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# Chess

*Wishing All Our Readers a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year*



ISSN 0964-6221



- ★ *Christmas Quiz* by Steve Giddins
- ★ *Interview: Magnus Carlsen*
- ★ *2011 European Team Championships* by GM Nick Pert

# Chess

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# Gormally on Chess

English GM and author Danny Gormally on why it's good to be concrete...

WHEN JOHN Saunders first approached me about writing a regular column for this magazine (OK, I lied – I approached him – a guy's gotta make a living, right?) the first thought that crossed my mind was, apart from the obvious (what the hell am I going to put in it?) was that it might be a good idea to make it as educational as possible. After all, when I pick up a magazine or a chess book, I like to think that it might contain some pearls of wisdom that might actually have a residual effect. How often have we seen a piece of advice in a chess book, and thought "hmm, that looks interesting, I'll try to remember that" but then we forget about it a little while afterwards?

Essentially the first, and really the only, objective of the chess writer is to give advice that will ultimately improve the readership. If he doesn't do that, then he's failed. (*I resign - ed*) So my mission, if I choose to accept it, dear reader, is to try and offer some advice that will stay in your brain forever, and will have a long-term positive effect on your chess results. (Easier said than done.) Firstly, I thought I'd look at one of the most important things that separate strong players from those not so strong, i.e. the ability to calculate variations well and to think concretely.

A recent game I played at the Four Nations Chess League is a very good example of this. My opponent, Ian Thompson, has a FIDE rating of 2280: by no means a bad player. But when we reached the following position, he had the first really concrete decision of the game to make, and he immediately went wrong.

4NCL, November 2011  
D.Gormally - I.Thompson



I have sacrificed a pawn, but I'm quite well mobilised, have a lead in development and the black king is standing perilously in the centre. The real question is, should he take the pawn on c3 or not? 16...g7? 16...xc3! was of course the move I feared in the game. I was desperately hoping he wouldn't play it, because then I would be essentially resigned to fighting for a draw. (Saying the prayer "please, please, please, Mr Opponent, don't make good moves against me" probably isn't a good sign.)



There was an element of bluff in all this, as it then looks as if 17 gxb5 is a very strong reply. But then comes 17...g7! (17...xb5? would play into White's hands – 18 xb5+ d7 19 0-0! xd2 20 ad1 b4 21 c6 d8 22 e6 with a huge attack) 18 0-0 xd2 19 xc6+ xc6 20 b7 0-0 21 xc6 ac8 and, with two big passed pawns in the centre, Black is probably just winning here. I'm sure plenty of you reading this are thinking, "but isn't this all very obvious?" But then again the capture on c3 demanded concrete calculation. If I had to imagine my opponent's thoughts at this point, then it perhaps might have gone something like "hmm, I can take this pawn on c3... but then he takes on b5... that looks dangerous... perhaps I should just play a "safe" developing move instead." It's quite possible his

investigations stopped after seeing the move gxb5, I don't know. Perhaps I'm being too harsh on Thompson. Instead of this strong continuation he plays a much safer looking, developing move. But this isn't a "safe" position. The situation on the board is still quite sharp, so it demands concrete calculation. 17 c2! This looks slow, but in fact it's the best move. Just protect the pawn and ask Black what he's going to do next? Of course I wasn't going to give him the chance to transpose into the previous variation with 17 0-0? xc3! 17...d7



18 e6! Of course! I must strike immediately, otherwise the black king will just escape to the queenside and White will have no compensation for the two pawns. 18 e6! is a great example of a purely "concrete" move. 18...f6 18...f8!? is a possible improvement. The main idea of this move is to keep an eye on the c3 pawn, which may force White to waste a move defending it with something like 19 exf7+ xf7 20 c1, although personally I would not like to try and defend such a position with Black. 19 hgx5 hgx5 The situation is still very sharp and roughly balanced, though, and despite missing a good opportunity earlier with 16...xc3! the Black cause is far from lost. Another possible alternative is 19...e4 20 xe4 dxe4, when White will have to make a decision between the immediate capture on f7, defending the c3 pawn with c1, or even the crazy-looking move my computer suggests, 21 0-0-0! (it's fascinating the way a computer will play for activity only, with little regard for general principles: the embodiment of concrete thinking!) with the idea that the c3 pawn is poisoned after 21...xc3? 22 xc3 xc3 23 d6!. 20 xh8+ xh8 21 f5



