

OCTOBER 2014

50MOVESMAGAZINE.COM



# Moves

**Tromso Interviews**  
Natalia Pogonina  
Wang Yue

**Ian Rogers**  
Olympiad Recap

**Guy West**  
Feast of Draw Offers

**Anton Smirnov**

**‘I could play  
professionally’**

**Junta Ikeda**  
Stalemate Studies



**Max Illingworth**  
h3 Najdorf



**Chris Wallis**  
Endgame Lessons

#### EDITORS

Moulthun Ly

Fedja Zulfic

#### MAIN CONTRIBUTORS

Ian Rogers

Max Illingworth

Junta Ikeda

Chris Wallis

Guy West

#### GUEST CONTRIBUTORS

Anton Smirnov

#### PHOTOGRAPHY

Cathy Rogers

Eteri Kublashvili

Sergey Sorokhtin

#### 50 Moves Magazine ©

New issues are released on the first day of every second month; February, April, June, August, October and December.

#### Email:

support@50movesmagazine.com

#### Website:

50movesmagazine.com

ABN: 90822679591

# Becoming Digital

Thanks for reading the second issue of 50 Moves and supporting the magazine.

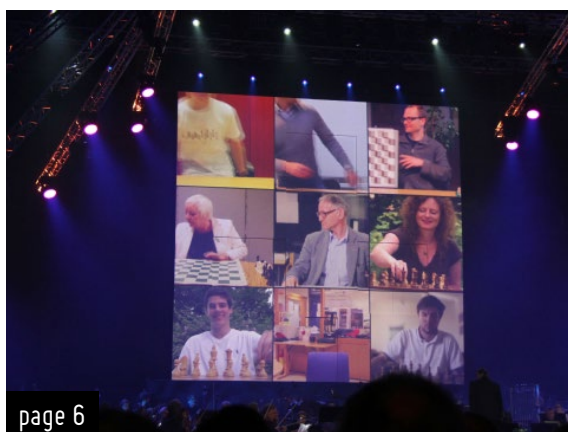
We've been working hard on incorporating your feedback from the first issue and making the magazine even better. To those who have been subscribed since the first issue, we appreciate your patience as we navigate our way through the first stages of publishing a magazine and a few hiccups we've had on the way. Any complaints about proofreading can now be directed to Junta Ikeda :)

We're also working on an exciting piece of software which will allow us to make the magazine more interactive and provide you with even more exciting content - we anticipate that this will be ready for the next issue.

In the meantime, we hope that you enjoy reading the second issue. We cover the action from the Tromsø Olympiad where both Australian teams performed admirably, Max Illingworth brings you the latest on the h3 Najdorf and Guy West takes a trip down memory lane. Chris' article is sure to teach you something new about endgames, Andrew explores some important questions, while Junta's selection of studies are simply stunning.

Happy reading!

Fedja Zulfic and Moulthun Ly



# Contents

## 6 OLYMPIAD REPORTS

Find out what happened during the Olympiad with round-by-round reports from Ian Rogers and Moulthun Ly. See all the exciting games and crucial moments that decided each match.

## 110 THREE WAYS TO BEAT AN IM

Max Illingworth takes us through some examples of typical mistakes made at this level and provides recommendations on how to exploit them.

## 114 JUST ANOTHER STEP

A chat with Australia's youngest chess talent and best performing team member, Anton Smirnov, who earned his IM title at the Olympiad and is sure to scale great heights in the future.

## 124 100TH MEMBER OF CHIGORIN CLUB

Magnus' losses at the Olympiad saw the inclusion of two new members to the club.

## 162 h3 Najdorf (Part 1)

Max Illingworth explores this new and very trendy opening variation of the Najdorf in a two-part survey.

## 168 STUDIES

Junta Ikeda shares six amazing stalemate themed studies from his collection for you to solve.

## 170 ENDGAMES

Chris Wallis continues his thorough examination of rook and pawn endgames.

## 174 CHESS HUMOUR

Guy West looks at his old scoresheets. You'll never look at him or Darryl the same way again :)

## 180 CHESS PSYCHOLOGY

Andrew Brown takes a look at the self-imposed limitations and what they mean for your chess.



# Tromsø 2014

While Kasparov's push to become FIDE President was ultimately and predictably (and unfortunately!) unsuccessful, the Tromsø Olympiad did still see a changing of the guard in one sense. China surprised everyone in the Open section to break the European stranglehold on the event and take home gold despite missing several of their 2700+ stars.

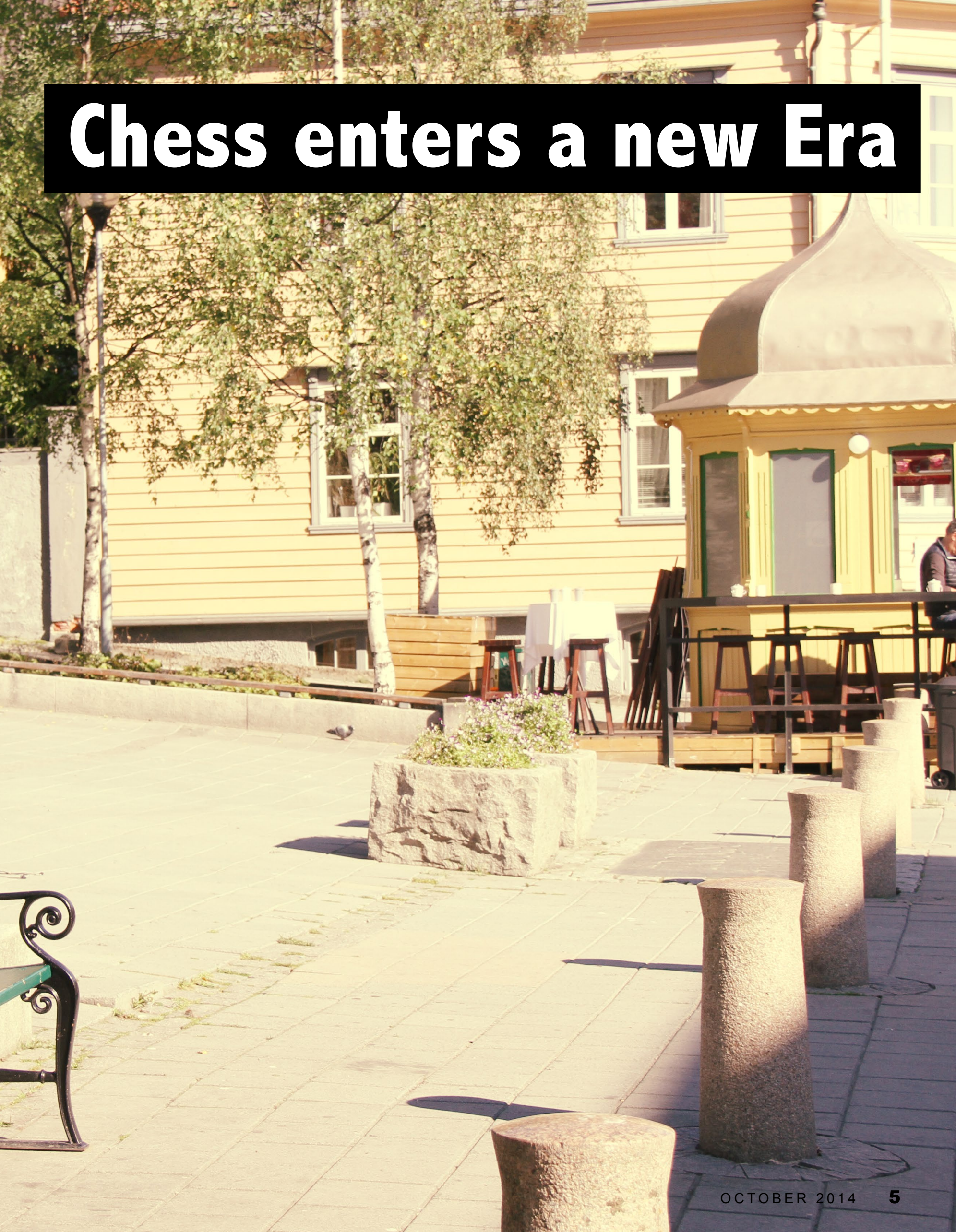
In the Women's section, Russia fought off strong competition to claim their third victory in a row after a dispute with the Local Organising Committee almost derailed their title defence before it even began.

For Australia, the results were largely positive. IM Moulthun Ly and GM Ian Rogers covered the performances with detailed round-by-round articles below.





# Chess enters a new Era





# Australia at the Olympiad (Open Team)

by Moulthun Ly

Tromsø saw the continuation of a generational change in the Open team. Veteran IMs Stephen Solomon and Aleks Wohl made way for debutants IM Junta Ikeda and FM Anton Smirnov, who would go on to make his IM title at the Olympiad, leaving GM David Smerdon as the oldest member of the team on Board 1.

With an average age of just 21, the team performed above expectations. Seeded 60th from 172 teams, Australia managed 14 match points and placed 31st, winning the silver medal in category B. With a number of other young players knocking on the door, the future looks promising for Australian chess.

		<b>Round 1</b>					
60	Australia	-	146	US Virgin Isles		4 : 0	
GM	Smerdon, David	-	IM	Van Rensselaer, William		1 - 0	
IM	Ly, Moulthun	-	CM	Massana, Jorge		1 - 0	
FM	Ikeda, Junta	-		Creswell, Reece		1 - 0	
FM	Smirnov, Anton	-		Mongiello, Anthony		1 - 0	

The first round saw Australia cruise through relatively comfortably to a 4-0 win. Most of the boards finished quickly with the exception of myself. The game dragged on into a better endgame which I eventually converted with some care.

		<b>Round 2</b>					
60	Australia	-	4	Armenia		1 : 3	
GM	Smerdon, David	-	GM	Aronian, Levon		½ - ½	
IM	Ly, Moulthun	-	GM	Sargissian, Gabriel		0 - 1	
IM	Illingworth, Max	-	GM	Movsesian, Sergei		½ - ½	
FM	Ikeda, Junta	-	GM	Akopian, Vladimir		0 - 1	





**LEFT**  
Kramnik is intrigued  
by David's exchange  
sacrifice

*Photo: Cathy Rogers*

One of the great aspects of Olympiads is the opportunity to encounter teams/players we would otherwise never meet over the board. Armenia were the defending champions so it was our mission to make life as difficult as possible for them. That we did. David managed to hold a draw against then world No. 2 Levon Aronian after playing one of the most interesting exchange sacrifices I've seen after he reached a transposition from a Portuguese line he had written about in his soon-to-be published book. I managed to keep the position balanced until the time control but unfortunately missed a nice in-between move which simplified the position. Max had the most interesting position and looked to be clearly winning at some point though a series of slight inaccuracies allowed Movsesian to escape with a draw. Junta's king safety proved to be a big problem on Board 4.



**LEFT**  
Playing Aronian's opening  
line catches his attention!

*Photo: Cathy Rogers*





## Round 3



104	El Salvador	-	60	Australia	2 : 2
IM	Arias, Lemnys A.	-	GM	Smerdon, David	0 - 1
FM	Arias, Daniel	-	IM	Illingworth, Max	1 - 0
IM	Burgoes Figueroa, Carlos E.	-	FM	Ikeda, Junta	1 - 0
CM	Giron, Jorge Ernesto	-	FM	Smirnov, Anton	0 - 1

This round saw some upsets on our part. Anton was never really in any danger and was the first to win. David was playing it smart and always keeping two results at hand, eventually converting. Junta was on the receiving end of a kingside attack from White which proved too difficult to save with a piece out of play. Max seemed to be on top for most of the game, although like myself may have underestimated the Black exchange sacrifice. He had the opportunity to win his opponent's queen but, believing his opponent could create a fortress with the two knights, chose not to and then blundered.

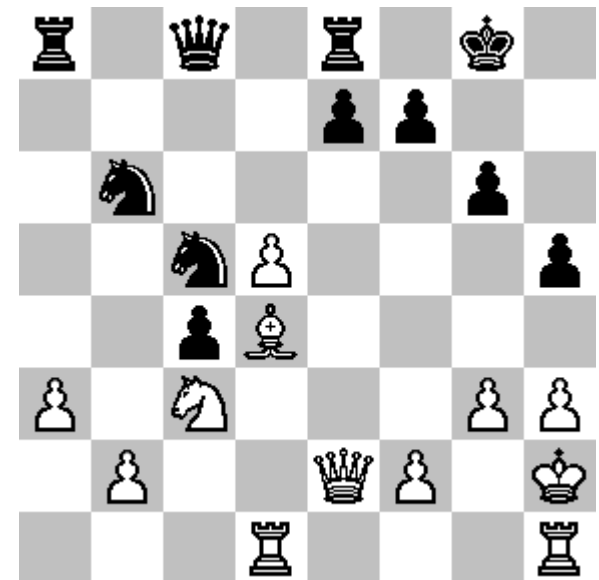
**Smirnov, Anton** 2334 *White*

**Giron, Jorge Ernesto** 2103 *Black*

41st Olympiad Open, 3.4,  
(Australia v El Salvador)

White is already much better, but Black's next move lets Anton finish off the game in style.

**23...e5?! 24.Bxc5 Qxc5 25.Ne4 Qe7 26.d6 Qe6  
27.d7 Red8 28.Rd6 1-0**



**Illingworth, Max** 2439 *White*

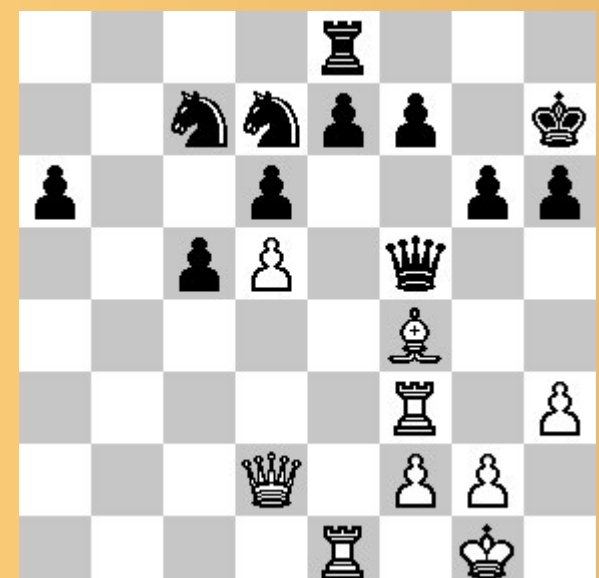
**Arias, Daniel** 2126 *Black*

41st Olympiad Open, 3.2,  
(Australia v El Salvador)

White can win a piece or Black's queen with the immediate Bxd6 which should soon force Black's resignation.

**26.Qa5? 26...Nb5 27.Bxd6?** One move later and the same idea is not so effective

**27...Qxd5 28.Rxe7??** Unfortunately missing a relatively simple tactic. **28...Qd1+ 29.Qe1 Qxe1+ 0-1**







# Round 4



74	ICCD	-	60	Australia	1½:2½
GM	Gruenfeld, Yehuda	-	GM	Smerdon, David	1 - 0
IM	Collutiis, Duilio	-	IM	Ly, Moulthun	½ - ½
IM	Klasan, Vladimir	-	IM	Illingworth, Max	0 - 1
	Ghadimi, Mohammed Reza	-	FM	Smirnov, Anton	0 - 1

David got a nice position from his opening preparation but allowed White to get his king to safety towards the endgame and ended up losing. I missed a decisive opportunity to break through and had to accept a draw. Max and Anton got the job done on the lower boards and brought the team an important victory.



**Taking on Italy without Caruana in Round 5 who are very strong nonetheless**

*Photo by Cathy Rogers*

# Three Ways to Beat an IM

by Max Illingworth

## Game 1

**Klasav, Vladimir** 2365 *White*

**Illingworth, Max** 2439 *Black*

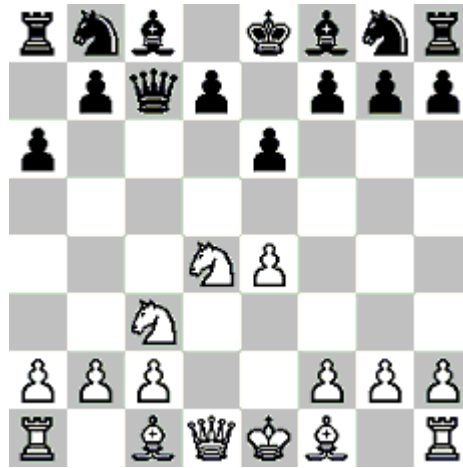
41st Olympiad Open, 4.3,  
(ICCD v Australia)

I nearly named this article ‘Six Ways to Beat an International Master’, given that I made some quite serious mistakes in all three of my wins that I’ll be presenting here! The context of this article is the 2014 Tromsø Olympiad, where I scored 3/3 against the IMs I played in the tournament. I didn’t follow up that consistency at either the Kecskemet August GM tournament for the First Saturday September GM tournament, but nonetheless we can learn a lot by studying the mistakes typically occurring in IM practice. In this first game we will learn the first, and perhaps the simplest, way to beat an IM: get them into a position that you understand and they don’t. It works at almost every level actually!

**1.e4 c5** 1...e5 would be the ‘match strategy’ move, but I really needed a win to have the opportunity to play against Italy.]

**2.Nf3 e6 3.Nc3 a6** Following the ‘Delchev’ approach of playing a Kan setup against Nc3 lines and the Taimanov against the Maroczy Bind.

**4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Qc7** This setup’s advantage is also its disadvantage – White has a lot of plans here and all of them should leave White at least not worse. So to come up with a move that does leave White worse requires some skill.



**6.g4?** Played after a four-minute think. Clearly White just killed his entire kingside and if I play in normal Taimanov fashion, I will get in ...Ne7-g6 and dominate the entire dark-squared complex. Unfortunately, I got a bit punch drunk and tried to refute White’s audaciously bad move. Lesson learned: Don’t try to refute the International Master’s first bad move (not as Black anyway). Allow them to make one or two more, and then pounce.

**6...Bb4** I doubt this can be bad given that it is a good response to the more sensible 6.g3. 6...b5 7.Bg2 Bb7 followed by Ne7-g6 and if necessary ...Bd6 would have been a simple way to dominate the dark squares and establish a positional advantage. 8.0-0 Nc6 (the immediate ...Ne7 fails to the sack on b5) 9.Nxc6 Qxc6 10.a3 Bc5 and White’s position makes no sense. He just weakened his own king with g4.

**7.Nde2 Nf6?!** Again, I tried way too hard to force things to happen and as a result, made my opponent play some good moves!

7...Nc6 in the style of the Taimanov would be normal. If 8.Bg2 Nge7 9.a3 Bc5 Black will play ...e5 and ...d6 later, with a very active and harmonious position.

**8.a3 Ba5?** This was completely stupid as it is obvious that the bishop is better on a7 than b6 when White goes b4. Well, I’m not sure what causes me to play so moronically, but even if I did know I wouldn’t be publishing it!

8...Bc5 9.b4 Ba7 10.Bf4 still gives White some sort of initiative, but it isn’t as bad as after ...e5 Bg5 I am at least not faced with a fork after Bxf6 and Nd5, as I would be with the bishop on b6.

10...Qc4! would keep Black afloat, although after (10...Qc6 11.Qd3 Nxc4 12.Qf3 (12.Nd4? Qb6 is the other clever point behind having the bishop on a7. A cute battery indeed!) 12...f5 13.0-0 e5 14.Nd5! is a strange computer line, but apparently very good for White whether Black grabs material or not.)

11.Bg2! Nxc4 12.0-0 e5 (I doubt Black can survive a position with the bishop entrenched on d6) 13.Bg5 0-0 14.h3 f6 15.Bc1 Nh6 16.Bxh6 gxh6 Black is only positionally worse as opposed to getting completely hacked up.)

**9.b4 Bb6 10.h3?!**

10.Bf4! would be very strong, especially as Black doesn’t have the ...Qb6 resource in response to Nd4 that we saw with the bishop on a7.



10...Qc6 (10...e5 11.g5! Nxe4 12.Nxe4 exf4 13.Qd6! gives White an enduring initiative in the endgame due to Black's problems developing and the insecurity of his king.)

11.Qd3 and now I'd have to settle for 11...0-0, letting White walk all over me with g5, Bd6 etc as (11...Nxc4? 12.Nd4 Bxd4 13.Qxd4± f6 14.b5! axb5 15.Bd6 is no fun at all.)



**10...d5?!** Another case of the same mistake: trying too hard to force matters when the position was fine for me by playing 'happy moves'.

10...Nc6 11.Bg2 0-0 was the obvious and correct continuation. After 12.0-0 d6 we simply have a good Keres Attack for Black, where White weakened himself with b4 and the dark-squared bishop is much more active on b6 than e7.

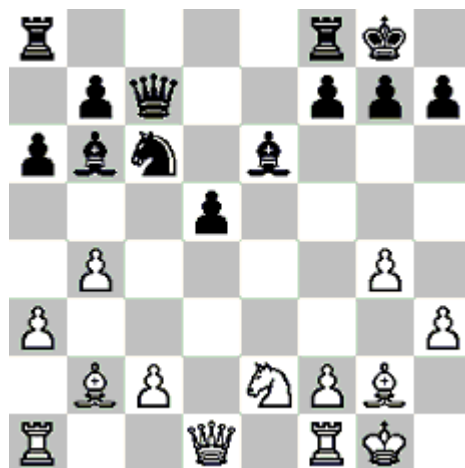
**11.exd5** 11.Bf4!? e5 12.Bg3 d4 13.g5! could have been a lot of fun to have on the board, but the game continuation is better.

**11...Nxd5 12.Nxd5 exd5 13.Bb2** A puzzling move as White knows he will play Bg2/0-0, whereas the ideal placement of the dark-squared bishop depends on how Black plays.

13.Bg2 Be6 (13...0-0 14.Bf4) 14.Bf4 (14.Bxd5 Nc6 15.c4 0-0 16.Bf4 Qe7 and ...Rad8 will give Black enough

compensation for the pawn due to White's problems completing development and his exposed king position.) 14...Qc4 however should still be about equal, though it's not like the equality in the game where White had to be more careful.

**13...0-0 14.Bg2 Be6 15.0-0 Nc6**



**16.Kh1?**

My opponent wants to attack with f4-f5, but it's a bad idea, not least because I can hit first with ...f5 myself. 16.Qd2 was correct, with the threat of Bxg7 and perpetual check if nothing else! Then the position should be equal, though I would be more comfortable playing Black.

**16...Rad8 17.Qd2**



**17...d4!**

A very nice move to block out my opponent's bishop and activate the e6-bishop

too. Indeed, as soon as I played normal moves and gave my opponent chances to make some decisions, he didn't make good ones.

**18.Rad1?** White was already in serious trouble as he has problems defending his king, but 18.Rfe1 had to be tried, to have Ng3 ready in response to ...f5.

**18...f5 19.gxf5 Bxf5 20.Ng3 Bg6** I wanted to keep the option of ...d3 option, but 20...Be6 intending ...Bc4 may be an even better way to do it.



**21.Rde1?**

This looks like it defends the kingside but doesn't do anything to defend the particularly tender squares on the f-file.

21.c4! was the only chance, seeking counterplay with c5 and f4 to constrict the dark-squared bishop, though 21... dxc3 (21...Qf7 22.f4 Qxc4 23.f5 Be8 24.Ne4 Ne5 is also possible, but at least gives White counterplay after 25.Qg5 .) 22.Qxc3 Rxd1 23.Qb3+ Qf7 24.Qxd1 Rd8 25.Qg4 Rd2 is still very good for Black.

**21...Ne5 22.Qg5 Nf3 23.Bxf3 Rxf3**

Now it is winning for Black due to a much safer king, bishop pair, superior pawn structure and an extra pawn once c2 falls.

24.Re6 Rdf8 25.Rxb6 Qxb6 26.Qd5+ Kh8 or 26...R8f7 27.Bxd4 Qb5 –+

27.Bxd4 Qc6 27...Qb5 28.Qxb5 axb5–+ was again even better as this way it is harder (actually, impossible) for White to advance his queenside majority.

28.Qxc6 bxc6 29.Re1 If 29.c3 Rxc3

29...Bxc2 30.Kg2 R3f7 31.h4 Bb3 32.h5 h6 33.Kg1 Rd8 Now there are plenty of ways for Black to win but I really liked how I finished things off with a mating attack.

34.Re4 Bd1 35.Bb2 Rd2 36.Bd4 Bf3 37.Re8+ Kh7 38.Bc5 Rf4 39.Re1 Rh4 0–1



Klasan - Illingworth after 23...Rxf3



# Round 5



60	Australia	20	Italy	1 : 3
GM	Smerdon, David	GM	David, Alberto	½ - ½
IM	Ly, Moulthun	GM	Vocaturo, Daniele	0 - 1
IM	Illingworth, Max	GM	Brunello, Sabino	0 - 1
FM	Smirnov, Anton	GM	Dvirnyy, Danyyil	½ - ½

Even without their star player Fabiano Caruana the Italians had a strong lineup. I placed too much value on the bishop pair and was worse after they were walled off by my opponent’s pawns, while Max made a fatal blunder which cost him two pawns and the game.

At that point, David was a pawn down and so accepted his opponent’s draw offer. Anton had the best chance to win but an inaccuracy allowed his opponent to reach a drawn endgame.



# Round 6



60	Australia	111	Botswana	3½: ½
IM	Ly, Moulthun	CM	Gaealafshwe, Barileng	½ - ½
IM	Illingworth, Max	FM	Khetho, Phemelo	1 – 0
FM	Ikeda, Junta	CM	Olebile, Thato	1 – 0
FM	Smirnov, Anton		Notha, Moakofi	1 - 0

Round 6 saw David taking his first rest, giving me my first opportunity to play on first board. We needed a convincing win against a lower rated team. All of my teammates won without trouble but after having a slightly better position all game I decided to offer a draw after a series of move repetitions.





## Round 7



46	Mexico	-	60	Australia	½: 3½
GM	Gonzalez Zamora, Juan Carlos	-	GM	Smerdon, David	½ - ½
GM	Leon Hoyos, Manuel	-	IM	Ly, Moulthun	0 - 1
GM	Hernandez Guerrero, Gilberto	-	FM	Ikeda, Junta	0 - 1
CM	Torres Rosas, Luis Carlos	-	FM	Smirnov, Anton	0 - 1

We all knew we had a chance this round, despite the excellent individual performances of the Mexican players. I held a slight advantage on the white side of a Dragon after which Manuel made a few passive moves and allowed his bishop to get trapped. Junta played well into his Kan preparation, reaching a slightly more active endgame. David had a slightly preferable position but the opposite-colored bishops endgame proved nothing more than a draw.

At this point, Anton was only a win away from reaching a live rating of 2400. With the norms already in the bag, it would guarantee him the title. Knowing the circumstances, he chose a relatively quiet exchange variation in the King's Indian. His opponent looked to have equalised but then followed with a series of blunders allowing Anton to win and secure his IM title.



**Australia took down Botswana in Round 6**

*Photo by Cathy Rogers*

ANTON SMIRNOV

# JUST ANOTHER STEP

Interview with Australia's Youngest Talent





## FEATURE INTERVIEW

*Anton Smirnov is Australia's greatest ever chess hope, having won the Australian Junior Championships, Australasian Masters and making his IM title at the tender age of 13. After a brave decision from the selectors to pick him in the side, he finished his first Olympiad as Australia's best performer with a remarkable 7.5/9 on Board 5. We caught up with Anton and found out more about this remarkable talent.*

***Your dad put your name in for the Olympiad team without your knowledge, how did it feel when he told you that you were selected in the team?***

I felt excited when my dad told me that I was selected to play in the Olympiad because I was happy to represent Australia and go to another country to play chess.

***What were your general impressions of Tromsø and the Olympiad? What did you enjoy the most? How did it feel to play next to some of the world's best players and were you excited to see any of them in particular?***

In my opinion the Olympiad was organised quite well. It is not easy to organise such a massive event in such an expensive country like Norway. I think that Tromsø is a unique place. In particular I enjoyed the fact that there are mountains in Tromsø that you can climb up. I climbed up one of the mountains twice. I even fell once when I was going down. I also felt excited playing next to many of the world's best players.

***You went there without your parents which must have been daunting. How did you get along with the rest of the team?***

I think I got along quite well with everybody on the team. We played a lot of Mafia/Resistance.

***How old were you when you started chess? What did you find so interesting about the game to pursue it in the way you have now?***

I started to play chess when I was 4 and a half. I found chess interesting by looking at how my dad was playing.

***Your father is an IM in his own right (you've finally overtaken him now!). How much of an influence do you think he's had on your chess thus far?***

I think my dad had a large influence on my chess so far by helping me in many different ways.

***Can you tell us about your weekly routine? How much time do you spend on chess, and what sort of training do you do?***

I do tactics each day either on computer or from books. I regularly look at my openings and try to improve them. I also study endgames once in a while. I usually have lessons with my coach twice a week.

***Have you thought about how far you would like to go in chess? Would you consider playing professionally if you had the opportunity?***

I haven't really thought about how far I can go but if I was one of the best players then I could play professionally.

***You have a younger brother who is now 3 years old. Has he shown any interest in chess? Would like to teach him?***

My younger brother hasn't yet shown any interest in chess. Maybe in a couple of years I could teach him.

***What do you like to do apart from chess?***

As most other kids of my age I go to school. I also play tennis and soccer.

**'I haven't really thought about how far I can go'**



**Anton attending the press conference with Susan Polgar**

*Photo by Cathy Rogers*

*You're becoming famous for knowing fascinating trivia questions – can you give us five of your best for our readers?*

(Questions to the right)

I also have a chess-related problem that I came up with.

**Bonus:** Can one bishop and a king win against 32 same-coloured bishops of the opposite colour and a king?

## Take Anton's Quiz

(solutions page 73)

**1.**

**What are the two double-landlocked countries in the world?**

**2.**

**How many countries are there in Africa?**

**3.**

**How old was the oldest person that ever lived?**

**4.**

**What year was André Danican Philidor born?**

**5.**

**How many years was Emanuel Lasker World Champion?**



## FEATURE ANALYSIS



Annotations by Anton Smirnov

**Smirnov, A 2328**

**Torres Rosas, L 2462**

Tromsø Olympiad 2014

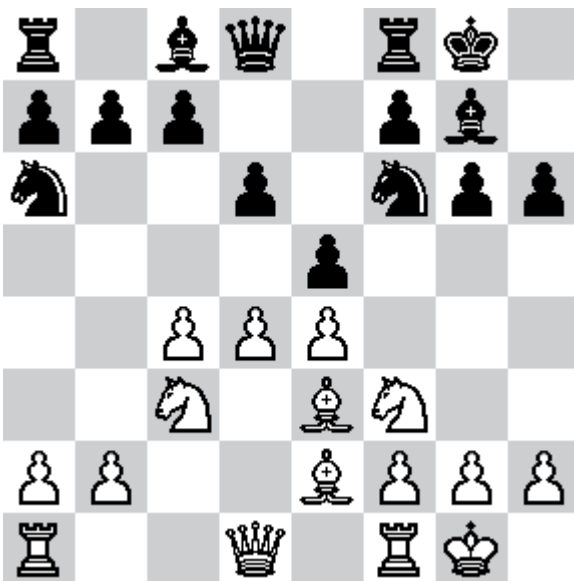
Before this game my live rating was 2390. If I would win this game my rating would cross 2400 and this would give me the International Master title.

Before the game I prepared the King's Indian.

**1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 Bg7 4. e4 d6 5. Nf3 O-O 6. Be2 e5 7. O-O Na6**

7... Nc6 8. d5 Ne7 The main line.

**8. Be3 h6?! (D)**



This isn't the best move and the fourth popular move even though Radjabov played this.

8... Ng4!? 9. Bg5 Qe8 10. dxe5 dxe5 11. h3 +=

**9. dxe5**

9. Ne1!? An interesting idea. 9... Ng4

(9... c6 10. Qd2 Kh7 11. Rd1 Ng4 12. Bxg4 Bxg4 13. f3 Be6 14. d5 cxd5 15. Nxd5 Nc7 16. Nxc7 Qxc7 17. b3 +/- With a large advantage. 1-0 (38) Van Wely,L (2647)-Gallagher,J (2531) Ledyards 2006)

10. Bxg4 Bxg4 11. Qd2 !?

(11. f3 Bd7 12. Qd2 Kh7 13. Rd1 f5 14. dxe5 Bxe5 15. c5 Bxc3 16. Qxc3 fxe4 17. cxd6 cxd6 18. Qd2 g5 19. h4 Bb5 20. Rf2 g4 21. fxe4 Bc6 22. Rxf8 Qxf8 23. Qxd6 Bxe4 24. Qe6 Bc6 25. Rd6 1-0 (25) Golod,V (2589)-Areshchenko,A (2645) Port Erin 2007)

11... exd4 12. Bxd4 Qg5 13. Be3 Qh4 14. Nc2 Be6 15. Bd4 f6 16. f4 c5 17. Bf2 Qh5 18. Ne3 f5 19. Qxd6 Rfe8 20. Rad1 fxe4 21. Nxe4 g5 22. f5 Bf7 23. Nf6+ Bxf6 24. Qxf6 Re4 25. Rd7 Rae8 26. g4 Rxc4+ 27. Nxc4 Qxc4+ 28. Bg3 1-0 (28) Ivanisevic,I (2658)-Markus,R (2616) Murska Sobota 2008)

**9... Ng4**

9... dxe5 10. Qc1 Ng4 11. Bd2 Kh7 12. h3 Nf6 13. Be3 Nd7 (13... Qe7 14. Nd5 Qd8 15. Nxf6+ Qxf6 16. c5 Nb4 17. Rd1 a6 18. Bc4 Qe7 19. c6 Nxc6 20. Bd5 Nd4 21. Nxd4 exd4 22. Bxd4 Bxd4 23. Rxd4 c6 24. Bb3 Be6 25. Bxe6 Qxe6 26. Qd2 1-0 (41) Vazquez Igarza,R (2565)-Calistri,T (2349) Cappelle la Grande 2013)

14. Rd1 c6 15. c5 Nc7 16. b4 Qe7 17. a3

(17. Rb1!? f5 18. exf5 gxf5 19. b5 +/-)

17... f5 18. exf5 gxf5 19. Bc4 e4 20. Nd4 Ne5 21. Nce2 Nxc4 22. Qxc4 Be6 23. Qc2 Nd5 24. Nf4 Bg8 25. Rab1 Rad8 26.

