

# CHESS

October 6th 2007

Michael Adams



## Triumphant return awaits victorious Vishy

Viswanathan Anand convincingly won the World Championship tournament in Mexico City, scoring four wins in his undefeated tally. The phlegmatic Indian is a popular figure on the international scene, but his fame is huge at home and doubtless there will be celebrations for him to rival those for the return of India's victorious 20/20 World Cup cricketers.

Anand only looked in difficulty once, in his Round-13 game versus Grischuk, but after he had secured a share of the point in this encounter the title was effectively his. This victory will also extend Vishy's lead at the head of the rating list and is likely to take him above the 2800 mark for the first time.

Gelfand and Kramnik were the only other players to end with a positive score, but at the respectable distance of one point behind. Kramnik has scored very well on the White side of the Catalan recently and here we see another victory in that system in his finishing burst of 2/3.

Kramnik, V - Leko, P  
Mexico City 2007

Leko spied an opportunity to free his position but Big Vlad has calculated further.

- 21... e6-e5
- 22.Nf3xe5 Nd7xe5
- 23.d4xe5 Be7-g5
- 24.Qf4-f3 Bg5xc1
- 25.Ra1xc1 Re8xe5

If 25...b5-b4, 26.Qf3-h5 gives massive compensation for the material, as the powerful horse on c5 dominates a lot of the board, but after the capture on e5, Black's position becomes unstable.

- 26.Qf3-c3 f7-f6

It was much better to return the exchange 26...Re5-e7 27.Nc5xb7 Qc8xb7 28.e4-e5 Qb7-a7 29.Bg2xa8 Qa7xa8 with a small edge for White. Now the Black kingside resembles Swiss cheese.

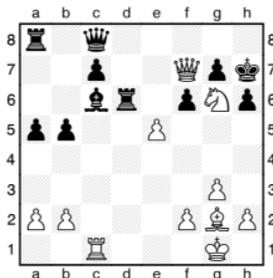
- 27.Qc3-b3+ Kg8-h8
- 28.Qb3-f7

After the queen infiltration, Black has big problems.

- 28... Bb7-c6

If 28...Ra8-b8, 29.Nc5-d7 is a nasty fork.

- 29.Nc5-d3 Re5-e6
- 30.Nd3-f4 Re6-d6
- 31.Nf4-g6+ Kh8-h7
- 32.e4-e5

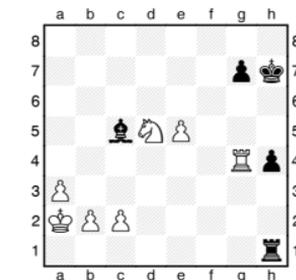


The decisive breakthrough: as the Catalan bishop comes into play the Black position collapses.

- 32... f6xe5

Neither 32...Bc6-e8 33.Ng6-f8+ Kh7-h8 34.Qf7-e7 nor 32...Rd6-d7 33.Ng6-e7 Rd7xe7 34.Qf7xe7 hold together.

- 33.Bg2xc6 Rd6-f6
- There is no escaping the pin after 33...Rd6xg6 34.Bc6-e4 Ra8-a6 35.Rc1xc7 Qc8-g8 36.Qf7-d7.
- 34.Qf7-d5 Qc8-f5
- A desperate last throw but White has won too much material and Kramnik ties up efficiently.
- 35.Bc6xa8 Qf5xf2+
- 36.Kg1-h1 Qf2xb2
- 37.Qd5-c5 Kh7xg6
- 38.Ba8-e4+ Kg6-h5
- 39.Rc1-b1 1-0



Anand, V - Morozevich, A  
Mexico City 2007

Here we see the new champion wrapping up a winning ending in style.

- 50.e5-e6 Kh7-h6
- 51.Rg4-c4 h4-h3

It looks as though the 'h' pawn is becoming dangerous but Vishy has it all under control.

- 52.Rc4xc5 h3-h2
- 53.Nd5-e3 Rh1-a1+

The rook must be sacrificed to force promotion as 53...Rh1-e1 54.Ne3-g4+ Kh6-g6 55.Ng4xh2 captures the pawn.

- 54.Ka2xa1 h2-h1Q+
- 55.Ka1-a2 Qh1-e4

The queen can't stop the White pawn on its own, eg 55...Kh6-g6 56.Ne3-d5 Qh1-e4 57.b2-b3 Qe4-d4 58.Rc5-c8 Qd4xd5 59.e6-e7.

- 56.Rc5-e5

This neat finesse caused Black to resign as 56...Qe4xe5 57.Ne3-g4+ or 56...Qe4-c6 57.e6-e7 Qc6-e8 58.Ne3-f5+ Kh6-g6 59.Nf5-d6 are decisive.



# CHESS

October 13th 2007

Michael Adams



## Manx Masters to continue under new patronage

It is always a hazardous time for a chess tournament when a long-term sponsor parts company with the event. So when Monarch Assurance, which has generously supported the Isle of Man Congress over the past 16 years, bowed out with this year's event, it was a relief to hear that the tradition will continue under the able stewardship of tournament director Jean-Pierre Depin. A resourceful fellow, he manages to simultaneously run both the tournament and the Ocean Castle Hotel.

I was spoilt for choice for games to select for this week's column, but I have narrowed it down to four.



**Mueller, M - Malakhatk, V**  
Monarch Assurance  
Isle Of Man 2007

26.Bd3xc4

White tries to relieve the pressure through exchanges as 26.Be1-f2 g4-g3 wins

26... d5xc4  
27.Qd4-c5 Qc7xc5+

28.b4xc5  
29.Be1-f2

Exploiting the monster long light-square diagonal, White tries to refuse the gift, keeping the rook away from his king, but in the end he is forced to acquiesce.

30.a4xb5

Taking immediately is not an option: 30.Bf2xe3 Rd2xg2+ 31.Kg1-h1 Rg2-g3+.

30... 31.g2-g3  
32.h2xg3  
33.Ra1-e1

Bg5-e3+  
Rd8-d2

a6xb5  
h4xg3  
f5-f4

If 33.g3xf4 g4-g3 34.Bf2xe3 Rd2-g2+ 35.Kg1-h1 Rg2-h2+ 36.Kh1-g1 Rh2-h1 mate is a familiar pattern.

33... 34.Bf2xc5  
35.Kg1-h1  
36.Kh1-h2  
37.Kh2-h1

Be3xc5  
Rd2-g2+  
Rg2xg3+  
Rg3-g2+  
g4-g3

This quiet move seals the game. White resigned as 38.Rf1xf4 Rg2-h2+ 39.Kh1-g1 Rh2-h1 mate is a fitting finish.



**Horner, J - Pavlovic, M**  
Monarch Assurance  
Isle Of Man 2007

36.Bd3-c4

Be6-f7

Black would prefer to capture the bishop but then 36... Be6xc4 37.Rg1xg5 Bc4-f7 38.Bh2xe5 breaks through. Now Jeff Horner unleashes another combination.

37.Bc4xf7  
38.Rg1xg5  
39.Rc6xg6+  
40.Bh2xe5+  
41.Qh5-f3+

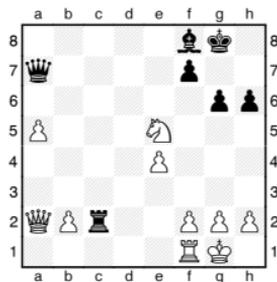
Qe7xf7  
f6xg5  
Qf7xg6  
Kg7-f7

Black was relying on

41.Qh5xg6+ Kf7xg6  
42.Be5xb8 d4-d3 when he would create a new queen but the intermediate check keeps everything under control.

