Game Prize

SIM Mike Read

Once again, I had a most enjoyable weekend at the Norfolk Championships on the 5th and 6th of October. I was listed on the entry form as Assistant Controller but, with such an efficient Chief Controller as John Wickham, my duties were little more than helping to set up the room at the start of the event, and the laying out of scoresheets during the proceedings.

This left me with plenty of spare time to concentrate on my fun duty of judging the Best Game prize. A number of games were entered, and all were of a high standard. Many of the entrants that did not quite win the prize will either be included in John Wickham's report (with your editor's game comments) elsewhere in this edition of your favourite magazine, or will be annotated by me for your enjoyment in future issues.

After the first day, games by Roy Hughes (against Graham Blowers) and Phil Bonafont (versus Ben Collinson) were the top contenders for the £20 prize on offer. On Sunday morning a spectacular win by Chris Tuffin in the Challengers Section (over Bob Grindrod) was also vying for selection. However, as the final round drew to a close (and with the

greatest respect to the games mentioned so far, and to the other fine efforts that I was fortunate enough to be enjoying analysing) all bets were suddenly off as Jeff Dawson produced the absolutely superb game that I have annotated below.

Graham Blowers, who was on the losing side of both this one and another of the top four games (as mentioned earlier), must be wondering what he has done to merit two opponents playing such fine chess against him in one weekend. The only solace that I can offer him is the fact that there have been several players who have been losers in the Best Game at one time but then winners later on! Jeff, himself, was actually the vanquished player in the Best Game in 2004 (in an encounter with your editor!) although perhaps Graham would like to wait a little bit less than fifteen years for his turn to play the top game!

Jeff Dawson - Graham Blowers

Norfolk Championship Round 5 6.10.2019

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 Bf5 4.g4

A rare, but quite venomous, sideline. 4.Nf3 and 4.Nc3 are the most common moves here.

4...Be4

To force White to advance his f-pawn. 4...Bg6 5.h4 h5 6.e6! fxe6 7.Bd3 is quite similar to the game continuation.

5.f3 Bg6 6.h4 h5 7.e6!?



7...fxe6?

The crucial, but quite difficult to find, move is 7...Qd6!. This takes advantage of the fact that White's f-pawn has moved forwards by threatening to check on g3. It also prepares an ...e5 advance. After 8.exf7+ Bxf7 9.Qe2 (to stop 9...e5) Black has two methods of equalising:

- 9...Qg3+ 10.Qf2 Qxf2+ 11.Kxf2 Nd7 and if 12.Bf4 then 12...e5! (despite White's efforts to prevent this) 13.dxe5 Bc5+ 14.Kg2 Bd4.
- 9...Nd7 10.g5 (preparing 11.f4) 10...e5 (but Black gets this in first) 11.dxe5

Qxe5 12.Bf4 Qxe2+ 13.Nxe2 Ne7.

8.Bd3 Bf7?!

It is understandable that Black wishes to avoid White's queen gaining access to the g6 square after 8...Bxd3 9.Qxd3, but that was actually the lesser evil!

9.g5! Qd6?

He cannot release his king's bishop with 9...e5! 10.dxe5 and now 10...e6?, due to 11.g6 winning the other bishop.

Nonetheless 9...e5 was the way to go, as returning the pawn frees up the e6 square for his unfortunate queen's bishop. After the text move it will either be lost, or incarcerated permanently.



10.f4!

He has two equally good moves. This is the sadistic method, which prevents Black from ever playing ...e5 and so leaves his king's knight, king's rook and light squared bishop in an eternal prison.

The other decisive move was 10.g6! (which Black unsuccessfully tried to prevent with his previous move) when, after 10...Qg3+ 11.Kd2 Bxg6, White has 12.Ne2 Qg2

13.Rg1 and he wins a piece.

10...g6

This is forced, to stop White from playing his own pawn to this square.

11.Nf3 Bg7

This is the only kingside piece that he can develop...

12.Ne5

...and White forces him to exchange it off.

12...Bxe5 13.fxe5 Qc7 14.c3

Do not show this game to any impressionable junior players. White has made 11 pawn moves in his first 14 turns... and yet he has a completely won game!

14...c5

With the long term plan of attempting to develop his bishop via the e8-a4 diagonal.

15.Bb5+ Nc6 16.Rf1 cxd4 17.cxd4 a6 18.Bxc6+

White is, of course, not averse to exchanges because he will effectively be playing any ending with a three piece advantage.

18...bxc6 19.Qa4

Black still has the idea which was outlined in the note to his 14th move. White therefore prevents 19...c5.

19...Kf8

Black tries to insist upon this pawn advance...

20.b4!

...and White firmly says no!

20...Qb6 21.Be3 a5 22.Nd2 (Diagram)

22...Ra7

22...Qxb4 is very well met by 23.Qxc6 with threats to a8 and e6. White would also be able to counter it with 23.Qxb4 axb4 24.Nb3, intending 25.Bd2 Rb8 26.Nc5 in the same sadistic style in which he has conducted the game so far.



23.Rb1

Still angling for an endgame. He prepares 24.bxa5.

