

Michael Adams



Kasparov shows old mastery as Karpov's powers wane

Kasparov and Karpov have reprised their famous matches of the 80s with a blitz and rapid encounter in Valencia. This kind of event is a mixed blessing; the players' enduring popularity ensures great public interest, but their age and inactivity means that the games are of a much diminished standard.

Although he has played much less regularly than his eternal opponent, Kasparov seemed less affected, but he too had a couple of bad moments. Several of the games nevertheless suggested that if Kasparov shook off the rust he could still be a force to be reckoned with by the current top players.

Unfortunately Karpov, much like the official website, was affected by a number of black-outs; he lost on time in four games in only one of which, shown below, he had a lost position. Given that they were playing with an increment this was a bit of a shocker.

21.Qc2-d2

It looks more natural to double rooks 21.Rf1-d1, but Kasparov's sharp tactical eye is aware of some possibilities on the kingside.

21...

Nd7-c5

Karpov blunders, after the correct 21...Nd7-e5 covering the kingside, Kasparov had calculated an impressive line: 22.f2-f4 Ne5-c4 23.Qd2-d4 b6-b5 24.b2-b3 Nc4xa3 25.Ne4-f6+ a nice echo of the combination in the game 25...Kg8-h8 (25...g7xf6 26.Qd4xf6 Ra7-c7 27.Rd5-d3 wins) 26.Nf6-d7 picking up the exchange.

22.Ne4-f6+

g7xf6

The knight must be captured as 22...Kg8-h8 23.Rd5-h5 concludes proceedings.

23.Qd2xh6

f6-f5

24.Qh6-g5+

It's important to improve the position of White's queen before taking on f5 as 24.Rd5xf5 f7-f6 allows Black to bring his rook into the defence along the second rank.

24...

Kg8-h8

25.Qg5-f6+

Kh8-g8

26.Rd5xf5

Nc5-e4

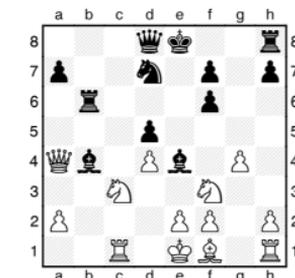
27.Qf6-h4

Rf8-e8

28.Rf5-h5

f7-f5

Karpov lost on time, but here it makes little difference as he would have perished under a barrage of checks: 29.Rh5-h8+ Kg8-f7 30.Qh4-h7+ Kf7-f6 31.Qh7-h6+ Kf6-e5 32.f2-f4+ Ke5-d4 33.Rf1-d1+ Kd4-c5 34.Rd1-c1+ Kc5-b5 35.Qh6-c6+ Kb5-a6 36.Rh8xe8.



**Karpov, A - Kasparov, G
Valencia Rapid 2009**

14.a2-a3

Karpov has been caught

unprepared in the opening which is never good in a blitz game. Perhaps 14.Bf1-g2 Qd8-c7 15.0-0 Bb4xc3 16.Nf3-h4 would have given practical chances at this time limit. It would have been very hard to find the best chance 14.Qa4-b3.

14...

Bb4xc3+

15.Rc1xc3

Rb6-b1+

16.Ke1-d2

0-0

Kasparov castles his king into safety, leaving Karpov's monarch with nowhere to hide.

17.Bf1-g2

Rb1-b2+

18.Kd2-e1

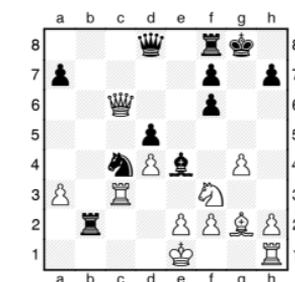
Nd7-b6

19.Qa4-c6

Sounding the retreat with 19.Qa4-d1 might have lasted a bit longer.

19...

Nb6-c4



20.Rc3xc4

Withdrawing the rook could have led to a nice finish 20.Rc3-c1 Qd8-a5+ 21.Ke1-f1 Qa5-c3 22.Rc1xc3 (22.Rc1-d1 Nc4-e3+ wins the queen) 22...Rb2-b1+ 23.Nf3-e1 Nc4-d2+ leading to mate along the back rank.

20...

Rb2-b6

The pin is illusory, Kasparov could have simply taken the rook as 20...d5xc4 21.Qc6xe4 Rf8-e8 22.Nf3-e5 Re8xe5 is deadly.

