

Chess Update

FIROUZJA ON FIRE!

Still only 18, Alireza Firouzja dominated the FIDE Grand Swiss and so qualified for the 2022 Candidates tournament



Norms to Newcastle - Tim Wall on two very successful tournaments in the North East



Stocking Fillers - Let Sean Marsh be your guide for what to request for this Christmas



Near Death Experiences - Terry Chapman survived and ultimately prospered in Paradise

Chess

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Wide Battlefield

The old and the young were in action at the Forest Hall IM tournament, causing Mike Basman to ponder how to help the former, as well as marvel at a fine attack

In late October I played in an international event organised by the new high priest of Northumbrian chess, Tim Wall (taking over from Paul Bielby), at the Forest Hall Social Club in Palmersville, Newcastle upon Tyne. This was a hugely successful event, which resulted in a decisive victory for Tarun Kanyamarala of Ireland, who scored an IM norm, as did Jonah Willow from Nottingham.

Northumbria is becoming a beacon of excellence for chess, echoing the early days of England when, in the 7th and 8th Centuries, the Venerable Bede and scholar Alcuin carried the torch of enlightenment aloft.

A curious feature arises when we look at the table of participants (*see crosstable below*). If you look at the ages of the bottom four players, the average age is 55 years. In contrast, if you take the ages of the top six players the average is 22 years old; in fact, four of the top six players are still teenagers.

This is clearly a declaration of war. What is to be done about this?

I have initiated a series of awards, to improve the status of older players. There are now prizes for: over 60 years old (senor), over 75 years old (super senor), over 85 years old (mega senor), over 100 years old (giga senor), and over 120 years old (tera senor).

In the Forest Hall event, Roddy McKay captured the over 60 prize, and I was clear winner in the over 75 section. There were no participants in the higher ranges.

I will finish with a spectacular game from the Forest Hall International event, by the sole female participant, 15-year-old Trisha Kanyamarala, who scored a very creditable 4½ points out of 9.



Here Comes the Knight!

T.Kanyamarala-R.McKay
Newcastle upon Tyne 2021
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 cxd5 cxd5 4 ♟f4 ♞c6
A harmless looking variation of the Slav has arisen.

5 e3 ♞f6 6 ♞c3 a6
Black moves his edge pawn to ward off any plans white might have to play ♞b5, but 6...e6 is quite adequate (if 7 ♞b5 ♟b4+).

7 ♟e2
A move loaded with Irish cunning. White is delaying the development of the g1-knight, and tempts 7...♟f5 8 g4!? ♟e4 9 f3 ♟g6 10 h4 h6 11 h5 ♟h7 12 ♟d3 with a bind.

7...e6 8 ♞c1
Another high-class waiting move; Black replies with a natural, but mistaken exchange offer.

8...♟d6? 9 ♟xd6 ♞xd6 10 f4!



Miraculously we have transposed into the historic Stonewall variation, which could not

have transpired if White had played her knight to f3 earlier, which would have blocked the f-pawn. Now the knight on g1 will head to e5, a magnificent outpost. Usually in the Stonewall variation, White ends up with a stone-dead bishop on c1, blocked by its own centre pawns, but here she has skilfully managed to swap it off. Trisha's strategy has been a resounding success.

10...0-0 11 ♞f3 ♟d7
In this case it is Black who has the bad bishop.

12 0-0 ♞e7 13 ♞e5
And here it comes – here comes the Knight. Did Trisha realise she was playing homage to another legendary Irish citizen, the singer Van Morrison (aka Them of the 1960s)?

13...♞fc8 14 ♟d3 ♟e8 15 ♞f3 b5 16 ♞h3



The first direct threat: 17 ♟xh7+ ♞xh7 18 ♞h5 with a mating attack.

16...g6
Black's position looks rock solid. True he has weaknesses on the dark squares, but surely they won't be that easy to exploit?

Player	Country	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pts.
1 FM Tarun Kanyamarala	IRL	2309	*	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	7.5
2 FM Jonah Willow	ENG	2353	½	*	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	7
3 IM David Fitzsimons	IRL	2334	½	½	*	½	½	1	0	1	1	1	6
4 FM Yichen Han	NED	2306	½	½	½	*	1	0	1	1	½	1	6
5 Thomas Eggleston	ENG	2175	0	0	½	0	*	½	1	1	1	1	5
6 WIM Trisha Kanyamarala	IRL	2082	0	0	0	1	½	*	½	½	1	1	4.5
7 Sedykh Mikhail	ENG	2120	0	0	1	0	0	½	*	1	0	½	3
8 Steven Jones	ENG	2231	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	*	1	½	2.5
9 IM Michael Basman	ENG	2273	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	0	*	1	2.5
10 IM Roderick McKay	SCO	2243	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	*	1



IM Mike Basman could only be impressed as WIM Trisha Kanyamarala simply demolished an eight-time Scottish Champion's defences.

17 ♖e1 b4 18 ♗e2 ♘b5

With two sharp blows Black takes the initiative on the queenside. Trisha reacts strongly on the other wing.

19 ♖h4!

Now if Black continues 19...♗xd3 he is in trouble after 20 ♖xf6 because the pawn at f7 is undefended. So he plays the natural move...

19...♗g7



...Acquiescing in a draw by 20 ♖h6+ ♔g8 21 ♖h4 ♔g7 22 ♖h6+, etc. But a draw is not on offer:

