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# Chess

## Howell's That?

David Howell fought hard for a narrow victory over Swedish no.1 Nils Grandelius at their match in London

ISSN 0964-6221



Mercurial Magic – FM Carl Strugnell on the attacking brilliance of Murtas Kazhgaleyev

A True Polymath – Darryl Accone pays tribute to South African colossus Eddie Price

Moustache Gang – Winning at chess once mattered to everyone apart from Steve Firth

# Chess

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# It's still Guildford on Top

After a hard-fought February 4NCL weekend, only Guildford Young Guns were on 4/4

The top flight of this season's 4NCL is a 28-team Swiss, a radical but sensible decision by the league to help deal with any weekends lost due to Covid. It also allows them to transition back from having 16 teams in Divisions One and Two (split initially every season into two pools in each), to two 12-team all-play-all for 2022/23. One downside of this was that the opening weekend in November in wintry Milton Keynes saw a number of mismatches, something which was much less of an issue when the second weekend took place in mid-February in Daventry.

Admittedly top seeds Wood Green breezed past The Sharks, exploiting an extra 144 points a board (average ratings: 2466 and 2322). There were contrasting draws on the top three boards (Peter Roberson rather let Jon Speelman off the hook, Ravi Haria and Tom Rendle enjoyed a hard-fought and wild sharing of the point, and James Moreby was a little too keen to halve out with Justin Tan), but Wood Green won the remainder to triumph 6½-1½. In contrast, second seeds, the 2488-rated Chess.com Manx Liberty faced Cheddleton, who for so long were a pain in Guildford's side. While still averaging 2385, Cheddleton were without Jonathan Hawkins and Simon Williams, whose absence proved crucial. After a couple of early draws, Jacob Boswell and 12-year-old Max Pert were outclassed on the bottom two boards, while Constantin Lupulescu swept aside Tamas Fodor at the top.



Constantin Lupulescu headed up the Manx Liberty team in Daventry and didn't face anyone as strong as Shak Mamedyarov, whom he memorably lost to at last year's Superbet Classic.

Lupulescu now calmly and notably completes development before striking in the centre.

10 ♖c3 ♜f6 11 ♚c2 ♙e7 12 ♜ad1 b6  
13 e4!



13...dxc4 14 ♙xc4 ♚xd4?

Fodor decides that he might as well have a pawn for his suffering, but he simply had to prefer to grovel, as with 14...0-0 15 ♜fe1 ♙b7, unpleasant though matters would have been after, say, 16 e5 ♜d5 17 ♙d3 h6 18 ♜e4.

15 ♙f4 ♚c5 16 e5! ♜h5

There's just no good square as 16...♜d5? 17 ♜e4 ♚a5 18 ♙xd5 leads to a disaster on c6 and 16...♜d7 17 ♜e4 ♚a5 18 ♙xe6! fxe6 19 ♚xc6 is also crushing.

17 ♜e4 ♚a5 18 ♙e2!



The same theme and the game is already up for Black.

18...♜xf4 19 ♚xc6+ ♙d7 20 ♚xa8+ ♙d8 21 ♙b5! 1-0

Manx's reward for that 5½-2½ victory was a pairing with Wood Green, they being the only teams on 3/3 along with Guildford Young Guns who had dispatched Oxford, also 5½-2½ and despite David Zakarian defeating Mark Hebden with the King's Gambit on top board. The resulting match between the Big Two was close. GM Lukasz Cyborowski and WIM Julianna Terbe triumphed for Manx over Marcus Harvey and Harriet Hunt respectively, but FM Maciej Czopor defeated Hungarian GM Miklos Galyas and Justin Tan was able to steer Wood Green to a 4-4 draw as he

## C.Lupulescu-T.Fodor

Manx Liberty vs Cheddleton

Semi-Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♜f3 ♜f6 4 e3 e6 5 b3 ♜e4

An ambitious alternative to the Colle-Zukertort-like play which arises after 5...♜bd7 6 ♙b2 ♙d6 7 ♙d3 0-0 8 0-0 b6 9 ♜bd2.

6 ♙d3 ♚a5+?!

6...♙b4+ 7 ♜fd2 f5 8 ♚h5+!? g6 9 ♚e2 is a little annoying, but probably better this for Black than the game.

7 ♜fd2!

Now 7...f5 8 0-0 is just extremely pleasant for White, as shown by 8...♙d6?! 9 ♙xe4! fxe4 10 f3, which either catches the black king in the centre or forces a major concession.

7...♜d7 8 0-0 ♜xd2 9 ♙xd2 ♚d8

Black's opening has not been a success.

eventually and impressively converted a messy exchange-up scenario against fellow GM Pawel Jaracz.

### M. Harvey-L. Cyborowski Wood Green vs Manx Liberty



White's play has been just a little too ambitious, and now Black more than took over. **22...f6! 23 g4**

23 d3 g5 is even worse for White, since serious material must fall after 24 h5 f7 25 h6 g7 26 h5 g6.

**23...xe2! 24 b1 xc2 25 xc2 df4+!**

The Polish Grandmaster continues to find all the moves as he forces a winning endgame.

**26 gx4 xf3+! 27 xf3 d4+ 28 e4 xc2**



Marcus Harvey is normally extremely hard to put away in inferior endings, but here White remains fatally hampered by his offside rook. **29 de3 cc8 30 f5 xe3!**

Simple and strong chess. White isn't going to survive after 31 xe3 exf5 32 d4 cc3+ 33 d2 h3.

**31 fxe3 exf5+ 32 xf5 cc5+!**

And that was pretty much that.

