

Michael Adams

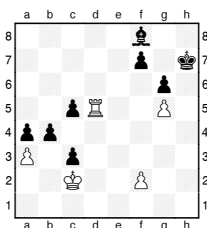


Two classics at the Classic

There was worldwide excitement in the run-up to the London Chess Classic, which more than lived up to its billing, attracting considerable media coverage and large fee paying audiences to Olympia. Congratulations to my fellow *Daily Telegraph* columnist Malcolm Pein on constructing an excellent tournament and many thanks to the generous benefactors who bankrolled proceedings.

The four English players had a tough job against very strong opposition which included three of the hottest in-form players from 2009, but all competed well.

The prize structure was innovative and Luke McShane was delighted to receive the brilliancy prize of €10,000 for the victory below.



Nakamura, H - McShane, L
London 2009

44.Rd5-d7

Nakamura, who has been on the back foot since the opening stages, is doing his best to slow down the armada on the queenside and continues to defend resourcefully. If 44.a3xb4 c5xb4 45.Rd5-a5 b4-b3+ 46.Kc2xc3 the important trick 46...Bf8-b4+ 47.Kc3xb4 b3-b2 promotes the pawn.

44...
45.Rd7xf7
46.Kc2-b1
47.Rf7-a7
48.Ra7xa4

A key moment: bringing Black's king into the game proves decisive. It looks tempting to grab a pawn, but after 48...Bd4xf2 49.Ra4-e4 surprisingly the White rook dominates both the Black bishop and king and the tables are completely turned. The natural capture also allows 49.Ra4-c4 winning for White showing the double-edged nature of the position.

49.Ra4-a6
50.Ra6-a4
51.Ra4-h4
52.a3-a4
53.Rh4-h1

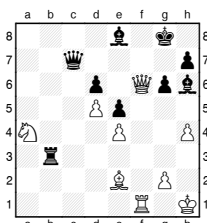
Following 53.a4-a5 c3-c2+ 54.Kb1-c1 the switchback 54...Be5-d6 brings down the curtain.

53...
54.Kb1-c1

The good news is that Black is no longer interested in promoting his pawns, the bad news is that he is going to deliver mate instead.

55.Rh1-h4
0-1

Magnus Carlsen concluded his fairytale year in style. He did his best work in the first two games, steadily outplaying his closest rival Vladimir Kramnik in the first round, which he followed up with this creative victory in round two, laying the foundations for his overall triumph.



Carlsen, M - McShane, L
London 2009

47.Na4-c5

Bf8-g7
b4-b3+
Kh7-g8
Bg7-d4
Kg8-f7

The natural 47.Be2-g4 Bh6-g7 doesn't lead anywhere, but Carlsen utilises tactics to manoeuvre his knight into the heart of Black's position.

47...
Rb3-g3

The neatest variation is 47...d6xc5 48.d5-d6 Qc7-f7 49.d6-d7 Qf7xf6 50.d7xe8Q+ when the newly passed 'd' pawn completes its mission, or 47...Qc7xc5 48.Qf6-e6+ and White delivers mate with a sequence of checks.

48.Nc5-e6
49.Qf6xf7+

The exchange of queens eases the pressure a little, but McShane's dodgy king position means the problems persist.

50.Rf1-b1
Bf7-e8

The knight can't be captured: 50...Bf7xe6 51.d5xe6 Kg8-f8 52.Rb1-b7 and the 'e' pawn is too strong.

51.Be2-f3

After a forcing sequence, Carlsen finds time for a quiet move stranding Black's rook far from the action.

51...
52.Rb1-b7+
53.Rb7xh7

Now Carlsen shows that several hours into the game he is still alert and calculating precisely, finishing proceedings with a precise combination, 53...Bh6-d2 would have hung on a bit longer.

54.Ne6xf4
55.e4-e5+

Forced as 55...Kf6xe5 56.Rh7-e7+ wins the bishop.

56.d5-d6
e5-e4

After 56...g6-g5 57.h4xg5+ Rg3xg5 58.d6-d7 Be8xd7 59.Rh7xd7 White's one remaining pawn is sufficient to win the game.

57.Bf3xe4
58.Be4-d5

The bishop shields White's pawn from the rook and loss of a piece and the game are inevitable.

58...
Kf6-f5

The point is that 58...Re3-d3 is met by 59.d6-d7.

59.Kh1-h2
60.Bd5-f3
61.d6-d7

Re3-e5
Kf5-f6

Michael Adams



A Herculean effort brings scant reward

Top seed Boris Gelfand slugged his way through the very strong 128-player knockout World Cup, with the new extended four-game rapid tie-breaks; it took him a stamina-sapping 38 games.

Unfortunately, the reward for this Herculean feat in FIDE's mismanaged world championship cycle is only a place in the candidates' tournament which, incredibly, some other lucky player will get for nothing as a wild card.

He made few mistakes and was good at grabbing his chances when they came along, as in the eighth and final game of the match below against the top French player.

Black should have offered the exchange of queens

19...Qd7-f7

20.b5xc6

21.Nd5-e3

22.Ne3-f5

23.d3-d4

Gelfand had a lot of good options here, but his classical style means that the strategy of opening more lines whilst undermining his opponent's pawn structure comes naturally to him.

23...

24.Nf5xd4

25.Bb2xd4

26.Qh5-f5+

27.Rf1-e1

After 27...Re6-e7 28.Re1xe7

Qd7xe7 29.Qf5xf4 things

aren't much more hopeful, but now Black becomes a human pin cushion.

28.Bd4xg7

29.Rb1-b7

30.Re1xe7+

30.Qf5-g6+ Kg7-h8

31.Qg6-f6+ was even better, but this is more than good enough.

30...

31.Qf5xf4

32.Nh4-f5

1-0

b7xc6

f5-f4

Rf8-f6

e5xd4

Ne6xd4

Rf6-e6

Kh7-g8

Ne8-c7

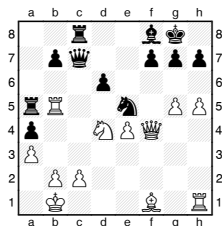
Kg8xg7

Re6-e7

Qd7xe7

Kg7-g8

Russia that their national championships also boasted an impressive prize fund. Many-time winner Peter Svidler put in an impressive performance, but this time he couldn't match an even better effort by Alexander Grischuk.



Grischuk, A - Sjugirov, S

Russian Championship
Moscow 2009

24.g5-g6

A thematic breakthrough: although Black has plenty of defenders on the kingside, this pawn thrust opens up the sensitive light squares.

24...

25.Bf1xb5

Ra5xb5

Qc7-b6

Capturing the pawn is disastrous 25...f7xg6 26.h5xg6 Ne5xg6 27.Qf4-f5 and the threat of Qf5-h5 can't be effectively met, trying to keep things closed is a better strategy, but White gradually opens up the kingside in the line 25...h7-h6 26.Rh1-f1 f7xg6 27.Bb5xa4 g6xh5 28.Ba4-b3+ d6-d5 29.Nd4-e6 Qc7-f7 30.Qf4xf7+ Ne5xf7 31.Bb3xd5.

26.g6xf7+

Kg8-h8

The pawn can't be captured due to 26...Ne5xf7 27.Rh1-f1 Rc8-c7 28.Nd4-e6.

27.h5-h6

There were other good moves such as 27.Qf4-f5, but Grischuk consistently uses his pawns as battering rams to lay bare the Black king.

27...