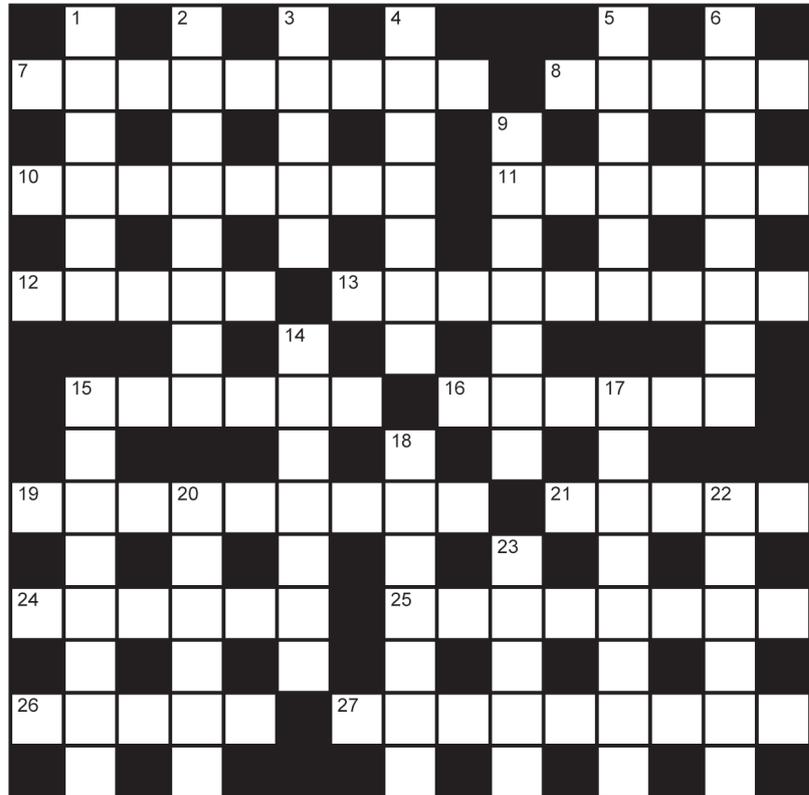
20 ♖xf6+!! 1-0

An explosive conclusion. After 20...♗xf6 White continues with 21 ♖xh7 with two threats of mate: 22 ♖xf7# and 22 ♗g4#. If Black then bales out with 21...♖xe5, a third mate appears: 22 dxe5#. Black did not wait to see these variations demonstrated, but resigned after 20 ♖xf6+.

As long as chess is played, this game by 15-year-old Trisha Kanyamarala will be celebrated, both for its devastating finish and for the subtle strategy that preceded it. We shall name it The Hesperides Encounter.

The Avid Old Swan C r o s s w o r d

Once Carlsen-Nepo is over for the day, why not enjoy this chess-themed composition? Solution on page 55.



Are you still unsure about what you would like to see in your Christmas stocking this year? After nearly two full years of weirdness, surely you deserve a treat – and here are some helpful hints to give you more of a chance of getting it.

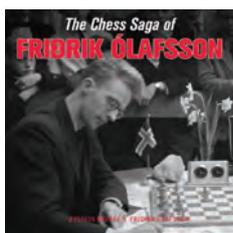
It would be folly to present a selection of recommended chess books without including the four which were shortlisted for the 2021 English Chess Federation Book of the Year. I have already reviewed three of them in earlier editions of *CHESS*.

Masterpieces and Dramas of the Soviet Championship Volume 1 (1920-1937) by Sergey Voronkov (Elk and Ruby) was the very worthy winner of the toughest contest I have judged since the start of my tenure on the panel. The second volume is coming soon too and I am sure it will be worth the wait.

Winning by Nigel Short (Quality Chess) received an honorary mention and I think his next book – if it comes to fruition – will be even better.

Smyslov, Bronstein, Geller, Taimanov and Averbakh by Andrew Soltis (McFarland) is the author's best book to date and a must for anyone interested one of the most golden of all chess eras.

This brings us to the only one of the quartet I didn't review earlier in 2021.



The Chess Saga of Fridrik Ólafsson
Øystein Brekke, 288 pages
Norske Sjakkforlag
RRP £32.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £29.65**

This really is a beautiful book and one which serious collectors will not want to be without. Fridrik Ólafsson, now 86, had a rich and varied chess career. He was a Candidate for the World Chess Championship, President of FIDE and six-time Icelandic Champion. He is also a perfect gentleman.

Our paths crossed once, very briefly. This was back in 1982 when our local Middlesbrough Chess Congress coincided with a double-round match between England and Iceland. I watched attentively as Ólafsson drew one game with John Nunn, but he lost the other. Ólafsson, in his capacity of the President of FIDE, signed the certificates of all of the players in the junior section. Such acts always have left an impression on me. When I started running my own junior tournaments, just a few years later, I always made sure that all of the players received a certificate, no matter how many points they had earned.

This book is, unashamedly, a celebration of Ólafsson's life and games. It boasts a sturdy hardback binding, enjoys quality paper, and is replete with excellent photographs and

Sean Marsh's Christmas Stocking Fillers



tributes from a whole range of people. Nor are the accolades just from chess players; the thoughtful foreword is provided by none other than the President of Iceland, Gudni Thorlacius Jóhannesson.

Ólafsson was more than capable of beating the best of players on his day. Here he is, outfoxing a future champion of the world.

opponent, 47 years earlier.

This is an excellent book which will undoubtedly provide many hours of instruction and entertainment. It came close to winning the Book of the Year award and was, perhaps, unfortunate to appear at the same time as such other powerful candidates. Still, it would make an excellent Christmas present.

F.Ólafsson-R.Fischer Candidates Tournament, Bled 1959



White is the exchange up, but Fischer has counterplay, as always. The next move makes the result very clear.

37 ♖a1!

What a great move! Now “37...♙xa1 was not possible because of 38 ♗xg5 and mates. Or 37...♗d2 38 ♖d1 and Black cannot avoid the exchange of queens.”

In the game, Fischer played **37...♙f4+**, but after the exchange of queens there was not much more hope of offering successful resistance (1-0, 45).

Other victims include Tal, Karpov, Korchnoi and Larsen. Indeed, Ólafsson contested an eight-game match with Larsen as recently as 2003. The former won 5-3, thus gaining revenge for a match defeat against the same



Eight Good Men

Dorian Rogozenko, 340 pages
Elk and Ruby
RRP £22.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £20.69**

Do you remember the days of tournament books? They helped to cement great events into our race memories. These include New York 1924, Nottingham 1936, Curacao 1962 and Santa Monica 1966, to name but four. It sometimes seems that elite tournaments come and go so quickly that they blur in the modern mind. Analysing top games played just a week ago feels like a tardy exercise, never mind chess battles from many years ago.

Elk and Ruby are doing an excellent job of unearthing and then preserving the past, but this time they have stepped away from older times to focus on a much more recent event. Indeed, the last Candidates tournament – Nepomniachtchi's great triumph – has perhaps remained in the public's consciousness rather longer than most modern elite events, simply because it went on for over a year.

