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Chess

CARUANA CONQUERS

Fabiano wins Candidates and will face off against Carlsen for the world championship in November



Road to the World Cup - Gawain Jones and Luke McShane qualify



When Capa Came to Margate - Robert Page on a heyday for Kent chess



The Anatoly Lein Chamber of Horrors - John Henderson remembers

Chess

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Contents

Editorial	4
Malcolm Pein on the latest developments in the game	
60 Seconds with...Robert Ris	7
The Dutch IM likes to escape to Cuba and has two new works out	
Dropping in on the Candidates	8
Daniel Fernandez went to Georgia via Berlin and annotates two games	
Fabulous Fabi	14
Fabiano Caruana proved a cut above in the Candidates in Berlin	
How Good Is Your Chess?	16
Daniel King stumbled upon a classic King's Indian triumph	
A Road to the World Cup	19
Gawain Jones and Luke McShane ventured to Batumi to qualify	
Tough Battles	24
David Howell and Matthew Sadler had to fight hard in the 4NCL	
The Greatest Chess Game Ever Played?	26
Or so wonders Correspondence Senior IM Mike Read	
The Anatoly Lein Chamber of Horrors	30
John Henderson remembers the late American GM Anatoly Lein	
Lein Brilliance	33
Malcolm Pein presents two highly instructive Lein wins	
When Capa came to Margate	34
The world's best were once drawn to Kent, as Robert Page explains	
Never Mind the Grandmasters...	40
Carl Portman makes a plea for supporting your county side	
The Chess Talents of Emily and Michael Green	42
Or, the downside of not resigning before you start, by James Essinger	
Find the Winning Moves	45
Can you do as well as the players at the 4NCL?	
Home News	49
Easter success for Sacha Brozel, Alan Merry and Tiger Hillarp Persson	
Overseas News	52
Germany has been quite the centre of chess attention of late	
Forthcoming Events	53
Solutions	54
New Books and Software	55
New works by John Emms and Andrew Martin are reviewed	
Saunders on Chess	58
John has some handy advice on how to hunt down old gamescores	

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Tough Battles

As Guildford and Cheddleton continued their winning ways, Matthew Sadler and David Howell were involved in dramatic battles at the latest 4NCL weekend

The 4NCL remains on course for a final-round shoot-out between champions Guildford and nearest challengers Cheddleton, at least so long as the latter have a much better final weekend than last season. The pool stage concluded at the March weekend at Wokefield Park in rural Berkshire, not that a change in surroundings made any difference to Guildford's all-conquering players. Against Spirit of Atticus they racked up their second 8-0 of the campaign, or even their biggest win as officially it was 8 for and -½ against, Atticus unfortunately defaulting a board. Matthew Sadler, for one, wasn't for hanging around.

M. Mitchell-M. Sadler Spirit of Atticus vs Guildford



Black would have had a pleasant advantage after 20...♙d6, but with White trailing in terms of development, as well as structure, Sadler rightly aimed for more.

20...♙e4! 21 ♖d1 ♗ae8 22 ♗xc7?

Deciding that he might as well have a pawn for his suffering, but this could have lost.

22...♗g4! 23 ♗c3 ♙d6?

Sadler is normally an arch-calculator, but did appear a little under the weather at Wokefield Park. Otherwise he would surely have found 23...♗xg2+! 24 ♙xg2 ♗h4+ with a huge attack, one pretty line running 25 ♙g3? (25 ♙f1 ♗xf3 26 ♙f4 ♗h4 27 ♙e5 f6 is still superb for Black) 25...♙d6+! 26 ♗e5 (if 26 ♙xh4 ♗h5#) 26...♗g2+! 27 ♙f4 ♗xf2+ 28 ♙e4 ♙xe5 29 dx5 ♗f5+ 30 ♙e3 ♗xe5+ 31 ♙d2 ♗f2+ 32 ♙d3 ♗e2+ 33 ♙d4 ♗f5#.

24 g3 h5

Black throws everything at the bulwark on g3, but it transpires that White has sufficient defensive resources.

25 ♙g5 h4 26 ♗ac1?

The cold-blooded 26 ♙xh4 was required. Black has some scary-looking responses, but

26...♙f4 27 ♗f1 g5 28 h3! is a key resource and after 28...♗xh4 29 ♗xh4 ♗xg3+ 30 fxg3 ♙e3+ 31 ♙h2 gxh4 Black somehow has no more than a draw according to the engines, the same outcome occurring after 26...♗e3!?

27 fx3 ♙xg3 28 hxg3 ♗xf3 29 ♗f1 ♗xg3+ 30 ♙xg3 ♗xg3+ 31 ♙h1 ♗h3+.

26...hxg3 27 ♗c6



27...gxh2+

27...♗e6! was very strong, since 28 fxg3 ♗xg3! 29 hxg3 ♗xg3+ 30 ♙h1 ♗h3+ 31 ♙g2 ♗g4+ forces mate.

28 ♙h1 ♗e6?

Sadler must have missed White's next. 28...♗xc6 29 ♗xc6 ♗e2 would still have left Black dominating.

29 ♙f6! ♗f8

29...♗e2 had been Black's idea, but now there is 30 ♗e5. **30 ♙e5 ♗d8 31 ♗xb6**

Suddenly it's very much game on and with both players beginning to blitz in the run-up to move 40.

