

Chess

MICHAEL BASMAN

A TRIBUTE TO A TRUE
CHESS LEGEND



B is for Basman - Jonathan Manley on a great player and huge chess presence



Remembering Mike - Blair Connell pays tribute to his former coach and friend



Mountainous Marvels - Andrew Ledger reports from the European Club Cup

Chess

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Chess Magazine (ISSN 0964-6221) is published by:
Chess & Bridge Ltd, 44 Baker St, London, W1U 7RT
Tel: 020 7486 7015 (9:30am - 5pm Monday to Friday)
Email: info@chess.co.uk, Website: www.chess.co.uk

Twitter: @CHESS_Magazine
Twitter: @TelegraphChess - Malcolm Pein
Twitter: @chessandbridge

Subscription Rates:

United Kingdom

1 year (12 issues)	£50
2 year (24 issues)	£90
3 year (36 issues)	£125

Europe

1 year (12 issues)	£60
2 year (24 issues)	£115
3 year (36 issues)	£165

Rest of World (Airmail)

1 year (12 issues)	£75
2 year (24 issues)	£145
3 year (36 issues)	£210

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editors. Contributions to the magazine will be published at the Editors' discretion and may be shortened if space is limited.

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FRONT COVER:

Cover Design: Matt Read
Cover image: John Saunders

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Printed in the UK by The Magazine Printing Company using only paper from FSC/PEFC suppliers www.magprint.co.uk

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New from Quality Chess!

Learn from Bent Larsen by Mihail Marin

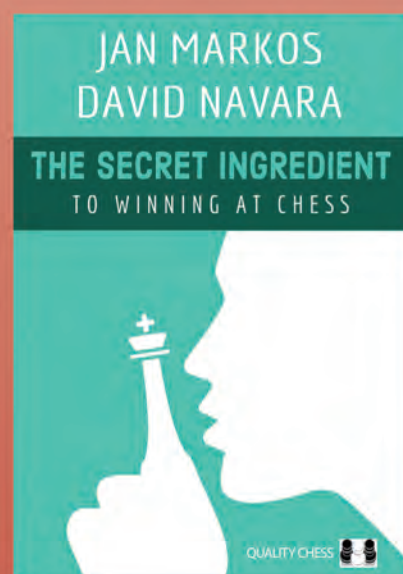
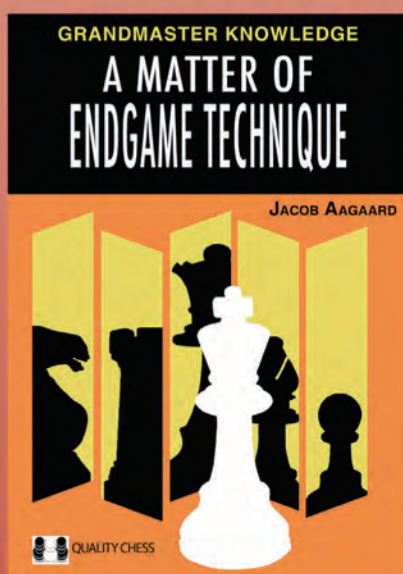
Bent Larsen is one of the most celebrated chess players of the twentieth century. Larsen is the man who pushed Bobby Fischer down to Board 2 on the Rest of the World team in 1970. The Danish grandmaster had spectacular results, but chess fans appreciated even more his creativity and fighting spirit. For Larsen, a drawish-looking position was no reason to halt a game, as he had the ability to create magic out of thin air.

Learn from Bent Larsen is a labour of love by award-winning author **GM Mihail Marin**. This project was originally planned as one chapter in a book about several players, but as ever more gems emerged, it became clear that Bent Larsen deserved a book of his own.



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Now European Champions Too!

World 50+ Senior Team Champions, England, did the double in Dresden, picking up the European title too. Nigel Povah and Keith Arkell report, and the latter also annotates

The wonderful city of Dresden hosted the 24th European Senior Team Chess Championship from October 27th to November 4th. There was a total of 34 teams playing in the 50+ competition and 42 teams in the 65+ competition, making it one of the largest Seniors events ever, with over 340 players taking part. England fielded three teams in each event, with a total of 26 players making up the English delegation. England's 50+ first team were the top seeds and had a superb tournament, being undefeated throughout to secure the European 50+ title. The 65+ first team were fourth seeds, but sadly failed to deliver and ended up in eighth place.

The playing venue and hotel accommodation in Dresden were both first class and we were fortunate to enjoy some beautiful weather throughout most of the tournament, with temperatures of 18-20 degrees, which is way above the seasonal average. Travelling to Dresden wasn't as straightforward as one would have hoped, as there were very few direct flights, so most of us opted to go via Frankfurt, Munich or Amsterdam and this gave rise to some very difficult journeys with various flights being cancelled. Fortunately, all 26 players managed to arrive on October 26th, the designated day of travel and we were ready to begin the competition.

In previous years England had sent self-funded amateur teams to the European Senior Team Championship, and with a few months to go this looked like happening again. However, thanks to sponsorship, initially by Ian Reynolds and Nigel Povah, first Keith Arkell and then Mark Hebden were signed up. The ECF, the Chess Trust and the Friends of Chess all followed suit, and so John Emms and Glenn Flear were also added to the ranks. With IM Chris Baker completing the line-up, we were left with a team very much Midlands-oriented. As many have observed, the five of them could just as easily have been found competing at a Birmingham Open in the 1980s!

It is likely that their shared roots, and various friendships, contributed significantly to a robust team spirit, and, unusually for

such a prestigious event, the whole thing went very smoothly for England I. They went undefeated in 36 games, winning 20 of them, and in so doing won eight of their nine matches, only dropping a 2-2 draw against Bielefeld in round 8 to seal first place with a round to spare.

Now on to the chess itself, and after winning 4-0 in rounds 1 and 2 we faced Germany. With Keith, John and Glenn drawing their games on boards two, three and four, it was left to Mark to seal victory.

M.Hebden-L.Fritsche

England vs Germany
Dutch Defence

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 c6 3 c4 e6 4 e3 ♗d6 5 b3 ♜e7

This is a very rare move order. Normally Black plays 5...♗f6 or 5...f5 immediately if they want to play a Dutch.

6 ♗b2 f5 7 ♗d3 ♗f6 8 0-0

But now we are back in mainline theory.

8...0-0 9 ♜c1 ♗e4 10 ♗a3 ♗d7 11 ♗xd6 ♜xd6 12 ♜b2 b6 13 ♗bd2

Mark could also consider 13 ♗c3 ♗b7 14 ♗e2 or 14 b4.

13...c5 14 cxd5 exd5 15 ♗b5



If White can establish a knight on e5 against a bishop hemmed in by the pawn on d5, he will gain a lasting advantage.

15...♗df6 16 ♗ad1 ♗b7 17 ♗e5 ♗ac8 18 ♗d3 ♗xd2 19 ♗xd2 c4?

A tactical oversight in a slightly worse position.

20 bxc4 dxc4 21 ♗xc4?

White returns the compliment. He could have emerged with a sound extra pawn: 21 ♗xc4+! ♗xc4 22 ♜b3! (not 22 ♗xc4? ♜d5!) 22...♗d5 23 ♗xc4 ♜e6 24 ♗c1 ♗e4 25 ♗dc2 ♗d6 26 ♜d3 ♗xc4 27 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 28 ♜xc4 should be winning.

21...♜d5 22 e4 fxe4

22...♗xe4 is also fine for Black.