21.Qc6-c5

d5xc4

22.Ke1-d2

The king heads up the board in desperation with the inevitable result.

22...

Rb6-b2+

23.Kd2-e3

Rf8-e8

24.g4-g5

Rb2-b5

25.Qc5xa7

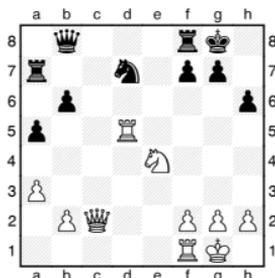
Be4xf3+

26.Ke3xf3

Qd8-d5+

0-1

**Kasparov, G - Karpov, A
Valencia Rapid 2009**



Michael Adams



Fans swoon over macho Sutovsky

The annual Antwerp tournament sponsored by Inventi is a welcome resurgence of top-level chess in Belgium. English fans won't have enjoyed witnessing a rare setback for David Howell, but all will have enjoyed a lot of entertaining chess.

It is always a treat when the tournament winner Emil Sutovsky is in good form as his maximalistic, aggressive style always goes down well with the audience. In the game below, it is clear that White should win, but the accuracy with which he finishes the job is a sign of a player at the top of his game.

41.Rb2-e2

Sutovsky could have grabbed a pawn utilising the same tactic as in the last note: 41.Rb2xb5 a6xb5 42.Qf6-g7+ Kf8-e7 43.e5xd6+ but he has bigger fish to fry as he transfers his rook towards the kingside.

41...

42.Re2-e4

43.Rf3-g3

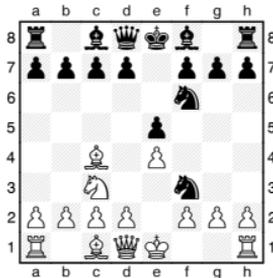
This loses immediately, but the better 43...b5-b4 44.e5xd6 Qd5xd6 45.Re4-e5 Qd6-d8 (45...h7-h6 46.d3-d4 c7-c6 47.Rg3-g6 wins) 46.Re5xe6 also can't hold the Black position together.

44.Re4xe5

45.Re5-g5

1-0

Etienne Bacrot finished in a tie for second and produced this very imaginative miniature.



Bacrot, E - Sargissian, G
Inventi GM Antwerp 2009

6.g2xf3

The normal recapture 6.Qd1xf3 isn't too inspiring, but Bacrot has a more aggressive treatment in mind for this game.

6...

7.Rh1-g1

Understandably, Sargissian doesn't fancy 7...0-0 putting his king opposite the newly opened file, but this move leads to some unexpected problems along the fifth rank.

8.d2-d4

Harassing Black's bishop with 8.Nc3-a4 was also possible, but Bacrot plays more energetically.

8...

It may have been better to take with the pawn: 8...e5xd4 9.Rg1-g5 (The Evans Gambit-inspired 9.b2-b4 Bc5xb4

10.Qd1xd4 also has its points) 9...Bc5-e7 10.Rg5xh5 d4xc3 11.Qd1-d4 0-0 12.Qd4xc3 d7-d6 looks reasonable for Black.

9.Nc3-e2

Sargissian echoes his opponent's idea, giving up a central pawn to accelerate development, but 9...Qd8-e7 was worth considering with the idea of 10.Ne2xd4 Qe7-b4+, the stronger 10.Qd1-d3 keeps compensation.

10.Bc4xd5

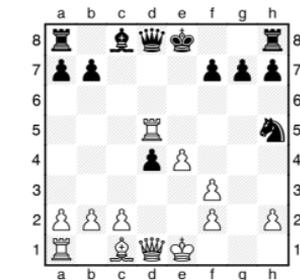
11.Ne2xd4

12.Rg1-g5

The rook swings into the action with great effect.

12...

13.Rg5xd5



13..

The knight can't be saved as 13...Qd8-h4 14.Bc1-g5 wins the queen due to the threat of mate on d8.

14.Rd5xh5

The computer proposes the sharp 14...f7-f5 which creates important counter play before White completes development.

15.b2-b3

The king runs into problems here so 15...0-0-0 getting away from the soon to be fianchettoed bishop was better.

16.Bc1-b2

This blunder leads to a quick finish, although Black is also worse after 16...Ra8-d8 17.Qd1-d2.