31...♗e7!? 32 ♗xa6 ♙h7

Avoiding any back-rank nastiness and 32...♗g1+ 33 ♗xg1 hxg1 ♗+ 34 ♙xg1 ♗g5+ 35 ♙f1 ♗h5 would only leave Black with a draw at best.

33 ♗e1 ♙xe5 34 ♗xe5 ♗f8



35 d5?

White's queenside duo are some trumps, but his king's safety is a concern. To that end, 35 ♗d3 ♗h6 36 ♗ce1 would have been sensible, and if 36...♗g1+!? (36...♗xd4 37 ♗5e4! ♗xf3 38 ♗xf3 doesn't leave White in any danger) 37 ♗xg1 hxg1 ♗+ 38 ♙xg1 ♙g7 39 ♙f1 which is most likely balanced, if also rather unbalanced.

35...♗h6 36 ♗f6??

A horrible blunder for the Blackpool no.1. By now Black was doing quite well, but would still have had plenty of work in front of him after 36 ♗c4 ♗d4 37 ♗f6 ♗xf3 38 ♗xf7+! ♗g7 39 ♗xg7+ ♙xg7 40 ♗xg4 ♗xe5 41 ♗e4 ♙f6 42 ♙xh2.

36...♗xc1+ 37 ♗e1 ♗f4 38 ♗xf7+ ♙h6 0-1

Elsewhere in Pool A, White Rose outclassed Oxford 5-3 to finish a clear second, with both teams progressing along with Guildford to the Promotion Pool. So did Grantham Sharks who overcame Barbican 4NCL II 4½-3½, despite FM Terry Chapman making a welcome return to the Barbican ranks and scoring a fine technical win. This all meant that arguably the success story of the 2016/17 season, 3Cs, could only finish fifth, despite overcoming the ADs 6½-1½.

Cheddleton were meanwhile busy cementing their position at the top of Pool B with a 6½-1½ victory over Cambridge, although Tamas Fodor did lose his 100% record as he was held by Charlie Nettleton. Only defeated by Cheddleton, Guildford II claimed second spot with a 6-2 win over Alba, who have certainly found life much more tough in Division One than in Division Two. On top board Andrew Greet worked wonders to almost grind something from a 4 vs 3 rook endgame, but was ultimately cost by the scenario of extra f- and h-pawns proving insufficient.

Barbican 4NCL I have endured another slightly tough season and were rather fortuitous to overcome West is Best 4½-3½. That lifted them to 8 points, meaning that Blackthorne Russia would have to defeat Wood Green to leap ahead of Barbican and reach the Promotion Pool, something which never looked too likely as the former champions ran out 5-3 winners.

Despite being held to a draw by the ADs in round 8, Blackthorne will surely once again finish near the top of the Relegation Pool, as will 3Cs. Cambridge look doomed, but any of the other five teams could easily join them in a return to Division Two. Barbican 4NCL II at

least helped their cause with a 4½-3½ victory over West is Best, a match which was notable for being the second clash in two days between Tim Kett and Martin Taylor. Kett had won their clash on board 7 of the West is Best vs Barbican I match, but down on board 4 for Barbican II revenge was to be Taylor's.

In the Championship Pool, Guildford I claimed top honours in the derby, overcoming their second team 5½-2½, thanks to wins from Matthew Sadler, Romain Edouard, Jean-Pierre le Roux and Mark Hebden, with only Sophie Milliet losing after young Alex Golding randomised successfully in a time scramble. Elsewhere White Rose impressively overcame Barbican 4NCL I in professional fashion with an unbeaten 5½-2½ victory, while Wood Green racked up 6½-1½ against Oxford and Cheddleton battered the Sharks 7-1.

Cheddleton's crushing scoreline was despite David Howell and Jonathan Hawkins being held on the top boards by Peter Roberson and Thomas Rendle respectively. The English no.2 was even somewhat fortunate to draw after a typically Herculean rearguard action followed a rare early oversight.

P.Roberson-D.Howell

Grantham Sharks vs Cheddleton
Pirc Defence

1 e4 d6 2 d4 3 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 g6 4 ♙e3 c6 5 h3 ♘bd7 6 ♘f3 e5 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♙c4 ♙b4!?

An engine-approved novelty, but White is happy to sacrifice his e-pawn for the initiative. **9 0-0 h6 10 ♘e2!?** ♘xe4 **11 ♘g3 ♘xg3 12 fxg3 ♙e7**

Already plenty has happened. Will the pressure against f7 fully compensate for a pawn? **13 ♘h4 ♙h7**



14 ♙xf7!?

14 c3 ♙c5 15 ♙e2 ♘b6 16 ♙d3 was a slower approach, but Roberson continues to play the most dangerous moves.

14...♙xf7 15 ♘xg6 ♙f6?

Even those rated over 2700 can lose their way in such a maze. Correct was 15...♙d6 when 16 ♙xf7+ (or 16 ♙h5 ♙f6! 17 ♘xe5+ ♘d8 18 ♘f7+ ♙xf7 19 ♙xf7 ♙c5) 16...♘xf7 17 ♙g4 ♘e8 (again, heading for safety; 17...♙xg6 18 ♙f1+ ♘f6 19 ♙xb4 wouldn't be so clear) 18 ♙h5 ♘d8 19 ♙d1 ♙e6 may not give White quite enough for his piece.

16 ♙h5! ♙g7 White is a whole rook down,



Peter Roberson was rewarded for his early aggression when even David Howell lost his way.

but the pressure against f7 is very strong, and if 16...♘d8? there's 17 ♙f1.