**33 e6 e5+ 34 d6 xe3 35 c6 e5 36 d4 a5 37 d7 b4 38 bb6 f5 39 c6 f4 40 d4 f5 41 d6 f3 42 e7**

One final roll of the dice...

**42...g6 0-1**

That means that the table is topped by a familiar name, albeit not Guildford, but Guildford Young Guns. They are generally fairly youthful, with 26-year-old Brandon

Clarke and 20-year-old Akshaya Kalaiyalahan scoring in their 5-3 win over Oxford, but also contain a dollop of experience. Nigel Povah was felled by a beautiful queen sacrifice from Peter Sowray, as we saw last month, but fellow veteran Mark Hebden crushed John Cox.

### A. Cont-B. Clarke Oxford vs Guildford Young Guns



**22...hx3! 23 gxh3 xh3+ 24 g1 e6 25 d3 g6+ 26 g3?**

This loses in fairly straightforward fashion, although even after 26 g3 xg3 27 fxg3 f5 28 g2 g4 White would have remained under heavy pressure.

**26...h6 27 f3 xg3! 28 xg7!?**

Unfortunately for White, Black doesn't have to touch this bishop. Instead, 28 g2 xg2+ 29 xg2 xf2 30 xg7 xg7 31 xf2 e8 would have been two extra pawns for Black, as would have 28 fxg3 h2+ 29 f1 xb2.

**28...h2+! 0-1**



IM Brandon Clarke has 3½/4 so far this season for title contenders Wood Green.

The Young Guns still have to face both Manx and Wood Green, but who else might cause trouble for the top teams? Wood Green Youth restricted Manx to a 4½-3½ win back in Milton Keynes before drawing with Barbican and crushing Barnet Knights 7-1 in

Davertry. They will provide tricky opposition for any team, with the now 2272-rated and 13-year-old Shreyas Royal but one dangerous player lurking on the lower boards.

### D. Fitzsimons-J. Cox Wood Green Youth vs Barbican 4NCL Giucco Piano

**1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 c4 c5 4 c3 f6 5 d3 0-0 6 0-0 a5!?**

A little unusual in a still quite fashionable position and now White might well try 7 d4.

**7 e1 h6 8 h3 a7 9 b3 d6 10 d4**

Only now does he advance, but Black is able to obtain sufficient counterplay in the centre.

**10...e8 11 c2 exd4 12 cxd4 b4! 13 c3 xc2 14 xc2 d5!?**



The most principled move. Previously, 14...c6 15 a4 e6 had seemed fine for Black in Amin-Sargsyan, World Rapid Championship, Warsaw 2021, where 16 f4? d5 17 e5 e4! 18 xe4 dxe4 19 xe4 d5 equalised.

**15 e5 d7?**

Too defensive a step, whereas 15...e4! 16 xe4 (16 e3? might yet be a little better for White, and if 16...f5 17 d2!) 16...f5 would have continued Black's active stance and after 17 f6+ xf6 18 xc7 xa6 his grip on the light squares should offer him enough for the pawn.

**16 e3 e6 17 ac1 c6 18 e2!**

White has taken control and now begins to build up with menace on the kingside.

**18...d7 19 g3 ac8 20 d2 b6 21 c3! a4?**



Taking up the challenge, but now White strikes and so Black should have bolstered the defence with 21...♙d8!

**22 ♖xh6! gxh6 23 ♜xh6 ♖e7**

How else to try and defend against the huge threat of ♗h5?

**24 ♗h5 ♜f8 25 ♜f4 ♙d8 26 ♗f6+! ♖h8**



Thus far the Irish IM has judged things extremely well, but how should White continue the attack?

**27 ♜e3?**

27 ♜c3 was a better rook to deploy, keeping Black tied up as 27...♙xf6? 28 exf6 ♜g8 29 ♜h6 would now prevent ...♜g6, but the way to crash through was 27 ♗g5! (27 ♗h2? is nothing like as effective on account of 27...♙xf6 28 exf6 ♜b4!) 27...♙xf6 28 exf6 ♗xg5 when White can recapture, but seemingly even stronger is 29 ♜e5! ♗h7 30 ♗h5 ♜g8 31 ♜g3 as the defence remains overwhelmed even in the event of 31...♜g6 32 ♜xg6 fxg6 33 ♜g3!.

**27...♙xf6 28 exf6 ♜g8!**

Keeping White at bay. There would now have still been plenty to play for after 29 ♜e5, insufficient though White's compensation for the piece may eventually be after 29...♜g6 30 ♜h4 ♜xf6 31 ♗g5 ♙f5 32 ♜g3 ♙g6, but in the game, having failed to crown his attack in style, Fitzsimons was to quickly collapse.

**29 g4? ♜g6 30 g5 ♜g8 31 h4? ♜xf6 32 ♜g3 ♜f5 33 ♗e5 ♗xg5! 0-1**

There's also Cheddleton, of course, who bounced back from defeat at the hands of Manx by defeating Oxford 5½-2½, Keith Arkell narrowly avoiding a 50-move draw claim en route to winning his favourite endgame of rook and bishop against rook. Likewise, Chessable White Rose might well put it up to the top teams. The Yorkshire side lost to old foes Barbican back in round 2, but welcomed back Gawain Jones no less for the second weekend. Jones crushed Adam A. Taylor and Jonathan Blackburn as White Rose fought their way to 7-1 and 5½-2½ victories over North East England and West is Best.