41... 42.Be5xb8  
43.Bb8-e5  
1-0

Kf7-g8  
Qg6-b6



**Prosviriakov, V - Georgiev, V**  
Monarch Assurance  
Isle of Man 2007

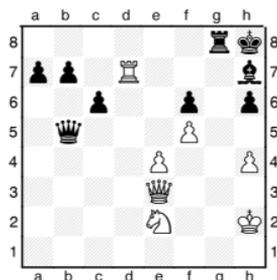
After 32.h2-h3 the extra pawns should be converted in due course, but White thought there was no reason not to capture another one.

32.Ne5xg6

Qa7xf2+

However, Black's reply came as a very cold shower. Mate follows after 33.Rf1xf2 Rc2-c1+ 34.Rf2-f1 Bf8-c5+ 35.Kg1-h1 Rc1xf1.

0-1



**Krasenkow, M - Golod, V**  
Monarch Assurance  
Isle of Man 2007

35.Rd7-e7

White should continue to drum up compensation for the pawns with 35.Ne2-g3. Instead, he fatally misplaces his rook

35...

Qb5-b4

and had to resign as 36.Re7-f7 Qb4-e1 is game over.

0-1

# CHESS

October 20th 2007

Michael Adams



## I believed in Magic and was not disappointed

I had high hopes that my Linux Magic team might be in with a good chance at the European Team Cup in Turkey. But when I saw the line-ups of the teams seeded ahead of us, including Baden Baden with Anand, Svidler and Carlsen; the Ural Sverdlovskaya team, which had the 16th-ranked player in the world, Grischuk, on board three; Tomsk, which had the 48th-ranked Tkachiev on board six and Sarajevo, which had slotted Nigel Short on to board five, I had second thoughts.

A tough pairing in the second round, which resulted in a 3-3 tie, also didn't seem to bode that well but we then put together an impressive spurt of five victories to clinch the title. Ivan Cheparinov was in good form. Here is his best game from the event.



**Bologan, V - Cheparinov, I**  
Kemer 2007

9... g7-g5

A strong novelty that Ivan and Veselin Topalov had prepared together, hoping to use it against me. I was quite happy

to see someone else on the receiving end.

10.f4xg5  
11.Be3xg5  
12.Be2-f3  
13.Nd4-c6

h6xg5  
b7-b5  
Nd7-e5

Viktor fights back with some tactics of his own. Both kings are stuck in the centre but the White monarch is more exposed.

13...  
14.e4-e5  
15.Bg5xf6

Ne5xc6  
Qd8-b6  
Rh8-h3

There is no way to get the White king to the sanctuary of the queenside.

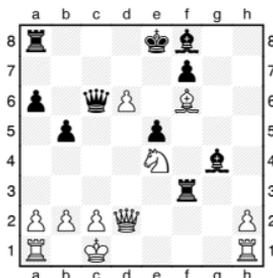
16.e5xd6  
17.Bf3-e2  
18.Qd1-c1

Qb6-e3+  
Nc6-e5  
Ne5-f3+

More ambitious than 18...  
Ne5xg4 19.Qc1xe3 Ng4xe3

19.Ke1-d1  
20.Nc3-e4  
21.Be2xf3  
22.Qc1-d2  
23.Kd1-c1

Qe3-b6  
e6-e5  
Rh3xf3  
Bc8xg4  
Qb6-c6



24.Rh1-d1

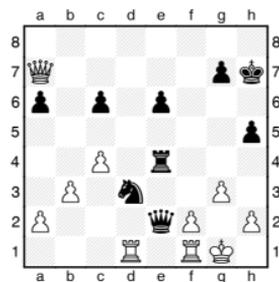
Bologan cracks. After this oversight Black simply wins material. Better was 24.Rh1-e1 Bg4-f5 25.Ne4-g5 Bf8-h6 26.h2-h4 Ke8-d7 when Black has a huge initiative and the rook on a1 remains a bystander, but it was the only way to fight on.

24...  
25.Ne4-c5  
26.d6-d7+  
27.Qd2-a5+  
28.Nc5-b7+  
0-1

Rf3-f4  
Rf4xf6  
Ke8-d8  
Qc6-b6  
Kd8-c7

A certain amount of good fortune is necessary to triumph in these events and this tricky

swindle by Rublevsky seemed to galvanise both him and the team. He won his following two games by more conventional methods.



**Volkov, S - Rublevsky, S**  
Kemer 2007

29.f2-f3

The sensible practical choice 29.Rd1xd3 Qe2xd3 30.Qa7-f7 would have given good chances to convert the extra pawn. It has to be said that White's move was a bit unlucky, allowing a spectacular turnaround.

29... Re4-h4

This amazing tactical blow turns the game on its head.

30.g3xh4

Something Volkov had not yet appreciated as he accompanied this move with a draw offer, but in fact White is quite lost.

30... Nd3-f4  
31.Qa7-f2

White was probably relying on 31.Rf1-f2 but a series of checks decide the game. 31...Qe2xd1+ 32.Rf2-f1 Qd1-c2 33.Rf1-f2 Qc2-g6+ 34.Kg1-h1 Qg6-b1+.

31... Nf4-h3+  
32.Kg1-g2 Nh3xf2  
33.Rd1-e1 Qe2-d2

The point. Rublevsky keeps the extra piece and wraps up the game smoothly.

34.Kg2-g3 Nf2-d3  
35.Re1xe6 Qd2xa2  
36.c4-c5 a6-a5  
37.Re6-e3 Qa2xb3  
38.f3-f4 Qb3-c4  
39.Rf1-f3 Nd3xc5  
40.Kg3-h3 Nc5-e4  
0-1

# CHESS

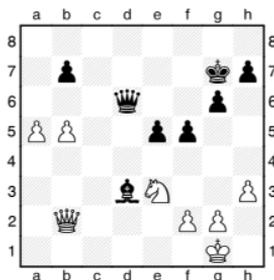
October 27th 2007

Michael Adams



## Brilliant knight sacrifice stacks up the points

In the final of the Spanish Team Championship the usual suspects pulled in the points for my Magic Linux Team. This deft finish by Sergei Rublevsky was crucial to us winning our first match.



Rublevsky, S - Bacrot, E  
Calvia 2007

35... Qd6-c5

Etienne should have given his king a bit more breathing space with 35...h7-h5. Now Rublevsky makes a clever breakthrough.

36.a5-a6 b7xa6  
37.b5-b6 Bd3-b5

It looks as though the pawn is under control but Sergei uncorks a brilliant knight sacrifice.

38.Ne3-c4 Qc5xc4

If 38...Bb5xc4 39.b6-b7 promotes. 38...Kg7-h6 39.Qb2xe5 could transpose to the game.

39.Qb2xe5+ Kg7-h6  
40.b6-b7

The pawn looks unstoppable but the tactics continue.

40... Qc4-f1+

41.Kg1-h2

The double attack seems to save the day but now the vulnerable position of the Black king is exploited.

42.Qe5-e3+

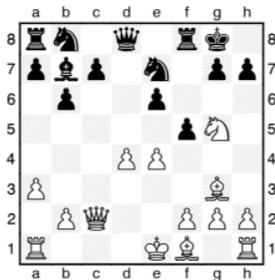
Kh6-h5

The Black king edges forward reluctantly, but both 42... Kh6-g7 43.Qe3-c3+ and 42... g6-g5 43.Qe3-e6+ win the Black bishop and the game.