28.h6xg7+

29.Qf4-f5

30.Qf5xc8+

31.Qc8-c3

32.Rh1-g1

1-0

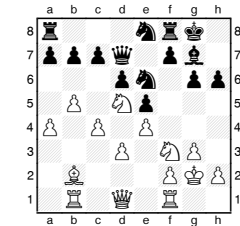
Qb6xd4

Bf8xg7

Ne5-g6

Ng6-f8

Qd4xe4



Gelfand, B -

Vachier Lagrave, M

World Cup Khanty-Mansiysk
2009

16... f7-f5

It was better to play 16...c7-c6 ejecting White's well-placed knight.

17.Nf3-h4

Kg8-h7

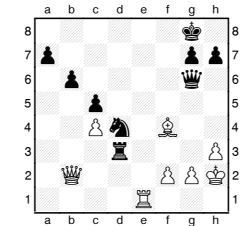
If 17...f5xe4 18.Nh4xg6 wins material, but now the wind starts whistling around the Black kingside.

18.e4xf5

19.Qd1-h5

g6xf5

c7-c6



Morovic Fernandez, I -

Rublevsky, S

World Cup Khanty-Mansiysk
2009

39...

White resigned as, if the rook is captured, the material is regained with interest after 40.g2xh3 Nd4-f3+ 41.Kh2-h1 Nf3xe1 and 40.Kh2xh3 leads to a neat finish 40...Qg6-h5+ 41.Kh3-g3 Nd4-f5 mate.

Rd3xh3+

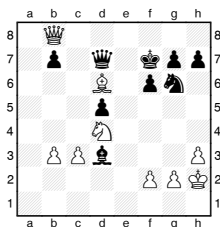
It was a good sign for the health of the game in

Michael Adams



English fight back in battle of Hastings

This year's Hastings event had a little better entry than usual with the spoils shared by two English players, Mark Hebden and David Howell, Mark and two visitors, Andrei Istratescu and Edouard Romain. Howell, the younger of the English duo, wasn't at his best, but a crucial last-round win against a strong opponent with Black more than rescued his tournament.



Howell, D - Giffard, N Hastings 2009

Although the position is quite simplified, White's better pawn structure and superior minor pieces put Black under unpleasant pressure.

29... **Ng6-e7**

It's understandable that Giffard tries to ease the pressure with exchanges, but in the game White's queen and knight combo justify their reputation as an effective pair of pieces.

30.Bd6xe7 **Qd7xe7**
31.f2-f4

31.Qb8-g3 was another possibility. Howell prefers to keep his queen active, but it

allows Black's bishop a decent post.

31... **g7-g5**
32.f4xg5 **f6xg5**
33.b3-b4 **h7-h6**

Not bad, but active defence with 33...Bd3-e4 34.b4-b5 Kf7-f6 was much better.

34.b4-b5 **Kf7-g7**

The last chance to play 34...Kf7-f6 when the threat to exchange queens with Qe7-e5+ interrupts White's plans.

35.b5-b6 **Qe7-f7**

36.Qb8-c7

Howell grabs the chance to dominate the dark squares which Black carelessly ceded control of with his last move. 36.Qb8-d6 was also good.

36.. **Kg7-g6**

Falling for a tactical trick 36...Kg7-g8 would have delayed, but not changed the result.

37.Nd4-c6

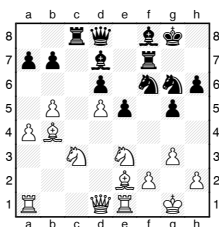
The impudent knight can't be captured as the pawn will queen, but there is no way to get Black's pieces out of forking range.

37... **Qf7-f1**
38.Nc6-e5+ **Kg6-f5**

39.Ne5xd3
1-0

Mark Hebden is a good example of the fact that your play doesn't have to decline with age if your motivation remains strong.

Here he demonstrates how years of experience have made him a great expert in one of his favourite systems, the King's Indian defence.



Kjartansson, G - Hebden, M Hastings 2010

White's forces are doing a very good job of containment, so Hebden parts with a pawn to create a handy central spot for his knight.

21... **e5-e4**
22.Qd1-b1 **Ng6-e5**
23.Nc3xe4 **Nf6xe4**
24.Qb1xe4 **Qd8-f6**
25.Re1-f1 **Bd7-h3**

The bishop and also the queen leap out into the action.

26.f2-f4

Weakening the kingside edifice releases the kinetic energy of Black pieces, 26.Be2-h5 would have been a better idea.

26... **g5xf4**

27.g3xf4

If White chooses the other recapture 27.Rf1xf4 Ne5-f3+ discovers an attack on the rook.

27... **Ne5-d7**

28.Ne3-g2

Suddenly White's position looks very shaky and this allows Hebden's pieces to jump in to detonate the foundations, 28.Kg1-h1 offering the exchange to hold things together would have been wise.

28... **Rf7-e7**

29.Qe4-d3

If 29.Qe4-f3 Bh3xg2 30.Kg1xg2 Qf6-b2 and White loses one of his bishops.

29... **Bh3-f5**

It was still possible to play 29...Bh3xg2 30.Kg1xg2 Qf6-b2 31.Bb4-d2 Nd7-c5, but Hebden's move is just as good as his pieces flood into the holes.

30.Qd3-d1 **Qf6-b2**

31.Bb4-d2 **Rc8-c2**

32.Ra1-b1 **Qb2-d4+**

33.Bd2-e3 **Qd4xd1**

White resigned as 34.Be2xd1 Rc2xg2+ 35.Kg1xg2 Bf5xb1 wins a whole piece.

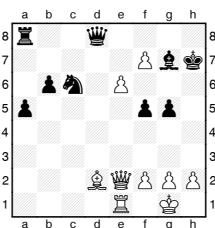
Michael Adams



Old order is restored despite stars' absence

The new world order of team competitions was turned on its head at the World Team Championships as despite Kramnik, Svidler, Kamsky and Anand amongst others being otherwise engaged, the three podium positions were filled by Russia, USA and India in that order.

This trio finished ahead of full-strength sides from Azerbaijan and Armenia, who have been top dogs in team events recently.



Mamedyarov, S - Morozevich, A

World Team Championship Bursa 2010

31... **g5-g4**

Black's priority is finding a safe spot for his king so 31...Kh7-g6 is best, the complications continue with 32.g2-g4 Qd8-d5.

32.h2-h3

This calm move undermining Black's remaining kingside pawns as well as making luft is surprisingly effective.

32... **Nc6-d4**

This knight leap looks tempting, but 32...Qd8-d5 might have given better chances of survival, although

33.h3xg4 f5xg4 34.Qe2xg4 Qd5xd2 35.Qg4-e4+ Kh7-h6 36.Re1-e3 looks very dangerous.

33.Qe2-e3 **Nd4-c2**

34.Qe3-f4

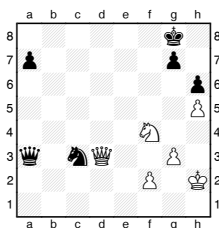
Mamedyarov edges his queen closer to Black's king with fatal consequences.

34... **Qd8-d5**

The other queen move 34...Qd8-f6 was a tougher defence, but one beautiful refutation runs 35.h3xg4 Nc2xe1 36.Qf4-h2+ Bg7-h6 37.Bd2xh6 Qf6xh6 (37...Qf6xe6 38.Bh6-f8+ Kh7-g6 39.Qh2-h5+ Kg6-f6 40.g4-g5+ Kf6-e5 41.Qh5-e2+ Ke5-d5 42.Qe2-a2+ Kd5-e5 43.f2-f4+ wins the queen) 38.Qh2xh6+ Kh7xh6 39.e6-e7.

