

# ChessLife

## FROM INMATE TO CHECKMATE

**Hollywood actor Woody Harrelson visited HMP Wormwood Scrubs in support of Chess in Schools and Communities' prison programme**

ISSN 0964-6221



Wei Above Expectations – Yochanan Afek reports on Wei Yi's triumph at Wijk aan Zee



Fischer vs. Karpov – Graff, Pandolfini and Pritchett on the match that never was



Not as Easy as it Seems – Brian Escalante on endgames that seem deceitfully simple

# Chess

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# Wood Green Pull Clear

The best of the action from the first three 4NCL weekends of the current season

## Weekend One – Milton Keynes

The first 4NCL weekend of the season can feel a little isolated, being these days the only one staged before Christmas. Still, a decent start is usually essential if a team wants to have a good season, something Wood Green supremo Lawrence Cooper was fully aware of, as well as relieved when his main Wood Green side triumphed 6-2 against Wood Green Youth. Neither side could be described as weak, Wood Green averaging 2429 to their youthful second team's 2362. Crucially the senior side held all four games as Black, while Jon Speelman, Conor Murphy, Matthew Wadsworth and Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant had good wins as White.

### M. Wadsworth-M. Czopor

Wood Green vs Wood Green Youth  
*Queen's Gambit Declined*

**1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗f3 d5 4 ♗c3 ♗bd7 5 ♙f4 dxc4 6 e3 b5!? 7 ♗xb5 ♙b4+ 8 ♗c3 ♗d5 9 a3!**

A crafty little move.

**9...♗xc3**

By no means forced. 9...♙xc3+ 10 bxc3 ♗xc3?! 11 ♖c2 ♗d5 12 ♙g3 clearly favours White, but Black might consider 9...♙a5!?, and if 10 ♖c1 ♖b8 or 10 ♙xc4 ♗xc3 11 ♖d2 ♗b6.

**10 ♖d2 ♗d5 11 axb4 ♗xf4 12 exf4 ♗b6 13 ♙e2 0-0 14 0-0 ♙b7 15 ♖fd1 ♖d6 16 ♙a5!?**



A new try and improvement over 16 ♗e5 a6 17 ♖a1 (17 ♖a5!) 17...♖fb8 18 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 19 ♙xc4 ♙d5 20 ♖c5 ♖b6 21 ♖dc1 c6, which led to a draw in Smirnov-Karjakin, FIDE World Cup, Tbilisi 2017.



IM Matthew Wadsworth is ever well prepared and has scored 4½/6 so far for Wood Green.

**16...g6?!**

Wadsworth is quick to exploit this weakening, although even after, for instance, 16...a6 17 ♗e5 ♙d5 18 ♖c5!?. White looks to be slightly better.

**17 h4! ♖ab8 18 ♗e5 ♙d5 19 ♖c1 ♖b7 20 h5!**

The middlegame is not going well for the Polish FM, coming under pressure on both the kingside and c4.

**20...♖d8 21 h6**

The cramping 21 b5!? followed by ♖a3-h3 might have been even stronger than this AlphaZero style advance.

**21...♖f8 22 f5!**

Wadsworth continues to play with great energy with his pawns.

**22...exf5 23 ♗xc4**



**23...♙e6?**

There would have been a lot of suffering in store for Black after 23...♗xc4 24 ♙xc4 ♙xc4 25 ♖xc4 ♖e7 26 ♖ac5, but the text move loses material.

**24 ♗e5!**

Teeing up ♗c6 and ♙a6 in some order.

**24...♗d5 25 ♙f3**

The pin's going to be a winner unless Black prefers to allow White to crash through with 25...♖b6 26 ♙xd5 ♙xd5 27 ♖xc7.

**25...♖d6 26 ♖cc5 ♖d8**



**27 ♗c6**

27 ♙xd5! ♙xd5 (or 27...♖xd5 28 ♗c6) 28 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 29 ♗c6 would have been an immediate game-ender.

**27...♖d7 28 ♖xd5! ♙xd5 29 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 30 ♙xd5**

With the bishop immune due to the check on e7, White has simply annexed two minor pieces for the rook and while continuing to dominate the board.

**30...♙f8 31 ♙f3 ♖b6 32 ♖c3 ♖d6 33 d5 f6 34 ♖c4 g5 35 g3 g4 36 ♙e2 a6 37 ♖c3 ♙f7 38 ♙c4 ♙g6 39 ♖e3 f4 40 gxf4 ♙xh6 41 ♖g3**

The remainder can only have been pure agony for Czopor who might well have resigned here having reached the time control.

**41...f5 42 ♖h4+ ♙g7 43 ♖g5+ ♖g6 44 ♖e7+ ♙h6 45 ♙d3 ♙h5 46 ♙h2! ♖h6 47 ♙g3 1-0**

Round 2 saw Wood Green again remain unbeaten as they overcame Celtic Tigers 5½-2½, while Wood Green Youth demolished Alba 6½-1½. That round also saw some big results. The Saturday matches had gone with rating (Manx Liberty 5-3 Blackthorne, Chessable White Rose I 7½-½ Chessable White Rose II, Cheddleton 5-3 Barnet, The

Sharks 6½-1½ Oxford), and with Alba exploiting a bit of fortune to edge out Celtic Tigers 4½-3½ to lay down a marker that the Scottish side could pull clear of any relegation battle.

Notably The Sharks looked pretty strong and had sensed they had a definite chance in their second-round clash with defending champions Manx Liberty, who were slightly weaker than sometimes at the top end due to a sub-optimal clash with the European Team Championships. The match turned when Daniel Fernandez exploited a slip from Mircea-Emilian Parligras to turn around his game (no.22 in last month's *Find the Winning Moves*), going on to win. Harry Grieve ground down Polish GM Piotr Bobras and Kamila Hryshchenko won too as The Sharks secured a big 5-3 success, despite Pawel Jaracz's win for Manx on board 2.

**P.Roberson-P.Jaracz**  
The Sharks vs Manx Liberty  
*Sicilian Najdorf*

**1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 a6 6 ♖g1 e5 7 ♗b3 ♙e6 8 g4 h6 9 ♙e3 ♗bd7 10 f3 b5**

10...♗b6!? also looks decent, with the value of ♖g1 perhaps debatable in this English Attack style position.

**11 h4 b4 12 ♗d5 ♙xd5 13 exd5 ♗b6 14 ♙xb6?**

By far the lesser evil was 14 ♗d3!? ♗xfxd5 15 0-0-0 ♙e7 16 g5, which supplied some compensation back in Shirov-Lautier, Monaco (blindfold, rapid) 1997.

**14...♗xb6 15 ♖g2 ♗e3+**



Beginning to exploit Black's dark-square domination.

**16 ♙e2 ♗f4 17 ♗d2!? ♗g3+?!**

After the cold-blooded 17...♗xf3! 18 0-0-0 ♗xg4 19 ♗d4 ♙e7 20 ♗c6 ♙d8 it's very hard to believe that Black wouldn't have been significantly better.

**18 ♙f2 ♙e7 19 0-0-0 0-0 20 ♖b1 ♗xh4 21 ♗a5! e4!**

The experienced Polish GM continues to fight hard for the initiative.

**22 ♗c6 ♙fe8 23 ♗h2 ♗g5**

Arguably letting White off the hook a little and 23...e3! 24 ♗e2 ♗g5 followed by ...a5 was likely a better approach.

**24 ♗xg5 hxg5 25 ♙e2?**



25 ♙e2! was the way to minimise the damage and leave White with good chances to hold.

