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# Chess Update

## THE RISE OF RAVI

Ravi Haria picked up his final two GM norms as over-the-board chess returned to the UK

ISSN 0964-6221



Finally, British Champion - Keith Arkell explains how he won the British Online Championship



The BCF's (Dis)Hon. Sec - An old scoresheet prompted a closer look into Frank Chetwynd



Turning One Hundred - Carl Portman's *Never Mind the Grandmasters* reaches a milestone

# Chess

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# Something Smells a Little (Stock)Fishy

## Jonathan Pein had an unusual experience while trying to qualify for the British Online Championship

As we all know, playing chess online is no substitute for over-the-board chess, but for a while there was no choice. With competitions and the rewards that come along with them moving to online chess platforms such as Lichess and Chess.com, the temptation to cheat and achieve seemingly impossible results all of a sudden was too much for some.

I have played thousands of games online and it is fairly rare to come across someone who is blatantly cheating, although I have found that many of my friends and pupils who play at a level below 1500 are regularly met with cheaters. It is sadly incredibly easy to cheat online and there are numerous ways to do so, such as having a stronger player assist you with moves, using a reference database or consulting chess books mid-game, but possibly the most common and effective method of cheating is simply using chess computer software on your phone or laptop. This is most commonly *Stockfish*.

The following odd encounter took place during round 4 of the British Qualifier on Chess.com. I felt I was playing reasonably well and I didn't expect my opponent with an ECF grade of approximately 150 and no FIDE rating to be too troublesome of an opponent. Both of us were on 2½/3 with his draw coming from the black side of a main line Sicilian Dragon against one of the top seeds, FM Harry Grieve.

Having done some very light preparation for my opponent and compared his games prior to the British qualifiers to his casual games, I was already a little suspicious, but I tried to cast these doubts to the back of my mind and focus on playing a good game.



Jonathan Pein enjoyed playing in the British Online Chess Championship, but wished there had been an arbiter to hand so he could query his opponent's rather unusual play in round 4.

### NN-J.Pein

British Online Ch., Qualifier 2021  
*Scandinavian Defence*

**1 e4 d5 2 exd5 ♖xd5 3 ♘c3 ♗a5 4 d4 c6 5 ♙d2 ♚f5 6 ♜f3 e6 7 ♙c4 ♗c7**

A slightly strange move order, but it has served me well. Black aims to delay ...♜f6 to avoid any ♜e4-f6 discoveries and possibly leave the bishop on d2 somewhat misplaced. **8 ♜e5**

A typical move in many variations, but quite rare in this position. 8 ♗e2 ♜f6 9 0-0-0 b5 with a fight is standard.

**8...♙d6?!**

Slightly dubious as my opponent shows

beautifully.

**9 g4 ♙g6**

9...♙xe5 10 gxf5 ♙xd4 11 fxe6 ♗e5+

12 ♜f1 fxe6 13 ♜g2 is absolutely crushing.

**10 ♜xg6 hxg6 11 ♗f3**



It was at this point I started to feel a little worried I may not be playing a 150-graded player here. I had assumed 11 h3/h4 would be played, but the more I looked into it, the more 11 ♖f3 was a lovely move. As I began analysing, it was the speed that ♖f3 was played that made me sceptical. How could he have seen the long-term compensation so quickly?

**11...♗f6**

After 11...♗xh2 12 ♗xh2 ♗xh2 13 0-0-0 ♗d7 14 ♗h1 ♗gf6 and a simple move such as 15 ♗b3 or 15 a4 it is suddenly quite difficult for Black to unravel his position, since ...0-0-0 leaves unpleasant issues with the f7-square. Moreover, after the strong regrouping (♗b3), ♗e2 and c2-c4, White takes over the board simply and effortlessly.

**12 h4 ♗bd7 13 0-0-0 ♗b6 14 ♗b3 0-0-0 15 ♗b1 ♗bd5**

Having a space deficiency, I felt swapping pieces was logical, but this was calmly met by the instructive....

**16 ♗e2!**

...When I begin to realise my bishop on d6 was in trouble and his pawns were dominating my minor pieces.

**16...e5 17 g5**



Having spent the last few years coaching and preparing against 1800-2000 level players, I feel quite in tune with their level. Here the way my opponent was playing and the speed of some of the more profound moves just did not sit well, so I decided to be cheeky and it was at this moment I began 'chatting' to my opponent for the first time.

I wrote the rather provocative, "You must be the strongest 1800 ever", leading to a mini conversation. He protested his rating was two years out of date and that his "current playing strength [was] at least 2100", to which I

replied, "Hell of a two year intense training period". This received an overly detailed reply which only served to increase my suspicions, including "Our club captain is 2260 and I beat him fairly regularly." Me thinks the cyborg doth protest too much.

Instead, 17 c4 e4 18 ♖g2 ♗f4 19 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 20 g5 ♗h5 21 ♖xe4 was what I was expecting, but computer analysis vindicates the immaculate calculation powers of my humble opponent and gives the played move as fractionally the stronger for White.

**17...♗h5 18 c4 ♗df4 19 c5 ♗f8 20 dxe5 ♗xe2 21 ♖xe2 ♗xc5 22 ♗c3 ♖e7 23 ♖g4+**

Again the computer's top move by just a fraction above something simple like 23 ♖f3.

**23...♗b8 24 f4 ♗b4 25 ♗d4 ♗a5 26 ♗hf1 ♗hf8 27 ♖g1**



Not the top move according to the engines, but the best reply is the seemingly hopeless 27...♗b6, just losing a pawn, and after 27...b6 the position is horrible too.

I was extremely frustrated at this moment as I felt I wasn't playing a human, so I resumed the conversation, but this time in a more confrontational fashion: "2100... Don't put yourself down mate, easy 2400 here, look forward to seeing you make some norms over the board".

I hoped to scare my opponent into realising that eventually if he hoped to play in real tournaments that people would be expecting top-quality chess every game on account of his masterclasses in these online matches. It had the desired effect and we now begin to see an immediate and drastic decline in his play.

**27...b6 28 ♖e3 c5 29 ♗c3 ♗xc3 30 ♖xc3 ♗xd1+ 31 ♗xd1 ♗d8 32 ♗g4 ♗d4**

Here I felt I was finally in the game.

**33 ♖e3 ♖d8 34 ♗xh5 gxh5 35 ♖f3 ♗d2**



**36 ♗f2??**

A horrific blunder. To me, someone who can show such mastery of a strange opening and play a very instructive middlegame does not throw the position at move 27 away and definitely not in this fashion.

**36...♗xf2 37 ♖xf2 ♖d1# 0-1**

In my opinion it is almost impossible to stop someone who is absolutely determined to cheat in online chess and when playing casual games online you will never really know who you're playing. However, there are many basic steps that will potentially scare off cheaters or at the least make it much harder and a far more conscious decision for them.