23 ♗e3 ♜g5?!

There's not much happening on g5; the queen would do a better job centralised on d6 from where it keeps an eye on the passed pawn.

24 ♗c4+ ♗h8 25 ♗e6 ♗cd8



26 ♜a3

I think 26 d5 might have been more to the point. The pawn restricts Black's pieces and can become quite threatening, while 26...♗xd5?? drops a piece after 27 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 28 h4! (forcing the queen to move and removing a defender of the rook on d8) 28...♜h5 29 ♗fd1.

26...♗d5 27 ♗h3 ♗f7 28 ♗c2 ♗h5 29 ♗xd5 ♜xd5 30 g3!

There's no time for the obvious 30 ♗d1 because of the powerful 30...♗f4! 31 ♜e3 ♜h5 32 ♗dd2 ♜g6 and Black is clearly better.

30...♜xd4 31 ♗g4 ♜e5 32 ♗d1 ♗df8

The position would remain about equal after the slightly better 32...♗xd1+. In either case White has good compensation for the pawn.

33 ♗d7 g6? 34 ♗cc7

34 ♗xh5 was probably better, and if



The European 50+ Champions are England I (left to right): Glenn Flear, captain John Emms, Mark Hebden, Keith Arkell and Chris Baker - a formidable Midlands quintet. John, Mark and Keith also won individual gold, Glenn individual silver and Chris bookended the unbeaten run.

34...gxh5 35 ♖xa7.

34...♖a1??

The losing move which only serves to drive the bishop on to its best square. 34...♖f6 was necessary, after which some simplifying exchanges would follow.

35 ♗d1!



35...♖f6

This allows a nice finish, but even after 35...e3 36 ♖g2! ♖xf2+ 37 ♖h3 White's control of the seventh rank is devastating.

36 ♖xf8+! ♖xf8 37 ♖xh7+ ♖g8 38 ♗b3+ ♖f7 39 ♖xf7 1-0

In round 4 England again won by the most economical means, this time John Emms doing the business while the other three all drew:

M.Thinius-J.Emms
Berlin vs England
English Opening

1 ♖f3 c5 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 ♖c6

5 ♖c3 d6 6 0-0 ♖b8 7 a3 a6 8 b4!?

This kind of pawn sacrifice can be awkward to meet as White will gain a lasting initiative in the centre, but John does an excellent job in keeping his position together.

8...cxb4 9 axb4 ♖xb4 10 d4 ♖c6 11 ♗f4 ♖f6 12 d5 ♖h5! 13 ♗d2 ♖e5 14 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 15 ♖b3 ♗d7 16 ♖fc1 0-0 17 ♗e3 b5!

This is good as it forces White to play precisely in order to keep the balance. Indeed, 18 cxb5 ♗xb5 would significantly favour Black.

18 ♖xa6 ♖c8 19 ♖a7?!

After 19 ♖c6! ♗xc6 20 dxc6 bxc4 21 ♖xc4 ♗xc3 22 ♖xc3 ♖c7 it will be very difficult for Black to play for a win.

19...bxc4 20 ♖c2 ♖f6



21 ♖e4?

This amounts to capitulation as the c-pawn will become too strong. The last chance was to muddy the waters with 21 ♖a4, but Black is in any case well on top.

21...♖xe4 22 ♗xe4 c3

Black has a clear advantage and John

concludes the game with ease.

23 ♖d3 ♗b5 24 ♖d1 ♖b7 25 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 26 ♗d4? ♗xe2 27 ♖xe2 ♗xd4

The opposite-coloured bishops and the monster on c3 make Black's task even easier.

28 ♖g2 ♖a7 29 h4 ♗f6 30 ♗f3 ♖b8 31 ♖c2 ♖d4 32 ♗e4 ♖b4 33 ♗f3 ♖g7 34 ♖e3 h5 35 ♖e2 ♗e5 36 ♖e1 ♖b2 37 ♖e2 ♖a4 38 ♗e4 ♖b4 39 ♗d3 ♖d4 40 ♖e4 ♖xe4+ 41 ♗xe4 f5 42 ♗d3 ♗d4 43 f3 ♖f6 0-1

Slovakia fielded three GMs against us in round 5, so England needed to be at their best. Glenn was solid on board four, while Mark's game against the well-known GM Lubomir Ftacnik looked slightly iffy. However, the engine showed little more than an edge for Black. John won effortlessly against GM Jan Plachetka after Black simply dropped the exchange when already significantly worse, and Keith faced the current European Senior 50+ Champion.

M.Mrva-K.Arkell
Slovakia vs England
French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♖d2 dxe4 4 ♖xe4 ♗d7

I've been playing the 'Fort Knox' defence for donkey's years, hoping to play solidly against my strongest opponents and positionally outmanoeuvre the rest. Of course, it doesn't always work out that way.

5 ♖f3 ♗c6 6 ♗d3 ♖d7 7 0-0 ♖gf6 8 ♖g3 ♗e7 9 ♖e2 ♗xf3 10 ♖xf3 c6 11 ♗e1 0-0 12 c3 ♖e8 13 ♗c2 ♖c7 14 ♖e4

A novelty approved of by *Stockfish*.

14...♖xe4 15 ♜xe4 ♜f6 16 ♜h4



Essentially Black is playing for the better pawn structure. After achieving the break ...c5, the most valuable pawn on the board will be the one standing on e6. I explain this in detail in *Arkell's Endings*, under the umbrella 'Arkell's hierarchy of pawns'. Meanwhile White has the opportunity to play for a kingside attack, so I have to be vigilant.

16...g6 17 ♜h3 ♗a5 18 ♗f4 ♜h5 19 ♗e3 ♜f8 My king will be a lot safer with the bishop on g7.
20 g4 ♜f6 21 ♗f3 ♜g7 22 g5 ♜d7 23 b4 ♗d8 24 ♜e3 ♗e7 25 ♖b1 ♜b6

I could have played 25...e5 here, possibly the best move, but I have too many bad memories of being punished for opening up the a2-g8 diagonal for White's bishop.

26 ♗g4 ♜c4



I had a particular purpose in mind in playing the knight here, rather than to d5.

27 ♗h4 h5 28 gxf6 ♗xh4 29 ♜xh4 ♜f6 30 ♜g4 ♜a3!

And this was it. Normally in Fort Knox structures White's dark-squared bishop is the most valuable minor piece on the board, but here if I capture it I will be vulnerable to an attack down the f-file, and also to an h4-h5 advance, so instead I go after the light-squared bishop.

31 ♜c1 ♜xc2 32 ♜xc2 ♜e7

Preparing the possibility of ...♜h7, ...♜f8 and ...♜xh6, in contrast to which the immediate 32...♜h7? runs into 33 ♜f4.

33 h4 ♜h7 34 f3?

Objectively I may not be much better, even before this error, but I really like my position because White's pawn structure is very fragile...

34...f5

...When he cannot play 35 ♜f4 because of 35...♜d6 with ♜f3 no longer an option.

35 ♜g2 ♜xh4 36 ♜f4 a5 37 ♜b2 axb4 38 ♜xb4



Black stands better here because his structure is more compact, whereas White's pawns are flung all around the board, or in traditional thinking, I have two pawn islands against my opponent's four.

38...b5 39 c4 ♜e7 40 ♖b1 ♜f6

I think 40...♜a3 was a better way to increase the pressure, but the move played isn't bad either.