17 ♘xe5+?

Missing 17 ♘f8+! ♘xf8 (17...♘d8 18 ♘e6+ ♘e7 19 ♙f1 wins, as does 17...♘e7 18 ♙f1) 18 ♙f1 when after, for instance, 18...♙xf1+ 19 ♘xf1 ♘f6 (or 19...♘e7 20 ♙xh6 ♙f7+ 21 ♙xf7 ♘xf7 22 ♙h5+ ♘e6 23 ♙g4+) 20 ♙xe5 Black is simply far too uncoordinated and so unable to defend.

17...♘e7?!

We shouldn't be too hard on the players. It is an extremely complicated position and was also only early Sunday afternoon by this stage. Here 17...♘d8 wouldn't have left White with quite enough after 18 ♘f7+ ♙xf7 19 ♙xf7 ♘c7 or 18 ♙d1 ♙xg3 19 ♙f2 ♙g5! **18 ♘d3 ♙d6 19 ♙f1 ♙g6 20 ♙h4+**

White remains a whole rook in arrears and while anything might yet happen in practice, the calm 20 ♙e2!? ♘d8 21 ♘f4 ♙xf4 22 ♙xf4 ♙e7 23 ♙d2 might have been a better try. **20...♘e8 21 ♘f4?!**

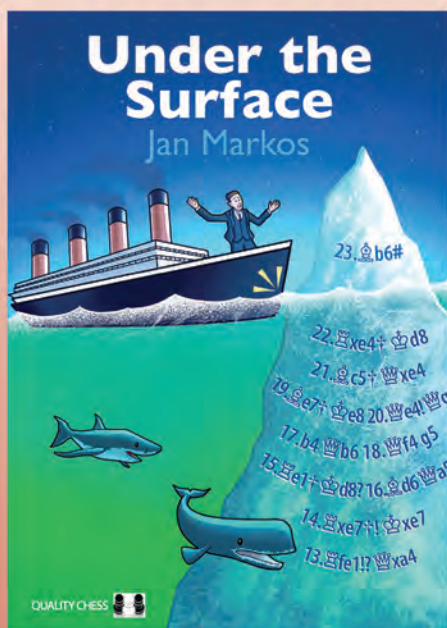


21...♙xg3??

Overlooking a fiendish trick. Instead, 21...♙g5 22 ♙h5+ ♙h5 23 ♘xh5 ♙e7

Our 4NCL coverage continues on page 48 of this issue

Two instructive new books – Quality Chess



Newly published!
288 pages in hardcover



Newly published!
336 pages in hardcover

The most significant difference between a grandmaster and a club player is not simply that the grandmaster calculates more accurately, but rather that he sees more deeply. This book invites you beneath the surface, where you can learn to navigate the depths of chess.

GM Jan Markos is a former European Under-16 Champion and has won the Slovakian Championship twice.

“In his new book, GM Jan Markos focuses on important, yet often neglected, aspects of chess. He deals with this interesting and difficult topic excellently, making fine use of his chess and teaching abilities. The book is highly readable and belongs among the best chess books I have read in recent years. Although the book is intended to be read by amateurs, even grandmasters will find it interesting and useful. If you want to learn more about chess and don’t mind thinking independently, this is the book for you.”

GM David Navara

Pawns can never move backwards, making pawn moves truly permanent decisions. This irreversibility makes Pawn Play among the most difficult aspects of chess strategy, which is one reason few books have been written about this topic – and some that have are almost incomprehensible.

Double Olympiad gold medallist **Sam Shankland** has gone the other way – breaking down the principles of Pawn Play to basic, easily understandable guidelines every chess player should know. Shankland starts with extremely simple examples, but then lifts the level, illustrating the universality of the book’s guidelines by showing how grandmasters could have made better decisions by using them.

GM Sam Shankland is a permanent member of the US national team, winning an Individual Gold Medal in 2014 and Team Gold in 2016. He also played on Board 1 at the two most recent World Team Championships.

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Home News

BELFAST – The Williamson Shield was contested in the spacious Students Union at Queen's University (23-25 March). Nikhil Joshi (Strand) triumphed with 5/6, finishing half a point ahead of Gareth Annesley (Mallusk) with the chasing pack a further half point back, Danny Roberts (Civil Service), Jacob Flynn (Malahide), Steven Scannell (Ballynafeigh) and Modestas Razbadauskas (Strand) sharing third.

BIRMINGHAM – Ameet Ghasi defeated Mark Hebden on his way to victory in the Alex Holowczak organised Birmingham Rapidplay on March 25th.

Open: 1 Ameet Ghasi (Richmond) 6/7, 2 Lawrence Cooper (Stafford) 5½, 3 Mark Hebden (Leicester) 5.

Major: 1-3 Anita Somton (West Nottingham), Chris Chadwick (Warrington), Faraz Malik (South Birmingham) 5.

Intermediate: 1 Ben Graff (Kenilworth) 6, 2 Richard Renegade (Crewe) 5½, 3-5 Samia Sheikh (Kettering), Geoffrey Brown (Sheffield), Mohammed Mozaffari (West Nottingham) 5.

Minor: 1 Nigel Wright (Ashfield) 6½, 2 Kanav Monga (Edgbaston) 6, 3 Inura Rajapaksa (Dudley) 5½.

BOLTON – Mike Surtees defeated Joseph McPhillips in the final round of the Bolton Easter Congress (30 March - 1 April) to force a three-way tie for first.