The first and most obvious preventative measure is to clearly publish every player's real name and corresponding username. The anonymity that usernames provide gives confidence to the cheaters that they can get away with it and nobody will really know who they are even if they get caught.

For events with cash prizes, it should be necessary to be on a zoom call with screen sharing and I do not believe that classical time controls should be used for tournaments with cash prizes, as it is simply too easy to leave the room and cheat. As shown in the British Online Championships, even being on a zoom call with all these measures did not stop at least one player (many suspect there were several).

A little bit of common sense from organisers also goes a long way in the fight against cheating. There should be nobody playing under newly made accounts and players with a known reputation for foul play should be refused entry. I was shocked to see that a junior player who had blatantly cheated against me in the British Online Blitz Qualifiers, and had his account closed for cheating by Chess.com days after the event, was then allowed to enter, qualify and play in the main British Online Championship.

Had the organisers of the British or any other online event plagued with cheating incidents (e.g. the London Juniors or UK Chess Challenge Online) viewed the games of the players in question prior to the event, and then compared them to their games in the event, they would see a very large discrepancy.

To summarise, it is very difficult to fully prevent cheating online, but there are a few simple steps that organisers can take to reduce the volume of cheaters in their events. That said I am happy that over-the-board tournaments are returning all over Europe and I look forward to playing in some again very soon!

Postscript: After some investigation into my opponent, I found out that he previously had a Lichess account banned and subsequently deleted his Chess.com account, which to me seems like jumping before being pushed...





# 60 Seconds with...

# Brandon Clarke



**Born:** Leicester, 14th December 1995.

**Place of residence:** Cambridge.

**Occupation:** Chess player and coach.

**Enjoyable?** It's great to be back playing again after a difficult time with lockdown.

**And home life?** I spent a few years living in Sydney, so it's nice to be back near family, although given the lockdown, I'm quite happy to be away from home for a while!

**But sometimes good to escape to:** Football or the gym.

**Sports played or followed:** Mainly football, but also rugby and American football on occasion.

**A favourite novel?** I've never been a big reader.

**Piece of music?** 'Time' – Hans Zimmer.

**Film or TV series?** *The Office*.

**What's the best thing about playing chess?** The social connections, which is why I prefer playing in open events as you get to reconnect with more people.

**And the worst?** Preparation. I would prefer it if pairings were done in a similar way to rapid/blitz events where you only see who

you are playing a few minutes before and just head straight to the board. That way, all of the work has to be done prior to the event which I think would allow people to be more social. These days, pairings come out an hour or so before and everyone heads straight to their room to prepare!

**Your best move?** Before playing 18 ♖xd5 I calculated everything to mate.

**And a highly memorable opponent?** Probably when I drew against Yu Yangyi in the PRO Chess League. At the time that was my biggest scalp, so it was a bit surreal being able to get a result against world-class opposition.

**Favourite game of all time?** There's been so many, but if I had to give one, Byrne-Fischer, 'The Game of the Century'. I think that's pretty tough to top.

**The best three chess books:** Again, so many good books out there nowadays and as I mentioned I'm not a massive reader, but I do a little better when it comes to chess. The obvious choices are Dvoretsky and Aagaard's books, but if I had to give something underrated, then I would go for *The Russian Endgame Handbook* by Rabinovich.

**Is FIDE doing a good job?** To be honest I don't really pay much attention. But from the little I have seen from Emil Sutovsky's Facebook posts, it seems they are moving in a positive direction. I like the format of the current Norway Chess event where there has to be a decisive result.

**Or your National Federation?** I think the ECF, along with some of the main sponsors and Malcolm Pein, are doing a great job providing norm chances to young players. We've had a drought of GMs lately, and I don't think that's down to a lack of talent, potentially more a lack of opportunities. So it's nice to see the support there.

**And advice for either?** I think if it was possible to not release pairings well in advance that would make tournaments more enjoyable for everyone. But I don't see them changing that!

**Can chess make one happy?** Yes, and no! I think it's better to have a healthy balance.

**A tip please for the club player:** The biggest thing I've learnt from my journey is that anything is possible. I remember the time when I was rated 2100 and was dreaming of being an FM. At the time, it seemed so unattainable and yet I've somehow managed to surpass it. So my advice would be to set your goal, and then start believing in it. In order to reach your goal, you will at some point have to learn to beat the players standing in your way, so better to learn sooner rather than later. Don't just draw against a higher-rated or even titled player, beat them!

## B. Clarke-K. O'Chee Sydney 2018



18 ♖xd5! ♙xd5 19 ♜xd5 ♖xa4 20 ♜c7+ ♚e7 21 ♜xe5+ ♜f6 22 ♙d4 ♜d8 23 fxe4 ♜xd4 24 ♜e6# 1-0

**But less memorable than your worst move?** My worst blunder was 34 ♖a8 when after 34...♚e7 all of a sudden I was completely lost...

## B. Clarke-B.A. Notkevich Young Masters, Adelaide 2018



34 ♖a8+?? ♚e7 35 ♖xe4+ ♜xd6 36 h4 ♖e5 37 c5+ ♚e6 0-1

# Find the Winning Moves

24 puzzles to test your tactical ability, with, as ever, the positions grouped in rough order of difficulty. The games come mainly from the Grand Chess Tour and various other recent over-the-board events. Don't forget that whilst sometimes the key move will force mate or the win of material, other times it will just win a pawn.

**Solutions on pages 52.**



## Warm-up Puzzles



**(1) M. Hughes-D. Owen**  
Internet 2021  
White to Play



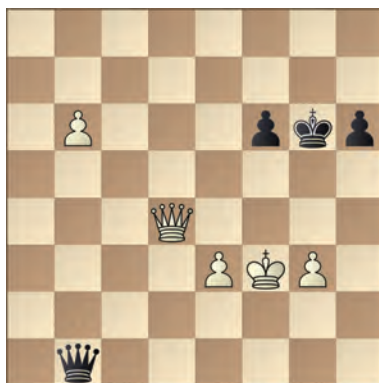
**(2) D. Saduakassova-A. Goryachkina**  
FIDE World Cup, Krasnaya Polyana 2021  
Black to Play



**(3) G. Kasparov-J. Van Foreest**  
Zagreb (blitz) 2021  
White to Play



**(4) S. Whitehead-'Dekuel'**  
Internet (blitz) 2021  
White to Play



**(5) N. Birtwistle-M. Basman**  
Northumbria Masters, Gateshead 2021  
Black to Play



**(6) S. Livermore-M. Anderson**  
Internet 2021  
White to Play

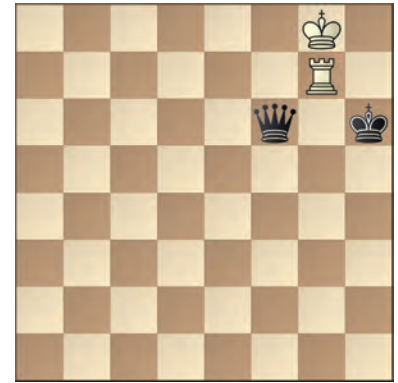
Intermediate Puzzles for the Club Player - Solutions on page 52