41 cxb5 ♜xd4+ 42 ♜f1 cxb5 43 ♜xb5 ♜e7 44 ♜g5 ♜f7 45 ♜d2 e5 46 ♜e2?! f4 47 ♜d3 ♜d7?!

47...♜a7 with the idea of ...♜f5 would have put him in more trouble.

48 ♜e2 ♜f7 49 ♜c2

He doesn't give me a second chance, of course.

49...♜a7



50 ♜d3?

With his position creaking badly, Mrva makes the losing move. He is clearly seduced by the appealing e4-square for his king, but there are tactical problems.

The only way to prolong the game is to go passive: for example, 50 ♜f1 ♜f5 51 ♜g2, after which one slightly paradoxical plan is to play 51...♜c7 with the idea of exchanging bishops with ...♜c5-e7 and rounding up the h6-pawn when my imposing pawn chain can begin to roll forward.

50...♜f5! 51 ♜h4 e4+! 52 ♜c4 ♜xb5 53 ♜xb5 exf3

The rest is straightforward.

54 a4 ♜xh6 55 ♜h2 ♜g7 56 a5 ♜f7 57 a6

♜e6 58 ♜d8 f2 59 ♜h1 ♜a8 60 ♜h4 ♜h8 61 ♜xf2 ♜b8+ 0-1

A decisive 3½-½ win over Austria followed, after which four solid draws against a deceptively strong team from Bielefeld wrapped matters up with a round to spare.

England I and England II were paraded on the top board for the final round, Chris and John agreeing quick draws with black to leave Glenn and Keith hoping to achieve something with the white pieces.

Glenn did indeed reel in the full point against Clive Frostick and Keith wrapped matters up with a long rook and opposite-bishop ending against FM Steve Dishman, who had an excellent Championship on board one for England II.

So as previously stated, England 50+ I are the European Senior Over-50 Champions and deserve huge congratulations for successfully navigating their way through the tournament without losing a single game, finishing with 17 match points and 28 game points from a possible 36. It's no surprise therefore that England claimed most of the gold medal board prizes, with Mark Hebden scoring 6½/8 on board one, Keith Arkell scoring 7/9 on board two and John Emms scoring 6½/8 on board three. Glenn Flear's score of 6 ½/9 on board 4 unfortunately only got him the silver medal.

Special mention should also be made of IM Chris Baker, who agreeably accepted that he would only play in the first and last rounds (scoring 1½/2), so the team could field its strongest side for most of the tournament, to ensure the title was secured. He leaves the tournament with the appreciation of his team-mates for his unselfish support and he was awarded by Mark Hebden with the affectionate nickname 'Book-end Baker'.

It goes without saying that none of this would have been possible without the support of a number of parties. The ECF and the Chess Trust contributed significantly to providing the funding to support the teams and there was also a useful contribution from the Friends of Chess. Additional funding was provided by Nigel Povah, Ian Reynolds, Natasha Regan and numerous others, so a big thank you to all, for helping England to add the European Seniors Team Chess Championship Over-50 title to the world title they secured in June.

Ed. – We'll have more from Nigel and the large England cohort in Dresden in our Christmas issue.



B is for Basman

Editor of *Kingpin*, Jonathan Manley, remembers one of his early contributors as well as a great British player and chess presence of the 20th Century, Mike Basman

In 1968, the American magazine *Chess Review* introduced Michael Basman as “another bright B” in the tradition of famous British chess players represented by Bird, Blackburne and Burn. That’s some billing.

Basman would never be the brightest chess star in this constellation of Bs, but he became the most doggedly extra-terrestrial of all of them. Throughout the 1970s he developed a playing style so distinctively baroque and otherworldly that it turned into a brand. ‘Basmanic’ quickly became a byword for boldly eccentric opening play, at roughly the same time as ‘Karpovian’ entered chess parlance to describe the patient accumulation and conversion of small positional advantages. It is hard to think of another player in recent times whose name has coined a style. Michael’s name fortuitously anagrammed to ‘Shamble Maniac’, which handily blessed his reputation for reckless invention.



An 18-year-old Mike Basman at the Stevenson Memorial Tournament, Bognor, April 1964.

J.Speelman-M.Basman

British Championship, Brighton 1980
Basmaniac Defence

1 e4 g5

The 2,000 page *FIDE Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* does not mention this move at all. However, Basman has adopted it on a number of occasions with success. His secret, perhaps, is that the move is not quite as bad as it looks.

2 d4 h6 3 h4 gxh4 4 ♖xh4 d5



Basman commented on this move: “This is to bust the position open and tear his king limb from limb.” This is the way he talks. Is it the way he thinks?

Murray Chandler & Ray Keene, *The English Chess Explosion: From Miles to Short* (Batsford, 1980), p.102.

This was also the year Tony Miles famously defeated Karpov with the Basmanic 1...a6! in the European Teams Championship at Skara.

I first met Mike in 1986 at the British Championships in Southampton. I was there to hawk a chess magazine I had launched and to gather material for it; and I was keen to seek a contribution from the Grobmeister, the mischievous uncle of English chess. As well as being a leading player, he had built a reputation as a fine chess teacher and a funny writer through his own magazine, *Popular Chess*, and his innovative Audio Chess cassette series (there were already over 100 cassettes covering openings, endings and positional play, including a few spoofs).

Luckily we were paired in a rapidplay tournament organised alongside the main event and after the game I plucked up the courage to ask him if he might be interested in doing something for *Kingpin*. He said he might if he thought any of his games in the British were worth writing up. They were. A couple of weeks later he sent me three annotated games from his British Championship – three acts of a Greek tragedy.

What is striking about these games is how each highlights different aspects of his playing style. As you might expect, there is his calling card – the outlandish opening 1 e4 g5 (“Totally bonkers” – Nigel Short); but next is a tricky rook, bishop and pawn versus rook ending – where Mike heroically struggles to win a position he had reached before (and only drawn) against William Hartston. Then comes the final act, a tragic loss to Murray Chandler in the last round after a promising start: “The opening begins ‘normally’; but after 10 moves we are in a position unknown to man.”

The article is typical of his clear, open and joyful approach to popularising chess. He focuses on simple explanations rather than variations, the critical moments, vivid analogies, and on-the-spot details to give you the impression you are at the board reliving the game with him. The agony and the ecstasy of chess wryly observed by one of the game’s most freethinking players. See www.kingpinchess.net for the whole drama.

Mike also wrote for *Kingpin* about his early forays into cheating at chess. These self-mocking confessions are among the most popular pieces on *Kingpin's* website. Several years ago he had suggested another article, about his most eventful year in chess. This was 1973, the year he tied for first in the British Championship (losing the play-off to

Hartston), and almost died in a car crash. Sadly, despite my encouragement he never managed to complete it.

C.Pritchett-M.Basman

British Championship,
Southampton 1986
Basmaniac Defence

1 e4 g5 2 d4 ♘g7 3 ♘c3 c5 4 d5 h6 5 h4
gxh4 6 ♘f3 d6 7 ♘xh4 ♘d7 8 ♘f5
♙xc3+ 9 bxc3 ♘e5 10 ♙b5+ ♘f8
11 ♙e2 ♖a5 12 ♘f1 ♙xf5 13 exf5 ♘f6
14 ♖xh6 ♘g7 15 ♖xh8 ♖xh8



16 ♘g1 ♖xc3 17 ♖b1 ♘e4 18 ♙h5 ♖d4
19 ♙e3 ♖xd1+ 20 ♙xd1 ♘c3 21 ♖a1
♘xd5 22 ♙c1 b5 23 ♙b2 f6 24 ♖b1 b4



Mike continued to compete right up to the end of last year. Here he is pictured at the Kingston Rapidplay of July 2018, continuing to both write down the early moves and refine Grob theory.