Nxd5 Bxd5 27. Ne2 Be5 28. Nf4 Rg8 29. g3 Qf7 30. Qe2 Bc4 31. Qe1 1/2-1/2 (55) Grandelius,N (2557)-Radjabov,T (2715) Warsaw 2013)

**10. Bd2 Nxe5 11. Nxe5 dxe5 12. Qc1 Qh4**

12... Kh7 ?! 13. Rd1 Qh4 14. g3 Qh3 15. Be3 +=

**13. g3 Qh3 14. Nd5 c6 15. Ne7+ Kh7 16. Nxc8 += Qxc8 (D)**

The opening phase ended with white having the two bishops and a small edge.



**17. c5 Nc7 18. Qc4 f5**

18... Nb5!? 19. Be3 Nd4 20. Bxd4 exd4 21. Bd3 += The opposite-coloured endgame is favourable for White.

**19. exf5 gxf5 20. Rad1 Nd5!?**

20... Ne6?! 21. Bc3 Qe8 22. Rd6 +/-

**21. f3 Kh8 22. Bd3 Qe6 23. g4 f4 24. Rfe1 +/-**

White has a clear advantage from the b1-h7 diagonal, the weak g7 bishop and White's centralised pieces.

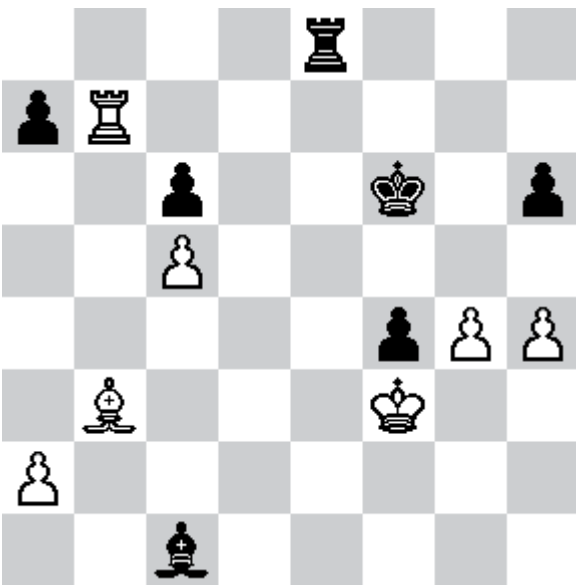
## FEATURE ANALYSIS

**24...Rad8 25. Qe4?** When I was calculating 25.Qe4 Nf6 26.Qg6 I blundered that after Qd5 Black was threatening to take on f3.

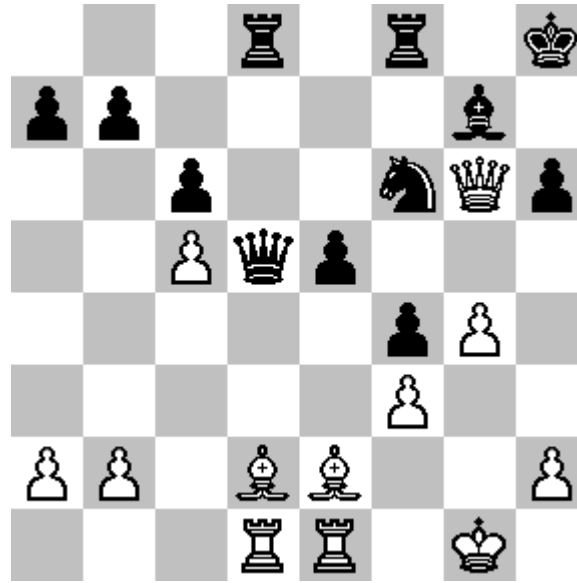
25. Bb1!? This calm move is very strong. Qg8 26. Qc2 +/-

**25... Nf6 26. Qg6 ?!**

26. Qc4 !? White should have returned but the position is still equal. Qxc4 27. Bxc4 Rd4 28. Bb3 e4 29. Bc3 Rxd1 30. Rxd1 exf3 31. Bxf6 Bxf6 32. Kf2 Bxb2 33. Kxf3 Re8 34. Rd6 Kg7 35. Rd7+ Kf6 36. h4 Bc1 37. Rxb7 **(D)** = Ending in a completely equal opposite-coloured bishop ending.



**26... Qd5 27. Be2**



**27... Qxc5+ ?** Fortunately my opponent chose the wrong option.

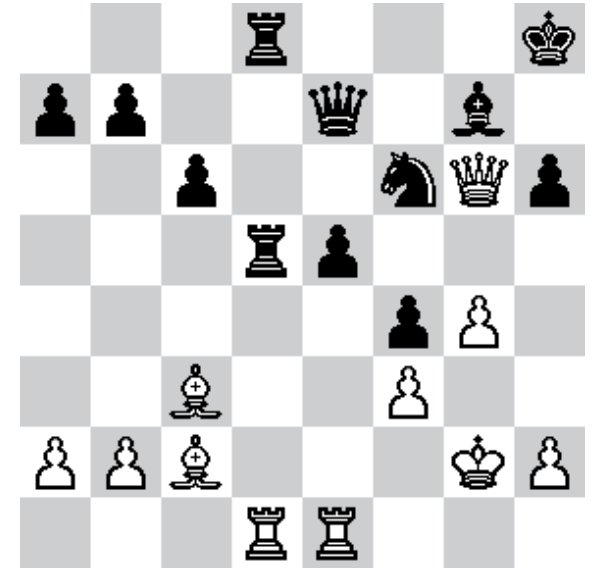
27... Qd4+! 28. Kf1 Qxb2 29. Bc1 Qxa2 30. Rd6 e4 -+ Black has a massive advantage.

**28. Kg2 Rd5 29. Bc3 Qd6 30. Bd3 Rd8?**

My opponent was already in time trouble and chose the losing move.

30... Qc7!? 31. Bf5 Qf7 32. Qxf7 Rxf7 33. Be6 Rxd1 34. Rxd1 Re7 35. Rd8+ Re8 36. Rc8 Rxc8 37. Bxc8 b6 38. Bxe5 Nd5 39. Bd6 Bxb2 40. Bb7 Bc3 41. Bb8 a5 42. Bxc6 Nb4 43. Bd7 Bd2 44. Be5+ Kg8 += White is pushing for the win.

**31. Bc2 Qe7**



**32.Bxe5 Rxe5 33. Rxe5 1-0**

After the game I was happy for becoming an International Master but mildly disappointed for blundering a pawn.



## Round 8



33	Uzbekistan	60	Australia	3 : 1
GM	Kasimdzhanov, Rustam	GM	Smerdon, David	1 – 0
GM	Filippov, Anton	IM	Ly, Moulthun	½ - ½
GM	Dzhumaev, Marat	IM	Illingworth, Max	½ - ½
FM	Tillyaev, Ulugbek	FM	Ikeda, Junta	1 - 0

This was one of the most critical matches for us. Although our opponent had very strong players on the higher boards, we were hoping to strike on the lower boards. Kasimdzhanov had already come off several impressive wins and his pawn sacrifice in the French caught David off-guard. My opponent played an interesting line, which seemed to provide quick equality against the Catalan. Junta had a nice opening, before making a very risky decision to collect a piece. The position was murky but difficult to hold with little time. A series of small mistakes soon pushed the endgame out of reach. Max was definitely winning throughout but never quite found the finish. The match was quite tense, perhaps not reflected in the scoreline.





# Round 9



60	Australia	-	75	Portugal	2½:1½
GM	Smerdon, David	-	IM	Dias, Paulo	0 – 1
IM	Illingworth, Max	-	IM	Ferreira, Jorge Viterbo	1 – 0
FM	Ikeda, Junta	-	IM	Rocha, Sergio	1 – 0
FM	Smirnov, Anton	-		Santos, Hugo Lima	½ – ½

Anton managed to avoid the curse of losing the game after earning a title, equalising fairly comfortably and holding a draw. Junta obtained a nice Catalan position and converted nicely with the stronger bishops while Max dispatched his second IM of the Olympiad to clinch the match, David tried in vain to save a slightly worse endgame; pawns on both sides of the board meant that his opponents rook was too powerful for the minor pieces.

**Ikeda, Junta** 2402 *White*  
**Rocha, Sergio** 2393 *Black*  
 41st Olympiad Open, 9.3,  
 (Australia v Portugal)

5/8 at an Olympiad does not sound too bad, but when it only comprised of decisive games and the losses were very poor play on my part, I wasn't very happy with my performance. However, the team finished excellently (as David has mentioned, we all get along very well and were always helping each other out), we all enjoyed the two weeks in Tromsø and playing at an Olympiad for the first time is an inspiring experience for sure.

My best game was probably against Mexican GM Hernandez Guerrero from Round 7, but I found this game from the match against Portugal also very interesting.

**1.Nf3 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.g3 0–0 5.Bg2 d5 6.cxd5 Nxd5 7.0–0**

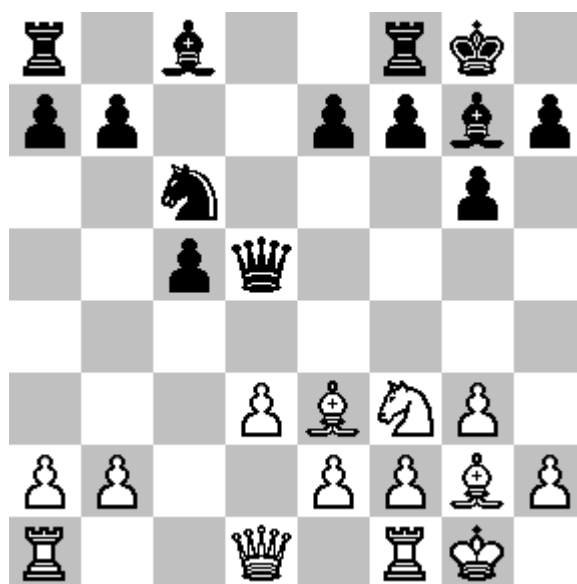
7.h4!? is an ambitious variation I want to play in a game.

**7...c5**

A GM had played 7...Nc6 against me a couple of weeks earlier. 8.d4 Bf5 9.Ne1 Be6 10.Nc2 Nxc3 11.bxc3 Na5 12.e4 c5

13.e5 cxd4 14.cxd4 Rc8 15.Bf4 f6 16.Re1 Qd7 17.d5 fxe5 18.Bxe5 Bg4 19.f3 Bxe5 20.Rxe5 Qd6 21.Re1 Bd7 22.Ne3 Nc4 1/2–1/2 Ikeda,J (2402)-Cornette,M (2532), Politiken Cup (5.11), 24.07.14

**8.Nxd5 Qxd5 9.d3 Nc6 10.Be3**



**10...Qd6**

10...Bd7 is more critical, and Black approaches equality after 11.Nd4 Qd6 12.Nxc6 (12.Nb5 Qe5) 12...Bxc6 13.Bxc6 Qxc6 14.Rc1 Qd5 (14...Qa6 and; 14...Qe6 are also fine.)

**11.Rc1 Nd4 12.Nxd4 cxd4**

12...Bxd4 13.Bxd4 cxd4 (13...Qxd4 14.Qc2 Bg4 15.h3 Be6 16.b3) 14.Qa4 is pleasant for White.

**13.Bf4** 13.Bd2 also scores well for White in practice. **13...Qb6**

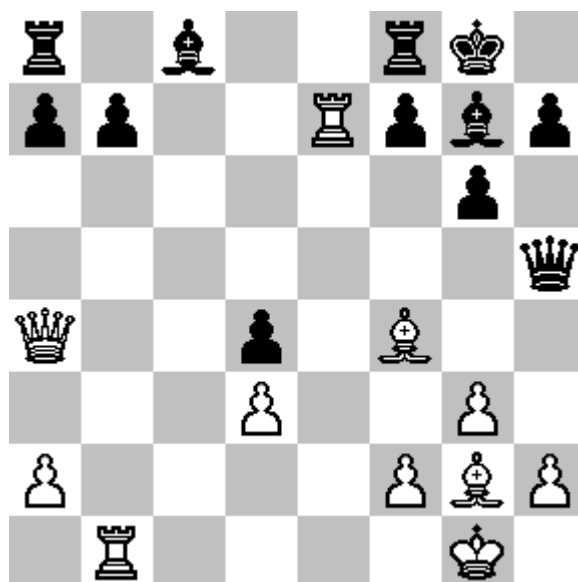
13...e5 14.Bd2 White scores +12 =7 –0 from here in the database!; 13...Be5 14.Bxe5 Qxe5 15.Qc2 does not look like much fun for Black, either.

**14.Qa4** White's queen, c1–rook and two bishops control many squares. **14...Qxb2?!**

14...e5 was probably the best chance for Black, as after 15.Bg5 (15.Bd2 Bg4 (15...Be6?! 16.Qb4! or) ) 15...Be6 things are much better than in the game.

**15.Rb1 Qxe2 16.Rfe1 Qh5 16...Qxd3 17.Be4 Qc3 18.Rec1** and the queen is trapped.

**17.Rxe7**



With all of White's pieces in great positions, it's difficult to find good moves for Black, though he is temporarily a pawn up. White's threats are to win the a- and b-pawns, double on the 7th, and increase pressure on f7 with Bd5 and Bd6 (to remove the defender). **17...Bf5 18.Rbxb7 g5**

18...Rac8 19.h4 g5 (19...Bxd3? 20.Rxf7!+-) 20.hxg5 Bxd3 and objectively Black is much worse but at least he has activity, and White has to think about the passed d-pawn.

### 19.Bd6

I briefly looked at 19.Bd5 but played the safer option approaching time trouble. 19...Bg6 (19...gxf4 20.Rxf7 Rxf7 21.Bxf7+ Qxf7 22.Rxf7 Kxf7 23.Qb5! was the final winning move I did not see.) 20.Bd6 and whatever Black plays, White's initiative is too strong. 20...Kh8 (20...Rad8 21.Red7 Rfe8 22.Rxd8 Rxd8 23.Be7 Rc8 (23...Ra8 24.Rxa7 Rb8 25.Ra8) 24.Qd7 Rc1+ (24...Ra8 25.Rxa7 Rb8 26.Bd6) 25.Kg2 h6 26.Qe8+ Kh7 27.Rb8 mating.) 21.Re1 Rg8 and the engine suggests 22.Bb8! +-

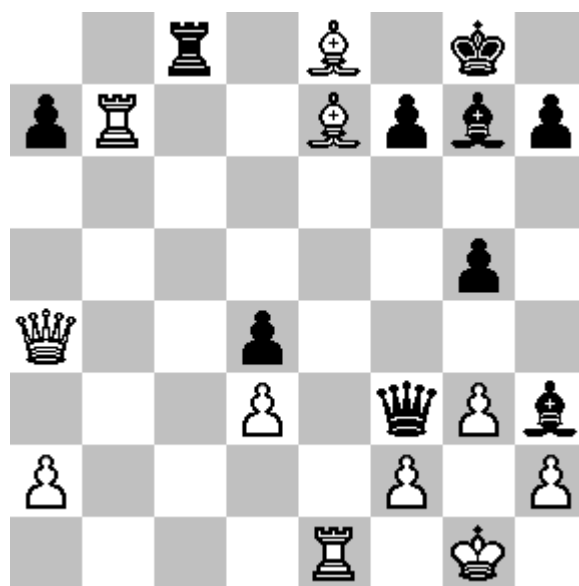
### 19...Rac8

19...Bxd3 20.Re1 Qg6 21.Bxf8 Rxf8 should also be losing, but perhaps practically better.

### 20.Re1 Rfd8 21.Be7 Re8 22.Bc6

The rook is trapped, but since I could not clearly calculate to the bottom of the following lines in my opponent's time, I did not feel comfortable at all.

### 22...Bh3 23.Bxe8 Qf3



### 24.Bc6 Rxc6 25.Rb8+ Bc8

25...Bf8 26.Rxf8+ Kg7 27.Qxd4+ f6 (27...Kg6 28.Rg8+ Kh6 29.Bxg5+ Kh5 30.Qh4#; 27...Kh6 28.Bxg5+ Kxg5 29.Qh4+ Kf5 30.Rxf7+ Kg6 31.Qxh7+ Kg5 32.Rg7+ Kf6 33.Qg6#) 28.Bxf6+ (Until I saw 28.Bxf6+, I was scared that Black has 28.Qe4 Re6, but it turns out White is still better (but not easily winning) here after 29.Bxf6+ Kxf8 30.Be5) 28...Kh6 29.Bxg5+ Kxg5 30.Rg8+ Rg6 31.Qh4+ Kf5 32.Rf8+ Rf6 33.Rxf6#

**26.Ba3** With 25...Bc8 there are no such complications as with 25...Bf8.

**26...h5 27.Re8+ Kh7 28.Rbxc8 Rf6 29.Qc2 h4 30.Qe2 Qb7 31.Qh5+ Rh6 32.Rh8+ Bxh8 33.Rxh8+ Kxh8 34.Qxh6+ 1-0**

## Three Ways to Beat an IM

*By Max Illingworth: Game 2*

**Ferreira, Jorge** 2413 *White*  
**Illingworth, Max** 2439 *Black*  
41st Olympiad Open, 9.2,  
(Portugal v Australia)

My opponent is stylistically quite similar to Mr. Klasan, in that he loves to attack and isn't as comfortable in positional/strategic waters. In this game we'll see a second way to win against IMs with such a style - play solid, healthy chess and let them create all the weaknesses in their

position as they try to attack you! This makes even more sense when you consider that you usually have to weaken yourself to start an attack, which isn't always the case with a counterattack!

**1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 c5 4.Nc3 cxd4 5.exd4 a6 6.Nf3 Bg4?!**

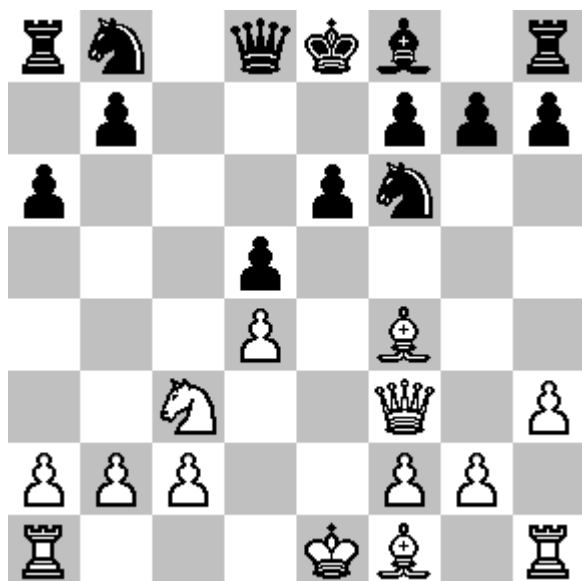
I knew 6...Nc6 was the right move, but over the board I saw this idea, reaching a better version of Chebanenko's 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 a6 4.d4 Bg4 system. However, that system is so dodgy that

even a bad version of it favours White slightly.

6...Nc6 is the best move, when after 7.Ne5 Black should play solidly with (7.Be2 Bg4 works much better when White can't take back with the queen on f3.) 7...e6, after which he has no particular problems.

**7.h3 Bxf3 8.Qxf3 e6 (D)**





Curiously enough, in the exact same round, Rapport-Sutovsky, Tromsø Olympiad 2014 continued 8...Nc6 9.0-0-0 e6 10.g4 Bb4 (I agree with Palliser that the bishop gets in the way here) 11.Ne2 Qa5 12.Kb1 Ne4 13.Nc1 Bd6 14.Nb3 Qc7 15.Be3 with a complicated fight ahead.

**9.0-0-0 Bd6 10.Bxd6 Qxd6 11.g4 Nc6 12.g5**

12.h4 would be more precise, to avoid weakening the f5-square for as long as possible. Generally speaking, if you have the time, you should advance the h-pawn almost as far as possible before pushing the g-pawn. 12...h5 13.g5 Nd7 is what I wanted to play in response, but I couldn't find a particularly enthralling answer to 14.g6! .

**12...Nd7**

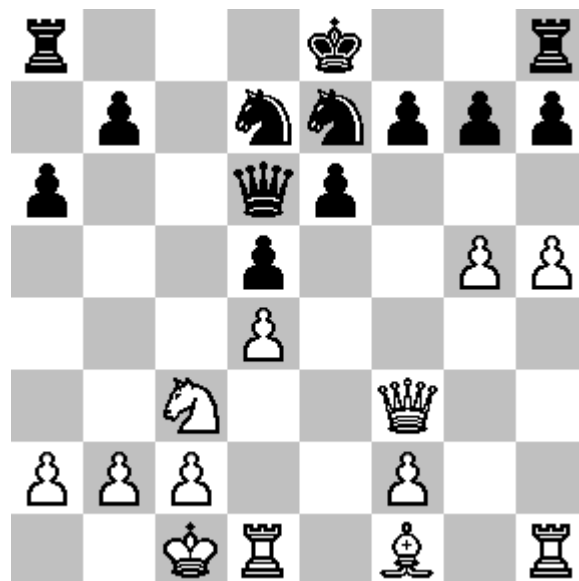
12...Ng8 13.h4 Nge7 was the alternative, but I felt the knight was better on d7 than e7, so I could play a later ...Nb6-c4

**13.h4 Ne7?!**

I was panicking about h5/g6 in the game and tried to prevent it at all costs. 13...b5 14.h5 h6 was an option, but I didn't want to open the side of the board where my opponent was attacking. We saw 13...

h5 14.g6 before, but maybe 14...fxg6 15.Bh3 Rf8 16.Qg3 Qxg3 17.fxg3 Kf7 18.Nxd5 exd5 19.Bxd7 Ke7 isn't so bad for Black as his active pieces make up for the worse pawn structure.

**14.h5**



**14... 0-0-0!** It's a good thing I have this trick, otherwise I might be in big trouble.

**15.Bh3**

15.Bd3 seems a better place for the bishop, and highlights the main problem with moving the knight from c6. White is obviously better as Black is very passive, but his position should also be defensible.

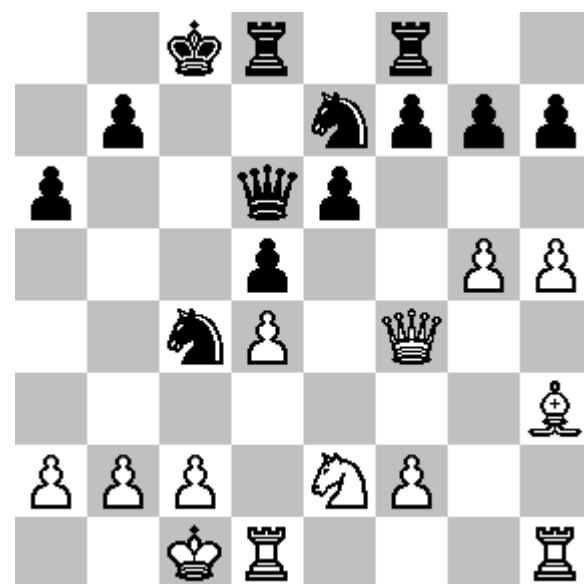
**15...Rh8** The difference now is that my h8-rook is free and White therefore can't make further progress on the kingside. But this does not stop my opponent trying!

**16.Ne2 Nb6 17.Qf4?!** I was very happy to see my opponent wanted to trade the queens! My superior pawn structure becomes more and more important with the exchange of pieces, especially queens!

17.Kb1 still leaves Black with a comfortable position as White is stuck on the kingside and Black can start his queenside attack with ...Kb8-a8, ...Nc4, ...Rc8 and ...b5-b4 or ...Qb4/...Rc6-b6 in

some order. Nevertheless this is almost always a good prophylactic move in such situations.

**17...Nc4**



**18.Qxd6?!** My opponent was bent on exchanging the queens but this only helps my pieces get to their best squares. I've noticed this to be a common mistake among many IMs - they have a natural inclination to make an exchange without considering who the trade benefits.

18.Kb1 was again called for, with the idea of Qc1 to keep the queens on the board!

**18...Nxd6 19.Ng3?!** My opponent wants to play f4-f5, but it takes a lot of moves to prepare and I can stop it in one move with ...g6.

19.Nf4 g6 is also very nice for Black however.

**19...b5** When the opponent has a bad, weakening plan in mind, don't do anything that might stop him!

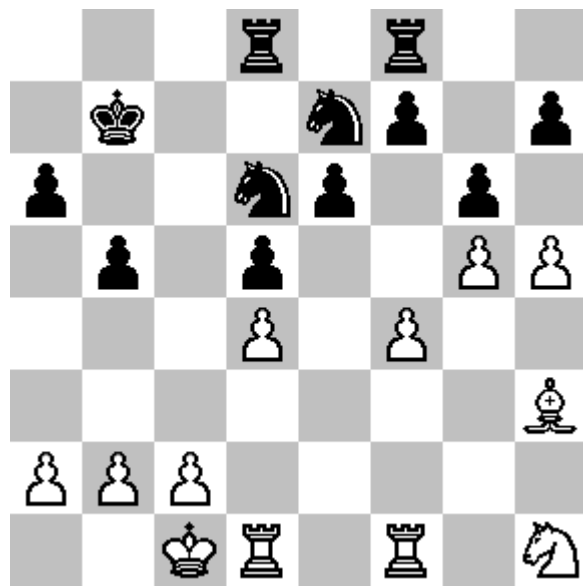
**20.f4?! Kb7 21.Rhf1**

21.Bf1 Rc8 22.Bd3 might not be the end of the world for White.

**21...g6** In this position White would prefer his rook to be on h1, so he can later play hxg6 and Rh7, though it's not obvious how he'll increase the pressure on the f7-pawn.

**22.Nh1?** I guess my opponent wanted to play Nf2-d3-e5, but this is nothing more than a pawn blunder.

22.Rh1 was necessary



**22...gxh5! 23.Nf2** Unfortunately, even in this game I showed the main weakness that cost me the 20-game GM norm at the Olympiad - weak play in clearly better/winning positions.

**23...h4?!** This move loses a tempo, but the pawn was 'psychologically poisoned' in that I started seeing problems with every single legal move in the position!

23...Kb6 was an obviously useful move, after which I'll be ready to play ...h6 and convert my extra pawn.

## 24.Ng4

24.Nd3 was a better route, but like in the previous game, giving my opponent more options led to him choosing an inferior one!

**24...Ndf5** I played this quickly and have no idea why I didn't play the clearly more

harmonious 24...Nef5 as my d6-knight can later go to e4 or c4, whereas the knight would do nothing on e7, even if it went to g6.

**25.Rf3 Kc7** Not objectively wrong, but I have to be a lot more careful for tactics with my king in the centre.

25...Rc8 stops all of White's counterplay.

## 26.Rc3+

26.Ne3 solves the problem of my superfluous e7-knight but also frees up White's game considerably.

## 26...Kd6 27.Ne5 Ng3?!

27...b4 28.Rb3 (28.Rc5? Nxd4) 28...a5 was obviously better to keep my opponent's rook out of the game. After 29.a3 Rb8µ I saw some truly ridiculous ghost that White would free himself with 30.axb4 axb4 31.c3, but then 31...f6! 32.gxf6 Rxf6 33.cxb4 Nc6 trades the extra pawn for a very clear positional dominance.

**28.Re1 b4** Consistent in that I again managed to not play the best move.

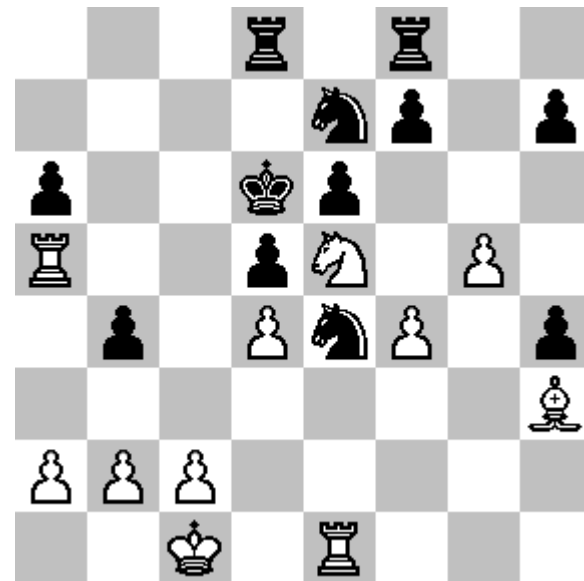
28...Ne4 29.Ra3 Ra8 kills all White's play once again. I think I was better at giving my opponent play in this game than he was! As the Beatles' secret goes, 'I get by with some help from my opponents'. Well, I guess it isn't a secret anymore!

**29.Rc5 Ne4?** This move offers an extra opportunity that we both missed.

29...f5 30.gxf6 Rxf6 seems counterintuitive, especially when White has the tactic 31.Bxe6, but then 31...Kxe6 32.Nc6+ Ne4 33.Nxd8+ Kd7 34.Nb7 Rb6 35.Na5 Nxc5 36.dxc5 Rf6 should be winning for Black. OK, Bxe6 was a mistake, but this is already not so easy to see, and for someone who played lots of bad moves in a row it's frankly impossible.

## 30.Ra5?

30.Nc4+! should lead to a draw after 30...dxc4 31.Rxe4 as my extra pawn is too weak and White's pieces are very active. 31...Rc8 32.Ra5 followed by Rxa6 and f5 is the key point.



**30...Ra8** Now I'm back in control, and once I was able to bang out a move quickly I calmed down again and finally my play started to have some correlation to my normal chess ability.

**31.Bg2** This move seemed normal enough but is highly bizarre in conjunction with the next. **31...Ng3 32.Bh3?!**

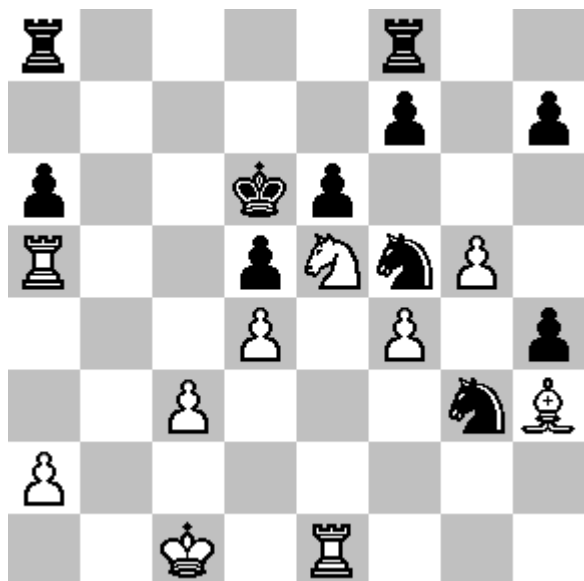
32.a3 tries to open the queenside up but I might even ignore it with 32...Ngf5!? 33.axb4 Nxd4, when ...f6 will open up lines for my rooks. Generally speaking I can play around this knight on e5.; 32.Kd2 was another, somewhat better continuation.

## 32...Nef5

32...Nh5 was even better, and I did consider it but after 33.Rf1 I couldn't see a clear way to increase the pressure on the f4-pawn. As it turns out 33...f6 34.gxf6 Rxf6 is the way to do that. It seems that neither player considered ...f6 in the whole game!



33.c3 bxc3 34.bxc3



34...Ra7! A nice move, finally freeing my rooks from defending.

35.Kc2

35.Rc5 Rc7 36.Rxc7 Kxc7 37.Bxf5 Nxf5 38.Rh1 might still hold the draw with best play, but my opponent was too short of time to find the best move every move up to the time control.

35...Rc8 36.Bxf5

36.Nxf7+? Rxf7 37.Rxa6+ Ke7 38.Rxe6+ Kf8 wouldn't be a good swindling attempt on White's part.

36...Nxf5 37.Kd3 After this move it becomes quite simple for me to win, especially when I didn't forget how to play chess for a second time.

37.c4! was the only chance, sacrificing as many pawns as necessary to activate the rooks! I briefly considered this but couldn't believe it could work, and indeed 37...dxc4 (37...Nxd4+ 38.Kd3 Nf5 39.cxd5 exd5 40.Rb1 would give White enough activity for the pawns to draw.) 38.Kc3 Ng3! threatening ...h3 is an excellent way to keep White tied down.

37...Ke7! Finally an exclamation mark move! My faith in myself is restored...

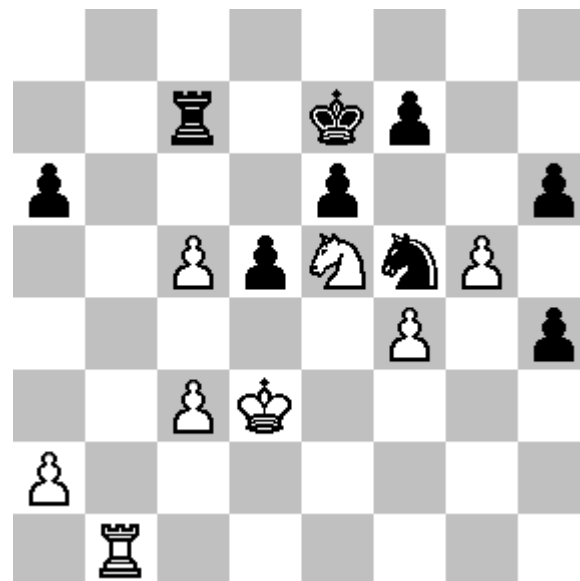
38.Rb1

38.c4 dxc4+ 39.Nxc4 Ng3 is a familiar story.

38...h6 I really should have played this or ...f6 a lot earlier, but at least I got it in eventually!

39.Rc5 Rxc5 40.dxc5 Rc7 Now I've reached the time control, and I showed much better converting technique in this game than in most of the games in the tournament, despite missing an obvious

win of the exchange later on.



41.c4 dxc4+ 42.Kxc4 hxg5 43.fxg5 Nd6+ 44.Kd4 Nb5+ 45.Ke3 Rxc5—+ 46.Nf3 Nd6 47.Rb4 h3 48.Kf4 Rc2 49.Kg3 Rxa2 50.Kxh3 Ra5 51.Rb6 Kd7 52.Rb8 Kc7 53.Ra8 Kb7

53...Nc8—+ would have given me a bit more time to spend with my teammates :)

54.Rd8 Rd5 55.Kg4 a5 56.Kf4 a4 57.Ne5 Nc4 58.Rxd5 exd5 59.Nd3 Kb6 60.Kf5 a3 61.Nc1 Kb5 62.Kf6 Nd6 63.Ke5 Kc4 64.Kxd6 d4 65.Ke7 d3 66.Nxd3 Kxd3 67.Kxf7 a2 68.g6 a1Q 69.g7 Qf1+ White resigned. 0–1



## Round 10



67	Tajikistan	60	Australia	1 : 3
GM	Amonatov, Farrukh	IM	Ly, Moulthun	1 – 0
IM	Khusenkhojaev, Muhammad	IM	Illingworth, Max	0 – 1
IM	Isaev, Jamshed	FM	Ikeda, Junta	0 - 1
IM	Khamdamov, Suhrob	FM	Smirnov, Anton	0 - 1

Tajikistan was a team with a high performing first board and after I made a rather strange capture on f6 with the bishop. I soon found myself sliding into an endgame a pawn down. Anton and Junta outplayed their opponents while Max's game finished rather abruptly when his opponent missed a relatively simple tactic. This was a much-needed result going into the final round.