**25...a5?!**

Holding on to b4 ahead of going ...♙d8, but Black actually missed a noteworthy opportunity here: 25...exf3! 26 ♙xe7 ♗xg4 would have left Black with three pawns for the piece, as well as a whopping 4-0 kingside majority. The engines consider that this should be decisive: for example, 27 ♖c1 g6 28 ♗d2 ♙xe7 29 ♗xe7+ ♖g7 30 ♗c6 f5 31 ♗xb4 ♙h8 32 ♙xa6 ♙h2+ 33 ♖c3 ♗f2 34 ♙e1 g4 when the black pawns are just too powerful.

**26 ♙de1?**

Returning the favour and missing 26 fxe4! ♙f8 (or 26...♗xg4 27 ♙h3!) 27 e5! dxe5 28 ♗xe5 when 28...♙d6 29 ♗c4 ♙ed8 would only have been slightly better for Black.

**26...♙f8 27 ♙g2?!**

This doesn't especially help, but even 27 fxe4 ♗xg4 28 ♙g2 ♗f6 29 ♙d3 g4 leaves Black in control.

**27...♗xd5 28 ♙xe4 ♙ec8! 29 ♗d4 g6**

A natural enough move, but continuing the policy of activation with 29...♗f4! 30 ♙f1 d5 31 ♙e5 f6 32 ♙5e3 ♙c5 would just have been very strong.

**30 ♙f1 ♗f4 31 ♗b5?**

The decisive mistake. Instead, 31 ♙b5! followed by ♙e8 would have retained some chances to draw.

**31...d5 32 ♙d4 ♙c5**

White's knight is in trouble and Black dominates the board.

**33 a4 bxa3 34 ♗xa3 ♙b8 35 ♙a4 ♙g7**



Black is winning, with not only late middlegame attacking chances, but also the only bishop which really influences

proceedings.

**36 b3 ♙f6 37 ♖a2 ♙c3 38 ♙d1 ♗e6 39 ♗b3! 42 ♗xd5 ♙xf3 43 ♗xf6+ ♙xf6 44 ♙xd4 ♙f1** would have been a won endgame for Black.

This doesn't help, but even 41 ♗c3!? ♙xb3! 42 ♗xd5 ♙xf3 43 ♗xf6+ ♙xf6 44 ♙xd4 ♙f1 would have been a won endgame for Black.

**41...♗c6 42 ♖b1 ♙e5 43 ♙d3 ♗b4 44 ♙e2 ♖g7 45 ♙a3 ♙f4! 46 cxd5 ♙c2**

At last the decisive breakthrough arrives.

**47 ♙xa5 ♙xd2 48 ♙a4 ♙c3 49 ♙xb4 ♙b2+ 50 ♖c1 ♙xb4 51 ♙c4 ♙a2 52 ♙d3 ♙f6 53 d6 ♙b8 54 b4 ♙c8 55 ♖b1 ♙b2+ 0-1**



*The legend that is Alexei Shirov has now won a stunning 12 games in a row for Manx Liberty.*

Elsewhere last season's runners-up, White Rose I, were far from their best and lost 5½-2½ to Cheddleton, despite Gawain Jones making a welcome return on top board, while an unbeaten Blackthorne overcame Oxford 5-3 and relegation favourites Barnet Knights and White Rose II drew 4-4.

**Weekend Two – Warwick**

Stung into action, Manx Liberty brought back Alexei Shirov for the mid-January, second weekend of the season. The Latvian wizard worked his magic against Alexander Cherniaev then outplayed Ezra Kirk to make it 12 individual 4NCL wins in a row, as Manx defeated Barnet Knights 6-2 then overcame Cheddleton 5-3. There Gabriel Sargissian was held by fellow GM and wildcard Fernando Peralta on top board, with Hungarian GM Viktor Erdos Manx's other scorer as he overcame Brandon Clarke.

**A.Cherniaev-A.Shirov**  
Barnet Knights vs Manx Liberty  
*Reti Opening*

**1 ♗f3 d5 2 g3 ♗f6 3 ♙g2 c6 4 c4 dxc4 5 ♗a3 b5 6 d3!? ♙b7!?**

Shirov returns the pawn to avoid preparation, but it seems that after 6...cxd3 7 ♗e5 e6! (7...♗d5 8 ♗xd3 reveals White's

main idea when e2-e4 will follow, but it's not hard to imagine Shirov preferring to sacrifice with 7...a6!? 8 ♖xc6 ♗xc6 9 ♖xc6+ ♗d7 10 ♗xa8 ♖xa8) 8 ♗xc6 ♖b6 9 ♗a5 ♗d5 Black is at least equal.

**7 0-0 ♗bd7 8 dxc4 b4 9 ♗c2 c5 10 ♖f4 e6 11 a3! ♖b6 12 axb4?!**

Allowing Black the use of c5 for his pieces. Instead, 12 ♗e3! would have given White an edge, in view of 12...♗e7 13 axb4 cxb4 14 c5! ♗xc5 15 ♗c4 when White enjoys a big initiative, as pointed out by our Executive Editor in his *Daily Telegraph* column.

**12...cxb4 13 ♗cd4 ♖c5**



**14 ♗b5!?**

A brave, possibly foolhardy approach, in contrast to which 14 ♗b3 a5 15 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 16 ♖e5 would have been roughly level.

**14...0-0! 15 ♖c7 ♖c6!**

The only square, but Shirov has the tactics all worked out.

**16 ♗e1?!**

A critical choice, but the engines suggest that White would have done better with 16 ♖a5! and only then ♗e1 or ♗bd4.

**16...♗e4**

A necessary follow-up to Black's bold last, and now ...a6 is a big threat.

**17 ♖a5 ♗e5 18 ♖c2?**

Cherniaev miscalculates badly. Instead, 18 ♗d4 ♖c8 19 ♗b3 would have been very murky if approximately level after, for instance, 19...♗xf2!? 20 ♖xf2 ♖e3 21 ♖f1 ♗xc4 22 ♖d3 ♖xf2 23 ♖xf2 ♗xb2 24 ♖d4.

**18...♗xc4!**



**19 ♖c1**

This doesn't especially help, but, of course, if 19 ♖xc4?? ♖xf2+.

**19...♗xa5! 20 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 21 ♖xe4**

**♖xe4 22 ♖xc5 ♗b3 0-1**

This may have been what Cherniaev had missed. Black is winning further material.

**23 ♖c4 ♗d2 24 ♖xb4 ♖ab8 0-1**

Meanwhile Wood Green continued their winning ways. IM Conor Murphy was outplayed by FM Hamish Olsson in an unbalanced rook and pawn endgame, but Wood Green still crushed Alba 6-2 before winning the big match of the weekend: Wood Green 4½ The Sharks 3½. Averaging 2478 to Wood Green's 2474, albeit with a huge rating advantage for Wood Green on board 8, The Sharks must have been slightly disappointed that Daniel Fernandez was their only winner, defeating Ravi Haria with White on board 2, as Wood Green hit back at the tail, Eldar Gasanov grinding down Dong Bao Nghia after a wild opening and Katarzyna Toma also winning.

Chessable White Rose I continued to have a season to forget, only managing to win on board 8 against Oxford and they might even have lost the last game to finish rather than limp to a 4½-3½ victory. However, they were firmly put in their place the next day by Wood Green Youth, who secured an impressive 6-2 win, Shreyas Royal and Jonah Willow defeating GMs Daniel Alsina Leal and Jonathan Rowson respectively on the top boards.

The day before Wood Green Youth had also won, this time 5½-2½ against Blackthorne. One the same day Cheddleton thrashed the Tigers 7½-½, while The Sharks racked up a 6½-1½ win against White Rose II, despite Sam Chow holding his own in a long theoretical discussion then sharp major piece endgame against Harry Grieve. The Yorkshire-based club's second team would then lose 5-3 to Alba in round 4, where Blackthorne overcame Barnet 4½-3½ and Celtic Tigers finally got on the scoreboard, edging out Oxford 4½-3½.