Covid brought an enforced hiatus at the half-way point, only for the tournament to resume over a year later. It must have been



The elite may be rivals, but can also get on very well, as shown by Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, and Ding Liren who both feature in Eight Good Men, Rogozenko's full account of the Candidates.

very difficult for the players to maintain focus, motivation and perspective as the months rolled by. Imagine seeing some secret novelties being found and played between the two parts of the tournament, and how it would feel to have missed the one and only chance to uncork them.

This book offers round-by-round commentary of the tournament, complete with excellent annotations and a very fine selection of photographs.

Was Nepomniachtchi's success a surprise? Possibly, as Fabiano Caruana was, for most people, the pre-tournament favourite and his preparation was clearly very deep, as evidenced by his fabulous demolition of Maxime Vachier-Lagrave's Sicilian Najdorf at the very start of the second half of the tournament.

F. Caruana-M. Vachier-Lagrave Candidates Tournament, Yekaterinburg 2021



Vachier-Lagrave is the world's leading expert on the Sicilian Najdorf, but this time he had his fingers burned on the fire of Caruana's extraordinary preparation.

18 ♖c4! ♜xc4 19 ♕d6!!

The book analyses the variations very well

and we don't have the space to give them justice here. Despite being hit by such bombs, Vachier-Lagrave still managed to put up very stubborn resistance before going on to lose on move 77.

Despite Caruana's glittering showcase of excellent preparation at the start of the second half of the event, Nepomniachtchi's extreme determination eventually saw him win the tournament with a round to spare, thus qualifying for a shot at the ultimate title.

Looking at the games, round-by-round, really brings home the struggle for supremacy and the fluctuations experienced by all of the players. The number of potential winners is steadily reduced as the rounds are used up; there is a genuine sense of excitement. After studying the book, readers will, however, be left in no doubt that Nepomniachtchi thoroughly deserved his sensational success.

A sterling effort all round by Elk and Ruby. Yes, let's have more tournament books!



The Chessmaster Checklist

Andrew Soltis, 256 pages

Batsford

RRP £16.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £15.29**

Soltis remains a prolific author (although it is unlikely he will ever overtake Cyrus Lakdawala), but his books for Batsford are very different to his books for McFarland. The latter volumes are deeply researched historical tomes, whereas the Batsford books are aimed at average club players – and this

one is no exception.

Typically, such books offer bite-sized chunks of chess wisdom, with each one offering a mini-lesson, of sorts. This time, the reader is given various questions to ask themselves, with the idea that the checklist will enable stronger moves to be found and played. The questions include: What Is His Weakest Point?, How Can I Improve My Pieces? and several more.

This high-profile example can be found in the very first chapter, entitled 'What Does He Threaten?', under the subheading 'Alarm Shut-Off'.

"Even if you have a good sense of danger you can inadvertently turn this alarm system off. This often happens when you can't imagine how your unprotected pieces can be attacked."

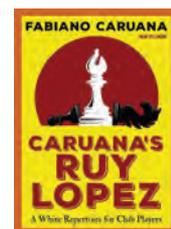
M. Carlsen-A. Giri

Magnus Carlsen Invitational
(online rapid) 2021



Various candidate moves offer some safety. "But why does White need safety? All of his pieces are protected except his rooks. And they can't be attacked, can they? This led the world champion to play 25 f3. It gave him options such as launching a kingside attack with ♖f2, fxe4 and ♕e2. But he didn't look for a threat. He was lost after **25... ♗xd3+ 26 ♜xd3 ♜c1+ and 27... ♜xb2.**"

As usual with Soltis' Batsford books, this one is great for dipping in and out of it, and has plenty of good material for improving club players.



Caruana's Ruy Lopez

Fabiano Caruana, 208 pages

New in Chess

RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

This book has been gathering excellent reviews and it would be remiss of me not to



Fabiano Caruana enlightens the spectators at the London Chess Classic and now you too can learn directly from him in the shape of Caruana's Ruy Lopez, recently released by New in Chess.

ention it here. I was heavily involved in the writing and editing of this one, and I learned a lot about the Ruy Lopez along the way. The content is based on the 2019 three-volume DVD set *Navigating the Ruy Lopez* from ChessBase.

I believe it is selling well, but suspect it would be doing even better in that department if Caruana had qualified again to play Magnus Carlsen in the world championship match. Still, it is a very accessible guide to one of the most popular of all openings. Despite being one of the world's top players, Caruana is more than able to explain both the basic points and the grandmaster subtleties of the opening and its associated plans.

One recurring theme which struck me as important is the number of times White plays a2-a4 and then a4-a5, leaving Black's a6-pawn as a permanent liability for the second player. Here is an early example of White setting out that particular stall. He has just played 9 a5.



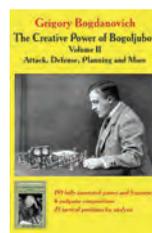
It certainly doesn't look like much, but imagine being even slightly worse against a player who is fully armed with the correct ways to increase the advantage. As Caruana puts it:

"It just fixes the weakness on a6. Of course, right now, it might sound a bit funny to call this a weakness. But in a lot of endgames, this weakness will start to tell.

White has a natural way to attack the pawn, with ♘c4. Right now, of course, the pawn is over-defended. But more often than not, it becomes a weakness."

This idea fascinated me. The more I delved into the book, the more the same theme popped up, with the a6-pawn stopped in its tracks and looking weaker as the game progressed.

Caruana shares many such insights in this very interesting book, which Ruy Lopez players will definitely find to be of great interest. Of course, despite the subtitle saying that is a 'A White Repertoire for Club Players', anyone facing the Ruy Lopez as Black will no doubt want to know what is in store for them when they play against someone who has studied the book carefully. Either way, it is an essential purchase for anyone interested in the Ruy Lopez.



The Creative Power of Bogoljubov Volume II

Grigory Bogdanovich, 402 pages

Elk and Ruby

RRP £34.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £31.49**

I have enjoyed a lot Elk and Ruby books this year. As we know, they won the ECF Book of the Year award this year, after several years finishing as runners-up. It is a tricky choice, but if push came to shove I would say I have enjoyed the two-volume work on Bogoljubov most of all. A reappraisal of the man who challenged Alexander Alekhine for the title twice had been long overdue.