25 ♙e2 ♘f4 26 ♙f1 ♖h5 27 ♙xe5 fxe5
28 g4 ♖g5 29 f3 ♘f6 30 a3 a5 31 axb4
axb4 32 ♙c4 d5 33 ♙f1 ♖g8 34 ♖a1
♖b8 35 ♖a6+ ♘g5 36 ♖a7 c4 37 ♖xe7
b3 38 cxb3 cxb3 0-1

The game recalls what Wilhelm Steinitz wrote of Mike's hero, the Victorian master Henry Bird, also famed for his stubborn loyalty to dubious openings:

"Few chess masters could excel Mr. Bird in rapid survey of position and in the formation and execution of surprising manoeuvres, which, although not always sound – and sometimes, as he admits, even eccentric – tend to raise confusing complications, difficult for the adversary to disentangle at a quick rate."

The Field, 30th December 1879.

So long Mike, and thanks for all the fun.

Remembering Mike

Blair Connell pays tribute to his former coach and friend

My first recollection of Mike was playing a Wey Valley tournament in Surrey at around the age of 8. I remember immediately being drawn to his charisma, energy and passion for chess. Alongside the tireless organiser Pat Armstrong, Mike made Wey Valley a force to be reckoned with. Perhaps more importantly, it would be difficult to even put an accurate estimate on the number of people who love chess as a result of their hard work and endeavours.

I owe my parents a lot, particularly for hiring Mike as my chess teacher at around the age of 11. I had the pleasure of streaming with Mike in April 2021. I said that he was my coach for a couple of years. "It felt much longer" was his typically accurate and humorous reply. I have mentioned to a number of players, including many foreign titled ones, that Mike was my tutor. Their eyes would light up and immediately suggest he must have taught me the Grob. Nothing could be further from the truth. We spent much of our time on endgames and I owe most of what positional understanding I have to him.

We covered many topics on our stream. His enthusiasm for all things chess was infectious. I had selected his Hastings game from 1966/67 versus the then recently ex-world champion Mikhail Botvinnik and I had the pleasure of hearing his thoughts on the game as a 20 year old thrust against the Soviet legend.

Notes by Mike Basman

After the first three rounds I only had a half-point out of three. After a little bit of crying in the bath I then put myself together and amazingly had three wins. Then it was my turn against Botvinnik. A Canadian article once said I was too lazy to learn any proper openings, but too smart to let anyone play them against me. However, back before I became a maverick I thought, what the hell, let's just play something and I accidentally stumbled in to a bad variation for Botvinnik. I was never a confident player, but as the game progressed I realised I might have a chance against a god-like player to me.

M.Botvinnik-M.Basman

Hastings Premier 1966/67
English Opening

1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 ♘f3 ♘c6 4 g3 ♙b4
5 ♙g2 0-0 6 0-0 ♖e8 7 d3 ♙xc3 8 bxc3
e4 9 ♘d4

BC: This was the first time that this position had been reached according to my database. It has been seen many times since, including a win for Karpov with Black vs Kasparov in their Seville world championship match of 1987. Karpov played 9...h6, but Mike preferred 9...exd3 which is supported by the computer and has been repeated by illuminaries such as Anand, Kramnik and England's own David Howell at the 2011 London Classic.

9...exd3 10 exd3 ♘xd4 11 cxd4 d5 12 ♙e3
A slightly passive choice, but done to avoid exchanges after 12 ♙g5 h6 13 ♙xf6 ♖xf6.
12...♙e6 13 ♖c1 h6 14 h3 c6 15 ♖d2
♖d7 16 ♘h2 ♘h7 17 ♖fe1 ♘g8



Mike Basman explains that classic trap, beloved of juniors, the Blackburne Shilling Gambit.

At this point it's getting very late and I'm tossing up which of the pawns to take. Maybe I go for the a-pawn to create a passed one, but maybe I should have gone for the d-pawn as it's more centralised. **58...♖xa5** Botvinnik was now right back in the game. **59 ♖f3 ♗b3 60 ♖e3 ♖h7 61 ♖f8+ ♖e6 62 ♖e8+ ♖d7 63 ♖b8 ♖h3+ 64 ♖f4 ♗a5 65 ♖f5 b5 66 ♖g8 ♖f3+ 67 ♖e5 ♖e3+ 68 ♖f5 ♖f3+ 69 ♖e5 ♖e3+ 70 ♖f5 b4 71 ♖g7+ ♖c8 72 ♖c7+ ♖d8 73 ♖a7 ♗b3 74 ♖e5 a5 75 ♖b7 ♖xd3 76 ♖b8+ ½-½**

Botvinnik once complimented me as a player who strived to create original positions. Inspired by this I'd invented some systems which worked well and used them to tie for first in the 1973 British Championship. It gradually became more deviant as I went to the edges of the board in 1978/79.



BC: The engine gives **38...♖g5**, followed up with ideas of **...♗f4** and **...h3**, which are hard for White to resist.

39 ♖f1 ♖f3 40 ♖h2 ♖d1



It was time for the adjournment, but Botvinnik said "No, no, I can play."

41 f4!

Here he began to show his fighting spirit. He reckons if he can get into an endgame, he's got chances against the young player.

41...♗xf4 42 ♖f2 ♗g6 43 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 44 ♖g1 ♖g4 45 a4 ♖h6 46 ♖e8 ♖f7 47 a5 a6 48 ♖e3 ♖g5 49 ♖e8 ♖h5 50 ♖g8 h3 51 ♖e8 ♖h4 52 ♖h8+ ♖g5 53 ♖g8+ ♖f5 54 ♖h2 It's around 10.30 at night and now I had to make a decision.

54...♗f3+ 55 ♖g3 ♗d2

He has made a success here by getting off my h3-pawn, but at the expense of my knight attacking his weak queenside pawns.

56 ♖xh3 ♖xh3 57 ♖xh3 ♗b3 58 ♖g3

At the end of the stream I had the pleasure of returning Mike's indefatigable sense of humour. With thanks to Ingvar Johannesson, who devises the devious questions at the Reykjavik Open chess quiz, I was able to show him the following:

At Hastings 1974/75 Ulf Andersson had these positions after his 12th move as White and then his 24th move:



Who was the joker with Black who gave away 12 tempi and still won?

Mike laughed, but was even more touched when I told him that one of the few, if only, people to get the question right was Magnus Carlsen, despite the game being played nearly 16 years before he was born. Mike's influence reached very far indeed.

To me, Mike was my mentor and coach who later became a friend. He reminded me I can be more than I am. I will treasure our times together and miss him greatly.

I've got to bring the pawns up to attack the kingside and get my knight to e7 and follow up with **...f5**. Botvinnik is playing a beginner and has nothing.

18 g4 ♗e7 19 ♖f4 ♖ad8 20 c5 g5

He's got the two bishops, but they haven't got the range they want.

21 ♖e5 f5 22 gxf5 ♖xf5 23 ♖e3 ♗g6

It's getting a bit tricky for White.

24 ♖ce1 All the entry points are covered on the e-file, but look at White's king!