Open: 1-3 Joseph McPhillips (Bolton), Mike Surtees (Gt. Lever), Ali Jaunooby (Denton) 4/5.

Major: 1-4 Gogia Armaan (West Nottingham), Barry Hymer (Lancaster), David Patrick (Halifax), Mark Whitehead (Rochdale) 4.

Knights: 1 S. Davin Silva (India) 4½, 2-5 S. Affi-Dehghan (Sale), Lawrence Harold (Eccles), Khalid Khokhar (Sale), Robert Owen (Woodvale) 4.

Busy Persons Blitz: 1-2 Joseph McPhillips (Bolton) Mike Surtees (Great Lever) 7/8.

CARDIFF – The Welsh Championships took place in Cardiff (30 March - 2 April 2018), resulting in a three-way tie for the Championship, while 13-year-old Venetia Sivarajasingam became the 2018 Welsh Ladies Champion after making 50%.

Championship: 1-3 Gerry Heap (Llanelli), David Jameson (Colwyn Bay), Sven Zeidler (Abergavenny) 5/7.

Tom Weston Open: 1-2 Dominic Gibbs (Coulsdon), Nicholas Evans (Llanelli) 5½, 3-5 Sam Jukes (Barry), John McGregor (Pentyrch), Roy Thomas (Pontypridd) 5.

Minor: 1 Alun Smith (North Cardiff) 5½, 2 Kevin Langmaid (Yate) 5, 3 Chris Fraser (West Bridgford) 4½.

EDINBURGH – Edinburgh University student



Oliver Jackson's experience was no match for Joseph McPhillips at Bolton over Easter.

IM Justin Tan swept the board with a perfect score in another highly successful Edinburgh Congress (6-8 April). A full report next month.

EXMOUTH – With Keith Arkell lured to Jersey (see below), Rick McMichael was able to triumph in the Open at the West of England Championships over the Easter weekend (30 March - 2 April). Coming from the capital McMichael was, however, ineligible for the Championship Cup itself which was shared between Dominic Mackle and Lewis Martin, while in the battle for the Elizabeth Walker Cup, 11-year-old Georgia Headlong narrowly edged out her mother, Fenella.

Open: 1 Richard McMichael (Kings Head) 5½/7, 2-3 Dominic Mackle (Newton Abbot), Lewis Martin (Swindon) 5.

Major: 1 Geoffrey Brown (Folkestone) 5½, 2 Yasser Tello (Wimbledon) 5, 3-7 Ronnie Burton (Weymouth), Yuyang Wang (Plymouth), Jonathan Morgan (Cornwall), Brian Gosling (East Budleigh), Paul Jackson (Coulsdon) 4½.

Minor: 1-2 Eddie Fierek (Gloucester), Gerald Parfett (Athenaeum) 5, 3-5 Ray Hunt (East Devon), Ken Alexander (East Budleigh), Andy Proudfoot (Plymouth) 4½.

HORWICH – Division Three North of the 4NCL is played on the same weekends as the top two divisions, albeit at somewhat more northerly venues. The fourth weekend took place in Horwich, where Gonzaga maintained their 100% score, but seven of the other 19 teams could yet join them in being promoted to Division Two. In that very second division, Manx Liberty and North East England are looking like two of the four teams who will be heading into the top flight next season, while Barnet Knights are very likely to be promoted from Division Three South and in

Division Four the following remarkable game was seen.

Ro. Jones-N. Jaufarally
4NCL, Mortimer 2018
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 c5 2 a3 e6 3 b4 cxb4 4 axb4 ♟xb4
5 ♟b2 ♞f6 6 e5 ♞d5 7 ♔g4 g6 8 ♚a3?!
♞c6 9 c4 ♞de7 10 ♚b3 ♚a5 11 ♚e4? ♚a2
12 ♚d3



12...♟c3!?

White has five(!) possible ways to capture the sacrificed piece and yet not a single one is ideal. Following...

13 ♚xc3 ♚xb1+ 14 ♟c1 ♚e4+ 15 ♚e3 ♚xe3+ 16 ♚xe3 ♞f5

...Black was a pawn to the good and eventually won after 94 moves.

JERSEY – The Polar Capital Jersey Chess Festival attracted seven GMs and four IMs to Saint Clement Bay. When the dust had settled, Tiger Hillarp Persson and Alan Merry

found themselves in a tie for first after both had won in the final round, against Jon Speelman and Alina L'Ami respectively. The Bury St Edmunds IM was rewarded with his first GM norm, while we were also delighted to see Matthew Wadsworth earning an IM norm, and elsewhere local player Garry Forbes won the Holiday section with 8/10.

Leading Scores: 1-2 Tiger Hillarp Persson (Sweden), Alan Merry (Bury St Edmunds) 7½/9, 3 Simon Williams (Farnborough) 6½, 4-5 Jahongir Vakhidov (Uzbekistan), Matthew Wadsworth (Reading) 6, 6-10 Jonathan Speelman (Hampstead), Alina L'Ami (Romania), Keith Arkell (Paignton), Simon Ansell (York), Kim Le Quang (Belgium) 5½.

R.Pruijssers-T.Hillarp Persson Jersey 2018



19...♖xc3! 20 ♗xc3 ♜xe4

A thematic and powerful blow. Black's strong centre and queenside play will give him more than enough for the exchange.