35.Qf4-g5

White can also win in a similar vein to the line above by 35.Re1-e5 Qd5xe5 36.Qf4xe5 Bg7xe5 37.e6-e7, but Mamedyarov's move is even stronger so Morozevich resigned.



Aronian, L - Kotronias, V

World Team Championship Bursa 2010

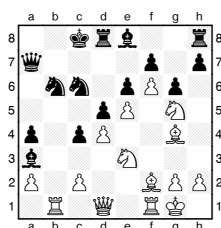
49.Nf4-d5

A rare slip by Aronian ditches half a point; 49.Nf4-e2 would have effectively carried out the winning idea in the game exploiting Black's pinned knight, but 49.Qd3-c4+ Kg8-h7 50.Qc4-f7 when the threat of Nf4-e6 is decisive is even better.

49... **Qa3-d6**

The counter pin saves the day.

1/2-1/2



Malakhov, V - Shulman, Y

World Team Championship Bursa 2010

Rarely can the French Defence have turned out so badly as in this game. Malakhov puts Shulman out of his misery by giving up a piece to Hoover up Black's central pawns.

23.Ng5xe6 **f7xe6**

24.Bg4xe6+ **Rd8-d7**

Self pinning is rarely a good idea, but 24...Be8-d7 25.Ne3xd5 also wasn't very enticing.

25.Ne3xd5

Shulman hoped for 25.Be6xd7+ Be8xd7 when Black has regained light-squared control, but Malakhov has a better idea in mind.

25... **Nb6xd5**

26.Qd1-f3

With both knights and Black's misplaced bishop under fire, material is regained leaving Black's position a wreck.

26... **Nc6-d8**

27.Be6xd5 **Qa7-a6**

28.e5-e6 **Rd7xd5**

The pawn can't be captured due to 28...Nd8xe6 29.Bd5xe6 Qa6xe6 30.Qf3-a8+ Kc8-c7 31.Qa8-b7+.

29.Qf3xd5 **Nd8xe6**

As the board clears of pieces, Black's stranded monarch's fate is sealed.

30.Bf2-g3 **Ne6-c7**

31.Bg3xc7 **Kc8xc7**

32.f6-f7 **Be8-d7**

33.Qd5-e5+

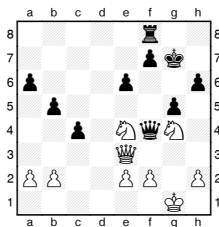
Black resigned as his rook will disappear without leaving its starting square.

Michael Adams



A novel angle on Pride and Prejudice

The crucial Wood Green Hilsmark Kingfisher vs Pride and Prejudice match-up was a good advertisement for the 4NCL – the British team championships – as the respective captains and long-time supporters of the league Brian Smith and Claire Summerscale assembled two strong sides which slugged out a tense 4-4 draw.



Bacrot, E - Adams, M
4NCL 2010

30.Qe3-h3

After 30.Qe3-d4+ f7-f6 31.Qd4-d7+ Kg7-g6 is a key move (31...Rf8-f7 32.Qd7xe6 is very good for White) 32.Qd7xe6 Qf4-f5 forces a pleasant ending for Black.

30... h6-h5

31.Ng4-f6

If 31.Qh3xh5 Rf8-h8 32.Qh5xg5+ Qf4xg5 33.Ne4xg5 Rh8-d8 White's queenside pawns look vulnerable.

31... Rf8-h8

32.Qh3-c3

Rightly rejecting the simplification 32.Nf6xh5+ Rh8xh5 33.Qh3xh5 Qf4xe4 34.Qh5xg5+ Qe4-g6 35.Qg5xg6+ Kg7xg6 when

Black has an edge.

32... e6-e5
33.Qc3-b4 Rh8-h6

I couldn't resist driving the knights further from my king, but as they are effectively hobbled at the moment, there was a good case for advancing the kingside pawns. The variation 33...g5-g4 34.Qb4-e7 h5-h4 35.e2-e3 Qf4-f5 (not 35...Qf4-f3 36.Nf6-e8+ Rh8xe8 37.Qe7-g5+ Kg7-h8 38.Qg5-h6+ Kh8-g8 39.Ne4-f6+ winning Black's queen) 36.Nf6-d7 Qf5xe4 37.Qe7-f6+ Kg7-g8 38.Qf6-d8+ leads to perpetual check.

34.Nf6-e8+ Kg7-g8
35.Ne8-d6

I was becoming concerned about the stronger 35.f2-f3, but with accurate play a draw is still on the cards 35...g5-g4 (my original intention 35...Rh6-e6 36.Ne8-c7 is good for White) 36.Qb4-e7 Qf4-e3+ 37.Kg1-f1 g4xf3 38.Ne4-f6+ Rh6xf6 39.Ne8xf6+ Kg8-g7 40.Nf6xh5+ Kg7-g6 41.Nh5-g3 f3xe2+ 42.Ng3xe2 Qe3-f3+ 43.Kf1-e1 Qf3-h1+ 44.Ke1-d2 Qh1-d5+ 45.Kd2-e3 Qd5-d3+ 46.Ke3-f2 Qd3-f5+ is another perpetual.

35... h5-h4

36.h2-h3

Not 36.Qb4-c5 Qf4-c1+ 37.Kg1-g2 h4-h3+ 38.Kg2-f3 Qc1-f4 mate.

36... g5-g4

37.e2-e3

With less than a minute, Etienne couldn't find the game-saving 37.Qb4-a5 Rh6-g6 38.Qa5-d8+ Kg8-h7 39.Qd8xh4+.

37... Qf4-f3

38.Qb4-c5

Now if 38.Qb4-a5 Qf3-d1+ 39.Kg1-g2 g4xh3+ 40.Kg2-h2 Rh6xd6 leaves Black with extra material.

38... Rh6-g6

A nifty move defending

my king and lining up a discovered check.

39.Qc5-c8+ Kg8-h7

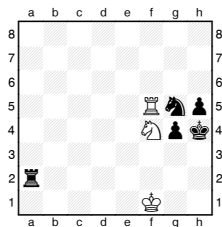
It seemed logical to put my king out of range of White's knights, but 39...Kg8-g7 40.Nd6-f5+ (or 40.Nd6-e8+ Kg7-h6) 40...Kg7-h7 leaves White helpless.

40.Kg1-h2

40.Qc8-f5 was worth a try just before the time control 40...Qf3xf5 (40...g4xh3+ 41.Ne4-g5+ is a very unpleasant turnaround) 41.Nd6xf5 g4xh3+ 42.Kg1-h2 b5-b4 should still win the game, but there remains work to be done.

40... g4-g3+

White resigned as 41.f2xg3 h4xg3+ 42.Kh2-g1 Qf3xe3+ 43.Kg1-g2 Qe3-e2+ 44.Kg2-g1 Qe2-h2+ concludes proceedings.



Hebden, M - Baburin, A
4NCL 2010

85...

g4-g3

Now a draw was agreed due to the variation 86.Nf4-g6+ Kh4-h3 (not 86...Kh4-g4 87.Rf5-f4+ Kg4-h3 88.Rf4-h4 mate) 87.Rf5xg5 but after the calm 87...h5-h4 Black is still winning! 88.Ng6-f4+ (88.Ng6xh4 Ra2-a1+ 89.Kf1-e2 Kh3xh4 is a winning ending) 88...Kh3-h2 89.Rg5-g4 Ra2-f2+ 90.Kf1-e1 Rf2xf4 91.Rg4xf4 h4-h3 92.Rf4-f2+ g3-g2 and the two pawns beat a rook. Not easy to work out at the end of a seven-hour playing session.