One should also not discount The Sharks from causing an upset and perhaps this is going to be a season where Blackthorne (in light of recent world events, they appear to have dropped 'Russia' from their name) don't under perform. They went toe to toe with Manx in the opening weekend, only

eventually losing 4½-3½, but in Daventry were held to a draw by Barnet Knights then crushed Guildford Castles 6-2. Kudos to the Knights for that upset, a point set up by Federico Rocco claiming the scalp of Danny Gormally on top board, while on board 2 the author of *Off the Board Chess*, Andrew Smith, outplayed Richard Bates.

### D.Gormally-F.Rocco

Blackthorne Russia vs Barnet Knights



A wild late middlegame had seen White sacrifice a piece to generate a dangerous counter passed pawn and obtain some counterplay. How should he now continue?

**44 e7?**

Tempting, but this is rebuffed by a strong queen sacrifice. 44 ♜e2! was the way to go, threatening to advance as well as check, and after 44...c2 45 ♜e5+ ♖h6 46 ♜e3+ g5 47 ♜e5! White would have forced perpetual check after all.

**44...♙f7 45 ♜e2**

45 e8♜+ ♜xe8 46 ♜xe8 ♗xe8 47 ♙f2 was the grim alternative and here too Black should really be winning, as after 47...♙d7 48 ♙e2 ♙c6 49 ♙d1 ♜d4+ 50 ♙c1 ♜d2 51 ♜e4+ ♗d5.

**45...♜e8! 46 ♜xe8 ♗xe8 47 ♜e5**

Rolling the dice, but Rocco now finds two only moves to pick up the full point.

**47...c2 48 ♜g7 ♜c8! 49 ♜f8+ ♙d7 50 ♜f7 ♜e8 51 ♜f4 ♗d5 52 ♜g5 ♙d6 53 ♙f2 ♜xe7 54 ♜c1 ♜c7 55 ♙e1 a5 56 ♙d2 a4 57 f4 ♙d7 0-1**

### A.Smith-R.Bates

Barnet Knights vs Blackthorne Russia



**28 ♜xe7!**

By no means the only way to win, but the prettiest choice. Now ♜f6 is a huge threat and 28...♙xe7? fails to 29 f6+ ♙d8 (or 29...♙f8 30 ♜d6+) 30 ♜xa8+ ♙c7 31 ♗xa6+.

**28... ♜b8? ♜f6 ♜b1+ 30 ♙f1 1-0**

By the time you read these pages, the third weekend of the season will most likely have taken place in Daventry. The first May Bank Holiday weekend is, of course, traditionally the final weekend of the 4NCL season. This year it will feature rounds 7-9 of the top flight, but not bring down the curtain as the mid-January weekend, which was postponed due to Omicron, has been rearranged for June 25-26.

That reinstatement of a fifth weekend of the season should be excellent news for ensuring the right teams are relegated and as many norms obtained as possible. On the other hand, an 11-round Swiss is not without its defects, especially when compared with a 9-round version, and will likely see the top teams facing large downfloats come that final June weekend, something which might concern not just captains of the leading teams, but any potential sponsor of the league. Let us certainly hope that the league doesn't come down to board points and so two of the top sides angling to win their final two matches 8-0 against massively lower-rated opposition.

### 4NCL Division 1 - 2021/2022

	Team	W	D	L	MP	GP
1	Guildford Young Guns	4	0	0	8	24
2	Wood Green	3	1	0	7	22
3	Chess.com Manx Liberty	3	1	0	7	21½
4	Cheddleton	3	0	1	6	22½
5	Chessable White Rose 1	3	0	1	6	21½
6	The Sharks 1	3	0	1	6	20
7	Wood Green Youth	2	1	1	5	19
8	Barbican 4NCL	2	1	1	5	18½
9	Blackthorne	2	1	1	5	18
10	KJCA Kings	2	1	1	5	17½
(28 teams)						



# 60 Seconds with...

# IM Eric Rosen



**Born:** 3rd September 1993, Skokie, Illinois.

**Place of residence:** Saint Louis, Missouri.

**Occupation:** Digital Content Creator focusing primarily on instructive chess content through my YouTube and Twitch channels. I also do some photography.

**Enjoyable?** Immensely! I consider myself very fortunate to have come of age in a time when technological advances have allowed chess players all over the world to easily connect with each other.

**And home life?** I recently decided to make the Central West End of Saint Louis my permanent home. The neighbourhood is home to the famous Saint Louis Chess Club and the World Chess Hall of Fame, and many grandmasters are choosing to relocate there.

**But sometimes good to escape to:** Anywhere! I traveled extensively through Europe and Asia before the pandemic, and am grateful that travel opportunities resumed again in 2021. My next big trip will be to play in the Reykjavik Open in Iceland.

**Sports played or followed:** I enjoy playing tennis, ping pong, soccer, volleyball, bowling and hacky sack.

**A favourite novel?** I prefer non-fiction, and read (actually listen to) a lot of self-development and business books. My regular

viewers know I'm a big fan of *The Art of Learning* by Josh Waitzkin. More recently, I've been enjoying *Flow* by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi.

**Piece of music?** Edvard Grieg's 'In the Hall of the Mountain King'.

**Film or TV series?** *Searching for Bobby Fischer*.

**What's the best thing about playing chess?** It has allowed me to connect with people from all over the world.

**And the worst?** It's always painful when you play an exceptional game for the first five hours, and then one careless blunder in the end ruins your whole position.

**Your best move?** 16...♙b4+! prompting GM John Fedorowicz to resign in the final round of the 2009 U.S. Open. This was my first GM scalp.