Round 10 also saw Magnus Carlsen lose his second game of the Olympiad, this time to Ivan Saric, who became the 100th member of the Chigorin Club.

# 100<sup>th</sup> member of Mikhail Chigorin's club

By Vitaly Gnirenko, Chess Statistician.

The 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2014 saw the closing of the 41<sup>st</sup> World Chess Olympiad in Norway, Tromsø. The home team was headed for the first time by Magnus Carlsen as World Champion. The results which he had achieved in Super Tournaments during the last few years were marked by an abundance of first places and few losses.

Before this Olympiad in Tromsø Magnus Carlsen had an Elo rating of 2877, significantly ahead of Armenian GM Levon Aronian, second in the rating list with Elo 2805. Therefore, the two losses of Magnus Carlsen suffered to chess players who are not even ranked in the top 30 could be put into the category of the unexpected. However, for an objective appreciation of the event, we should study the history of defeats of the World Champions.

The world champion M. Carlsen was beaten by the German grandmaster Arkadij Naiditsch (No. 38 in the rating list FIDE, Elo 2709) and Croatian grandmaster Ivan Saric (No. 71 in the rating list FIDE, Elo 2671).

These two chess players respectively became the 99<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> members of Mikhail Chigorin's club.

Mikhail Chigorin's club is a symbolic club that unites chess players all over the world who have defeated a World Champion (during the possession of the title) in any game with classic time controls in an official competition. Neither results of team/consultation games nor training matches are taken into account. In the event of a member of Chigorin's club winning the world title in classic chess at least once, they are then excluded from the club.

Currently (August 2014) there are 16 world champions of the classic version. The first was Wilhelm Steinitz, and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2013 Magnus Carlsen became the sixteenth.

Only a victory over the champion from the list of these 16 allows one to become a member of Mikhail Chigorin's club. Victories over the World Champions in other versions of chess are not counted towards membership of the club.

The club was founded on the initiative of the author of this article and was named in honour of Russian chess player Mikhail Ivanovich Chigorin (1850-1908), who was the first competitor to beat the first ever World Chess Champion Wilhelm Steinitz on the 20<sup>th</sup> of January 1889. He subsequently beat him again 13 times but never succeeded in becoming World Champion himself. The first reference to the club in the press was in June 1995.

The main object of the Chigorin's club is to save for historical chess records the names of all who have defeated the World Champion at some time.

The dynamics of the increase of the number of club's members can be seen in the extract from its chronological register (as of 12.08.2014), which is given below:

No. The club's member. The year of joining the club. The place of the competition. The world champion.

1. Mikhail Chigorin, 1889. Havana. W. Steinitz.
2. Isidor Gunsberg, 1890. New York. W. Steinitz.
3. Curt von Bardeleben, 1895. Hastings. E. Lasker.
4. Siegbert Tarrasch, 1895. Hastings. E. Lasker.
5. Joseph Blackburne, 1895. Hastings. E. Lasker.
6. Harry Pillsbury, 1895. St. Petersburg. E. Lasker.
7. David Janowski, 1896. Nuremberg. E. Lasker.
8. Rudolf Charousek, 1896. Nuremberg. E. Lasker.
9. Frank Marshall, 1900. Paris. E. Lasker.
10. Carl Schlechter, 1904. Cambridge Springs. E. Lasker.
20. Arthur Dake, 1932. Pasadena. A. Alekhine.
30. Ludwig Rehlstab, 1942. Munich. A. Alekhine.



Table 1

Year	Chess Olympiad, place	World champion	Winner over the world champion	No. of winner in Chigorin's club
1931	4th«Tournament of nation», Prague	A.Alekhine	German Mattison	18
1933	5th«Tournament of nation», Folkestone	A.Alekhine	Savely Tartakover	21
1937	7th«Tournament of nation», Stockholm	M.Euwe	Andre Lilienthal Torsten Gaufrin	23 24
1960	14th Chess Olympiad, Leipzig	M.Tal	Jonathan Penrouz	44
1962	15th Chess Olympiad, Varna	M.Botvinnik	Wolfgang Uhlmann	46
1994	31th Chess Olympiad, Moscow	G.Kasparov	Veselin Topalov	78
2014	41th Chess Olympiad, Tromsø	M.Carlsen	Arkadij Naiditsch Ivan Saric	99 100

40. Mark Taimanov, 1952. Moscow. Botvinnik.  
 50. Lajos Portish, 1966. Zagreb. T. Petrosian.  
 60. Yuri Balashov, 1980. Rostov-on-Don. A.Karpov.  
 70. Andrei Sokolov, 1988. Reykjavik. Kasparov.  
 80. Peter Svidler, 1997. Tilburg. Kasparov.  
 90. Emil Sutovsky, 2005. Dortmund. Vladimir Kramnik.  
 91. Evgeny Bareev, 2005. Moscow. Vladimir Kramnik.  
 92. Teimour Radjabov, 2008. Wijk aan Zee. V. Anand.  
 93. Levon Aronian, 2008. Moreliya-Linaris. V. Anand.  
 94. Hikaru Nakamura, 2011. London. V. Anand.  
 95. Sergei Tiviakov, 2012. Hamburg. V. Anand.  
 96. Boris Gelfand, 2012. Moscow. V. Anand.  
 97. Wang Hao, 2013. Wijk aan Zee. V. Anand.  
 98. Fabiano Caruana, 2013. Zurich. V. Anand.  
 99. Arkadij Naiditsch, 2014. Tromsø. M.Carlsen.  
 100. Ivan Saric, 2014. Tromsø. M.Carlsen.

More about Mikhail Chigorin's club and all its chronological register you can find in Russian Wikipedia «Клуб Михаила Чигорина».

Magnus Carlsen's defeats confirm once again the fact that playing team chess isn't easy even for a World Champion. Responsibility for the team score undoubtedly influences the course and outcome of the game.

The analysis of the outcomes of the games of World Champions shows that they were often defeated in team competitions. From all team tournaments we should detail chess Olympiads as the most prestigious.

**Table 1** summarizes all defeats of World champions at chess Olympiads (before 1940 named «Tournament of nation») that led to the augmentation of the number of members of Mikhail Chigorin's club.

In conclusion, I would like to note that after the first victory over the first world champion, it took more than 125 years for the appearance of 100th member of Mikhail Chigorin's club. The analysis of the successes of club's members allows us to highlight several breathtaking achievements, which are very difficult to surpass.

Mikhail Chigorin was the most successful in the number of victories over the world champions, 15 wins: 14 of them are games when he beat Wilhelm Steinitz and in one game - Emanuel Lasker. The Bulgarian grandmaster Veselin Topalov has the best result from the modern active great players, 9 victories. He twice defeated Garry Kasparov, four times - Vladimir Kramnik, and three times - Viswanathan Anand.

In 1992 American grandmaster Gata Kamsky at a tournament in Dortmund beat the world champion Garry Kasparov and became the youngest member of the club at the tender age of 17!

In 1964 grandmaster Vladimir Liberzon gained the quickest victory over the World Champion. Tigran Petrosian resigned on the 15th move.

While there are no women among the members of Chigorin's club, the numerous victories of Judit Polgar over the male Grandmasters (in Tromsø for the male national team of Hungary she has also a very good result: +4, -1, = 1) suggests that very soon a woman's name shall appear in the second hundred of Chigorin's club's members.

Vitaly Gnirenko, Chess Statistician.  
The Hague.

# Three Ways to Beat an IM

by Max Illingworth

## Game 3

**Illingworth, Max** 2439

**Khuseinkhodzhaev, M** 2410

41st Olympiad Open, 10.2

(Australia v Tajikistan)

Here we will see a third way to beat an International Master - prepare an opening where the opponent has to find the right moves early on to avoid reaching a very difficult position, and where the antidote is not widely known. This requires a bit of work but the variation in this game is a pretty good example, and could be applied against anyone who tries to play a Grunfeld against 1.c4 or 1.Nf3.

### 1.c4

I largely switched to 1.d4 in Hungary, but for the details of that experience you'll have to wait until the next issue of 50 Moves! 1...Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 Nxd5 5.e4 Nxc3 6.bxc3 Bg7 7.Nf3 0-0?! 8.Be2 c5 9.0-0 would then transpose to the game - Black should play 7...c5 first, to meet 8.Be2 with 8...Nc6!

### 1...Nf6 2.Nc3 d5

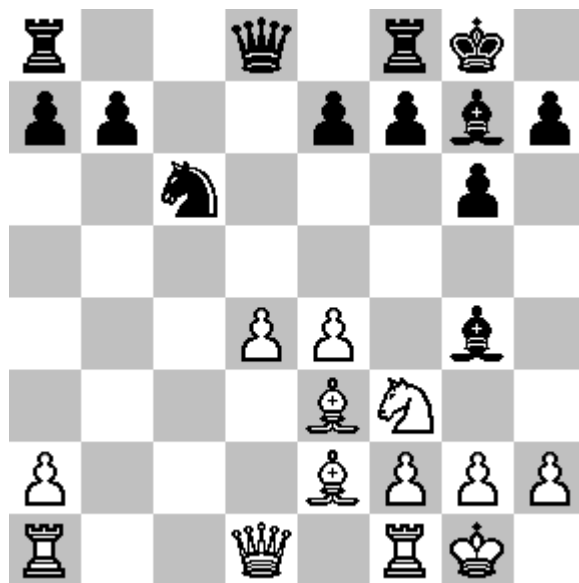
2...g6 3.e4 is a neat way to avoid a Grunfeld.

**3.cxd5 Nxd5 4.e4 Nxc3 5.bxc3 g6 6.Nf3 Bg7 7.Be2** The point behind delaying d4 is to try and move order Black into a bad version of a normal Grunfeld, where he can't pressure White's centre quickly enough.

### 7...c5 8.0-0 0-0

8...Nc6 was correct, and here I was going to follow Aronian-So, Tata Steel 2014 with 9.Qa4!? , intending Ba3 or Qa3 to put pressure on the d4-pawn.

**9.d4 cxd4 10.cxd4 Nc6 11.Be3 Bg4** Black puts pressure on White's centre in a normal fashion, but the inclusion of castling for both sides makes a gigantic difference...



**12.d5!** White is already clearly better after this move.

### 12...Bxf3 13.Bxf3 Bxa1 14.Qxa1

14.dxc6? Be5 15.cxb7 Rb8 is fine for Black.

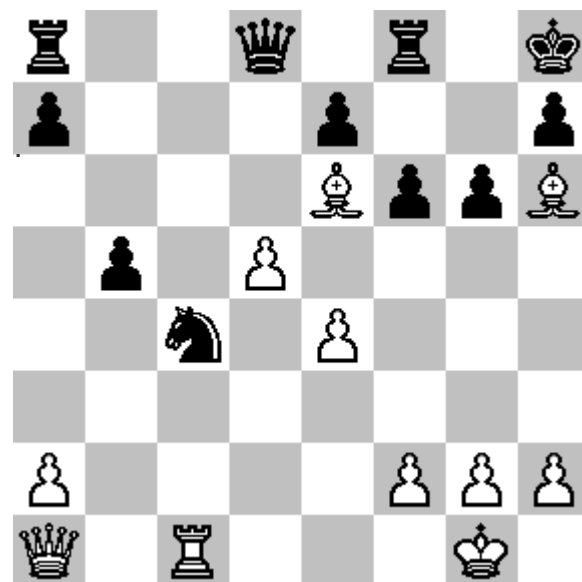
**14...Na5 15.Bh6 f6 16.Bg4!** I had looked at this line and even Black's next move before the game, but I couldn't remember how to meet it over the board, and in trying to remember my preparation, forgot everything I knew about chess.

**16...Nc4 17.Be6+ Kh8 18.Rc1?** This is a beginner's mistake, making a one-move attack for the sake of it and as a result

Black gets the very important 'free move' ...b5.

18.Rb1 b6 19.Rb4± was a much more effective way to attack; Black has to play 19...Ne5 to prevent a decisive e5 breakthrough, but 20.Bxf8 Qxf8 21.Qc3 gives White dominant of the open c-file, and that is almost enough to win by itself.

### 18...b5



**19.h4?** This is a ridiculous mating attempt that I knew wouldn't work, but I played it anyway because I was panicking.

19.Bxf8 Qxf8 20.Bd7 a6 21.Bc6 Rb8 22.Qd4 was better, but suddenly 22...Qh6 23.Re1 Qf4 24.Qa7 Qd6! 25.Qxa6 Qb4 gives Black good counterplay for the pawn as my queen and bishop are very offside.

**19...Qd6 20.h5?!** Continuing the bad plan, after which I am lucky not to already be worse. 20.a4 a6 21.Bxf8 Rxf8 22.axb5 axb5 23.Qa7 isn't winning for White or anything, but keeps some slight pressure.

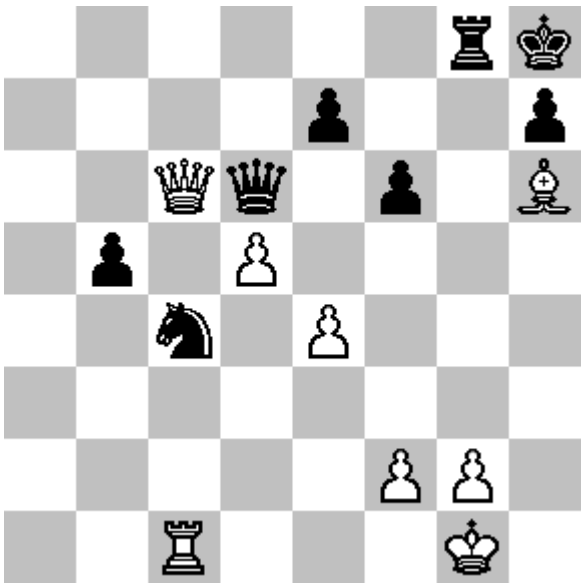


20...Rg8! 21.a4 a6

I realised that I could be in real trouble here if I didn't find some way to 'kill' the game, and went into a 15 minute think before banging out the rest of my moves. It worked well as my opponent started making mistakes after my 'barrage'.

22.Bxg8 Rxd8 23.axb5 axb5 24.hxg6 Rxd8 25.Qa8+ Rg8 26.Qc6

The tournament regulations prevented me from offering a draw at this point! The endgame is just a dead draw, but my opponent wasn't accustomed to the sudden change in the position and did an even better job of destroying his position than I had done on moves 18-20, probably because he thought he was much better and was trying to win the position.



26...Qe5 26...Qxc6 27.dxc6 Rc8= chops all the pieces off one way or another.

27.Qe6 Qh5? My opponent had just missed my 29th move. In this situation it is very important to play quickly, before the opponent realises his mistake! 27...

Qxe6 28.dxe6 is still probably a draw, but the e6 pawn and h6 bishop trap Black's king for the time being, so I'd have some chances to win in a practical game.

28.Bf4 Qf3?? An unfortunate oversight, though after 28...Qg4 29.Qxg4 Rxd8 30.g3± I am winning the b5-pawn with Rb1 and I suspect this is a theoretical win.

29.Qxg8+ 1-0

Well, I hope with this article I've shown that IMs do make lots of mistakes in their games, meaning that even if you're a club player, your next IM opponent will give you chances - you just have to analyse well enough to take advantage of them! Now I really should get that GM title before everyone uses the detailed strategies against me...



# Round 11



60	Australia	12	Germany	2 : 2
GM	Smerdon, David	GM	Meier, Georg	½ - ½
IM	Ly, Moulthun	GM	Fridman, Daniel	0 - 1
IM	Illingworth, Max	GM	Nisipeanu, Liviu-Dieter	1 - 0
FM	Smirnov, Anton	GM	Baramidze, David	½ - ½

At this point we were well placed with 13 match points and a win would ensure we went one better than the last Olympiad. However, of all the teams who were on our score, we were drawn against one of the toughest, Germany. We were unsure of their team formation but dropping Naiditsch was definitely a surprise.

Anton played well to equalise after entering a very theoretical line of the Grunfeld. David pushed slightly but agreed to a draw with Georg. I had played one of the worse blunders in the tournament, getting somewhat confused with all the lines from that morning. This was a real let-down, as it was a spoilt opportunity to play a good game. Luckily, Max played a great game against Nisipeanu. Generating a strong kingside attack along the g-file in a Taimanov Sicilian, Max finished his opponent off in style to draw the match. The draw left us with 14 match points and a final ranking of 31<sup>st</sup>, well above our seeding of 60.

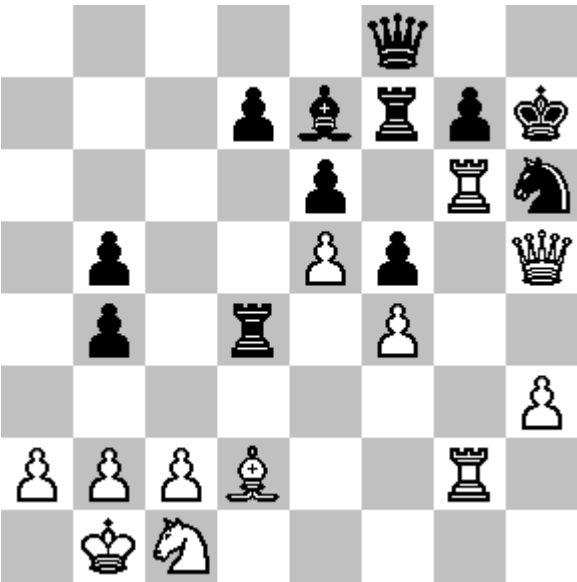
**Illingworth, Max** 2439 *White*  
**Nisipeanu, Liviu-Dieter** 2126 *Black*

41st Olympiad Open, 11.3,  
 (Australia v Germany)

Max had a strong attack from the opening, and after reaching the time control found the following knight manoeuvre to win the game and tie the match against heavy favourites Germany.

**41.Nd3 Kh8 42.b3 Re4 43.Ne1 d6 44.Nf3 dxe5  
 45.Ng5 Rf6 46.Nxe4 Rxg6 47.Rxg6 fxe4 48.Qxe5  
 Bf6 49.Qxe4 1–0**

A sweet finish to the Olympiad for Australia.



Overall, a very well rounded team performance. Certainly Anton and Max had the standout performances but everyone played their part. Perhaps with a bit of luck in those critical games, we could have seen an even higher placing for the team.

For one of the first times, it was evident that Australia was playing more as a team. This must be credited to the pre-olympiad preparation sessions. If Australia continues to improve in such a way, we will definitely be in for a strong fighting chance in Baku. Not to mention the absence of players such as Zong-Yuan Zhao, Bobby Cheng and James Morris who would have given that extra boost. It wouldn't be surprising that by the next Olympiad, Australia may have its first full-GM team.

		Name	Rtg	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Pts.	Games	Rp
1	GM	David Smerdon	2515	1	½	1	0	½		½	0	0		½	4.0	9	2457
2	IM	Moulthun Ly	2462	1	0		½	0	½	1	½	0	0	0	3.5	9	2415
3	IM	Max Illingworth	2438		½	0	1	0	1		½	1	1	1	6.0	9	2587
4	FM	Junta Ikeda	2402	1	0	0			1	1	0	1	1		5.0	8	2438
5	FM	Anton Smirnov	2334	1		1	1	½	1	1		½	1	½	7.5	9	2601



— GET CONNECTED —







Wang Yue is China's highest-ever rated player with a peak Elo rating of 2756 in November 2010. After a distinguished youth career, including winning the under-12 category of the World Youth Chess Championship in 1999 in Oropesa del Mar, Spain, he made his Olympiad debut at Calvia 2004 at the age of 17 where his performance earned him the GM title.

Wang Yue won the individual gold on Board 4 as the Chinese team won the silver medal at Turin 2006. After three top ten finishes where they narrowly missed the medals in 2008, 2010 and 2012, Wang Yue led a Chinese team rejuvenated by young talent to their first Olympic Gold in Tromsø, breaking the European stranglehold on the tournament. We spoke to Wang Yue after the September leg of the Chinese league.

*Congratulations on becoming Olympic Champion! What were your general impressions of the Tromsø Olympiad?*

Perfect!!! think everything was perfect!

*How was the victory received in China? Was there much media coverage?*

Yes, you know this was the first time our country became Olympic champions, So when we returned to Beijing airport there were many reporters. I think chess will be start to become more and more popular in China.

China sent a very young team to the Olympiad with a number of strong players not participating such as Li Chao, Bu Xiangzhi and Wang Hao. What is the relationship of the players like with the Chinese Chess Federation and how was the team selected? Was there a qualification process?

Yes, you are right. We have some qualification rules but I can't tell you more than that, so sorry! For some reason Wang Hao and Li Chao did not play the qualification tournament. Bu played the tournament but this time he was not so lucky, he was 3rd. The Champ is Wei Yi and second is Ni Hua. :)

*The Chinese League is played on five boards and unlike most leagues (eg Bundesliga) only 2 foreigners are allowed to play per club (1 woman, 1 man).*

# Wang Yue

*Do you think this has played a big role in helping to establish a deep pool of chess talent in China or would you put it down to other factors?*

Yes, I think the Chinese League can be of helpful to some younger players, but not us. When we play in the Chinese League, our rating will go down! However, yes I believe it is a good way to improve for younger Chinese players.

*You're very close friends with Li Chao and you run a chess school together; we've had the pleasure of welcoming some of your students to our tournaments in Australia. We've heard you have plans to take a step back from playing to spend more time focussing on your coaching. What makes you so passionate about coaching and are you considering retiring from playing?*

Firstly, we are passionate about teaching and we want to teach more talented kids. We hope in the future our kids can have a chance to become World Champions, or at least to challenge Carlsen! :) This is our dream...

Of course I want to play in more strong tournaments, but we need to spend more time on the kids. I think when we teach the kids, maybe we can learn more about chess ourselves.



China celebrates an impressive victory Photo by Cathy Rogers



# Australia Quiz

1. What is the capital city of Australia?

Canberra

2. What is Kylie Minogue famous for?

- a) Athlete
- b) Scientist
- c) Singer
- d) Author

She is a Singer

3. Kangaroos are the third most common pet after cats and dogs – true or false?

Yes, I think...

4. How many Grandmasters does Australia have?

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3
- d) 4

I know Roger, Zong Yuan, so two....

5. Australia has a larger landmass than Europe – true or false?

False

6. How many times have the Summer Olympics been held in Australia?

2000 i think....

7. In which year did Australia become a Federation?

I don't know that one.

8. After which tennis player is the stadium which holds the Australian Open final named?

Kouyong?

9. Apart from the kangaroo, name any two animals from the following video:

<http://www.tubechop.com/watch/3551158>

A koala and emu

NAME ..... WANG YUE .....

SCORE ..... 5 / 10 .....







## **INDEPENDENT CONSULTANTS**

WHERE AND WHEN YOU NEED THEM

Icons Alliance supports clients by providing highly capable independent consultants and freelancers where and when they are needed

We support independent consultants by creating and identifying opportunities through relationship development, panel provision, preferred partnering arrangements and tendering

There are many more business opportunities that are available to us as teams than there are as individuals. We want our "Icons" to form teams that are able to accept large roles as well as individual assignments

We are currently seeking consultants across Australia in Business Support:

Management Consulting

Stakeholder Engagement

Project Management

Ecology

Water Science and Engineering

Change Management

Communications

Accounting

IT

Graphic Design



**Business Support**

**[www.iconsalliance.com](http://www.iconsalliance.com)**

**Natalia Pogonina is the World Number 22 among Women, and now twice Olympic Champion with the Russian Women's team. She took the individual gold on board 5 in Istanbul as her team won, and again helped her team to victory in Tromsø, finishing undefeated with 5.5/7, only missing out on an individual medal as she had not met the minimum required amount of games. Natalia was kind enough to spare some time from her busy schedule to talk to us.**

***Congratulations on becoming Olympic Champion again! Could you please tell us about your experience in Tromsø, and how it compared to your win in Istanbul two years ago?***

Thank you! The Chess Olympiad is a fantastic event, so it is always a pleasure to play there.

Tournament-wise in Istanbul we got a bit lucky in the end when China drew with Kazakhstan in the penultimate round. We had equal match points after the final round, but our team was declared winner due to a better tie-break score. This year we defeated China 3-1 and led the event most of the time, so I would say that our victory was more well-deserved in a certain sense. Of course, had China not drawn with Spain in the penultimate round, the final standings might have been different, but there are always many "ifs" in tournaments with a tough competition. Obviously, I am very happy that Russia won the Women's Chess Olympiad three times in a row.

Finally, I believe FIDE should be stricter about choosing the venue for the Olympiad and inspecting it well in advance. All the people I have talked to or seen interviewed referred to the level of organization of this Olympiad as (one of) the worst they have ever seen. Don't get me wrong: I loved Tromsø, but the playing hall and other organisational matters were subpar, which is a pity.

***Many commentators suggest that the recent disappointing performances of the Russian Men's team have been down to poor team bonding, yet the Women's team continues to win even without being top seeds this year. Could you point us to a particular reason why you continue to be so successful? Do you all get along?***



Source: Eteri Kublashvili, [RussiaChess.org](http://RussiaChess.org)

We have a very good team spirit indeed. In team chess events the average rating of the players is not the decisive factor. It's hard to name one particular reason why our men's team has been struggling to win the Chess Olympiad since 2002.

## Natalia Pogonina

First of all, they seem to lack that "one for all, all for one" atmosphere which we have. Men tend to be more individualistic and rivalry-driven. When there are a few candidates for the World Champion title on one team, it's hard for them to be fully supportive and sincere with each other. I mean, they do get along well and try to be helpful, but some "team magic" is missing.

Secondly, the competition is rather fierce, and there is always an extra burden of responsibility on the favourites.

Thirdly, Russia has like 214 grandmasters of which 10+ are normally rated 2700+, not to mention bright juniors who are underrated and slightly under 2700. It is hence a real challenge to come up with the optimal roster. If the captain drops some of the big names and something doesn't work out well, he will become a scapegoat and get blamed for not going with the favourites. If he opts for "fresh blood" and the team fails, he will be criticized even more. As a result, it is quite difficult both objectively and "politically" to select the best possible line-up for a particular moment. You know, everyone has ups and downs, and it is not easy to get into a player's mind and predict how he will perform at this particular event.

This year the Chinese and the Indian team lacked quite a few of their very top players, yet they won medals. I am not saying that the philosopher's stone is to let only the young & ambitious play, but something definitely has to be done.



I guess it would be fair to allow all the candidates to test their powers in important team events. Last time we had two almost totally different teams for the European and the World Team Championships. This is a good practice, in my humble opinion, both for the players themselves and for the captains. After all, you never know how well or badly someone is going to perform until you give the person a chance to step into the spotlight.

***Australia's players are essentially amateurs, and recently our Women's Captain GM Ian Rogers lamented the lack of preparation by our women's team. Could you tell us a bit about the training and preparation schedule of a top team like Russia?***

Of course, the Russian female players are in a better situation chess-wise than the Australian team, because there is more support from the government and more opportunities to play in strong tournaments and to get access to top-level coaching. However, most people grossly overestimate the seriousness of our preparation. First of all, most of us are young mums, so we spend a lot of time with our kids. Secondly, like most women, we perform most of the household work and have other interests in life except for our job. Thirdly, there is traveling – we don't spend much time at home or on vacations. Hence, there are very limited opportunities for training, so the most efficient periods for improvement are tournaments and special training sessions.

For example, before the Olympiad we have spent about 10 days at the special Olympic training camp. We do a lot of physical sports there, socialise and get to know each other better, study chess and play training games. Generally speaking, nowadays top-level chess is a highly competitive full-time occupation.

***The Norwegian organisers at one point refused to accept the registration of the team. How much of a distraction was that to your preparation? Did you at any point seriously fear you may not be able to play?***

This was a very disappointing step on the organisers' behalf. What was most disturbing is that quite a few chess fans didn't even bother reading the actual Regulations and instead started screaming hysterically: 'Russia didn't register on time; they should be excluded!'. Of course, the prevailing majority of the chess community members seemed to support us, but still. I have a degree in Law, so it didn't take me long to figure out that the actions of the organisers were preterlegal. Later an **extensive statement** was released by the US law company Quinn Emanuel, but again, some officials and their counsellors were so excited about the chance of getting the defending champion Russian team disqualified or demoralised that they didn't bother with common sense, Gens Una Sumus spirit or, finally and most importantly, with following the actual Regulations. As far as I know, after the Chess Olympiad ended the Norwegian federation apologized for the actions of the organising committee, but there is still a sour aftertaste.



*Photo by Natalia Pogonina*

‘Chess **shouldn’t** be perceived “not cool” among Australian girls.’

Of course, I was confident that our position is sound from the legal point of view, so I didn’t expect our team to be disqualified. However, when I was informed a few times by different sources that there is such a possibility, it certainly started to get on my nerves. I just felt that such a treatment was very unfair and undeserved. It was rather distracting when I was playing in the European Championship and people began tweeting or coming up to me and saying: “Did you know that you have just gotten disqualified from the Olympiad?”. It makes one lose focus, you know. However, eventually all of us managed to pull ourselves together and overcome the hurdles. This is another reason why this victory is of special significance to our team and to our fans.

However, myself and most of the women I have talked to feel happy about being mothers.

Conversely, I recall a conversation with a strong WGM who confessed that she was so obsessed with her results in youth that she didn’t marry and have any children. Now she is past her peak and feeling rather lonely, so she believes she has made the wrong choice back then.

Generally speaking, discipline does play a role in becoming a strong player, but there is no particular need for all those crazy sacrifices. Even if it brings short-term results in sports, it is likely to damage one’s state of mind and overall wellbeing in the long run. Therefore, I am not a big fan of the “all or nothing,” “get rich or die trying” approach. In my opinion, life is about harmony!

Most of the time I travel alone, although occasionally I take my son with me, especially if the tournament is held at a resort. Or, also very rarely, my husband Peter accompanies me to an event as a supporter or even as a participant. He is rated FIDE 2000+ and is quite serious about becoming a better player.

***Women’s chess in Australia particularly suffers as a result of chess being perceived to be ‘not cool,’ and many of our promising players do not continue past their teenage years. While Russia obviously has a stronger chess culture in general, is girls and women’s chess promoted in any particular way which you think is beneficial?***

Well, I guess you are being too modest here. As far as I know, Arianne Caoili has received a certain amount of media attention in Australia. Of course, the more role models there are and the higher profile they have, the better, but I believe this example alone proves that chess shouldn’t be perceived “not cool” among Australian girls.

Frankly speaking, I wouldn’t say that women’s chess is promoted in a special way in Russia either. Women’s prizes are much lower than men’s; most top coaches prefer to work with boys, not girls; the level of publicity is also in men’s favour. I was actually delighted that this time our team has been nurtured by the RCF officials, especially by President Andrei Filatov, and interviewed by many TV channels after winning the Chess Olympiad. Also, we have received a special congratulatory **telegram** from the Russian President Vladimir Putin.

 **Natalia Pogonina** ✓  
@Pogonina

Kudos to @Ilyumzhinov and Andrei Filatov for their timely reactions and for maintaining the Gens Una Sumus spirit

↩ Reply ★ Favorite ... More

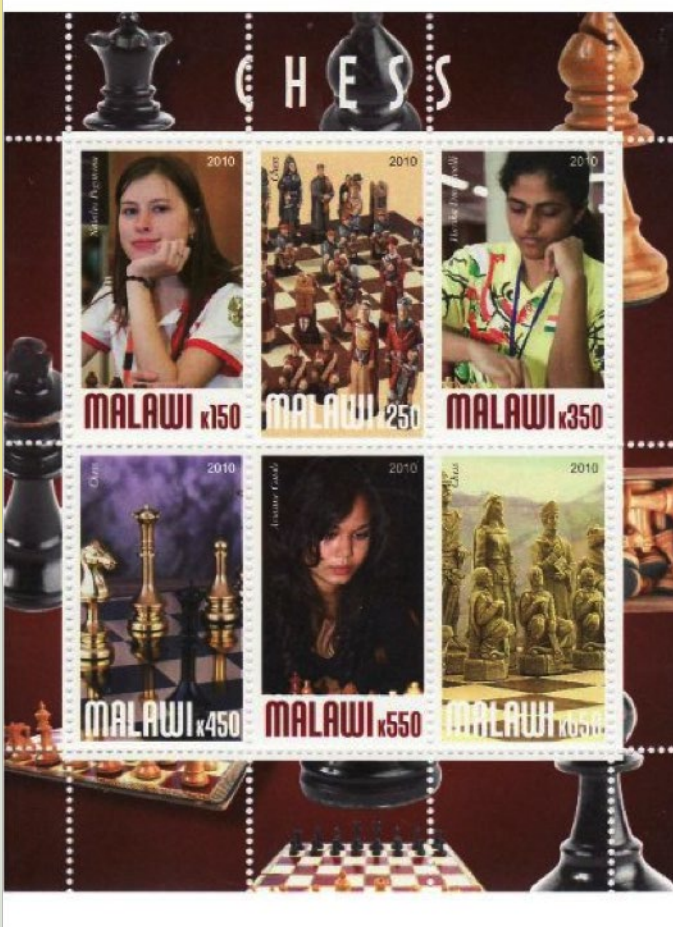


Source: Natalia Pogonina’s Twitter

***You got married and gave birth to your son Nikolai in 2009. Was it difficult making a comeback to top level chess after these events? Does your family travel with you to events now?***

Obviously, it wasn’t easy. Your priorities change; so does your schedule. When you are young and single, it is easier to dedicate a lot of time to training and to travel from one event to another, thus getting a lot of practice and improving quickly. When you have kids, you rush to meet them after a tournament, so that leaves less time for chess.





Source: Pogonina.com



Natalia and her husband Peter. Photo by Sergey Sorokhtin

Otherwise, chess doesn't get much coverage at all, and the news is mostly focused on how the men's team did. For instance, 90% of the article might be dedicated to why the men's team didn't win again, while only a sentence or two will be about the women's team victory. Fortunately, this time the situation was different.