43.f2-f3

Black resigned as 43...Bc6xb7 44.g2-g4+ f5xg4 45.f3xg4+ Kh5-h4 46.Qe3-h6 is mate.

Ivan Cheparinov was even more efficient, winning both his games. As each of the matches finished 3.5-2.5, this was a decisive contribution. The additional ELO points will enable him to reach another landmark in his career as he will go above 2,700 for the first time. Working as Topalov's second has fringe benefits. In fact, he could have won his first game even faster, as we see below.



Cheparinov, I - Tiviakov, S  
Calvia 2007

Tiviakov has played the opening highly ambitiously and is already in a lot of trouble.

13... Ne7-c6

The dismal 13...Bb7xe4 14.Ng5xe4 f5xe4 15.Qc2xe4 Qd8-d5 16.Bf1-d3 might have been Black's best hope.

14.Ng5xe6 Nc6xd4  
15.Qc2xc7

Ivan misses the opportunity to conclude the game with a piece of startling castling.

The unexpected 15.0-0-0 destroys the teetering Black edifice e.g. 15...Nd4xc2

Bb5-c6

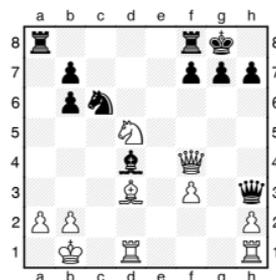
16.Ne6xd8 Bb7xe4 17.Bf1-c4+

15...

Qd8xc7

16.Ne6xc7

and White went on to win, albeit rather more slowly. The next day he was no less ruthless, taking full advantage of some uninspired play by his opponent.



Khamrakulov, I -  
Cheparinov, I  
Calvia 2007

20.Bd3-f5

White had to pluck up his courage and try 20.Bd3-f1 Qh3-e6 21.Rd1xd4 Nc6xd4 22.Qf4xd4 Qe6-e1+ 23.Kb1-c2 Rf8-c8+ 24.Kc2-b3 when his king is safer than it looks and he has a modest material advantage. In any case it was a better try than his choice, which he is forced to retract next go.

20... 21.Bf5-c2

Qh3-g2  
Ra8xa2

The lost tempi have set up this deadly tactic.

22.Nd5-e7+

22.Kb1xa2 Qg2xc2 is curtains.

22... 23.Qf4-e4

Kg8-h8

White fights on but Cheparinov steadily removes his pieces from the board.

23... 24.Kb1-c1  
25.Qe4xc2  
26.Kc1-b1

Ra2xb2+  
Rb2xc2+  
Qg2-g5+  
Qg5xe7

Black has a huge material edge as well as the wide-open king to target.

27.Qc2-b3  
28.Rh1-e1  
0-1

Rf8-a8  
Qe7-c5

# CHESS

November 3rd 2007

Michael Adams

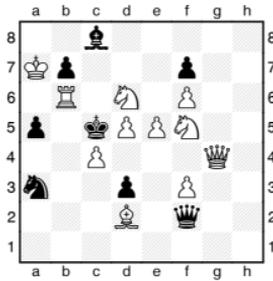


## The problem-solving Doc makes it three in a row

Many years ago, I was a participant in the British Problem Solving Championships. I managed to negotiate the first round, but I remember that my submission for the second round was returned to me, rather like most of my homework at the time, covered in red ink. This signalled the end of my illustrious solving career but it did have the benefit of instilling in me a great deal of respect for those who can perform this discipline with a bit more skill.

Beating Russia and Germany, Dr John Nunn and his team-mates David Friedgood and Jonathan Mestel have scored gold in the World Chess Problem Solving Championships held in Rhodes last month. This is the third title in a row for the team, sponsored by Winton Capital Management, and the second individual win for the Doc.

Competitors in this event faced a battery of problems that included mates in two, three or more moves and helpmates, selfmates and endgame studies against the clock. John Nunn scored an astonishing 89/90 in this competition, securing the title five and a half points ahead of his nearest rival. Before you get out your red pens, you should know that the following analyses are mainly John Nunn's own comments. I thank him for giving me the opportunity to bring you the insights of the World Champion.



### Gilbert Dobbs – 'La Stratégie' 1907

White to play and mate in two

Black to move would be in zugzwang. For example, a knight move is met by 2.Rb6-b5 mate, a bishop move is met by 2.Nd6xb7 mate and so on. So it looks as if White's first move will be a waiting move. But, in fact, there is no good way to pass and the only way to mate in two is to disrupt the position with

1.Nf5-d4

Threatening 2.Nd4-b3 mate.

The only moves that prevent this allow White to give mate in other ways:

1...

Qf2xd4

2.Qg4xc8 mate

Na3xc4

1...

2.Rb6-b5 mate

a5-a4

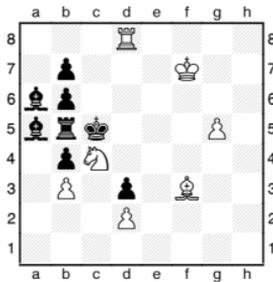
1...

2.Bd2-b4 mate

Na3-b5+

1...

2.Rb6xb5 mate



### Horst Böttger – 'Die Welt' 1994

White to play and mate in six

Black is in stalemate, so White's first move must allow the black king to move. Then, to prevent Black's pieces coming out, White must immediately force the king back to c5. The question is how White can make progress while keeping Black bottled up. Nunn realised that the g5-pawn is the key feature of the problem. Why is it on the board? The answer

must be that White starts with 1.Rd8-h8 and 2.Rh8-h4+, the g5-pawn being present to prevent the alternative 1.Rd8-g8 and 2.Rg8-g4+ (problems must have a unique solution). This logic allowed Nunn to ignore possibilities such as 1.Bf3-d5 and 1.Nc4-d6, which don't work and on which he could have wasted a lot of time

1.Rd8-h8

Kc5-d4

2.Rh8-h4+

Kd4-c5

With two moves determined, it is now much easier, although some imagination is still necessary to see the conclusion.

3.Rh4-h6

Kc5-d4

4.Rh6-d6+

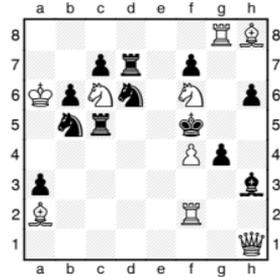
Kd4-c5

The transfer of the rook from d8 to d6 means that the bishop is no longer required to defend c6, and so White can sacrifice it.

5.Bf3-e2

d3xe2

6.d2-d4 mate



### Tony Lewis – 'Chess 1952'

White to play and mate in two

All Black's available moves are already provided with a White mate. For example, if the b5-knight moves, then 2.Nc6-d4 mate, or if the d6-knight moves, then 2.Qh1-e4 mate, if 1...Rd7-d8 2.Nc6-e7 mate, or 1...h6-h5 2.Rg8-g5 mate. Thus if White had a pure waiting move, then the problem would be solved. However, there is no pure waiting move. For example, 1.Ba2-b3 would give Black the extra possibility of 1...a3-a2. The solution is

1.Qh1-d1

Black is again in zugzwang, but some of the mates are different. If the d6-knight moves, then instead of 2.Qh1-e4 mate we have 2.Qd1xd7 mate. Likewise, 1...g4-g3 is met by 2. Qd1-h5 mate (rather than 2.Qh1xh3 mate) and 1...Bh3-g2 by 2.Qd1xg4 mate (rather than 2.Qh1-h5 mate).