23...axb4 24.Qxb4 Qxb4 25.Rxb4 Rxa2

Black is now two pawns ahead...

26.Rb8+

...but three of his remaining four pieces cannot be developed.

26...Kg7 27.Ke2 Ra4 28.Nb3 Ra2+ 29.Bd2 Rb2 30.Rb7

Preparing to play his knight to c5 – probably after a preliminary 31.Ra1.

30...Nf6

Black accepts the inevitable, and decides to sacrifice a piece in a desperate, but futile, attempt to develop the other two.

31.gxf6+ exf6 32.exf6+!

A final accurate pawn capture.

32...Kf8

32...Kg8 would be met by 33.Ra1! when the threat of 34.Ra8+ wins Black's bishop. The same piece is also lost after the text move.

33.Rb8+ Be8 34.f7 Ke7 35.fxe8Q+ Rxe8 36.Rxe8+ 1-0

After 36...Kxe8 37.Nc5 Ke7 38.Nd3 White will be two pieces up, and all three of Black's extra pawns will be totally blockaded.



Owen And Me (Etc.)

David Mabbs



The photo shows myself and Owen Hindle at the prizegiving of the Appleby Frodingham tournament in Scunthorpe, 1960(?). Owen is second from the left, and I'm third from the left. Unusually, it is I who is wearing a cravat, and Owen who is wearing a tie!

Bob Wade teased us Londoners (Dave Rumens and me as juniors) that there was an excit-

ing new junior player from the provinces about to burst onto the scene. We found this hard to believe. Finally we met Owen, whose play was elegant, dreamy, superb: beautiful chess, a great talent and a thoroughly nice and unassuming person. Quite unlike us Londoners!! Owen and I played in a lot of events together, and became good friends.

In simultaneous displays [referring to the game against Tal given in *September's EP - Ed.*] I had previously played against Botvinnik (a draw) and against Keres (a loss) so, as will be seen, I go back a long way. (My grandfather was born in 1866, which sounds ridiculous!)

Talking of World Champions, I played in the same event as Boris Spassky in Leningrad in 1960. Obviously, I didn't play against him – my highest opponent was Florin Gheorghiu, who smashed me in 26 moves. I also played against Leonid Stein, but – I must be honest – this was not at chess but at football. This encounter was in the Helsinki Olympic Village in 1961. (The West beat the East 3-1.)

My chess has always been played 'in the moment'. One of my Lowestoft colleagues remarked recently that he'd been surprised by the opening that his frequent opponent chose on that particular evening, and I replied that he should think himself lucky, I'm regularly surprised by my own opening choices. In a tournament last year, I opened with 1.e3, and my opponent burst out "I've never seen that before!" – to which I replied, truthfully, "Nor have I."

One of my Saxmundham colleagues, who has a phenomenal chess memory, remembered an article called *Something New In The Max Lange* which majored on an interesting exchange sacrifice that I had made: he asked how long it took me to research this innovation, expecting me to say "months", and he was greatly taken aback and disappointed when I said "Well, I simply played it at the time – it looked interesting"

I quite enjoy being lazy. I don't have a chess computer, I don't study books, basically I just throw the pieces around. I must confess that I no longer have a burning chess ambition. I want to enjoy; I want to try to avoid making too many simple blunders; and it would be nice if I could stay just a smidgeon ahead of life's inexorable spiral of decline that drags down the gradings of old gits such as myself. (But that's probably asking for too much!)

Am I Losing? - Part 6

We have come to the final part of this series of articles where things are not as worrying as they appear at first glance. As last time, we feature moves which put an unexpected spoke in the wheel of the opponent's intentions.



This is from a 2004 County match game against Suffolk's Steve Gregory, who later became a team-mate of mine when I played for Anglian Avengers in the 4NCL.

White's position is pretty ropey. He has lost a pawn on the queenside and Black's rooks are also tying White down to the defence of the g-pawn on the kingside. Meanwhile, the black king in the centre seems fairly secure.

Black's queen looks a bit stuck, but he is actually threatening 21...Nxd3, since the c2 pawn is pinned against White's undefended queen. Even 21.Qd2 can be ignored as the threat to trap the black queen is not real. Black can play 21...a5! (21...Rg3 is also good, with similar intentions, and with the added benefit of attacking the e3 pawn) because 22.Ra1 can be met with 22...Nb3!! 23.Rxa2 Nxd2 and now 24.Rxa5 loses to 24...Nf3! exploiting the pin on the g2 pawn.

The solution lies in a powerful *intermezzi* which eventually leads to the lost pawn being regained.

21.Ra1! Nxd3

21...Qb2 is best met with 22.e4! which opens the queen's diagonal to a7 and so leads to a strong attack on the black king:

- a) 22...Nxd3? loses to 23.Qxa7+ and now:
- (i) after 23...Kd6 24.cxd3, preventing 25.Rab1 with 24...Rb8 leaves the rook on g7 without protection and

loses prettily to 25.e5+! fxe5 26.fxe5+ Kxe5 27.Qd4+.