I now felt in my element. We had reached the kind of murky, incomprehensible position that I tend to revel in. One where the ability to calculate sharp variations is paramount. **21...♖e7** **21...♗xc3!**? - this move seems to pop up a lot! And would have been an interesting “re-bluff”... but unfortunately it fails after **22 ♔e5 d4** **23 ♕xf6!** ♗xa1+ **24 ♔d1 ♕xf6** **25 ♗xf6 fxe6** **26 ♗xe6+ ♖f8** **27 ♗d6+ ♖g8** **28 ♗xc6** and the white queen, bishop and knight will eventually combine for devastating effect against the black king. **22 ♔e5!** My original intention here had been **22 exf7!** but then I began not to like the murky position that would arise after **22...♗xc3** **23 ♔e5 d4!**. However, this was my turn to pay too much attention to “general” considerations, and not enough time to concrete calculations. In fact, after **24 ♖b1!**, White still retains a huge initiative. The main point is that the crude **24...♗e4** can be met by **25 ♔d1!**. **22...fxe6** **23 ♗xg5 ♖f8** The smoke has cleared to a certain extent and now Black has got good chances of hanging on. However, short of time at this point (I still had over an hour left), he starts to drift and the “second wave of attack” overwhelms him. **24 ♗g3 ♗d8** **25 0-0-0 ♔d7** **26 ♖h1!** **♖c8** **27 ♗g5!** “Seemingly” creating unanswerable threats.



**27...♗a5** **27...♗h7** **28 ♗xd8+ ♖xd8** **29 ♕xh8 ♖xh8** **30 ♔d3!** and **27...♖g8** **28 ♖xh8!** are ineffective, so **27...♖f7!** is the only move to fight on, but he was so short of time at this point that I wasn't surprised that he didn't find it. **28 ♗g6.**

This looks completely crushing, but Black has a typically “computer like” defence in **28...♖h7!** **29 ♖xh7 ♗xh7** **30 ♕xh8 ♗xh8** **31 ♗xe6+ ♖b7** **32 ♖c2** and White is better, but it's far from over. **28 ♖xh8 ♖xh8** **29 ♗xf6 ♖h1+** **30 ♖b2 d4** **31 ♗xe6+ ♔d7** **32 ♗g8+ ♗d8**



**33 ♗d5 dxc3+** **34 ♕xc3 ♗c7** **35 ♔f3 ♖e1** **36 ♗a8+ ♗b8** **37 ♕b7+ ♖c7** **38 ♔a5+ 1-0**

The main reason I presented this game was to try and emphasise how the majority of players tendency to over-rely on general themes when making their decisions at the chessboard. The stronger the player, the more they think in concrete terms. I know if I have that position at move 16 against a strong grandmaster, he will take on c3 without question, because he calculates much better... he believes in the strength of his calculation.

Later on I also made a similar mistake, when not taking on f7. The rule of thumb is, the stronger the player, the more they will trust their calculation to the point where everything else, like judgement, general overview of the position, simply becomes a subconscious activity. So the real question is, how can the average player overcome this laziness and tendency to over rely on general themes? My advice would simply be to spend as much time analysing sharp positions as possible. It is only by concrete, difficult problems being addressed on a regular basis that we can lose these kind of bad habits and improve our calculation.



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## Positional Exercises

by GM Jacob Aagaard

Every month we look at two positions with the intention of finding the best move. They can be complicated or simple positions, opening, middlegame or endgame; the common theme in all of them is that there is one best move, based on one best plan. To solve these exercises you should ask yourself three questions in order to focus your attention on the things that really matter. Answer questions 1 & 3 for both sides. The questions are:

- 1) Where are the weaknesses?
- 2) What is the opponent's idea?
- 3) Which is the worst placed piece?