# CHESS

November 10th 2007

Michael Adams



## No holiday for Cheparinov in a Cretan tactical slugfest

The European Championship has followed in the footsteps of the Euro Team Cup by siting their competition in a Mediterranean resort just before it enters winter hibernation. The Creta Maris hotel near Heraklion has coped admirably with 500 chess players landing on it this late in the season, and players enjoyed the opportunity to take a dip in the sea before their games.

A number of top 10 players showed a commitment to their countries despite schedule clashes with other leading events. Ivanchuk hot-footed it from his match in the Ukraine vs Leko, arriving for round three. He started with 1.5/2 but then fell victim to a 27-move thrashing by Bacrot with the Black pieces – perhaps not the welcome he had in mind. Topalov took the reverse route, scoring a useful three points in the opening four games before heading off to another engagement. His replacement on board one, Ivan Cheparinov, was unlucky to come off worse in this tactical slugfest.

**Cheparinov, I - Navara, D  
Crete 2007**

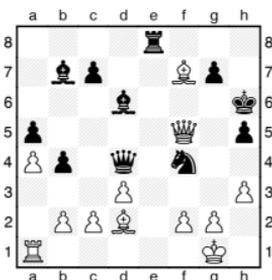
We join the game as a quiet Anti-Marshall has caught fire with pieces under attack all over the board. Things quickly get even more complicated.

**24.Nf5-h6+**  
This looks like it sets up a mating net but in fact the simple **24.Nf5xd4 h5xg4 25.h3xg4 Nf4xg2 26.Be1-d2** was stronger when Black has good compensation for the pawn.

**24... Kg8-h7**  
**25.Qg4-f5+**  
A piece is given up to draw the Black king into the danger zone.

**25... Kh7xh6**  
**26.Be1-d2 Bf8-d6**  
**26...g7-g5 27.h3-h4** looks very dangerous

**27.Ba2xf7**  
White threatens **Qf5-g6** mate and **Qf5xh5** mate and the Black rook is also hanging. It is hard to imagine how any counter-attack can work due to the awkward pin on the knight, but Navara produces a stunning riposte.



**27... Qd4xf2+**  
**28.Kg1xf2 Re8-e2+**  
**29.Kf2-g1 Re2xg2+**  
**30.Kg1-f1 Rg2xd2**

The key to the combination. Removing the dark-squared bishop takes the sting out of the White attack and frees up Black's remaining army to target Cheparinov's denuded monarch.

**31.Bf7-g8**  
White could have salvaged half a point with **31.h3-h4** preventing the Black king walk. Perpetual check would follow after **31... Bb7-g2+ 32.Kf1-e1 Rd2-e2+ 33.Ke1-d1 Bg2-f3 34.Qf5-g5+ Kh6-h7 35.Qg5-f5+ Kh7-h8 36.Qf5-c8+**.

**31... Bb7-g2+**  
**32.Kf1-e1 Rd2-e2+**  
**33.Ke1-d1 Bg2-f3**  
**34.Qf5-h7+ Kh6-g5**  
**35.Ra1-a2**

If **35.Qh7xg7+ Kg5-h4 36.Qg7-f6+ Kh4xh3**, the Black king runs to safety or joins in the assault. Relatively best was **36.Kd1-c1** but **36...Re2-e1+ 37.Kc1-d2 Re1xa1** leaves Black ahead on material.

**35... Re2-h2+**  
**36.Kd1-e1**  
Sidling towards the queenside is no better: **36.Kd1-c1 Nf4xd3+ 37.c2xd3 Rh2-h1+ 38.Kc1-c2 Bf3-d1+ 39.Kc2-d2 Bd6-f4mate**  
**36... Nf4xd3+**  
White resigned as **37.Qh7xd3 Bd6-g3+ 38.Ke1-f1 Rh2-h1** mate would be a fitting finish.



**Rodshstein, M -  
Landenbergue, C  
Crete 2007**

Black's position looks a little shaky, but it is astonishing just how deadly the following exchange sacrifice is.

**13.Rd1xd6 Bc7xd6**

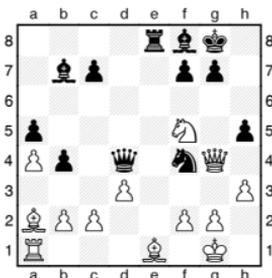
**14.Bf4xd6**  
The Black king is unable to castle into safety and, before he can coordinate his pieces, White's forces flood through the centre to bring about a swift conclusion.

**14... Nd7-f8**  
**15.Rh1-d1 Nf8-e6**  
**16.Nf3-e5 Qd8-c8**  
**17.Nc3-d5**

The two horses make a pretty picture.

**17... Bc6-b5**  
It looks natural to play **17... Bc6xd5** but **18.Qc2-a4+ Bd5-c6 19.Ne5xc6** is a very unpleasant reply.

**18.Qc2-b3 Qc8-a6**  
After **18...Bb5-e2** the direct **19.Nd5-c7+ Qc8xc7 20.Bd6xc7 Be2xd1 21.Qb3-b5+** wins easily. Even nastier is the quiet **19.Bg2-h3**, when the crossfire will tear the Black position apart. The move played in the game has the advantage of putting Black out of his misery.  
**19.Nd5-c7+ 1-0**



**Michael Adams**



## England can only match expectations

**The English men's team hit its seeded position spot on at the European Team Championship in Crete, finishing in 16th place. The result might have been a bit better but for a rather unfriendly last-round pairing with Ukraine, but it seems a far cry from our victory in Croatia 10 years ago.**

I was hoping to bring you some of my sparkling wins for this column, but although I made a decent score, my games were far from thrilling. Fortunately, my team-mates' efforts were more attractive.

We start with probably the best English game from the event, a masterful victory by Mark Hebden.



**Hebden, M - Illescas Cordoba, M  
Crete 2007**

Mark surreptitiously slides his pieces towards the Black king and suddenly there is no defence against the massed attackers.

**17.Nd2-e4 Bc8-d7  
18.Qd1-d2 Nf8-g6**

This knight move loses time, better was the immediate 18...Bd7-e8.

**19.Ne4-g3  
20.Re1-e4  
21.Rc1-e1  
22.b2-b4**

Not allowing Black to disrupt the White build-up after: 22.Re4-g4 Na5-b3 23.Qd2-d1 Nb3-c5.

**22... Na5-c6  
23.h2-h4 a7-a5  
24.h4-h5**

Kicking the knight back.

**24... Ng6-f8  
25.Re4-g4 Kg8-h8  
26.Re1-e4 f7-f5**

Black is forced to make this concession and open the kingside as 26...a5xb4 is met by a fatal sacrifice 27.Rg4xg7 Kh8xg7 28.Re4-g4+ Nf8-g6 29.h5xg6 f7xg6 30.Ng3-h5+ Kg7-h7 31.Nh5-f6+ Kh7-g7 32.Rg4-h4 h6-h5 33.Rh4xh5 and the White pieces flood in decisively.

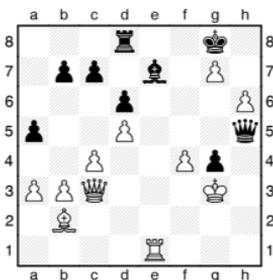
**27.e5xf6 Qe7xf6  
28.b4-b5 Nc6-b8**

A better try was 28...Nc6-e7 29.Re4-f4 Ne7-f5. Lining up the Black army across the back rank doesn't inspire confidence.