21 ♗e1 ♟f8 22 ♟d2 d5 23 ♟a5 d4 24 ♜h3 ♜d6 25 ♗e2 ♗c6 26 ♜a2 ♜c4

Black's pieces continue to flow to good squares, whereas White's kingside pawn roller isn't really going anywhere.

27 ♟e1 ♜a3+ 28 ♜b2 a5 29 g5 a4 30 h5 axb3 31 ♖xb3?

The a-file decides after this, but 31 cxb3 ♗d5 32 g6 e4 was also pretty strong.

31...♜c4+ 32 ♜a1 ♜a8 33 c3 d3! 34 ♗h2 ♗a4 35 ♖xd3 ♗xb3 36 ♖xd7 ♟a3 0-1

A.Merry-A.L'Ami Jersey 2018



One associates Alan Merry with quite

dangerous if slightly offbeat openings, but here he has gone in for a main line Classical King's Indian. Now 27 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 28 ♖xg4+ ♟g7 29 ♜c3 would have been a sensible way to retain control, but rather than offer the exchange Merry preferred to provoke great complications.

27 ♜c7!? ♖xc7 28 ♟b6 ♜g3+!

Otherwise, the pin would, of course, have been a killer, but what is now happening on the kingside?

29 hxg3 hxg3 30 ♟g2

It transpires that White is maintaining the balance, both after the text and 30...♖c2!? 31 ♖xc2 ♗xb6 32 ♟d1 gxf3+ 33 ♟xf3 ♟h3+! 34 ♜xh3 ♗xg1 35 e5!

30...gxf3+ 31 ♟xf3 ♗d7 32 ♖h1

Not only averting mate, but preparing to seize the initiative himself on the kingside.

32...♖xc1 33 ♖xh6 ♟b1??

A horrible oversight. One wonders if Merry had coolly seen this position back at move 27 and what he was planning for 33...♗g7. Best play seems to run 34 ♗xf4 ♖c2+ 35 ♟g1 ♟d7 36 ♗xd6 ♖c1+ 37 ♟g2 ♖c2+ with perpetual check.

34 ♟d4 1-0

KENILWORTH – The MCCU Junior Championships took place in the Warwickshire town (3-5 May), resulting in victory for Jonah Willow (Nottingham) with 5½/6. Meanwhile Bowcott-Terry (Halesowen) and Abigail Weersing (Saffron Walden) shared first with the same score in the Under-14 Championship, while Joe Hirst (Newcastle-under-Lyme) racked up 100% in the Under-11, as did Sohun Lohia (Barnet) in the Under-9 Championship.

LONDON – The latest Muswell Hill Rapidplay took place on March 25th, resulting in success in the Open for Benedict Keohane (London) with 4½/5, with Kevin Bowmer (Loughton) half a point back. Meanwhile Colin Gentile (Muswell Hill) won the Major with 5½/6, finishing a point and a half clear of Philip Gardner (Letchworth), Wole Maraiyasa (Coventry) and Jan Gorgol (Ealing), while Martin Jones (Newquay) triumphed with 4½/5 in the Minor, with James Barber (Lewisham) back in second.

RUGELEY – Gary Kenworthy won the all-play-all top section of the Rugeley Rapidplay on April 7th, which marked 50 years of Rugeley Chess Club.

Open: 1 Gary Kenworthy (Bedfordshire) 5½/7, 2-3 Marek Mazek (Heywood), Lawrence Cooper (Stafford) 5.

Major: 1-3 Peter Collins (Lichfield), Phil Bull (Wolverhampton), Douglas Barnett (Crewe) 5½.

Minor: 1 Robert Marks (Sutton Coldfield) 6½, 2-3 David Blower (Brewood), Steve Whatmore (Birmingham) 5½.

SOUTHEND – There weren't any grandmasters present, but 14-year-old Sacha Brozel still did very well to claim the £800 first prize in the Southend Easter Congress (30 March - 2 April).

The Trends in Chess Openings

The top twenty openings as played by International Masters and Grandmasters in March

1	=	Reti Opening	169 games
2	=	1 d4 ♜f6 sidelines	136 games
3	↑	King's Indian Defence	120 games
4	↓	Caro-Kann Defence	110 games
5	=	Queen's Gambit Declined	94 games
6	=	Slav Defence	89 games
7	↑	Nimzo-Indian Defence	76 games
8	↑	Sicilian, Najdorf	72 games
9	↑	Catalan Opening	56 games
10	↑	English, 1...e5	55 games
11	↓	1 d4 d5 sidelines	53 games
12	↑	English, 1...♜f6	51 games
13	↓	Sicilian, 2 ♜f3 d6 sidelines	51 games
14	↑	English, 1...c5	46 games
15	↑	Sicilian, Kan	46 games
16	↑	Giucoco Piano	45 games
17	↓	Queen's Indian Def.	43 games
18	↓	English, 1...e6	42 games
19	↑	Pirc Defence	42 games
20	↓	Grünfeld, Classical	39 games

2,461 games played between 1-31 March where both players were rated over 2400 Elo

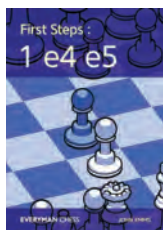
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This Month's New Releases



First Steps: 1 e4 e5

John Emms, 304 pages
Everyman Chess

RRP £17.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £16.19**

It has been a while since a John Emms book arrived for review and it is good to see the return of this highly respected author. This book is all about "Studying a range of openings and making choices about which ones to play in your games", with the Open Games falling within the range in question.