Identifying weaknesses in the position will help deduce the opponent's idea. You then combine your own active idea with the prevention of his idea - known as prophylactic thinking. Finally, your position can often be improved the most by bringing your worst placed piece into the game – or by keeping your opponent's pieces out of the game. Usually two out of these three aspects will be important in identifying the best move; sometimes all three, and occasionally only the one. Having said that – there are of course many correct ways to solve these positions – namely, all the ways you find to solve them!

Paying close attention to these three basic areas of positional evaluation will take you a long way towards developing the intuition of a grandmaster. **Solutions on page 54.**



A.Adly - M.Sebag  
Essent Crown, 2008  
**BLACK TO MOVE**



A.Baburin - L.McShane  
Kilkenny Open, 2002  
**WHITE TO MOVE**



# Home News

**BRITISH RAPIDPLAY** - In the absence of David Howell (who has won it for the past three years), top seed GM Gawain Jones was the convincing winner of the British Rapidplay Championship (Leeds, 19-20 November), which celebrated its 25th anniversary this year.

**Open:** 1 Gawain Jones (ENG) 10½/11, 2 Matthew Turner (ENG) 9, 3 Stephen Burns-Mannion (SCO) 8, 4-6 Nigel Davies (ENG), Alexander Longson (ENG), David Walker (ENG) 7½, 5-8 Peter Wells (ENG), Peter Shaw (ENG), Jim Burnett (ENG), Ali Jaunooby (ENG) 7.

**Major:** 1 Andrew Bak 9/11.

**Intermediate:** 1 Paul Talbot 8½.

**Minor:** 1 Graham Bates 9½.

**Junior U12:** 1-2 Zheming Zhang, Callum Brewer 4½/5.

**Junior U16:** 1 Ashwin Kalyana 3½/5.

Despite his apparently overwhelming score, Gawain Jones was neck and neck with Matthew Turner until round eight when they both had 7½/8, having drawn with each other, but Turner could only finish with three draws.

*British Rapidplay 2011*

**M.Parsons - G.Jones**

*KID, London System*

1 d4 ♟f6 2 ♟f4 g6 3 e3 ♟g7 4 ♟f3 c5  
5 c3 b6 6 ♟e2 ♟b7 7 0-0 0-0 8 ♟bd2 d6  
9 h3 ♟bd7 10 a4 a6 11 ♟h2 ♟c8  
12 ♟b1 ♟e8 13 ♟e1 ♟c6 14 ♟f1 b5  
15 e4 e5 16 d5 ♟b6 17 a5 ♟d8 18 b4  
18 c4 b4 was possibly better. 18...c4  
19 ♟e2 ♟h5! 20 ♟d1?! ♟f4 21 ♟c2  
♟c8! 22 ♟xf4? Better to put up with the knight and play 22 ♟f1 here. 22...exf4  
23 ♟d4 ♟e5 24 ♟d1 h5 25 ♟2f3 ♟xf3+  
26 ♟xf3 ♟g5 27 ♟ad1 ♟d7 28 ♟h1  
♟e5 29 ♟b1



29...♟g4! 0-1 30 hxg4 hxg4 31 ♟e2  
♟h5+ 32 ♟g1 ♟xd4 33 ♟xd4 f3 34 ♟d2  
♟g7 and 35...♟h8 forces mate.

**GUERNSEY** - The 37th Guernsey Open (Peninsula Hotel, 16-22 October) was won by GM Sarunas Sulskis of Lithuania.

**Scores:** 1 S Sulskis 6/7, 2-4 Dave Collier (ENG), Mark Hebden (ENG), Nick Pert (ENG) 5½, 5-8 Kevin Goater (ENG), Tiger Hillarp Persson (SWE), Wolfgang Mack (GER), Alan Minnican (SCO) 5.