Michael Adams



Sparks fly as bishops go on the attack

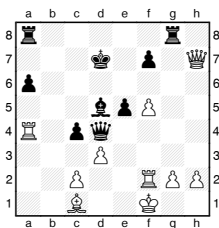
Alexei Shirov produced a dazzling five-game winning streak to open the 72nd Corus tournament, which included this spectacular game demonstrating the attacking potential of opposite-coloured bishops.

continues to open more lines for this piece.

20.b3xc4 **b5xc4**
21.Ra2-a4 **Bb7-d5**
22.f4-f5 **e6-e5**
23.Qh5xh7

Grabbing this pawn doesn't help White; 23.g2-g3 blocking out the rook on g8 was a better idea.

23... **Ke8-d7**



24.Qh7-h6

Overlooking an immediate breakthrough, 24.f5-f6 making room for some queen checks or the withdrawal 24.Qh7-h3 had to be tried.

24... **Bd5xg2+**

25.Kf1-e1

The bishop can't be taken: 25.Rf2xg2 Rg8xg2 26.Kf1xg2 Ra8-g8+ 27.Bc1-g5 Qd4-g4+ 28.Kg2-f2 Rg8xg5 and White's king is defenceless.

25... **Bg2-d5**

26.Bc1-a3

If 26.Rf2-f1 Rg8-g2 creates carnage on the second rank, now the direct approach drives the king all round the board before it is cornered by its pursuers.

26... **Rg8-g1+**

27.Ke1-e2 **Qd4-g4+**

28.Ke2-e3 **Rg1-e1+**

29.Ke3-d2 **Qg4-d1+**

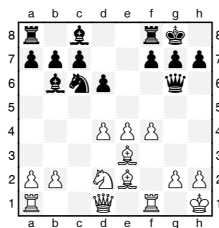
30.Kd2-c3 **Qd1-a1+**

31.Kc3-b4 **Re1-b1+**

White resigned as mate is coming, 32.Kb4-c5 Qa1-d4 mate is one pretty finish.

However, neither Shirov nor Vladimir Kramnik, who won his individual game against Magnus Carlsen, was able to prevent the unstoppable Norwegian finishing half a point

ahead of both. The English players didn't have a great time, but David Howell did win this snappy miniature.



Howell, D - Nyback, T
 Corus B 2010

Howell's centre is under pressure, but he finds a superb solution.

17.f4-f5 **Qg6-f6**

18.e4-e5 **d6xe5**

19.Nd2-e4 **Qf6-d8**

Now the sacrifice has opened up a great spot for the White knight. Black's queen is embarrassed as if 19...Qf6-h4 20.Be2-d3 threatens Be3-g5 trapping the lady.

20.Be2-c4

Another imaginative idea, putting the bishop on a good diagonal. The direct 20.f5-f6 g7-g6 21.Qd1-c1 was also very dangerous.

20... **Nc6-a5**

Nyback attacks the bishop as 20...Bb6xd4 21.Be3-g5 Qd8-d7 22.Ne4-f6+ g7xf6 23.Bg5xf6 leaves Black's king fatally exposed.

21.f5-f6 **Bb6xd4**

This doesn't work out

well, but 21...Na5xc4

22.Qd1-h5 Nc4xe3 (22...

Nc4-d6 23.f6xg7 Kg8xg7

24.Qh5-h6+ Kg7-h8

25.Ne4-f6 decimates the

Black kingside) 23.Qh5-g5

and 21...g7-g6 22.Qd1-c1

Na5xc4 23.Be3-g1 when

White's queen decisively

lands on h6 aren't any

better.

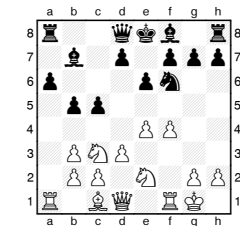
22.f6xg7 **Kg8xg7**

Black resigned as

23.Be3-g5 Qd8-d7

24.Qd1-h5 will soon lead

to mate.



Tiviakov, S - Shirov, A
 Corus A 2010

10... **d7-d5**

11.e4-e5 **d5-d4**

11...Nf6-d7 12.d3-d4

blocking Black's bishop would suit White.

12.e5xf6 **d4xc3**

13.f6xg7 **Bf8xg7**

14.b2xc3 **Rh8-g8**

15.Rf1-f2 **Bg7xc3**

Shirov would have seen and accurately assessed the position arising from this tactic, regaining the pawn several moves previously.

16.Ne2xc3 **Qd8-d4**

17.Kg1-f1

Understandably, Tiviakov

didn't fancy 17.g2-g3

exposing more light

squares.

17... **Qd4xc3**

18.Ra1-a2 **Qc3-d4**

19.Qd1-h5 **c5-c4**

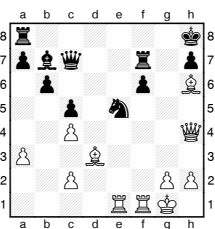
Both kings are precariously placed, but Shirov's bishop rules the roost and he

Michael Adams



Day I became a Rock star

The Gibtelecom Masters, held at Gibraltar's welcoming Caleta Hotel, had moved up a notch from when I last played three years ago. Brian Callaghan has continued to steer the tournament from strength to strength. I was surprised and delighted after many adventures and tiebreak games to end up receiving the £15,000 first prize. My best game was this sharp encounter from the third round.



Adams, M - Halkias, S
Gibtelecom Masters 2010

23.Bd3xh7

Giving up the bishop tears open Black's king position. The natural 23.Rf1xf6 was also possible although during the game 23...Ra8-g8 looked concerning as 24.Re1xe5 Qc7xe5 25.Rf6xf7 Qe5-a1+ wins for Black. However the clever 24.Re1-e2 Ne5-f3+ 25.Rf6xf3 Bb7xf3 26.Bh6-d2 exploiting the vulnerable dark squares is good enough.

23... Kh8xh7

24.Re1-e3

It was tempting to play the forcing 24.Bh6-g5+

Kh7-g8 25.Bg5xf6 Rf7-g7 26.Bf6xg7 Qc7xg7 27.Qh4-h3, but the resourceful 27...Ra8-f8 allows Black to emerge unscathed, so the quiet move preparing to bring the rook to g3 or h3 is better.

24... Ne5-g6

If 24...Ra8-h8 25.Bh6-f4+ Kh7-g8 26.Re3-g3+ Rf7-g7 27.Qh4xf6 Rg7xg3 28.Bf4xg3 is the most efficient.

25.Qh4-h5 Ra8-h8

A clever defensive move 25...Qc7-c6 26.Bh6-f8+ Kh7-g8 27.Qh5xg6+ Kg8xf8 28.Qg6-h6+ Rf7-g7 29.Rf1xf6+ wins immediately.

26.Re3-e8

White needs to play precisely here, 26.Re3-h3 Qc7-e5 and 26.Re3-g3 Bb7-e4 allow Black to hold on. Another rook move 26.Re3-e6 Qc7-d7 27.Bh6-f8+ Kh7-g8 28.Qh5xg6+ Kg8xf8 29.Re6xf6 Qd7-d4+ 30.Kg1-h1 was also winning.