### S.Chow-F.Waldhausen Gordon

White Rose II vs Alba  
*Nimzo-Indian Defence*

**1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♖b4 4 e3 0-0 5 ♖d2!?**

This modest choice was long rather ignored by theory, but has become topical in recent years.

**5...d5 6 ♗f3 b6 7 cxd5 exd5 8 ♖d3 ♖b7 9 0-0 a6 10 ♖c1 ♖d6**

The bishop was achieving little on b4, so regrouping it makes sense. Black also does well to avoid 10...♗bd7 11 ♗e5! ♗xe5 12 dxe5 ♗d7 13 f4, with a promising attacking set-up for White.

**11 ♗e5 ♗e4?!**

A little hasty. Instead, 11...c5 12 f4 ♗c6 13 ♗g4 (Bluebaum-Korobov, Titled Tuesday Blitz 2023) 13...♖e7! should be OK for Black.

**12 f4 c5**

(see diagram at top of next column)

More consistent would have been 12...♗xd2 13 ♖xd2 c5 when 14 ♖f3 ♗d7 15 ♖h3 ♗f6 16 ♖f1 is only a little better for White.



**13 ♖e1**

One of two good approaches, the other being 13 ♗xe4!? dxe4 14 ♖c4, taking aim at f7.

**13...♖e7?**

Black is drifting into serious trouble and would have done better with 13...♗d7 14 ♖xe4 dxe4 when 15 ♖h4! is on, if not totally clear after 15...♖xh4! 16 ♗xd7 ♖ad8 17 ♗xf8 cxd4 18 ♗xh7 ♖xh7 19 g3.

**14 ♖h5**

Better would have been 14 ♗a4!, striking from an unexpected direction, and if 14...♖xe5 15 dxe5 ♗d7 16 ♖xe4 dxe4 17 ♖h4! ♖xh4 18 ♖xd7 when Black's queenside collapses.

**14...g6 15 ♖h6**



**15...♗xc3?**

15...f5 here or on the last move was probably the last real try.

**16 ♖xc3**

16 f5! crashes through: 16...f6 17 fxg6 ♖xe5 (or 17...♗e4 18 ♗f7 ♖xf7 19 gxh7+ ♖xf7 20 ♖xe4 dxe4 21 ♖xf6) 18 dxe5 ♗e4 19 ♖xe4 dxe4 20 exf6 when Black must resign in view of 20...♖xf6 21 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 22 gxh7+ (Pein).

**16...f6? 17 ♗xg6! hxg6 18 ♖xg6 ♖g7 19 ♖h5**



Black is completely lost as e3-e4 will facilitate a deadly rook swing.

19...♖h8 20 ♜f5 ♗a7 21 e4! ♙c6 22 ♖g3 ♜d8 23 e5 ♙d7 24 e6 ♙c6 25 ♙h7+  
Crashing through.  
25...♙f8 26 ♖g8+ ♜xg8 27 ♜xf6+ 1-0

### Weekend Three – Telford

Wood Green remained in pole position after the top divisions of the league had returned to Telford for the first time in a few years. They thrashed Barnet Knights 7-1, then overcame Cheddleton 5½-2½. Jacob Boswell turned over GM Eldar Gasanov, but Conor Murphy, Jonathan Speelman, Matthew Turner and Matthew Wadsworth and all won for Wood Green.

The Saturday round also saw big wins for Manx Liberty and The Sharks. The former overcame Oxford 6½-1½, despite Romanian GM Constantin Lupulescu being defeated by an inspired FM William Claridge-Hansen on board one, while the latter crushed Celtic Tigers 7½-½, although it would have been 7-1 had our Executive Editor managed to finish off Daniel Fernandez after outplaying him.

The Sharks then enjoyed a fairly straightforward 5½-2½ win against a still off-form Chessable White Rose I, who had also lost the day before, 4½-3½ to Alba. That same score was the margin Manx defeated Wood Green Youth by in round 6, with top board German GM Rasmus Svane grinding down Shreyas Royal to win the match and compensate for his younger brother's defeat on board two at the hands of a teenage Ukrainian IM.

### F.Svane-S.Bazakutsa

Manx Liberty vs Wood Green Youth  
*Caro-Kann Defence*

1 e4 c6 2 ♘f3 d5 3 ♘c3 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♙f6 5 ♜e2 ♘xe4 6 ♜xe4 ♙d5 7 ♜f4 ♜f5 8 ♜e3 ♘d7 9 ♙d3 ♜c5 10 ♜e2

White continues to avoid a queen exchange and will now look to castle then regroup the bishop from d3.

10...g6 11 0-0 ♙g7 12 ♗e1 0-0!?

This doesn't equalise, but was blitzed out with the idea of 13 ♜xe7 ♜xe7 14 ♗xe7 ♘c5 15 ♙c4 b5 when Black secures

sufficient counterplay.

13 ♙c4 e5 14 d3 b5!?

14...♗b6 15 ♙b3 ♙g4 16 h3 ♙xf3 17 ♜xf3 ♘d5 would have been a more solid and possibly stronger approach.

15 ♙b3 ♙d6 16 ♙g5

Natural enough, but 16 ♘g5! or 16 ♙e3 ♙b7 17 a4 a6 18 ♘g5! was the way to obtain an edge, and if 18...h6? 19 ♘e4 ♜e7 20 ♜g4.

16...♙b7 17 d4 ♗ae8!

Accurate play has enabled Black to equalise.

18 dxe5 ♘xe5 19 ♗ad1 ♜b8!



Not forced, but this retreat followed by advancing the c-pawn creates a rather strong impression.

20 ♙f4 c5! 21 ♘xe5 c4

The bishop on b3 is trapped and White must also deal with the pin on the e-file.

22 c3!?

Ambitious. 22 ♙xc4 bxc4 23 ♙g3 ♗e6 24 f4 was safer if likely OK too for Black after 24...♙a6.

22...cxb3 23 ♜xb5 a6?

This goes unpunished, but Black should have preferred 23...♜a8 24 axb3 (24 f3?! bxa2 25 ♗a1 a6 26 ♜a5 ♙d5 also feels quite risky for White) 24...♙xg2 25 ♜d3 ♗e6 when there must be enough compensation for a pawn.

24 ♜a5?

A rather optimistic move, possibly played to avoid simplification. However, 24 ♜xb3 leaves Black with nothing better than to suffer after 24...♙xe5 25 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 26 ♙xe5 ♜xe5 27 ♜xb7 ♗b8 when White can most certainly press with 28 ♜xa6 ♗xb2 29 ♜c8+! ♙g7 30 ♜c4.

24...bxa2 25 ♘xg6?

By now there was nothing better than to grovel in a clearly worse position with 25 ♙g3 ♙a8 26 ♗a1 ♗e6 27 f3.



25...♜d8!

The most aesthetic and also the strongest choice. Black is also doing well after 25...♗xe1+!? 26 ♗xe1 ♗e8! 27 ♗d1!, but only if he then finds 27...♜c8! 28 ♘e7+ ♗xe7 29 ♗d8+ ♜xd8 30 ♜xd8+ ♙f8 31 ♜d1 ♗e2!, which should be winning.

26 ♙c7?

Naturally not 26 ♗xd8?? ♗xe1# and even after 26 ♜xd8 ♗xe1+ 27 ♗xe1 ♗xd8 28 ♘e7+ ♙f8 29 ♘f5 ♙e4! Black must be winning.

26...♗xe1+ 27 ♗xe1



27...♗e8! 28 ♗f1 ♜d5

Simplest approach; the a2-pawn's a winner.