I reviewed the first volume earlier in the year and the follow-up is equally good. It picks up immediately where the first volume left off,

with the first game in the book being number 195. Thematic topics include material on defence, attack, openings and endgame technique.

Yes, of course, modern computers will expose the primitive nature of some of the moves and calculations of players from another era, but it would make for rather a miserable and mean-spirited task to spend time doing so. Instead, I recommend immersing oneself in a thrilling chess world from a bygone age, to experience some *real* chess.

Here is a tactical snippet from Bogoljubov's 1941 match with Euwe.

M.Euwe-E.Bogoljubov ?th matchgame, Carlsbad 1941



"This is a case when the queen and knight pair is inferior to the queen and bishop tandem. Black needs to find salvation, and Bogoljubov finds a tactical solution to the problem."

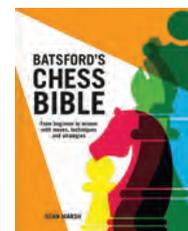
44...♗d5!?

"By sacrificing the knight, Black makes it impossible for the white queen to come to the aid of her king."

45 exd5 ♖d2+ 46 ♔h3 ♜h6+ ½-½

I learned a lot from this two-volume set, which has excellent annotations throughout. Think you know Bogoljubov? Think again – and buy the two books to help you ponder!

Will we still be writing about contemporary title challengers a century from now? Find out, in my review column for December 2121.



Batsford's Chess Bible

Sean Marsh, 208 pages

Batsford

RRP £14.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £13.49**

Now look, you may or may not choose to believe me, but I firmly believe this to be a good book (although not *the* Good Book, despite the titular evidence to contrary). Don't take my word for it; just buy it and see for yourself!



60 Seconds with... Ken Neat



Born: York, a long time ago (March 1944).

Place of residence: Durham, for the past 50 years.

Occupation: Semi-retired translator.

Enjoyable? I like being my own boss.

And home life? Married with two daughters, and now a delightful 3-year-old granddaughter.

But sometimes good to escape to: The hills – all my life I've loved hill-walking (and rock climbing when I was younger). Just yesterday I enjoyed a seven-mile walk in the North Pennines with my younger daughter.

Sports played or followed: We moved to Sunderland when I was four, and I've supported the football team ever since. The team's results strongly affect my mood (ask my wife) – at the moment I'm a bit down...

A favourite novel? I'm not a great reader of fiction, so if you don't mind I'll opt for *Mountaineering in Scotland* by W.H. Murray – I've read some chapters so many times, that I almost know them off by heart.

Piece of music? So difficult to choose, but it has to be something Russian, so I'll go for Rachmaninov's 2nd Piano Concerto (with his 3rd not far behind).

Film or TV series? The BBC4 French crime series *Spiral* – during the Covid lockdown my wife and I binge-watched several dozen episodes.

What's the best thing about playing chess? Forgetting about everyday problems.

And the worst? Not being able to forget about a game afterwards, when trying to sleep.

Your best move? When I was 18, I beat Michael Haygarth in a National Club Championship match, just two years before he became British Champion [Ed. – See this month's pgn download for Ken's crushing 26-move win].

But less memorable than your worst move? A game where on the last move before the time control I had three possible checks, two of which gave instant mate. Alas, I chose the third:

K.Neat-D.Curnow Hastings Challengers 1975



40 ♖d8+?? ♕e6 and Black won on move 67.

And a highly memorable opponent? When Nigel Short first qualified for the British Championship at the age of 11, I was paired against him in the very first round. The game was adjourned after 40 moves (my friend Jim joked, "You're keeping the kid up past his bedtime"), and we agreed a draw 10 moves later, with Nigel signing my scoresheet 'English Rot'!

Favourite game of all time? Perhaps a game I played a few years ago in a weekend congress against David Oswald, a very pleasant young man from Edinburgh. After a king hunt he generously allowed me to checkmate his (black) king on the square e1.

K.Neat-D.Oswald Chester-le-Street Open 2013 *Benko Gambit*

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 b6 e6 6 ♕g5 ♖xb6 7 ♕xf6 gxf6 8 e4 ♖xb2 9 ♘d2 ♕h6 10 ♘gf3 0-0 11 ♕c4 ♖b6 12 0-0 d6 13 ♘h4 ♕h8 14 dxe6 fxe6 15 ♖h5!



15... ♕xd2 16 ♘g6+ ♕g7 17 ♘xf8 ♕xf8 18 ♖xh7 ♘c6 19 ♖h8+ ♕f7 20 ♕e2 ♕e7 21 ♖ab1 ♖a5 22 ♖b3 ♘d4 23 ♕h5 ♕d7 24 ♖g3 ♕b7 25 ♖h7+ ♕c6 26 ♖b1 ♘b5 27 e5 fxe5? 28 ♕f3+ d5



29 ♕xd5+! ♕xd5 30 ♖xb7+ ♕c4 31 ♖g4+ ♕c3 32 ♖b3+ ♕c2 33 ♖e4+ ♕d1 34 ♖b1+ ♕c1 35 ♖d3+ ♖d2 36 ♖b3+ ♕e1 37 ♖e4+ ♖e2 38 ♖d1# 1-0

The best three chess books: *Grandmaster Preparation* by Lev Polugaevsky, *School of Future Champions* (5 volumes) by Mark Dvoretsky, and *Kasparov on Kasparov* (3 volumes). But I may be a little biased, as I translated all of them [Ed. – Ken was also the translator of the recently published Kupreichik: The Maestro from Minsk].

Is FIDE or your national federation doing a good job? Sorry, but I'll have to pass on these questions – I'm not in a position to judge. Mind you, I could offer some thoughts on the state of British politics...

Can chess make one happy? "Chess, like love, like music, has the power to make men happy". Yes, I think Dr. Tarrasch was right.

A tip please for the club player: 'Always check, it might be mate'. Not true, of course, but it's surprising how often a check can be a very effective move.