However, I guess your question was more about what could be done to get girls interested in chess than about the particular situation with chess in Russia.

Let me quote my reply from a recent **interview** for the **StartupTown blog**:

Inform, motivate and persuade. If more parents realize how beneficial it is for their daughters to learn how to play chess, then the ratio between men and women in this industry will eventually even out. Also, female pro chess players should be more active in promoting the game, thus serving as role models for the young girls.

'Female pro chess players should be more active in promoting the game'

Finally, currently the prize money in women's chess is considerably lower than in open tournaments.

Of course, one can argue that women are allowed to compete for the "men's" prizes too, but at the moment it is clear that in the nearest future we won't see a female challenger for the World Chess Champion title.

I've heard radical suggestions along the lines of eliminating the women's events altogether and making us compete with men on equal basis.

This hardly looks like a feasible solution: by far not all the women like competing against men, and just about all of them would be forced to give up on the profession, because the level of competition is too tough in men's chess for women to handle at the present time.

As a result, I believe that women's chess should be additionally sponsored ("positively discriminated") until at least a few women reach the level required to be invited to the "men's" super tournaments.

**Now comes the hard part...** 😊



# Australia Quiz

**1. What is the capital city of Australia?**

Canberra

**2. What is Kylie Minogue famous for?**

- a) Athlete
- b) Scientist
- c) Singer
- d) Author

This one is trivial: she is a famous singer. Btw, Kylie has a #KissMeOnceTour coming up! ;) I am following her on Twitter and thus staying up-to-date with what's going on in her life.

**3. Kangaroos are the third most common pet after cats and dogs – true or false?**

I don't think it is even legal to keep a kangaroo as a pet in Australia unless you have a special license. Is it?

**4. How many Grandmasters does Australia have?**

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3
- d) 4

Ian Rogers, Zhao Zong, David Smerdon... maybe someone else as well?

I apologize in advance in case I have forgotten someone. Let it be 4.

**5. Australia has a larger landmass than Europe – true or false?**

I believe Europe is larger.

**6. How many times have the Summer Olympics been held in Australia?**

Sydney (2000) and Melbourne a while ago, right?

**7. In which year did Australia become a Federation?**

Sorry, I don't know. Will check it out after answering your questions.

**8. After which tennis player is the stadium which holds the Australian Open final named?**

I can't remember, sorry! Will also have to look this one up and feel embarrassed.

**9. Apart from the kangaroo, name any two animals from the following video:**

<http://www.tubechop.com/watch/3551158>

The easiest to name are a koala, a dingo, an emu (co-featured on the 50 cent coin along with a kangaroo), a spiny anteater (featured on the 5 cent coin) and a platypus (featured on the 20 cent coin). I forgot the names of the remaining two. Actually, my husband's favourite animal has always been the duckbill, so he has even bought Perry the Platypus T-shirts for our son. We all love the cartoon! :D

NAME NATALIA POGONINA .....

SCORE 8 / 10 .....







# Australia at the Women's Olympiad

by Ian Rogers

Unlike their counterparts in the Open division, the Australian team which arrived in Tromsø on August 1 for the Women's Olympiad looked remarkably similar to the 2012 team. The one change in personnel was Irina Berezhina returning after a long absence to take over first board duties instead of Arianne Caoili. (Work commitments forced Caoili's late withdrawal and 2012 team member Sally Yu was called up only three weeks before the Olympiad began.)

The Australians were seeded 51<sup>st</sup> from 134 teams but ultimately finished tied for 27<sup>th</sup> place, the best result since Istanbul 2000 (when Laura Moylan brought home a silver medal).

Every Australian player finished with a plus score — the first time this has happened — and the team accumulated as many game points as the bronze medal winners Ukraine.

Weird fact; had the Olympiad been decided on game points, as in the years before 2006, Australia would have finished tied for eleventh! Unfortunately for Australia, in an attempt to combat match-fixing, FIDE has changed the scoring system to match points, with game points relegated to second tiebreaker.

Of course in a long Olympiad, there will be bad days as well as good but if a team's worst losses are 1-3 against top seeded teams Ukraine and Serbia then it is clear that the team has performed well.





Round 1



118	Kenya	-		Australia	0 : 4
	Jumba, G 1507	-	IM	Berezina, Irina	0 - 1
	Wambugu, J 1530	-	WIM	Guo, Emma	0 - 1
	Shah, R 1289	-	WIM	Dekic, Biljana N.	0 - 1
	Winfred, T Unrated	-		Yu, Sally	0 - 1

A smooth first round against the 118<sup>th</sup> seeds.



Round 2



3	Ukraine	-		Australia	3 : 1
GM	Muzychuk, A 2555	-	IM	Berezina, I	½ - ½
GM	Ushenina, A 2487	-	WFM	Nguyen, G	½ - ½
GM	Zhukova, N 2468	-	WIM	Dekic, B	1 - 0
IM	Gaponenko, I 2379	-		Yu, S	1 - 0

In round two the Australians found themselves in the elite section of the playing hall, near Magnus Carlsen and other world class players, in a match-up against the 2008 gold medallists.

The match was extremely tight and, although the Australians could look back on plenty of missed chances – most notably Berezina and Nguyen settling for draws in winning positions – Ukraine’s win was not entirely undeserved. World number 5 Anna Muzychuk was on top for most of her game while Zhukova and Gaponenko produced very strong play at key moments to win their games.



Irina and Giang very nearly pulled off the biggest upsets  
*Photo by Cathy Rogers*

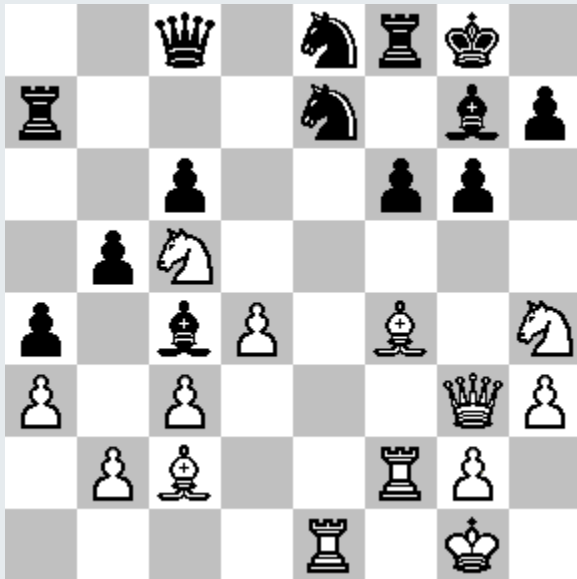


**Muzychuk, Anna 2555 (Ukraine) White**

**Berezina, Irina 2182 (Australia) Black**

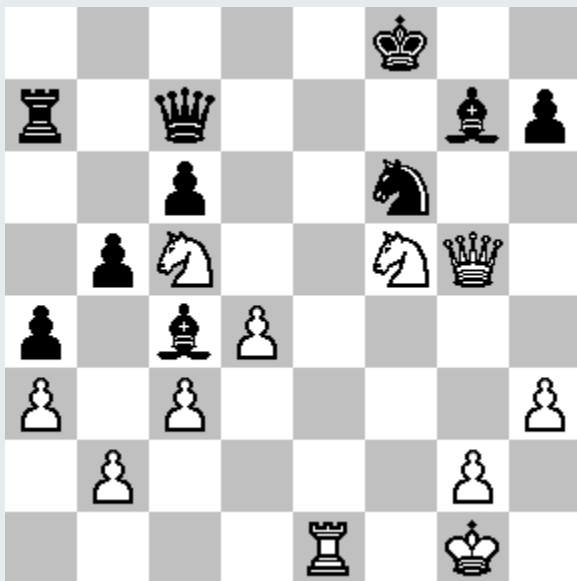
41st Olympiad Women, Round 2, Board 1

After a dubious opening Berezina, short of time and facing an ugly defensive task, decided to gamble...



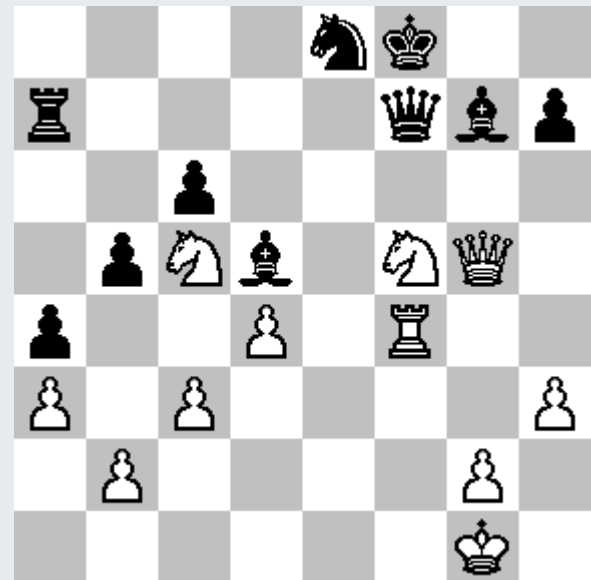
**28...g5!? 29.Bxg5!?** This results in a nasty attack but the unusual **29.Bb8! gxf4 30.Qxf4!** would have won immediately.

**29...fxg5 30.Rxf8+ Kxf8 31.Qxg5 Nf6 32.Bf5! Nxf5 33.Nxf5 Qc7**

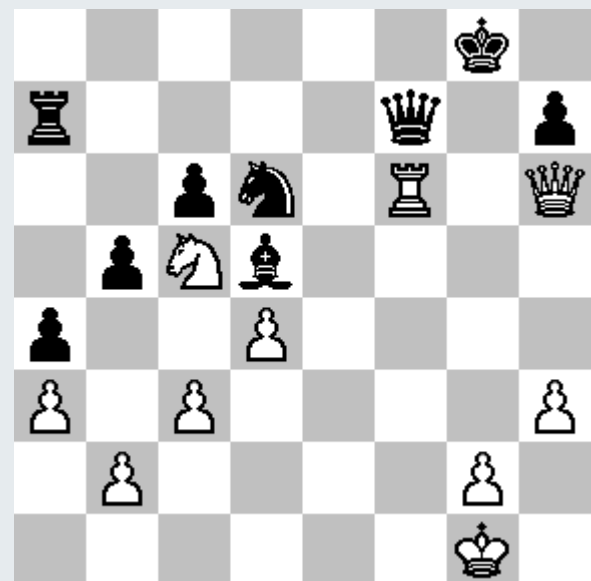


**34.Re3** The stylish way to reach the f-file would have been **34.Re6! Ne8 35.Re2! Nf6 36.Rf2!** when Black is defenceless.

**34...Bd5 35.Rg3 Ne8 36.Rg4 Qf7 37.Rf4?** Finally reaching the desired file but now Berezina shows her defensive skills. **37.Nxg7! Qxg7 38.Qh4** would still leave Black facing a huge, probably decisive, attack.



**37...Bf6! 38.Qh6+ Kg8 39.Nd6?** Winning back the piece, but at a terrible cost. **39...Nxd6 40.Rxf6**

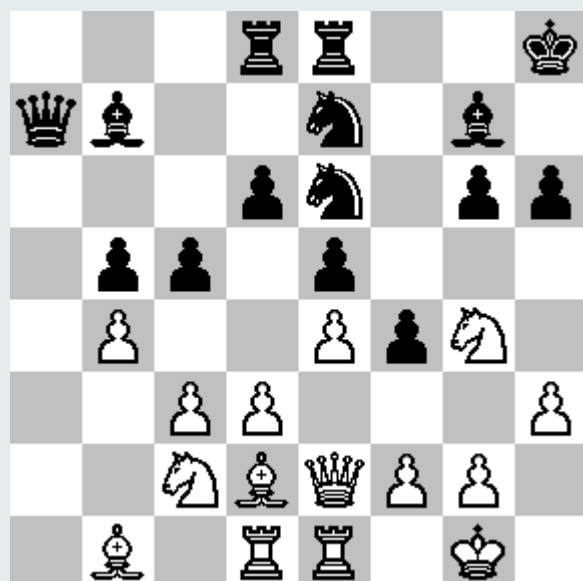


Here Muzychuk realised her predicament and offered a draw. Berezina had 40 seconds left for her 40th move, which she knew to be forced, but failed to ask herself the question "Why is a 2550 GM suddenly offering me a draw?" So, without first reaching the time control or consulting her captain, Berezina agreed to split the point.

Of course had Black decided to play on, after the forced line **40.Rxf6 Qg7 41.Qxg7+ Rxg7 42.Rxd6 Rxg2+ 43.Kf1 Rxb2** the White pawns would be so weak that the game would not have lasted long.  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$

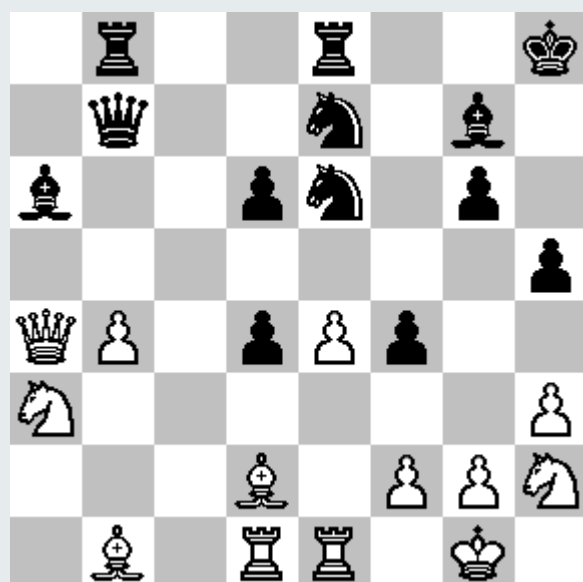
**Nguyen, Giang** 2165 (Australia) *White*  
**Ushenina, Anna** 2487 (Ukraine) *Black*  
 41st Olympiad Women, Round 2, Board 2

Nguyen is suffering from an acute shortage of space and found the only way to break out.



**28.d4! cxd4?!** After 28...c4! Black keeps the queenside closed and can concentrate on rolling White over with a slow kingside pawn advance

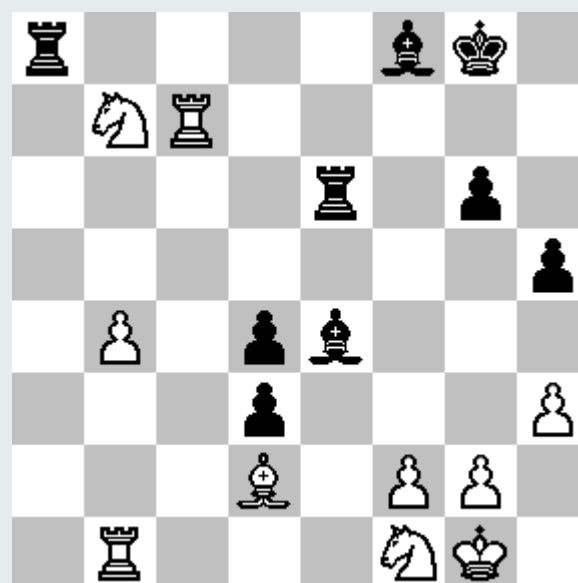
**29.cxd4 exd4 30.Qxb5 Ba6 31.Qa4 h5 32.Nh2 Qb7 33.Na3! Rb8?** Amazingly enough, Black now walks into trouble. After 33...Ra8! 34.b5 Qd7! Black would retain chances for an advantage.



**34.Ba2! Nc6?** Mistakes are rarely orphans. Ushenina correctly rejected 34...Nc7 35.Bxf4 but; 34...Qc6! would keep White's advantage to a minimum because 35.b5 is well met by 35...Bxb5 36.Nxb5 Nc5

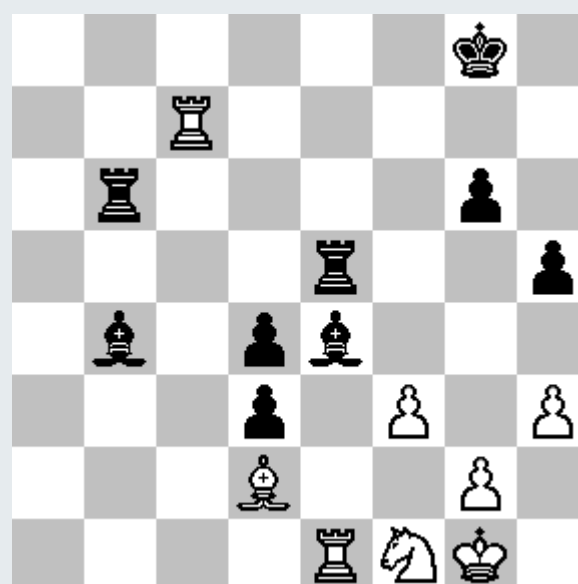
**35.Bd5! Ned8 36.Rc1** Now Ushenina desperately looked around for a saving idea, but there was nothing to be found. **36...Ra8 37.Bxc6** Cashing in immediately, though 37.b5 Bxb5 38.Qxb5 was a cleaner finish.

**37...Nxc6 38.Qxc6 Qxc6 39.Rxc6 Bb7 40.Rc7 Bxe4 41.Nc4 Bf8 42.Bxf4 d3 43.Nf1 Re6 44.Bd2 Kg8 45.Rb1?!** Nguyen was, not unreasonably, expecting Ushenina to resign soon but that led to some slack play, which soon became costly. 45.f3 was simple and winning. **45...d5 46.Na5 d4 47.Nb7?**



**47...Rb6!** All of a sudden, Nguyen looked in horror at what she had done; her intended 48.Nc5 allows 48...Bd6! followed by 49...Bxc5. With time ticking down, Nguyen finally found a way to hang on to her extra piece.

**48.Na5!! Rxa5 49.Re1! Re5 50.f3 Bxb4**



**51.fxe4?!** Nguyen has hung on to her extra piece, but the shock of almost blundering has had its effect and she no longer trusted herself. The text move is good enough, but after 51.Bxb4 Rxb4 52.Nd2!, followed by 53.Nxe4, Black could safely resign.

**51...Bf8! 52.Rd7 Rbe6 53.Rc1 Rxe4 54.Rc8 Re8 55.Rc6 R8e6 56.Rc8 Re8 57.Rc6 R8e6 58.Rc8**

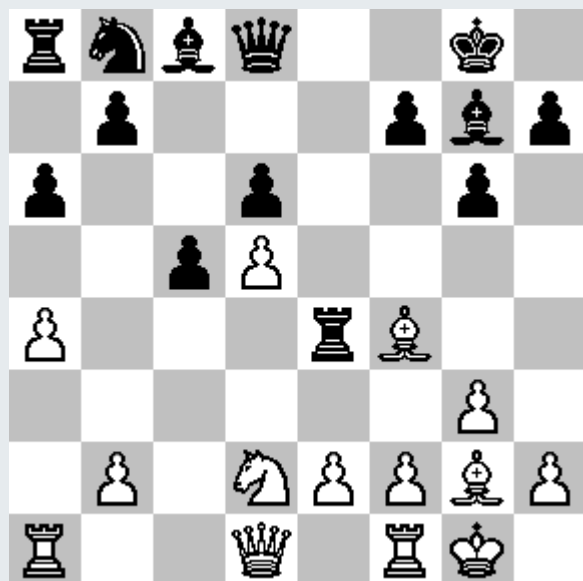
Ushenina claimed the draw - without writing down her move until this was drawn to her attention, but the sector arbiter allowed the claim. In any case, Nguyen seemed in no state to find 58.Rxe6 Rxe6 59.Rb7 followed by 60.Rb3 when the Black pawns will fall sooner rather than later. Nguyen was subdued on the walk back to the Radisson Blu Hotel but once safely inside her room she let out a blood-curdling scream of disappointment at having failed to convert against the former Women's World Champion. ½–½

**Zhukova, Natalia 2468 (Ukraine) White**

**Dekic, Biljana 2048 (Australia) Black**

41st Olympiad Women, Round 2, Board 3

**1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.Nc3 a6 7.a4 g6 8.Bg2 Bg7 9.Nf3 0–0 10.0–0 Re8 11.Bf4 Ne4 12.Nxe4 Rxe4 13.Nd2**



**13...Rb4!?** This brought an end to Dekic's preparation and came as a surprise to Zhukova, who only expected 13...Rxf4!? 14.gxf4 Bxb2 which was tested successfully later in the Olympiad.

**14.b3! g5!** Carlsen has tried 14...Rxf4 15.gxf4 Bxa1 16.Qxa1 but the text move is more challenging for White.

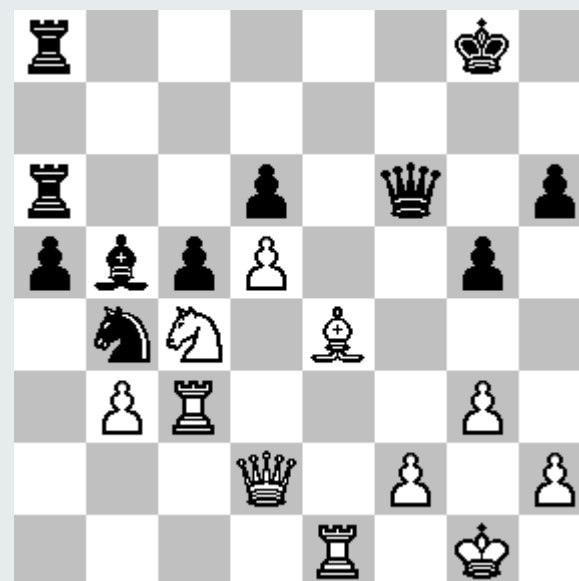
**15.Be3 f5 16.Nf3 16.Nc4!?** Bxa1 17.Qxa1 Rxb3 18.a5! is White's most ambitious try, but a little too ambitious for Zhukova.

**16...h6 17.Rc1 a5!?** Utilising an idea with which Caruana beat Zhukova's partner Grischuk, but more controversial here since 17...b5 was quite playable.

**18.Bd2 Rb6?!** An extremely awkward square. The rook could have escaped via e4 or, more ambitiously, stayed on b4 and played for dark square domination.

**19.Bc3?!** Now the rook on b6 can redeploy. After 19.h4! Black has problems.

**19...Bxc3 20.Rxc3 Qf6 21.Qc1 Na6 22.Nd2 Nb4 23.Nc4 Rba6 24.Qd2 Bd7 25.e4 fxe4 26.Bxe4 b5 27.axb5 Bxb5 28.Re1**



**28...Bxc4?** A careless exchange. After 28...a4! 29.bxa4 Rxa4 Black can take over the initiative.

**29.Rxc4 a4 30.bxa4 Rxa4 31.Bb1!** Suddenly Black's queenside attack has run out of targets and Black's kingside is looking vulnerable.

**31...Ra1 31...Ra2** here or next move was the only chance but Dekic was caught unawares by the rapid turn of fortunes.

**32.h4! Kf7? 33.Rce4 Kf8 34.Re6 Qd4 35.Qe2 Rxb1 36.Rxb1 Qxd5 37.Rxh6 Ra2 38.Rf6+ Kg8 39.Qe8+ Kg7 40.Qg6+** A typically sharp game by the Ukrainian Board Four gold medallist. 1–0





## Round 3



	Australia (AUS)	-	82	Monaco (MNC)	2 : 2
IM	Berezina, I	-	WIM	Lebel-Arias, J 1859	½ - ½
WFM	Nguyen, G	-		Chung, M 1981	½ - ½
WIM	Guo, E	-		Levacic, M 1994	1 - 0
	Yu, S	-		Grillon, C 1734	0 - 1

After the previous day's heroics, this match brought the team back down to earth. Berezina and Nguyen were winning soon after the opening but let their advantage slip – and Berezina went very close to losing against a veteran of the Argentinian, French and Monaco Open teams, as well as leading the Monaco Women's team.

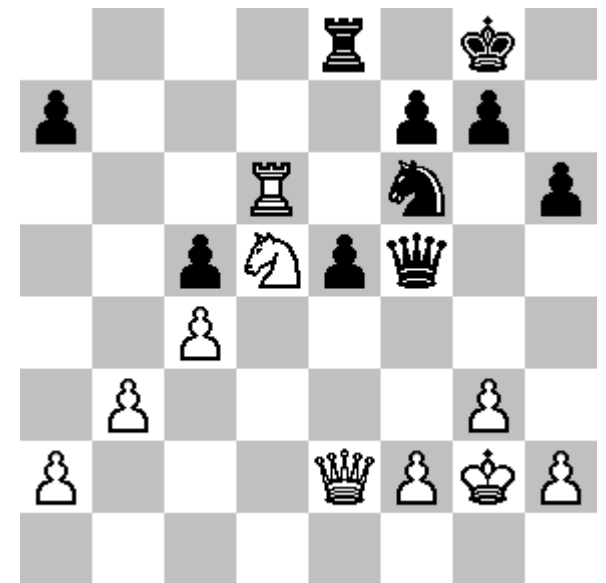
**Guo, Emma** 2044 (Australia) *White*

**Levacic, Melissa** 1994 (Monaco) *Black*

41st Olympiad Women, Round 3, Board 3

Levacic thought she could take the initiative with **33...Ne4?** but was shocked by Guo's reply **34.Rd8!!** intending to meet 34...Rxd8 with 35.Ne7+.

At first Levacic thought she could hang on with **34...Kf8** but after **35.Rxe8+ Kxe8 36.g4! Qg6 37.f3!** Black discovered that her position was falling apart and the game ended **37...Nf6 38.Qxe5+ Kf8 39.Qd6+ 1–0**



**Grillon, Charline** 1734 (Monaco) *White*

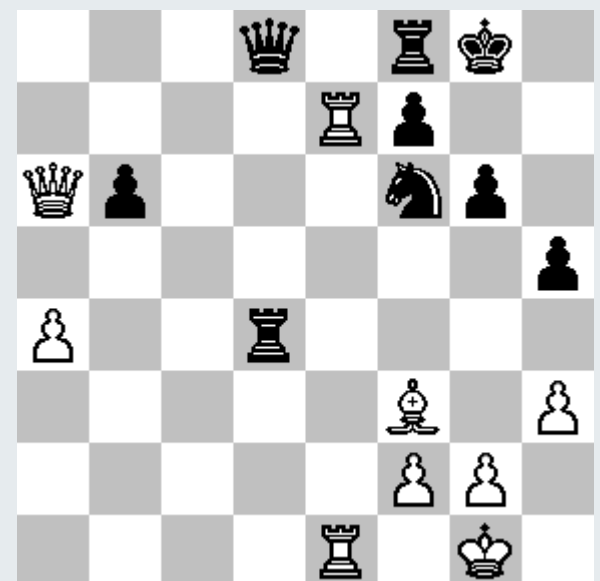
**Yu, Sally** 1953 (Australia) *Black*

41st Olympiad Women, Round 3, Board 4

Yu had survived severe middlegame pressure but now relaxed and committed an astonishing blunder.

**38.a5 bxa5??** 38...Rd6 would force an immediate pawn exchange and a draw.

**39.Qxf6 a4 40.R1e5 Rd6 41.Qf4 Ra6 42.Bd5 1–0**





# Round 4



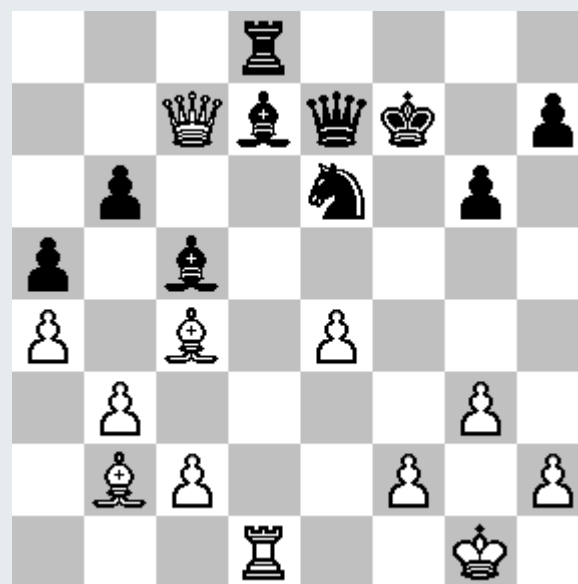
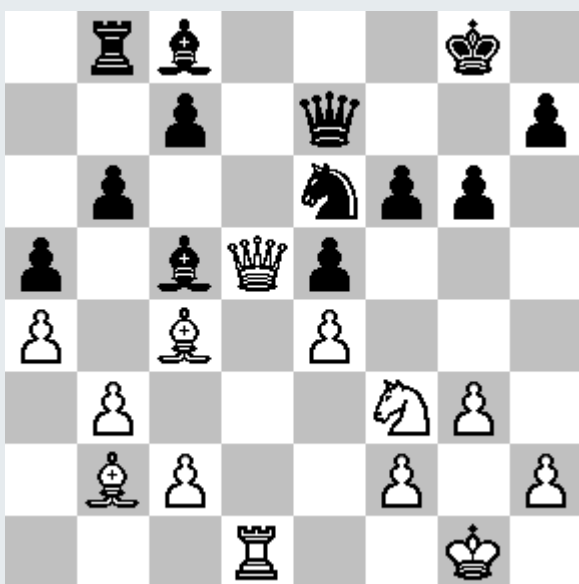
	Australia	-	88	Jamaica	4 : 0
WFM	Nguyen, G	-	WIM	Richards-Porter, D 2024	1 - 0
WIM	Guo, Emma	-		Miller, R 1782	1 - 0
WIM	Dekic, B	-		Smith, M 1747	1 - 0
	Yu, S	-		Gray, K 1728	1 - 0

On paper an easy pairing but every game was hard fought. Only Nguyen had control most of the way while Yu had to survive an inspired attack.

**Gray, Krishna** 1728 (Jamaica) *White*

**Yu, Sally** 1953 (Australia) *Black*

41st Olympiad Women, Round 4, Board 4



Position after 28...Rd8

Black, under pressure, should play 25...Bd6 and hope for the best but Yu played the more natural **25...Kf7?** and was hit by **26.Nxe5+!!** 26.Bxe5! is also strong, though requiring the sophisticated follow-up 26...fxe5 27.Qxe5! Bd6 28.Ng5+ Kg8 29.Qd5!

**26...fxe5 27.Qxe5** Now White has huge threats including 28.Qg7+ and 27.Qh8.

**27...Bd7! 28.Qxc7** Perfectly good, though [28. Rxd7! Qxd7 29.Bxe6+ Qxe6 30.Qxc7+ Be7 31.Qxb8 Qxe4 32.Qc7 would leave White two pawns up for a few checks.

**28...Rd8 (D) 29.Qe5?!** Now Black can hang on, though the line 29.Bxe6+! Kxe6 30.Rd5! Kf7 31.Qf4+! , intending 31...Kg8 32.Bf6 was not easy to find.

**29...Ke8! 30.Qh8+ Qf8!** Suddenly Gray woke up to the point of Yu's defence - White cannot simply grab the h-pawn due to the threats against f2.

**31.Qf6 Qxf6 32.Bxf6 Be7 33.Bxe7 Kxe7 34.f3 Ng5 35.Kf2?** Discombobulated, Gray hands the game to Yu. After 35.Be2 Black has whatever advantage is going but a draw is the most likely result.

**35...Rf8!** Winning a pawn and the game.

**36.Re1 Nxf3 37.Rd1 Nd2+ 38.Ke3 Nxc4+ 39.bxc4 Bxa4 40.Rd2 Rc8 41.Kd3 Rd8+ 42.Ke3 Rxd2 43.Kxd2 Ke6 44.Kc3 Ke5 45.Kd3 Bc6 0-1**





# Round 5



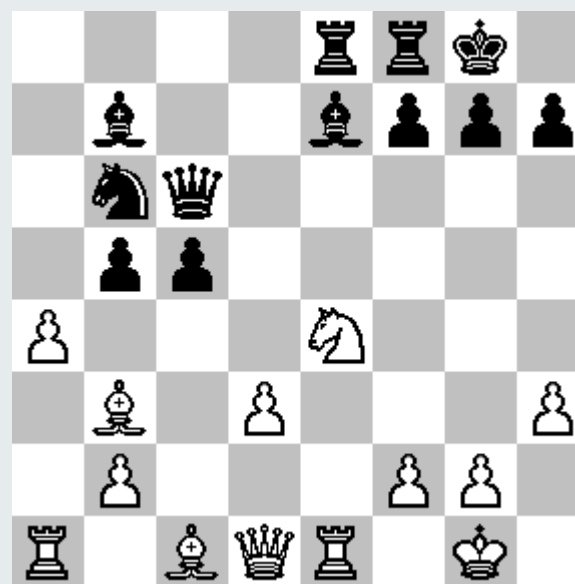
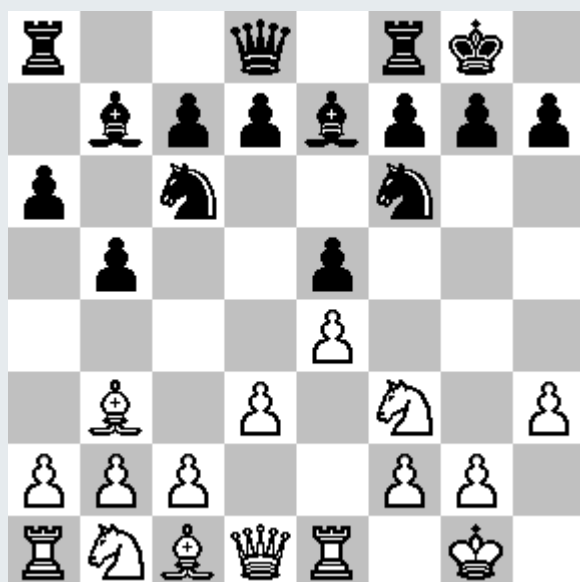
25	Latvia	-	51	Australia	2½:1½
WGM	Reizniece-Ozola, D 2278	-	IM	Berezina, I	½ - ½
WGM	Rogule, L 2347	-	WFM	Nguyen, G	½ - ½
WGM	Berzina, I 2247	-	WIM	Guo, E	½ - ½
WIM	Skinke, K 2217	-	WIM	Dekic, B	1 - 0

A tough match. All four players lost control soon after the opening but the top three boards hung tough. The finish, however was rather disappointing.

**Berzina, Ilze 2247 (Latvia) White**

**Guo, Emma 2044 (Australia) Black**

41st Olympiad Women, Round 5, Board 3



Position after 18...a4

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Ba4 Nf6 5.0-0 Be7 6.Re1 b5 7.Bb3 0-0 8.h3 Bb7 9.d3 d5** A favourite gambit for Guo, though Berzina also had experience in this line.