29 ♙f4 ♜xa5 30 ♙xa5 ♙e4! 31 ♗a1

♙b1 32 ♙f1 ♗b8

Forcing the win.

33 ♙b4 ♗xb4! 34 cxb4 ♙xb2 0-1

### 4NCL - Division One Championship 2023/2024

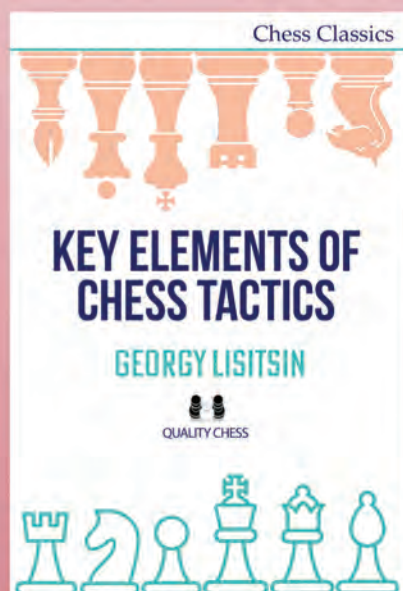
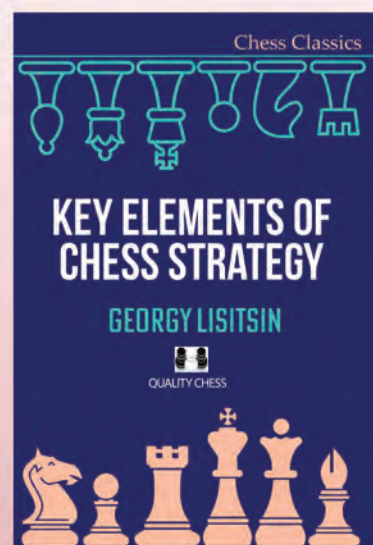
Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	MP	GP
1 Wood Green	X	4½-3½		6-2	5½-2½	6-2			7-1		5½-2½		12	34½
2 The Sharks I	3½-4½	X	5-3					5½-2½		6½-1½	7½-½	6½-1½	10	34½
3 Manx Liberty		3-5	X	4½-3½	5-3		5-3		6-2			6½-1½	10	30
4 Wood Green Youth	2-6		3½-4½	X		6½-1½	5½-2½	6-2		6-2			8	29½
5 Cheddleton	2½-5½		3-5		X		4-4	5½-2½	5-3		7½-½		7	27½
6 Alba	2-6			1½-6½		X	4-4	4½-3½		5-3	4½-3½		7	21½
7 Blackthorne			3-5	2½-5½	4-4	4-4	X		4½-3½			5-3	6	23
8 Chessable White Rose I		2½-5½		2-6	2½-5½	3½-4½		X		7½-½		4½-½	4	22½
9 Barnet Knights A	1-7		3-5		3-5		3½-4½		X	4-4	6-2		3	19½
10 Chessable White Rose II		1½-6½		2-6		3-5		½-7½	4-4	X		4½-3½	3	15½
11 Celtic Tigers I	2½-5½	½-7½			½-7½	3½-4½			2-6		X	4½-3½	2	13½
12 Oxford I		1½-6½	1½-6½				3-5	3½-4½		3½-4½	3½-4½	X	0	16½

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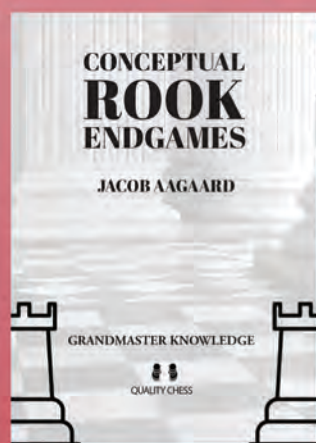
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# Overseas News

**AUSTRALIA** – IM Rishi Sardana dominated the Australian Championship in Adelaide (January 2-11), racking up 9½/11 to finish two points ahead of both Liu Yi and Samuel Asaka, with Gary Lane a further point back in sixth.

**GERMANY** – After 8 rounds of the Bundesliga, Viernheim lead with 16/16, although they are yet to play the two teams who lie just a point behind, Baden-Baden and Deizisau. The 16-time champions were, of course, stunned back in October by Hamburg who took a point off them, while Deizisau dropped their first point during the February 3rd and 4th weekend, drawing with Bayern Munich. There Nikita Vitiugov defeated Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu on top board and Michael Adams also won as Baden-Baden thumped Hamburg 7½-½, with both also winning the next day too as Baden-Baden defeated Hannover's HSK Lister Turm 6½-1½, while Viernheim fielded Jan-Krzysztof Duda, Shakhriyar Mamedyarov and Parham Maghsoodloo on the top three boards as they overcame Bayern Munich 5½-2½.

**INDIA** – Kyrgyzstan IM Semetey Tologontegin won with 7½/9 the 12th Tamil Nadu IM event (January 9-14), where there was a remarkable finish, one which may well remind readers of a certain sixteenth game featured by Ben Graff in our December pages.



*'Can I really make that sacrifice work?' wonders in-form speed chess expert Alexandra Kosteniuk.*

Mitrabha edged out S.P. Sethuraman on tie-break after they had both finished on 8/10. Third place and the best result by a non-Indian was achieved by Nigel Short, who drew with both eventual winners, whom he would have caught had he not had the worse of a draw with 19-year-old IM L.R. Srihari in the final round.

rating gains and had earlier gained even more rating points in the Blitz, where they finished on 7/13 and 5½/13, respectively. There Hunt scored 50%, while the star of the show was once again Bodhana Sivanandan who scored 8½/13 for a 2146 performance, defeating IMs Lela Javakhishvili and Nurgul Salimova in the last to rounds to finish 15th on tie-break.

## V.Raghav-S.Buscara Chennai 2024



White has been completely outplayed and Black has many ways to win. French IM Sevan Buscara chooses the fastest and prettiest:

**33... ♖g2+! 34 ♜xg2 hxg2+ 35 ♔g1 f2# 0-1**

Shades indeed of McDonnell-De La Bourdonnais.

There was also the Bangalore International Open (January 18-26), in which Guha

**IRELAND** – The 19th Gonzaga Charity Classic took place at the Jesuit-run Gonzaga College in Dublin (January 26-28). Croatian Ante Saric shared first with fellow GMs Daniel Fernandez and Matthew Turner on 4/5 in the Masters, while Kevin Burke (St. Benildus, Dublin) won the Championship with 5½/6, that same score racked up by both Alan Lane (Drogheda) and Riccardo Rastelli (University College Dublin) in the Challengers.

**MONACO** – Monte Carlo hosted the European Women's Rapid and Blitz Chess Championship (January 12-14). Despite a last-round loss to Sarasadat Khademalsharieh, who now represents Spain, Alexandra Kosteniuk prevailed on tie-break in the Rapid Championship after finishing alongside Khademalsharieh, who took silver, and Bella Khotenashvili on 10/13. Kosteniuk won the earlier Blitz Championship too, amassing 9/11 to finish half a point ahead of Antoaneta Stefanova, Elisabeth Paehtz and Klaudia Kulon.

In the Rapid, Harriet Hunt was seventh seed and finished on 6½/11, with Kamila Hryshchenko half a point behind and Emily Maton back on 50%. Hryshchenko and especially Maton both made significant rapid

**NEW ZEALAND** – We were a little hasty last month in declaring Tom Middelburg the winner of the 131st New Zealand (Open) Championship in Palmerston North (January 2-12). Our apologies to FM Nic Croad who overtook Middelburg to become New Zealand Champion with 7½/9, with former Dutch IM Middelburg back on 7 points, half in front of Ben Hague, who inflicted a crushing defeat on Middelburg in round 8. The event concluded with a two-day rapid championship, won by visiting GM Gawain Jones with 9/9.