26... Rh8xe8

White can realise his threat after 26...Qc7-c6 27.Bh6-f8+ Kh7-g8 28.Qh5xg6+.

27.Bh6-f4+ Kh7-g7

28.Qh5-h6+ Kg7-g8

29.Bf4xc7

Although White collects a rook and knight with check in the line 29.Qh6xg6+ Rf7-g7 30.Qg6xe8+ Kg8-h7 31.Qe8-h5+ Kh7-g8, Black is over the worst as 32.Bf4xc7 Rg7xg2+ 33.Kg1-h1 Rg2-f2+ is an immediate draw.

29... Re8-e2

Black has some practical chances in the time scramble, but White's extra material should tell

29...Rf7-g7 30.Rf1xf6 is also winning.

30.Rf1-f2 Re2-e1+

31.Rf2-f1 Re1-e2

32.Rf1-d1 Re2xg2+

33.Kg1-f1 Rf7-g7

Now Black's knight gets fatally pinned, 33...Bb7-e4 34.Rd1-d8+ Rf7-f8 35.Rd8xf8+ Ng6xf8 was the last chance to fight.

34.Rd1-d8+ Ng6-f8

35.Bc7-d6 Rg2-g1+

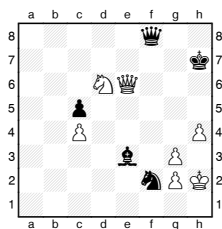
36.Kf1-e2 Rg7-g2+

37.Ke2-d3 Rg1-d1+

38.Kd3-c3

Black resigned as the flurry of checks has only driven my king to safety on the queenside.

The Best Game prize was awarded to the beaming players below whose enterprising encounter ended in a draw, despite the 567 rating-point differential.



61.h4-h5 Qf8xd6

This study-like move removes the danger to Black's exposed king by enforcing liquidation.

62.Qe6xd6 Nf2-g4+

63.Kh2-h3 Ng4-f2+

64.Kh3-h2 Nf2-g4+

65.Kh2-h3 Ng4-f2+

66.Kh3-h4 Be3-g5+

Draw agreed, as after 67.Kh4xg5 Nf2-e4+ White's king has been lured into a fork 68.Kg5-f4 Ne4xd6 69.Kf4-e5 Nd6xc4+ 70.Ke5-d5 Nc4-e3+ 71.Kd5xc5 Kh7-h6 and Black will mop up White's remaining pawns to Hoover the board.

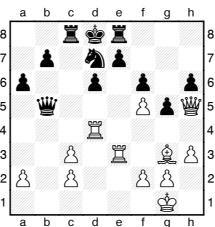
Michael Adams



Skulduggery in Moscow

The Moscow Open was enlivened by the top-seeded player in the rating-limited section being shown the door on the grounds that his current low rating was the result of a precipitous drop which had left him conveniently just under the limit.

Such skulduggery is not unknown and exposes the folly of offering high prizes in minor sections. In the top section the dirty tricks were only employed over the board as in the tactically charged games below.



Bologan, V - Amonatov, F
Moscow 2010

24... **Qb5xf5**
Black's pieces are compactly huddled in the centre but White's very powerfully placed rooks mean he needs to tread carefully. So 24... Nd7-e5 aiming to keep lines closed would have been a better try.

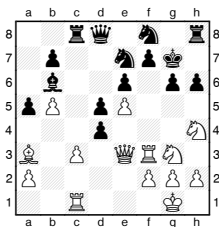
25.Rd4xd6 **Rc8-c5**
26.Rd6-d2
The rook doesn't have to withdraw 26.Qh5-f7 was also very good.

26... **e7-e5**
Although Black loses the exchange after 26...Rc5-d5 27.Rd2xd5

Qf5xd5 28.Bg3-c7+ Kd8xc7 29.Qh5xe8 Qd5-d1+ 30.Kg1-h2 Qd1-d6+ 31.g2-g3 Qd6-d2 offers some hope.

27.Qh5-f7 **Rc5-c7**
The queen can't be challenged due to 27...Qf5-e6 28.Rd2xd7+ Qe6xd7 29.Re3-d3, but now another pin proves decisive.

28.Bg3xe5
Black resigned as 28... Re8xe5 29.Qf7-f8+ leads to mate next go.



Zhigalko, S - Korobkov, P
Moscow 2010

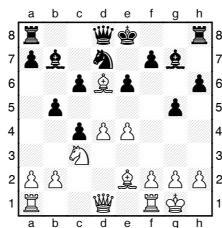
22.Qe3-f4
With so many pieces lurking in the vicinity of Black's king, Zhigalko realises this option is much stronger than the routine recapture 22.c3xd4 Rc8xc1+ 23.Ba3xc1 Ne7-f5 when Black eases the pressure with exchanges.

22... **Ne7-f5**
23.Ng3xf5+ **e6xf5**
24.Rf3-g3
I like this little rook nudge, lining up the black king in the cross hairs but the bulldozing 24.Nh4xf5+ g6xf5 25.Qf4xf5 Rc8-c7 26.Ba3-d6 was also promising.

24... **Kg7-h7**
The king tries to crawl away as 24...Nf8-e6 25.Nh4xf5+ is even worse.

25.Nh4xf5 **g6-g5**
26.Qf4-h4
Black resigned as 26...g5xh4 27.Rg3-g7 is mate and after 26...Nf8-e6

27.Qh4-h5 Black's king is not long for this world.



Najer, E - Shinkevich, V
Moscow 2010

13... **e6-e5**
This game shows the dangers of playing very sharp lines without detailed preparation, 13...a7-a6 is the theoretical move: contesting the centre immediately proves foolhardy. Najer continues with a known idea aiming to open lines as quickly as possible.

14.Be2-g4 **e5xd4**
15.e4-e5 **Nd7xe5**
Taking the knight is also risky as 15...d4xc3 16.e5-e6 Nd7-e5 17.e6-e7 proves a bit awkward; the Black queen has no appropriate flight square.

16.Qd1xd4 **h6-h5**
Things are already so bad that 16...Qd8-b6 17.Qd4xb6 a7xb6 18.Rf1-e1 b5-b4 19.Bd6xe5 0-0 giving a few practical chances was the best try. Now Black's pieces are caught napping as the centre explodes.

17.Rf1-e1 **f7-f6**
18.Bd6xe5 **f6xe5**
19.Re1xe5+ **Bg7xe5**
19...Ke8-f8 20.Qd4-c5+ Kf8-g8 21.Bg4-e6+ Kg8-h7 22.Re5xg5 isn't too healthy.

20.Qd4xe5+ **Ke8-f7**
21.Bg4-e6+ **Kf7-g6**
22.Ra1-d1 **Qd8-f6**
23.Be6-f5+
Black resigned as 23...Qf6xf5 24.Rd1-d6+ or 23...Kg6-f7 24.Rd1-d7+ clean up.

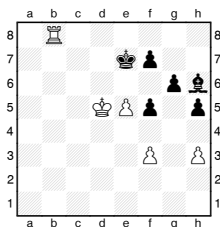
Michael Adams



Good morning, Vietnam's grandmasters

The Aeroflot open was a great success for Vietnamese players. The 18-year-old Le Quang Liem in particular, who followed up his shared triumph in the Moscow Open with outright victory in this more prestigious event. His countryman Nguyen Ngoc Truong Son was also well in contention until a last-round loss knocked him back into the pack.