- (ii) 23...Kf8 must be met by 24.Rg1! as 24.Rab1 allows Black to equalise with 24...Rxc2!, intending 25.Rxb2 Rxc2+ 26.Qxc2+ Rxc2+ 27.Kxc2 Nxb2 with an extra piece or 25.Rxc2 Qxb2+ with an extra piece. White would have to bail out with 25.Qb8+! Qxb8 26.Rxb8+ Ke7 27.Rxc2 Rxc2 and, with two pawns for the exchange and all of White's pawns vulnerable, Black stands better.

After 24.Rg1 Black must still play 24...Rxc2, but White emerges a rook ahead with 25.Rxb2 Nf2+ 26.Qxf2 Rxf2 27.Rb8+ as 27...Kg7 is met with 28.Rg1+.

- b) Therefore Black should protect his knight with 22...Qxc3 when White replies 23.Rxa7+ Kd6 24.exd5 cxd5 25.Rb1 threatening mate on b6 and the black king is under heavy pressure.

22.Qd2!

The black queen must move away and White can recapture the knight and probably take the a7 pawn with an equal game.

22...Rxc2?

This is the kind of brainstorm that can afflict a player who has seen his win go up in smoke.

If Steve spotted that 22...Qb2 23.Rg1! doesn't actually trap the black queen in view of 23...Nf2+! 24.Qxf2 Qxc3, coming out two pawns ahead, maybe he couldn't see a decent defence after the further 25.e4! which threatens to involve the white queen in the attack. Then a most wonderful line results in a spectacular draw when Black sacrifices both of his rooks for perpetual

check: 25...Rxc2! 26.Qxa7+ Kd6 27.e5+! fxe5 28.fxe5+ Qxe5 29.Qa3+ c5 30.Rb6+ Ke7 31.Qxc5+ Kf6 32.Rf1+ Kg5!! 33.Kxc2 Kh4+ 34.Kf2 Rg2+!! 35.Kxc2 Qg3+ 36.Kh1 Qxh3+ etc.. It is hardly possible to see all that while analysing over the board, of course.

If White wants a quieter life, he doesn't need to go after the queen with 23.Rgb1 but can play simply 23.Qxd3 and now Black must do something to save his queen. Safest is 23...Rb8 (23...Qb6 24.Rgb1 Qc7 25.Qa6 Rb8 26.Rxb8 Qxb8 27.Qxc6 is slightly better for White) 24.Rxa7+ Kf8 when material is equal, White has bad pawns but active pieces and the black king is heading for safety. Any result is possible.

The desperate move played leaves Black the exchange behind with a hopeless endgame.

23.Qxg2 Rxc2 24.Rxa2 Rxc1+ 25.Kxg1 Nc5 26.Rxa7+ Nd7 27.Kf2 Kd6 28.Kg3 f5 29.Kh4 Nf6 30.Rxf7 Ne4 31.Kxh5 Nxc3 32.Kg6 Nd1 33.h4 Nxe3 34.h5 Ng2 35.Kg5 Ne1 36.h6 Nf3+ 37.Kh5 e5 38.h7 1-0



The final example is a little different. I am playing the black pieces in a Norfolk League game from 2007. Here both players are attacking, but White's attack is stymieing Black's. In turn, Black finds a remarkable way to stymie White's attack and rekindle his own, but then misses a further refinement and White is on top again. The game staggers on and White blunders into a mate.

The white queen on d7 – which can be reinforced by the rook coming down the

b-file – is attacking the bishop on e7, and now there seems to be no good move:

- a) 24...Rg5? would be clever (25.Nxc5 allows 25...Qxh2 mate) but it comes to grief against 25.Qe6+ Rf7 (25...Kh8 26.Qxe7 forks the two rooks) 26.Rb8+ Bf8 27.Qxf7+! Kxf7 28.Nxc5+ forking king and queen and emerging two rooks ahead!
- a) 24...Rf7 fails to 25.Bxf4! Bf8 (25...Rxf4? 26.Qxe7 threatens 27.Rb8 mate and 26...h6 doesn't help because after 27.Rb8+! Kh7 28.Rb7 there is no good way to prevent mate on g7 because now 28...Rg5 29.Nxc5 is check) 26.Qe6 Nxf2 27.Nd4! (27.Qxh3?? Nxc3+ wins the bishop on f4) Qxe6 28.Nxe6 Nh3+ 29.Kg2 Nxf4+ 30.Rxf4 when White has an extra pawn and the better minor piece.
- c) 24...Bh4 25.Qe6+ Kh8 also allows 27.Bxf4! thanks to back rank mate and now 27...Nxf2 loses to 28.Qxd6 Rd8 29.Rb8! when White emerges with two extra pawns.
- d) 24...Bf6 allows 25.Bxf4 protecting h2.
- e) 24...Bg5 is met spectacularly by 25.Rb7 Bh6 26.Bxf4!! and the bishop is immune thanks to two different mates.
- f) 24...Rh5 25.Qe6+ Rf7 26.Rb8+ Bf8 27.Rxf8+! Kxf8 28.Rb1 g6 29.Bc3 and the black king will not survive without big material loss.

Astonishingly, Black is actually winning here if he finds the right move...

24...Re5!!