**SWITZERLAND** – Wijk aan Zee certainly shook things up the near the top of the rating list, when the latest one was released by the FIDE Office in Lausanne on February 1st. By the time we went to press, the top-20 was: 1 Magnus Carlsen (NOR) 2830, 2 Fabiano Caruana (USA) 2804, 3 Hikaru Nakamura (USA) 2788, 4 Ding Liren (CHN) 2762, 5 Anish Giri (NED) 2762, 6 Alireza Firouzja (FRA) 2760, 7 Ian Nepomniachtchi (FID) 2758, 8 Wesley So (USA) 2757, 9 Wei Yi (CHN) 2755, 10 Leinier Dominguez Perez (USA) 2750, 11 Sergey Karjakin (FID) 2750, 12 Viswanathan Anand (IND) 2748, 13 Dommaraju Gukesh

(IND) 2747, 14 Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa (IND) 2747, 15 Vidit Santosh Gujrathi (IND) 2747, 16 Nodirbek Abdusattorov (UZB) 2744, 17 Arjun Erigaisi (IND) 2741, 18 Vincent Keymer (GER) 2738, 19 Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (FRA) 2732, 20 Alexander Grischuk (FID) 2732.

England had just 10 active players over 2500 at the start of February: Nikita Vitiugov 2692 (world no.44), Michael Adams 2676, David Howell 2675, Luke McShane 2624, Gawain Jones 2618, Nigel Short 2594, John Nunn 2552, Nick Pert 2527, Daniel Fernandez 2526, and Ameet Ghazi 2509. Elsewhere, Jonathan Rowson remains Scotland's highest-rated player on 2527, Jose Camacho Collados tops the Welsh list at 2371 and Conor Murphy is Irish no.1 at 2479.

Over in Basel, Serbian GM Mihajlo Stojanovic triumphed with 4½/5 at the Basel Carnival Open (February 2-4), where Harry Grieve was one of nine players to finish half a point adrift.

**USA** – Chess.com's 2024 Champions Chess Tour got underway with the Chessable Masters (February 2-7), which once again featured a Play-In, double elimination in the main event and a 10+2 time control. Celebrating his 25th birthday, Peruvian GM Jose Martinez Alcantara won the Play-In, successfully defending an endgame a piece down against Hikaru Nakamura no less to qualify for Division One. In the resulting knockout stage, 17-year-old Belarusian Denis Lazavik defeated both Nakamura and Anish Giri to also qualify for the top division.

It was no surprise to see Magnus Carlsen qualify for the Winners' Final. He smoothly overcame Wesley So 2½-1½, but then had to dig deep to draw an Armageddon encounter to get past Vladimir Fedoseev, who is now playing under the Slovenian flag. Lazavik meanwhile continued his impressive tournament, eliminating Maxime Vachier-Lagrave 3-2, i.e. with an Armageddon victory, then Martinez Alcantara 2½-½. Lazavik even outplayed Carlsen as Black to level the final at 1½-1½ before being ground down in the final game. Notably Carlsen felt that Lazavik is "just fundamentally very sound. Good understanding. He's not easy to break down. I think with some experience he's going to become a top player."

Having been defeated 2½-1½ by Fedoseev, Alireza Firouzja found himself in the Losers' Bracket, where he defeated So and Martinez Alcantara 1½-½ before prevailing at Armageddon against Ian Nepomniachtchi. Still only 20 years old, Firouzja would then defeat Lazavik 1½-½ to set up a Grand Final with Carlsen. Despite having had two days' rest, the Champ lost the first two games as Firouzja won 2½-1½, which necessitated a Reset Match, won this time by Carlsen 2-0, which netted him \$30,000, as well as qualification for both Division One of the next event and the end of season Tour Finals. Vincent Keymer will also play in the top flight next time after defeating Levon Aronian 2-0 in a Grand Final Replay in Division Two.



A new Tour, a familiar winner. Carlsen bounced back against Firouzja to win the Chessable Masters.

**M. Carlsen - A. Firouzja**  
Grand Final Reset,  
Game 1 (rapid) 2024  
*Trompowsky Attack*

**1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♙g5 d5 3 e3 c5 4 ♘d2**  
Electing to keep things solid, whereas the somewhat more unbalanced 4 ♙xf6 gxf6 5 dxc5 remains pretty topical.  
**4...♗c6 5 c3 cxd4 6 exd4 h6 7 ♙h4 ♙f5 8 ♘g3 e6 9 ♙e2 ♙d6 10 0-0 ♚c7 11 ♙g3 ♙xg3 12 hxg3 h5!?**

Ambitious, if tempting at a quick time control. Previously, 12...0-0 13 ♘b3 ♗ad8 14 ♗e1 ♙h7 15 ♙b5 a6 16 ♙xc6 ♚xc6 17 a4 ♘e4 had seemed rock-solid for Black in Bendig-Pospelov, correspondence 2019.

**13 ♗e1 g6 14 ♘f1 ♘g4 15 ♚d2 0-0-0?! 16 b4! ♙b8 17 a4 f6**  
Firouzja wants to attack, but 15...♙f8 and ...♙g7 would have been sounder.



Fairly necessary, of course, but now Carlsen is able to undertake a strong manoeuvre.

**18 ♘h4! g5?**  
This is far too loose. In contrast, 18...e5

19 a5 would only have been a little better for White according to the engines.

**19 ♘xf5 exf5 20 ♙d3**  
Attacking f5 while clearing the e-file as White begins to take control of the whole board.  
**20...♘e7 21 f3 ♘h6 22 ♗e6 ♗hf8 23 ♗ae1 ♘c8 24 a5 ♘d6 25 a6!**

Only one side is attacking, and it isn't Black.  
**25...b6 26 ♘e3 ♚d7 27 ♘xd5!**

The precursor to a strong exchange sacrifice.  
**27...♘e4 28 ♗xb6+ axb6 29 fxe4**



White has two pawns, control and much the safer king for the exchange.

**29...♙a7 30 b5! fxe4 31 ♙xe4 ♚xb5 32 c4 ♚a5 33 ♘b4**

Black is undone on the light squares and the game is pretty much up.

**33...♗c8 34 ♘c6+**  
34 c5! would have been even stronger, followed by ♚b2 or ♘c6+.

**34...♗xc6 35 ♚xa5 bxa5 36 ♙xc6 ♘f5 37 d5 ♙xa6 38 c5**

The connected passed pawns will sweep all before them.

**38...♗d8 39 ♗e6 ♘d4 40 ♙a4+! ♙a7 41 ♗e7+ ♙b8 42 d6 ♗c8 43 ♗e4 ♘f5 44 ♙f2 ♗xc5 45 ♗e8+ ♙b7 46 d7 ♗d5 47 d8 ♚xd8 48 ♗xd8 1-0**



# 60 Seconds with... FM Andrew Burnett



**Born:** 1968, Glasgow, Scotland.

**Place of residence:** Near to Newcastle, England.

**Occupation:** Writer/editor/proofreader.

**Enjoyable?** Almost always – at least the freedom it provides.

**And home life?** Too predictable really but... safe.

**But sometimes good to escape to:** Anywhere. I love travel. Let's say... Budapest would be a nice trip this year.

**Sports played or followed:** Football, boxing, golf, everything as a kid; almost nothing as an adult.

**A favourite novel?** Historically anything by Agatha Christie, Bernie Gunther novels by Philip Kerr, and *Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman in recent times.