**29.Qd2-e2 Nb8-d7  
30.Re4-f4 Qf6-e7  
31.Ng3-f5 Qe7xa3  
32.Nf5xg7**

Black resigned a possible finish was 32...Qa3-d6 33.Rf4xd4 Qd6-c7 34.Qe2-d2

Stuart Conquest pulled off a spectacular swindle to complete an undefeated performance.



**Areshchenko, A - Conquest, S  
Crete 2007**

**38.Kg3-g2**

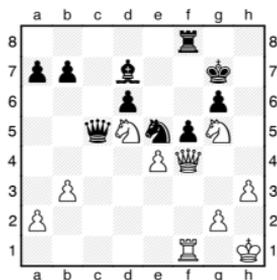
White could safely take the bishop as the checks quickly run out after 38.Re1xe7 Qh5-h3+ 39.Kg3-f2 Qh3-h2+ 40.Kf2-e3. Instead he tries to play it ultra-safe, with the opposite effect.

**38... Be7-f6  
39.Qc3xf6**

39.Qc3-e3 Bf6xb2 40.Qe3-e6+ Kg8-h7 41.Re1-h1 gives good compensation for the piece but Areshchenko decides to settle for the draw.

**39... Qh5-h3+  
40.Kg2-g1 Qh3-g3+  
41.Kg1-f1 Qg3-f3+  
42.Kf1-g1 ½-½**

Gawain Jones did a good job for the team on board two; it is not easy to make your debut for the team so high up the order. Here we see the first of two crushing wins in the Grand Prix attack, drumming up some good publicity for his forthcoming book on that subject.



**Jones, G - Agopov, M  
Crete 2007**

**30... Ne5-d3**

Instead of this incautious leap, 30...Qc5-c8 would have hung on.

**31.Qf4-h4 Rf8-h8  
32.Ng5-e6+**

Gawain quickly takes advantage, infiltrating with his queen.

**32... Bd7xe6  
33.Qh4-f6+ Kg7-h7  
34.Qf6-e7+ Kh7-h6  
35.Qe7xe6 f5-f4**

If 35...Nd3-f2+ 36.Kh1-h2 Nf2xe4 37.Nd5-f4 creates a very nasty threat.

**36.Qe6-f6 Qc5-c8**

36...Rh8-e8 37.Nd5xf4 Nd3-e5 38.Qf6-h4+ Kh6-g7 39.Qh4-g5 allows Black no respite.

**37.Nd5-e7 Qc8-e8  
38.Ne7-f5+** and mate follows next go.

**1-0**

# CHESS

November 24th 2007

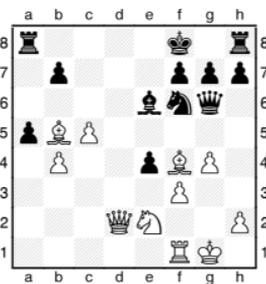
Michael Adams



## Karpov the only loser in an act of generosity

The Chess Champions League at Vitoria Gasteiz in Spain was a unique event as it was part of a festival to raise funds to build a hospital in Mbuji-Mayi in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The chess players very generously donated their considerable prize fund to this worthy cause.

The event was won by Veselin Topalov after a trademark strong finish, including a hat-trick of wins in the last three rounds. The younger players weren't too charitable, however, to Anatoly Karpov, who had a particularly tough time and finished at the bottom of the field. Due to the escalating speed of advancements in opening theory, it is more and more difficult for players to play only the occasional tournament.



**Kasimdzhanov, R - Karpov, A**  
**Vitoria 2007**

**21.Bf4-b8**

An amazing blow creating the twin threats of Ne2-f4 and Qd2-d8+.

**21...**

**Nf6-d5**

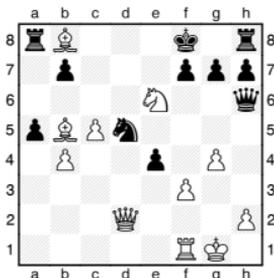
It seems 21...Be6-d7 was Black's best chance but this is not an easy move to find; the bishop is immune due to 21...Ra8xb8 22.Qd2-d6+

**22.Ne2-f4**

**Qg6-h6**

Karpov tries a pin of his own as the knight cannot be captured due to the back rank mate.

**23.Nf4xe6+**



**23...**

**Qh6xe6**

If 23...f7xe6 24.f3xe4+ Kf8-g8 the brilliant 25.Bb5-d7 is decisive.

**24.Bb8-d6+**

**Kf8-g8**

**25.Bb5-c4**

**e4xf3**

**26.Bc4xd5**

**Qe6xg4+**

**27.Kg1-h1**

Material is roughly balanced but the scope of the bishops is in sharp contrast to the rooks and it doesn't take Rustam long to hunt down the Black king.

**27...**

**a5xb4**

**28.Bd5xf3**

**Qg4-c4**

**29.Qd2-g2**

**h7-h5**

The natural 29...Ra8-a2 is met by 30.Bf3-d5 winning a rook.

**30.Bf3-d5**

**Qc4-g4**

**31.Bd5xf7+**

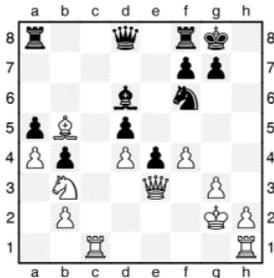
**Kg8-h7**

**32.Qg2-c2+**

**g7-g6**

**33.Bf7xg6+**

**1-0**



**Karpov, A - Ponomarev, R**  
**Vitoria 2007**

White's position looks pretty solid but Pono sees a way to take advantage of the half-open 'h' file.

**24...**

**g7-g6**

**25.Rh1-f1**

The immediate 25.h2-h3 was better as the rook is doing a useful job on h1.

**25...**

**Kg8-f7**

**26.h2-h3**

**Rf8-h8**

**27.f4-f5**

Opening the kingside proves disastrous 27.Rc1-c6 was a better try.

**27...**

**Nf6-h5**

**28.g3-g4**

**Qd8-h4**

**29.g4xh5**

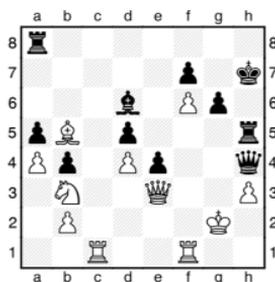
Neither 29.Bb5-c6 Nh5-f4+ 30.Rf1xf4 Bd6xf4 31.Qe3xf4 Qh4xh3+ 32.Kg2-f2 Qh3xb3; nor 29.Nb3-c5 Nh5-g3 hold out any hope.

**29...**

**Rh8xh5**

**30.f5-f6+**

**Kg7-h7**



**31.Kg2-h1**

Bringing the bishop into the defence doesn't work because of 31.Bb5-d7 Rh5-g5+ 32.Bd7-g4 Rg5xg4+ 33.h3xg4 Qh4-h2 mate

**31...**

**Bd6-g3**

**32.Bb5-d7**

**Ra8-d8**

There are no flight squares for the prelate.

**33.Rf1-g1**

**Bg3-f4**

**34.Rg1-g4**

**Bf4xe3**

**35.Rg4xh4**

**Rh5xh4**

**36.Rc1-c7**

**Be3-f4**

**37.Rc7-b7**

**Rd8xd7**

**0-1**

# CHESS

December 1st 2007

Michael Adams



## Zappa and the brothers of contention

At the same time as the World Championship in Mexico City, it was also possible to observe a match between two of the best silicon entities in the world.

The programs Zappa, the 2005 World Computer champion, and Rybka, the 2007 champ, contested a 10-game match in which they managed an astonishing 890 moves. The fourth game was particularly epic, continuing for 180 moves before Zappa delivered mate.