**(7) 'jonmacf'-N.Hickman**  
Internet 2021  
Black to Play



**(8) A.Kassis-Y.Kuzubov**  
FIDE World Cup, Krasnaya Polyana 2021  
Black to Play



**(9) J.Benedetti-M.Ruperez**  
Barcelona 2021  
White to Play and Draw



**(10) Le Quang Liem-W.So**  
Chessable Masters (rapid) 2021  
Black to Play and Draw



**(11) M.Basman-Dong Bao Nghia**  
Northumbria Masters, Gateshead 2021  
Black to Play



**(12) N.Salimova-I.Aliaga Fernandez**  
FIDE World Cup, Krasnaya Polyana (rapid) 2021  
Black to Play



**(13) J.Willow-T.Villiers**  
Leamington Spa 2021  
Black to Play



**(14) I.Nepomniachtchi-E.Bacrot**  
Paris (rapid) 2021  
White to Play



**(15) J.K.Duda-A.Grischuk**  
Croatia (blitz) 2021  
Black to Play

## Harder Puzzles for the Club Player – Solutions on page 52



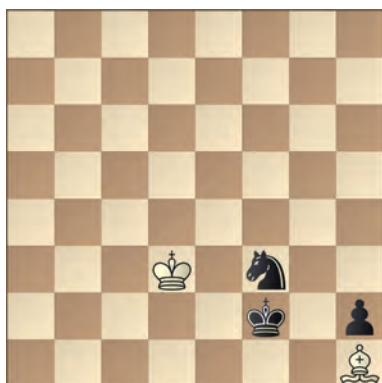
**(16) A.Giri-V.Anand**  
Zagreb (blitz) 2021  
*White to Play*



**(17) T.Villiers-H.Grieve**  
Muswell Hill 2021  
*Black to Play*



**(18) Z.Kozul-M.Harvey**  
European Hybrid Qualifier 2021  
*White to Play*



**(19) E.Kretov-S.Pastar**  
Titled Tuesday Blitz 2021  
*Black to Play*



**(20) J.K.Duda-A.Korobov**  
Zagreb (rapid) 2021  
*Black to Play*



**(21) B.Heberla-V.Zwardon**  
Katowice (rapid) 2021  
*White to Play*



**(22) R.Rapport-P.Svidler**  
Paris (rapid) 2021  
*White to Play*



**(23) R.Mamedov-E.Kirk**  
French Top 12, Châlons-en-Champagne 2021  
*White to Play*



**(24) E.Blomqvist-T.Hillarp Persson**  
Swedish Championship, Helsingborg 2021  
*Black to Play*





# Solutions

to Find the Winning Moves (pages 42-44)

## 1) Hughes-Owen

1 ♖xa7+! ♗xa7 2 ♖a6# 1-0

## 2) Saduakassova-Goryachkina

1...♖xc2! 0-1 White actually resigned here before 2 ♗xc2 ♗xf1+! 3 ♗xf1 ♗e3+ landed.

## 3) Kasparov-Van Foreest

1 ♗xg5! 1-0 In view of 1...♗xb1 2 ♗d8+ ♗h7 3 ♖xb1 and 1 ♖e8+ ♗h7 2 ♗d3+! would also have done the business.

## 4) Whitehead-'Dekuel'

Remarkably in the game, Black resigned after 1 ♗g6? when 1...h6 should be winning for him, not White, whereas 1 ♗xh7+! ♗f8 (if 1...♗xh7 2 ♗g6+ ♗g8 3 ♖h8#) 2 ♗h8+ ♗e7 3 ♗g6+ ♗d7 4 ♗g8 ♖e7 5 ♖h8 would have been all over.

## 5) Birtwistle-Basman

White, who had been winning, has just tragically blundered with 1 ♗d6-d4. Retribution was swift: 1...♗f1+! 0-1 Mate follows with 2 ♗e4 ♗f5# or 2 ♗g4 h5+ 3 ♗h4 ♗h1#.

## 6) Livermore-Anderson

1 ♖a8! ♖xa8 2 ♗xa8 (Black cannot keep his knight and halt the a-pawn) 2...♗d6 3 a7 ♗c8 4 ♗c6+! ♗xc6 5 a8♗+ 1-0

## 7) 'jonmacf'-Hickman

1...♖b4+! 2 ♗b3 (2 ♗xb4 ♗xb4+ picks up the white queen) 2...♖xb3+! 3 cxb3 ♗xb3+ 4 ♗a1 c2 (White must now ditch his queen or be mated on b1 or the a-file) 5 ♗b2 0-1

## 8) Kassis-Kuzubov

1...♗xc3 2 bxc3 ♖xc3! 0-1 It's all over in view of 3 ♗xc3 ♗xd4+.

## 9) Benedetti-Ruperez

1 ♖h7+! (a well-known drawing device and the reason why the material-up side should generally keep the queen and king apart) 1...♗g5 (we'll see what happens after 1...♗g6 shortly) 2 ♖g7+ ♗h5 3 ♖h7+ ♗g4 4 ♖g7+ ♗h5 5 ♖h7+ ♗g5 6 ♖g7+ ♗h6 7 ♖h7+ ♗g6 (unable to head on to the f-file without being pinned, White finally goes to the obvious square) 8 ♖h6+! ♗xh6 ½-½

## 10) Le Quang Liem-So

White has misplayed his attack and now 1...♗f1! would have drawn (in contrast, 1...♖xd8? 2 ♗xd8 ♗g8 3 ♖e8 forced resignation in the game), since there's just no way for White to avoid the perpetual, as we can see from 2 ♖xb8 ♗xf2+ 3 ♗h3 ♗f1+ 4 ♗g3 ♗g1+ 5 ♗f3 ♗f1+ 6 ♗e3 ♗e1+ when the king must return, not venture

forwards: 7 ♗d4?? ♗d2+ 8 ♗c4 ♗d3+ 9 ♗b4 ♗b3+ 10 ♗a5 ♗a4#.

## 11) Basman-Dong Bao Nghia

1 ♗d2-e3 had been an unfortunate slip, allowing Black a deadly fork: 1...♖xh5! 2 ♗xh5 ♗g3 3 ♗g4 ♗xg4 4 ♗f4 (of course, if 4 hxg4 ♗f1+) 4...♗f1 5 ♖h1 ♗xe2 6 ♗g6 ♖f7+ 7 ♗e5 ♗g3 0-1

## 12) Salimova-Aliaga Fernandez

1...♗d3! is Black's most accurate move, giving the white king a square while keeping it imprisoned, if by no means the only move to win (here 2 ♗f7 ♖e5 3 ♗f3 ♖f5! would force resignation). However, it's vital to be aware of and take steps against White's saving device, as occurred in the game: 1...♖e1?? 2 ♗g8+! ♗g6 3 ♗f7+ ♗h6 4 ♗xh5+! ♗xh5 ½-½.