**10.exd5 Nxd5 11.Nxe5 Nxe5 12.Rxe5 Qd6 13.Re1 Rae8 14.Nd2 c5 15.Ne4 15...Qc6** Berzina now fell into deep thought, working out a reasonable way to delay or stop ...c4.

**16.c4 Nb6 17.cxb5?! 17.f3** is much safer. **17...axb5 18.a4 (D)**

Now it was Guo's turn to catch up on the clock, but her subtle solution was not the strongest option.

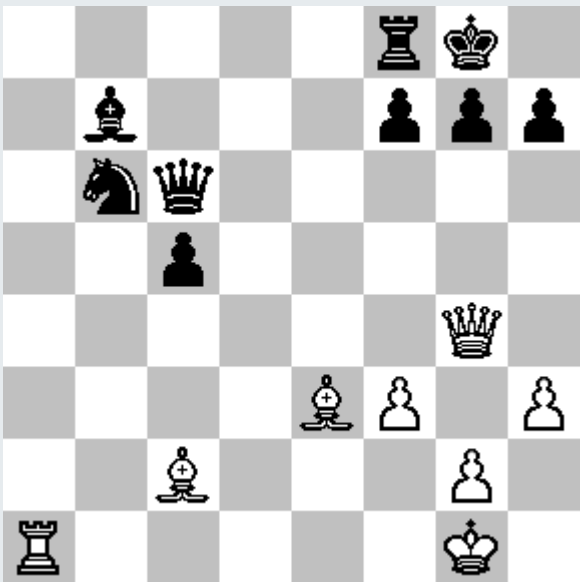
**18...Rd8?! 18...bxa4! 19.Bxa4 Nxa4 20.Qxa4 Qd5!** turns out to be very strong for Black because the obvious **21.Qc4** loses a piece after **21...Qxc4 22.dxc4 Bd8!**

**19.axb5 Qxb5 20.Nc3 Qc6 21.Qg4 Bf6 22.Be3 Rxd3 23.Bc2 Rxc3 24.bxc3 Bxc3 25.f3 Bxa1 26.Rxa1 (D)**

Black has won a pawn, but the White bishops provide more than enough compensation and Black soon finds herself defending grimly.

26...Nd5 27.Qh4 g6 28.Bh6 Rc8 29.Be4 f5 30.Bxd5+ Qxd5 31.Kh1 Qd4 32.Qe1 Kf7 33.Rb1 Bc6 34.Qa5 c4 35.Qb4 Re8 36.Rc1 Bd5 37.Bg5 Qe5 38.Qc5 f4! 39.Bxf4 Qxf4 40.Qxd5+ Kg7 The c-pawn is immune from capture, so Guo was now sure the draw was in the bag.

41.Qd7+! A well-timed draw offer by White, before Guo realised that 41.Qd7+ Kh6! would still leave White, not Black, with a few technical problems before she could be sure of the draw. Guo was intending to play 41...Kf8 when 42.Rd1 is dead equal. ½–½

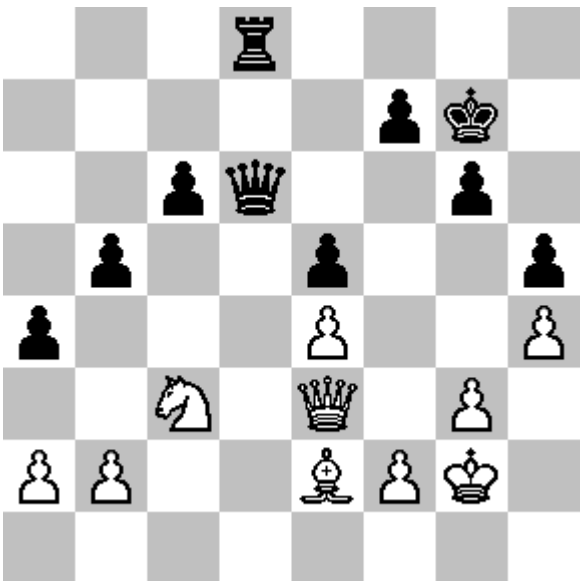


Berezina - Guo after 26. Rxa1

Reizniece-Ozola, Dana 2278 (Latvia) *White*  
Berezina, Irina 2182 (Australia) *Black*  
41st Olympiad Women, Round 5, Board 1

By now the match stood at 1–2, so Berezina knew that she needed to win to save the match. After six minutes thought Berezina found the forcing 41...a3! and her opponent thought for nine minutes before replying 42.bxa3 and, on the prompting of her captain, Kveinis, offering a draw.

Berezina, with an obvious reply, spent the next 20 minutes apparently trying to find a forced win (while avoiding eye contact with her captain) and when she couldn't do so accepted the offer and the match was lost. Objectively White might be able to hold after 42.bxa3 Qxa3 43.Bxh5! b4! 44.Qg5! bxc3! 45.Bxg6! (45.Qxd8 c2) 45...Qd6!? 46.Bf5+! Kf8 47.h5! but the chances of White playing this way when needing only a draw was remote. ½–½



## Round 6



	Australia	-	62	Norway 2	3½: ½
IM	Berezina, I	-		Machlik, M 2081	1 - 0
WFM	Nguyen, G	-		Reppen, E 2016	½ - ½
WIM	Guo, E	-		Gronnestad, A 1997	1 - 0
	Yu, S	-		Machlik, E 1950	1 - 0

Norway 2 were the classic bony chicken; a lower rated team with great potential to cause an upset. The Norwegians had prepared hard for their home Olympiad but the pressure of being televised and having their every mistake dissected seemed to get to the Norway 2 team.

Berezina and Guo won comfortably but Nguyen's opponent missed a forced mate (admittedly against the run of play) and Yu gave her opponent two pawns head start before long-term pressure, and an opponent reluctant to take a draw, gave Yu a hard-earned victory.



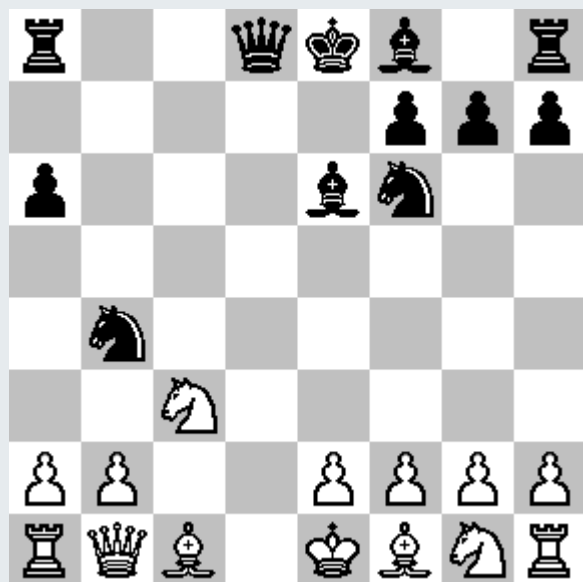
**Machlik, Edit** 1950 (Norway 2) *White*

**Yu, Sally** 1953 (Australia) *Black*

41st Olympiad Women, Round 6, Board 4

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.cxd5 cxd4 5.Qxd4 Nc6 6.Qd1 exd5 7.Qxd5 Be6 8.Qb5?! 8.Qxd8+ Rxd8 9.e3** is the main line, though Black's compensation for the pawn can last long into the endgame.

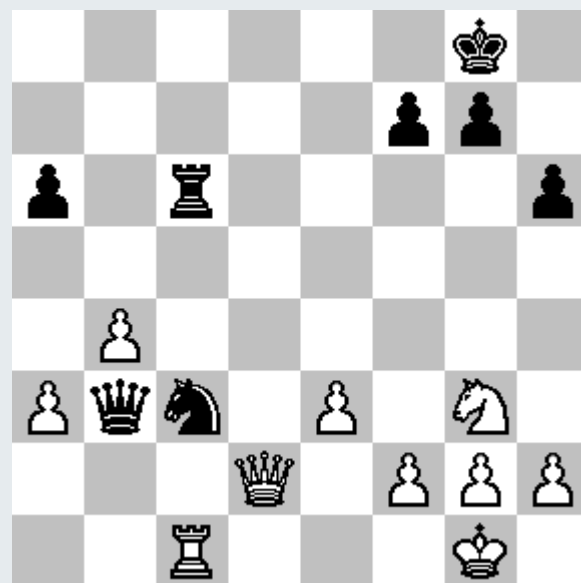
**8...a6! 9.Qxb7 Nb4 10.Qe4 Nf6 11.Qb1**



**11...Bc5?! Yu** spent more than 40 minutes on this move, knowing that there must be something strong but unable to find it. Her preparation had (very briefly) covered **11...Qd7! 12.a3** (If **12.e4 Bc5!** with a far superior version of the game continuation) **12...Bf5! 13.e4 Nxe4! 14.Nxe4 Qc6!** when Black is winning, but Yu examined primarily; **11...Qc8** and (correctly) could not find a good answer to **12.e4**.

**12.a3 Nc6 13.e3 Bb3** Black has created some play but once White untangles the two-pawn deficit should prove decisive. However Yu never allows her opponent to completely untangle and in the time scramble began to turn the game around.

**14.Nf3 Qe7 15.Be2 0-0 16.0-0 Rfd8 17.Nd2 Na5 18.Bd1 Rab8 19.Nxb3 Nxb3 20.Bxb3 Rxb3 21.Qc2 Rdb8 22.Rd1 Bd6 23.Ne2 R3b7 24.Ng3 Be5 25.Rb1 Rc7 26.Qe2 Qe6 27.b4 Rbc8 28.Qd3 Rd7 29.Qe2 Rdc7 30.Bd2 Nd5 31.Rdc1 Bc3 32.Qd3 h6 33.Bxc3 Rxc3 34.Qd2 R8c6 35.Rxc3 Nxc3 36.Rc1 Qb3**



**37.Ra1?** White's last winning chance lay in exploiting the pin on the c-file via **37.Qd8+ Kh7 38.Qd3+ g6 39.Kf1!** followed by **Ne2**.

**37...Nb1! 38.Qd8+ Kh7 39.h3 Rc1+ 40.Kh2 Rd1 40...Qb2! 41.Qc8 Qb2! 42.Qf5+ Kg8 43.Qc8+ Kh7 44.Qc4?! Qxf2! 45.Ne2 Qf1**



**46.Ra2?** **46.Qe4+! g6 47.Qf4!** was still enough to draw.

**46...Qh1+ 47.Kg3 Qe1+ 48.Kh2 Nd2! 49.Rxd2 Rxd2** Now Black, with an exposed king, needs to show excellent technique to win, but Yu is up to the task.

**50.Qe4+ g6 51.Qe7 Qf1! 52.Nf4 Qc4! 53.h4 Rc2 54.h5 g5 55.Ng6 Qc7+ 56.Qxc7 Rxc7 57.Ne5 Kg7 58.Nd3 Rc3 59.Nc5 Rxa3 60.e4 Kf6 61.g3 g4 62.Nd7+ Kg5 63.Ne5 f6 64.Nd7 Ra4 65.Nf8 Kxh5 0-1**



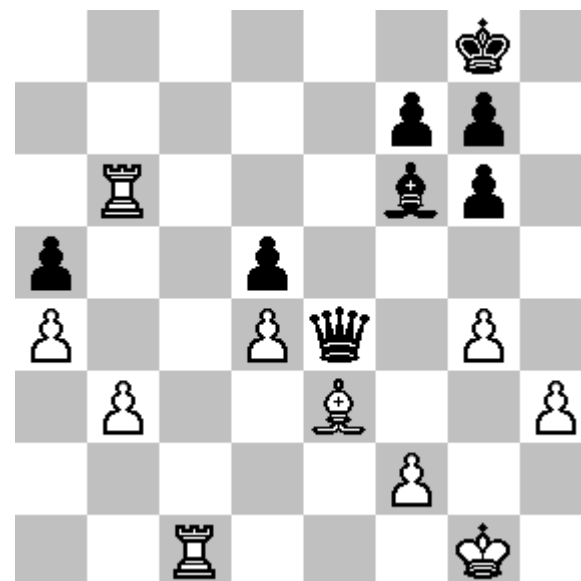
**Reppen, Ellisiv 2016 (Norway 2) *White***  
**Nguyen, Thu Giang 2165 (Australia) *Black***  
 41st Olympiad Women, Round 6, Board 2

Black should be fine after 35...g5 followed by 36...Bxd4 since 36.Rd1 allows 36...Qf3 but Nguyen has a moment of incaution...

**35...Bxd4? 36.Bxd4 Qxd4 37.Rb8+ Kh7 38.Rcc8??** Right idea, wrong move order. After 38.g5! Black is dead because after 38...Qd2 39.Rcc8 Qxg5+ 40.Kf1 Black has no more checks.

**38...g5 39.Rh8+ Kg6 40.Rhd8 Qd3 41.Rb5 Qxh3 42.Rdxd5 Qxg4+ 43.Kf1 f6 44.Rd3 Qe4 45.Re3 Qa8** Passive, but neither side has serious winning chances.

**46.f3 Qc6 47.Kf2 Qc2+ 48.Re2 Qc3 49.Kg2 Kh5 50.Re4 Qd2+ 51.Kf1 Qd1+ 52.Kf2 Qd2+ 53.Kf1 Qd1+ ½-½**



**All smiles before their game**  
*Photo by Cathy Rogers*





## Round 7



39	England	-		Australia	1½:2½
IM	Houska, J 2401	-	WFM	Nguyen, G	0 - 1
WIM	Maroroa, S 2120	-	WIM	Guo, E	1 - 0
	Kalaiyalahan, A 2016	-	WIM	Dekic, B	0 - 1
WFM	James, A 2095	-		Yu, S	½ - ½

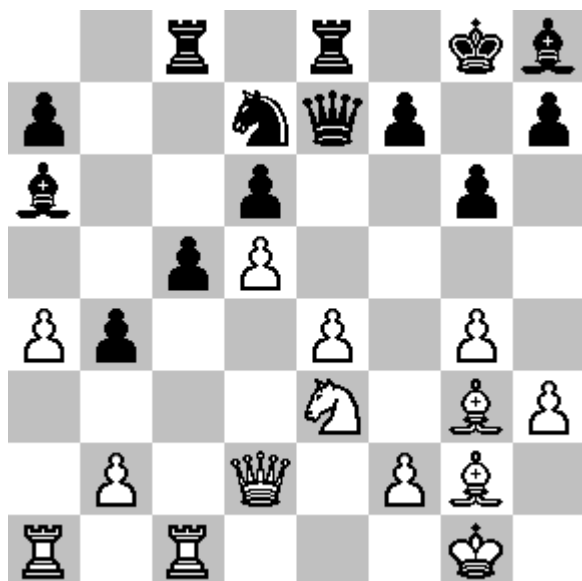
An important win against a higher seed and achieved despite Guo's first bad day and Berezhina's desire to avoid another Black against a strong opponent. Nguyen played an outstanding game against England's one star, while Dekic fought back against her young opponent, refusing to make any concessions in a seriously passive position and hitting Kalaiyalahan on the counter when the opportunity presented itself. Notably, this was the first day when any of Australia's top 3 had lost a game.

**Houska, Jovanka 2401 (England) White**

**Nguyen, Thu Giang 2165 (Australia) Black**

41st Olympiad Women, Round 7, Board 1

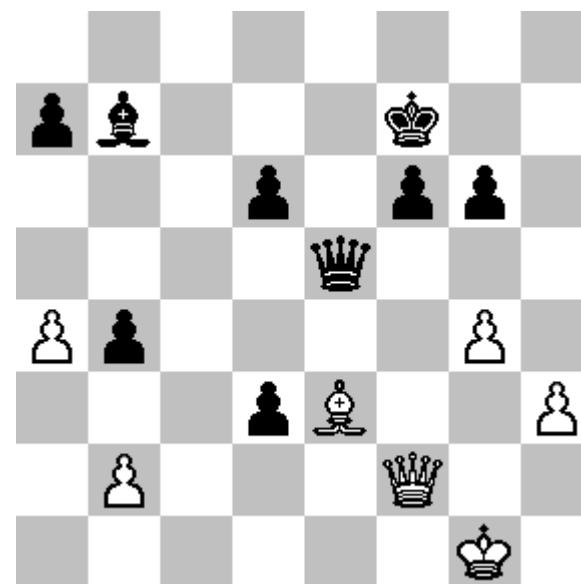
After a complicated opening (where Black's queen turned up on a4 and Black's knight on b4!), both sides have consolidated their position, but now Houska becomes overambitious.



**30.f4?! Bd4! 31.Kh2 Nf6!** Suddenly White's centre is collapsing.

**32.Re1 Nxe4! 33.Bxe4 Qxe4 34.Nf5 Qxd5** The safest way, though 34...gxf5! 35.Rxe4 Rxe4 36.Re1 Rce8 37.Rxe4 Rxe4 would have been a fitting finish to White's resistance.

**35.Nxd4 cxd4 36.f5 f6 37.fxg6 hxg6 38.Bf2 d3 39.Rxe8+ Rxe8 40.Re1 Rxe1 41.Qxe1 Kf7 42.Be3 Qe5+ 43.Kg1 Bb7 44.Qf2 (D)**



Position after 44.Qf2

**44... Qe4?! The first step in the wrong direction. After 44... a5! White has run out of moves because 45.Bd4 is powerfully met by 45...d2!**

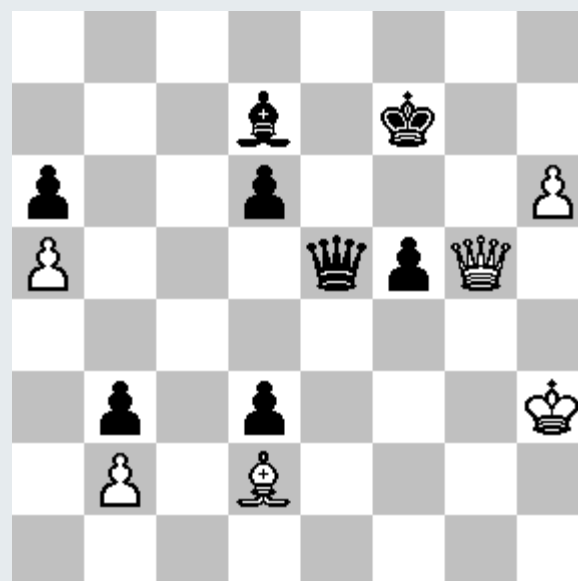
**45.Kh2 a6?! 46.Kg3!** Now the win has become rather difficult and Nguyen prevailed only after many tribulations.

**46...Ke6 47.h4 Bc6 48.a5! f5 49.gxf5+ gxf5 50.Bf4 Be8 51.Qb6 Bc6 52.Qf2 b3 53.h5 Kf6 54.h6 Kg6 55.Qg1 Kh7 56.Qf2 Qh1 57.Bd2 Kg6 58.Qf4 Qg2+ 59.Kh4 Qh1+ 60.Kg3 Qg2+ 61.Kh4 Qe4 62.Kg3 Qe5 63.Kh3 Bd7!? 64.Qg5+ Kf7**

**65.Qh5+?**

65.h7!

**65...Kf8! 66.h7 f4+ 67.Kh4 Qe7+ 68.Qg5 Qxh7+ 69.Qh5 Qxh5+ 70.Kxh5 f3 0–1**



Houska - Nguyen after 64... Kf7

**Kalaiyalahan, Akshaya** 2016 (England) *White*

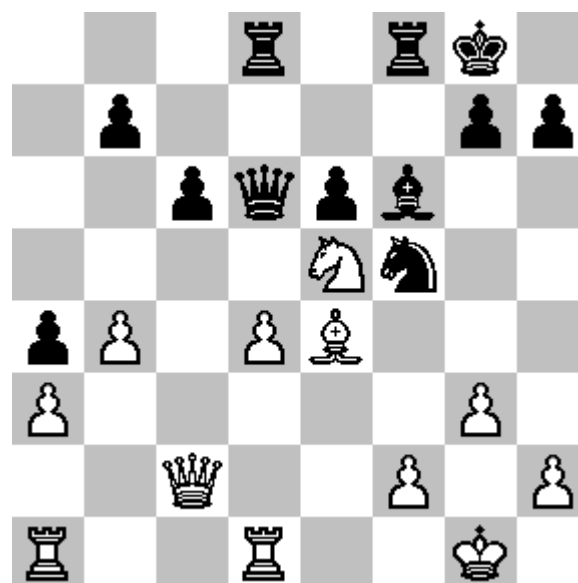
**Dekic, Biljana** 2048 (Australia) *Black*

41st Olympiad Women, Round 7, Board 3

Black can win a pawn by capturing twice on e5 but Dekic finds a much stronger (and braver) was to secure an advantage.

**34...Nxd4! 35.Bxh7+ Kh8 36.Ng6+ Kxh7 37.Nxf8+ Kg8** Despite the double check, Dekic has calculated that White must surrender material.

**38.Qh7+ Kxf8 39.Qe4 Kf7 40.f4 Qc7 41.Re1 Qd7 42.Rad1 Qd5 43.Qe3 Nf3+! 44.Kf2 Bd4 45.Rxd4 Nxd4 0–1**







## Round 8

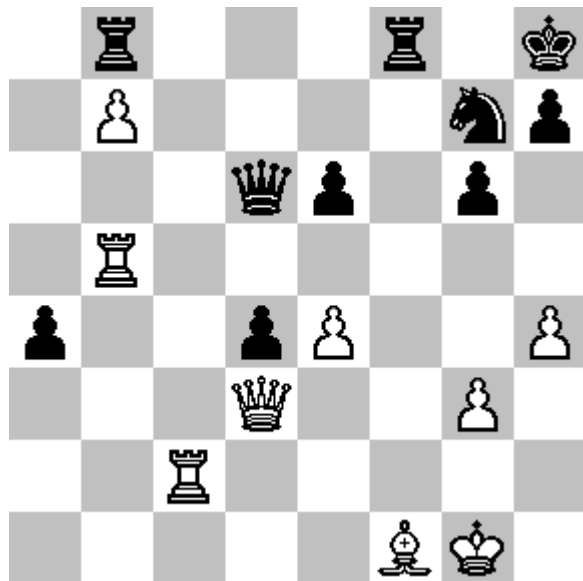


	Australia	-	15	Serbia	1 : 3
IM	Berezina, I	-	IM	Bojkovic, N 2425	1 - 0
WFM	Nguyen, G	-	WGM	Vojinovic, J 2312	0 - 1
WIM	Guo, E	-	WGM	Stojanovic, A 2297	0 - 1
WIM	Dekic, B	-		Velikic, A 2145	0 - 1

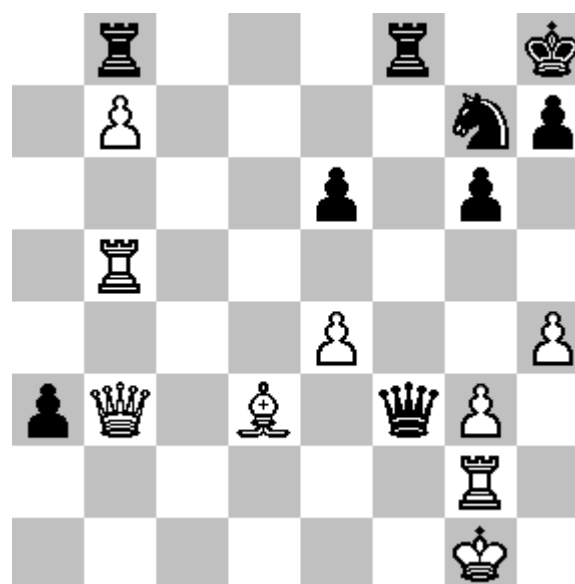
Back again in the elite team zone, Serbia were too strong, provoking serious mistakes from the Australians on the lower three boards. The honourable exception was Berezina, who played her best game of the Olympiad against a player who has been as high as number 17 in the world. Berezina sacrificed a pawn early but missed a number of chances and by the time the second time control was reached, anything could happen.

**Berezina, Irina 2182 (Australia) White**  
**Bojkovic, Natasa 2425 (Serbia) Black**  
 41st Olympiad Women, Round 8, Board 1

Bojkovic ran herself down to less than five minutes on this move, desperately playing for a win when Black should probably be content with a draw.



**43...a3!? 44.Be2 Qe7 45.Qb3 Qf7 46.Bc4 d3!? 47.Bxd3 Qf3**  
**48.Rg2?! Played quickly, but 48.Kh2 was much safer.**



**48...a2! 49.Ra5 Qf7?** Panic, as her last minute ticked away. Black can win a piece with 49...Rbd8! 50.Raxa2 Rxd3 although after 51.Qc4 Rdd8 52.Kh2 it is unclear whether Black can make progress given the strength of the White b-pawn.

**50.Ba6!** With the b7-pawn safe, White now takes control.

**50...Qc7 51.Raxa2 Qc5+ 52.Kh2 Nh5 53.Qxe6 Nf6 54.Rac2 Qa7 55.Rc8 h5 56.Qxf6+! 1-0**



## Round 9



72	Kyrgyzstan	-		Australia	2½:1½
WIM	Ostry, I 2177	-	IM	Berezina, I	1 - 0
	Alymbay, K 1859	-	WFM	Nguyen, G	½ - ½
	Shyngys K 1800	-	WIM	Guo, E	0 - 1
	Omurbekova, D 1707	-		Yu, S	1 - 0

A mediocre result just three rounds from the finish when every match point is gold.

Guo was back to her winning ways, but the other three players were outplayed and only Nguyen managed to hang on. Berezina was coming down with a cold and played like it against an old rival from her Ukraine days while Yu could not control the tactics she unleashed in the opening. Nguyen's survival – living on the edge and constantly challenging her opponent to calculate a forced win when faced with multiple attractive options - was simply remarkable.



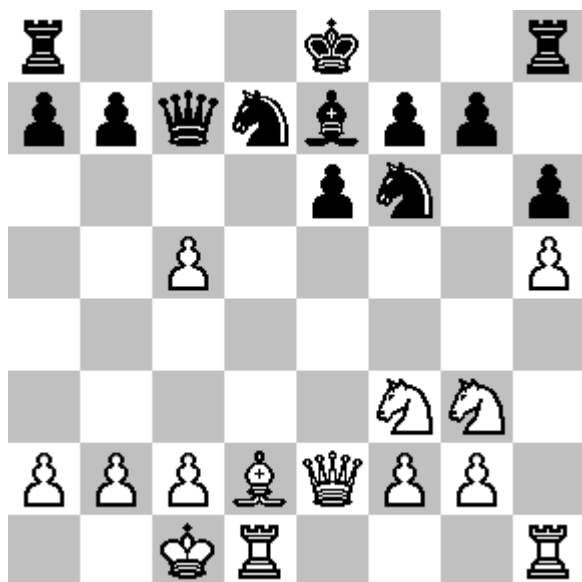
**A team had a disappointing loss against Kyrgyzstan**

*Photo by Cathy Rogers*



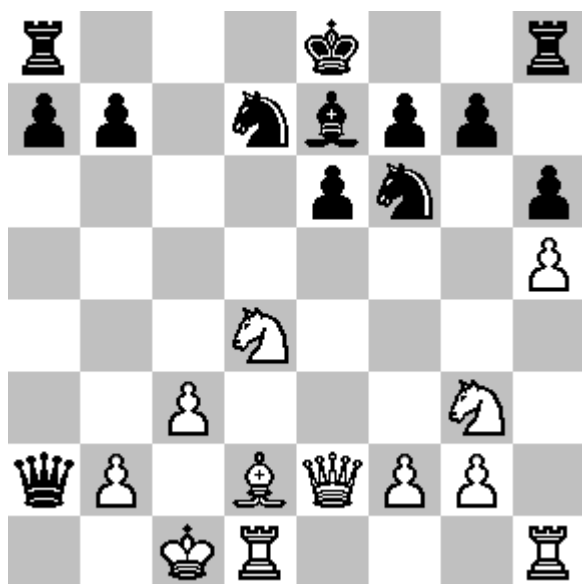
**Nguyen, Thu Giang 2165 (Australia) White**  
**Alymbay, Kyzy Aizhan 1859 (Kyrgyzstan) Black**  
 41st Olympiad Women, Round 9, Board 2

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4  
 h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.h5 Bh7 9.Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 e6 11.Bd2  
 Ngf6 12.0-0-0 Be7 13.Qe2 c5!? 14.dxc5 Qc7

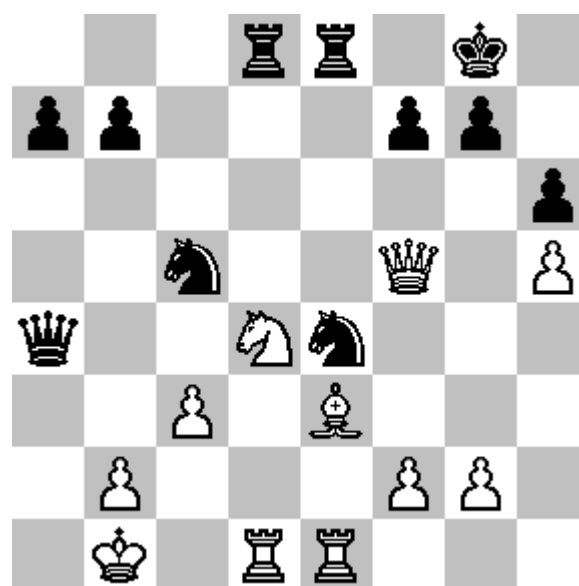


15.c6?! Qxc6 16.Nd4? Qa4! There goes a pawn and the game, most observers thought, but Nguyen is not willing to lie down and die.

17.c3 Qxa2

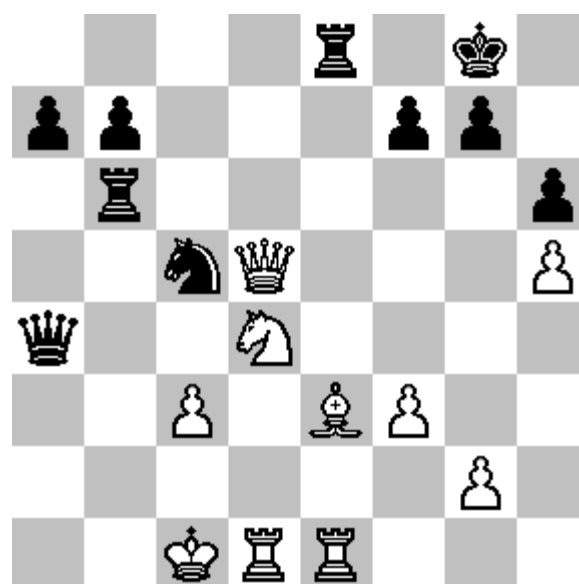


18.Ngf5! exf5 19.Rhe1 0-0! 20.Qxe7 Qa1+ 21.Kc2 Qa4+  
 22.Kb1 Rfe8 23.Qd6 Ne4 24.Qf4 Ndc5 25.Be3 Rad8  
 26.Qxf5 (D)



26...Rd6! Intending a sacrifice on c3. Little did Alymbay realise that Nguyen was going to force her to implement her plan.

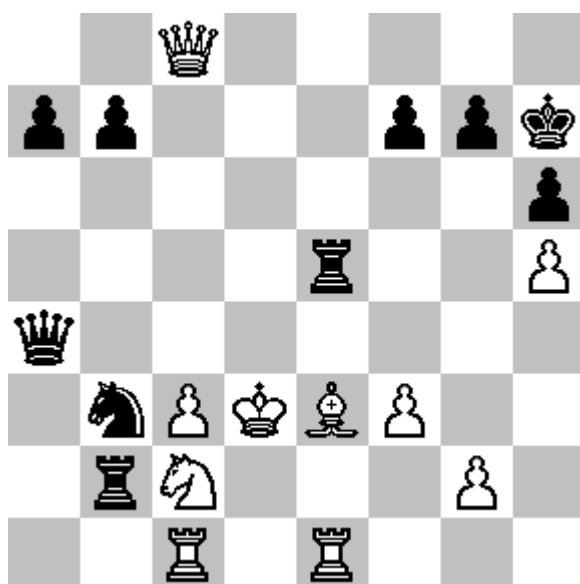
27.f3! Rf6! 28.Qd5 Nxc3+! 29.bxc3 Rb6+ 30.Kc1



30...Qa3+ Good enough to win, but the computer shows 30...Re5!! as the brilliant way to finish the game, with the idea that after 31.Qxe5 White's queen no longer controls a2 and Black can mate with 31...Qa3+ 32.Kd2 Rb2+ 33.Nc2 Rxc2+! 34.Kxc2 Qa2+ 35.Kc1 Nb3#

31.Kd2 Rb2+ 32.Nc2 Qa4! 33.Qf5 Re5 Now the rook sacrifice is unnecessary given that 33...Ne4+! would probably force a quick resignation.

34.Qc8+ Kh7 35.Rc1 Nb3+ 36.Kd3!

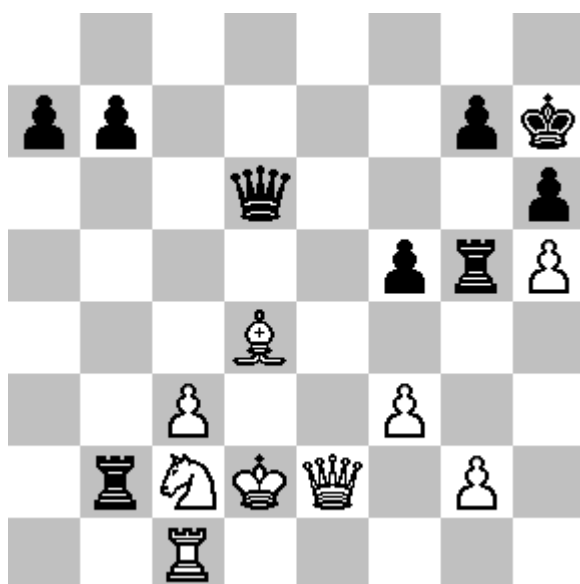


Nguyen - Alymbay after 36.Kd3!

**36...Nxc1+?! Obvious, but now Nguyen is back in the game. After 36...Qa6+! 37.c4 (Black may have missed 37.Qc4 Rd5+ 38.Bd4 Nc5+! winning the queen.) 37...Nxc1+ 38.Rxc1 Rb3+ 39.Ke2 Black has the winning tactic 39...Rbxe3+! 40.Nxe3 Qa3!**

**37.Rxc1 Qa6+ 38.Kd2 Rd5+ 39.Bd4 Qd6 40.Qg4** The final move of the time control gives Black hope again, though 40.Qe8! was not an easy move to find with 30 seconds on the clock.