Home News

4NCL – The 4NCL Online League and Junior League continue apace on Lichess, with five and four divisions, respectively, and matches held every other Tuesday. With one round left to play in the preliminary all-play-all stage, Division One had seen favourites Chessable White Rose and Guildford Young Guns, for whom Mark Hebden has 5/5, win all six matches in their respective groups. The remaining groups were closer, with Brentwood a point ahead of Anglian Avengers in Group A, while Alba and Chessable White Rose II were both on 10/12 in Group D.

BURY ST EDMUNDS – Alan Merry made a welcome return to the board as he defeated fellow IM Richard Pert en route to triumphing at his local Bury St Edmunds Congress (October 23–24).

Open: 1 Alan Merry (Bury St Edmunds) 4½/5, 2–8 Richard Pert (Brentwood), David Haydon (Brentwood), Martin Walker (Norwich), David Spence (Suffolk), Dan Waller (Cambridge), Russell White (Chelmsford), Alfie Onslow (Ealing) 3½.

Major: 1 Max Pert (Brentwood) 4½/5, 2–4 Nathan Barnes (Colchester), Stuart Nelson (Braintree), Jerzy Cholewinski (Ipswich) 4.

Minor: 1–3 Steven Ashworth (Ely), Colin White (Chelmsford), Richard Dickinson (Bury St Edmunds) 4.

HULL – Stephen Greep combined with Mike Truran to stage the Hull 4NCL International Congress, which included a GM event at the University of Hull (October 20–24). The top section looked pretty competitive on paper, and so it proved. Only 17-year-old Polish FM Maciej Czopor came close to making a norm, racking up 4/5 before Matthew Turner ended his norm chances with a powerful attack in the penultimate round. That enabled Czopor's first round victim, Hungarian GM and fellow London resident Tamas Fodor, to catch him up and tie for first on 6/9.

M.Czopor–T.Fodor Hull 2021 French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 c5 4 ♗gf3

This remains a fairly popular way to avoid 4 exd5 ♜xd5 and then the trendy 5 ♗gf3 cxd4 6 ♖c4 ♜d7!?

4...cxd4 5 ♗xd4 ♗c6 6 ♖b5 ♗d7 7 ♗xc6 bxc6 8 ♗d3 ♗d6 9 ♜e2 e5 10 exd5 cxd5 11 c4!

Clearly if he wants to be better, White must chip away at Black's strong centre and now 11...f5!? 12 cxd5 e4 probably wouldn't have offered quite enough compensation in Xiong-Shimanov, Internet (blitz) 2021, had White calmly gone 13 0-0 ♗f6 14 ♗c4.

11...♗f6 12 0-0 ♗g4

Forcing the pace and a potential weakness.

13 f3 ♖e6 14 cxd5



14...♖c5+?

This was presumably over-the-board inspiration. A couple of months earlier 14...♗xd5 15 ♖b5+ had been seen in Kilpatrick-Haria, Gateshead 2021, when 15...♗d7! 16 ♗e4 ♗e7 (Pein) may well equalise, since White must deal with the

threat of ...♜b6+.

15 ♖h1 ♜xd5

Otherwise, the e-pawn would be loose, but now White's pieces spring to life.

16 ♗e4 ♗d4?

Missing a bolt from the blue. As such, 16...♗xe4 17 ♖xe4 ♜c4 was necessary, sub-optimal though Black's position would have been after 18 ♗d3 ♜b4 19 ♗d2! ♜xb2 (or 19...♜b6 20 ♜xe5 0-0 21 ♗c3) 20 ♜ab1 ♜d4 21 ♖b5+ ♗f8 22 ♜fd1 with a very strong initiative for White.

17 ♖h6!!



Already there just isn't a satisfactory defence, in view of 17...gxh6?? 18 ♗xf6+ and 17...0-0 18 ♗xf6+ gxf6 19 ♜e1! followed by ♜g3+ or ♜h4.

17...♗xe4 18 ♖xe4 ♜c4 19 ♗d3 ♜xd3!?

This was always likely to come up short, but 19...♜c5 20 ♖xg7 ♜g8 21 ♜ac1 ♜a5 22 ♖f6 would have been pretty hopeless, with White's light-squared bishop ruling the roost.

20 ♜xd3 gxh6 21 f4! ♗d8 22 fxe5 ♜g8 23 ♜ad1 ♜g4 24 h3 ♜h4 25 ♜g3 ♜h5 26 ♜a3

The extra queen begins to make her presence rather felt.

26...♗d7 27 ♜b4 ♜h4 28 ♜e1! ♜h5 29 ♜e4

2021 Hull 4NCL GM International - Wed 20th to Sun 24th October (Category 7, average rating = 2414)

Player	Title	Country	Rating	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Pts	TPR	
1	Maciej Czopor	FM	POL	2411	#	1	½	0	½	1	½	1	½	1	6	2539
2	Tamas Fodor	GM	HUN	2524	0	#	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	6	2527
3	Conor Murphy	FM	IRL	2428	½	½	#	1	0	½	1	0	1	1	5.5	2493
4	Matthew Turner	GM	SCO	2471	1	½	0	#	0	½	½	1	1	1	5.5	2488
5	James Jackson	IM	ENG	2386	½	0	1	1	#	0	½	½	½	1	5	2460
6	Brandon Clarke	IM	ENG	2442	0	½	½	½	1	#	0	1	0	1	4.5	2411
7	Nigel Davies	GM	WLS	2475	½	½	0	½	½	1	#	½	½	0	4	2364
8	Matthew Wadsworth	IM	ENG	2425	0	0	1	0	½	0	½	#	1	1	4	2370
9	Jonah Willow	FM	ENG	2353	½	0	0	0	½	1	½	0	#	1	3.5	2341
10	Shreyas Royal	FM	ENG	2226	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	#	1	2084



Successful chess coach and Hungarian GM Tamas Fodor didn't have to face anyone as strong as Gawain Jones on his return to Hull as he tied for first with Maciej Czopor in a competitive APA.

♖xe5 30 ♖xh7 ♗ed5 31 ♗de1 ♕d8 32 ♖g8+ ♕c7 33 ♗c1+ ♕b6 34 ♖c8 ♗5d6 35 ♖b8+ ♕a6



Fodor has done his best to stay on the board, but his hapless king position is still going to cost him the game.