## 13) Willow-Villiers

The game's 1...♖d8? could have been met by 2 ♗h5! ♖xb1+ 3 ♗e1 ♗e7 4 h4! when White would have had enough counterplay to maintain a rough balance, whereas 1...♖8a2! would have threatened mate on g2 and won after 2 ♗e1 ♖xb1.

## 14) Nepomniachtchi-Bacrot

1 ♗xh6! (or 1 ♖g3 followed by ♗xh6!) 1...gxh6 2 ♖g3 1-0 There's no good way of covering h6 in view of Black's weak back rank.

## 15) Duda-Grischuk

1...♖xf3! 2 ♗xf3 (2 gxf3 ♗h2+ 3 ♗f1 ♗h1+ collects the rook on a1) 2...♖f8! 0-1 3 ♗xf8+ ♗xf8 4 ♖xc6 ♗f4 is clearly hopeless with such an exposed king.

## 16) Giri-Anand

1 ♗f4! (forcing mate is even better than 1 ♗f7 ♖xg8 2 ♗h5+ ♗g7 3 ♗g6+ ♗f8 4 ♗xg8+ ♗e7 5 ♗xh7, with an extra piece) 1...exf4 2 ♗xf4 ♗xf2 (there's just nothing good to be done about the threat of 3 ♖g6+ ♗h5 4 ♗d1#, as if 2...♗f8 3 ♗xh4+! ♖h5 4 ♖h8+ ♗h7 5 ♖xh7+! ♗xh7 6 ♗xh5+ ♗g7 7 ♗f7+ and mate next move) 3 ♖g6+ 1-0

## 17) Villiers-Grieve

1...♗g5! (1...♗e5! also does the trick, and if 2 fxe5 ♗f3+ 3 ♗f1 ♗h3+ 4 ♗e2 ♗d4+ 5 ♗d2 ♗h6+) 2 fxf5 (2 ♖e3 ♖xf4 just gives Black far too strong an attack for the exchange, as shown by 3 ♗f1 ♗df3+ 4 ♗h1 ♖d4 5 ♗c1 ♖h4, which will lead to mate) 2...♗f3+ 3 ♗f1 (3 ♗g2 ♗g4+ 4 ♗h1 ♗h3 is clearly hopeless) 3...♗h3+ 4 ♗e2 ♗xc3 5 ♗e4 (5 bxc3 ♖e8+ cleans White up) 5...♗d4+ 6 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 left Black queen for rook to the good and still attacking.

## 18) Kozul-Harvey

1 ♖d7! (a devastating blow, although so dominating is White's position that 1 'pass' is also more than good enough to retain a winning position, as is 1 ♖d8 ♗e7 2 ♖8d7!) 1...♗xd7 (1...♗e7 2 ♖xc7 ♖ab8 3 ♖d6 would just be crushing) 2 ♗c4 (the point and now 2...♗e6? fails to 3 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 4 ♗xg7#) 2...♗h7 3 ♗xf7 ♖xf7 4 ♗e5 ♗b5 5 ♗e6 ♖f8 6 ♖d7! (continuing to dominate; the game is up for Black) 6...♗xd7 7 ♗xd7 ♖f7 8 ♗xf7 1-0

## 19) Kretov-Pastar

1...♗h4! (1...♗g1? threw everything away in the game: 2 ♗e2! ♗xh1 – Black won't be able to evict the white king from f1 and f2 after this, but 2...♗h4 3 ♗e1 is also a draw, as shown by 3...♗f5 4 ♗d5 ♗e3 5 ♗h1! – 3 ♗f1 ♗d2+ 4 ♗f2 ♗e4+ 5 ♗f1 ♗f6 6 ♗f2 ♗g4+ 7 ♗f1 and Black soon reconciled himself to the inevitable; note too that 1...♗e1+ 2 ♗d2 ♗g2 3 ♗d3 is still winning if Black moves his knight and is then careful, rather than allow 3...♗g1? 4 ♗e2!, with a now-familiar drawing mechanism) 2 ♗d2 ♗f1! 3 ♗d1 (an important advance, as now 3 ♗d3 ♗g1 4 ♗e2 ♗g2 works for Black) 3...♗f5! 4 ♗d2 (bishop moves lose to 4...♗e3+ 5 ♗d2 ♗g2) 4...♗g1! (only now) 5 ♗a8 (5 ♗e2 fails to 5...♗g3+ and 5 ♗e1 to 5...♗e3) 5...♗h4 6 ♗e2 ♗g2 finally forces the pawn home.

## 20) Duda-Korobov

After 1...♖b8+? 2 ♗a1 White's king was safe and he even went on to triumph. Instead, 1...♗b4+! 2 ♗c2 (2 ♗a1 ♖xd1+ 3 ♖xd1 ♖b8 is hopeless for White, as his rook cannot cover b1 and b2, and 4 ♗c1 ♗xf6 leaves him tied up in knots; 5 ♗c2 defends e4, but after 5...h5 there's precious little that White can do as Black calmly goes ...♗c4, ...♖b3 and ...a6-a5-a4-a3 followed by ...♖b2, or just bags the h4-pawn) 2...♖c8 gives Black far too strong an initiative, with e4 loose and ...a1♗+ deflection sacrifices possible, as shown by 3 ♖d3 ♗a4+ 4 ♗b2 a1♗+! 5 ♖xa1 ♖b8+ – a neat line pointed out by Glenn Flear on ChessPublishing.

## 21) Heberla-Zwardon

1 ♗xc5+! (simpler than 1 ♗xg7+ ♗d7 2 ♗f5+ ♗c6 3 ♗xd6 ♖a1! and 1 ♗xd4+ ♗d8 2 ♗g5+ ♗e7, although these lines too should be quite promising for White – with care) 1...♗d8 2 ♗g5+! ♗e7 (now the king can't slip away in view of 2...♗c8 3 ♗f5+ ♗d8 4 ♗g5+ ♗e7 5 ♖xe7 ♗xe7 6 ♗xe7+ ♗e8 7 ♗c8+ ♗f7 8 ♗e6+ ♗e8 9 ♗c7# and 2...♗e7 3 ♗d3 ♖a3 4 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 5 ♗xe7 1-0 3...♗c8 4 ♗f5+ is a killer, as is 3...♗e8 4 ♗xe7+.

## 22) Rapport-Svidler

1 h6! ♗h8 2 ♖h4! ♗xf3 (there's just no good defence, as 2...♗f5 3 e4 wins a piece and 2...♗c6 3 ♖f4 ♗d8 4 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 5 ♖xf8+ ♗xf8 6 ♗xd7 leaves White two pawns ahead) 3 ♖f4 ♗d8 4 ♗xd7! 1-0 4...♖xf4 5 ♗xe6+ picks up the queen with mate and 4...♗xd7 5 ♗xe6+ also terminates

proceedings, as does 4...♖xd7 5 ♜xf8#.