**Piece of music?** I am an old punk/anarchist, so: Exploited, Crass, Conflict, Chumbawamba, etc.

**Film or TV series?** Anything with Nicola Walker in it!

**What's the best thing about playing chess?** The eternal search for beautiful ideas and moves.

**And the worst?** Piece-twirlers.

**Your best move?** Looks super-standard now, but 26 ♖f6 for my first win over a grandmaster.

**A. Burnett-C. McNab**  
Glenrothes Open 2002  
*Pirc Defence*

1 e4 g6 2 d4 d6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 ♗e3 ♜f6  
5 h3 c6 6 ♗d2 ♖a5 7 ♗e2 0-0 8 a4  
♜bd7 9 g4 e5 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 g5 ♜e8  
12 h4 ♜c7 13 h5 ♗e8 14 hxg6 hxg6  
15 ♗c4 ♖b4 16 ♗b3 ♜e6 17 ♗xe6  
♗xe6 18 0-0-0 a5 19 ♜ge2 ♗e8 20 ♗h4  
♜c5 21 ♗dh1 ♗e6 22 ♗xc5 ♖xc5  
23 ♜g3 ♗ed8 24 ♖e2 b5 25 ♖f3 b4



26 ♖f6 1-0

**But less memorable than your worst move?** My brain can't compute that question.

**And a highly memorable opponent?** Scottish GM Paul Motwani, my first chess hero.

**Favourite game of all time?** Tal-Larsen from their Candidates semi-final.

**M. Tal-B. Larsen**

10 matchgame, Bled 1965  
*Sicilian Scheveningen*

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 e6  
5 ♜c3 d6 6 ♗e3 ♜f6 7 f4 ♗e7 8 ♖f3  
0-0 9 0-0-0 ♖c7 10 ♜db5 ♖b8 11 g4

a6 12 ♜d4 ♜xd4 13 ♗xd4 b5 14 g5  
♜d7 15 ♗d3 b4



16 ♜d5!? exd5 17 exd5 f5 18 ♗de1 ♗f7  
19 h4 ♗b7 20 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 21 ♗xe7 ♜e5  
22 ♖e4 ♖f8 23 fxe5 ♗f4 24 ♖e3 ♗f3  
25 ♖e2 ♖xe7 26 ♖xf3 dxe5 27 ♗e1  
♗d8 28 ♗xe5 ♖d6 29 ♖f4 ♗f8 30 ♖e4  
b3 31 axb3 ♗f1+ 32 ♜d2 ♖b4+ 33 c3  
♖d6 34 ♗c5 ♖xc5 35 ♗e8+ ♗f8  
36 ♖e6+ ♜h8 37 ♖f7 1-0

**The best three chess books:** *Chess Combination as a Fine Art* (Golcz and Keres), *Life and Games of Mikhail Tal* (Tal), and... 'something, something Dvoretsky' he mumbled, thoroughly ashamed to have never read his *Endgame Manual*.

**Is FIDE doing a good job?** In a corrupt world they are, let's say, par for the course.

**Or your National Federation?** They are trying to improve things with absolutely no financial support – it's a difficult and mostly thankless task.

**Any advice for either?** FIDE – get rid of Dvorkovich for a start. Chess Scotland – rob a bank?

**Can chess make one happy?** Of course not! (Joke – of course it can, but it's a 'limited offer' only.)

**A tip please for the club player:** Put that opening book down! No, not *Dragon Masters*, that one is allowed – just, all the rest.

*Ed. – Andrew Burnett's Dragon Masters: Volume 1 has been published and is in stock at Chess & Bridge, retailing at £39.95 or £35.95 for Subscribers.*

# This Month's New Releases

## **Boris Spassky's Best Games 1: The Rising Star**

Tibor Karolyi, 344 pages  
Quality Chess

RRP £29.50 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.55**

After years of neglect, the games of the 10th world chess champion finally received new attention thanks to last year's *Spassky's Best Games* by Alexey Bezgodov and Dmitry Aleynikov (New in Chess). This year continues the trend, with the first of two hardback volumes covering Spassky's life and games from Tibor Karolyi, for Quality Chess.

This volume takes the reader from 1948 up to 1968 and the second volume will take the story up to Spassky's last recorded games, in 2009. The genesis of the books came from Karolyi's books on the famous Fischer-Spassky match of 1972: *The Road to Reykjavik* and *Fischer – Spassky 1972: Match of the Century Revisited* (both Quality Chess, 2022). The Hungarian IM and acclaimed author is on a mission to bring more of Spassky's best games to the attention of the chess public.

"When I was analysing the games of my book *Fischer – Spassky 1972*, I came to appreciate what a great player Boris Spassky is. I hope that after reading my two books, the chess public will feel the same. There are some obvious game highlights that most players have already seen: for instance, Spassky's rook sacrifice against Larsen is one of the most famous combinations in the history of chess. However, Spassky also produced many gems which are nowhere near as well known as I think they deserve to be."

Despite always being a very popular character, there remain many illusive aspects to Spassky's life and games. He somehow refrained from writing a book of his own (something even Bobby Fischer managed to do), and the time to do so has almost passed, which is a real shame. He may have become partial to early draws in his latter years, but there was still the odd occasion when he showed what he was really capable of doing (two wins against Garry Kasparov, for example).

Karolyi became more aware of just how many of Spassky's games were worthy of greater attention when he started writing an introduction to the champion in the aforementioned *Fischer – Spassky 1972*: "The problem was that I found so many brilliant games of his which I felt should be included, which meant that before I knew it, the 'Introduction' on Spassky had grown far too big to include as part of the 1972 book."

Each year from 1948 to 1968 is covered by several annotated games and then a summary

of Spassky's tournament results and percentages of wins, draws and defeats. Karolyi, as always, digs deeply into his subject's style of play and brings some new observations to the table, such as Spassky "had a knack for making breathtaking knight manoeuvres".

The 1960s featured some of Spassky's best games of all, especially in the two sets of Candidates matches from which he twice emerged as the challenger for Tigran Petrosian's crown. He was, of course, unsuccessful in the first title match of 1966, but volume two will no doubt offer extensive coverage of his triumphant 1969 challenge.

The Candidates matches brought the best out of Spassky and several of the games are memorable and often quoted. Readers should be familiar with his famous victories using the Closed Sicilian against Efim Geller, for example. Not only did he beat Geller twice in those matches, he also defeated Paul Keres, Mikhail Tal, Bent Larsen and Viktor Korchnoi on his way to those two monumental clashes with Petrosian. These days, when the Candidates event is confined to one tournament and the question of who is on form for a month or so is one of the deciding factors, it is easy to forget just how much energy and preparation the heavyweight clashes of old would have required, not to mention the stamina to keep going through each three-year cycle.

Spassky has often been described as a universal player, meaning he is more than capable of playing any style of chess and that certainly shines through in the games Karolyi has selected for this volume, whether Spassky is playing to keep Tal quiet or whipping up snap checkmates against one of the most resourceful defenders in the business.

## **B. Spassky-V. Korchnoi** 7th matchgame, Kiev 1968



The game was decided by **35 ♖h6+** and **1-0** due to the inevitable checkmate.

Boris Spassky will never be able to escape the ghost of Bobby Fischer and perhaps he has never wanted to do so. Frustratingly, unless Spassky has his own set of writings squirreled away, we will never know his thoughts on so many historically important issues. At least we now have Karolyi on the case, breathing new life into the best games of the tenth champion of the world. I can recommend this book for anyone who is interested in delving into one of the golden eras of chess and becoming acquainted with some of the very best games of one of the most entertaining world champions.