**Holiday Tournament:** 1-2 Peter Hoogakker (NED), Ray Kearsley (ENG) 5½/7, 3 David Smith (GCI) 5.

Tiger Hillarp Persson usually wins the tournament but this time lost games to Nick Pert and Mark Hebden. He adjudged the following game from the subsidiary section to be the winner of the best game award. Local Guernsey player Kerry Bateman launched an audacious sacrificial attack White's tenth move has never been played outside of club chess and puts Black on the defensive immediately. As so often happens over the board, the practical problems for the defender prove insuperable.

*Guernsey Holiday 2011*

**K.Bateman - J.Beadle**

*Caro-Kann Defence*

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♟c3 dxe4 4 ♟xe4  
♟f5 5 ♟g3 ♟g6 6 ♟f3 ♟d7 7 ♟c4 e6  
8 0-0 ♟gf6 9 ♟e1 ♟d6 10 ♟xe6!?  
A theoretical novelty and doubtless something of a shock for Black. 10...fxe6  
11 ♟xe6+ ♟e7 Forced, else the bishop is lost. 12 ♟e2 ♟f7? Black only gets one chance in this game. 12...♟f8 13 ♟e5  
♟8d7 14 ♟e6 as 14 ♟e3 ♟d5 looks good for Black. 13 ♟f5! ♟xe6 14 ♟xg7+! ♟f7  
15 ♟xe6 ♟a5 16 ♟fg5+! ♟g8



17 ♟c7!! ♟xc7 18 ♟e6+ ♟g7 19 ♟f7+  
1-0

**HAMPSHIRE** - The Hampshire Open (Eastleigh, 4-6 November) was won by a visiting IM, Craig Hanley. 16-year-old Peter Williams finished second but, as

the top county finisher, was crowned Hampshire Champion in succession to the absent Mike Yeo.

**Open:** 1 Craig Hanley (Wood Green) 5½/6, 2. Peter A Williams (Alton) 5, 3 Paul Hackman (Andover) 4.

**U175 Grading Prize:** Rohan Shiatis (Coulsdon) 3½.

**Major U160:** 1 Ian Matthew (Portsmouth) 5/6, 2 Matt Chapman (So'ton University) 4½, 3-5 Gillian Moore (So'ton), Alec Samuels (So'ton), Peter Dallas (Cosham) 4.

**U140 Grading Prize:** Paul Hurn (So'ton), Mark Stone (Orpington) 3½. **Minor U125:** 1 Gunnar Mallon (So'ton University) 5/6, 2-4 James Farrant, Kevin Sawers and Alex Dore (all Southampton) 4½.

**U100 Grading Prize:** Robert Hewitt (So'ton University) 4.

The game between the first two players was decided by a blunder. White failed to foresee a deadly pin following a number of exchanges.

*Hampshire Open 2011*

**P.Williams - C.Hanley**



13 ♟d2?? After 13 ♟e1, White is only slightly worse. 13...♟xd2 14 ♟xd2 ♟xe5  
15 dxe5 dxc4 White must lose a piece.  
16 e4 cxd3 17 ♟h6 ♟e8 18 exf5 exf5  
19 f3 ♟g6 20 ♟f4 ♟e6 21 ♟b4 b6 22 a4  
♟d5 0-1

**OBITUARY** - Bruce H Birchall (26 April 1946 Nottingham - March 2011 London) was a chess player and organiser, latterly for Middlesex Girls' Chess Association, and had been a campaigner for the rights of people with disabilities, both inside and outside chess. He played for Nomads (Nottingham) and King's Head (London). After an early career as a teacher, he became a theatre director and playwright in London and Liverpool.

**SIMPSONS** - ECF President CJ de Mooi has announced another chess/charity event to be held at Simpson's in the Strand on 20 August 2012. Nigel Short will be playing six celebrities in a simultaneous blindfold display, followed by a gala dinner.