36 ♗f3! ♕b6 37 ♖c8+ ♕b5 38 a4+

38 ♗f5+! would have been even more clinical, and if 38...♕xf5 39 ♖c4+ ♕a5 40 b4+ ♕a4 41 ♖a6+ ♕xb4 42 ♗c4#.

38...♕b4 39 ♗f4+

Plenty good enough, as would have been 39 ♖c3+! ♕xa4 40 ♖a3+ ♕b5 41 ♗b3+! ♕xb3 42 ♖xb3+ ♕a6 43 ♖c4+ with mate next move.

39...♗d4 40 ♖c6 ♕b3 41 ♖c2+ ♕b4 42 ♖c6 ♕b3 43 ♗f3+ 1-0

There was also a weekend congress, in which Mark Hebden overpressed against John Cooper, while Marco Gallana impressively ground down Keith Arkell ahead of drawing with both eventual winners on the final day.

Open: 1-2 Peter Wells (Swindon), Steven Jones (Basingstoke) 4½/5, 3-6 Mark Hebden

(Leicester), Keith Arkell (Paignton), Marco Gallana (London), David Maycock (Richmond) 4.

Under-2000: 1 Tim Spanton (Hastings) 4½, 2-4 Ben Rich (York), Ovidiu Angheluta (Romania), Sam Coates (Oban) 4.

Under-1700: 1 Joseph Catto (Hull) 5, 2-5 Dave Patterson (South Shields), Andrew Zigmond (Harrogate), Michael Carroll (Hoylake), Adam Nilsson (Scunthorpe) 4.

LONDON – The Golders Green Rapidplay

continues to be staged on a frequent basis, with teenager Connor Clarke enjoying a fine result as he tied for first with IM John Pigott on October 23rd.

Open: 1-2 IM Peter Large (Epsom), Connor Clarke (Harrow) 5½/6, 3-4 Ganesh Viswanath (Australia), Alexander Cherniaev (Hackney) 5; rating prizes: Peter Koiza (Linton) 4½, Stanley Badacsonyi 4½, Julie Oh (both Barnet) 3½.

Under-1450: 1 William Lawrence (Muswell Hill) 6, 2 Magnus Borissov (Guildford) 4½, 3-4 Elliot O'Donnell (Harrow), Dmitry Nikityuk (Hampstead) 4.

It was then the turn of the rapidly-improving Peter Finn to win on November 6th and how, as he racked up a perfect score.

Open: 1 Peter Finn (Cambridge) 6/6, 2-3 Peter Large (Epsom), John Pigott (Little Heath) 5; rating prizes: Frankie Badacsonyi (Muswell Hill) 5, Samvrit Subin (Richmond) 3½, Oleg Verbytski (Charlton) 4.

Adam Raof also staged a Muswell Hill Rapidplay on October 26th, which was especially popular, with it being half term, and in which Alexander Cherniaev (Hackney) picked up the top prize of £100 with 5½/6, finishing half a point ahead of Kai Rundall (Golders Green).

SCARBOROUGH – The Scarborough Congress returned to the Scarborough Spa, proving popular as it attracted some 275 players. As ever the event was very well run, but was hampered by the strange decision to make the Major under-1850, which resulted in some 92 players taking part in the Open. We can't remember the last time a weekend open saw two players reach 5/5.

That happened here as Andrew Ledger continued his fine form from the British Championship, defeating Brandon Clarke in the final round, while David Zakarian kept up



LISBURN – The Lisburn Chess Rooms, pictured above, were officially opened on 6th November by not just the Deputy Mayor of Lisburn, Tim Mitchell, but also the First Minister of Northern Ireland, Paul Givan, which was fitting considering the scope and ambition of the new home of Lisburn Chess Club at 60-62 Longstone Street. The club currently has 17 permanent chess boards, a chess library and also a teaching room. We're certain that it won't be at all long before it is open much more than just on Thursday evenings and 10.00-13.30 on Saturdays.



Andrew Ledger has been back to his best of late, impressing at the British Championship then racking up 5/5 at Scarborough, but most unusually that was only enough to tie for first.

with a win over Jon Nelson, who had earlier drawn with Danny Gormally. Notable too was that the Intermediate was won by an ungraded player, 14-year-old Ted Filby from Eastbourne, who only started playing in January after being inspired by *The Queen's Gambit*.

Open: 1-2 Andrew Ledger (Sheffield), David Zakarian (Oxford) 5/5, 3 Danny Gormally (Alnwick) 4½, 4-9 Brandon Clarke (Ely), Paul Townsend (York) Tim Wall (Newcastle upon Tyne), Nathanael Paul (Newport), Samuel Milson (Louth), Zoe Varney (Durham) 4.

Major: 1 Robert Kane (West London) 4½, 2-4 Graham Wiliamson (Liverpool), Joseph Bradey (Sheffield), Randolph Donahue (Leeds) 4.

Intermediate: 1 Ted Filby (Eastbourne) 4½, 2-6 Owen Robson (York), Luke Gostelow (Hampton), Keith Marsh (Bradford), John Merry (Salford), Benedict Weis (Uckfield) 4.

Minor: 1-2 Jason Boutsias (Sheffield), Patrick Coleman (Lytham St Annes) 4½, 3-4 Andrew Nettleship (Sheffield), David Scorer (Clitheroe) 4.

Foundation: 1-2 Elliot Kent (Newcastle upon Tyne), Dylan Whitney (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 4, 3-5 Jenny Porritt (Sheffield), Michael Simmons (Sheffield), Thomas Hynes (Urmston) 3½.

TORQUAY – Everyone must hope that things will be fully back to normal by next summer when we're certain that the British Chess Championships will prove especially popular, as they return to the Riviera Centre at Torquay. There will be all the usual sections, with the event scheduled for the slightly later than normal time of August 8-21, with the Championship and Major Open set to run from the 13th until the 21st, although that may change to avoid any scheduling clash with the 2022 Olympiad.