**J.Fedorowicz-E.Rosen**  
110<sup>th</sup> U.S. Open, Indianapolis 2009  
*Queen's Gambit Declined*

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗f6 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♙g5 c6 6 e3 ♙f5 7 g4 ♙e6 8 h3 ♗bd7 9 f4 ♗b6 10 ♙d3 ♙e7 11 ♗f3 ♗d6 12 f5 ♗g3+ 13 ♙d2 ♗e4+ 14 ♗xe4 dxe4 15 ♙xe4 ♗f2+ 16 ♙c3



16...♙b4+! 0-1

**But less memorable than your worst move?** I try to have the attitude that I can always learn and grow from my worst moves, so really there are no worst moves – just learning opportunities.

**And a highly memorable opponent?** Magnus Carlsen – I unknowingly played him in a Lichess bullet titled arena and managed to defeat him in our first encounter. He was playing anonymously on the account 'manwithavan'.

**Favourite game of all Time?** XQC vs MoistCritical. While this was a beginners' game, it's more well known than most world championship games. It got millions of viewers in the mainstream to appreciate the beauty and cut-throat nature of chess.

**XQC-MoistCritical**  
PogChamps 2020  
*Scotch Game*

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♗xd4 ♙c5 5 c3 ♗f6 6 ♗xc6?? ♗xf2# 0-1

**The best three chess books:** Any book by Jacob Aagaard.

**Is FIDE doing a good job?** There are a lot of things they are doing well, but there are also a lot of things they can improve on (just like my chess game).

**Or your National Federation?** In my experience, I think the U.S Chess Federation has done an outstanding job of promoting and encouraging scholastic chess, thereby nurturing the next generation of chess players.

**Any advice for either?** Get continual feedback and input from the chess community. Embrace new technology and platforms... maybe start a tiktok!

**Can chess make one happy?** Emphatically, yes!

**A tip please for the club player:** Don't become too fixated on your rating. Focus on learning something from every single game you play and prioritise studying the areas in which you're weak. Eventually, you will improve and then so will your rating – but be patient: improvement is a gradual process.

**For more from Eric, do enjoy:**  
[youtube.com/RosenChess](https://www.youtube.com/RosenChess)



# How to Beat a Grandmaster

Part 4 of IM Paul Littlewood's popular series - [plittl@hotmail.com](mailto:plittl@hotmail.com)

Over the years I have had the odd success against grandmasters and in analysing these, I can suggest that there seem to be at least four ways that can lead to a successful outcome:

- i. You play really well and simply outplay your illustrious opponent.
- ii. You adopt an aggressive strategy, sacrificing material (not always 100% soundly), and your GM opponent cracks under the pressure.
- iii. You play an unusual opening line which takes your GM opponent out of his comfort zone and he fails to find the right plan.
- iv. You play quite well, but in a superior position your GM opponent blunders.

Having covered the first three options I would now like to look at the fourth, which particularly applies to the first game I'll examine. I am indebted here to Chris Wood and John Nicholson who responded to my request to send in games where they had beaten a grandmaster.

Back in 2008 in the German Regionalliga, Chris reached the following position as Black against Yugoslavian Grandmaster Vladimir Kostic after White's 31st move:



The game had been one of fluctuating fortunes, but Chris could have maintained a small advantage by 31...♖d2! and after 32 ♖g1 ♗f6 Black stands better, although it is still quite tricky. Instead Chris, perhaps afraid of complications, exchanged queens, but after...

**31...♖xe5 32 fxe5**

...White was clearly better because if 32...♗xf3 then 33 ♖d1 with the initiative. Black should have tried this, though.

**32...g6 33 ♖g2 ♖d8 34 ♖c2 ♗g5 35 ♖g3**

Now White has an even better position.

**35...♖d2 36 ♖c3 ♖g7 37 f4 ♗e7 38 f5 ♗d6**



Here the straightforward 39 f6+ gives White a clearly winning position as Black will be forced to give up his bishop for a couple of pawns in the near future. Instead, White made an inaccuracy.

**39 ♖f4?! g5+ 40 ♖f3 ♗xh2?!**

Better is 40...♗c7! when White is only slightly better.

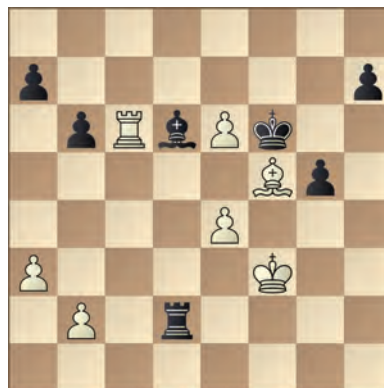
**41 f6+ ♖g6 42 ♗e6 ♖d2 43 ♖e3 ♖g2 44 ♖f3 ♖d2 45 ♗f5+?**

White misses his chance. The winning move is 45 ♖b3 and if 45...b6 46 ♖c3 c5 57 ♖e3 ♖d4 58 b4 ♗c7 59 bxc5 ♗xe5 60 c6, etc.

**45...♖f7 46 ♖b3 b6 47 ♖c3 ♗c7!**

Black has equalised.

**48 e6+ ♖xf6 49 ♖xc6 ♗d6**



White now plays a combination, but it has a flaw.

**50 e7? ♖xe7 51 e5 ♗xe5 52 ♗xh7**

White has missed that after 52 ♖e6+ ♖f7 53 ♖xe5 ♖f6 54 ♖b5 a6 Black regains the piece with a winning ending. Black is now material up and finishes off efficiently.