### 23) Mamedov-Kirk

1 ♜xf5!! (perhaps remarkably, 1 ♜d5!? exd5 2 g6+ ♜e8 3 ♜xf5 also appears to do the business for White) 1...exf5 2 ♖xf5+ ♜e8 (2...♜g7 fails to 3 ♜xd6!, and if 3...♜xd6 4 ♖f6+ ♜g8 5 ♖g6+ ♜f8 6 ♜xd6) 3 g6! ♜f8 4 ♖h5! (the final move it was handy to spot in advance; the g-pawn's a winner) 4...♜d7 5 g7 ♖c8 6 gxf8 ♖xf8 7 ♜f3 ♖g8 8 ♜f7 a5 9

♖f5+ ♜e8 10 ♜h7 a4 11 ♖h5+ ♜d7 12 ♜h8 ♖g5 13 ♖e8+ ♜e6 14 ♜g8 1-0

### 24) Blomqvist-Hillarp Persson

1...♖d1!! (White even went on to win in the game after 1...♖e5? 2 g3 and 1...♖b1 2 ♖c5! ♜xf1 3 ♜e3 would save the day, as shown by 3...♜h1+ 4 ♜g3 ♖f1 5 ♜e8+ ♜h7 6 ♜h8+! ♜xh8 7 ♖f8+, with 1...♖c1 2 ♖a7! ♖xa3 3 ♖xa8+ ♜g7 4 ♖b8! also generating enough counterplay for White to draw) 2

♜d3 (White will now be mated after 2 ♖a7 ♜xf1 3 ♖xa8+ ♜g7, and if 4 ♖b8 ♖e1 or 4 ♜e3 ♖d2, while 2 ♜e3 ♜xf1 3 ♜e8+ ♜h7 4 ♖a7 ♜h1+ 5 ♜g3 fails to the delightful 5...♜h3+!, and if 6 gxf3 ♖xf3+ 7 ♜h2 ♖g2# or 6 ♜xf4 ♖d2+ 7 ♜e5 ♖e1+ 8 ♜f6 ♖xe8) 2...♜e2! (a neat resource pointed out by Sam Collins on Chess Publishing) 3 ♜xe2 (3 ♖xe2 ♜xe2 4 ♜xe2 ♖xe2 shouldn't be too hard to convert) 3...♜h1+! 4 ♜g3 ♖d6+ 5 f4 ♖f6 and White will be mated on h4.

# This Month's New Releases

### Nail It Like Nepo!

Zenon Franco, 256 pages  
Elk and Ruby

RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

A world championship match usually ignites a scramble from publishers to unleash books on both the champion and the challenger. Elk and Ruby are first off the blocks, with this new book on the winner of the 2020-21 Candidates tournament – and brand new title challenger – Ian Nepomniachtchi, which is subtitled 'Ian Nepomniachtchi's 30 Best Wins'.

Franco opines that Nepomniachtchi's strength has increased comparatively recently: "Nepomniachtchi's career is already quite long and successful, but until the last few years he was overshadowed by other great players of his generation. His often excellent results were sometimes followed by poor performances. However, things began to change in recent years: his results are now much more stable and winning the 2020-2021 Candidates Tournament is obviously a big jump forward."

The book is light on biographical material, but the main focus is meant to be on the games. These are arranged chronologically, from 2008 to 2020. Nepomniachtchi's opponents include Vladimir Kramnik, Viswanathan Anand and, of course, Magnus Carlsen. The annotations are very good and thankfully do not go down the route of too many lengthy variations. Indeed, numerous questions are asked of the reader as the games progress.

Incidentally, how does one assess the challenger's style of play? It is not an easy question to answer. Apparently, at 14, Nepomniachtchi named Mikhail Tal as his chess idol, but Franco reckons his subject's style has not been overly influenced by the seventh champion of the world.

"It is difficult to find just one great player from the past that reminds me of his style. Even though all the top players have gained something from all the great masters of the past, in Nepomniachtchi we could particularly

highlight a few, beginning with Emanuel Lasker, David Bronstein, Bent Larsen and Viktor Korchnoi: he has the fighting spirit of all of them, as well as a mixture of some of their abilities."

An interesting selection of players, only one of whom ever took the ultimate chess title. To tie in with the question of style, Game 16 in the book has the title 'In the spirit of Lasker and Korchnoi'. It is a particularly relevant game as we look ahead to this year's title match. The point is that, just like the two named heroes, Nepomniachtchi sails very close to the wind with Black. Such provocation requires great self-belief and often leads to highly combative games, characterised by a number of mistakes by both players. It is a risky stance to take against the strongest of players, but one which can work out very well for those with a certain style.

This snippet also provides a sample exercise from the book, albeit one of the simplest ones. It looks so easy when we see top-level games on our screens, complete with instant engine evaluations, but trying to find the moves and plans of the elite players without being spoon-fed the data is an excellent way to improve.



### 36 ♖c6?

"This was the faulty idea White had in mind. He should have gone for 36 cxb6 ♖xb6, which is clearly worse but not quite lost yet.

"Exercise (simple): Why was 36.♖c6 the last mistake of the game?"

Answer: 36...♖a4!

Winning a piece.

37 ♖xa4 ♜xa4 38 c6 ♜b6 39 c7 f6 40 ♜b3 ♜c8 0-1

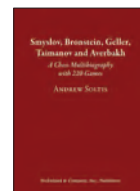
Of particular use to improving club players is the post-game selection of 'Some lessons from this game', which serve to distill the salient moments from each encounter in succinct and fully accessible fashion.

Franco has done a good job here. This is not merely a rushed potboiler to take advantage of the current title match, but rather a serious attempt to get to grips with the unusual style of Nepomniachtchi and to keep challenging the reader with admirable regularity. Careful study of this book will undoubtedly enable the reader to appreciate just how tough Carlsen's defence of his title will be while providing plenty of general chess instruction along the way.

Sean Marsh

### M.Carlsen-I.Nepomniachtchi

London 2017



### Smyslov, Bronstein, Geller, Taimanov and Averbakh

Andrew Soltis, 380 pages  
McFarland

RRP £59.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £53.95**

Subtitled 'A Chess Multibiography with 220 Games', this is a follow-up to Soltis's excellent *Tal, Petrosian, Spassky and Korchnoi* (McFarland, 2019). This time he covers the lives and games of five famous players

instead of four, but only one of them became champion of the world (and then, for a very short period of time).

As the blurb puts it, "This book explores how fate played a capricious role in the lives of five of the greatest players in chess history." Pointing to the impact of the hand of fate in the lives of five of the strongest grandmasters of their time leaves a curious impression – at least initially – but further justification is a recurring theme of the book.