Forthcoming Events

December 3-13 **London Chess Classic**
<https://londonchessclassic.com/>

December 4 **Golders Green Rapidplay**
goldersgreenschess.blogspot.com or call 07855 036537

December 12 **Greenisland Christmas Shopping Recovery Rapid**
ulsterchess.org/events or call 07934 177350

December 12 **Renfrewshire Allegro Chess Congress**
chessscotland.com/events/ or call 0741 553 9523

December 17-21 **2nd EJCOA Forest Hall IM**
northumbriamasters.com

December 18 **Golders Green Rapidplay**
goldersgreenschess.blogspot.com or call 07855 036537

December 18
rjcc.org.uk

Rik Thomas Memorial Richmond

Dec 29 - Jan 9
hastingschess.com

Hastings International Congress

And for the Online Connoisseur:

Nov 26 - Dec 15

World Chess Championship, Dubai
fideworldchampionship.com; it's the big one, Carlsen vs Nepomniachtchi!

December 3-13

London Chess Classic

<https://londonchessclassic.com/>
 Adams, Gelfand, Jones, Lagarde, McShane, Vitiugov

December 26-30

World Rapid & Blitz Championships, Nur-Sultan Watch at fide.com;

Congress organisers – Don't forget to email editor@chess.co.uk to ensure your event is listed, or if you really want to guarantee a good entry, contact Matt@chess.co.uk to discuss having it advertised.

and the initiative. In fact, he goes as far to say: "Nobody in the world is more lethal with the initiative."

Nepomniachtchi's chess career is covered in the first three parts of the book (Prodigy: 2003-2009; Gathering Power: 2010-2018; The Road to Magnus: 2019-2021), and then there is a chapter of puzzles from his games followed by a final chapter of well-annotated solutions.

Readers should be familiar with the Everyman *Move by Move* approach by now. Here, there are 61 annotated games, complete with questions to – and exercises for – the reader along the way. Lakdawala's annotations fluctuate between impressive and bizarre. Commenting on an Exchange Queen's Gambit with 7 g4!?, he writes: "It was Jane Austen who pointed out that manners are the glue which holds society together. If you aren't familiar with this line, then get prepared for a Queen's Gambit Exchange version like you have never seen it before."

Nevertheless, the games are, indeed, instructive and the annotations keep everything accessible. I liked the 52-puzzle 'What Would Nepo Do?' chapter. We would all wish to play in similar style to a title contender and here is the chapter's very first position for you to try.

H. Jonkman-I. Nepomniachtchi

Wijk aan Zee 2007

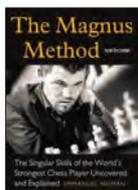


Work out Black's forced mate in five

I am sure you can sort this one out without needing me to quote the answer here.

Summing up, there will, no doubt, be books offering a deeper examination of Nepomniachtchi's life and games at some point in the future. The appeal of this one is the accessibility and the fact that the book's format will definitely be familiar to most readers. Think of it as the 'comfy slippers' approach.

Sean Marsh



The Magnus Method

Emmanuel Neiman,
320 pages, New in Chess

RRP £24.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.45**

There have been numerous books on Magnus Carlsen in recent years. What does this one, with its extra-long streamline of 'The Singular Skills of the World's Strongest Chess Player Uncovered and Explained', bring to the table?

We find that "Emmanuel Neiman has been studying Carlsen's games and style of play for many years. He now presents his findings that will surprise, delight and educate every player, regardless of their level."

Furthermore, "My goal as a trainer is to use Carlsen's games, especially the areas in which he is exceptional, to enable readers to use them for themselves. I try to answer two questions: 1. What does he bring to the game? 2. What are the specific tools he uses?"

There are 12 main chapters in the book, with "each of them dealing with a specific 'Magnus' approach to one of the main phases of the game. In each chapter, we start with an explanation of Magnus' approach to the theme at hand. Next (with the exception of the first two chapters), a series of diagrams is given. These diagrams show positions in which I recommend that you first try to find the required move yourself – what would you play here if you were Carlsen?"

Some of the prose reads like it needed a polish, such as this woolly statement, extolling the virtues of Carlsen's strength: "He is probably the most dominant chess champion ever, together with Capablanca, Alekhine and Karpov at their best – with the exception of Kasparov, who stayed at the top for fifteen years (1985-2000)." Of course, calling someone "the most dominant" becomes diluted immediately by adding four exceptions.

Here is another case in point: "Carlsen's chess culture is enormous, and he knows practically everything about chess, having learned it mainly from books." Does the author really mean "everything about chess" or is the inference that he means a couple of specific aspects about chess?

The next quote shows up an element of laziness: "There are some experts, notably Botvinnik, Petrosian and Karpov, who have developed concepts of how to play with pawns in this or that structure (for example, the Spassky-Petrosian World Championship Match 1966, the Torre Attack)." Why not look up the game number (game seven) in order to make a more succinct reference?

The main material is what really matters, of course. Here, we find a plethora of very interesting subject matters, presented as neatly and instructively as you would imagine by a chess trainer.

Carlsen's ability to work on the slightest endgame opportunity is perhaps his career-defining characteristic and there are plenty of such examples to be found in this book, including this one.



M. Carlsen-T. Radjabov

Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2008



55 ♖xf4!

"White falls for the trick and allows a small combination that wins a knight but loses the game. The active king is no match for the opponent's poorly-placed pieces. Magnus loves to sacrifice a knight in the endgame, because he anticipates positions where the proud horse is just worth a pawn, as it has to be sacrificed against a lone passer."

Sure enough, after **55...♗e8+ 56 ♖e6+ ♗xe6+ 57 ♖xe6 ♖f4+ 58 ♖d6 ♖xd3 59 ♖c6 ♖c5 60 ♖xb6 ♖xb3 61 c5** Black resigned.

In conclusion, the material is indeed instructive, but one more stint polishing the prose would have been appreciated.

Sean Marsh

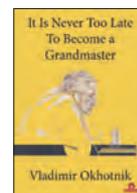


A Complete Opening Repertoire for Black after 1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6!

Volume 1: Nimzo-Indian

Dariusz Swiercz, 352 pages, paperback
RRP £27.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £25.15**

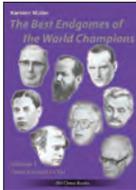
This new repertoire from the Polish-American GM begins in the first volume by mapping out a repertoire for Black with the Nimzo-Indian. The coverage is quite theoretical at times, but Swiercz is also keen to discuss all the key strategic ideas. He does so in some depth at times, not least at the start of each chapter, making this new work for Thinkers Publishing fully accessible to the average club player.