Black protects the bishop, prevents Qe6+ and attacks the white e2 pawn (thus undermining the knight on f3) – all with one move. Naturally the rook cannot be taken on pain of mate on h2.

It is hard to find a move for White now:

- a) 25.Rfe1 allows 25...Bh4 and f2 collapses with decisive effect.
- b) 25.Qb7 allows the e2 pawn to go but protects the knight on f3. Taking the

pawn on e2 is a decent path to a win, but I couldn't resist giving you a more spectacular variation, namely 25...Rf6 (threatening 26...Rg6) 26.Kh1 Nxb2! 27.Nxb2 f3! 28.exf3 (or the very nice 28.Rg1 Rh5! 29.Rxg7+ Kh8!! and White must give up his queen by 30.Qc8+ to avoid mate) 28...Rg6! (after 28...Rh5 29.Qd5+ gives up the queen to delay mate) 29.Rg1 Qxb2+! 30.Kxb2 Rh5 mate.

Therefore the only reasonable move is to protect the e2 pawn with the b1 rook, but that removes White's threats of back rank mate and attacks on g7 and so frees Black from many of the difficulties that he faced in the diagram.

25.Rbe1 Rd8?

The time trouble play that follows is full of errors and missed opportunities for both players.

I was hoping to make 25...Rg5!! work, but after 26.Qxe7 I missed the beautiful little retreat 26...Rg6! and White is helpless against a discovered attack by the knight. E.g 27.Kh1 Nxb2! with a quick mate.

I won't give analysis of the moves up to the

time control, which both players would rather forget. I'll just indicate where we went wrong, but not how.

**26.Qxa7? g5? 27.Bc3? Re6?
28.Qa5? d5? 29.cxd5? Rh6 30.d6
Rdx6 31.Qa8+??**

The move after the time control and a disastrous, unnecessary, check. 31.Qf5! pins the knight to the queen and so prevents the coming combination. 31...Nxf2! 32.Qxb3 Nxb3+ 33.Kg2 Rc6 is likely to be a draw as Black's active pieces give him compensation for the pawn.

31...Rd8 32.Qe4



32...Nxb2! 33.Nxg5 Nf3+! 0-1

It will be mate on h2 or h1.

An Opening Courtesy Of Erwin L'Ami

Geoff Moore

This was only my third OTB game since being hit by gout last October. Unusually for me, I played all three Saturday rounds at a weekend tournament; normally I take a bye in the evening, but I was keen to actually play chess.

While coming to terms with gout, also called inflammatory arthritis, and, for me, one of the consequences of being infected with the bacteria that cause whooping cough for four years, instead of playing chess I studied it. I mentioned in an article in the October 2017 issue of EP that I had purchased a laptop and some ChessBase software, but I had struggled with understanding how to use some of the ChessBase functions. Confined to home, I thought now is the time to remedy this.

Those who use ChessBase will know it's possible to construct databases of openings so as to create your own repertoire database. This was one of the things I had struggled with but eventually cracked earlier this year. Having done so, I decided to explore a different opening repertoire to the ones I have been using in recent years. So, against 1.e4, I would leave (for now) the Modern, French and the Caro-Kann alone, and see if I could cope with 1...e5.

There is a lot to do to construct a complete repertoire with 1.e4 e5, and I soon got bogged down with different books recommending different lines. To help me through I started looking at some of the ChessBase opening videos; and there is a huge number of them. I've not previously been a fan of opening videos but I found that with the right presenter they can be very useful.

Unfortunately, I think many of the ChessBase presenters I have seen are not so good. One of the best is GM Erwin L'Ami, and it was he who gave me the surprising line I played in this game.

Peter Finn - Geoff Moore

EACU Closed Championship Round 3,
23.3.2019

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 4.Ng5
d5 5.exd5 Na5 6.Bb5+ c6 7.dxc6
bxc6**



This is a famous position from the Two Knight's Defence. Now 8.Be2 and 8.Bd3 are apparently the common moves, with Nikolaos Nitrilis giving the latter an ! in his book *Playing 1.e4 e5: A Classical Repertoire* (Quality Chess, 2016). Nitrilis says 8.Qf3 is a less-common move, but the 2019 edition of the Mega Database of games has 3,545 with 8.Be2, 1,175 with 8.Bd3 and 1,693 with 8.Qf3, with some of the latter played by strong GMs in the past few years.

8.Qf3 cxb5!?

This is the surprising move. All the books I have recommend Black offering another pawn with 8...Be7 9.Bxc6+?! Nxc6 10.Qxc6+ Bd7 11.Qf3 with Black having compensation for the two pawn deficit.

L'Ami relates that he was analysing the opening with his computer in preparation for his video when he went to the kitchen to make a coffee and got distracted. He said it

was some time before he got back to his computer and in his absence the engine had continued analysing and had 8...cxb5 as Black's best move. L'Ami said he didn't believe it could be at first but the more he looked at it the more convinced he became that White would have serious practical problems to solve in a game if Black followed it up correctly.