The introduction starts with something all 1 e4 e5 defenders need to know: how to stop the four-move checkmate. This may seem trivial to some readers, but it is actually one of the book's strengths that the basics are covered, as this could be the first opening book a player has ever opened.

Main chapters on the Italian Game, Evans Gambit, Two Knights Defence, Ruy Lopez, Four Knights Game, Scotch Game all follow and there is a further chapter to wrap up an assortment of "Openings which are much less popular than those we've already considered, especially in games between young players." These include the Petroff, Philidor, Ponziani, King's Gambit, Danish Gambit, and Centre Game.

Some of the openings are given greater coverage than others, with the logical justification that Emms is recommending readers play them from both sides of the board. One opening to receive the deeper treatment is the Evans Gambit, which for some years had been consigned to the historical archive and considered an unsound antique. Yet some latter-day high profile outings by Kasparov and Short showed there was definitely still life in the old gambit.

Emms begins his coverage of 1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 c4 c5 4 b4 with the famous 1963 Fischer-Fine offhand game, in which the future world champion tore apart one of the world's former top players. True, Fine had long-retired from competitive chess, but the game is still fit for illustrative purpose. At just 17 moves it is short enough to enable

inexperienced students to get to grips with the basics (incidentally, Anand lasted just eight moves longer against Kasparov's Evans Gambit in 1995).

It looks like a lot of fun is to be had in the Evans Gambit and this is the chapter I most enjoyed in the book. Now that the Italian Game is back in fashion at the highest level it would be a good idea to throw in the occasional 4 b4 to spice up one's play down in the local leagues.

Even the mighty Botvinnik failed to reach move 20 when faced with the Evans, as shown by Emms.

I.Kan-M.Botvinnik Odessa 1929



Kan played **11 d2!** with the intention of 12 e4, increasing the pressure on the pinned knight. The young Botvinnik made a mistake with **11...g4?** and Kan pounced with **12 xf6!**

"By using the tactical themes 'remove the defender' (the knight on f6) and counterattack (meeting a threat to the queen with a threat to Black's queen), White wins a piece. For example, 12...gxf6 is answered by 13 xg4+, and 12...xd1 by 13 xd8 axd8 14 ffd1. Botvinnik chooses a third option, moving the queen, but careful play by Kan enables him to keep the extra piece." The game didn't last much longer 1-0 (19).

Emms is a good writer and this is a very instructive book, which should appeal to the older end of the keen junior scale and to club players of all ages who would like to learn more about the classical world of 1 e4 e5.

Sean Marsh



The Surprising Sicilian! – Shock Your Opponent With an Early...b6

Andrew Martin, PC-DVD,
running time: 5 Hours and 19 minutes
ChessBase

RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Andrew Martin, a man who could sell snow to Eskimos and the Elephant Gambit to club players, continues his industrious output with an examination of a rare Sicilian featuring an early ...b6, designed to "Shock the opposition." After 1 e4 c5 2 f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 xd4 b6 Black is trying to take an early initiative by forcing White into unfamiliar territory, although this is rife with dangers for both sides.

In the words of the presenter: "4...b6 – to a degree – menaces the knight on d4 and tries to persuade White to play 5 b3, after which the knight takes up a less influential position. This is a gain, but Black will have to lose time soon when his queen is attacked, as she inevitably will be. White can play other ideas in place of 5 b3, as we will see, and a sharp struggle is assured."

Martin always presents his material with style. He sets up the DVD nicely with a typical no-nonsense introduction, followed by an instructive game and then a discussion on what he will cover and when. This enables the viewer to head straight for any particular areas of interest. Alternatives to the main lines are covered too, namely 5 b5, 5 e3, 5 a3 and 5 c3.

As usual, Martin advocates the sharpest possibilities, such as 5 e3 xb2 when "Black has got to be very careful he doesn't get murdered in his bed." After White's natural 6 d2, Black must remember to play 6...a6 to prevent White building up an automatically strong attack with a quick b5. 5 c3 is the main move and both 5...c5 and 5...a6 are covered, with the former offering the murkier positions.

Although some of the lines enjoy the occasional crossover with those given in *The Lazy Man's Sicilian* (Bronznik and Giddins, New in Chess, 2015), which features

4...♙c5, 4...♜b6 is by no means a simple way to dodge the theoretical bullets. Black needs to tread very carefully along often narrow paths to safety. However, it is along these paths that unsuspecting white players can easily take a tumble. There is no reason to suspect that the first player will know more about the theory of 4...♜b6 than Black, making it an ideal weapon (albeit best used sparingly as a surprise).

A case in point arises after **1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 ♜b6 5 ♗c3 ♙c5 6 ♗a4 ♜a5+ 7 c3 ♙xd4 8 ♜xd4 ♗f6 9 ♗c5 ♗c6 10 ♜d6 b6.**



The unwary might play **11 b4** here, which looks a very logical way to try to punish Black's early queen excursion, but this is exactly the sort of thing that plays directly into Black's hands: **11...♗xb4! 12 ♗b3 ♗c2+ 13 ♗d1 ♗xe4 14 ♜f4 ♜xc3** and Black is clearly better. Creative attempts to improve the line for White can backfire with even greater ferocity. For instance, **14 ♜d3? ♗xa1! 15 ♗xa5 ♗xf2+** is a catastrophe for White.

Black can eschew the complications created by **5...♙c5** in favour of **5...a6**, but there are murky lines here too, none more than after **6 ♙e3 ♜xb2 7 ♗a4**, when some of Martin's computer-assisted analysis needs to be seen to be believed.