Luke McShane was the only English player to try his luck in Moscow. His up-and-down event ended on a high note as he demonstrated his trademark fighting spirit in the well-played endgame:



McShane, L - Danin, A
Aeroflot Open Moscow 2010

57... Bh6-g5

A better option here is 57...Bh6-d2 as 58.Rb8-b7+ Ke7-f8 59.e5-e6 f7xe6+ 60.Kd5xe6 Bd2-c3 is a draw as there is no way for White's king to pass the dark square barrier.

A similar ending occurred in game five of the 2004 Kramnik-Leko World Championship match. White does better to play

59.Rb7-c7 keeping the bishop off the long diagonal, but 59...Bd2-a5 keeps causing problems.

58.Rb8-b7+ Ke7-f8
59.e5-e6

McShane seizes the opportunity to make this break with the bishop awkwardly placed.

59... f7xe6+
60.Kd5xe6 Kf8-g8
61.Rb7-b4

61.Rb7-c7 keeping the king locked up for the moment looks more precise.

61... Bg5-d2
62.Rb4-c4

A crucial move keeping the bishop away from the c3 square, 62.Rb4-a4 Bd2-c3 would allow Black to achieve his aim.

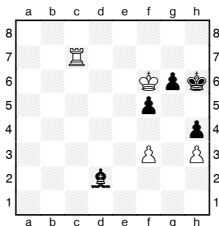
62... Kg8-g7

The king moves up the board as 62...Bd2-g5 63.h3-h4 causes immediate collapse.

63.Rc4-c7+ Kg7-h6
64.Ke6-f6 h5-h4

If Black waits he is gradually outmanoeuvred

64...Bd2-e3 65.Rc7-c8 Kh6-h7 66.Rc8-e8 Be3-d2 (66...Be3-d4+ 67.Kf6-g5) 67.Re8-e2 or 64...Bd2-g5+ 65.Kf6-f7 Bg5-d2 66.Rc7-c2 Bd2-e3 67.Rc2-g2.



65.Rc7-c8

Good enough, but 65.Rc7-c2 Bd2-f4 66.Rc2-c4 Bf4-g3 67.Rc4-c8 Kh6-h7 68.Kf6-g5 wins immediately.

65... Bd2-g5+
66.Kf6-f7 Bg5-e3
67.Rc8-e8 Be3-d2

The last throw of the dice 67...Be3-d4 at least enables Black to activate

his king, but 68.Re8-e6 Kh6-g5 69.Re6xg6+ Kg5-f4 70.Kf7-e6 Bd4-f2 71.Rg6-g8 Bf2-e1 72.Rg8-a8 Kf4-g3 (72... Kf4xf3 73.Ke6xf5 Be1-g3 74.Ra8-a3+ Kf3-g2 75.Kf5-g4) 73.Ke6xf5 Kg3xh3 74.f3-f4 proves decisive.

68.Re8-e2 Bd2-c1
69.Re2-g2 Bc1-g5

Or 69...g6-g5 70.Kf7-f6.

70.Rg2-g1
Finishing the game with a neat zugzwang.

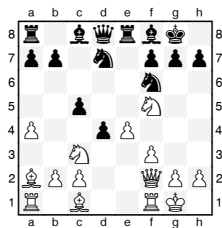
70... Kh6-h5

71.Kf7-g7
Forcing Black's bishop to give ground.

71... Bg5-h6+

72.Kg7-f6

1-0



Savchenko, B - Yudin, S
Aeroflot Open Moscow 2010

14.Nc3-d5 Nf6xd5
15.Qf2-g3

This unexpected intermezzo creates havoc.

15... Nd7-e5

Black can't hold onto the extra material, but returning the gift with 15...g7-g6 16.Ba2xd5 Nd7-f6 leads to a normal position.

16.Nf5-h6+ Kg8-h8
17.Qg3xe5

This blow which Black had overlooked caused him to resign. The knight can't be captured due to the pin and 17...Re8xe5 18.Nh6xf7+ Kh8-g8 19.Nf7xd8 wins the house. Black could have tried 17...Qd8-d7 18.Qe5-h5 g7xh6 19.Ba2xd5, but decided against playing on in this wreck of a position.

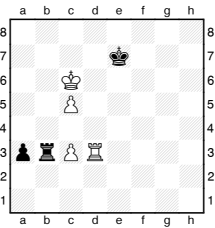
Michael Adams



Topping time for Topalov

Linares has, in modern times, been something of a marathon with eight double rounds and a plethora of free days. This year, partly for financial reasons, the event was reduced to a snappier six players and 10 games.

There was a fairly high draw percentage, but proceedings built to a fascinating climax as Topalov clinched the tournament and cut Carlsen's lead at the top of the rating list with this last-round win.



Topalov, V - Gelfand, B
Linares 2010

48... Ke7-e8
Gelfand could save the game with active defence; 48...a3-a2 49.Rd3-d7+ Ke7-e6 50.Rd7-a7 Rb3-b2 51.Kc6-c7 Ke6-d5 52.c5-c6 Kd5-c4 53.Kc7-c8 Kc4xc3 54.c6-c7 Rb2-c2 and the board will soon be wiped clean of pieces.

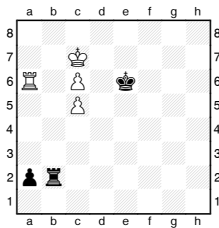
49.Rd3-h3 a3-a2
It was still possible to return to the same plan with 49... Ke8-e7 50.Rh3-h7+ Ke7-e6 now White should be winning.

50.Rh3-h8+ Ke8-e7

51.Rh8-a8 Rb3-b2
52.Kc6-c7 Rb2-c2
After 52...Ke7-e6 the precise 53.c3-c4 decisively impedes Black's king.

53.c5-c6 Rc2-b2
If both sides capture their opponent's pawns a winning ending results, and 53...Ke7-e6 54.Ra8-a5, again cuts off the monarch.

54.c3-c4 Rb2-c2
55.Ra8-a6 Rc2-b2
56.c4-c5 Ke7-e6



57.Ra6-a5
Another accurate move, Black slips the noose in the variation 57.Kc7-c8 Ke6-d5 58.c6-c7 Kd5xc5 59.Kc8-d7 Rb2-d2+.

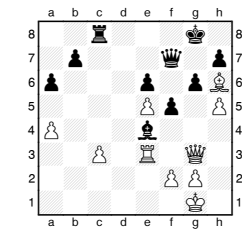
57... Rb2-c2
Waiting as 57...Ke6-d5 58.Kc7-d7 clears the path for the passed pawn.

58.Kc7-b7 Rc2-b2+
59.Kb7-c8 Ke6-e7
60.c6-c7 Ke7-e8
61.Ra5xa2

Topalov has inched his pawn forward and now delivers a beautiful final blow. The natural 61.c5-c6 Ke8-e7 is only a draw as there is no exit route for the White king who blockades his own pawns.

61... Rb2xa2
62.Kc8-b7
Black resigned as following 62...Ra2-b2+ 63.Kb7-c6 a new queen is inevitable.

Alexander Grischuk was the other form player who helped to create an exciting tournament.



Grischuk, A - Gelfand, B
Linares 2010

29... Kg8-h8
Things are pretty grim, but putting the king on a dark square seals Black's fate. However, 29...Rc8-c7 isn't easy to refute 30.Qg3-h4 Qf7-e7 31.Bh6-g5 Qe7-d7 32.Kg1-h2 Qd7-d1 33.f2-f3 Be4-c6 gives chances to hold.

30.Qg3-h4 g6xh5
A fatal opening, but it was too late for the king to return: 30...Kh8-g8 31.h5xg6 h7xg6 32.Re3-h3.