24...♖e6 25 ♖g3 ♖de8 26 ♖f1 ♖g7 27 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 28 ♖e5 ♖f7 29 ♖g3 ♖f5 30 ♖d1 ♖f8 31 ♖g2 ♖f7 32 ♖e3 ♖f6 33 ♖e1 ♖d7 34 ♖b4 g4



I was an aggressive player then. Would I play it today? Who knows? Now the h-pawn is hoping to come down the board and add to his torment, so he had to take it.

35 hxg4 ♖xg4 36 ♖b2 h5 37 ♖g1 h4 38 ♖d6 ♖f5?!





60 Seconds with... FM Peter Lee



Peter Lee (right) enjoys a spot of blitz with his old friend Mike Basman at the London Classic.

Born: London, 21st November 1943.

Place of residence: Sutton, Surrey.

Occupation: Consultant Medical Statistician and Epidemiologist (still working part time).

Enjoyable? Yes.

And home life? Live with my wife Margaret, with our daughter and granddaughter nearby and grandson (a professional *League of Legends* player) sometimes in the country.

But sometimes good to escape to: Before Covid used to go on regular sea and river cruises, but not much escaping currently. Escapes are mostly walks to the pub or a restaurant.

Sports played or followed: Played chess for England up to early 1970s, but retired for about 20 years then joined Athenaeum gentlemen's club and now play in the inter-club league (chess for two hours then a nice dinner!). I still follow what is happening in the top tournaments.

Bridge is now my serious game, and I believe I am the only person to have won the British Championship at both chess (age 21) and bridge (age 60 and 68).

I also follow cricket and football closely, but don't go to matches. Chelsea supporter since my teens.

A favourite novel? Don't really read novels, more crosswords and number games.

Piece of music? I Like Mozart, Elvis and Roy Orbison particularly.

Film or TV series? Film – *Some Like It Hot*; TV series – *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and *Richard Osman's House of Games*.

What's the best thing about playing chess? It's good for manic problem solvers like me.

And the worst? Losing won positions. Which I managed in two successive games in one Olympiad – ouch!

Your best move? Marrying Margaret wins, but if referring to chess, ♟xd5 against Ivan Radulov in the 1965 Student Olympiad.

P.Lee-I.Radulov England vs Bulgaria, Sinaia 1965



23 ♟xd5! exd5 24 e6 ♟b6 25 ♔xc7!
♔xc7 26 ♟f6+ ♟h8 27 e7



27... ♔b8 28 exf8 ♔+ ♔xf8 29 ♖e8
♔xe8 30 ♟xe8 ♟c8 31 ♟f6 ♟e6 32 ♖e1
♟c8 33 ♟xd5 ♟d6 34 ♟f4 ♟b5 35 ♖e5
♟c3 36 ♔xc5 ♟g8 37 ♔xc3 bxc3 38 ♟xe8
fxe6 39 ♟g2 ♟f7 40 ♟f3 1-0

But less memorable than your worst move? No.

And a highly memorable opponent? Played and lost to Spassky, Keres and Korchnoi.

The best chess books: *My System* helped a lot in my formative years.

Can chess make one happy? Yes.

Any memories of Michael Basman? A great character who did a lot for chess. A few memories stand out:

i. When we both played in the National Club Championship for Bradford and were away to a Birmingham team, Michael rang up just before the start of the game saying he had missed his train. We told him come as soon as he could. He arrived almost an hour late and won the game *on time* against Bernard Cafferty.

ii. When we were meeting at the airport to get on a plane to a Clare Benedict tournament in Europe, Michael arrived late saying, "Mr Alexander, Mr Alexander, I have forgotten my passport!" As Hugh Alexander, our non-playing captain, was a senior member of GCHQ, he was able to get him through customs without a passport.

iii. In another tournament, Michael played the whole game standing up (and won), as he could not sit down because of piles.

These are typical of his way-out and lovable character.

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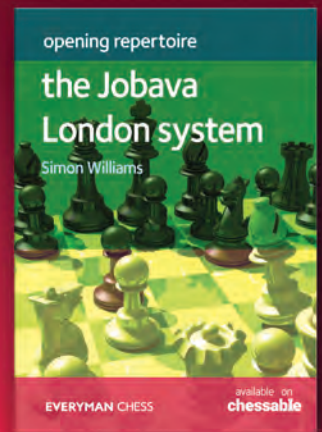
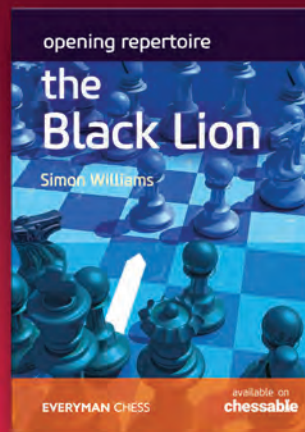
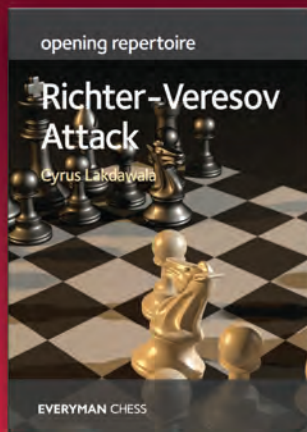
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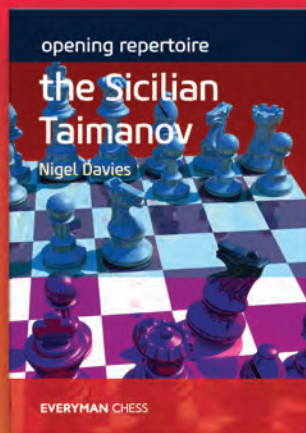
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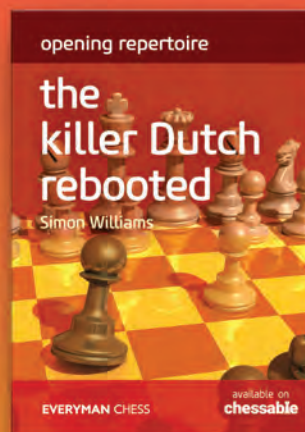
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3...♟f8 4 ♞g7+! ♚h8 5 ♞h7+! 1-0 It's mate in two.

18) Wall-Ashton

White went on to win a messy struggle after 1...h5? 2 ♘e5!? c4 3 ♟e2, but **1...c4! 2 ♟e2 ♘c5!** would have picked off c3 after 3...♘e4 (or 3 ♘g5 h6), since White cannot, of course, allow 3 dxc5? ♟xc3.

19) Gaffney-Hall

After 1...♘8e6 2 ♞c3 g5!? Black eventually won, but **1...♘g2!** would have been an immediate knockout, and if **2 ♘xg2** (or 2 ♟xd5 ♞xd5) **2...♞g5+ 3 ♟f1 ♟xf3!**, neatly exploiting the pin along the fifth rank, as pointed out by David LeMoir in *En Passant*.