**52...♖xb2 53 ♗g8 ♗f4 54 ♖c3 ♗d6 55 ♖d3+ ♖c5 56 ♖d7 a6 57 ♖d5+ ♖c6**

**58 ♖f5 ♖d2 59 ♖e4 b5 60 a4 ♖b6 61 axb5 axb5 62 ♗d5 ♖d1 63 ♖f6+ ♖a5 64 ♖f7 ♖b4 65 ♖b7 ♖c5 66 ♗f7 ♖d4+ 67 ♖f3 ♖c6 68 ♖a7 g4+ 69 ♖e2 ♖d2+ 70 ♖e1 ♖b6 71 ♖e7 g3 72 ♗h5 ♖d5 73 ♖h7 g2 0-1**

A real tussle, but hats off to Chris for defending tenaciously and then taking advantage of a serious mistake by the grandmaster in the difficult ending.

My second game refers more to our second and third options, and was sent in by John Nicholson who now lives in the Netherlands. Many years ago we played in the same team for Cambridge University and I was delighted when he contacted me to share one of his GM scalps.

**D.Gurevich-J.Nicholson**  
Lugano 1985  
*Benko Gambit*

**1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 e3 ♗b7 6 ♗c3 ♖a5 7 ♗d2 axb5 8 ♗xb5 ♖b6**

John has opted for a sharp line in the hope of upsetting the equilibrium of his very strong opponent.

**9 ♖b3?!**

And already White makes a mistake. Better is 9 ♗f3, returning the pawn, but obtaining the superior position after 9...♗xd5 10 a4 e6 11 0-0.

**9... e6 10 e4?!**



Another imprecise move. The position is about equal after 10 ♗f3 ♗xd5 11 0-0.

**10...♗xe4! 11 ♗xe4 ♗xd5 12 ♖d3 f5!?**

12...♖b7! is a slightly better alternative, although after 13 f3 c4 14 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 15

♖xc4 d5 16 ♖d4 dxe4 17 a4 the position is very double-edged.

13 ♖g3 ♗xg2 14 ♖1e2 ♗xh1 15 ♖xh1 ♗e7

After the smoke has cleared we are left with a very interesting position with chances for both sides.

16 a4 0-0 17 ♖hg3 ♖c6 18 ♗c3 d5?!

Better is 18...♖f7 to bolster Black's defences on the kingside.

19 ♖e3 ♖d8



20 ♖h5?!

White misses his chance. The brilliant 20 ♗xg7! denudes the black king of his defenders. Then if 20...♗xg7 21 ♖h5+ ♗f7 22 ♖a3! and White has a very strong attack which will be very hard for Black to defend against. Perhaps Gurevich was unsure about the position arising after 20...♖xb5! 21 axb5 ♖xa1+ 22 ♗d2 ♗xg7, but this is better for White after 23 ♖h5+ ♗f7 24 ♖h6 when the queen in combination with his knights is more powerful than the black pieces.

20...d4 21 ♖xd4!?

Interesting too was 21 ♖g3 g6!? (21...♖f7 is safer) 22 ♖xd4 ♗d6! (not

*Some five years after arriving in New York from Moscow, Dmitry Gurevich lost a wild game to FM John Nicholson's Benko at the 1985 edition of the famous, super-strong Lugano Open.*

22...cxd4? 23 ♖e5 and wins) 23 ♖xf5! ♖xf5 24 ♖f6+ ♖xf6 25 ♖g2 ♖xa4 26 ♗xa4 e5 which is somehow about equal.

21...cxd4 22 ♗xd4 ♖b7



23 ♗xg7?

White makes the decisive error after a fascinating middlegame and Black now finishes off nicely. Best was 23 0-0-0 when there is still all to play for.

23...♖h1+ 24 ♗f1 f4 25 ♖e2 ♖f5 26 0-0-0 ♖c6+ 27 ♗c3 f3 28 ♖d3 ♖xa4 29 ♖g3 ♖d5 0-1

An exciting game in which the grandmaster had been taken out of his comfort zone and this proved the most important factor.

If you have any games where you have beaten a grandmaster then please send them to me, and if they are suitable I will include them in a future article.



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# This Month's New Releases

## A Disreputable Opening Repertoire

Jonathan Tait, 360 Pages  
Everyman Chess

RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

This month brings two interesting opening books to our attention. The first one, by Senior International Correspondence Chess Master Jonathan Tait, is for club and tournament players who would like to surprise their opponents from the start. The word 'disreputable' will attract a certain type of player. The first thing to note is that this is a repertoire for Black after 1 e4 e5, which is certainly not clear from the title.

Jonathan is an entertaining writer with an enterprising style of play. I recall playing Jonathan just the once, many years ago, in the Lightning Chess Championship on the Saturday evening of a Scarborough Chess Congress. They played the Albin Countergambit in particularly wild fashion. I accepted the sacrifices and eventually won. Jonathan smiled and said, "Ah, you were taking it seriously!"

The Albin subsequently became more reputable, but judging by the extraordinary lines advocated in this book, Jonathan's refreshing attitude towards openings persists. They say: "If you want to play the very best openings, this book is not for you because few of those herein are 'best' for Black. What they represent is my own disreputable repertoire in the Open Games after 1 e4 e5."

Delving a little deeper, we find out more about their ethos: "There are two pertinent points about playing such lines. Firstly, I think it's important to want to play them, to want to defend their honour, to feel protective of them. This provides added motivation at the board, leading to heightened concentration, which in itself should lead to better chess. Secondly, the time limit and strength of opposition may be relevant. Disruptive chess is excellent for blitz and rapid play, whereas you might have concerns about coming out worse against a strong opponent with more time to think."