Sean Marsh



## **Time Management in Chess**

Regina Theissl-Pokorna, PC-DVD;  
running time: 7 hours, 20 minutes  
ChessBase

RRP £30.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £27.85**

"We've all experienced the evils of time trouble in our chess life. Time is ticking, panic is rising, and we make moves that we wouldn't consider if we had more time on our clock. From winning to losing – all our effort is wasted because we couldn't manage our time more efficiently. What is worse – we keep repeating this mistake over and over again."

Wise words indeed. Some players thrive in time trouble and others absolutely collapse if they don't have a significant amount of thinking time left on the clock. It is an important part of the game of chess, especially at club level, with its manifold, eccentric and rarely matching time controls, varying, as they do, from club to club (often depending on what sort of time the caretaker comes in, rattling the chess room's keys).

For something which happens so often and spoils so many games (the time trouble, not the key-rattling), it is odd that very few players actually try to do anything about it and looking around, there is a definite lack of resources to help to correct the problem.

It is therefore refreshing to see ChessBase tackle the subject head-on, covering a whole

range of topics such as “looking for chances in a worse position and finding the best ways out of it; how and why to keep emotions under the control; complicated and complex positions; why to be cautious with the changes in a pawn structure in time trouble; and when and if to convert positions into (pawn) endgames.”

The name of Regina Theissl-Pokorna will be new to a lot of readers, so it is useful to check her chess credentials. She is “currently the no.1 female chess-player in Austria, is a Woman Grandmaster who enjoyed early success in European and World Youth Championships. She participated in several chess Olympiads, and her highest Elo rating was 2429 in 2003. Her grandest achievements were 1st place at the European Team Championship and victory at Junior G20 in 1999. In 2015, she moved from the Slovak to the Austrian Chess Federation. Theissl-Pokorna is Chair of the Women’s Commission of the European Chess Union and is strongly committed to promoting girls’ and women’s chess in Europe.”

This is Theissl-Pokorna’s ChessBase debut, but her delivery is smooth, accessible and impressively avoids the hyperbole favoured by so many modern chess commentators and presenters, who repeatedly cry out that something rather mundane is actually “insane”. The material is split into two main parts:

“In the first part I focus on the methods and techniques that will help you to avoid time trouble, such as: strict opening repertoire, using chess intuition wisely, identifying critical moments, deciding between several possible moves, prophylactic thinking and how to avoid perfectionism in chess. In the second part, the focus lies on the moments in time trouble. How players of different strength and experience solve their problems at the board, but also why many of them (incl. strong grandmasters) failed.”

There is a large amount of material on this DVD, as suggested by the runtime. It will certainly take a chess student a long time to make the best of the material, but I suggest finding the topics which have the most resonance for one’s own games and experience, and to start with those; it doesn’t have to be in the order given on the DVD.

I think most players will have tried to be perfectionists, only to find to their cost that such a quality can be detrimental when very short of time. As explained on the DVD: “Why is perfectionism a dangerous habit? Perfectionism is a desire to find the best move on each and every occasion. Often, it is a desire to win beautifully, instead of winning quickly.”

Yes, exactly; a win is a win, but we are now in an era when we worry too much about the chess engines ‘telling us off’ afterwards by pointing out much more precise winning sequences. In the current climate, it is easy to forget that chess is a game and not an exact science.

Here are some tips from the DVD: “How to avoid perfectionism? 1. Don’t spend large amounts of time to find the elusive ‘perfect solution’. 2. You don’t need to make perfect moves. It is important to play good moves

through the whole game. 3. It is impossible to avoid making mistakes. Usually, the player with fewer mistakes wins the game (or the one who makes the last but one mistake!)”

### P.Keres-M.Filip Candidates Tournament, Amsterdam/Leeuwarden 1956



Keres was a perfectionist. Here, he could have played the obvious 38 ♖f6, threatening 39 ♜xf7, when 38...♗e5 39 ♖xe5 would have given him a winning position as Filip would never have been able to shake White’s major pieces from his position.

Instead, he played the vastly inferior 38 ♜h2?, which, even though it looks like a precursor to the sort of move Garry Kasparov used several times in his best games (tucking the king out of the way before going for the final attack), was a major mistake. Unfortunately, Keres had missed 38...♜c4! 39 ♖f6 ♗xe5 when 40 ♖xe5 would be met by 40...♖f4+, with a winning ending for Black. The quest for perfection had backfired and he should have stuck with the most obvious winning line of 38 ♖f6. In the game, he struggled on with 40 ♖xe6+ ♗f7, but could not avoid defeat (0-1, 91).

As can be seen from the above, the material has been very carefully selected and some of the examples represent a real blast from the past, including one fine game from the 1896 match between Wilhelm Steinitz and Emanuel Schiffers. Each section has interactive tests for the viewer to try. Playing a move on the board unlocks the next video clip in each case.

Summing up, the research is excellent and the presentation is impressive. At the very least, the DVD should enable players to understand where the seeds of their own time trouble problems are planted and some suitable weeding should begin to alleviate the formerly eternal recurrence of the serious issue.

Sean Marsh



### Building a Reti Repertoire

Semko Semkov, 244 pages, paperback  
RRP £23.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.55**

If you’re looking to take up 1 ♗f3 and initially want to learn how to deal with 1...d5, a Chess Stars production may well be the answer. In typical fashion, the step-by-step format helps ensure that the reader masters the key lines and strategic motifs, and enjoys as much of the detailed theoretical coverage as they wish. Semkov maps out a repertoire with 1 ♗f3 d5, beginning with a 2 e3 and 3 c4 move order, examining all Black’s main set-ups in response. He also looks at the idea of following up 2 e3 with a rapid b2-b3, as well as the topical ‘Advanced Reti’ line that is 2 c4 d4 3 b4.



### Calculation Training – Sharpen Your Game!

Robert Ris, PC-DVD; running time: 5 hours  
RRP £30.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £27.85**

Robert Ris makes a welcome return to the ChessBase studio, presenting 73 positions to solve, featuring more than 160 separate questions along the way. The material is taken from recent grandmaster games, as well as several by Ris’s students. After some fairly basic tests, designed to reinforce many key classic tactical motifs, Ris challenges users to calculate accurately as the material gradually becomes somewhat harder. Notably not every exercise is of the White to play and win type; there are also sections where the aim is to identify then exploit a weakness, as well as on defence and some pretty tough “brainteasers”.



### Dragon Masters: Volume 1

Andrew Burnett, 404 pages, paperback  
RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

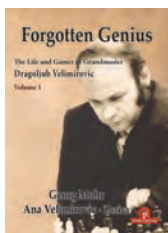
Scottish FM Andrew Burnett has long been a big fan of one of the most popular and controversial chess openings, the Sicilian Dragon. In this first volume for Thinkers Publishing, he maps out the history of the Dragon, highlighting the key games and protagonists, as well as how the theory of the variation: 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5 ♗c3 g6 evolved over the decades. Dragon aficionados and those looking to improve their knowledge of the opening should enjoy Burnett’s coverage, which along the way contains a number of enjoyable anecdotes.

### Fortify Your Defences

Harald Schneider-Zinner, PC-DVD;  
running time: 5 hours, 10 minutes

RRP £30.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £27.85**

Schneider-Zinner, an Austrian IM and long-time coach of their national women's team, aims to strengthen viewers' chess resistance. While defence is rarely seen as a fun topic to study, he believes that a great many positions can be defended thanks to an appreciation of the right techniques. Along the way, Schneider-Zinner presents several handy rules of thumb, as well as psychological tips, while topics include your sense of danger, seeing ghosts, comparisons and finding only moves.