"A crucial decision spared chess Grandmaster David Bronstein almost certain death at the hands of the Nazis – one fateful move cost him the world championship. Russian champion Mark Taimanov was a touted as a hero of the Soviet state until his loss to Bobby Fischer all but ruined his life. Yefim Geller's dream of becoming world champion was crushed by a bad move against Fischer, his hated rival. Yuri Averbakh had no explanation how he became the world's oldest grandmaster, other than the quixotic nature of fate. Vasily Smyslov, the only one of the five to become world champion, would reign for just one year – fortune, he said, gave him pneumonia at the worst possible time."

Perhaps there is an element of hyperbole in the above paragraph, but nevertheless the five players had extraordinary lives and there is a significant number of intriguing and revealing stories about all of them in this book.

The chapter called 'Secrets and Scandals' starts with the tale of Taimanov upsetting Mikhail Botvinnik. This is something Taimanov, who "never wavered in his admiration of Mikhail Botvinnik", didn't mean to do (he was clearly very different to Bronstein in that respect).

**M.Botvinnik-M.Taimanov**  
USSR Championship, Moscow 1952



Taimanov's version of events is that he offered a draw here. "I had no aggressive intentions, and I would be completely satisfied with a drawn outcome." Unfortunately, the rules for the tournament stipulated draws could be agreed no sooner than the 30th move, and here Black has just played 22...♙a6-c4.

Staying with Taimanov's version, Botvinnik declined the draw and "immediately made a bad move" with **23 ♖d2?**. Botvinnik's version is that he offered he draw, which

Taimanov accepted but then "started playing for a win" in violation of "unwritten but traditional rules of chess etiquette."

Unfortunately for Botvinnik, the chief judge was Igor Bondarevsky, who was definitely not a Botvinnik fan. Taimanov asked Bondarevsky if they were allowed to make a draw, but the latter "was very pleased to say that he objected to making peace" once he had looked at the position and seen for himself that the world champion stood badly. Taimanov duly won on move 50. Botvinnik decided to "cut off all contact with Taimanov for two years as punishment."

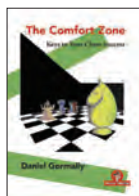
This is merely a small piece of skullduggery (albeit unintentional – probably!) but there are plenty more where that came from, including various desirable results ordered from above.

The illustrative games are lightly annotated, although still instructively so. There are numerous evocative photographs to be found throughout the book. On page 174 we see Taimanov on the piano while Smyslov sings, in a snap taken at the banquet for the U.S. and USSR teams during their match in 1954. Elsewhere, we see a number of shots showing Bronstein in typical enigmatic poses.

The appendices provide plenty of interest too. The bibliography runs to four pages, for example. There is also a comparison of the world rankings of the five featured players, all the way from 1945 to 1979. It is interesting to see the ebb and flow of their respective standings. Bronstein, for example, topped the world list in 1951. Smyslov followed suit the following year and was still at the relatively high place of number 20 as late as 1979 (by which time Bronstein was down to 41).

This book is even better than *Tal, Petrosian, Spassky and Korchnoi* and may even be Soltis's best work to date. I have been studying the lives and games of all five players for some considerable time, but I still discovered a large amount of fresh material. This is a treasure trove for chess historians and, indeed, for anyone interested in excellent chess paired with fabulous stories.

Sean Marsh



**The Comfort Zone**

Daniel Gormally, 264 pages  
Thinkers Publishing

RRP £25.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £23.35**

*"By then it had become the norm to go down the pub after the game. Go for a curry perhaps. Maybe go clubbing later. Everybody slapping each other on the back, telling each other you're a talented player, but no you're even more talented mate, until it's four in the morning and you're catatonic in a club and you know you're going to lose tomorrow."*

Daniel Gormally – *The Comfort Zone*

What is it really like to be a grandmaster? Players at this level might be looking at the same plastic pieces as the rest of us, yet their understanding of the game is so much deeper. In this brave and deeply honest book, Daniel Gormally shares his life both at and away from the board. Part guide to the psychology of chess, part superb coaching manual and part memoir, *The Comfort Zone* is a truly original offering.

It is not often that a book manages to seamlessly combine thoughts on improving your game from a technical perspective with insights into mental resilience at the board, yet this is what Gormally manages to do. Add in the fascinating stories Gormally shares from the chess circuit and a host of interesting, accessibly annotated games, and it is little wonder that this book is likely to prove very popular.

Another reason *The Comfort Zone* is so engaging is that Gormally is completely open about the challenges he has faced. From anxiety to low self-esteem, through to problems with gambling, the opposite sex, and the sense sometimes that he is "a chess bum living at home with his parents", Gormally demonstrates that however good anyone is at chess, it does not necessarily mean their life is entirely sorted.

Inevitably there are still struggles and disappointments, good days and bad. Even at the board, however strong you are, there are always better players still to contend with. For Gormally, memorable victories have been interspersed with painful defeats, which leaves him well placed to empathise with the challenges his readers face in their quest to improve. As ever with Daniel's writing, there is no flannel or pretence. Everything is real and authentic, and there can be no better foundation for a work like this.

Chess preparation is an important theme throughout. Gormally has never had a chess coach and his own education "consisted largely of reading chess magazines and trying to figure out the best moves in the problem pages." For many years, he had something of "an innocent outlook" and "the idea that someone could prepare for me [...] that they would actually bother to study my games [...] only occurred [...] much later." All of which means that when Gormally writes about preparing for certain types of opponents or considering what openings to adopt, he does so in a way that the reader will find both relatable and of real practical value.

A student of many sports, the concept of a comfort zone is drawn from Gormally's observation that the unfancied Kokrak won a golf event in part because it was on his home course – which was also of a type that his more highly fancied European rivals were less familiar with. Ensuring we are truly comfortable and familiar with the openings we choose, which might well be those we first utilised in childhood, is the inference Gormally draws. During the book, he builds on the concept of the comfort zone, with a view to helping the reader shore up their chess, before ultimately progressing to the next level of development.

Gormally writes well about mental resilience at the chess board, highlighting the Brooks Koepka method – essentially creating the capacity to be “mentally strong enough to walk through the door” when a chance for victory arises. Equally, having once withdrawn from the British after a poor start and later regretting it, Gormally now recognises that if you are having a bad tournament, the only real choice is to say: “Heck to all that, I am going to keep competing.”

On occasion good advice from a fellow GM can help on this front. “I recall a few years ago my chess was in a terrible mess and my hands would almost shake when making a move; I was almost unable to complete it, because I was so afraid that I was about to make a blunder. And then I had a conversation with Mark Hebden outside of the playing hall in Hastings. He said play quickly, make a mistake. Does it matter? Most mistakes you can recover from, and after that the anxiety left me. My hands never shook again.”