Jonathan has great experience in this department and claims that "up to about 2350 Elo (equivalent to my highest OTB rating) [...] you can pretty much play any old rubbish as long as you know what you're doing."

The reader's interest must now be sufficiently piqued to want to know exactly which openings are featured in the book. We have: The Centre Game (and other Second Moves); Calabrese Countergambit; Vienna Game; Bishop's Gambit (and other King's Gambits); Wagenbach Defence; Three Knights

Game (and other Third Moves); Scotch Game; Two Knights Defence, Ulvestad Variation and the Jaenisch Gambit against the Ruy Lopez.

Some of those names will be familiar to readers, but here are a couple of clarifications. The Two Knights Defence, Ulvestad variation appears after the moves 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♗f6 4 ♕g5 d5 5 exd5 b5!?. This was not Jonathan's first choice for the book: "I was intending initially to write about the Traxler, my main weapon for over thirty years. Unfortunately, issues have arisen with 4...♗c5, not least 5 d4! for which IM Panayotis Frenzias has been proselytizing online."

However, Jonathan worked hard on a different option and it is worth quoting a significant paragraph about the process here, as it shines a light on the depth of research carried about by the author while also providing a suitable sample of their writing style.

"An online thematic tournament prompted me to go through published theory with *Stockfish* which turned up quite a lot of interesting ideas. Ultimately, Black may still be obliged to defend pawn-down endgames, but I think there are excellent prospects for success. This move [5...b5!?] was discovered by the US master Olaf Ulvestad and analysed in his openings booklet *Chess Charts*. Ulvestad took the view that 5...♗a5 was suspect (!) because it sidelines the knight and thus sought to find an improvement.

"He came up with 5...b5, which he justified as follows: 'It meets the Pawn attack on the Knight by a Pawn attack on White's most effectively placed piece. White's original attack is completely broken up and Black definitely obtains a powerful initiative. Instead of committing the same mistake as White, by moving the same piece twice in the opening, Black attacks with a move which furthers his general development. 5...P-Kt4 provides useful freedom to his QB and QR.'

"This led to a discussion with another American master, Albert Pinkus, in the 1941 issues of *Chess Review* (incidentally, the Traxler line above comes from Pinkus' articles), where Ulvestad doubled down on behalf of 5...b5: "It stands out head and shoulders above all the other moves as the strongest, sharpest and best. The last word on the play may not be given for a long time, but I have complete confidence in the move itself. Analysis will support it – now or later." Last words are hard to come by in chess, so the following should only be regarded as the latest word. Until it no longer is."

Perhaps the most obscure of all of the



variations advocated is the Wagenbach Defence. For the uninitiated, it is 1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4 3 ♗f3 h5!?.



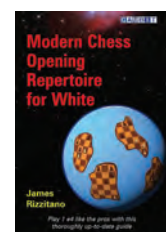
This definitely fits in with the 'disreputable' scenario. In fact, it looks absolutely ridiculous. However, Black's idea is to clamp down on the white kingside with a subsequent ...g5 and ...h4, with a sort of Botvinnik System pawn structure which has been blown from the centre of the board to the flank by one of 2022's many storms.

It is strange, but having not seen or heard of Janos Wagenbach since the 1980s, his name came up twice in quick succession. One was in this book, of course. The other was a news item, detailing how the 85-year-old had just won £2,686.04 from a three-pence bet. Such optimism is what the Wagenbach Defence is all about and I do remember Janos never had a lost position at any time – in the *post mortems*, at least.

The page count reveals that this is not a book offering token coverage of the openings in question. The reader will have to work hard with the material to make the lines work in practice. Rest assured the author definitely practises what they preach, as the illustrative games amply demonstrate.

There is no doubt that anyone armed with the recommended disreputable openings given in this book will indeed "turn the tables and make White fight on your territory."

Sean Marsh



## Modern Chess Opening Repertoire for White

James Rizzitano, 176 pages

Gambit Publications

RRP £15.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £14.39**

The title of this book makes the mission clear from the start, especially when augmented by the strapline: 'Play 1 e4 like the pros with this thoroughly up-to-date guide.'

The blurb puts it into a nutshell: "The goal of writing *Modern Chess Opening Repertoire for White* is to provide the reader with a one-volume, theoretically sound, dynamic opening repertoire beginning with 1. e4."

These are the repertoire choices against 'the big four': Giuoco Piano, via a Bishop's Opening move order; Modern Advance Caro-Kann; Tarrasch French; Rossolimo and Moscow Sicilians, and 2...e6 3 c3. The coverage of those defences takes the book up to page 140. Other options, such as the Scandinavian, Alekhine and Pirc, receive much briefer coverage. Percentage-wise, this is probably fair game for club and tournament players.

Various criteria were set to determine which openings to include in the repertoire, starting with these three: the opening must be played with regularity by top players in meaningful games; the opening must have a healthy theoretical reputation; and it must give some scope to outplay our opponent.

There are extensions to the criteria given above, namely: play openings where you have a relatively safe king; take the bishop-pair in a semi-open position if it is offered to you; avoid creating unnecessary weaknesses in your own position; accept questionable gambits and material sacrifices; and absorb any space advantage conceded by the opponent. Most of these should already be part of the modern player's chess understanding, but it does no harm to spell them out again.