17.Bb2xd4

Black resigned as 18...g6xh5 19.Qd1-d2 or 18...Rf8-d8 19.Qd1-c1 are decisive and if the queen comes to the rescue 18...Qc7-f4 19.Bf6-e5 unexpectedly traps the lady.

Sutovsky, E - Socko, B
Inventi GM Antwerp 2009

40.e4-e5

An excellently calculated, precise move, the natural 40.Rf3-g3+ Kg8-f8 41.Rg3-g7 Re8-c8 42.Rg7xh7 Kf8-e8 isn't bad, but drives Black's king to a safer spot.

40...

The point is that 40...Qa1xb2 41.Rf3-g3+ Kg8-f8 42.Qf6-g7+ Kf8-e7 43.e5xd6+ is the sting in the tail winning Black's queen.

Kg8-f8

d7-d5

c7-c6

c6xd5

e5xd4

Qd8-b6

Bc8-e6

0-0

g7-g6

Qb6-c7

CHESS

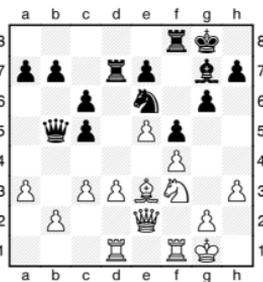
October 17th 2009

Michael Adams

Economy looks strong in Ohrid

Congratulations to the Economist team from Saratov, Russia who won the European championships, unusually with victories in all seven of their matches; not easy in such an open competition.

It proved a frustrating experience for my Baden Baden team. Although we made huge scores against the weaker opposition and picked up a few consolation board prizes, in the two crunch matches we came up just short both times by 3.5-2.5.



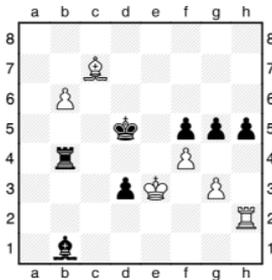
Adams, M - Meins, G Ohrid 2009

19.b2-b4 b7-b6

I thought I had a huge advantage, but the computer points out that 19...Qb5-a4 holds Black's position together, although after 20.Qe2-a2 Rd7-d5 21.b4xc5 Ne6xf4 22.d3-d4 Nf4-h5 23.Rd1-b1, White maintains strong pressure. Meins missed that my last move opened a route for my queen along the second rank.

20.Qe2-a2

Black resigned as the pin is completely deadly 20...Kg8-f7 21.Nf3-g5+ or 20...Rd7-d5 21.c3-c4.



Pacher, M - Vallejo Pons, F Ohrid 2009

Here Vallejo played the sneaky

**46... g5-g4
47.Rh2xh5**

And his opponent fell into the trap, not realising that the Black pawns were bait, 47.Rh2-d2 would have kept drawing chances.

**47... Rb4-b2
48.Rh5xf5+ Kd5-c4**

White resigned as his king has been ensnared and there is no sensible way to prevent Rb2-e2 mate.



Stamenkov, V - Kamsky, G Ohrid 2009

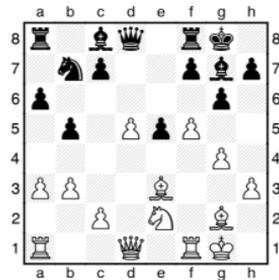
Black's chain of pawns looks very impressive, but you need to be attentive to realise there is a tactical conclusion available immediately. Kamsky was very much up to the job and decided matters with:

**33... Rc2xc1
34.Re1xc1**

34.Nb3xc1 d3-d2 is no better.

**34... Qc6xc1+
35.Nb3xc1 d3-d2**

White resigned as 36.Nc1-b3 d2-d1Q+ 37.Kg1-g2 f5-f4 gives a rampant initiative as well as the extra piece.



Peter Svidler was in great form achieving the highest overall rating performance. Here he dispatches a very strong opponent in short order.

Svidler, P - Mamedyarov, S Ohrid 2009

18.d5-d6

This sacrifice throws Black's game into disarray, preventing the knight coming to the useful d6 square and opening up White's bishop.

18... c7xd6

Everything works like clockwork for Peter after this capture, 18...Ra8-b8 would have been more disruptive.