A theme of the play up until this point has been the rook hunt by White's minor pieces. The game is still afoot, thanks to the veiled threat lurking behind the intended **15 ♗xc8**, but the computer analysis has it that Black's best move is the unlikely-looking **14...g5!?**, giving up the exchange for compensation.

Andrew Martin continues to produce inspirational DVDs. It must be tempting for

Sicilian players to add **4...♜b6** to their repertoire, perhaps as an occasional surprise weapon in place of the Najdorf, Dragon or whatever else they might already play. It is unlikely players with white will be better prepared than well-versed black players and I imagine the material on this DVD, if studied very carefully, will definitely enable **4...♜b6** practitioners to reel in quite a few points over the board.

Sean Marsh



A Lifetime Repertoire: Play the Nimzo Indian

Rustam Kasimdzhanov; PC-DVD; running time: 6 hours, 47 minutes
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Fabiano Caruana's second and former FIDE World Champion, Rustam Kasimdzhanov, has long both played the Nimzo-Indian and fought against it. He is surely right that it is an opening which can last one a lifetime, as, indeed, it did for the great Mark Taimanov. Kasimdzhanov doesn't fail to explain the key ideas, but overall this is quite a detailed repertoire, especially for a DVD, one highlight of which is the dynamic **1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♙b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♗ge2 b6!?**



A Practical Guide to Chess Improvement

Nigel Davies & Neil McDonald, 320 pages, paperback
RRP £17.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £16.19**

Everyman Chess continue to package up some of their classic works from the past 15 years or so, in this case Davies's *10 Great Ways to Get Better at Chess* joining McDonald's *Break the Rules!* under the same cover.

Likewise, *Great Games by Chess Legends 1* by Neil McDonald and Colin Crouch has been released, both stemming from the *Chess Secrets* series and featuring a look at the games of Alekhine, Bronstein, Geller, Kasparov, Morphy, Tal, Topalov and Stein. This runs to 432 pages and is also available for just £17.99 or £16.19 for Subscribers.



Calculation Training

Robert Ris; PC-DVD; running time: 4 hours, 52 minutes
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**
Last month we mentioned Robert Ris' *Crucial Chess Skills for the Club Player: Volume 1* and hot on its heels the Dutch IM and experienced coach has made a welcome return to the ChessBase studio. Ris believes that the training material presented will really help players rated anywhere between 1400 and 2400. He begins by explaining how to use the demands of the position to select the right candidate moves and then aims to explain how one should calculate better, while throughout there are plenty of training positions for the viewer to solve.

Endgame Turbo 5

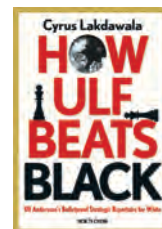
ChessBase USB 3.0 flash drive
RRP £159.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £143.95**
See full page advert on page 59 (inside back cover).



How to Beat the Open Games

Sverre Johnsen, 256 pages, paperback
RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

When one thinks of Gambit Publishing and the Open Games, one's mind is irrevocably cast back to John Emms' classic *Play the Open Games as Black*. Now Gambit are back with a new work from Norwegian Sverre Johnsen, mapping out a complete repertoire with **1 e4 e5** for when White avoids the Ruy Lopez. Good use has been made of engine discoveries to rehabilitate some lines for Black, aiming to present a number of fairly fresh paths to catch out white players, while after **2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♙c4** both **3...♗f6** and **3...♙c5** are covered.



How Ulf Beats Black

Cyrus Lakdawala, 288 pages, paperback
RRP £25.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £23.35**

The prolific American IM's second work for New in Chess sees him take a look at the opening repertoire of one of his all-time favourite players, the legendary Ulf Andersson. Subtitled a 'Bulletproof Strategic Repertoire for White', it is certainly that, although as Lakdawala is at pains to point out, many of Andersson's openings only looked quiet, while actually containing a fair amount of bite. The reader who wants to learn a solid opening repertoire,

as well as plenty about the middlegame and endgame along the way, could do far worse than follow Andersson and Lakdawala.



New in Chess Yearbook 126

Peter Boel & René Olthof (eds.),
256 pages, paperback

RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

Anish Giri features on the front cover of the latest *Yearbook* where he is described as the “Sovereign in the 1.c4 labyrinth”. Inside there are three opening surveys devoted to the English Opening, as well as five on the Sicilian, including one by Junior Tay on the Grand Prix. The opening forum is also jam-packed, while there are special columns from Erwin L’Ami and Jan Timman, the latter taking a good look at Magnus Carlsen’s repertoire.

Play 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6!

Alexei Kornev, 304 pages, paperback
RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

Chess Stars’ latest opening repertoire might not have the jazziest of titles, but the venerable Queen’s Gambit Declined is quite popular these days, especially if one meets 3 $\text{d}3 \text{c}3 \text{d}6 4 \text{cxd}5$ with 4... $\text{d}5!$?, as Vladimir Kramnik has done and Kornev proposes. The Russian GM also looks at the Catalan and the orthodox main lines of the QGD in some detail, while mapping out a repertoire for Black in typical Chess Stars fashion. 4 $\text{d}3 \text{e}7 5 \text{f}4 0-0 6 \text{e}3$ is countered by 6... $\text{d}7$ and 5 $\text{g}5$ by 5... $\text{h}6 6 \text{h}4 0-0 7 \text{e}3 \text{d}7!$?. Finally, the book concludes with ‘When Winning is a Must’, three chapters devote to those fairly trendy lines where Black advances his a-pawn one square on move 3.