You had to feel some sympathy for the Rybka team as their horse erroneously sacrificed a pawn to prevent the game being concluded under the 50-move rule.

The final result was edged 5.5-4.5 by Zappa, whose programmer, Anthony Cozzie, seems to be one of the more congenial of the breed. His entertaining website mentions that his creation is named after a scene in an Austin Powers movie and also puts forward an interesting theory with at least a grain of truth: even the strongest engines still make serious positional mistakes, but humans are no longer strong enough to create the opportunities for them to do so.

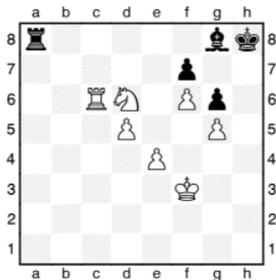
Computers can certainly still do this to each other, as the final position from game three shows.

**ZAPPA - RYBKA**  
Mexico City 2007

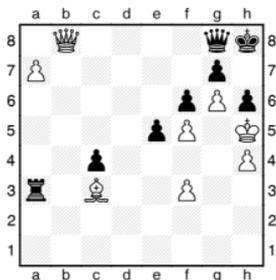
As Black's only remaining hope is a power cut, the programs

put the machine out of its misery.

1-0



Rybka had its moments as well, and achieved a very aesthetic finish to game eight.



**RYBKA - ZAPPA**  
Mexico City 2007

Here Rybka concluded the game nicely with

**68.Bc3xe5 Ra3xa7**

If the bishop is captured 68...f6xe5 69.f5-f6 g7xf6 70.Kh5xh6 Ra3xa7 (the only way to prevent mate) 71.Qb8xa7 Qg8-f8+ 72.g6-g7+ is a fatal interception.

**69.Qb8xa7 Qg8-c8**

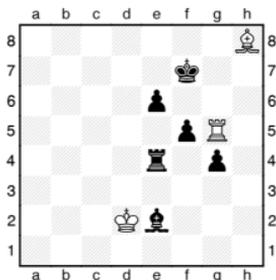
69...f6xe5 70.f5-f6 is similar to the last line but now the extra piece is decisive.

**70.Qa7-b8 Qc8xb8**

**71.Be5xb8**

1-0

The match was probably decided by an amazing escape the following day.



**RYBKA - ZAPPA**  
Mexico City 2007

71...

f5-f4

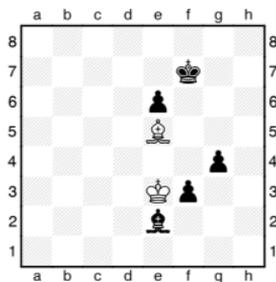
If Black plays sensibly with 71...Be2-f3 or 71...Kf7-e7 the result is not really in doubt, but Rybka makes a surprising error, allowing the exchange of rooks and losing the flexibility of his pawn structure.

**72.Rg5-e5 Re4xe5**

Following the rook exchange, the three extra pawns are about as useful as a chocolate fireguard. Black could have tried the interesting 72...Re4-d4+ jettisoning the bishop, but the win seems to have slipped away. After 73.Kd2xe2 f4-f3+ 74.Ke2-e1 (74.Ke2-e3 Rd4-f4 and 74.Ke2-f2 Rd4-d2+ both win for Black) Black has two attempts but both come up short 74...Rd4-d8 (74...g4-g3 75.Re5-f5+ e6xf5 76.Bh8xd4 Kf7-e6 77.Bd4-f2 f5-f4 78.Ke1-f1 leads to a draw) 75.Re5-g5 Rd8xh8 76.Rg5xg4 e6-e5 77.Ke1-f2 Rh8-h3 78.Kf2-e3 Kf7-e6 79.Rg4-g8 and the rook and pawn endgame is a dead end.

**73.Bh8xe5 f4-f3**

**74.Kd2-e3**



Now there is no way to advance the pawns or penetrate with the Black king

**74... Kf7-g6**

**75.Be5-d6 Kg6-f6**

**76.Bd6-g3 Kf6-f5**

**77.Bg3-h2 e6-e5**

**78.Bh2-g3 Be2-c4**

**79.Bg3-h4 Bc4-a6**

**80.Bh4-g3 Kf5-e6**

**81.Bg3-e1 Ke6-d5**

**82.Be1-h4 Ba6-b5**

**83.Bh4-e1 Bb5-e2**

**84.Be1-f2**

Rybka conceded the blockade is insurmountable.

½-½

# CHESS

December 8th 2007

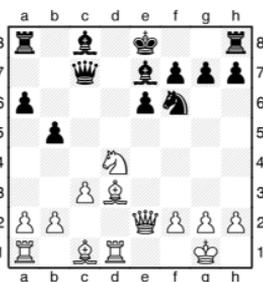
Michael Adams



## Fur play: our Mickey keeps his cool in the Siberian snow

Arriving in Khanty-Mansiysk in the Ugra region of Siberia for the World Chess Cup knockout is truly like stepping into another world. For one thing there is the temperature, or rather the lack of it; although it has not yet come close to the lowest recorded temperature here in December of -49C, we have touched -22C.

Parents pull infants wrapped in furs on sleds on their daily walks; the snow-covered fir forests and astonishing ice sculptures, including ones of a chess set and, oddly, a pair of sumo wrestlers, in the main square make this a very picturesque place. Of course, most of the players will be back in warmer climes by the time you read this, but here is how I extended my stay in the snow by a few more days in round two.



Adams, M - Gurevich, M  
World Cup Khanty-Mansiysk  
2007

14... Bc7-c5  
The natural 14...0-0 15.a2-a4 b5-b4 16.c3xb4 Bc7xb4

17.Bc1-g5 is dangerous for Black. I thought my opponent would try 14...Bc8-d7.

15.Bc1-g5 Bc8-b7  
The consistent 15...Bc5xd4 16.c3xd4 Nf6-d5 17.Ra1-c1 Qc7-d7 was better.

16.Bg5xf6 g7xf6  
17.Bd3-e4 Bb7xe4  
18.Qe2xe4 0-0  
19.Qe4-h4 Rf8-d8  
Mikhail understandably didn't fancy 19...f6-f5 20.Qh4-g5+ Kg8-h8 21.Qg5-f6+ Kh8-g8 22.Rd1-d3 but there is no compensation for the pawn.

20.Qh4xf6 Bc5-f8  
21.Rd1-d3 Bf8-g7  
22.Qf6-g5 Qc7-e5  
Black can't drive the lady away with 22...Rd8-d5 due to 23.Nd4xe6.

23.Qg5-g4 Rd8-d6  
24.Rd3-g3 Ra8-c8  
25.Qg4-h4 Kg8-h8  
26.Qh4-e7 Qe5-c5  
27.Ra1-e1 Rc8-f8  
Black had to play 27...Bg7xd4 28.c3xd4 Qc5xd4 29.Qe7xf7 but his exposed king should enable White to win the ending.

28.Nd4xe6  
Even stronger was 28.Rg3xg7 Kh8xg7 29.Re1-e3 but my choice is not bad either.

28... Qc5-e5  
If 28...Rd6-d1, 29.Ne6xc5 defends the back rank, or 28...Rd6xe6 29.Re1xe6 winning material.

29.Rg3-e3  
It was not too late to reverse the result with 29.Kg1-f1 Qe5xe1+ 30.Kf1xe1 Rd6xe6+. Now Black resigned, although he could fight on. After 29...Qe5xe3 30.f2xe3 Rd6xe6 31.Qe7-d7 the result would not really be in doubt.