**40...Rg5 41.Qe4+ f5 42.Qe2**



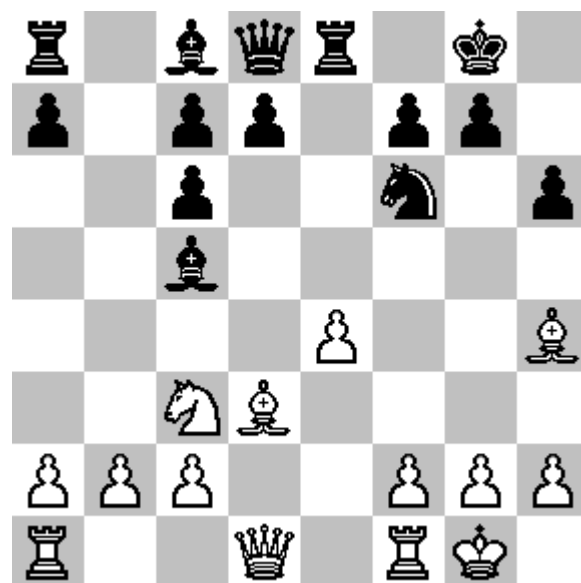
**42...Rxf5** Now White is fine again. The tactic 42...Qh2 43.Rg1 Rb1! does not win immediately but Black keeps up the pressure.

**43.Re1! Rg5 44.Kc1 Ra2 45.Qc4! Qa6 46.Qxa6 Rxa6 47.Re2 Ra5 48.Kb2?! Rb5+ 49.Kc1 a5 50.Kd2 a4** Given the match situation White would have liked to decline the offer but the a pawn, and the possibility of ...h5-h4, provides Black with all the winning chances. 1/2-1/2

**Shynys Kyzy, Aijarkyn 1800 (Kyrgyzstan) White**  
**Guo, Emma 2044 (Australia) Black**  
 41st Olympiad Women, Round 9, Board 3

**1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nxc6 bxc6 6.Bd3 6.e5 Qe7 7.Qe2** is the critical main line - though it did not work well for Smerdon when he played it in round 9 against Portugal, on the other side of the playing hall to the Kyrgyzstan-Australia match.

**6...Bc5 7.0-0 0-0 8.Bg5 h6 9.Bh4 Re8 10.Nc3**



White has done nothing particularly wrong, but with a series of very precise moves Guo takes the initiative.

**10...Rb8! 11.Qf3?! 11.Rb1 Bd4 12.Qd2** is passive but safe.

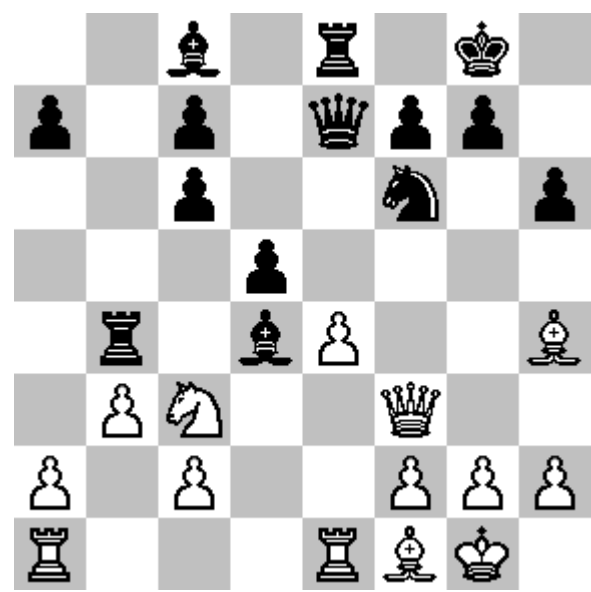
**11...Bd4! 12.Bc4!?** Hoping to trap the Black rook if it captures on b2.

**12...Qe7 13.Rfe1?! Now White becomes pinned along the e-file. After 13.Bb3! Black can win the e-pawn but White will have compensation.**





13...Rb4! 14.b3?! 14.Bb3 was now absolutely forced.  
14...d5!? 14...g5! 15.Bg3 d5 was even better because now 15.Rad1 hangs on. 15.Bf1?!



15...g5! 16.e5 Ne4 and Black won bulk material and soon the game.  
17.Bg3 Bxc3 18.Rxe4 Bxa1 19.Re1 Bb2 20.c3 Re4 21.Rb1 Ba3 22.Qh5 Kg7 23.h3 Bf5 24.Bd3 Rxe5 25.Bxe5+ Qxe5 26.Qd1 Bd6 27.g3 Bxh3 28.Qf3 Re6 29.Rd1 Rf6 30.Qh5 Bf5 31.Qf3 Bxd3 32.Qxd3 Bc5 33.Rf1 g4 34.Kg2 Rf3 35.Qd2 Qxc3 36.Qe2 Qf6 37.Qd2 Rxf2+ 38.Rxf2 Qxf2+ 39.Qxf2 Bxf2 40.Kxf2 Kf6 41.Ke3 Ke5 42.b4 d4+ 43.Kd3 h5 44.a4 h4 45.gxh4 g3 46.h5 g2 47.h6 g1Q 48.h7 Qg6+ 49.Kc4 Qc2# 0-1



# Round 10



73	New Zealand	-	Australia	½ :3½
CM	Milligan, H 1939	-	Nguyen, G	0 - 1
	Meyer, M 2064	-	Guo, E	0 - 1
	Gao, J 1947	-	Dekic, B	0 - 1
	Timergazi, L 1874	-	Yu, S	½ - ½

At 9.00am on the morning of the match I received a phone call from a croaky Irina saying that her illness had become worse and that she was doubtful that she would be able to play. This was unfortunate, not only for the obvious reason of Australia being without their Board 1 but also because it ruined any attempt to balance colours and game numbers. Dekic was particularly aggrieved at having her third consecutive Black.  
Fortunately the match went very well, with smooth wins on the top two boards and Dekic and Yu taking control after poor openings. Yu was eventually held out by excellent defence after move 40 by the new Kiwi talent who picked up a WFM title from drawing this game.

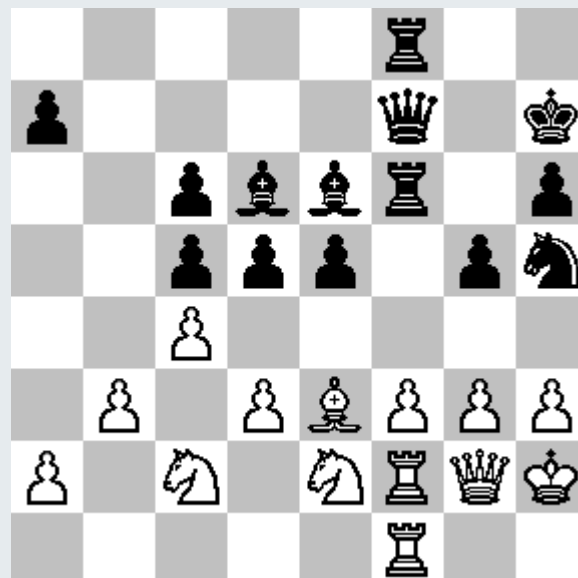
**Milligan, Helen** 1938 (New Zealand) *White*

**Nguyen, Giang** 2165 (Australia) *Black*

41st Olympiad Women, Round 10, Board 1

White's position is barely hanging together and Nguyen finds a stylish way to break through.

**33...d4! 34.Bc1 e4! 35.dxe4 d3 36.Rd1 Rxf3 37.Rxf3 Qxf3 38.Ne3 Qxe2 0-1**



**Gao, Judy** 1947 (New Zealand) *White*

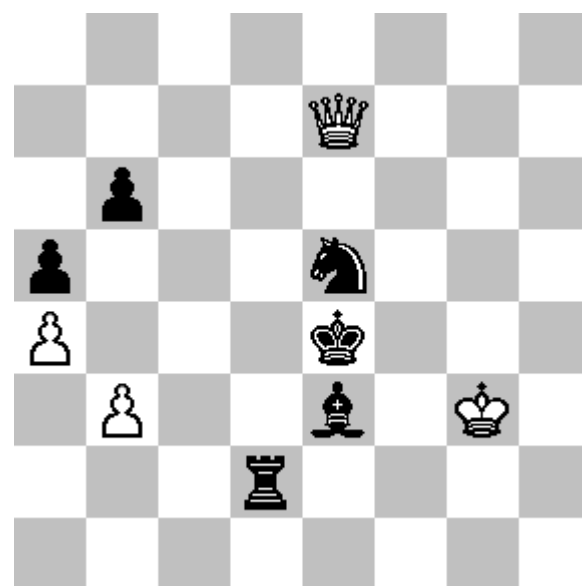
**Dekic, Biljana** 2048 (Australia) *Black*

41st Olympiad Women, Round 10, Board 3

Dekic had been manoeuvring patiently since move 56 with this unusual material imbalance and now has a chance to end the game immediately...

**82...Bc5** Good enough, but when asked why she didn't mate in 2 with 82...Bf4+ 83.Kh3 Rh2# Dekic explained "I only had three minutes left so I didn't want to waste time analysing this!" The game ended..

**83.Qh7+ Kd4 84.Qh4+ Kc3 85.Qf6 Bd4 86.Qe6 Rd3+** and with the b-pawn soon to fall, White resigned. **0-1**



## Round 11



	Australia	-	78	Malaysia	4 : 0
WFM	Nguyen, G	-	WCM	Tan, L 1945	1 - 0
WIM	Guo, E	-	WCM	Azman Hisham, Nur Nab. 1916	1 - 0
WIM	Dekic, B	-	WFM	Azman Hisham, Nur Naj. 1886	1 - 0
	Yu, S	-		Azhar, P 1860	1 - 0

Malaysia, with a team made up entirely of teenagers, had been performing brilliantly up until this round, leading the C group and with two of their players gaining close to 100 points each from the Olympiad. Berezina, due to an inability to find a suitable flight after the Olympiad, had already headed home, leaving the same team as played New Zealand to front up again after the rest day.

Yu won quickly, after which the match was never in doubt. Guo and Dekic waited patiently until their opponents allowed a tactic, while Nguyen won a manoeuvring game that would have done Petrosian (or Carlsen) proud.



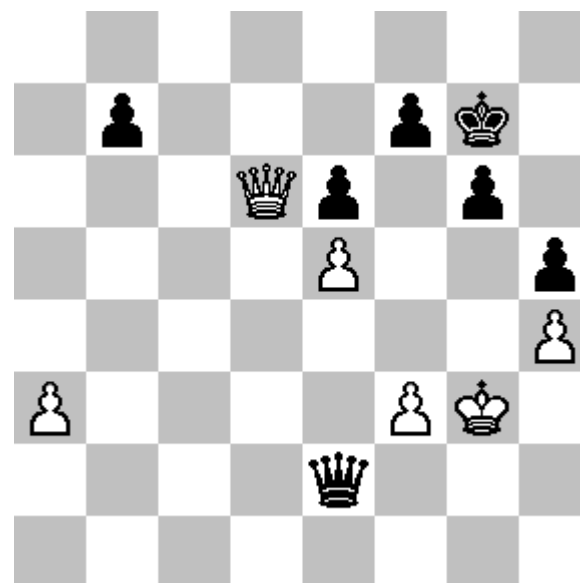
**Azman Hisham, Nur Nabila** 1947 (Malaysia) *White*  
**Guo, Emma** 2044 (Australia) *Black*  
 41st Olympiad Women, Round 11, Board 2

This endgame would be very challenging to win after 38.Qd4! but Azman keeps her a-pawn protected and allows the decisive break.

**38.Qc5?! Qe1+! 39.Kh3 g5!! 40.Qd4**

The resulting pawn ending is hopeless, but 40.hxg5 h4 41.Kg4 Qg3+ 42.Kh5 h3 is hardly better - the march of the h-pawn will be decisive.

**40...Qxh4+ 41.Qxh4 gxh4 42.Kxh4 Kg6 43.a4 b6 44.Kg3 Kf5 45.Kh4 Kxe5 46.Kxh5 Kf4 47.Kh6 Kxf3 48.Kg7 e5 49.Kxf7 e4 50.Ke6 e3 51.Kd6 e2 52.Kc6 e1Q 0-1**



**Dekic, Biljana** 2048 (Australia) *White*  
**Azman Hisham, Nur Nahija** 1886 (Malaysia) *Black*  
 41st Olympiad Women, Round 11, Board 3

Black's control of the a-file has been a worry for White for some time, so it must have been a relief for Dekic to play

**33.Ra1 Qb7?**

33...Ra2 keeps the important file, though after the exchange of rooks, White should hold the position.

**34.Qd1! Rb2?!**

On 34...Qxb3 35.Ra8 wins a piece and Black's counterplay should not be sufficient. Nonetheless, this was a better chance than the game continuation.

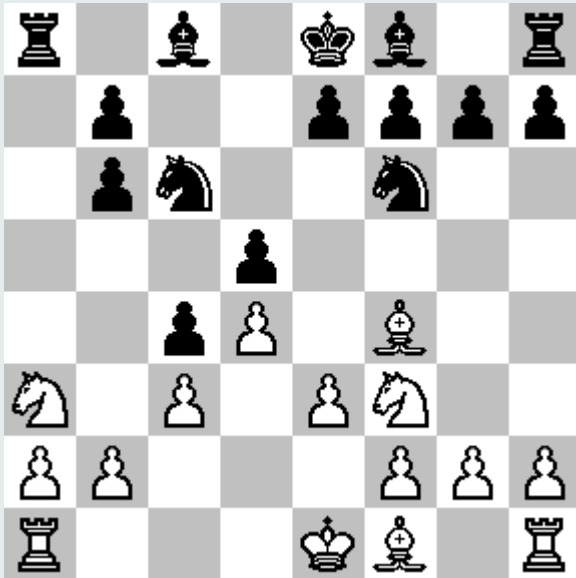
**35.Ra3!** Now the Black rook is trapped and the game is effectively over, though Azman fights on, and on.

**35...Nb6 36.Nd3 Nxc4 37.bxc4 Rb1 38.Nc1 Qe4 39.Kf2 d3 40.Qf3 Qd4+ 41.Qe3 Qxc4 42.Ra8 Qd5 43.Qxd3 Qxa8 44.Qxb1 Be7 45.Ne2 Qd5 46.Be3 g5 47.Qb8+ Kg7 48.fxg5 Qh1 49.h4 Qh2+ 50.Ke1 Qh1+ 51.Bg1 c4 52.Qb5 Qe4 53.Bd4 Qd3 54.Qb2 Qf3 55.Qc3 Qd5 56.Kf2 Qb5 57.Nf4 Bb4 58.Qc2 Qa6 59.Nh5+ Kf8 60.Nf6 Ke7 61.Nxh7 Qc6 62.Ke3 Be1 63.Qb1 Qd5 64.Qxe1 1-0**



**Azhar, Puteri Rifqah Fahad 1860 (Malaysia) White**  
**Yu, Sally 1953 (Australia) Black**  
 41st Olympiad Women, Round 11, Board 4

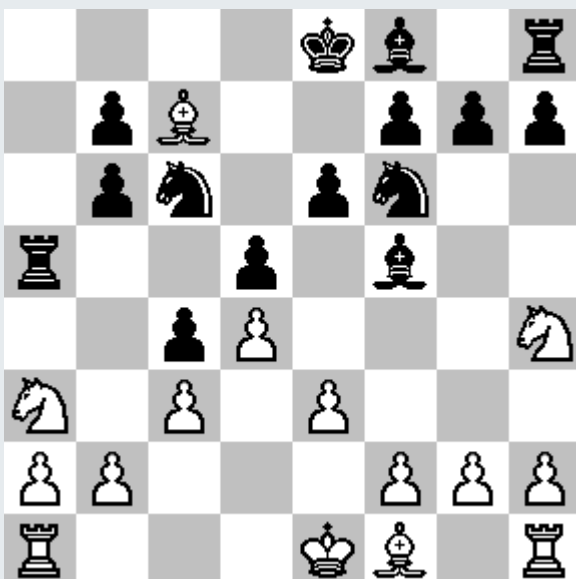
**1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4 c5 4.e3 Nc6 5.c3 Qb6 6.Qb3 c4**  
**7.Qxb6 axb6 8.Na3**



**8...Ra5!** An improvement on 8...Bf5 9.Nh4 Bd7 10.Nb5 Ra5 11.a4 which gave Azhar a draw against the strong German player Hooft earlier in the Olympiad.

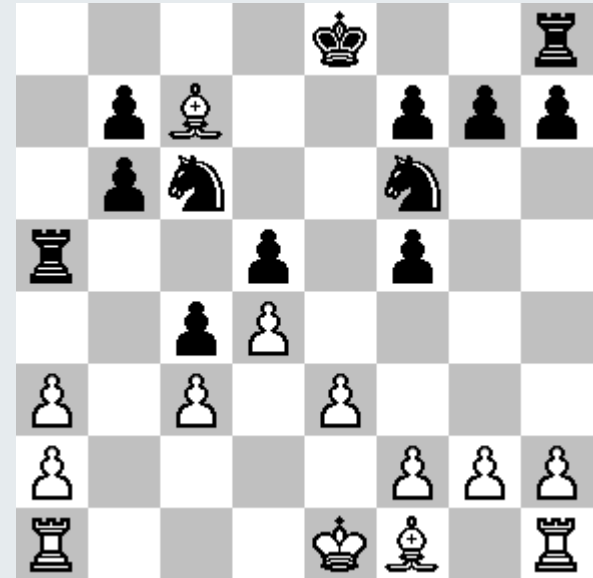
**9.Bc7 Bf5! 10.Nh4?!** Unexpected - though it should not have been given the Hooft game - but the move meets a clear refutation. 10.Bxb6 Ra6 11.Bc7 e6 12.Nb5 is the critical test of Black's pawn sacrifice but Black can simply develop and Black's queenside remains weak, e.g. 12...Be7!? 13.Be2 (13.Nd6+ Bxd6 14.Bxd6 Nxd4) 13...0-0 14.0-0 Rfa8 15.a3 Ne8 16.Bg3 Rb6 and Black wins back a pawn as 17.a4 Bc2 18.Bd1 allows 18...Bd3 19.Re1 Rxb5!

**10...e6!**



White is already in dire straits - so much so that Houdini believe that White should already give up a piece via 11.Nxc4?!

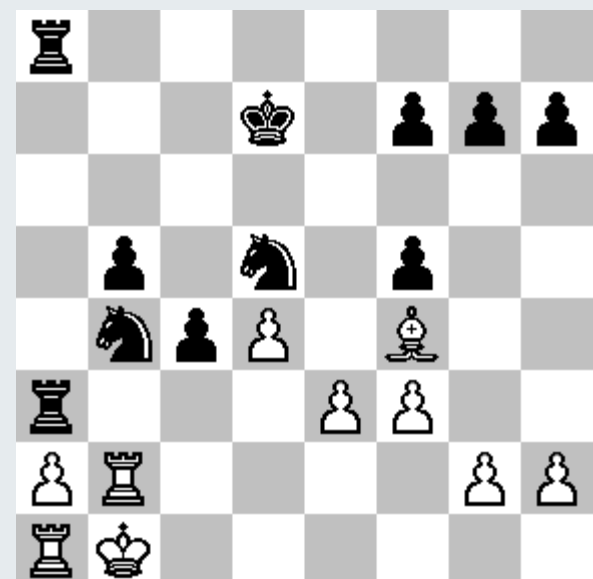
**11.Nxf5 Bxa3! 12.bxa3 exf5** Now the a3 and c3 pawns are chronically weak.



**13.f3 Rxa3 14.Bxb6** 14.Kd2 b5 is hardly better.

**14...Rxc3 15.Kd2 Ra3 16.Bc5 Ra6 17.Kc3 b6 18.Bb4 Ra4 19.Bd6 Kd7 20.Bf4 Rha8 21.Kb2 Ra3 22.Bxc4** Absolute desperation.

**22...dxc4 23.Rhc1 b5 24.Kb1 Nd5 25.Rc2 Ncb4 26.Rb2**



**26...Nc3+ 27.Kc1 Nd3+ 28.Kc2 Nxb2 29.Kxb2 b4 30.Bg3 Rxa2+ 31.Rxa2 Rxa2+ 0-1**



=27th Australia Match Points 13 TB1 285 Game Points 28.5																			
Bo.		Name	Rtg	FED	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Pts.		Rp	rtg+/-
1	IM	Berezina Irina	2182	AUS	1	½	½		½	1		1	0			4.5	7	2311	17.8
2	WFM	Nguyen Giang	2165	AUS		½	½	1	½	½	1	0	½	1	1	6.5	10	2267	21.0
3	WIM	Guo Emma	2044	AUS	1		1	1	½	1	0	0	1	1	1	7.5	10	2220	37.0
4	WIM	Dekic Biljana	2048	AUS	1	0		1	0		1	0		1	1	5.0	8	2119	12.2
5		Yu Sally	1953	AUS	1	0	0	1		1	½		0	½	1	5.0	9	1900	-10.0

A very solid performance overall, especially the performance on the tough top board where Berezina scored 4.5/7 and Nguyen a remarkable 4/4. Guo was a point machine for much of the event while Berezina and Nguyen lost only one game each. Dekic and Yu were less consistent but also chipped in for valuable points.

Could Australia do better? Certainly if Caoili, Richards and Jule are available, competition for places in the 2016 team will be fierce. However the most important factor in improving team performance will almost certainly involve serious pre-Olympiad practice, preferably all players competing in at least one tough tournament in the weeks before the Olympiad. In Tromso it was noticeable that the Australian Open team, almost all of whom had competed in the Politiken Cup shortly before the Olympiad, were ready to hit the ground running, while, Guo apart, it took until round 6 before all players in the women's team were into the groove.

Nonetheless, =27<sup>th</sup> is a result of which all the players can be proud and a challenge for the Baku 2016 team to better.

# Chess Training

## IM Max Illingworth

*Australian Champion 2014*

---

**Chess training for all ages and levels, anywhere in Australia!**

### Experience

2014 Australian Champion

Australian Olympiad team member  
2012, 2014

Official NSW coach at the Australian  
Juniors

Coach at the National Junior Elite  
Training Squad

### My chess coaching delivers results.

Organised improvement plan

Clear explanations

Develop practical competition skills and  
a strong competitive approach.

Learn how to make the most of your  
current ability and appreciate the  
beauty of the game

---

**Get in touch today to get started!**

Email: [IllingworthChess@gmail.com](mailto:IllingworthChess@gmail.com)

Phone: 0448 918 392

Chess.com username: Illingworth





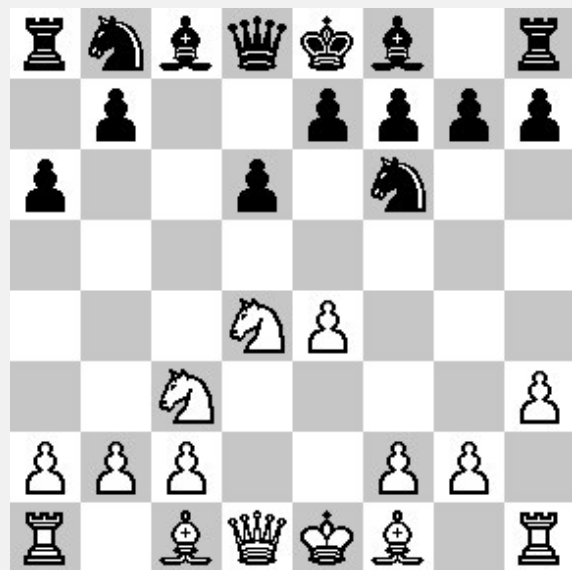
## h3 Najdorf

By IM Max Illingworth

In this article I'll turn my attention to a trendy variation of the Najdorf, namely the Fischer system where White plays an early h3:

**1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6**

Of course, the idea of this move is not just to prepare ...b5, but also ...e5 without running into an annoying intermediate check on b5. 6. h3 ( D )



White prepares g4-g5 to kick the f6-knight to a more passive square ( where it won't exert so much influence over the centre ) - we know this theme from the English Attack ( Be3/f3/Qd2/0-0-0/g4 ).

However, in our version we can play Bg2 (the bishop supports the centre nicely when not obstructed by a pawn on f3),

White can play f4 in one go, and in some cases White will use the f3-square for his queen. 6.h3 also attempts to gain a tempo over the Fianchetto System (6.g3), where in many cases White will play h3 and g4 - there the g-pawn moved twice to reach g4.

The first top player to play this system regularly was Fischer. Nowadays it is quite trendy among top players, but only Shirov has established it as his main system against the Najdorf. I've divided my article into two parts - this, the first, will cover 6...e5, while the second part in the next issue will examine 6...e6.

**Carlsen, Magnus 2838 White**  
**The World Black**  
Mexico City 2012

This game is a model of what White is aiming for when he plays 6.h3.

**1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. h3 e5**

6... e6 7. g4 resembles the Keres Attack 5...e6 6.g4 and represents the major alternative.)

**7. Nde2 Be7**

(7... h5! is the correct move to prevent g4, and will be considered in the next game.)

(7... Be6 8. g4 d5 is another major option, meeting the flank attack with a central thrust, but it works in White's favour:

**9. exd5 Nxd5 10. Bg2 Bb4**

(or 10... Nxc3 11. Qxd8+ Kxd8 12. Nxc3 Nc6 13. Be3 Kc7 14. O-O-O Bb4 15. Nd5+ Bxd5 16. Bxd5 f6 17. Be4 Rad8 18. Rxd8 Nxd8 19. c3 Be7 20. Rd1

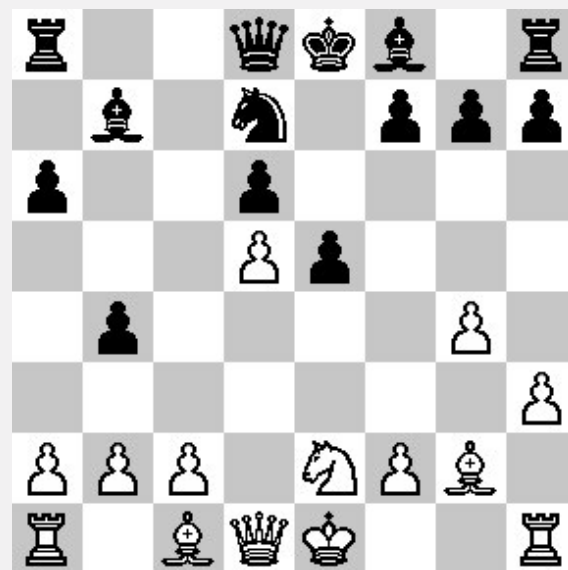
with a clearly better endgame for White, which he soon won by opening lines on the kingside, Smirin-Idrisov, Baku 2011.)

**11. O-O Bxc3 12. Nxc3 Nxc3 13. Qxd8+ Kxd8 14. bxc3 Kc7**

If Black could complete development, he would be able to exploit his superior pawn structure, but White won't let that happen.

**15. f4! f6 16. fxe5 fxe5 17. Be3 Nc6 18. Rfb1 Rac8 19. Rb6 Rce8 20. Rab1 Bc8 21. Be4** and with Black completely tied up, winning was just a matter of technique in 1-0 Jensen,C 2301 - Cantelli,A 2331 ICCF 2012.)

7... b5 is the sort of thing you might face at club level. **8. g4 Bb7 9. Bg2 b4 10. Nd5 Nxd5 11. exd5 Nd7 ( D )**



is a theoretical position in the 6.g3 Najdorf, but there it is Black to move!

The tempo makes a difference as now White can stop Black from attacking White's king effectively with ...h5, and thus White will win the battle for the kingside after 12. Ng3 Be7 13. O-O O-O 14. a3 a5 15. Nf5.

## 8. g4 O-O

As the position isn't of a forcing nature, one can't and shouldn't try to study every reasonable move - it's more useful to understand when the main plans work.

8... h6 is a common response to stop g5, but our plan is similar: 9. Ng3 g6 (otherwise we'll play a later Nf5 to good effect) 10. Be3 Be6 11. Bg2 Nbd7 12. O-O Qc7 13. Nd5 Bxd5 14. exd5 and White will either break with f4 or prepare a more gradual queenside advance with c4, b4 and eventually c5.

Just to show that White can also play on the queenside in this variation, 1-0 Firnhaber,I 2510 - Marez,S 2430 ICCF 2012 continued 8... Be6 9. Bg2 Nbd7 10. Be3 h6 11. Qd2 Rc8 12. a4 (we'll see in the game that White doesn't have to stop ...b5, but it works well here).

12... Qc7 13. O-O O-O 14. a5 Rfd8 15. Rfc1 Nh7 16. Nd5 Bxd5 17. exd5 and White's simple plan of advancing the queenside pawns proved rather effective: 17... Bg5 18. c4 Ndf8 19. b4 Ng6 20. c5 Nh4 21. c6 and White's passed c-pawn gave him a significant advantage.

## 9. Ng3 Nbd7

9... Nc6 is generally a worse square for the knight in these positions, as when White plays Nd5 and Black takes on d5, when White recaptures with the pawn, it

will gain a tempo on the c6-knight.

## 10. Nf5 Nc5 11. Bg2 Be6

11... Bxf5 12. exf5 is a serious positional mistake as now White completely dominates the light squares and will continue the kingside attack with g5.

## 12. O-O b5 13. a3

13. b4!? Ncd7 14. a4 is an ambitious attempt to control every sector of the board, but Carlsen settles for restraining Black's counterplay.

## 13... Rc8 14. f4 (D)



Usually White needs this pawn break at some point to open lines for his pieces - the charge of the h- and g-pawns alone isn't enough when White has castled kingside.

## 14... Na4 15. Nxa4 bxa4 16. g5 Nd7 17. Nxe7+ Qxe7 18. f5 Bc4 19. Rf2

I'll stop here as it is clear that White dominates the position - he has a large space advantage, the d6-pawn is weak, he possesses the bishop pair, and he has the initiative.

19... f6 20. g6 h6 21. Be3 Nc5 22. Rd2 Rfd8 23. Qe1 Qb7 24. Rad1 Qxb2 25. Rxd6 Rxd6 26. Rxd6 Qxa3 27. Qd2 Nd3 28. Rd7 Bb5 29. Rd5 Nf4 30. Rc5 Re8 31. Rc7 Qa1+ 32. Kh2 Kh8 33. c4 a3 34. cxb5 Qb2 35. bxa6 Qxd2 36. Bxd2 Ne2 37. Rc4 a2 38. Ra4 1-0

Giri, A 2750 *White*

Wojtaszek, R 2733 *Black*

Biel SUI 2014

This game features a very trendy and enigmatic variation, so I have covered it in more depth, mainly for the higher-rated readers.

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. h3 e5 7. Nde2

7. Nb3 Be6 8. Be3 is another major system, which will be examined in the next game.

## 7... h5 !

This move will seem strange to some of you, but we saw how easy it was to play White's position once g4 was in, and also it's not easy to exploit the h5 'weakness', even after Black castles kingside

(after all, the pawn can be supported with ...g6 in the worst case).

Keep in mind that in the English Attack with 6.Be3 e5 7.Nb3 Be6 8.f3, ...h5 systems have become the main line, scoring promisingly for Black in a large sample of top GM games.

## 8. g3

The latest trend, playing as in a normal Fianchetto Variation.

8. Bg5 is the other main continuation:

8... Be6

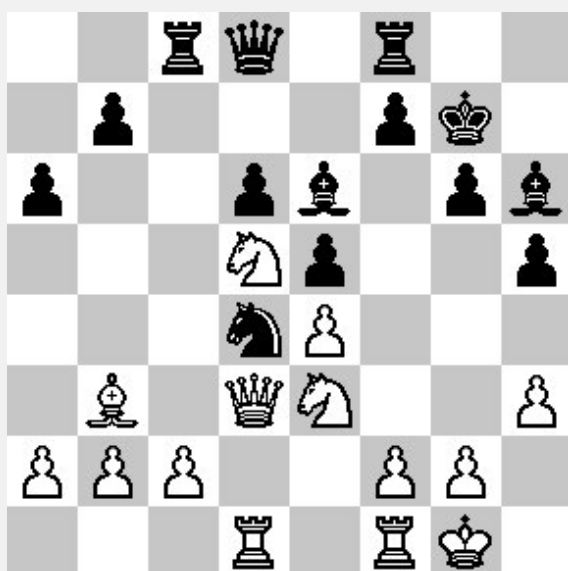
Black should play this before White gets in Ng3 and Bc4

9. Bxf6

(9. Ng3 Nbd7 10. Be2 g6 11. Bf3!? hasn't received a practical test, but the plan of setting up a Bf3/Ne3/Re1 formation has been slightly annoying for Black in the Classical 6.Be2 Najdorf, and with ...h5 thrown in you could argue it's an improved version for White.

11... Be7 12. O-O Rc8 13. Re1 Kf8 14. Nf1 Kg7 15. a4 Nh7 16. Bc1 would be a typical continuation, when White's position is definitely easier to play, but when Black plays 7...h5 he indicates his intention to hold a marginally worse position.)

9... Qxf6 10. Nd5 Qd8 11. Nec3 g6! 12. Bc4 Bh6 13. O-O Nc6 14. Bb3 O-O 15. Qd3 Rc8 16. Rad1 Kg7 17. Ne3 Nd4 18. Ncd5 ( D )



Now the position closely resembles a Pelikan

18... Rc5 and now 19. f4 has led to a lot of draws in correspondence play, and indeed

19... Nxb3 20. axb3 Bxd5 21. Nxd5 Bxf4 22. Nxf4 exf4 23. Rxf4 f6 was totally equal and agreed drawn in Barnsley,T 2472 - Krecak,D 2314 ICCF 2012.

Unfortunately there isn't a great alternative to 19.f4 as Black always has ...Bxe3 and ...Nxb3 in the air to negate White's grip on d5.

## 8... Be6

There are so many possibilities for Black that it's unrealistic to cover every single one, so I've focused on Black playing an early ...b5. Furthermore, the position is not at all forcing in nature, making the engines not particularly helpful.

(8... Be7 9. Bg2 b5 is a major line - the difference to the Wojtaszek game is that White gets the option of 10. Nd5 Nxd5 ( before White plays Nec3 )

11. Qxd5 Ra7 12. Be3

(White has an improved version of Dzumaev-Illingworth from the Olympiad)

12... Rb7 13. O-O

( 13. O-O-O!? Nd7 14. Qd2 O-O 15. f4 may be even better as Black's queenside play will be a lot slower than White's kingside attack.)