It Is Never Too Late To Become a Grandmaster

Vladimir Okhotnik, 320 pages, paperback
RRP £29.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.95**

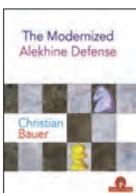
Thinkers Publishing are always busy, but have been especially so of late, these pages featuring no fewer than six new releases from them. Former Ukrainian Champion Okhotnik now plays under the French flag and won the 2011 World Senior Championship, so clearly knows something about staying sharp and even improving at chess late in life. In this very personal account, Okhotnik's love of chess shines through, with the majority of the book devoted to his most memorable games, all of which are annotated in some detail and many of which are quite inspirational.



The Best Endgames of the World Champions Volume 1: from Steinitz to Tal
 Karsten Müller, 236 pages, paperback
 RRP £24.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £22.45**

German Grandmaster Karsten Müller remains arguably the world's leading expert on the endgame. Here he focusses on those particular endgame skills with which he associates each of the world champions. As such, the reader gets to see Steinitz making fine use of the bishop-pair, Alekhine attacking even late in the game and Botvinnik impressing with his long-range planning. In Müller's company it is hard not to enjoy the many classic endgames within, some of which may be new even to fans of each world champion. Usefully there are also a number of exercises to solve in this new work from Bavarian publishers Joachim Beyer Verlag.

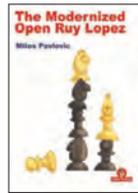
There is also a companion work, which is highly recommended too, *The Best Endgames of the World Champions Volume 2: from Petrosian to Carlsen*. This runs to 236 pages, while retailing at £24.95 or just £22.45 for Subscribers.



The Modernized Alekhine Defense
 Christian Bauer, 544 pages, paperback
 RRP £30.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £27.85**

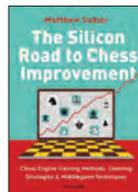
The strong French GM Christian Bauer clearly likes being provocative with his knights, having previously penned *The Modernized Nimzovich Defense* for Thinkers Publishing. Here his attention is on a different, famous early knight development, 1 e4 ♖f6. Bauer clearly enjoys playing the Alekhine and presents pretty detailed coverage of it, examining along the way more than one way for Black to handle White's critical lines. As such, both 5...exd6 and 5...cxd6 are analysed in the Exchange variation, while after 2 e5 ♘d5 3 d4 d6 4 ♖f3 pretty much every option receives some coverage, not least 4...g6, 4...dxe5 and 4...♗g4. Bauer uncovers

a number of new and forgotten ideas for Black in what is likely to be indispensable coverage for all serious Alekhine practitioners.



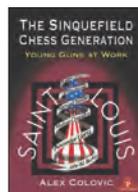
The Modernized Open Ruy Lopez
 Milos Pavlovic, 160 pages, paperback
 RRP £21.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £19.75**

Regular readers will be aware of the creativity of Milos Pavlovic and, like in so many of his books and articles, here he strives to uncover new paths in the Open Lopez. Pavlovic's coverage only really begins after 1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 and is pretty theoretical at times. This work should be of interest to all fans of the Open Lopez, as well as stronger players who find themselves having to fight against this both forcing and unbalanced choice.



The Silicon Road to Chess Improvement
 Matthew Sadler, 560 pages, paperback
 RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**

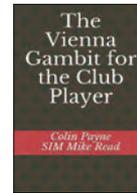
Any work by Matthew Sadler is likely to be notable, as well as prove popular, and his latest work is arguably his most interesting yet. Since becoming involved with *AlphaZero*, Sadler has become quite an expert on the leading chess engines, most of which these days are, of course, now at least part built on deep-learning techniques. In short, Sadler has channelled his vast experience of the TCEC and working with most of the top engines into this fascinating book. There is much to learn from Sadler and the engines, not just from a training and opening perspective, but also on the middlegame. Chapters include ones on how the engines handle closed structures, as in the French, their use of rooks along the third rank, pawn sacrifices and especially the advance of the rook's pawn, as made famous by not just Simon Williams, but also *AlphaZero*. We'll have a full review next month.



The Sinquefield Chess Generation: Young Guns at Work

Alex Colovic, 274 pages, paperback
 RRP £26.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £24.25**
 Inspired by the manner in which Botvinnik

studied all Bronstein's games ahead of their world championship match, experienced grandmaster Colovic decided to examine the play of six rising American stars. By looking at the games of the Sinquefield-supported generation, he aims to reveal how they improved, as well as the preferences and strengths of each player. Along the way Colovic provides plenty of practical pointers whilst uncovering much of interest in the play of John Burke, Akshat Chandra, Awonder Liang, Sam Sevian, Andrew Tang and Jeffery Xiong.



The Vienna Gambit for the Club Player
 Colin Payne & Mike Read,
 216 pages, paperback
 RRP £11.99 **SUBSCRIBERS £10.79**

This self-published work sees club player Colin Payne take a detailed look at his favourite Vienna Gambit. Written with a view to both presenting some interest new ideas from the engines and introducing other club players to 1 e4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♗f6 3 f4, Payne's enthusiasm is clear and much of the analysis of interest. The book even suggests that after 3...d5, White can consider 4 exd5, as well as the standard 4 fxe5, while each chapter contains an illustrative game annotated in some depth by the strong correspondence IM Mike Read.



Your Jungle Guide to Unbalancing Your Opponents
 Dorsa & Borna Derakhshani,
 408 pages, paperback

RRP £28.95 **SUBSCRIBERS £26.05**

Both FM Borna, in the UK where he plays for Wood Green in the 4NCL, and WGM Dorsa, in the USA where she studies at Saint Louis University, are popular players who have made a name for themselves. They are both quite dynamic in style and also great fighters at the board, perhaps unsurprisingly considering how they've had to relocate from their native Iran. The siblings combine to present a number of useful "Tips & Tricks" in their debut and often highly original work. Practical as well as often neglected subjects tend to dominate, including very handy advice offered on how to prepare, when to grab material, how to find ways to keep grinding and on the psychology of the game.