Macieja, B - Laznicka, V  
World Cup Khanty-Mansiysk  
2007

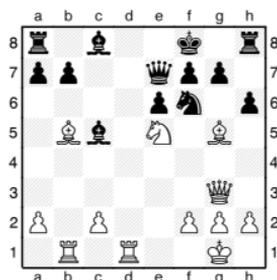
13... Bc5-e7  
After 13...Qd7-e7 14.Nf3xd4 the pin is annoying.

14.Nf3xd4 Qd7-a4  
15.Qe5-c7 Ra8-d8  
Black had to play 15...Qa4-a6 16.Rh1-e1 Qa6-b6, exchanging queens with a slight edge for White. Now the game is over before it has begun.

16.Nd4-f5 Rd8-d7  
The knight leap causes total carnage: it can't be captured due to 16...e6xf5 17.Rd1xd8+ Be7xd8 18.Rh1-e1+.

17.Qc7-c8+ Rd7-d8  
18.Nf5xg7+

1-0



Alekseev, E - Ismagambetov, A  
World Cup Khanty-Mansiysk  
2007

White has a lot of strong continuations but decided on the visual

19.Rd1-d7 Bc8xd7  
Sacrificing the queen 19...h6xg5 20.Rd7xe7 Bc5xe7 21.Qg3xg5 also looks rather bleak.

20.Bg5xf6 Bc5xf2+  
21.Qg3xf2 g7xf6  
22.Ne5xd7+ Kf8-g7  
23.Rb1-b3 Rh8-d8

The alternative 23...f6-f5 24.Rb3-g3+ Kg7-h7 25.Qf2-d4 e6-e5 26.Bb5-d3 would have led to a prettier finish.

24.Rb3-g3+ Kg7-h8  
25.Qf2-f4

1-0

# CHESS

December 15th 2007

Michael Adams



## Shirov sails close to the wind but stays afloat

The semi-finals of the World Cup in Khanty-Mansiysk have thrown up some surprises, with fifth-seeded Alexei Shirov the only player in single figures remaining. In reality, though, this is not that big a shock. Once the last-32 stage is reached a favourite in any match is a marginal one, and the FIDE rating system tends to underestimate the strength of fast-improving young talents like Karjakin and Carlsen.

Neither Carlsen nor Kamsky have been in serious trouble in their matches so far, and at this stage the survivor of their semi-final might seem the likely winner, but there is plenty more chess to be played yet. Karjakin and Shirov have both played very well overall but also benefited from crucial moments of good fortune. Shirov sailed very close to the wind in this game from the second round; as the first game had ended in a draw the loser of this encounter would be packing his bags.

### Shirov, A - Shulman, Y World Cup Khanty-Mansiysk 2007

White's king is stranded in mid board and there is a selection of wins for Black to choose from.  
26... e3-e2

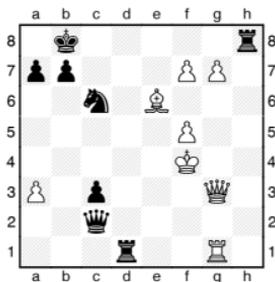
This terrible blunder must have been based on a horrible oversight: Shulman had a choice of ways to triumph. The most deadly sequence is 26... Rd8xd1 27.Qf1xd1 Re8-h8 28.Qd1-e1 e3-e2 29.Qe1-g3+ Nc6-e5+. Also good enough was 26...Nc6-d4+ 27.Rd1xd4 Rd8xd4 28.Rg1-g4 e3-e2 29.Qf1xe2 Qh2-h3+ 30.Rg4-g3 Qh3-h5+ 31.Kf3-f2 Rd4-d2. A third winning option was 26...Rd8-d2 27.Rd1xd2 c3xd2 28.Kf3xe3 Qh2-e5+.

**27.Qf1xe2**  
Now there is not enough ammunition to trouble White's monarch as his trio of foot soldiers march onwards.

**27... Nc6-e5+**  
**28.Kf3-e3 Qh2-h3+**  
A better try was 28...Qh2-h4 but Black was understandably disillusioned by the turn of events.

**29.Ke3-f4 Ne5-c6**  
**30.Qe2-g4**  
Shirov takes full advantage of his reprieve, bringing his queen into the defence.

**30... Qh3-h2+**  
**31.Qg4-g3 Qh2xc2**  
**32.f6-f7 Re8-h8**  
**33.g5-g6 Rd8xd1**  
**34.g6-g7**



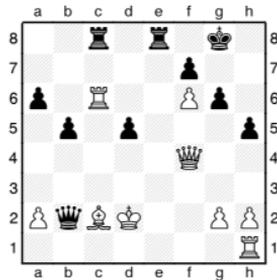
The position becomes even more confusing, but Alexei has matters under control. The sacrificed rook is less relevant than the production line of potential queens on the seventh rank.

**34... Rh8-d8**  
If the rook retreats 34...Rd1-d8 35.g7xh8Q Rd8xh8 36.Kf4-f3+ Kb8-a8 37.Qg3-g8+

shows one of the points of the queen manoeuvre earlier. The discovered check can come in very handy.

**35.f7-f8Q Rd1xg1**  
**36.Qg3xg1 Qc2-d2+**  
**37.Qg1-e3 Kb8-a8**  
**38.Qe3xd2 c3xd2**  
**39.Be6-b3**

The smoke has cleared and White is at least a queen ahead, so Black resigned.



Karjakin also survived a close shave in the first tie-break game against the French number one.

### Bacrot, E - Karjakin, S World Cup Khanty-Mansiysk 2007

**26.Rc6xc8**  
Bacrot had a fairly straightforward win with 26.Rh1-b1 Qb2xa2 27.Qf4-h6 Qa2-a5+ 28.Kd2-d3 Qa5-a3+ 29.Bc2-b3 Qa3-f8 30.Qh6xf8+ Kg8xf8 31.Rc6xa6, when the exchange of queens removes Black's practical chances and allows the extra piece to decide. Surprisingly, after the exchange of rooks the position's assessment is reversed.

**26... Re8xc8**  
**27.Rh1-c1 Rc8-c4**  
**28.Qf4-g5**

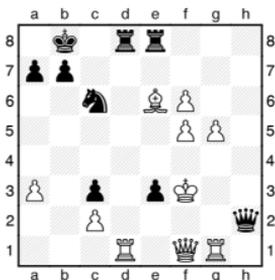
Now 28.Qf4-h6 Qb2xf6 picks up another pawn and removes any counterplay, leaving the denuded White monarch feeling the heat.

**28... Rc4-d4+**  
Even better was 28...Rc4-g4, collecting some more material, but the move played works out well.

**29.Kd2-e2**  
Etienne had to play 29.Kd2-e1 Rd4-g4 30.Qg5-d2 Qb2xf6 31.Bc2-d1 although his position is still unenviable.

**29... Rd4-g4**  
**30.Qg5-e3 Rg4-e4**

0-1



# CHESS

December 22nd 2007

Michael Adams

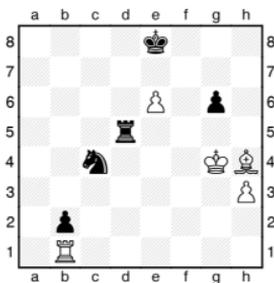


## Festive fun with our 'beautiful mistress'

Christmas has rolled around again sooner than I expected. Round up your family and friends, break out the brandy and mince pies and test your knowledge of chess trivia. Answers next week.