13... Nd7 14. Qd2 O-O 15. Nc3 Nf6 16. a3 h4?! 17. g4 Be6 18. f4 exf4 19. Bxf4

and White had a nice grip on the position, though the result didn't reflect that in 0-1 Edouard,R 2680 - Nepomniachtchi,I 2714 Tromso NOR 2014.)

(8... Nbd7!? may be best answered with 9. a4!? as ( 9. Bg2 b5 10. O-O Bb7 11. a3 Be7 12. Bg5 Rc8 is already more harmonious for Black; White is in danger of losing control of d5 and 13. Nc1 Rxc3! 14. bxc3 Nxe4 15. Bxe7 (0-1 Reinaldo Castineira,R 2503 -Edouard,R ( 2597) Pamplona 2009 )

15...Kxe7! 16. Qe1 Qa8 certainly doesn't help with that - the typical exchange sacrifice on c3 is almost always good if you subsequently win the e4-pawn.)

9... b6 10. Nd5?!

In my view White has to do something concrete and fast to fight for anything, as if both sides play happy moves, Black's position improves more than White's as we saw in the previous note.

10... Nxd5

(capturing on e4 wasn't a great idea, in case you were wondering )

11. Qxd5 Rb8 12. Nc3 Bb7 13. Qd1 Nc5 14. Bg2 h4! 15. Be3 Be7 16. O-O O-O

and Black is pretty solid, and certainly 17. g4 Rc8 18. Qd2 Ne6 made it hard for White to do anything useful in 1/2-1/2 Telepnev,I ( 2489 ) -Lelenko,A ( 2463 ) ICCF 2013, as his kingside dark squares are weak and he lacks a handy pawn break. )

Finally, the 8... b5 9. Bg5 Nbd7 10. Nd5 Bb7 11. Nec3 Rc8 12. Bg2 Be7 13. Nxe7 Qxe7 14. h4 Nb6 15. Qd3 ( D )





of 1-0 Karjakin,S 2759 - Gelfand,B 2777 Wijk aan Zee NED 2014 shows why I've focused on lines where Black meets Nd5 with ...Nxd5 - he should avoid this passive position at all costs.)

## 9. Bg2 b5

9... Be7 should be met with an early 10. f4! before Black can tie White's kingside up with ...h4:

10... b5 11. Be3 and the difference is that after 11... h4 12. g4 Nbd7 13. Qd2 exf4 14. Nxf4 Ne5 15. b3 White has a pincer grip on the position, which he strengthened with 15... Rc8 16. Nce2! Bd7 17. Nd4 on the way to winning in 1-0 Smirin,I 2660 - Steinberg,N 2416 Beer-Sheva ISR 2014.

## 10. O-O

The trade-off to avoiding Nd5 is that now Black would much prefer his bishop on the long diagonal, putting pressure on e4.

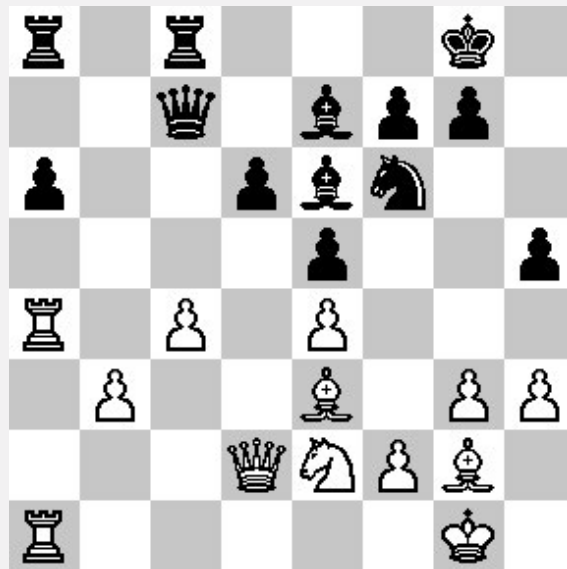
10... Nbd7 11. Be3 Nb6 12. b3 Be7 13. Qd2 Qc7 14. a4

This could also have been played on the previous move.

## 14... bxa4

14... b4 15. a5 Nbd7 16. Nd5 Bxd5 17. exd5 would also be a favourable change in the pawn structure as both the b4 and a6-pawns are weak - White will round up b4 with Ra4 and Nc1-d3.

15. Nxa4 Nxa4 16. Rxa4 O-O 17. Rfa1 Rfc8 18. c4 ( D )



One can draw favourable comparisons to the Prins Variation ( 5.f3 ) - the centre is fixed and with Black tied to defending the weak a6-pawn, White is free to put the squeeze on Black. I won't analyse the rest of the game, but notice how, once Black had set up his defences on the queenside, White hit him as far away from there as possible with an attack on Black's king. This technique of 'widening the battlefield' is one you should keep in mind when you have an obvious strategic advantage but can't turn it into the win of material.

18... Rcb8 19. R4a3 Nd7 20. Nc3 Qc8 21. Qd1 Nf6 22. Kh2 h4 23. gxh4 Nd7 24. h5 Nc5 25. Na4 Nxa4 26. Rxa4 Rb7 27. Rc1 Rab8 28. Rc3 Rb4 29. Rxb4 Rxb4 30. f4 Kh7 31. f5 Bd7 32. h6 g6 33. Qd5 Qe8 34. fxg6+ fxg6 35. Qd2 Be6

36. Rd3 Rb7 37. Qa5 Qc6 38. Qd2 Bf8 39. Bg5 Rf7 40. Qe1 Qb6 41. Be3 Qc7 42. Qg3 a5 43. Bd2 a4 44. bxa4 Qxc4 45. a5 Qa2 46. Qe3 d5 47. exd5 Bf5 48. Rb3 e4 49. Qc3 Bd6+ 50. Kh1 e3 51. Qxe3 Re7 52. Qc3 Be5 53. Ra3 Bxc3 54. Rxa2 Re2 55. a6 Bxd2 56. Bf3 Re1+ 57. Kg2 Be3 58. a7 Bxa7 59. Rxa7+ Kxh6 60. h4 Re3 61. Kf2 Rd3 62. Rf7 Rd4 63. Kg3 Bc2 64. Rf4 Rd2 65. Rb4 Bd1 66. Be4 g5 67. Rb6+ Kh5 68. Bg6+ Kh6 69. Be4+ Kh5 70. hxg5 Kxg5 71. Rg6+ Kh5 72. Kf4 Rf2+ 73. Ke5 Re2 74. Rc6 Ba4 75. Rc8 Kh6 76. Rc7 Be8 77. Rh7+ Kg5 78. Rg7+ Kh6 79. Rg3 Re1 80. d6 Kh5 81. Kf4 Kh6 82. Rg8 Ba4 83. Rg6+ Kh5 84. Re6 1-0

**Zhigalko, S 2678 White**

**Gelfand, B 2753 Black**

Tromso NOR 2014

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. h3

6. Be3 e5 7. Nb3 Be6 8. h3 is the other move order, but the silent draw offer 6... Ng4 has been somewhat annoying for White of late.

6... e5 7. Nb3 Be6

7... Be7 8. Be3 O-O 9. g4 a5?! is an interesting way to initiate queenside play, first suggested by Van Delft and Ris.

In 0-1 Zhigalko,A 2615 - Papaioannou,I 2633 Rhodes GRE 2013 White has stopped the a-pawn from advancing to a3, but that's exactly what Black is hoping for:

10. a3!? a4

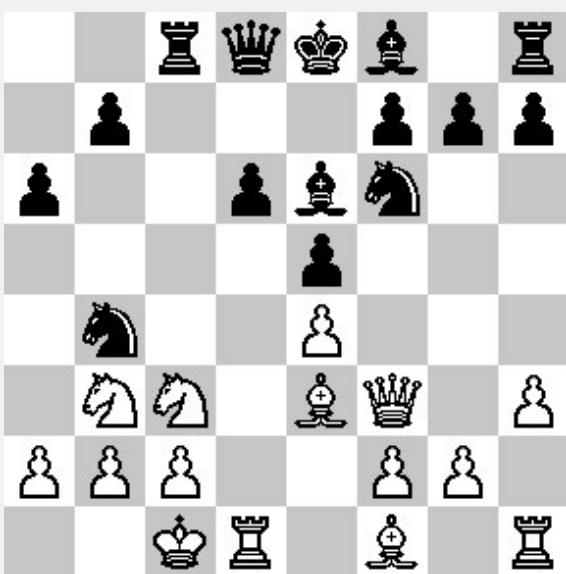
11. Nc1 Be6 12. g5 Nfd7 13. h4 Nb6 14. N1a2 and here 14... d5! 15. Bxb6 Qxb6 16. exd5 Bd7 would have been a very promising pawn sacrifice, exploiting White's poor development by opening up the position.

## 8. Be3

In all honesty there have been too many hot games for me to cover this thoroughly in one game, but I'll offer a starting point from which you can conduct your own research.

## 8... Be7

8... Nbd7 has also been popular, but I want to single out 8... Nc6!? 9. Qf3 Rc8!? 10. O-O-O Nb4 ( D ) as a promising try for Black, initiating queenside play as soon as possible:



11. Kb1

(11. a3 Na2+ 12. Nxa2 Bxb3 13. Nc3 Be6 was also fine for Black in ½-½ Smirnov,A 2334 - Gao Rui 2529 Helsingor DEN 2014.)

11... Qc7 12. a3 ( 12. Bg5!? is a better try but the jury's out on whether it's enough for an advantage.)

12... Nxc2! 13. Kxc2 Qc6 14. Nd2 d5 15. exd5 Nxd5

and Black has a very strong attack for the piece, although it ended up only being enough for a draw in ½-½ Laznicka,V 2681 - Wojtaszek,R 2713 Yerevan ARM 2014:

16. Nb1 Qa4+ 17. Kd2 Qb3 18. Ke1 Nxe3 19. Qxe3 Qxb2 20. Qxe5 Bc5 21. Rd2 Qc1+ 22. Rd1 Qb2 23. Rd2 and the players continued repeating moves.

## 9. Qf3

I wrote about the late Gyula Sax's favourite 9. f4 in Yearbook 109, and I refer readers there for coverage of this, though the article has spurred on further developments as this has been the most played move in 2014.

## 9... O-O

9... Nbd7 was played in the game that started the 8. h3 rage, ½-½ Kamsky,G 2732 - Gelfand,B 2733 Kazan 2011 CBM 143, and there White obtained a promising position with 10. g4 h6

(After the flexible 10... Nb6 11. O-O-O O-O 12. g5 Nfd7 13. h4 a5 , I suggest the novelty 14. Bh3! a4 15. Nd2 a3 16. b3 Rc8 17. Ndb1 , which may look funny at first sight, but Black's queenside counterplay has been prevented with the knights and White will soon proceed with his kingside offensive. )

11. O-O-O Rc8 12. Nd5 Bxd5 13. exd5 Nb6 14. h4 ( 14. Kb1 has since been shown to be even stronger. )

14... Qc7 15. c3 Nbx d5 16. Bd2 Nb6 17. g5 Nfd7 18. gxh6 gxh6 19. Kb1 and

the position was very complicated, but White's game was easier as Black has issues safeguarding his king.

## 10. O-O-O b5

This has been established as the main line, since

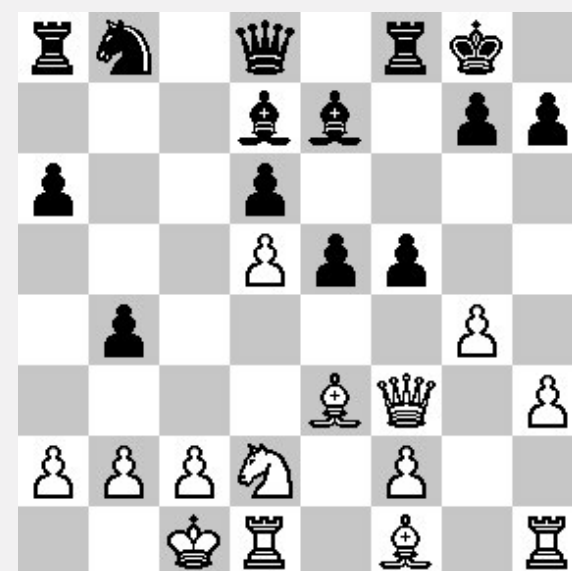
10... a5?! 11. Nc5 is definitely best avoided.

## 11. g4 b4 12. Nd5 Nxd5 13. exd5

The previous moves have been very logical, but here both bishop retreats are quite feasible, and this line has been tested a lot in correspondence. In either case, we'll have a race between the respective attacks on the king!

## 13... Bc8

13... Bd7 14. Nd2 f5!? ( D ) showcases a different approach, hitting back on the kingside before White can attack there.



15. Nc4 a5 and while 16. Qg2 led to success in 1-0 Tulfer,P 2493 -Ottesen,S 2410 ICCF 2011, I quite like the forcing line

(16. Nxe5!? dxe5 17. d6 Bc6 18. dxe7 Qxe7 19. Bc4+ Kh8 20. Bd5 f4

21. Bxc6 fxe3 22. Qxf8+! Qxf8 23. Bxa8 exf2 24. Rhf1 for White as he will round up the f2-pawn, and he doesn't have the coordination problems usually connected with the transformation into a two rooks vs. queen position, plus his king is a fair bit safer.)

#### 14. Bd3

The prophylactic 14. Kb1 has been the main continuation in correspondence; to give one example, ½-½ Jacot,L 2535 - Dosi,A 2560 ICCF 2013 went 14... a5 15. Nd2 a4 16. Qe4 b3! 17. axb3 f5 18. Qb4 axb3 19. Nxb3 Na6 20. Qb5 Bd7 21. Qb7 Qc8! 22. Qxc8 Rfxc8 and Black had very nice activity down the open queenside files for the pawn. Naturally White has plenty of other options earlier on, but this is the latest word.

14... a5 15. Nd2 ( D )



15. Nc5!? is fancy, but Black doesn't have to take the knight - I prefer Zhigalko's choice.

15... Nd7

½-½ Djukic,N 2538 - Sjugirov,S 2646 Cappelle la Grande FRA 2013 saw

another go at holding White off on the kingside with 15... Bg5 16. h4 Bxe3 17. fxe3 Na6 18. Ne4 f5 19. gxf5 Bxf5 , but after 20. Rdf1

Black's resources for his queenside-counterplay have been reduced, and going all in with 20... b3 21. axb3 Nb4 22. Nf6+ Rxf6 23. Bxf5 a4 24. Kd2 axb3 25. c3 Na6 26. Rhg1 sees White take the initiative instead.

16. h4 a4 17. Kb1 Ba6 18. Ne4 Qc7

White's kingside play hasn't really kicked off, so White switches to holding his fragile queenside together.

19. Qe2

19. g5 b3! indeed sees Black strike first.

19... Bb7 20. c4 bxc3 21. Nxc3 a3 22. Nb5

From here the players repeated moves, possibly because of the match situation, but if Black had played on then he is surely better.

22... Qa5 23. Bd2 Qb6

23... Qd8! 24. b3 Bxd5 25. Bxh7+ Kxh7 26. Qd3+ Kg8 27. Qxd5 Nf6 28. Qf3 Qd7 29. Nc3 Qxg4 gives Black an extra pawn, and 30. Qxg4 Nxg4 31. Nd5 Bd8 32. Rhg1 is drawing compensation for White at best.

24. Be3 Qa5 25. Bd2 Qb6 26. Be3 Qa5

1/2-1/2



# Stalemate...

*By Junta Ikeda*

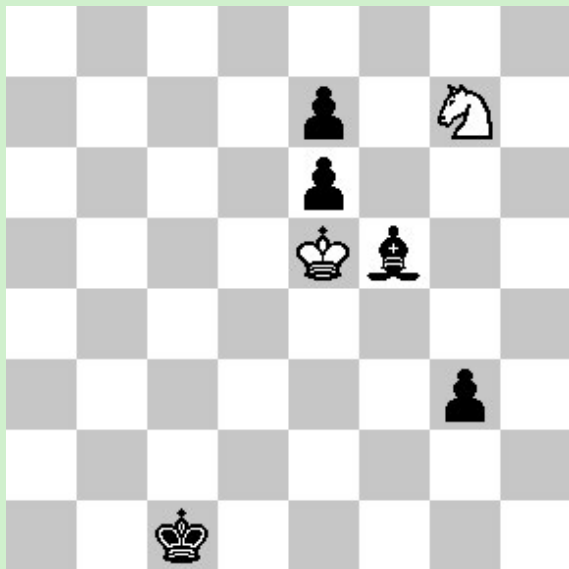
The theme for the studies in this issue is utilising stalemate as a drawing resource on the defending side – in all six positions, the stipulation is White to play and draw. The concept of stalemate in chess is an interesting one – one could think that completely immobilising the opponent should result in a win rather than a draw, but the more peaceful option was chosen many years ago.

As we start out as chess players, stalemate is an act of obliviousness we may commit as the winning side, and something we hope that the opponent will overlook as the losing side. Later, such oversights in completely winning positions become a rarity, but stalemate is a frequent guest in various sorts of endgames – evacuating our king on the edge of the board so the counterpart's approach would bring about a draw, deploying the second rank defence in RB vs. R, defending R vs. B in the right-coloured corner, or a queen or rook going on a checking rampage because once it is captured, the game is over -  $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ .

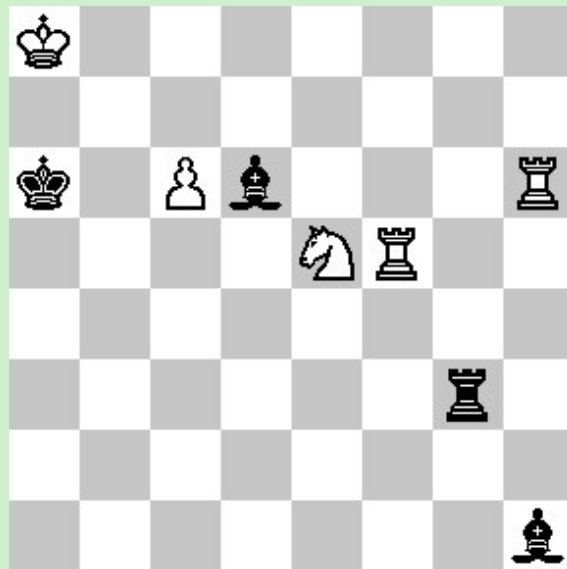
Again, the six studies are in a generally increasing order of difficulty: the latter three are more complicated and conceal a higher number of significant variations to consider, with #5 requiring a thorough analysis though only having five pieces on the board, and #6 capping off the series with fireworks from both sides.

# Stalemate Studies

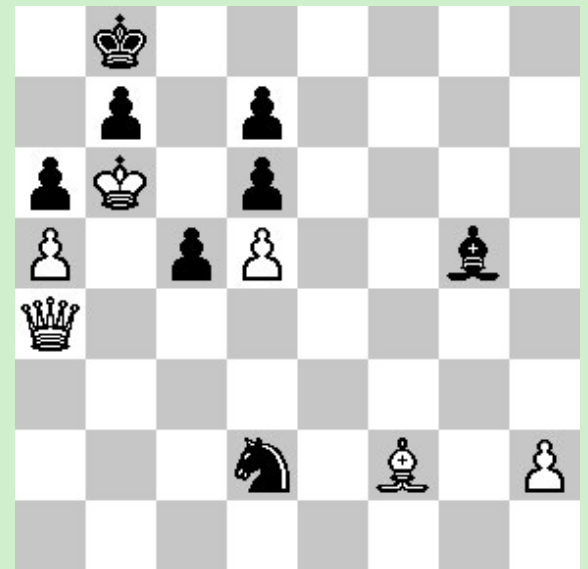
Solutions page 78



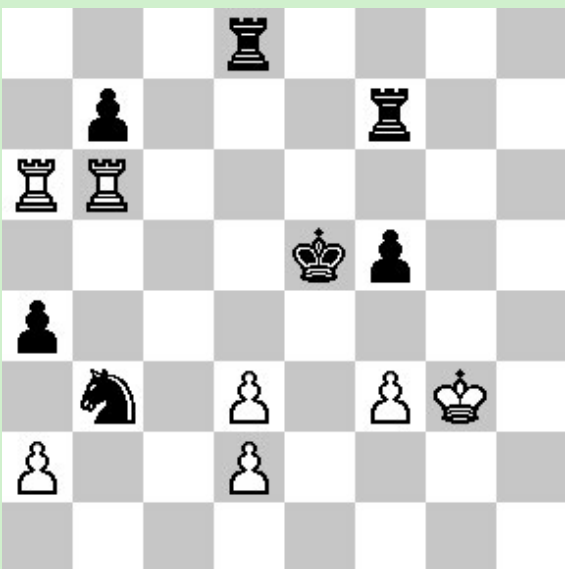
**1. A.Selesniev**  
Tidskrift for Schack 1921



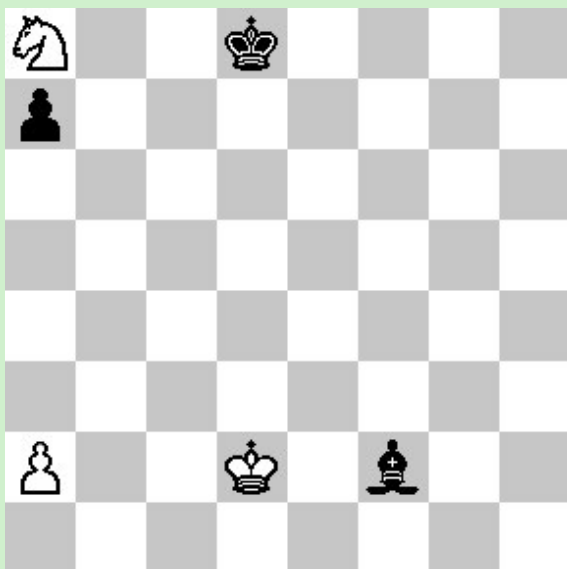
**2. S.Osintsev - 3rd Commendation**  
Cheliabinsk 1990



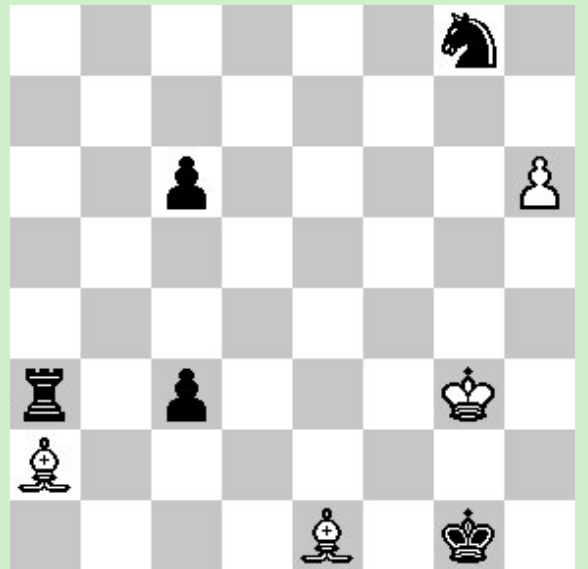
**3. A.Wotawa**  
1937



**4. V. A. Korolov & L. Mitrofanov**  
1st Prize, First FIDE tourney 1958



**5. T. Gorgiev (after H. Mattison)**  
Shakmarty vs SSSR 1963



**6. L. Kubbel - 1st Prize**  
Shakmarty 1925

# ENDGAME LESSONS

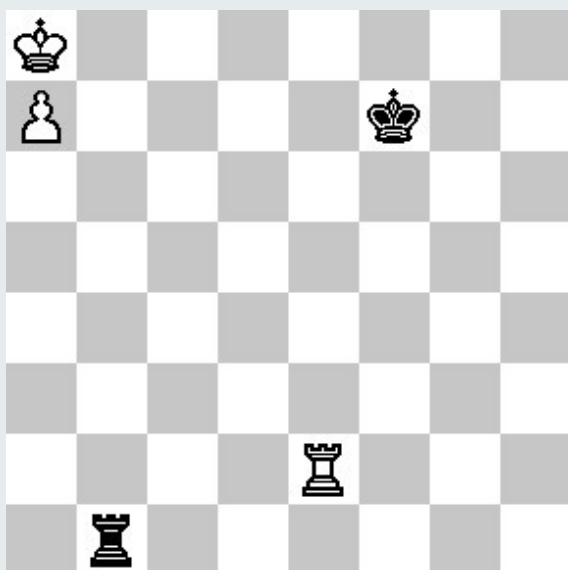
*with FM Chris Wallis*

Endings of a single passed pawn, in which the pawn skirts the edge of the board, present unusual problems for both attacker and defender. These problems arise from the restriction on piece movements; knights are prone to these problems, and the knight frantically yet helplessly scurrying to block an inevitable advance of the rook's pawn presents a sorry picture (eg W pawn at a6, B knight at b7).

Conversely, rook endings of a rook's pawn generally favour the defender, especially when he/she needs to make way for the pawn by moving the king, and finds itself pinioned and frozen in place by the opponent's rook (eg W pawn a7, W king a8, B rook b1).

Consequently, the 'borderline' positions, delicately balanced between a win or draw, may involve some kind of disadvantage on the defender's part – his king may be separated from the pawn by a vast distance, or the attacker's king may be very active in supporting the pawn. We'll examine positions with either White's king or rook in front of an a7 pawn, and then a simple position with an a6 pawn.

Firstly, the most important rule that should be known is the following: 'With White's pawn at a7 and king at a8, and Black's rook at b1, White must cut off Black's king along at least the e-file to win.' This rule is symmetrical around the centre of the board; replace 'a' with 'h' and 'e-file' with 'd-file' for the case of an h-pawn. Firstly I derive this rule, and then consider a game where it was neglected.



White's king is blocking the pawn, and cannot immediately get out of the way. Clearly, only the rook can challenge that culprit at b1, which suggests the first stage of White's plan:

**1. Rh2** (also releasing Black's king, but he reckons on it being far enough away; and has no alternative besides)

**1...Ke7 2. Rh8 Kd6**

There is an important distinction between d6 and d7, as we'll see; while both defences lose, this is the trickier. It should also be clear now why a king cut off along only the d-file would draw; Black's king would already have reached c7 by now, and then Rb8 Ra1 makes no difference – Black's king has relieved the rook of its duty, and cannot be displaced from c7/c8!

**3. Rb8 Ra1 4. Kb7 Rb1+ 5. Kc8**

(5. Ka6 Ra1+ 6. Kb6 Rb1+ achieves nothing because White's king is cut off from c5; if Black's king had gone to d7 on move 2, however, the flight to c5 via a6 and b6 would simply win.)

**5...Rc1+ 6. Kd8 Rh1** Now White appears to have met a stumbling block. Promotion is mated by Rh8, and 7. Ke8 loses the pawn to 7...Rh8+ 8. Kf7 Rh7+.

There is a way around it though: **7 Rb6+ Kc5**

(else Ra6 simply wins)

**8 Rc6+!**

(not 8 Ra6 Rh8+ when White's king won't escape the checks, as crossing the 6<sup>th</sup> rank leads to a skewer and if the king staircases along the 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> ranks to then move to g6, Black's rook takes up residence on a8 when the king is sufficiently far and Black will win the pawn)

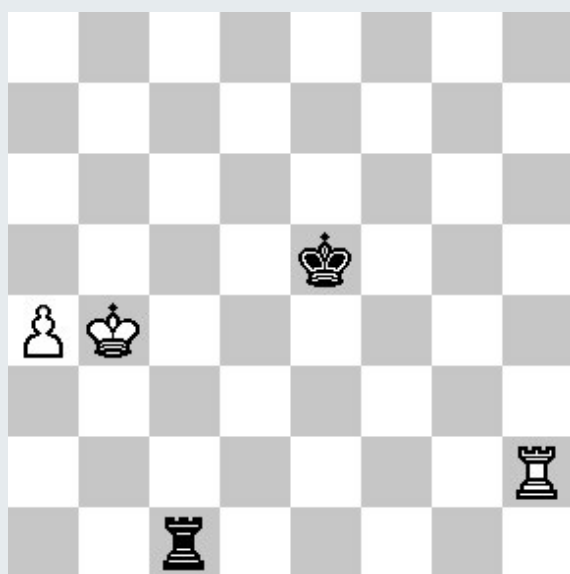
Capturing the rook at c6 allows promotion with check, so: 8...Kd5 9 Ra6 and, after the unexpected fireworks, White is winning easily; the king goes to a5 if Black's rook checks from the side.



# ROOK & PAWN V ROOK

## Lesson 2

This rule might only be used a handful of times in a chess player's career, but those moments can be rather special and serve to emphasise the importance of endgame theory. When the rule is not known, or perhaps not applied correctly, the consequences can be equally memorable:



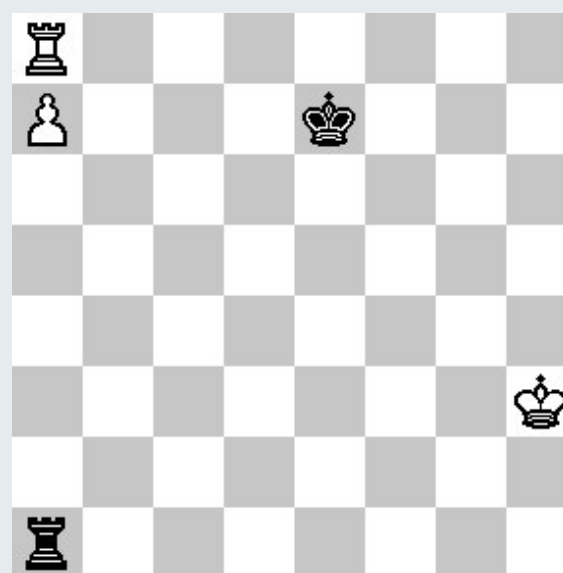
This position is taken from the game D.Stojic – Z.Loh, Croydon Chess Classic 2013. Black had recovered from a piece deficit to reach this drawn ending, with White to play. Dusan immediately cut the king off with 1 Rd2. While the position is optically different to the one for which the rule about the number of files was derived, it turns out that this is insignificant – which suggests the rule has quite a general range of application. The reason is that White's rook is tied down to the d-file, as it must prevent Black's king from approaching the pawn, and so the best White can do is to advance the king and pawn, which will result in a situation with the pawn at a7; while Black's rook will give nuisance checks when possible, forcing the king in front of the pawn.

**1...Rb1+ 2 Kc5.**

A dangerous moment; Black doesn't notice White's threat and plays **2...Ra1?** (2...Rc1+ was the best way), allowing **3. Re2+** after which the king is cut off along the e-file and White is easily winning.

In the next section, we'll see a few examples of two general ending principles: Tarrasch's Rule, that the best location for a rook with reference to a passed pawn, whether friend or foe, is to the rear, respectively for support or restraint; and the notion that it is best to maximise the distance of one's rook from the opponent's king, all other things being equal.

Firstly, a well-known tactic, famously used by Morphy, allows White to win the following position despite the unfavourable placement of the rooks, and the existence of a trap for the unwary:



White wins, but only with **1 Rg8!** - minimising the checking distance! - forcing **1...Rxa7** when **2 Rg7+** wins Black's rook via a skewer.

Ironically, the 'routine' 1 Rh8, playing for the same tactic, would itself lose by skewer to 1...Rh1+ ! After the correct 1 Rg8!, White needs to play one more careful move: 1...Rh1+ 2 Kg2, and then Black can resign.

The position doubles as an exception to Tarrasch's rule (reversing the position of the rooks would result in a draw), and an exception to this notion of maximising the checking distance, which are both, in most cases, important principles to bear in mind, even if concrete analysis can and does overrule them surprisingly often.

## Solution 1

Of course, Black has no choice but to play

**1... Kh7**, taking the promotion square at g8 under observation. While Black's defence then appears to be delicate, as long as the rook remains on the 8th rank White has no winning idea; the White rook must maintain its watch on the 7th to prevent sniping checks from Black's rook.\*

## Solution 2a

The solution to this problem is based on the defensive idea seen in exercise

1; to begin with, Black defuses an imminent tactical crisis ( Kf8 and f6-f7, establishing Lucena, is threatened - so the answer to the second part of the question is yes, as explained in 2b ) , and then waits for the chance to set up a defence along the back rank;

**1... Ra7+ 2. Re7**

( Or 2. Kf8 Kg6 and the f-pawn cannot be defended; while the clever 3. Re7 allows 3... Ra8+.)

**2... Ra8** and here, Black waits for White to play Ke7, f6-f7, and then establishes a back-rank defence with ...Kg7; it's true that the pawn has been shifted one file to the left, but this makes no difference and the game is still drawn.

A sample variation would be: **3. Rb7 Kh6 4. Ke6 Ra6+ 5. Ke7 Ra8 6. f7 Kg7** with a draw. \*

## Solution 2b

With White to move, the position is winning as a favourable kind of Lucena position may be reached:

**1. Kf8 Kg6 2. f7** and White doesn't even need to use the conventional bridge-building technique here;

**2... Kh7 3. Ke7 Re1+ 4. Kd6** followed by a staircase to the bottom of the board, while there is nothing Black can do about the pawn promotion. \*

## Solution 3

This position further develops the themes seen in the previous two. A winning idea is immediately suggested by the comparison:

**1. Kf8+**

( 1. Ke8+ Kg6 2. f7 Ra8+ 3. Kd7 Kg7 is drawn. )

( 1. Rd7 ? was played by Capa, and then: 1... Ra8 2. Re7 Ra6? ( giving White a second chance, which he takes! )

( As we already know, 2... Kh6 ( along with an rook move along the a-file except to a6! ) is simply drawn. )

**3. Kf8+ Kg6 4. f7 Ra8+ 5. Re8 Ra7 6. Re6+ Kh7 7. Ke8?**

( another blunder! - Black has a new opportunity to set up a back rank defence )

( 7. Rf6 followed by a king move would be a fairly simple winning idea! )

**7... Ra8+ 8. Ke7 Ra7+?**

Clearly neither player was familiar with the defensive setup from position 1. 9. Kf6 and Menchik had to resign. )

1... Kg6 2. f7 , with the threat of Kg8;

there is nothing too profound about the last two moves, they are natural enough. Possibly, apart from the game continuation, Capa had at first overestimated the defence 2... Kf6, threatening to win the f7 pawn by first checking at a8, and then moving the rook to a7 to make the capture. It would be quite easy to overlook the flaw in this defence:

( For 2... Ra8+ , see the notes to 1 Rd7 - the variation transposes to this position at move 4 after a repetition. )

3. Kg8 - White reaches queen vs rook, though it must be said that at least Black won't lose the rook straight away: 3... Kxe7 4. f8=Q+ Kd7 and White still has work to do, though in practice this ending is extremely difficult for the defender. \*

## Solution 4

White to play can draw by returning the king to a more useful square:

**1. Ke2 Re8+** ( 1... d3+ 2. Kd1 is very simple.)

**2. Kd1 Rh8 3. Ra3+** would be a Philidor draw.

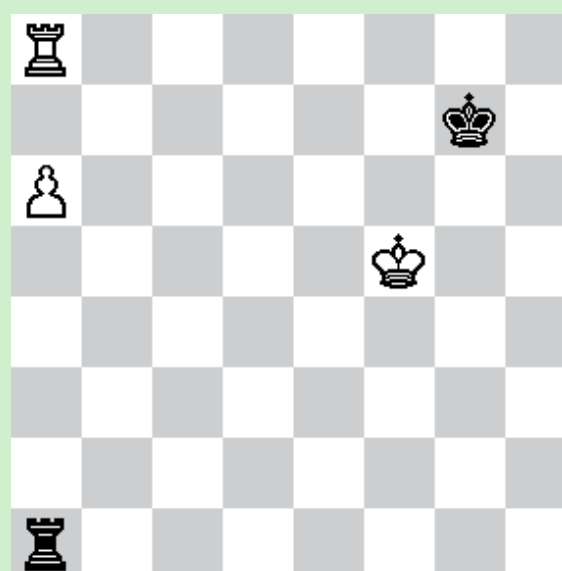
( A little fancier, but completely unnecessary, is 3. Rd7!? , using the restraining pattern seen in the centre pawn section of the column.