It was interesting for me that a few weeks before this game I showed the line to Mike Read, who typically remarked that it was considered in some of his books and was thought to be good for White. Within minutes he had found the book [Harding and Botterill, *The Italian Game* (Batsford, 1977)] and the analysis. They credited the Russian player Estrin with the line they gave that busted 8...cxb5. The Estrin line starts with 9.Qxa8 Qd7?! but I had a different line to play. There are 47 games in the Mega Database with 8...cxb5 (White scoring just under 50%) but none of them followed the analysis L'Ami gave, and many of them featured white blunders early on so were not proper tests of the line. And indeed, some of them followed the Estrin analysis and were won by White.

9.Qxa8 Be7

This is the start of the L'Ami line. It has only been played in two games in the Mega Database, both old correspondence games, and neither continued as my game or the L'Ami analysis does. Until now White had played touch chess and with the increments had more time on his clock than he started with. Now, though, he thought for 17 minutes.

10.d3

One predecessor went: 10.0–0 Nd5 11.Nf3 0–0 12.Nc3 Nf4 13.d3 Nxc2 14.Qe4 Bb7 15.Qe2 f5 16.Kxc2 and White won in Panchenko-Mazurenko Ukraine 1964. 10.Qxa7? fails to 10...Nc6 and if 11.Qe3 Nd5 and White's knight on g5 is lost.

10...Qd7?!

It's all well and good having opening analysis in a database but it needs to be in your head. Here L'Ami gives 10...0–0, and with black's king secure its time to start active play.

11.Qf3!

I was threatening to trap the queen with 11...Nc6 so this is best. Now I want to get my knight from a5 to d4.

11...Nc6 12.c3 0–0 13.0–0



Now we have both castled it's time to take stock.

I am the exchange and a pawn down but in compensation I have a lead in development, the two bishops and, if I can manage it, good diagonals for the bishops to sit on hitting White's kingside. Also. White's queen and the knight on g5 are not well placed, meaning that he can't immediately continue his queen-side development and, when he does get round to it, c3 is not available for his knight.

And two final, related points that I believe are very relevant: White picked this opening to attack me, not defend, and he may have difficulties in coming to terms with this. The related point is that he had already used 31 minutes compared with my six, and I had

studied this kind of position in my preparation so felt comfortable with it.

13...Bb7 14.Qh3

14.Ne4 Nd5 was what I expected at the time but Fritz found the excellent resource for White of 15.Bg5 when if 15...f5 16.Bxe7 and I don't have 16...fxe4 so I guess 15...f6 is what I would have played.

14...Qc7 15.f4

This surprised me but perhaps ties in with the point I made earlier about who the attacker is in this game. I think it must be better to develop with, say, 15.Nd2. White is still better after 15.f4 says Fritz (though the material imbalance renders its evaluation questionable I think).

15...Bc8 16.Qg3 h6 17.Ne4 Nh5 18.Qf3 Nxf4 19.Bxf4 exf4 20.Qxf4 Qd8

Fritz says I should play 20...Qxf4 but I never considered it.

21.d4 f5 22.Ng3 Bd6 23.Qf2 Ne7

This knight is headed for f4 and, if I can hold it there, then I intend to play ...g5 and use my pawns to batter my way in to his king's position with the bishops eagerly awaiting the diagonals to open further.

24.Nd2 Nd5 25.Rfe1

I was pleased to see this as my knight comes to f4 threatening a fork on d3 but Fritz thinks it's an OK move.

25...Nf4 26.Qf1 Bb7

Threatening to take the g2 pawn.

27.Nf3 a6



Time to take stock again. I am still an exchange and a pawn down but my bishops are great, and my knight on f4 superbly placed. I envisaged White developing his rook on a1 via the a-file after pushing a4, but there was nothing sensible I could do to stop it. It seemed to me at the time that his knights on f3 and g3 were excellent targets for my kingside pawns and I planned to harry them. Importantly, he had 16 minutes (plus 15 second increments) to the time control at move 36 compared with my 31 minutes.

28.a4 bxa4 29.Red1

Here I expected 29.Rxa4 when I was planning 29...g5. Fritz thinks 29.Rxa4 is right too but wants me to go 29...Qb6 in reply. I now guessed that the point of 26.Qf1 and 29.Red1 is to play c4 and d5 to close off the b7-g2 diagonal. I was happy about that because it would mean that the c5-g1 diagonal gets opened.

29...g5 30.c4 g4 31.Ne1 Qh4 32.d5?

Both Fritz and I think 32.d5 is a mistake. Fritz says 32.c5 Bb8 33.Rxa4 (and White is better) while it says 32.Rxa4 Nh5 is equal. At the time I thought I was going to crash through on the king-side and, though I wasn't clear how, I felt I had lots of possibilities and White was in serious trouble. Even now, with Fritz telling me Black is only equal if White does not play accurately, I would prefer to be Black.

32...Nh5



Finally Fritz says Black has the advantage, albeit a small one.