# Overseas News

## AMATEUR CHESS ORGANISATION -

An organisation called the 'Amateur Chess Organisation' has recently been set up and issued information to the press. It is independent and not connected to FIDE. Its brief is to represent those players who are rated below 2400 because "FIDE is almost exclusively dedicated to professional chess." The ACO is organising a 'World Amateur Chess Championship', to be held in Dubai in July 2012, and a 'World Youth Chess Championship', to be held at Disneyland, Paris, in August 2012. The president of the new organisation is Lothar Hirneise, father of German IM Tobias Hirneise. A number of GMs from around the world are associated with it. The URL is [www.amateurchess.com](http://www.amateurchess.com)

**AMSTERDAM** - The Max Euwe Memorial was held in Amsterdam from 13-20 November to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the former world champion's death in 1981. It consisted of two separate four-player, double-cycle tournaments, with two men and two women in each. Group 1: 1 Peng Zhaoqin (NED) 3½/6, 2-3 Pia Cramling (SWE), Fridrik Olafsson (ISL) 3, 4 Paul van der Sterren (NED) 2½. Group 2: 1 Robin Van Kampen (NED) 4½, 2 Monika Socko (POL) 4, 3 Stuart Conquest (ENG) 2, 4 Ketevan Arakhamia-Grant (SCO) 1½. Rather a disaster for the two British competitors. Stuart Conquest's arrival in Amsterdam had been considerably delayed by fog in London and their first round game had to be postponed to another day. It was interesting to see Icelandic GM and former FIDE President Fridrik Olafsson take part at the age of 76. He exchanged decisive results with the winner of Group 1 and generally gave a good account of himself. The closing ceremony, held at a club frequented by artists and chessplayers, was somewhat unusual. Visitors were



*Closing ceremony, Dutch style: Jennifer Shahade gives a simul to naked artists' models in Amsterdam*

immediately confronted by a chess performance given by US woman grandmaster Jennifer Shahade of her creation of Naked Chess, as a simul against three chessplaying, nude artists' models. The lighting created dramatic shadows against the back wall while Shahade walked from board to board in her beautifully stylised dress. It would never work at Hastings – the models would get hypothermia.

**COMPUTER CHESS** - The computer program Deep Junior has won the 2011 World Computer Chess Championship, held in Tilburg, Netherlands. It did so without losing a game. It was the seventh world title won by Israeli software engineers Amir Ban and Shay Bushinsky, assisted by GM Alon Greenfeld. Rybka, stripped of its 2007-2010 titles for software plagiarism, was banned from the competition.

**CORSICA** - The Corsica Masters (Bastia/Ajaccio, 22-31 October) was won by world champion Vishy Anand, who beat Shakhriyar Mamedyarov 2-0 in the final. The Masters is a two-tier event, starting with a nine-round Swiss open at longplay, from which the 14 top finishers joined Anand and Mamedyarov in a rapidplay knock-out phase in Ajaccio. The Swiss was won by Krishnan

Sasikiran with 7½/9 ahead of England's Gawain Jones on 7. Glenn Flear finished on 6. Jones then defeated Tregubov 3-2 in the round of sixteen before losing to Mamedyarov in the quarter-finals by ½-1½.