31.Re3-g3 Be4-d5
32.a4-a5
Black has no useful moves, so Grischuk clamps down on the Black queenside. The tempting 32.Bh6-g5 h7-h6 33.Bg5-f6+ Kh8-h7 doesn't improve White's position.

32... f5-f4
If 32...Rc8-e8 33.c3-c4 Bd5-c6 34.Qh4-f6+ Qf7xf6 35.e5xf6 f5-f4 36.Rg3-g5 Black's king is finished off by White's small army.

33.Rg3-g7 Qf7-f5
Giving up the queen was better, but after 33... Qf7xg7 34.Bh6xg7+ Kh8xg7 35.Qh4-g5+ Kg7-h8 36.Qg5xf4 Black's pawns are too weak to put up much resistance. Now mate follows shortly.

34.Qh4-e7 Qf5-e4
35.Qe7-f6
It's hard to argue with a move that forced resignation, but 35.Rg7-g8+ is mate in three.

Michael Adams



Theme for a dream match

Themed chess events are often not that entertaining as the contrived nature doesn't result in attractive games, but the Polgar - Kaidanov match sponsored by Jeff Smith with all games played in different variations of the Sicilian bucked this trend.

Four interesting games were won by White before Polgar clinched the tiebreaker. The lower-rated Kaidanov normally favours more positional opening systems but proved quite at home in sharp positions. Perhaps he will be expanding his opening repertoire.

31...Ba8xd5 32.Rd1xd5 e4-e3 was playable as 33.a7-a8Q e3-e2 is very good for Black.

32.Qa6-d6 **e3xf2+**

After 32...Qe7xa7 33.Qd6-e6+ Kg8-h8 34.Rd5-d8, the exchange of rooks will expose Black's king.

33.Kg1-f1 **Qe7-e3**

The best move was the subtle 33...Qe7-e4 when the power of the bishop and queen down the long diagonal mean that White is struggling to draw after 34.Rd5-g5 f4-f3 35.g2xf3 Qe4xf3 36.Rg5xg7+ Kg8xg7 37.Qd6-e7+ Qf3-f7 38.Qe7-g5+ Kg7-h8 39.Qg5-e5+ Qf7-g7 40.Qe5xg7+ Kh8xg7.

34.Rd5-d3 **Ba8xg2+**

This sacrifice looks good, but once the bishop is taken, White's king wanders to safety on the light squares, 34...Qe3-e4 35.Rd3-f3 Qe4-a4 kept things going.

35.Kf1xg2 **f4-f3+**

36.Kg2-h3 **Qe3-e2**

37.a7-a8Q **f2-f1Q+**

Queens appear everywhere but White keeps the material edge.

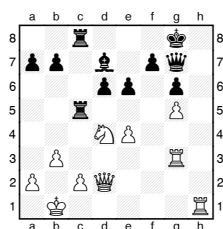
38.Rd1xf1 **Qe2xf1+**

39.Kh3-h4 **Qf1-e1+**

The best continuation 39...Bg7-f6+ 40.Qd6xf6 Qf1-f2+ 41.Kh4-h5 Qf2xh2+ 42.Qf6-h4 Qh2xh4+ 43.Kh5xh4 Rf8xa8 44.Rd3xf3 leaves White with a winning rook and pawn ending. The checks run out after 39...Qf1-f2+ 40.Kh4-h5.

40.Kh4-h5

Black resigned, although 40...Qe1-e2 could have been tried, the calm 41.Rd3-d2 is most efficient. 40...Rf8xa8 is met by 41.Qd6-d5+ picking up the rook with check as it would have been earlier.



Polgar, J - Kaidanov, G

Sicilian Theme Match
Hilton Head, 2010

27.Rg3-h3

The plan of tripling on the 'h' line is so strong Polgar can afford to abandon her knight.

27... **e6-e5**

28.Rh3-h4 **e5xd4**

29.Qd2-h2 **Kg8-f8**

30.Qh2xd6+

Forcing the king back into the box.

30... **Kf8-g8**

31.Qd6xd7 **d4-d3**

Giving his queen some scope as 31...Rc5xc2 32.Qd7-h3 wins immediately.

32.c2-c4

Ignoring the pawn to close down the activity of Black's rooks.

32... **Qg7-c3**

33.Rh4-h2 **b7-b5**

Black had to harass White's queen as 33...Rc5-c7 34.Qd7-h3 Kg8-f8 allows his king to escape. The materialistic 34.Qd7-d5 Rc7-c5 35.Qd5xb7 is best. Now Polgar finishes the game with three brutal moves.

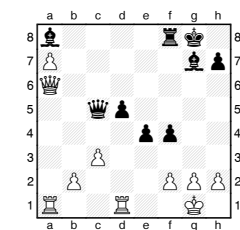
34.e4-e5 **Qc3xe5**

35.Rh2-h7 **Rc5-c7**

35...Rc8-f8 36.Qd7-e7 is similar.

36.Qd7-d6

This neat queen deflection caused Black to resign as the queen can't be captured due to mate and 36...Qe5-c3 37.Qd6-f6 closes the mating net.



Kaidanov, G - Polgar, J

Sicilian Theme Match
Hilton Head, 2010

30.Ra1-a5

Bringing the rook into the action as 30.Qa6-e6+ Kg8-h8 doesn't trouble Black.

30... **Qc5-e7**

31.Ra5xd5

Very tempting, but 31.Ra5-b5 e4-e3 32.Rb5-b8 might have been stronger.

31... **e4-e3**

The bishop is doing an excellent job preventing White's pawn from promoting, but here

Michael Adams



Europe heading for a hot 100

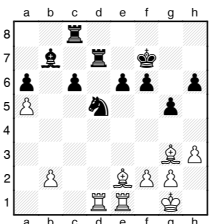
Although it seems reasonable to think that rating inflation is occurring, things are not that simple as the numbers at the top are still not much above 2800, but the group of players bunched below is sharply increasing. I was aware of this phenomenon, but was still amazed to see that in the European Individual Championships, 95 participants were rated 2600 or above.

20.Ne2-c3 Qd5-e6 21.0-0-0 looks even better.

16... **Nc5xe4**
The only way to extricate the queen but there isn't enough compensation for the piece.

17.f3xe4 **Qf4xe4**
18.Bf1-g2 **Qe4xc2**
19.Ra1-c1 **Qc2-g6**
20.Rc1xc7

and White converted after a few further adventures.

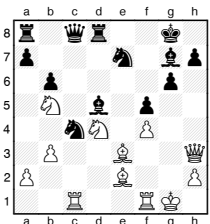


Halkias, S - Fressinet, L
Rijeka 2010

35... **c6-c5**
Missing White's threat after 35...f6-f5 there is reasonable compensation for the pawn.

36.Be2-h5+ **Kf7-e7**
37.Re1xe6+ **Ke7xe6**
38.Rd1-e1+ **Ke6-f5**
38...Nd5-e3 39.Re1xe3+
Ke6-d5 40.Re3-d3+
Kd5-e6 41.Bh5-g4+
f6-f5 42.Bg4xf5+ Ke6xf5
43.Rd3xd7 might have been a little better.

39.Bg3-h2
A very unpleasant quiet move, the threat of g2-g4 mate can't be easily met.
39... **g5-g4**
40.Bh5xg4+ **Kf5-g6**
41.Bg4xd7
and White went on to win the ending.