20) Nguyen-Ivic

1 ♟g3! (clearing the way for the c-pawn; otherwise, Black is in time to draw, as with 1 f6? ♟b3 2 ♟g3 ♞c1) **1...♞g1** (1...♞xe4+ 2 ♘xe4 ♟c2+ 3 ♘e5 ♟c6 4 ♟f2 is an easy win, despite the opposite-coloured bishops) **2 c6+ ♟c8 3 f6! ♞f1** (or 3...♟g4 4 ♟f5+! ♟xf5 5 f7 ♞xg3 6 f8 ♞+ ♟c7 7 ♞xf5 ♟xc6 8 ♞c8+) **4 ♟g2 1-0**

21) Pert-McClement

1 ♟c7! ♞xc7 (1...♞xd7 2 ♞xd7 ♟e8 3 ♞d8+ ♟e7 4 ♞hh8! is also all over, in view of 4...♞xc7 5 ♞he8#) **2 ♟e1 f5** (now it's mate, but if 2...g6 3 ♞h8+ ♟g7 4 ♞xd8) **3 g6 ♞cx7 4 ♞h8# 1-0**

22) Zhu Jiner-Abdumalik

After 1...♟g3+? 2 ♘h1 ♞d8 (2...♟xe1 3 ♞xe1 ♞g3 4 ♘e4 is also more than sufficient) 3 ♘e4 White went on to win, but 1...♟xe1! 2 ♞axe1 ♞g3+ 3 ♘h1 ♘g4! would have been fairly effective. 4 fxc4 is forced and then in turn 4...f3! 5 ♞ef1 fxc2+ 6 ♞xg2 ♞xf1+ 7 ♞xf1 ♞hx3+ 8 ♟g1 ♞e3+ 9 ♞f2 ♞c1+ 10 ♞f1 ♞e3+ forces a repetition.

23) Hollan-Tin Jingyao

Black did prevail after 1...f4? 2 ♘c4 h4 3 b4? (3 ♘d4! e3 4 ♘d3 ♟f6 5 ♘e2 ♟e5 6 ♘d3 ♘d5 7 ♘e2 ♘c4 8 ♘d1! ♟b3 9 ♘c1 is the key drawing method, as pointed out by Daniel Fernandez in his excellent Chess-Publishing column) 3...♟f6 4 ♘d4 e3 5 ♘d3 ♟e5, but **1...h4!** should have been the only way to win, fixing the white kingside while keeping the central majority where it is: **2 ♘c4 ♘f6 3 ♘d4 ♟e6 4 ♟e3 ♟e5 5 ♟e2 ♘d4 6 ♘d2 ♘c4 7 ♟c2 f4** reveals a key difference with the previous variation, and if **8 ♟d1 ♟b3 9 ♟c1 e3**.

24) Cheparinov-Murzin

1 ♟xg7+! ♟xg7 2 ♞xf7+! ♟h8 (of course, if 2...♟xf7? 3 ♞g6+ ♟f8 4 ♞g8#) **3 ♞xe8+ ♞xe8 4 ♞f2!** (the key and deadly quiet follow-up, covering e1 while threatening to give mate on f6) **4...♞e5 5 ♟g6 ♟e8 6 ♞f8+ ♟g7 7 ♟xe8 1-0**



This Month's New Releases



Opening Repertoire: Richter-Veresov Attack
Cyrus Lakdawala, 416 pages
Everyman Chess

RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

Two new books on the Richter-Veresov Attack offer different ways of playing this obscure d4 deviation. Traditionally reached via 1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 ♟g5, the Richter-Veresov has yet to enjoy its time in the sun, despite nearly all of the other d4 systems – such as the Trompowsky, Barry Attack and London System – experiencing spells of popularity over the years.

This opening has featured in a previous Lakdawala book and he says, "In my super-unbiased opinion this one is more useful than the original *A Ferocious Opening Repertoire*, mainly since this one faithfully follows the path of the opening's founders, Kurt Richter and Gavriil Veresov, rather than the modern, slightly shady, fad du jour version of White playing 4 f3 and 5 e4, as was covered in the *AFOR* book."

Yes, it is certainly a safer repertoire this time around. The main line runs 1 d4 d5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 ♟g5 ♘bd7 4 ♘f3, avoiding "the somewhat sleazy 4 f3". There are some obscure points here, such as meeting 4...h6 with 5 ♟f4!? (5 ♟h4 is also considered), which gives an extra tempo in what is now a Jobava London System.



This approach seems strange and potentially toothless at first glance, but as the illustrative

games show, even the great attacker Rashid Nezhmetdinov played this way. Perhaps the pawn on h6 will turn out to be a target or a hook if White can get a kingside attack going?

The plan recommended by Lakdawala against standard play by Black is slower than normal. He plays e2-e3, completes development and only then aims for e3-e4. Frankly, this shouldn't cause too many problems for a well-prepared player with the black pieces, but, as usual, a lot of the fun comes from White playing in their own backyard and knowing considerably more about the system than any of their opponents.

Early deviations are nicely covered, with even the likes of 1 d4 d5 2 ♘c3 ♟g4? and 2...e5? receiving (relatively brief) attention. Interestingly, rather than refer to readers to books on other openings to cater for all transpositions, Lakdawala gamely takes the theoretical bull by the horns by devoting half of the book to meeting other major defences, such as the French and Caro-Kann, as these can easily be found after 1 d4 d5 2 ♘c3 e6 (or 2...c6) 3 e4. He then goes the extra mile to provide lines against even earlier deviations, including the Schmid Benoni with 1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 c5 3 d5, before concluding with an anti-Dutch which takes us back into the Richter-Veresov territory of 1 d4, 2 ♘c3 and 3 ♟g5.

Further reading will be required; for example, the lines against the French are rather skimpy (a full repertoire with 3 ♘c3 would take a lot more pages and 4 exd5 against the Winawer isn't going to cause Black too many sleepless nights). Nevertheless, the main chapters on the true Richter-Veresov Attack are very interesting and point to a repertoire for White which is offbeat yet sound.

Sean Marsh



The Richter-Veresov Attack: Qd3 Variation

Eric J. Fleischman, 284 pages
Mongoose Press*

The second Richter-Veresov book to be placed under our microscope this month takes an altogether different approach to the first. This time, the white queen decides to go

into battle very quickly indeed. As Fleischman says: "We will develop an opening system for White based on the moves 1 d4 d5 2 ♖c3 ♗f6 3 ♘g5 ♗bd7 4 ♕d3".



Naturally, bringing out the strongest piece so early in the game is a controversial act, but there are some obvious advantages in avoiding main line theory too.

"Right away, you'll be taking your opponents out of their preparation and into your comfort zone. While the Richter-Veresov has developed its own 'book' over the years, Eric Fleischman shows you how to bypass a lot of that body of theory, too, with an early deployment of the queen to d3, an idea sometimes known as the Amazon Attack."

Indeed, after both 1 d4 d5 and 1 d4 ♗f6, White can already play 2 ♕d3 ("The Hyper-Accelerated ♕d3 Attack"), or 1 d4 d5 2 ♖c3 ♗f6 3 ♕d3 ("Accelerated ♕d3 Attack"), both of which may come as a shock to the opponent. There is some justification for the early queen move. She controls e4, perhaps as a prelude to advancing the e-pawn. Also, Black cannot play 1...d5 and then 2...♗f5. Speedy queenside castling could also be on the agenda.

Even with such an original approach, White can't quite shake off the shackles of chess theory. For example, after 1 d4 d5 2 ♖c3 ♗f6 3 ♘g5 ♗bd7 4 ♕d3 e6!?, White is advised to play 5 e4, "transposing into the French", albeit one in which White will have to justify the somewhat strange position of the queen.

As Fleischman himself states: "Historically, the early development of the queen has been considered a strategic mistake." This attempt to weave a book full of lines around ♕d3 is interesting and the ideas will appeal to the free spirits of the club world. Yet with eccentric opening lines, the question remains: does one have the time to study everything that is required to face all of the black responses for what will probably turn out to be an occasional surprise weapon?

Incidentally, although some of Black's second-move alternatives are covered, this is not a full repertoire for White. I would have been tempted to shoehorn in 2 ♕d3 against 1...f5, but that is, perhaps, a story for another time.