## Corsica Masters 2011 R.Dimitrov - G.Jones

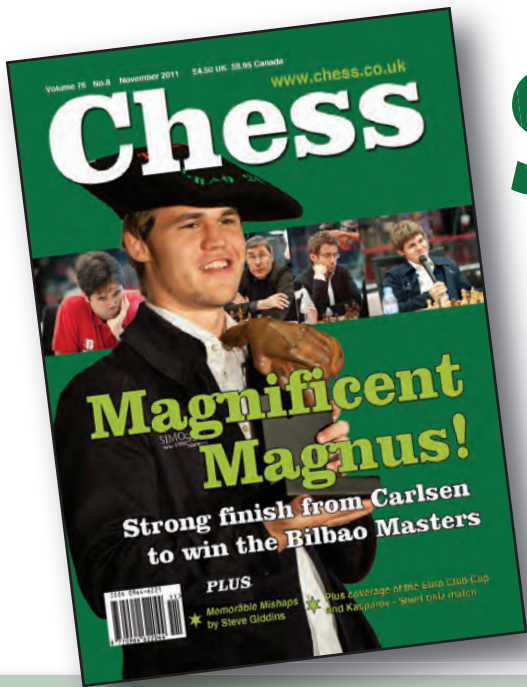


**34...♟f8!!** The configuration of pieces is unusual so this took more than pattern recognition to find. **35 ♔xg4** 35 ♖h2 ♗e3! 36 ♟e6 ♗f2+ 37 ♗xf2 ♟xf2 and there is no perpetual for White. 35 h5 is best, trying to set up a perpetual check square on g6, but 35...♗e3! forces White to abandon the defence of the knight on f3, e.g. 36 ♟g6 ♟xf3 37 ♟e8+ ♗h7 38 ♟g6+ ♗g8 39 ♟e8+ ♟f8 and it turns out there is no perpetual check. **35...h5+!** **36 ♗xh5** 36 ♗h3 ♟xf3 leaves Black a piece up and with all perpetual check possibilities covered. **36...♟f5+ 0-1** 37 ♗g5 ♗f6+ and White has to give up his queen to avert mate.

**FIDE RATINGS** - The November 2011 FIDE Rating List (see table left) featured a number of changes as the leading players were involved in a significant number of elite events. Magnus Carlsen extended his lead over Vishy Anand to 15 points, Levon Aronian remained, while Vladimir Kramnik created a bit of history by advancing to 2800. This is the first time that as many as four players have held a 2800 rating at the same time. Teimour Radjabov has advanced to fifth place, Morozevich to ninth, while Nakamura has subsided to tenth. There were also big falls for Kamsky and Ponomarev. As regards the top English players, Mickey Adams made a small increase while Matthew Sadler added a remarkable 37 points to take over in fourth place, nine points behind an inactive Luke McShane (third) and Nigel Short (second). The ubiquitous Gawain Jones added 11 points to move ahead of the inactive David Howell who now finds himself in sixth place, though with a comfortable 70 point buffer ahead of Nick Pert.

World Top Ten, November 2011				England Top Ten Players		
1	Magnus Carlsen,	NOR	2826	1	Michael Adams	2734
2	Viswanathan Anand	IND	2811	2	Nigel Short	2698
3	Levon Aronian	ARM	2802	3	Luke McShane	2671
4	Vladimir Kramnik	RUS	2800	4	Matthew Sadler	2662
5	Teimour Radjabov	AZE	2781	5	Gawain Jones	2635
6	Vassily Ivanchuk	UKR	2775	6	David Howell	2633
7	Veselin Topalov	BUL	2768	7	Nick Pert	2563
8	Sergey Karjakin	RUS	2763	8	Stephen Gordon	2535
9	Alexander Morozevich	RUS	2762	9	Stewart Haslinger	2534
10	Hikaru Nakamura	USA	2758	10	Jonathan Parker	2531





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**Acting Editor: John Saunders.** Contributors include: Danny King, Danny Gormally, Nick Pert, Malcolm Pein, Simon Williams, Richard Palliser, Jacob Aagaard, Lorin D'Costa, Yochanan Afek, Andrew Greet, Amatzia Avni, and many more.

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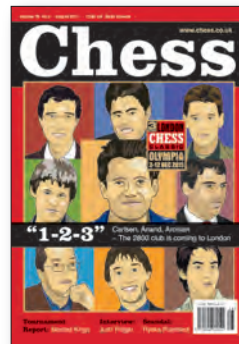
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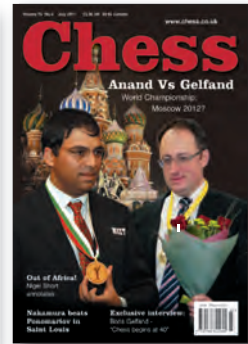
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