Small Steps to Giant Improvement

Sam Shankland, 336 pages, hardback
RRP £23.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.59**

Pawn play is a topic often ignored by even serious students of the game and, as Shankland demonstrates, even grandmasters could have made better use of their foot soldiers at times. In any game it is vital to keep an eye on the pawn structure and what pawn breaks are available to both sides, but how often do we forget to do that? The U.S. Olympiad regular begins at a fairly basic level, emphasising that we should never forget that pawns cannot move backwards, before examining the various ways in which one may weaken and exploit the opponent’s structure.

Strategic Chess Exercises

Emmanuel Bricard, 224 pages, paperback
RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

Do you find that you struggle more strategically than tactically? If so French Grandmaster and experienced trainer Emmanuel Bricard aims to help in this latest work from New in Chess. Bricard presents a number of instructive positions and then many exercises with the aim of helping with such issues as finding a strategic plan, reducing the number of lines to calculate, and accumulating advantages.

The Modernized Nimzo –

Queen’s Gambit Declined Systems

Milos Pavlovic, 350 pages, paperback
RRP £27.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £25.15**

Our regular contributor has been busy of late taking a look at 1 $\text{d}4 \text{d}6 2 \text{c}4 \text{e}6$, intending a Nimzo or 3 $\text{d}3 \text{d}5$. Pavlovic’s aim is to present a number of dynamic weapons for Black, whether the opening branches off into Nimzo, QGD or even Catalan waters. Those who possess quite a classical Nimzo and QGD repertoire and would like it both updated and spiced up may wish to explore this latest work from Thinkers Publishing.



The Najdorf in Black and White

Bryan Smith, 162 pages, paperback
RRP £18.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.09**

1 $\text{e}4 \text{c}5 2 \text{d}3 \text{d}6 3 \text{d}4 \text{cxd}4 4 \text{dxd}4 \text{d}6 5 \text{d}3 \text{a}6$ remains a pretty popular opening from the mid-stronger club player upwards, and no surprise considering its pedigree. The Najdorf can, of course, be pretty theoretical, but American GM Bryan Smith believes that it is possible to play it “by the light of nature”, i.e. experience is very important. To that end he has annotated 29 Najdorf encounters in some detail, aiming to help further the understanding of those who play the opening, as well as those who fight against it, while also exploring a number of creative and topical opening nuances.

The Popular Italian

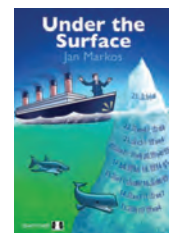
Victor Bologan; PC-DVD;
running time: 6 hours, 12 minutes
RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

It’s been hard to escape in recent years the increase in the popularity of the Italian Game, or Giuoco Piano if readers prefer. Following swiftly on from Wesley So’s *My Black Secrets in the Modern Italian*, ChessBase have released another DVD on the opening and from one of their leading presenters. In contrast to So and Reeh, the Moldovan Grandmaster’s perspective is to supply a repertoire with the Italian for White, which he does pretty well, along the way highlighting all the main key positional motifs and plans.

The Schliemann Defence: Move by Move

Junior Tay, 400 pages, paperback
RRP £19.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £17.99**

It’s good to see Everyman’s *Move by Move* series still going strong, whether for use tackling some of the greats of our game or presenting fairly detailed opening repertoires. Here the goal for our regular contributor is, of course, the latter, and the tricky and dynamic 1 $\text{e}4 \text{e}5 2 \text{d}3 \text{c}6 3 \text{b}5 \text{f}5$ is one of Junior Tay’s favourite openings. The Singaporean FM makes good use of the series’ question-and-answer format to explain the key ideas, all the while mapping out a repertoire for Black against all White’s counters to the Schliemann, and in the main line, 4 $\text{d}3 \text{fxe}4 5 \text{dxe}4$, both 5... $\text{d}5$ and 5... $\text{d}6$ receive plenty of coverage.

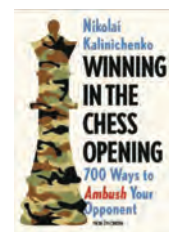


Under the Surface

Jan Markos, 288 pages, hardback
RRP £23.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £21.59**

Credit must go to Quality Chess for commissioning another work on quite a deep topic. It is well known that grandmasters don’t just calculate better than club players, but also see more deeply and faster into a position. How? That is the aim of Slovakian Grandmaster Jan Markos who explains how he perceives chess and exactly what he sees at the board. Along the way in a slightly eclectic journey, Markos touches on such subjects as openings and using computer engines. The curious club player may well enjoy joining him for the voyage, picking up while aboard tips about how to improve their own thinking and game.

Both *Under the Surface* and *Small Steps to Giant Improvement* are currently only available in hardcover format, and for those who like their works so, all five volumes of *Kotronias on the King’s Indian* can be purchased together in hardback from Chess & Bridge for the special price of just £107.00.



Winning in the Chess Opening

Nikolai Kalinichenko, 464 pages, paperback
RRP £22.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.65**

Subtitled ‘700 Ways to Ambush your Opponent’, Kalinichenko, a Russian Correspondence GM, presents 700 miniatures selected for their instructive value. The games are grouped together by opening and playing through them will prove enjoyable, while also making the reader much more aware of where typical early pitfalls can suddenly spring from.