**3... Kd3 4. Kc1 Rh1+ 5. Kb2 Rd1 6. Rh7 Re1 7. Rd7** is that idea again; keep the rook behind the pawn unless Black tries to support it from the front, and in that case prepare to check from the side.

Also, moving the king to the shorter side either makes the defender's life easier, and can mean the difference between a loss and a draw! ) \*

## Exercise

To pre-empt the next column, I've included an exercise more difficult than any in column 1. Of course, the topic of that next column has the pawn a little further back on a6; and it is considerably more difficult than the situations above with the pawn at a7, but solving the exercise should give anyone the background knowledge to understand the article.



**Note: White will always play from bottom**

**Black to play,  
Can you achieve a draw?**

## Doeberl Cup Book

*by Bill Egan*

A great collection of history, annotated games, photos and players. It is recommended for all Australian chess fans.

Jeremy Silman made a nice review of Doeberl Cup book - see link below:

<http://www.jeremysilman.com/shop/pc/Doeberl-Cup-The80p3872.htm>



## Anton's Quiz Solutions

1. Liechtenstein and Uzbekistan
2. 53
3. 122 years old
4. 1726
5. 27 years

**Bonus:**

**Yes, it a win for the side with a single bishop.**



# Hideous Moves and a feast of draw offers

Back to the 70s with IM Guy West

**W**ELL, I'M FINALLY implementing my New Year's Resolution of 2003, notwithstanding it now being 2014, and painstakingly entering the thousands of tournament games I played before the computer era into Chessbase 9. I don't tend to update computer software as much as I should due to my kainotophobia... (which I'm told is fear of change, not fear of cane toads.)

It happened partly because of a handwritten letter, an actual physical letter that arrived recently in my mailbox, from Tony Wright, a former member of Waverley Chess Club when it was the most powerful chess club in Australia in the 1970s. Yes, Tony Wright, doyen of Victorian junior chess organisation for many years and he of the megaphone voice, which was lauded in the Guinness Book of Records as the loudest noise on earth until the unfortunate rise to prominence of the vuvuzela.

Unlike the completely illegible, long and disputative letters I used to get from Australian Master John Hanks, creator coincidentally of the Australian Master Points system, Tony's letter was brief and surprisingly legible.

I have a theory by the way that evolution, which is supposed to happen at a glacier-like pace, unless you are Jon Sarfati in which case it doesn't happen at all, is rapidly robbing humans of the ability to write in anything better than an illegible scrawl such as championed by most doctors, especially on scripts in which mistaking Metoclopramide for Methocarbamol is clearly a mere trifle. Apropos of legibility, I have to brag that I once won a prize for the neatest scoresheets at the Ballarat Begonia Tournament, narrowly beating out 9 year old Emily Qualtrough-Sheffield, one of my proudest moments in chess... but I digress.

Tony Wright, in perfectly legible handwriting, informed me that he had resumed writing his book 'Australian Chess', and asked me to send him my games from various tournaments from back in the mists of time. So out they came, about 4,000 sheets of yellowed paper, faithfully documenting the thousands of hours of my life that I have spent moving little pieces of wood or plastic around a board.

Looking at the wobbly stack I realised that finding specific games would be like trying to find a very small haystack amongst a massive forest of... well, needles. At that point I realised that it was time to revisit my resolution of 2003 and digitize my life's work.

**'Entering my games from as far back as 1974 was quite an eye opener!'**

My wife was often witness to bursts of incredulous laughter and protestations of, 'No... I couldn't have done that!'

Several things were evident. One was that the standard of junior chess in this era of widespread coaching, global databases and chess engines, bears no resemblance to the standard 40 years ago.

# A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE



The standard of chess in general has gone up enormously, but even more so at junior level.

Players like Darryl Johansen, Alex Wohl and myself came to chess late and were actually relative patzers in our early to mid teens. Players like Rogers and Hjorth were very strong (relatively) at a young age, but perhaps not as objectively strong as the young masters of today like Cheng and Smirnov, who were also arguably best in the world for their age groups at various times. There is also a much greater depth of strength nowadays. Back in the seventies the Australian Junior field would rapidly drop away to under 2000s after the top few players, whereas now if every junior who was eligible played, the top seeds would all be over 2300, with even a few over 2400.

Another thing I noticed was that behavioural standards seem to have risen, too, perhaps with the increase in strength and professionalism. Examples of this were found in several games, such as Smith-West from the 1975 Hobart Australian junior where Murray blundered a pawn in the opening and then proceeded to make 8 draw offers in hopeless positions before resigning. I have a guilty feeling this may have been revenge for a similar but even longer string of draw offers by me in some other game. There was a lot more gamesmanship going on back then.

I recall for instance that I once went to play Murray in a Vic U/16 play-off match game at his house in Mt Waverley. He brought out a display set with men on horseback, goblins and all manner of creatures. I had no idea which pieces were what, so I refused to play on it. I didn't want a dragon suddenly moving like a knight when I'd been thinking it was a badly placed bishop. Luckily I had brought a proper Staunton design pocket set, but for some reason Murray then also refused to play, apparently not liking the fact that the pieces were only about one fingernail tall. He then unleashed a psychological masterstroke by announcing that his mentor, an International Master, lived over the back fence and would provide a standard tournament set. Robert Jamieson did indeed come to the rescue and I was so intimidated that Murray actually knew an IM that I lost rather weakly.

Revisiting that contretemps over the non standard sets reminds me of a funny exchange between comedian Andrew Denton and Ian Rogers on one of Denton's TV shows. I think it was 'Live and Sweaty'. Ian, introduced as Australia's first chess Grandmaster and wearing a cape worthy of D'Artagnon that he had dug out of the ABC wardrobe, was about to give a simultaneous exhibition against a dozen or so audience members who had been asked to bring their own sets.

One of them had brought a tiny pocket set on which Denton had placed a gigantic queen. Ian stared at it for a moment and said indignantly, 'What's that?' Quick as a flash Denton replied, 'That's a chess set, Ian.' Then in an aside to the audience, 'This doesn't augur well!' By the way, decades after the aforementioned 1975 Australian Junior I was talking to Roger Nokes and he casually let slip that all the New Zealanders thought my round 1 draw with the much higher rated Rogers was rigged and that Ian 'gave me' a draw. I was so taken aback by this libelous accusation that I didn't think to ask Roger why the Australian top seed and favourite to win the event would rig a draw against someone with no hope of winning the thing. As to how this heinous plot would hurt the New Zealanders even if it had been true, well, I still have no idea. Obviously the New Zealanders were not only a trifle challenged in the logic department, but they also didn't know Ian very well. He'd rather gnaw his own ear off than give a prearranged draw to a poor dear lower-rated friend like me!

In that tournament two New Zealanders came out to compete, as they usually did with some success. The higher rated, charismatic one was Kai (the interceptor) Jensen and he was considered a real threat. He would sing, 'How much is that doggie in the window, the one with the waggly tail?' under his breath as he crushed us at blitz. He had a scruffy, skinny little offside who was pretty much ignored... at the start. Blow me down if that little urchin didn't win the whole tournament! His name was Murray Chandler.

One hilarious difference I was reminded of when transcribing my old games was the bizarre archaism known as 'adjournments'. Nowadays the idea that in the heat of battle, in a critical position, the combatants could suddenly stop the game and rush off to analyse the position with all their mates, sometimes not even resuming until a week or more later, seems quite insane. When I think about adjournments, two particular ones spring to mind.

One was at the 1981 Zonal in the Philippines, where in the last round I had to beat IM Rico Mascarinas to get an automatic IM title. We adjourned at move 40 in what I thought was a winning rook and pawn ending. I then made what I realised later was a big mistake. Instead of quietly and methodically working out the winning line by myself, I started analysing the position with countrymen Rogers, Solomon and Depasquale. Hands flew across the board, instant pronouncements were made, lines were rapidly rejected and replaced by 'interesting' speculative possibilities, pieces were knocked over in the enthusiastic scramble to show me the best moves and in the end it was concluded that unfortunately the position was drawn.

The next day when I turned up to play the adjournment Mascarinas was nowhere to be seen. His clock was started and after 20 minutes he still hadn't arrived.

I paced up and down the corridor to the playing hall, wondering if perhaps a miracle had occurred and he had been run over by a steamroller. Alas, this was not the case and finally he appeared, perfectly three dimensional, walking hurriedly to the board. I tried a few desultory tricks and then the game was agreed drawn. To my horror Mascarinas then told me he'd considered not turning up because I had a simple win. He showed me the line and it was true. I was shattered, but consoled myself that I would soon get the IM title anyway so it didn't matter. Little did I know that it would be another 10 long years and

“Blow me down  
if that little urchin  
didn't win the  
whole tournament”

an expensive trip to Singapore for a tournament with no prizemoney before I would get the title!

The other adjournment that sticks in my mind because the situation was so preposterous, was a game on the Queensland circuit where at some tournament I was the top seed and playing Colin Morris, the second seed and a very talented player. Again it was adjourned in a rook ending where I was a pawn up and appeared to be winning. However, in this case for some reason there was no time to continue the game, so the organisers decreed that the game had to be adjudicated. The problem was that the two players most qualified to adjudicate it were the ones playing the game, so it was left for us to make the call!

But proving objectively that it should be a win rather than a draw when it was rather finely balanced between the two, was no mean feat. Eventually it came down to the fact that Colin was such a nice guy that he reluctantly agreed that it did seem to be 'probably' winning.

Looking back it seems amazing that so many World Championship games back then were decided by teams of analysts, rather than the cut and thrust of play to the death. But I guess players back then would be amazed that nowadays the strength or otherwise of a move is ultimately arbitrated by a computer program and the task of players is largely to find the moves the machine would play. Instead of people saying, 'Spassky thinks this position is very good for White', they say, 'Houdini gives this as plus 1.51.'

I could expand much more on my adventures down memory lane as I methodically entered in those yellowed old battles, but space dictates that it will have to wait for another day. I will leave you with a game that might inspire today's juniors, when they see just how terrible Darryl Johansen and myself were in our first foray into tournament chess. When I play over this game from 1974 it reminds me that we all start as patzers and even Morphy, Capablanca and Carlsen no doubt once played optimistically for Scholar's mate.



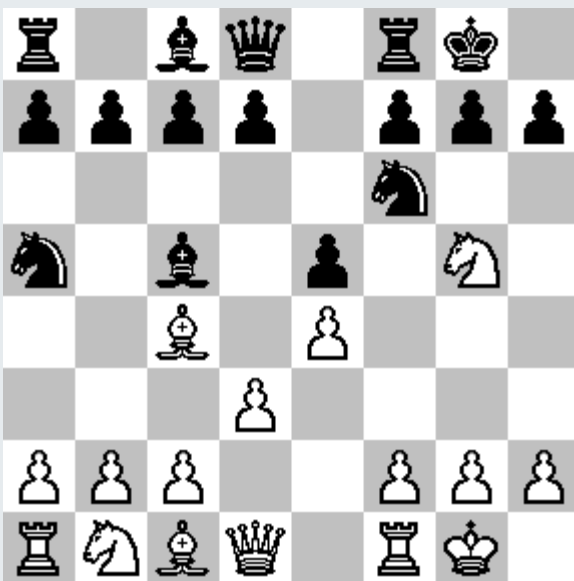
This is the third oldest tournament game of mine that I currently have a record of.

White: Darryl Keith Johansen  
Black: Guy West  
Victorian Under 16 Championship  
20th May 1974

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6 3. Bc4 Bc5  
4. 0-0 Nf6

So far so good, but now Darryl launches a premature attack.

5. Ng5? 0-0 6. d3 Na5



7. Bd5!?

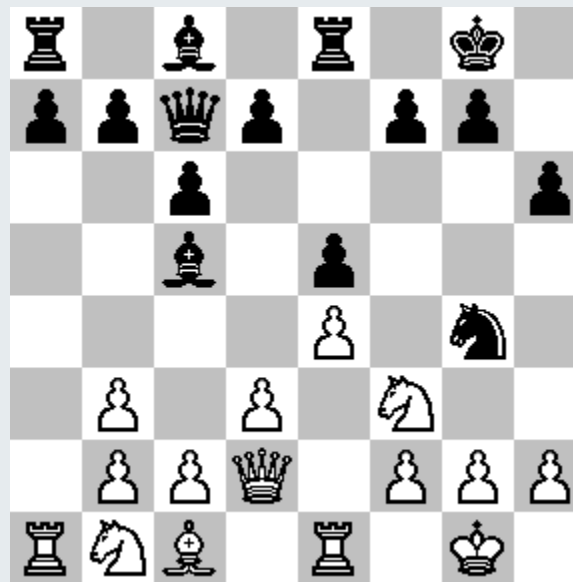
Cunning as a rat! Darryl hopes that the knight on a5 might end up without a retreat.

7... h6 8. Nf3 c6 9. Bb3 Nxb3  
10. axb3 Re8 11. Re1 Qc7 12. Qd2?

The first of a series of bizarre moves by both players. I'm assuming the idea must have been Qc3.

12... Ng4?!

The f7 and f2 squares featured a lot in the minds of weak juniors in those days.



13 h3??

Planning to meet 13...Nxf2?? with 14 d4, no doubt.

13... Bxf2+ 14. Kf1 Bxe1 15. Qxe1 Nf6 16. Qg3

Darryl doesn't have much for the blundered exchange and pawn and there are numerous sensible ways I can defend against the threatened Bxh6. Now however, it is my turn to reveal that there was not a positional bone in my body and traps and tactics were my only stock in trade.

16... Qd6?

A hideously ugly move, with the one redeeming feature being that it sets a trap that Darryl then fell into.

17. Bxh6? Nh5 18. Qh2 Qxh6 19. Nxe5

One has to respect the optimism of this move. Now 19...Qc1+ appears a little uncomfortable for White, but why do that when you can revisit the ugliest square on the board?

19... Qd6 20. Nf3 Qxh2 21. Nxh2

I'd stop here, except that something is about to happen that made a big impression on me at the time.

21... d5 22. g4 Nf4 23. h4 dxe4  
24. dxe4 Rxe4 25. Nd2 Re2

I clearly remember being convinced that I had won a knight here and thinking that it should, along with my extra rook, be enough to ensure victory. After all, if he defends one knight I take the other one.

I probably thought there should be a name for this kind of move, perhaps a 'knife', as you are slicing in between two pieces like a knife between the shoulder blades. Or a 'spoon', as it is a bit like sticking a spoon into a bowl with two lychees left in it, knowing you will emerge with one of them.

Darryl's next move, ingeniously thwarting my ambitions, seemed absolutely brilliant to me at the time and I recall that from that moment on I was (justifiably) confident that he had the magic to go on to become a Grandmaster.

26. Ndf3!!

An incredible concept. Despite being a whole 5 squares apart, one knight defends the other and I can't take either of them!

26... Rxc2 27. Re1 Be6

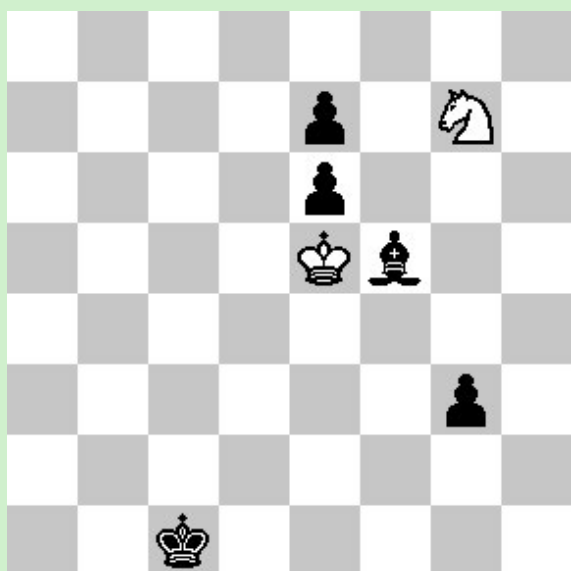
0 - 1

And Darryl somewhat prematurely packed his bags, having demonstrated that I was incapable of winning either of his knights and thereby salvaging a moral victory of sorts.

Admittedly not many of the juniors back then were as bad as us. Darryl and I had only recently started playing. Rogers, Jordan, Freaan and others were actually pretty good. Good yes, but probably not objectively speaking as good (at the same age) as today's 'super juniors'.

Oh, and Tony Wright, if you're reading this, I will get those games to you. I only have about 3,000 or so to go.

# Solutions



## 1. Nh5

White must go for the g-pawn.

**1... g2 2. Nf4**  
2. Ng3 Bd3 -+

**2... g1=N**  
2... g1=Q transposes after 3. Ne2+ Kd2  
4. Nxg1 Ke3

## 3. Ne2+ !

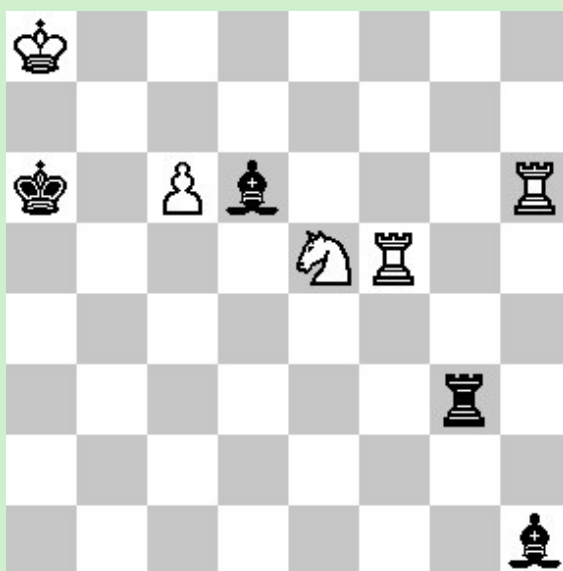
3. Nxe6 looks like a decent try, but Black can keep the e-pawn and win with the extra piece and pawn, e.g. 3... Bg4 4. Nd4

( 4. Nc7 Bc8 5. Nd5 Nf3+ 6. Kf4 e6 7. Nb6 Bb7 ) 4... Bd7 5. Nf5 Nf3+

**3... Kd2 4. Nxg1 Ke3** White looks to be in trouble, but...

## 5. Nh3! Bxh3

1/2-1/2



White is an exchange and pawn up, but the king on a8 is in mortal danger.

**1. Rf8!**  
1. Rh8 Rg7 -+  
1. Rg6 Rxg6 2. Nxg6 Bxc6#

## 1... Bxf8 2. Rxh1 Rg8

Black, a pawn down, must keep going for mate.

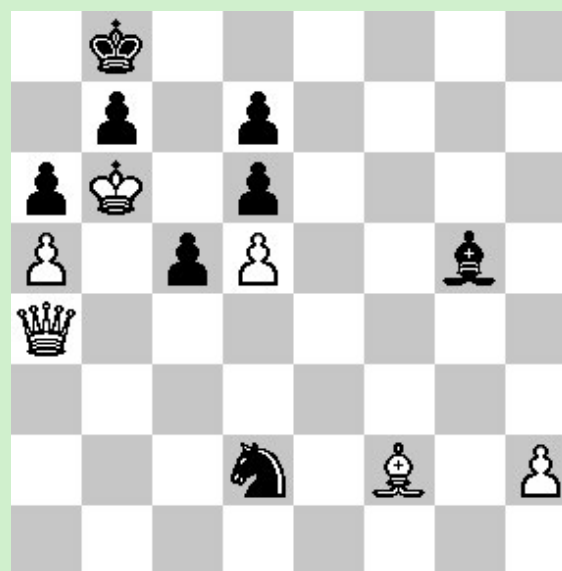
2... Bd6 3. Ra1+ Kb5 ( 3... Kb6 4. Nc4+ += ) 4. Rd1 +=

**3. Rh8! Rxh8 4. Nf7! Rg8**  
4... Rh1 5. c7 Rc1 6. Kb8 Rb1+ 7. Ka8 Rc1 8. Kb8 +=

**5. c7 Bd6+**  
5... Be7+ 6. Nd8 Bxd8 7. c8=Q+

## 6. Nd8 Bxc7

1/2-1/2



White is a queen for knight up, but the king on b6 is threatened with mate from Black's bishop and knight.

## 1. Bh4 ( 1. Qxd7 Nc4# )

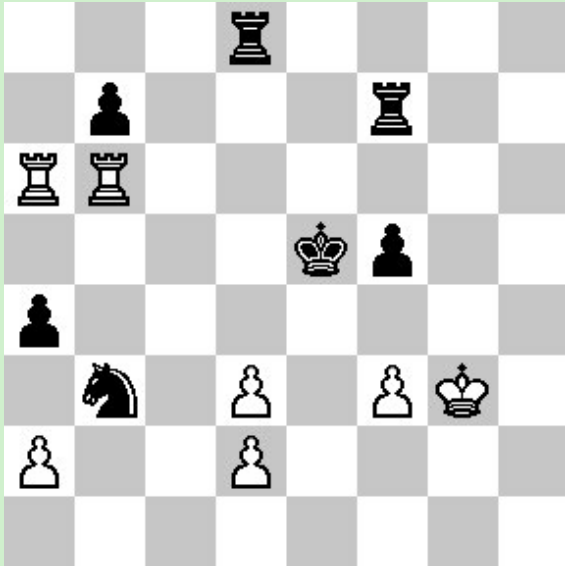
**1... Be3 2. Bf2! Bxf2 3. Qf4 Nc4+! 4. Qxc4 Bd4**

The threat of ...Bf6-d8 can only be thwarted by

4... Be3 5. Qe4 +- )

## 5. h3! Bf6 6. Qh4! Bxh4

1/2-1/2



### 1. Rb5+

After other moves, Black is able to save the knight with a decisive material advantage. The study revolves around Black attacking both of White's rooks, and White resisting by checking with one rook, and then moving the other to defend his partner.

1. Re6+ Kd5 -+

**1... Nc5!**

1... Kd4 2. Rxa4+ Kxd3 3. Rxb3+

1... Rd5 2. f4+ Kd4 3. Rxa4+

**2. Rxc5+**

2. Raa5 b6 3. Rxb6 Rc7 4. Rbb5 Kd4

**2... Kd4 3. Raa5 Rg7+**

3... b6 4. Rxf5 Rg7+ 5. Rg5 Rdg8 6. Rxa4+

3... f4+ 4. Kf2 b6 5. Rc4+ Kxd3 6.

Raxa4 b5 7. Rxf4

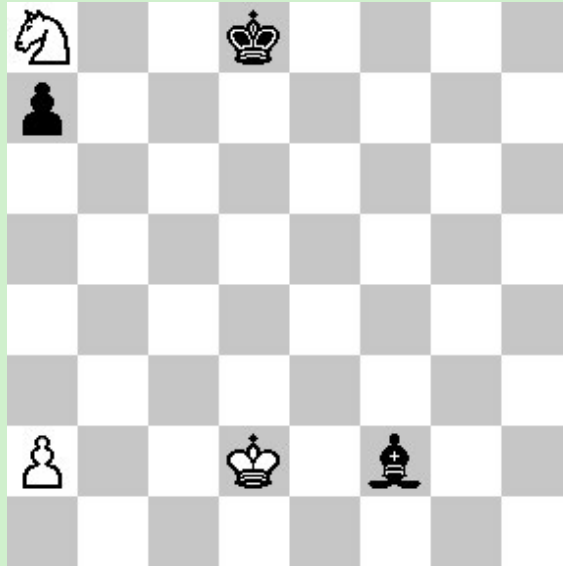
**4. Kf4!** The drawing idea must be seen to choose this square over f2.

**4... b6**

Now we see White's rooks and Black's king and b-pawn perform a systematic manoeuvre.

**5. Rc4+ Kxd3 6. Raxa4 b5 7. Rc3+ Kxd2 8. Raa3 b4** The dance to the south ends, but White has **9. Rc5! bxa3 10. Rd5+ Rxd5**

1/2-1/2



Extraordinary measures are needed from White, because losing the Na8 will result in a lost endgame - Black has the right-coloured bishop for the a-pawn.

**1. a4!**

1. Ke2 Bc5 2. a4 Kc8 3. a5 Kb7 4. Nb6 Bxb6 5. axb6 axb6 6. Kd3 Ka6

7. Kc4 Ka5 -+

**1... a5**

1... Kc8 2. a5 Kb7 3. Nb6 Bxb6 4. axb6 axb6 5. Kc3+= )

**2. Ke2!** A deep in-between move.

( 2. Kd3 Kd7 3. Kc4 Kc6 4. Nc7 Kxc7 5. Kb5 Be1 )

**2... Bg1**

White gains a tempo in the case of 2... Bc5 3. Kd3 Kd7 4. Kc4 Kc6 5. Nc7 or 2... Bd4 3. Kd3 2... Ba7 leads to the same as the main line. )

**3. Kd3 Kd7**

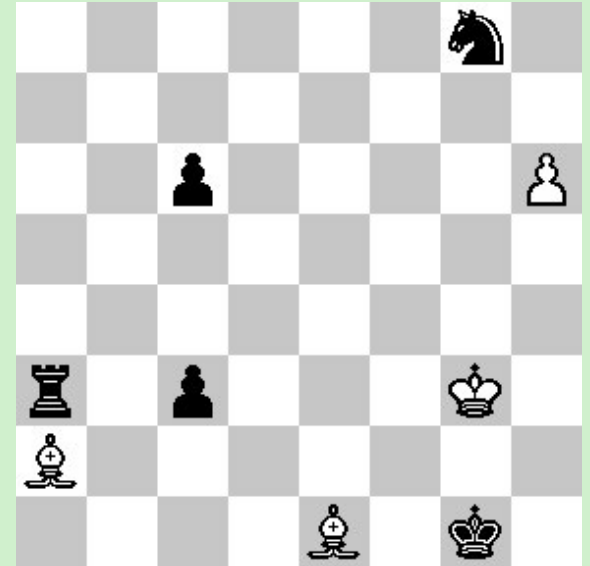
3... Kc8 4. Kc4 Kb7 5. Kb5 +=

**4. Kc4 Kc6 5. Nc7! Kxc7 6. Kb5**

Compared to the 2.Kd3 line, Black now does not have ...Be1.

**6... Bb6 7. Ka6 Kc6**

1/2-1/2



Our last study sees all six pieces in action.

**1. Bf2+**

1. h7 c2+ 2. Kh4 (2. Kf4 c1=Q+ ) ( 2. Kg4 Nf6+ ) 2... Ne7 3. Bd2 Rxa2 -+

1. Bxg8 c2+ 2. Kg4 c1=Q -+

1... Kh1 ( 1... Kf1 2. Bc4# )

**2. h7!**

2. Bd5+ cxd5 3. h7 c2+ 4. Be3 Rxe3+ 5. Kf2 Rf3+! 6. Kxf3 Nh6 7. h8=Q c1=Q -+

2. Bc5 Rxa2 3. h7 Rh24. hxg8=Q Rg2+ -+

**2... c2+ 3. Be3! Rxe3+ 4. Kf2**

4. Kf4 c1=Q 5. hxg8=Q ( 5. h8=Q+ Rh3+ ) 5... Re8+

4. Kh4 Re4+

**4... Rh3 5. Bd5+!**

5. hxg8=Q Rh2+ 6. Kf3 c1=Q -+

**5... cxd5** Things look grim for White, but **6. hxg8=Q Rh2+ 7. Kf3 c1=Q 8. Qg2+! Rxg2**

A beautiful mid-board stalemate - the king is usually stalemated on the corner or edge of the board. **1/2-1/2**



# The Amazing Performance

By IM Andrew Brown

**Fabiano Caruana recently had one of the best tournament performances of all time, in the 2014 Sinquefeld Cup. Against five of the other world top 10, including No.1 Carlsen, and No.2 Aronian, Caruana achieved the absurd feat of winning – quite convincingly – his first 7 games of the tournament, followed by drawing three games, to finish with a full 3-point lead over second place.**

To put this in perspective, in junior chess, especially with really young juniors, 7/7 is seen every now and then, but as one progresses through the ranks, the various playing styles and degrees of knowledge – as well as perhaps the nature of the game – make it harder and harder to win. At top-level Australian chess it is very uncommon nowadays for a player to win an elite tournament with 7/7; though on occasion it has been done, usually when one player was substantially higher rated than the rest of the field. When you get to the international stage draws become more and more frequent, and in most strong open tournaments the normal winning score is somewhere around 7-7.5/9; less still for closed (invitational) tournaments.

The further up you go, the harder it becomes to win, and in world class tournaments, it is not uncommon for the tournament winner to have only +1 or +2 (meaning winning one or two more games than they lose). Most world championship matches consist of many, many draws, and only a couple of decisive games. So, for someone to play in – by rating – the strongest tournament in history, and win the tournament with 8.5/10 (+7) is truly remarkable.

So, how do things like this happen? Why is it that someone who is remarkably consistent and performs at 2750-2850 for several years (not to be sniffed at of course!) can suddenly have a freak 3100 performance, destroying his world class opposition. For many chess players it is common to on occasion have an unusually good performance, whether it be over a few games or even a few tournaments. Perhaps equally common are stand-out poor performances.

But, while in the best performances there is usually some element of luck – be it an opponent missing something they would normally see, or choosing an opening you prepared well for, or physical conditions in the event are just right for you personally – there must surely be that same wisdom or insight or intelligence somewhere in the back of your brain when you go to your next tournament and get 2/10. How can we make our amazing performances normal?

One thing that strikes me is how often I see a player (myself included) having an excellent performance in one tournament – or even for half a tournament – and then having a string of losses and sub-par games thereafter; or vice versa. Such changes in playing ability even occur mid-game. Often I find this occurs when we relax prematurely, or become complacent; e.g., “I’ve done the hard stuff. I can get by from here without thinking too much.” I have experienced such situations first hand and know how frustrating it is. I think it is important on this note to always keep trying to do your best, whether or not you are miles in front or well behind.

# SELF-IMPOSED LIMITATIONS



When we get complacent, we stop working as well as we can – and I see this as one way of limiting our abilities. Whether we are a complete novice or a world class player, we are always prone to putting unnecessary limitations on ourselves. For some people this is more severe than for others, but I would say most people do this to some extent (myself included).

Sometimes the limitations we impose on ourselves are to do with the player we are up against. While Hikaru Nakamura has been one of the top players in the world for several years now, and shown himself to be one of the very best blitz players of all time, holding rating records across many different internet chess servers, he consistently seems to have trouble playing Magnus Carlsen. Sure, not even world class players can expect to beat the best player of our generation without playing some seriously good chess, but given the fact that they have played 26 times in classical chess over many years, and the win-loss record is 11-0 to Carlsen, one would think there is more to this than chance. I have also come across players I've found hard to back myself against merely on a psychological level.

Sometimes it is ratings that lead us to limit ourselves. I would be interested to know whether Caruana had a fixation of sorts on the number 2800: While he was on the verge of that rating "barrier" for nearly 3 years (as have been many other top players), the tournament straight after he makes it to 2801 is literally one of the most impressive performances in tournament history. Perhaps 2800 was his self-imposed limit, and perhaps he hadn't felt the need to give himself any limits beyond that – hence shooting up spectacularly.

While we are still well and truly in the realm of speculation, I have seen similar things occur with some of my chess friends, and most certainly with myself.

My point here is that at all levels we are capable of giving ourselves unnecessary limits. Whether you are a 500 playing a 1200, or a 1600 playing a 2000, or a son playing a dad, it's important always to back yourself. Indeed, I have wondered on occasion what might happen if those rating numbers were removed entirely from someone's mind. What happens when you no longer attach yourself in any significant way to the number next to your name? Does how you play affect your rating, or does your rating affect how you play?

On a similar topic, to borrow a phrase from my father, what if instead of being called the Grand Master title, it was just called "Level 11"? I imagine we would not see as many people wanting so badly to get to Level 11, for one, but also we would probably not see as many people teetering on the edge of Level 11 for many years before finally getting there – or giving up, or people narrowly missing Level 11 norms by a point or half a point again and again.

I do not mean to discredit anybody's attempts to achieve any of these things, nor how hard one must have to work to get there. What I am interested in is the unnecessary limitations we put on ourselves, what might happen if we were able to put them aside completely – and then perhaps most importantly, how?

# UNLOCKING YOUR POTENTIAL

## - PART I

The answer I suppose is not an easy one to find.

I am currently of the theory that somewhere in the mind of a person who struggles with such issues, when they come close to achieving something of importance, there is a thought or a feeling that they either can't (i.e., I am not capable of this, this is not appropriate for me) or they deep down don't want to (i.e., if I do achieve this how will that affect me, how will I take to having this or that rating or title when I never thought I could?). Almost always they can conceptually, they have all the resources they need within them, but for one reason or another these resources are not being used.

So what can we do about this?

Sadly I am no expert on the topic, but what I can say for sure is that the first step to overcoming your limits – or anything else, really – is awareness of them. If you have already got it in your mind that you can't beat so-and-so, or you'll never be able to achieve that rating or that title or that level of success, chances are, you won't. If you are aware of these limitations it will naturally follow that you will try to do something about them – if you're not, well, don't expect things to change much any time soon.

Hey, why do we need limits anyway?