It is good to see Mongoose Press back in action, although this book could have done with an index, as there are many lines to examine and it would be useful to have a handy guide to them all. However, it good to see so much original material, which will

tempt anyone to take a look who is currently feeling overwhelmed by the sheer volume of main line theory in other openings. I would certainly like to give some of these maverick ideas a try over-the-board.

Summing up, Lakdawala's book is better for an all-embracing White repertoire, but Fleischman offers something very different; an eccentric niche which will appeal more to the club mavericks.

Sean Marsh

* Publication of The Richter-Veresov Attack: Qd3 Variation has been delayed until early 2023.



Chess for Schools

Richard James, 224 pages
Crown House Publishing

RRP £16.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £15.29**

Richard James is a writer and tutor with an impeccable reputation. His latest book will be welcomed by anyone who is involved with teaching chess in schools and through community clubs and groups.

The strapline promises to take the reader and student 'from simple strategy games to clubs and competitions'. The material is presented in four parts: Setting the Scene; Posing the Problem; Finding the Solution; and Resources.

Richard starts off by informing readers of his own background and how chess has helped throughout his life, after starting out enduring bullying and abuse at school and home respectively. "I never felt I belonged to the real world, but in the world of chess I was able to make friends with whom I had much in common."

He became a reluctant teacher of chess, but "Much to my surprise, I enjoyed teaching and my pupils made, in some cases, considerable progress. When I was a child, many of my peers had despised me because I was different, but now I was an adult it was precisely because I was different that children liked me."

There is also discussion on what chess *isn't* before the author shares his thoughts on what chess *is*. This is all worth reading as it explodes various myths, such as 'chess is for nerds' and 'chess isn't for girls', Richard also discusses numerous other relevant topics, such as whether or not chess should be on the school curriculum.

Chess in Schools and Communities receives only a couple of mentions; Richard and I have slightly different views regarding the merits of CSC's approach in schools. The study carried out by the Education Endowment Foundation in 2013-14 is highlighted too, particularly regarding whether or not "chess makes kids smarter". The study was flawed, which isn't mentioned here, but the fact that only 8 percent of pupils said they didn't like the chess lessons means, of course, that a very significant

percentage of children *did* like them – and that can hardly be a bad outcome.

I think most people who want to run some sort of chess activity in their school – whether during curriculum time or not – will want to move on to the more practical material sooner rather than later, and this finally makes an appearance on page 91 (and the first chess diagram only turns up on page 95, which seems a little late for a book about chess). Mini-games are recommended and I can happily confirm that these are extremely effective in the classroom.



I would have gone further and presented more practical material (perhaps, one day, I will).

The book concludes with the rules of chess, followed by some recommendations for further reading. There is no index, which is disappointing, as one would have been very useful. Other than that issue, the production values are high, with the book enjoying good quality paper and the general layout being crisp and clear.

Richard James continues to use his passion for chess to make a difference and it is fitting to give him the closing words to round off this month's reviews.

"Chess transformed my life – and it can transform other lives as well. If you're a teacher, there will be children in your school whose lives could be transformed by chess in so many ways."

Sean Marsh



Checkmate!

Ben Graff, 208 pages, paperback
RRP £25.00 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.50**

Subtitled 'Great Champions and Epic Matches from a Timeless Game', this lavishly-produced work from White Star will educate and amuse those new to the game, as well as the layman with only a passing interest in chess. Ben Graff explains a little about the book earlier in these pages and writes typically well as he focusses on the 16 world champions and their title matches. His work concludes in the present day with the impact AI has made on chess, meaning that even the

more experienced player will be able to enjoy more than just the excellent photography and revisiting some classic world title duels.



Chess Endgames for Club Players

Herman Grooten, 480 pages, paperback
RRP £31.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £28.75**

It's not just those who transition from online to OTB club chess who tend to struggle with their endgames, but even many fairly strong players. Highly experienced IM, trainer and writer Grooten is fully aware of such failings, ones he aims to address in this useful-looking tome, which groups together by theme plenty of instructive material. Grooten begins by looking at 'Fear of the endgame?' before moving on to elementary endings, various techniques and curious endgames.



Chess Informant 153 – Grandeur

Sahovski Informator, 344 pages, paperback
RRP £39.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £35.95**

The latest 'Informator' supplies not just all the latest leading games and novelties, presented with typically languageless annotations, but some very interesting tournament reports, including Ivan Sokolov on the Candidates and Danny Gormally on the British Championship. There are also some nice historical articles, including Douglas Griffin's tribute to Borislav Ivkov.

Please note that if you'd prefer *Chess Informant 153 – Grandeur* in CD format, so that you can play through the games in ChessBase, that too is available retailing at £19.95 or £17.95 for Subscribers.



Chess Parallels I: Strategy and Tactics

Bora Ivkov, 224 pages, hardback
RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

Talking of the legendary Serbian (Yugoslav) Grandmaster, while Ivkov may have sadly passed away earlier this year, he left behind quite a legacy of annotations and writings, some of which are now appearing in print for the first time thanks to Sahovski Informator. This first

volume of Ivkov's material is quite wide-ranging, featuring several chapters devoted to both tactical and strategic themes, with the main part of the book on 'Parallels'. Here it's impossible not to quickly be aware of both how strong and how creative Ivkov was, and surely some of the short chapters – on such topics as the Geller motif, Cosma's rook and the almighty knight – can but inspire the reader.



Learn from Bent Larsen

Mihail Marin, 304 pages, hardback
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Quality Chess have a knack of putting together leading authors with some great topics, as exemplified by their latest title, pairing leading chess authority Mihail Marin with one of the most creative and popular players of the second half of the 20th Century, Bent Larsen. This isn't a biography, but rather a collection of some of Larsen's best efforts, games which remind us just what a good fighter and attacker he was, as well as most independent-minded. A good new work on the Great Dane was long overdue and now one is out, and in good time for Christmas.



Life at Play: A Chess Memoir

Lubomir Kavalek, 352 pages, paperback
RRP £31.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £28.75**

New in Chess are also likely to do well from the Christmas market based on this memoir from the famous Czech-American Grandmaster, written in conjunction with Jan Novak, and which was largely finished when Kavalek passed away late last year. Seven chapters present his oft-fascinating journey from his birth in Prague in 1943 up to his training Nigel Short for his world championship quest between 1990 and 1993. There are also just over one hundred pages devoted to selected games, ones which remind us just what an insightful and instructive annotator Kavalek was.



Memorable Games of British Chess

Neil Hickman, 288 pages, paperback

RRP £14.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £13.49**

*CHES*s readers have benefitted of late from some fine games which didn't make their way into Neil Hickman's book, not least that remarkable Nicholson-Basman encounter which Neil annotated for our November issue. This entertaining read presents 90 games played between 1788 and 2016, with Hickman setting the scene for each encounter before presenting detailed annotations, often by drawing heavily on any contemporary annotations. If you like your British chess history or simply want to be inspired, *Memorable Games of British Chess* should brighten many a long winter's evening.



Sicilian Dragon: The Real Deal! Part 2

Chris Ward, PC-DVD;

running time: 4 hours, 22 minutes

RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Ward follows up his earlier DVD for ChessBase, which was subtitled 'Part 1: Understanding The Dragon', by beginning to dive deeper into the specifics of the opening. Users quickly learn which lines used to be popular, but are no more, and vice versa, before the leading Dragon authority begins to map out a repertoire for Black with his favourite opening. On this second DVD, Ward reveals how to counter in the main line 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 g6 6 ♙e3 ♙g7 7 f3 0-0 8 ♖d2 ♘c6 both 9 0-0-0 and 9 g4, before presenting some bonus material on the Dragadorf with an early ...a6.