It initially claimed 33.Qf2 is equal (awarding the move an !) but after 33...Bxg3 34.hxg3 Nxc3 it failed to find a decent move for White. Black threatens 35...Qh1 mate - which I had seen during the game - and as far as I can see White can only prevent this by fatally exposing his king. For example, 35.Qb6 f4 36.Qg6+ Kh8 37.Kf2 Bc8 and if 38.Rd3 then Bf5 with an eventual ...f3 to follow. Mike Read suggested 35...Qh1+ 36.Kf2 Qf1+ sacrificing another piece and it turns out he is right, though I hadn't considered this during the game. After 37.Kxc3 f4+ 38.Kh4 Qh1+ 39. Kxc4 Bc8+ White is going to have to give up his queen to avoid an immediate mate. Once Fritz became convinced that 33.Qf2 isn't equal it eventually chose what White played as the best continuation.

33.Rd3 Bc8

I spent five minutes on this move and after it I had 15 minutes to the time control at move 36, compared with White's three minutes.

What I was concerned about was having my attack beaten off by White giving up material, and then going into a complex ending. I wanted to have a decisive material advantage or an overwhelming endgame advantage if I couldn't get mate! Also, I thought obvious moves, like 33...Nxc3 34.Rxc3 f4 would only help White as his replies are forced. I also thought 33...Bc8 was sensible because after ...f4 displaces his knight on g3 he would have to worry about my bishop coming to f5, or (and here is my old Kings Indian Defence study coming into play) if he played h3 after I had gone...f4 and...g3 maybe I would have a ...Bxh3 sacrifice.

34.Nf3?

This took White a minute and I guess he just wanted some forcing moves to get to the time control, and a simplification of the position.

34. Rxa4 is a mistake as now 34...Nxc3. 35.Rxc3 f4 is decisive. However, Fritz still thinks White is slightly better after 32.Qf2!

Maybe, but when I used the assisted-analysis function of Fritz to try to understand why, the following line is typical of those Fritz came back with: 34.Qf2 Nf6 35.Nc2 f4 36.Ne4 g3 37.hxg3 fxg3 38.Rxg3+ Ng4 39.Rxg4+ Qxg4 40.Qd4 Rf4 41.Nf6+ Rxf6 42.Qxf6 Bc5+ 43.Kh2 Qh5+ 44.Kg3 Qg4+ 45.Kh2 Qh5+ 46.Kg3 Qg4+ 47.Kh2 Qh5+ 48.Kg3 with equality.

34...gxf3 35.Qxf3 Nxc3 36.hxg3

Fritz gives this a ? preferring 36.Qf2, but I couldn't find anything a human would play after this.

36...Bc5+ 37.Re3

37.Kf1? is met by 37...Qh1+ picking up the white rook on a1 to go two bishops up and without a check for White.

37...Qxc4

I couldn't see how to exploit the pin on the rook with 37...Qd4 or 37...Qg5 to give me an easily won position so took the c4 pawn with a view to weakening his passed d-pawn and giving my bishop on c8 some space to work in. We have now reached the time control and had an extra 10 minutes added to our times. And that's it, apart from the 15 second increments per move, for the rest of the game. So White is likely to be in time trouble again soon; I have 20 minutes on the clock compared to his 10.

38.Kh2 Bxe3 39.Qxe3 f4

I had to stop 40.Qxh6 with prospects of perpetual check, and eventually I realised 39...f4 would lead to the exchange of queens leaving me with an easily won ending. If White tries to avoid the queen exchange I get a mating attack. For example, if 40.Qb6

then 40...fxg3+ 41.Kg1 Qh4 with ...Qh2 to come, or 41.Kxg3 Qf4 mate.

40.Qf3 fxg3+ 41.Qxg3+ Bg4 42.Re1 Qf4 43.d6 Qxg3+ 44.Kxg3 Bd7

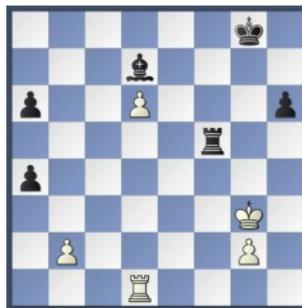
I have a decisive material advantage and just have to be careful that I don't get left with just the bishop and one or more a pawns with his king close to a1.

45.Rd1

45.Re7 is met with 45...Rf7 and it's not easy to find a move for white. After, say 46.Re5, 46...Rf6 forces 47.Rd5 and Black can then march his king to the d-file, move the bishop and play ...Kd7 when White's d pawn falls.

45...Rf5

I was, and am, pleased with this move. It stops his king approaching my h pawn and prepares for me to march my king to e8, play Bd7-e6-d5 and Kd7 rounding up his d-pawn.



46.Rd2 Kf8 47.Kh4 Ke8 48.g4

What else can White do?

48...Rg5 49.Rd4 Rxg4+ 50.Rxg4 Bxg4 51.Kxg4 Kd7 0-1

He can have the h-pawn now as my king will capture his d-pawn, then his b-pawn, and prevent his king from approaching a1.



Norfolk Challengers Unofficial Best Game

SIM Mike Read

Not all of the really good chess at the Norfolk Championships gets played by competitors in the upper echelons of the Championship section. In fact, in 2018 a game from the Challengers section was joint winner of the Best Game prize, while in 2017 a Challengers

game won the prize outright.