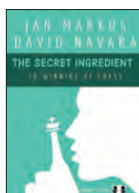
Gormally’s chapter on competing in the 1999 British makes for gripping reading and gives a real ringside seat on the action. After racing to 5/6, anxiety struck, and he ultimately faded from contention. This chapter also forms a nice tribute to the late John Naylor, a friend to many on the circuit including Daniel, who had a stellar tournament. “Looking back, I wonder if the British Championships in 1999 was one of the pinnacles of his life. Doing something he enjoyed, surrounded by good friends, able to enjoy a laugh at any time he chose.”

There are many terrific anecdotes. Gormally’s account of his camping trip with Simon Williams and Keith Arkell is hilarious. His discussion with Keith as to whether it is really a good idea to wager on whether the mountain they are standing at the bottom of can be climbed certainly made me smile. There is also a fantastic story about a player analysing with Karpov after their game. Karpov was engrossed and the discussion ran on, but the hotel restaurant was about to close...

I was also fascinated to read about Kasparov’s “twelve strengthening moves theory.” Kasparov’s view is that a super-GM needs to have the ability to make twelve strengthening moves in a row. “He said that international masters and weaker GMs might be able to play six strengthening moves in a row, but sooner or later they will lose patience and do something active, like go for an attack when it is not there.” Gormally then brilliantly takes this notion and explores it in a way that we can learn from.

*The Comfort Zone* is an excellent book, which both teaches and entertains. Daniel Gormally is great company, and this is one to get.

Ben Graff



### The Secret Ingredient: To Winning at Chess

Jan Markos and David Navara, 224 pages  
Quality Chess

RRP £26.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.29**

Confession time: I was prepared to beg to review this book. Like many chess players I have simply failed to convert what (for my level – around 2100) is considered to be a high level of knowledge and understanding of the game into practical results.

I had read and gained considerable insight into the potential causes of this problem by reading John Nunn’s excellent (and still highly recommended) *Secrets of Practical Chess*, but my play failed to remove the considerable doubt that something more fundamental was missing from my practical chess skillset.

Having read and been highly impressed with Jan Markos’s *Under the Surface* and David Navara’s *My Chess World*, I was very excited at the prospect of reading a high-level book with the potential to provide me with plentiful insight into how to improve my practical skills.

Spoiler alert: I got what I hoped for. Normally I would provide an example or two of what I think are the key highlights of a book. With this tome, however, I found myself thinking, ‘I don’t do that’ or ‘I simply didn’t know that’ from start to finish. Therefore, I don’t wish anyone to think that the examples chosen are those that I consider ‘best’, because, quite frankly, I could have picked practically any of them. Therefore, the ones I have chosen are the ones that I gained the greatest insight from.

Firstly, without doubt the biggest gap in my practical skills that the book laid bare was just how much psychology is used as a practical weapon by strong players, even in opening preparation.

### L.Ftacnik-J.Markos

Slovakian Championship, Banska  
Stiavnica 2011  
*Semi-Slav Defence*

**1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 d4 c6  
5 e3 a6 6 b3 ♙b4 7 ♙d2 ♙d6 8 ♙d3 c5  
9 cxd5 exd5 10 dxc5 ♙xc5 11 ♘d4 0-0  
12 ♙c1?!**



Markos describes this as an “insecure move”. More interestingly, he had chosen this

opening variation because in his preparation he spotted a game in it where Ftacnik had castled and lost after he allowed his king’s defences to be damaged. He therefore thought that providing his opponent with an unpleasant memory might provoke a reaction. Whether or not this was the inspiration for White’s 12th move is unknown. Regardless, the net result was an easy draw with the black pieces against a strong player.

Secondly, I have long been aware of my tendency to negatively misevaluate my position. However, in the chapter on time management (‘Taming the Time’), I realised that I am also guilty of regularly wasting swathes of time due to overestimating the attacking potential of my pieces, and searching for a breakthrough that ‘must’ be there.

### D.Navara-A.David Greek Team Championship, Patras 2019



Here Navara writes, “When this position appeared on the board, I had approximately an hour on my clock, whereas Black was already in time trouble. I was confident that the offensive set-up of my pieces had to bring me a big advantage. I contemplated the position for approximately 55 minutes – first looking for a victory, then for an edge at least. In reality, the position is objectively balanced and I was wasting my time searching for a unicorn, something non-existent.”

Before I had even read to the end of the above quote, my brain had lost count of the number of times this exact scenario had played out in my own games. Note to self: there is no ‘must’ and I need to be more disciplined with my use of time.

Chapter 9, entitled ‘Train Hard, Fight Easy’ comprises what I consider a high-level puzzle section. 10 positions are presented, which Markos has used in training sessions. The reader is invited to immerse themselves in these positions, and compare their thoughts with the author’s. Having attempted the positions, I wholeheartedly recommend anyone who reads the book to follow Markos’s advice.

The final chapter is a very useful summary of all the key points, and provides a very useful and appropriate finish to what I regard

as a very high-level work. Furthermore, I was struck throughout by the accessibility of this book, and therefore its potential to benefit a large range of playing strengths.

David Navara's role was to add comments where he felt appropriate and, at the end of chapters 1-8, to answer three questions posed by his co-author. These served to flesh out the material already presented, whilst also providing further food for thought.

Jan Markos writes that he wishes the book to be able to be read on the tram, and I have no doubt he succeeded. Throughout the examples are of a bitesize nature, with maximum explanatory text, minimal variations and key points highlighted in bold. The user-friendliness of this hardback book is further accentuated by Quality Chess's typically efficient layout and excellent editing.

There is little else left to say. Quite simply, I have not enjoyed and gained so much from reading a chess book since *Under the Surface*. That book won the ECF Book of the Year award, and it would not surprise me if this one did too. So many books I have read seek to improve your playing level by increasing your knowledge. This book will help you to make significantly more of what you already possess.

Paul Hopwood



### Caruana's Ruy Lopez

Fabiano Caruana, 208 pages, paperback  
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Every now and then a book appears which makes you simply exclaim 'wow!' and, yes, the world number two really has written a work subtitled 'A White Repertoire for Club Players'. The Lopez has been a key component of Caruana's repertoire throughout his career and his knowledge of not just its theory but key concepts is unsurprisingly first class. All of Black's sidelines receive just the right level of coverage for most club players, as do the main lines where Caruana notably side-steps the Marshall with 8 a4.



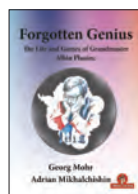
### Everyone's First Chess Workbook

Peter Giannatos, 344 pages, paperback  
RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

New in Chess haven't just been working with Caruana of late, but also Peter Giannatos, the founder and executive director of the Charlotte Chess Center & Scholastic Academy. Thousands of pupils have now passed through its ranks we learn, and Giannatos certainly appears to know his

onions. Subtitled 'Fundamental Tactics and Checkmates for Improvers – 738 Practical Exercises', this book features all the main tactical themes (forks, pins, skewers, decoys, X-rays, etc), before moving on to covering a number of vital checkmating patterns and a few more advanced themes. Children should find the large layout very user-friendly, not least the hints and ample space in which to write the answer to each position.