White's recommendations after 1 e4 are all perfectly sensible; there is no danger of encountering anything disreputable here. Indeed, against 'the big four' only the Tarrasch variation against the French isn't seen on a very regular basis from the top level down. It appears that most players prefer to take the Winawer bull by the horns via 3 ♘c3 at the moment, and the Tarrasch is certainly nowhere near as trendy as it was when it hit the height of its popularity during Anatoly Karpov's reign as world champion.

After 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5 White is advised to keep away from the lines with 4 exd5 ♗xd5, which have accrued a large of amount of critical theory over the years. The author prefers 4. ♘g3 and examines no fewer than six replies. Incidentally, Rizzitano, a Gambit stalwart, has a fine ability for covering a lot of lines without overloading the reader; it is one of his notable strengths as an author.

There are little quirks to prevent Black from transposing to other lines, such as the aforementioned and popular 4...♗xd5. After 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5 4 ♘g3 cxd4 5 ♘xd4 ♖f6 6 exd5 ♗xd5 7 ♖b5! Black already has to be careful about ending up in a worse position.



7...♘a6 is clearly the best reply, but Black's knight is not ideally placed on the side of the board. It is not much, but just enough to give White a slight edge. This snippet represents the repertoire in microcosm; White will often secure a tiny yet nagging advantage, rather than try to blow Black away with unjustified aggression.

This approach is summed up neatly by the book's blurb: "While serious work on chess openings confirms the basic truth that White can't simply force a large advantage from the start position, we can greatly narrow Black's path to safety, and tilt the practical struggle in our favour. To have a chance of half a point, our opponents will need to solve difficult tactical and strategic problems deep into the middlegame."

There is no doubt that this repertoire is fireproof. Anyone following the recommendations will be difficult to beat, but will need good technique and fine middlegame skills to make the most of the chances on offer. Continuing the theme, this is another solid work by Rizzitano and one which doesn't ask the reader to try and remember too many different lines.

I wonder if anyone will combine the two repertoire books and be solid and stable with White, while heading straight for disreputable territory with Black?

Sean Marsh



## 100 Endgame Patterns You Must Know

Jesus de la Villa, 464 pages

New in Chess 2021

RRP £24.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.45**

Subtitled 'Recognize Key Moves and Motifs and Avoid Typical Errors', this book is the Spanish Grandmaster's third foray into endgames, following his acclaimed *100 Endgames You Must Know* and *The 100 Endgames You Must Know Workbook*.

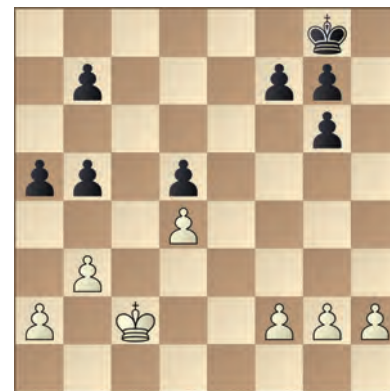
Despite a similarity in the titles, there is no overlap in the content. Whereas *100 Endgames* focused on theoretical endgames, *100 Endgame Patterns* analyses practical endgames. In general this means the phase

just prior to reaching a textbook theoretical position, usually featuring more pieces and/or pawns. Readers who have not studied endgame theory before might prefer to study *100 Endgame Patterns* after, or at least alongside, a more basic work such as *100 Endgames You Must Know*. However, de la Villa's new tome is also designed to be read completely by itself. It fulfils the high expectations aroused by his previous publications.

The book's large size may seem initially intimidating. Yet it turns out to be enjoyable and satisfying. The organisation of the material is methodical. Crucially, de la Villa has succeeded in his aim of presenting examples that really stick in the memory. Long experience as a trainer as well as diligent research have informed these choices and the lucid explanations that accompany them. Many recent games are used, meaning that almost everything will be fresh even for well-read endgame enthusiasts. Also, there are plenty of games by lower-rated players, and those in which grandmasters slip up, all of which helps to shed light on typical mistakes.

Here is a light example on the theme of king entry.

## K.Berbatov-D.Chatterjee Khanty-Mansiysk Olympiad 2010



This position should be a draw, but White won with a nice trap.

**31 b4!?** b6?

31...a4! keeps the queenside locked, whereas now White broke through:

**32 a4!!** bxa4

Or 32...axb4 33 ♖b3.

**33 bxa5 bxa5 34 ♖b2 ♖f8 35 ♖a3 ♖e7 36 Kax4 ♘d7 37 ♖xa5 ♖c6 38 h4 f6 39 g4 g5 40 hxg5 1-0**

There is no doubt that we will be more alert to such possibilities after studying de la Villa's book.

The patterns are split across 15 chapters, with rook endings the longest, and pawn endings – the first chapter – the second-longest. There are chapters on same-coloured bishops, opposite-coloured bishops, knight versus bishop, and so on. Chapter Five, queen versus pawns, is a nice, unusual feature.

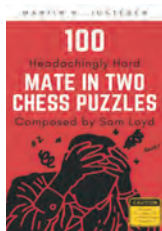
The book's priorities seem right. Some of the patterns will be familiar to experienced

players, such as triangulation, the umbrella in a rook ending, or the Vancura position. Even here, however, any reader will be encountering new, instructive material, as de la Villa has selected complex endgames with more pawns in which the Vancura turns out to be a key resource.

The author is alert to psychological issues, emphasising that amateur players tend to lack confidence in endgame play, and so become indecisive. The first remedy is simple enough: play through more model games. De la Villa shows a few instances of rook versus three connected pawns because his pupils tend to overestimate the visually impressive pawn wall. The second remedy is to reinforce our learning by solving puzzles. Chapter 16 thus rounds off the book with 100 puzzles, which are once again very carefully chosen. I found the early puzzles challenging at first, but much easier once I had read the book. There is something for everyone here: de la Villa warns us that the last ten puzzles “are something special and require a greater effort. You must not be disappointed if you cannot solve them.”