You will have seen earlier in this issue that this year's £20 prize went to Jeff Dawson, as a Championship encounter was sole Best Game for the first time since 2016. However, that does not by any means suggest that there was not some great play in the lower section.

Two games from the Challengers really stood out. One was David May's tactical masterclass against St John's clubmate Joseph Grant which your editor has looked at in the main Championships report. That game was, of course, a very fine one but even better and therefore unofficial Challengers best game was the one annotated below.

Most readers will know that Chris Tuffin has not been in the best of health over the past year or two. It was therefore extremely pleasing to see him looking well recovered, and back playing chess again after his enforced break. He was undefeated over the weekend and in a tie for second place in the tournament. He was at the peak of his form in his Round four encounter with Norfolk's under-120 team captain Bob Grindrod, where he rounded off a sparkling attack with a beautifully calculated, and absolutely crushing, knight sacrifice.

Sadly, he does not receive a prize for this fine effort, but I hope that seeing his game in this magazine goes some of the way to compensating for that. [*You'll have to get him to subscribe, then, Mike! - Ed.*]

Bob Grindrod - Chris Tuffin

Norfolk Championship Challengers
Round 4 6.10.2019

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 Bf5 4.Be2

White plays the opening hesitantly. In the 17th game of his 1935 World Championship match against Max Euwe, Alekhine played 4.Bd3 here, and after 4...e6 5.Bxf5 exf5 6.Qd3 Qc8 7.b3 he had the possibility of a pawn push too c4 lined up, and therefore had some hopes of gaining an advantage from the opening.

4...e6 5.c4 c6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.Bd3

By taking two moves to get his bishop to this square, he has lost the tempo that White begins the game with. Therefore Black is already equal at this early stage of the encounter.

7...Bxd3 8.Qxd3 Nbd7 9.0-0 Bd6

Black is quickly developing all of his pieces.

10.b3

His plan of a minority attack is in line with the demands of the position. However, he could have saved another tempo by starting with 10.a3, and then playing his pawn directly from b2 to b4 on his next turn.

10...Qe7 11.a3 0-0 12.b4 a6

He has the time to prevent White from making his planned advance to b5.

13.Bb2 Ne4!

Because of the speed at which he developed all of his units, Black is able to begin playing the middle game while White is still completing the opening phase of his game.

14.Nbd2 f5 15.Nb3 Ng5

He decides to attack on the kingside. An equally valid idea was queenside play with 15...Nb6, intending to answer 16.Ne5 with 16...Bxe5 17.dxe5 Nc4.

16.Ne5?

Better, though scary looking in view of his sparsely defended kingside, was 16.Nxg5 Qxg5 17.Nc5. the text move contains a flaw, albeit a very difficult one to spot.

16...f4? (See Diagram)

The only blemish on his play in the entire game. After 16...Nxe5 17.dxe5 Bxe5 18.Bxe5 Qxe5 he does, indeed, win a pawn because White's intended 19.f4 can be answered safely by the counterthrust 19...Qe4! when Black saves both his queen and knight.

17.Rfe1?

Once again the best move, which is 17.exf4!



looks frightening as 17...Rxf4 brings Black's rook close to White's king. However, after 18.Rae1! White's play in the centre would be sufficient for him to be able to claim a balanced position. The text move allows Black to carry out a deeply calculated attack.

17...f3!

A very strong move. White's reply is virtually forced because 18.gxf3? allows 18...Bxe5 19.dxe5 Nxf3+. Note that 17...Nxe5? 18.dxe5 Bxe5?? would now have lost to 19.exf4!

18.g3 Nh3+ 19.Kf1

This is clearly a forced move.

19...Nxe5 20.dxe5 Bxe5 21.Bxe5 Qxe5

The position has clarified. Black has won a pawn, and his attack is becoming ever more powerful.

22.Nd4 Qh5! (See Diagram)

Another extremely strong move. It forces a win in all lines.

23.Qd1

He spots the threat of 23...Nf4!, which would have won the queen or checkmated



him. However, the lightning will now strike on another square. We will examine White's alternatives at this point after the game. Suffice it to say that they all lose.

23...Nxf2!

Deadly! 24.Kxf2 allows mate in two, and so does any move that saves his queen.

24.Qd2 Qh3+ 0-1

Let us return to the last diagram and examine how White's other 23rd moves would have been dealt with:

- 23.Rec1 (or any other rook move that gives the king the e1 square to run to) 23...Nxf2! 24.Kxf2 Qxh2+ 25.Ke1 Rae8! 26.Kd1 (the threat was 26...f2+ 27.Kf1 Qg1+ 28.Ke2 f1Q+! 29.Rxf1 Qg2+ 30.Ke1 Rxe3+! 31.Qxe3 Rxf1 mate) 26...Rxe3! 27.Qxe3 f2 and Black obtains a second queen.
- 23.Qc2 Ng5! (vacating the h3 square for use by the queen) 24.h4 Qg4 25.Rec1 Qh3+ 26.Ke1 Ne4! (threatening 27...Qh1 mate) 27.Qd3 (the only move) 27...Nxf2! and Black has won a second pawn, since 28.Kxf2 Qg2+ 29.Ke1 f2+ is curtains for White.