1. Which famous chess player was imprisoned in Russia last month and which Grand Master was refused access to visit him?
2. The 2007 World Chess Cup was held in Khanty-Mansiysk in Siberia. Name the venues for:  
a. The 2005 World Cup.  
b. The 2009 World Cup.
3. Which GM was the last line of defence when Chess United played a five-a-side football match against Levski Sofia on the rest day during the Sofia tournament?
4. How much time did David Baramidze have remaining on his clock when he showed up for his tie-break game against Nigel Short in Khanty-Mansiysk?
5. Which strong US chess player is a two time Tai Chi Chuan Push Hands World Champion?  
a. John Fedorowicz  
b. Yasser Seirawan  
c. Hikaru Nakamura  
d. Josh Waitzkin  
e. Larry Christiansen
6. Who said "Chess is a beautiful mistress"?

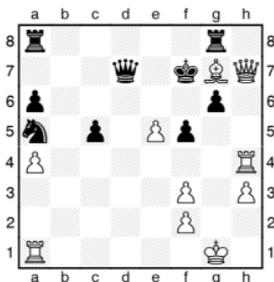
7. How did Gata Kamsky (Black to play) conclude this game against Boris Avrukh from the second round of the World Cup?



8. Which famous Russian player was ringside at the Vladimir Klitschko vs. Lamon Brewster heavyweight fight in Cologne in July?  
a. Garry Kasparov  
b. Vladimir Kramnik  
c. Peter Svidler  
d. Sergei Rublevsky

9. In round six of The Arctic Chess Challenge In Norway, Magnus Carlsen scored a convincing victory over his opponent who was rated 2089. What was unusual about the game?

10. How did Emil Sutovsky (White to play) force immediate resignation in his game against Kamil Miton in Montreal?



11. Which versatile English GM won the World Problem Solving Championship this year with a stupendous 89/90?
12. Who said of his ex-wife "We were like bishops of opposite colours"?
13. What attire did Peter Svidler

choose for his last-round game between Russia and Bulgaria in the European Team Championship?  
a. A dinner jacket  
b. An England cricket shirt  
c. An orange team tracksuit  
d. Swimming trunks

14. Which rising star of English chess won the Susan Polgar Under 11 Girls Open World Chess Championship in June?

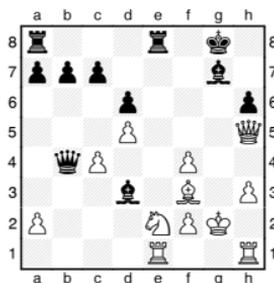
15. Boris Spassky was incorrectly introduced as the 12th World Champion at the Elista Candidates matches. Which number was he?

16. Who won the first World Blindfold Championship?

17. How many moves were made in the Ivanchuk-Leko drawn game in the World Blitz Championship where the time limit was four minutes with a two second increment?

- a. 10
- b. 40
- c. 75
- d. 215

18. How did the evergreen Viktor Korchnoi (White to play) short-circuit Ilya Smirin's position in this game from a rapid-play event in Odessa?



19. What problem was encountered during the London-Moscow Ice Match exhibition game held in January?

20. Which British sports star was once president of the British Chess Federation?

Good luck and Merry Christmas!

Michael Adams



## Melting pieces and other right answers

Now's the time to bring an end to the nail-biting suspense and reveal the answers to last week's Christmas quiz. If you scored 15 or over, award yourself a GM norm in chess trivia.

1. Garry Kasparov was imprisoned in Moscow earlier this month. His old rival Anatoly Karpov was denied permission to visit him.

2. The 2005, 2007 and 2009 World Cups all have the same venue – Khanty-Mansiysk in Siberia.

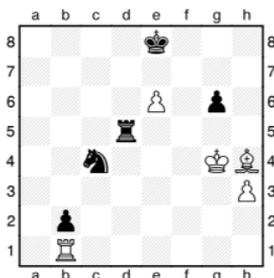
3. Gata Kamsky was the goalkeeper in the Chess United vs Levski Sofia football match and did a very decent job despite our 6-4 defeat.

4. David Baramidze overslept and tore into the tournament hall with 56 seconds remaining on his clock for his rapid game with Nigel Short. He got good value out of the 10 second increment and managed to win the game.

5. Josh Waitzkin is a two-time Tai Chi Chuan Push Hands World Champion. So don't mess with him.

6. Bent Larsen said "Chess is a beautiful mistress". Very poetic.

7.



Gata Kamsky forced immediate resignation in his game against Avrukh in the World Cup by playing:

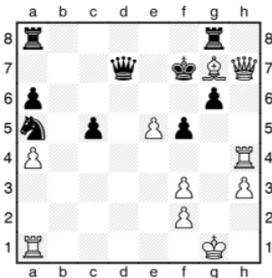
53... **Rd5-d1**

as after the exchange of rooks 54.Rb1xd1 Nc4-e3+ 55.Kg4-f3 Ne3xd1 the 'b' pawn is unstoppable.

8. Vladimir Kramnik was ringside at the Klitschko vs. Brewster fight in Cologne. Award yourself partial credit if you answered Kasparov, as he has also attended the Klitschko's fights in the past.

9. Magnus Carlsen defeated his 2089-rated father Henrik in the 6th round of the Arctic Chess Challenge. Now Henrik knows how the rest of us feel.

10.



Emil Sutovsky polished off Miton in this game from Montreal, with the neat interruption:

32. **Bg7-f8+**

which forced resignation, as if the bishop is captured 32... Kf7xf8 33.Qh7xd7 picks up the queen. If the lady is defended by 32...Kf7-e8 33.Qh7xg8 collects the rook instead.

11. John Nunn won the World Problem Solving Championship with an amazing 89/90. Maybe he can go one better next year.

12. Boris Spassky said of his ex-wife "we were like bishops of opposite colours".

13. Peter Svidler wore an England cricket shirt for his last-round win against Bulgaria in the European Team Championship. Strangely they credited Russia with the point. The Ukrainian team, England's opponents, were wearing fetching orange tracksuits.

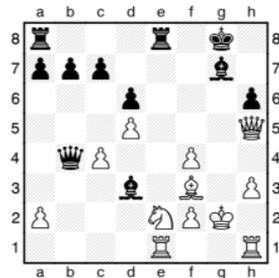
14. Emma Bentley won the Susan Polgar Under 11 Girls Open World Chess Championship. A name to watch out for in the future.

15. Boris Spassky loudly corrected the organisers of Elista to remind them that he was the 13th World Champion, not the 12th as announced.

16. The talented Chinese player Bu Xiangzhi won the inaugural Blindfold Championship.

17. The epic tussle between Ivanchuk and Leko in the World Blitz Championship continued for 215 moves before Leko pulled off a stalemate trick. It was amazing that a game of this length and quality could be played with a 4 minutes +2 seconds increment time control. Despite this setback, Ivanchuk went on to win the event, defeating Anand in a decisive last-round game.

18.



Viktor Korchnoi concluded his game with Ilya Smirin with this unexpected knight retreat:

25. **Ne2-c1**

which forced resignation. The bishop and rook are both attacked and if Black captures the White rook 25...Re8xe1 26.Nc1xd3 is a decisive fork.

19. The London-Moscow Ice Match exhibition game had a problem with melting pieces, I can recommend Khanty-Mansiysk as a venue for next year should organisers wish to avoid this problem.

20. Snooker legend Steve Davis did an excellent job during his stint as president of the British Chess Federation.

Congratulations for the ones you got right. Happy New Year!