### Forgotten Genius: The Life and Games of Dragoljub Velimirovic: Volume 1

Georg Mohr & Ana Velimirovic-Zorica,  
328 pages, hardback

RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

Dragoljub Velimirovic (1942 – 2014) was a Yugoslav Grandmaster famed for his attacking, sacrificial style. A three-time Yugoslav Champion, he also thrice qualified for the Interzonal and is remembered not just for his brilliant games, but his contributions to opening theory, especially the Velimirovic Attack, 1 e4 c5 2 ♟f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♟xd4 ♟f6 5 ♟c3 ♟c6 6 ♟c4 e6 7 ♟e3 ♟e7 8 ♟e2. With this new release, Thinkers Publishing pay a fitting tribute to Velimirovic, as his daughter Ana explains a little about her father, while Slovenian GM Mohr annotates some truly amazing games.



### How to Play the Najdorf

Garry Kasparov, PC-DVD;  
running time: 9 hours

RRP £43.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £39.55**

Between 2003 and 2007 Garry Kasparov recorded a three-part course for ChessBase on his beloved Sicilian Najdorf. The Hamburg giants have now put those three parts together and in their latest ChessBase media system for this new release. While theory has moved on in places, Kasparov's historical coverage of the opening and explanation of the key ideas remains most insightful. Moreover, many of his theoretical recommendations are still at least partly quite important, not least his thorough coverage of the critical 1 e4 c5 2 ♟f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♟xd4 ♟f6 5 ♟c3 a6 6 ♟g5 where he explored all Black's main options, including the famous Poisoned Pawn

and Polugaevsky variations.

### Learn from Sammy Reshevsky

Zenon Franco, 428 pages, paperback

RRP £29.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.95**

Bobby Fischer considered Samuel Reshevsky (1911 – 1992) to have been the strongest player in the world between 1946 and 1956. Prolific author and Paraguayan GM Franco doesn't quibble and hopes that his readers "will learn from the magnificent play of Sammy Reshevsky, and grow to admire it" as much as he does. He presents 60 of Reshevsky's best games, annotated in a clear fashion, while containing a number of exercises to solve along the way.

This title is also available in hardback, retailing at £42.95 or £38.65 for Subscribers.



### Tournament Battle Plan

Daniel Gormally, 356 pages, paperback

RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

This multipurpose guide should be invaluable to all who like to battle regularly in tournaments, be it rapidplays, weekenders or international events. The ever-candid Gormally discusses such topics as how best to go about winning won positions, which endgames you should know, how important modern opening theory is, and how long you should prepare before a game for. This enjoyable, at times dramatic, work concludes with Gormally's explosive Hastings diary, where readers receive a blow-by-blow account of how he prepared for each round at the famous post-Christmas tournament.

This Thinkers Publishing release is also available in hardback format should you prefer, retailing from Chess & Bridge at £39.95 or £35.95 for Subscribers.



### The Modernized Trojan Knight 1.♟c3

Bruno Dieu, 472 pages, hardback

£39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

Thinkers Publishing have once again clearly been busy of late and so has the strong French amateur, Bruno Dieu, who maps out an impressively detailed, as well as often refreshing repertoire for White with 1 ♟c3. This unusual first move often appeals to those who are quite creative or who like to go their own way early in the game, as well to players who like to try and move order their opponents. Dieu is, of course, fully aware of all those transpositional tricks and also presents

good, if perhaps not quite god-like coverage of the key middlegame motifs in each variation.

Also just released from Belgium is *The Practical Endgame Bible* by Boroljub Zlatanovic (456 pages, paperback, RRP £34.95; Subscribers £31.45). It is subtitled 'Guidelines for the Fundamentals of the Endgame' and sees the IM and leading Serbian coach aim to give the internet generation a thorough grounding in the key general endgame concepts that every aspiring player should really know.

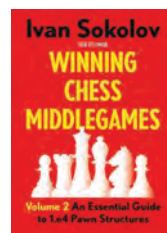
### Understanding Chess Exchanges

Amir Bagheri & Mohammad Salehzadeh,  
356 pages, hardback

RRP £29.50 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.55**

Knowing when to exchange pieces and when not to is an important skill, one which Magnus Carlsen often makes look easy, but which almost every club player struggles with at times. Amir Bagheri was Iran's second-ever grandmaster and now represents Monaco. Here he teams up with Iranian FM and FIDE Trainer Mohammad Salehzadeh to provide plenty of insight to help the reader improve their knowledge of exchanges, including when to retain pieces and attack, and when to swap down towards an endgame. There are chapters on Exchanges and Piece Activity, Exchanges and Space, Exchanges and Attack, Exchanges and Lasting Advantages, and Exchanges and Initiative, all of which contain a number of handy guidelines, as well as exercises to solve.

On top of the impressive new works on Spassky (reviewed above), and *Understanding Chess Exchanges*, Quality Chess have also recently released a paperback version of Mihail Marin's 304-page acclaimed work, *Learn from Bent Larsen*, which retails at £24.99 or £22.49 for Subscribers.



### Winning Chess Middlegames: Volume 2

Ivan Sokolov, 284 pages, paperback

RRP £24.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.45**

Back in 2010, Sokolov wrote the highly praised *Winning Chess Middlegames*, which had a focus on typical pawn structures arising from 1 d4 and 2 c4 openings. Now he returns for New in Chess with a second volume, one subtitled 'An Essential Guide to 1.e4 Pawn Structures'. Those naturally include the typical complex, tension-laden middlegames common to the Ruy Lopez and Giuoco Piano, with coverage too of the Richter-Rauzer structure with ♟xf6 gxf6, the Maroczy Bind and Hedgehog, the Sveshnikov, and the French Winawer. Sokolov once again highlights both a number of important concepts and some lesser-known ideas, while those who are fairly theoretically-minded may well enjoy his coverage of the early parts of several of the complete games he annotates in some detail.

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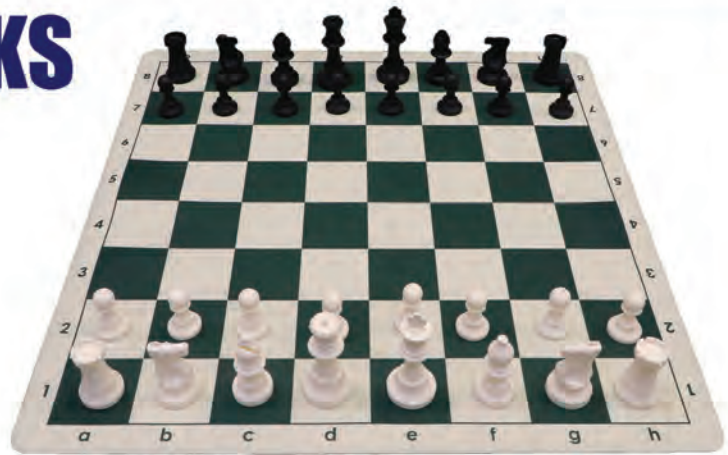
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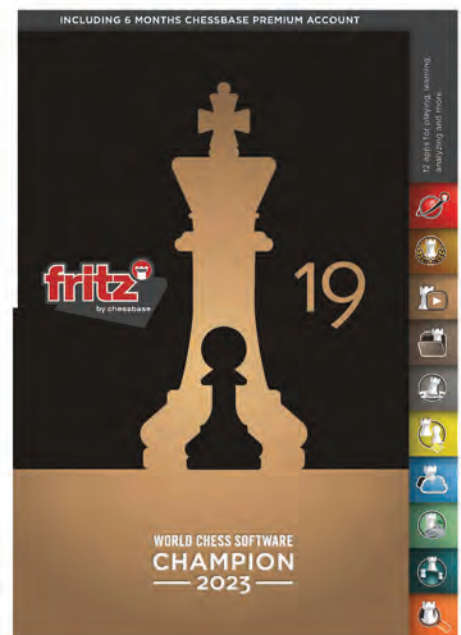
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