There are a few very minor glitches: for instance, it wasn't Botvinnik who failed to beat Bondarevsky in the bishop ending mentioned on p.142, but the other way round. Such tiny proofreading issues apart, the book is beautifully presented. I strongly recommend it.

James Vigus



### 100 Headachingly Hard Mate in Two Chess Puzzles Composed by Sam Loyd

Martin B. Justesen, 208 pages, paperback  
RRP £9.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £8.95**

Carl Portman writes elsewhere in these pages about the legendary American Sam Loyd (1841-1911). Now in this self-published work you can aim to improve your calculation and creativity by solving 100 of Loyd's toughest mates in two.

Readers may also be interested in Martin B. Justesen's other recent releases, which are available too from Chess & Bridge: *The Tactics Ladder Vol. 1 Blue Series: 1000 Endgame Puzzles* and *The Tactics Ladder Vol. 2 Blue Series: 1000 Opening and Middlegame Puzzles*, both of which run to 210 pages, are available for £8.95 (Subscribers – £8.05), and especially are aimed at readers around 1400 strength. Others may be more intrigued by *Blindfold Opening Visualization* and *Blindfold Endgame Visualization*, which feature 212 and 118 pages respectively, retail at £7.95 (Subscribers – £7.15), and aim to improve the club player's ability to visualise and so calculate.



### Attacking 1...d5 Volume 2

Kiril Georgiev, 220 pages, paperback  
RRP £21.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £19.75**

The leading Bulgarian GM continues his repertoire for White and Chess Stars with a 1 d4 d5 2 c4 move order. Having already dealt with the Slav and Semi-Slav by sacrificing the c-pawn, Georgiev turns his attention to tackling the Ragozin (met by 5 ♖a4+), Vienna, Chebanenko, Hennig-Schara and Tarrasch, as well as two trendy lines in 2...e6 3 ♘c3 a6 and 3...♗b4.

Also new from Chess Stars is *Squeezing the Caro-Kann: Simple Chess* (254 pages, paperback, RRP £21.95; Subscribers – £19.75), in which Alexander Khalifman and Sergei Soloviov advocate the Exchange variation for White, combining plenty of theoretical coverage with explaining clearly the key motifs for both sides.



### Chess Queens

Jennifer Shahade, 400 pages, hardback  
RRP £20.00 **SUBSCRIBERS £18.00**

This is an updated and significantly expanded version of the 2005 book *Chess Bitch*, with Siles Press now replaced by leading publisher Hodder & Stoughton. Shahade writes not just about her own experiences, which are often shocking as well as fascinating, but about the earlier great female players and also interviews a number of leading contemporary players. As the back-cover blurb explains, “For fans of *The Queen's Gambit*, this is the real life story of a female chess champion travelling the world to compete in a male-dominated sport with the most famous players of all time.” A full review next time.

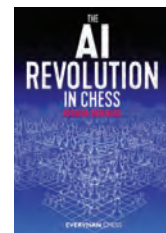


### Petrosian Year by Year Volume 2 (1963-1984)

Tibor Karolyi & Tigran Gyozyalyan,  
516 pages, paperback  
RRP £33.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £30.59**

The second volume of Karolyi and Gyozyalyan's detailed look at the life and career of Tigran Petrosian begins with the story of how he dethroned Mikhail Botvinnik to become world champion in 1963, a title he would, of course, hold until 1969. The authors continue to tackle, taking one year at a time, Petrosian's life right up to his death when he was still a world-class player. As in the first volume, Petrosian's many fine games form the bulk of the book, with the annotations generally accessible and not overly long. Being an Elk & Ruby production, there are also a number of fine, previously unpublished photos and it's also possible to purchase a hardback version for £43.99 or £39.59 for Subscribers.

Elk & Ruby have also released two more works in Sergei Tkachenko's popular studies series, *Two Knights Save the Day* and *Two Bishops Save the Day*, both of which run to 206 pages, while retailing at £11.95 (Subscribers – £10.75). Each contains 100 studies, with two knights or two bishops playing a key role in the finale and few are longer than six moves, making them ideal to solve and study.



### The AI Revolution in Chess

Joshua Doknjas, 336 pages, paperback  
RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

It was only in late 2017 that we became aware just how strong *AlphaZero* was. Nowadays neural networks and deep learning have become part of most of the major chess engines and their styles, as well as opening discoveries, have undoubtedly had an impact on the play of many grandmasters, as well as lesser but theoretical souls. The young Canadian FM Doknjas takes a detailed look at many of the resulting AI-impacted human games. He explores not just how certain openings have seen their theory advance, but also draws plenty of middlegame lessons, especially on the topics of pawn sacrifices, closed positions and material imbalances.

### The Hippopotamus System of Defence

Andrew Martin, PC-DVD; running time: 5 hours,  
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Martin does a typically good job in the ChessBase studio of explaining the key ideas behind a set-up with ...g6, ...♗g7, ...d6, ...e6, ...b6, ...♗b7, ...♘d7 and ...♘e7 for Black, often followed, of course, by ...h6 and ...a6. Usefully he explores both 1...g6 and 1...b6 move orders after 1 e4 and 1 d4. The Hippo isn't everyone's cup of tea, but if you like having plenty of dynamic potential in your set-up and don't mind a patient start, it might just fit the bill and will certainly surprise opponents at club level.