The Dragon aficionado will likely also want to purchase *Sicilian Dragon: The Real Deal! Part 3* (RRP £26.95, Subscribers £24.25), where over six hours of video Ward examines both the critical 9 ♙c4 in the Yugoslav main line, including coverage of a few different options for Black, and White's early deviations, such as the Classical, Levenfish and 6 ♙c4.

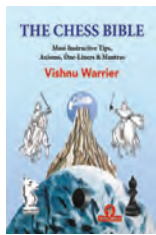


Squeeze Play

Cyrus Lakdawala, 464 pages, paperback
RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

Modern day chess fans have become accustomed to Magnus Carlsen successfully grinding away from positions which look completely drawn. So too, of course, did the likes of Jose Raul Capablanca and Anatoly Karpov, and in his latest book Lakdawala, an accomplished positional player and no stranger to the art of grinding himself,

explains what methods – beyond the fear caused by their reputations and high ratings – such quality players use to create problems in even the most innocuous looking of positions. In this fine practical guide there are chapters devoted to such topics as exploiting superior activity, making use of imbalances and ‘Blood from a Stone: How Magnus Squeezes’.



The Chess Bible

Vishnu Warrior, 384 pages, paperback
RRP £31.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £28.75**

Subtitled ‘Most Instructive Tips, Axioms, One-Liners & Mantras’ this new work from Thinkers Publishing builds on Bruce Pandolfini’s classic 1986 work *The ABCs of Chess*, which featured the 64 commandments of chess. Warrior attributes Pandolfini’s book to his rise from 1000 to 1500 strength and here revisits the 64 rules while expanding on them. The result is a set of 200 axioms, one-liners and mantras, all of which should prove useful to pretty much every club player.



The Closed Sicilian

Andrew Martin, PC-DVD;
running time: 5 hours

RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

The Closed Sicilian isn’t as popular as it once was, although Vladislav Artemiev and Luke McShane continue to dabble in it, and it remains a decent, easy-to-play weapon at club level. As such, Andrew Martin is the ideal presenter to explain the main ideas behind White’s set-up with 2 ♘c3, 3 g3 and 4 ♗g2. In the main line Martin endorses a set-up with ♗e3 and ♖d2, while his coverage doesn’t only cover the traditional Closed Sicilian. Indeed, he also takes a good look at both the Big Clamp (2 d3, 3 g3, 4 ♗g2 and 5 f4), and the semi-fashionable 2 ♗e2 followed by 3 f4, the so-called British Grand Prix Attack.



The Modern Nimzo-Indian

Igor Lysyj, 216 pages, paperback
RRP £21.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £19.75**

Chess Stars are keen for us to know that Igor Lysyj was one of a brave number of chess players to sign an open letter to Vladimir Putin condemning the invasion of Ukraine. That may reassure those currently uncertain about purchasing books by Russian authors and publisher Chess Stars is, of course, Bulgarian. What matters most is that the 2014 Russian Champion certainly knows his onions when it comes to 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 and here maps out a thorough but also fairly user-friendly repertoire with it in typical Chess Stars fashion. Notably 4 ♗c2 is met by 4...0-0 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 ♖xc3 d5 and 4 e3 by 4...0-0, intending 5 ♗e2 d5, 5 ♗f3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 d6 and 5 ♗d3 ♖e8!?



Understanding Middlegame Strategies Vol.5 – Sicilian Rossolimo & Maroczy Structures

Ivan Sokolov, PC-DVD;

running time: 7 hours, 20 minutes

RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Ivan Sokolov continues to examine a number of important pawn structures for ChessBase and is fully aware that too many players focus on learning opening theory and not on understanding the key ideas in the middlegames that arise. The Maroczy Bind can, of course, occur from a wide array of different openings, although here Sokolov looks at the specific middlegames which tend to arise after 1 e4 c5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 g6 5 c4. He also takes a good look at 3 ♗b5 in that move order, with the Rossolimo leading to some distinctive pawn structures and rich middlegames, especially when White meets 3...g6 and 3...e6 with 4 ♗xc6.

Sokolov has certainly been busy in Hamburg, also recording *Understanding Middlegame Strategies Vol.6 – Ruy Lopez Structures* (RRP £26.95, Subscribers £24.25), a DVD which is likely to be popular with all those players who debate the Spanish with either colour. Over six hours and 25 minutes of coverage, Sokolov does his usual good job of exploring a number of key middlegame motifs, chiefly in the main line, 1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♗f6 5 0-0 ♗e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♗b3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 h3.

As we prepared to send off to the printer, on their way from Germany to Baker Street were not just *ChessBase Magazine 210* (PC-DVD, RRP £17.99, Subscribers £16.19), with a special focus on both the Olympiad and Ding Liren, and especially *ChessBase 17*, as well as the latest Mega and Big Databases. Please see page 39 for more details, but in short *ChessBase 17 – Starter Package* retails at £179.00 (Subscribers – £161.10), with an upgrade from *ChessBase 16* to 17 available for £109.95 (Subscribers – £98.95).



A little bird just told me

A round-up of what the top players and chess personalities have been saying on Twitter

Simon Williams - @ginger_gm

Blair and I visited Mike Basman in the hospital on Saturday. He was clearly very ill but still shined with that special charisma his soul possessed. He mentioned that he wanted the following things to be remembered:
♙ To spread the love of chess, something he tirelessly dedicated his life to.

♙ To look at things differently, that’s what Mike did and what Mike wanted future generations to do. RIP.

Jovanka Houska - @thelittlehat

Very sad news. Mike was quite simply one of a kind. He will be very much missed.

David Howell - @DavidHowellGM

Sad news. Rest in peace, Mike Basman. A maverick on & off the board. Mike once personally sponsored my coaching without asking for anything in return. For anyone seeking inspiration, check out Mike’s games.

Malcolm Pein - @TelegraphChess

It’s more gold for England Seniors in the 50+ European Ch! Congrats to Mark Hebden, Keith Arkell, John Emms, Glenn Flear, Chris Baker, and Manager Nigel Povah. @ecfchess

Nigel Short - @nigelshortchess

There was a power outage today, so I gave my simul at the Solomon Islands National Institute of Sport wearing shorts. I don’t believe I have ever dripped so much sweat during an exhibition, but I somehow won all my games. Time for a beer.

Fiona Steil-Antoni - @fionchetta

Another fantastically mad #GGMCrypt in the books! A huge shoutout to @ginger_gm and everyone who helped organise this brilliant blitz extravaganza. Playing @polborta [Peter Svidler] in full meerkat costume was definitely a highlight!

Tata Steel Chess - @tatasteelchess

BREAKING: The first names of the 2023 #TataSteelChess Masters playing field, @DGukesh and @ArjunErigaisi! These two young Indian Grandmasters are taking the chess world by storm, crossing 2700 this year and beating Magnus Carlsen for the first time in a recent event.

WR_Chess_Masters - @wr_chess

We are happy to introduce the last participant of the WR #Chess Masters Tournament! Polish Grandmaster, the winner of the 2021 FIDE World Cup Jan-Krzysztof Duda will play in our event, which will take place at the Hyatt Regency #Dusseldorf from February 15th to 26th.

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