Also new in stock at Chess & Bridge is *Chess Tactics Workbook* by Al Woolum (150 pages, paperback, RRP £12.99, Subscribers – £11.69), which comes from publisher Wood Expressions. It is quite similar to Giannatos's new work, if with a somewhat fuller layout. This is actually the fifth edition of *Chess Tactics Workbook*, which has apparently sold 25,000 copies already in the States and is the tactics book of choice for the famous Chess in the Schools Program NYC.

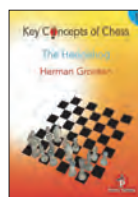


### Forgotten Genius: The Life and Games of Grandmaster Albin Planinc

Georg Mohr & Adrian Mikhalchishin, 408 pages, paperback

RRP £29.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.95**

As readers will be aware from Julian Way's fine article, 'Tal on Acid', in our July pages, the late Slovenian Grandmaster Albin Planinc was most certainly highly talented at the game. Mohr and Mikhalchishin both knew him, so are well placed to produce this biography and collection of Planinc's 85 best games. Inside readers will find several fine photographs, a number of enjoyable anecdotes and plenty of simply stunning games, for Planinc loved to sacrifice and attack.



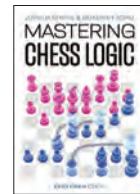
### Key Concepts of Chess: The Hedgehog

Herman Grooten, 200 pages, paperback

RRP £23.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.55**

This new series from Thinkers Publishing tackles some of the most important middlegame pawn structures, beginning here with the Hedgehog. Grooten opens with some classic and highly inspirational Hedgehog games before discussing the typical ideas behind the set-up. More model games follow, as well as a detailed discussion of the Maroczy Bind in relation to the Hedgehog set-up and a very useful section devoted to what Grooten himself has learnt from his own games with the opening. As one would expect from such an experienced coach and author, the book is a pleasure to

read and should more than serve to get the curious club player very interested in this fascinating if complex pawn structure.



### Mastering Chess Logic

Joshua Sheng & Guannan Song, 256 pages, paperback

RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

Many readers will have worked on their tactics and openings ahead of the new chess season, but how many have also thought about their thought processes at the board? Step forward this new release from Everyman Chess, which aims to address how to go about improving your ability to evaluate a position, as well as feel for the game. The American and Canadian author team discuss 'building blocks', the formulation and execution of plans and how best to go about exploiting the initiative. On top of all this fascinating material, there are also 270 positions to solve which should really ensure that the reader will emerge the richer for a study of this fascinating new work.



### Miguel Najdorf: Life, Games & Stories

Zenon Franco, 720 pages, paperback

RRP £34.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.45**

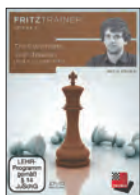
Paraguayan GM Franco has certainly had a busy 2021, although whilst *Nail It Like Nepo!* was written this year, he had been working on this vast work devoted to a true chess legend for much longer. 'El Viejo' ('the old one') is fondly remembered throughout the chess world and especially in his adopted Argentina, which he made his home in 1939 right up until his death in 1997. Franco builds his work on an unfinished manuscript of Najdorf's. That forms the basis for the start of this monumental production from Thinkers Publishing, which is part tribute, part biography and also a best games collection. Najdorf was, of course, a world-class player throughout the forties and fifties, and readers will learn much about classical and attacking chess, while his infectious love of the game shines through thanks to Franco's fine prose and Phil Adams's excellent translation.



### The Catalan vs. the Semi-Slav, Chebanenko and Triangle (PC-DVD)

Mihail Marin, running time: 6 hours  
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

The Catalan is a popular opening choice amongst stronger players, but isn't so common against the Semi-Slav. Nevertheless, leading theoretician Marin believes that 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 is a good move order for White, intending 4...e6 5 g3. He returns to the ChessBase studio to map out a detailed repertoire for White in typically clear fashion with this Catalan-like gambit. Do note that Marin also takes a good look at 4...a6 5 g3 and 3...e6 4 g3, but the traditional pure Slav response, 4...dxc4, is not covered.



### The Fianchetto Scandinavian

Nico Zwirs, running time: 4 hrs, 25 mins  
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Dutch IM Zwirs supplies a repertoire aimed squarely at the club player on this ChessBase DVD. The viewer will quickly become aware of the key aims behind meeting 1 e4 with 1...d5, with 2 exd5 ♗f6 Zwirs's recommendation, intending 3 d4 ♗xd5 4 c4 ♗b6 5 ♗f3 g6, with which Black quickly sets about targeting the white centre in Grünfeld-like fashion. Plenty of coverage is also devoted to 3 ♗b5+ ♗bd7 and 3 c4 c6, as well as White's less common options which are by no means unknown at lower levels.

Also new in stock is *ChessBase Magazine 203*, the latest edition of the PC-DVD-based German magazine. Jan-Krzysztof Duda's victory at the World Cup is the main story and there is also a special section devoted to the play of the world championship challenger, Ian Nepomniachtchi, as well as all the usual high-quality opening surveys.

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## The Gambit

by Gillian Moore

Oh what is it about a gambit  
That attracts me so?  
At first I found the explanation  
Difficult to know.

I see that in the opening stage  
I like a lively game,  
Not holding back my restless pieces  
Feeling cramped and lame.

And so to gain initiative  
A pawn or so I spend.  
The other player thus attacked,  
Is needing to defend.

And sometimes it is hard for him  
To find the best replies,  
And therein the psychology  
Of chess we see arise.

For we all want some free and easy  
Good development,  
And when a compromise arises  
We don't feel content.

Material worth is not the only  
Sort of wealth, I say,  
But richness of a good position  
And the pieces' play.

And 'oft the one who snatched the pawn  
Might need to give it back,  
So that the gambit player suffered  
Just a short-term lack.

When Black adopts the Dutch Defence,  
My feeling is 'hurray',  
For then my favourite Staunton Gambit  
Comes into the play.

And when he takes my gambit pawn,  
That suits my purpose fine,  
As I pursue with my move four  
The Tartakower line.

Just try it out! Without a doubt  
This fancy foxy move  
Is fun to play, and in due course  
Its worthiness can prove.

*Ed. - 'The Gambit' is one of 79 poems in Gillian's forthcoming collection, In Praise of Chess. Do keep an eye on hampshirechess.co.uk for further details. As Gillian points out, 'The Staunton Gambit, Tartakower Line is 1 d4 f5 2 e4 fxe4 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 g4!. The threat is for White to push the defending knight away with 5 g5, or else Black allows a nasty hole on g6 if he responds with 4...h6. White then follows up with 5 f3, opening up the line from d3 to the g6-square.'*