My Ten Year Tenure

To celebrate ten years under new management (founder editor John Charman gave over the *En Passant* reins to me after 14 years at the helm) I thought I would present you with a quiz-cum-guessing game based on the 120 issues published in those ten years (not counting this issue). A large number of you have been subscribing to *En Passant* for all of those ten years, and more. You might be able to make rather more informed guesses than the more recent newcomers to "everyone's favourite magazine" (as dubbed by Mike Read).

1. Who has been Norfolk Champion most times (2009-2018)?
2. Which team has been Norfolk League Division 1 Champions most (2010- 2019)?
3. Compared with 2009/10 which teams are no longer present, and which have disappeared up to 2018/19?
4. What is the most and least number of sides in the Norfolk League in those seasons?
5. Which Norfolk sides have won the Norfolk and Suffolk Cup in those seasons?
6. How has the Norfolk county first team fared in those seasons?
7. Which other Norfolk adult county sides have won national honours in that time?
8. Which Norfolk players have been British Champions (in age or rating groups) in that time?
9. How many EP subscribers have there been in each of those ten years?
10. How many annotations has Mike Read done for EP in those 120 issues?
11. How many tactical puzzles (of any kind) have been in those 120 issues?
12. How many errors has Mike Read corrected at proof stage?

Answers:

1. Twice each: Roy Hughes ('13 and '16), Mike Gough ('10 and '11) and Stephen Orton ('14 and '17). Once each: Mike Harris ('09), Caius Turner ('12), Gordon Scott ('15) and Gerald Moore ('18).
2. Norfolk & Norwich A (6 times); Broadland Bitterns (3) and Thetford Checks (1) are the other Champions.
3. In: Aylsham, St Johns Knaves and Bishops, Lowestoft B, DONs Daredevils.
Out: Diss, Lowestoft ESCCG, Yarmouth's second team. (*There may be more!*)
Norfolk & Norwich's teams have changed names, but there are still 4.
4. Least: 25 (2017/18). Most 30 (2012/13).
5. Norfolk & Norwich won it in 2011.12; Broadland won it twice: in 2014/15 and 2016/17.
6. It won the regional group 3 times, came second twice and third five times. It won the national Minor Counties title in 2012, and only once failed to make the knockout stages of either the Open or Minor Counties championships.
7. The under-120 County side won the national title in 2018.
8. Gordon Scott won the Under-15 British Championship in 2010, Ieysaa Bin-Suhayl won the Under-9 title in 2013 and your editor won the Over-65 title (tied with five others!) In 2015. Terry Turner won the Under-180 (that's grade, not age!) title in 2010. Also Paul Talsma (Norwich DONs) won the Major Open in 2010 and Jonathan Wells won the Week 1 Morning Open in 2013 and the Week 2 Afternoon Open in 2015.
9. Of course, you would have no idea, but for your information, it was: Vol 15: 92 (inherited from John Charman), Vol 16: 97; Vol 17: 100; Vol 18: 111; Vol 19: 101; Vol 20: 98; Vol 21: 92; Vol 22: 91; Vol 23: 93; Vol 24: 96. An interesting graph!
10. If my counting is correct (looking quickly through 120 issues) I reckon it's 252, or an average of more than two annotations per issue. Thanks Mike (from all our readers, too)!
11. If my counting is correct (again): 282. That includes problems as well as the Tactics pages.
12. Mike corrects only my typing, not my analysis. I reckon it's at least 15 errors per issue. That's getting probably 2,000+ errors across 120 issues that you have been spared. He will also be checking this page! Thanks again, Mike!

Here's to many more issues of *En Passant!*

Norfolk Championships Tactics

A set of six neat tactics from the Norfolk Championships. Solutions are below, upside-down. W= White to play. B= Black to play.

1:W



2:W



3:W



4:B



5:W



6:B



Solutions

1 19.Nxd5! Bxe3+ 20.Nxe3 1-0 (Walker-Pullinger).
 2 24.Rxg7! won a pawn and broke through to the black king because 24...Rxg7 loses back the rook to 25.Qxh6 (Harland-S.Moore).
 3 32.f4! forced 32...Rg3 (32...Rc5 allows mate in two while 32...Rxf4 loses to 33.Bc2+ Kg8 34.Rc8+ Rf8 35.Bb3+ etc) when 33.Kh2 trapped the rook. (D.Moore-Weston, Challengers).
 4 26...Ng3+! 27.hxg3 (27.Kg2 Nxe2 and if 28.Rxe2 then 28...Nf4+ wins the queen) 27...hxg3 28.Qxh8 Rxh8+ 29.Kg2 gxh2 with a massive material advantage to Black (Danger-Owen).
 5 22.Nxb5! cxb5 23.Rc3 Nc5 24.Qxb5! and White emerged two pawns ahead and still attacking (Ansell-Danger).
 6 40...g4! White had to jettison the h-pawn in view of 41.hxg4 Nxg4! 42.fxg4 (or 42.Rh1 Nc3+) 42...Rxg4+ 43.Kf2 Bh4+ winning the rook on g1. (Barnes-Dempster).



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