Krasenkov, M - Jobava, B
Rijeka 2010

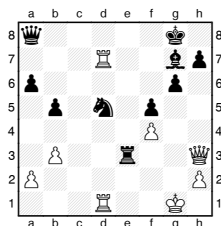
Jobava looks in trouble as he is unable to save his pinned knight, but he stirs up considerable confusion which proves too much for his opponent.

24... **a7-a6**
25.Be2xc4 **Qc8-b7**
26.Nb5-c7

After the other knight leap 26.Nd4-e6 a6xb5 27.Ne6xd8 Ra8xd8 28.Bc4xb5 it isn't easy to exploit White's draughty king.

26... **Bd5xc4**
27.Rc1xc4 **b6-b5**
28.Rc4-c1 **Rd8xd4**
29.Nc7xa8 **Qb7xa8**
30.Rc1-c7

30.Rf1-d1 aiming for exchanges was better.
30... **Rd4-e4**
31.Rf1-d1 **Ne7-d5**
32.Rc7-d7 **Re4xe3**

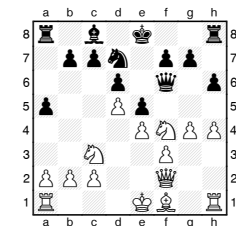


33.Qh3-g2
This natural move allows a complete turnaround, 33.Qh3-h4 Qa8-c6 34.Rd7xd5 Re3-e2 leaves all to play for.

33... **Bg7-d4**
A lethal blow, all the tactics work for Black.
34.Rd1xd4
34.Kg1-f1 Re3-e4 or 34.Qg2xd5+ Qa8xd5 35.Rd7xd5 Re3-e1+ are also losing.

34... **Re3-e1+**
35.Qg2-f1 **Nd5-e3**

This vicious move forced Krasenkov to resign due to 36.Qf1xe1 Qa8-g2 mate, or 36.Rd7-d8+ Kg8-g7 37.Rd4-d7+ Kg7-h6 38.Rd8xa8 Re1xf1 mate. Instead capturing the queen 35...Re1xf1+ 36.Kg1xf1 Nd5-e3+ 37.Kf1-e2 allows White to fight on.



Vallejo Pons, F - Ruck, R
Rijeka 2010

14... **Qf6xf4**
I thought 14...e5xf4 freeing the e5 square for Black's knight might be positionally well motivated.

15.g4-g5
After Vallejo played this move he got up looking rather pleased with himself and it became clear that Black's last move also had tactical drawbacks.

15... **Nd7-c5**
Desperate measures are required as 15...h6xg5 16.Nc3-e2 Qf4-f6 17.h4xg5 wins the queen or the rook.

16.Nc3-e2
In fact the intermediate check 16.Bf1-b5+ Ke8-e7 17.Nc3-e2 Nc5xe4 18.f3xe4 Qf4xe4 19.Rh1-f1 Qe4xd5

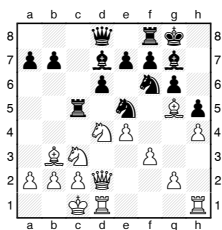
Michael Adams



Multi-talented Mestel makes his move

Jonathan Mestel has had a very successful chess career despite holding down a day job as an Associate Professor of applied mathematics at Imperial College. Other disciplines at which he excels include contract bridge and chess problem solving, in which he also holds a Grandmaster title and added to his tally of British championships in 2009-10.

I always liked this combative game in his favourite Sicilian Dragon variation, where Mestel's unwieldy pawn mass touches down on the kingside backed up by a dominant dark-squared bishop.



Westerinen, H - Mestel, A
Esjberg 1979

- 14.g2-g4** **h5xg4**
- 15.f3-f4** **Ne5-c4**
- 16.Qd2-e2** **b7-b5**
- 17.e4-e5**

Later 17.f4-f5 was found to be a more effective approach here, playing for a kingside attack.

- 17...** **d6xe5**
- 18.Nd4xb5**

White hopes that the destabilised knight on

c4 will have to retreat, allowing him to capture on e5, but Mestel finds a powerful response interrupting White's best laid plans.

- 18...** **Nc4xb2**
- 19.Kc1xb2** **Qd8-a5**

The alternative 19...e5xf4 opening the long diagonal immediately also wasn't bad, but this has the advantage of harassing the chain of knights and unpinning Black's queen.

20.Rd1xd7

Westerinen doesn't fancy 20.a2-a4 Bd7xb5 21.Nc3xb5 e5xf4 so he tries to fight fire with fire.

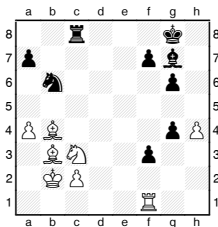
- 20...** **Nf6xd7**
- 21.Bg5xe7** **Rc5xc3**

21...e5xf4 22.Be7xc5 Nd7xc5 was another way to do it, the mass of kingside pawns and the awkward pin exerted by the Dragon bishop give Black excellent play in all cases.

- 22.Nb5xc3** **e5xf4**
- 23.Qe2-c4** **Nd7-b6**
- 24.Qc4-b4** **Qa5xb4**
- 25.Be7xb4**

The pressure has been partially resolved by the queen swap, but the unpleasant pin remains and Black's foot soldiers gain in strength as fewer pieces remain.

- 25...** **Rf8-c8**
- 26.Rh1-f1** **f4-f3**
- 27.a2-a4**



- 27...** **Rc8-c4**

A cute tactic after which the knight runs riot. The simple 27...Nb6-d7 was also good as the natural response 28.Bb3-d5 loses material to 28...a7-a5 29.Bb4xa5 Rc8-c5 winning

one of White's bishops.

- 28.Bb3xc4** **Nb6xc4+**
- 29.Kb2-c1**

If 29.Kb2-a2 Nc4-d2 30.Rf1-d1 f3-f2 Black regains the rook and squares on the 'b' file allow a knight fork.

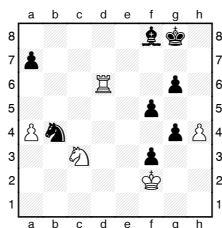
- 29...** **Bg7-h6+**
- 30.Kc1-d1** **Nc4-e3+**
- 31.Kd1-e1** **Ne3xc2+**

Taking the rook doesn't work as 31...Ne3xf1 32.Ke1xf1 g4-g3 33.Bb4-c5 stops the pawns, so the knight continues on its merry way collecting the loose bishop en route.

- 32.Ke1-f2** **Nc2xb4**
- 33.Rf1-d1** **f7-f5**

Although White has halted the avalanche for now, the unusual pawn pyramid is very secure as only the weak point of the chain on g6 can be attacked, and it is a matter of time before black's forces offer decisive support.

- 34.Rd1-d6** **Bh6-f8**



35.Rd6-d8

White should have tried 35.Rd6xg6+ Kg8-f7 36.Rg6-g5 Bf8-c5+ 37.Kf2-f1 Kf7-f6 38.Rg5-g8 Kf6-e5 39.h4-h5 Ke5-f4 40.h5-h6 g4-g3 41.h6-h7 Bc5-d4 which just falls short, now things are simple.

- 35...** **Kg8-f7**
- 36.Kf2-g3** **Bf8-c5**
- 37.Nc3-d1** **Kf7-e6**
- 38.Rd8-d2** **Nb4-d5**

The knight regroups to the kingside to bring proceedings to a close.

- 39.a4-a5** **Nd5-f6**
- 40.Rd2-c2** **Nf6-h5+**
- 41.Kg3-h2** **g4-g3+**
- 0-1**