19.Ne2-c3 Ra8-b8

Maybe 19...g6xf5 20.g4xf5 Kg8-h8 was worth a try.

20.Nc3-d5

The knight arrives at the prime location making a nice contrast with Black's counterpart.

**20... g6xf5
21.g4xf5 Qd8-h4**

If 21...f7-f6 22.Be3-b6 Qd8-d7 23.Bb6-a7 Rb8-a8 24.Nd5-b6 wins a whole rook.

**22.Be3-f2 Qh4-g5
23.h3-h4 Qg5-d8
24.f5-f6**

Black resigned as 24...Bg7xf6 25.Bf2-b6 or 24...Bg7-h6 25.Qd1-h5 are not very healthy.

See Michael Adams in action against Kramnik and Carlsen at the London Chess Classic on December 8-15. Tickets from londonchessclassic.com

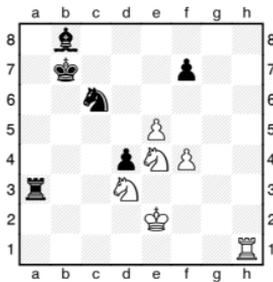
Michael Adams



A super show from Carlsen

Magnus Carlsen decimated the field in the Pearl Spring supertournament held in Nanjing, China; a very impressive achievement, although a lot of the other competitors were out of form with half the field failing to win a single game.

Although Carlsen has won big tournaments before, this result was on a different level and his colossal 8/10 score makes him only the fifth player to top 2800 on the rating list. One of his fortes is squeezing extra half-points out of the final stage of the game and we see a bit of endgame magic below:



Carlsen, M - Wang Yue Nanjing 2009

Despite the reduced material, all of White's pieces are superior to their counterparts, so Wang Yue sensibly decides to give up a piece to simplify further.

**55... Bb8xe5
56.f4xe5 Nc6xe5
57.Ne4-d6+ Kb7-a6**

The practical difficulties facing Black are considerable as knights are very tricky pieces, 57...Kb7-c6 58.Nd3xe5+ Kc6xd6 59.Ne5-c4+ was one way to go wrong.

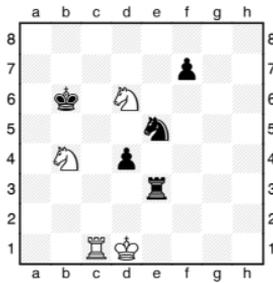
58.Nd3-b4+ Ka6-b6

The safest way was to move his pieces to the opposite sides of the board with 58...Ka6-a5 59.Rh1-b1 Ra3-h3 getting them out the knights' range.

59.Rh1-c1 Ra3-e3+

Understandably, Wang Yue was reluctant to defend passively with the correct 59...Ra3-a5, but this active-looking check leads to serious problems.

60.Ke2-d1



60... Re3-b3

In this study-like position things are already very difficult, but if Black had played 60...Kb6-a5 61.Nb4-d5 Re3-e1+ 62.Kd1xe1 Ne5-d3+ 63.Ke1-d2 Nd3xc1 64.Kd2xc1 f7-f5 65.Nd5-f4, the players would have arrived at the technically winning, but in practice notoriously problematic, two knights versus pawn ending, once Carlsen rounds up Black's 'd' pawn. Now White's forces coordinate perfectly to drive the king in to trouble.

61.Nb4-d5+ Kb6-a7

62.Rc1-a1+ Ka7-b8

63.Kd1-c2

A crucial move, driving the rook off the 'b' line as the knights cover a lot of squares on that file.

63... Rb3-h3

64.Ra1-b1+ Kb8-a7

65.Rb1-b7+ Ka7-a6

66.Rb7-b6+ Ka6-a5

The king has to carry on moving up the board as 66...Ka6-a7 67.Nd6-c8+ Ka7-a8 68.Nd5-c7 is mate.

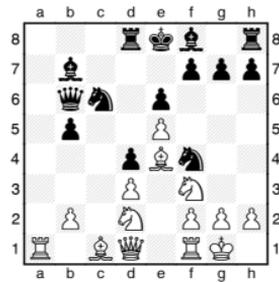
67.Rb6-b5+ Ka5-a4

Here 67...Ka5-a6 68.Nd5-c7+ Ka6-a7 69.Nd6-c8 is a similar mate to the last one.

68.Nd5-b6+ Ka4-a3

69.Rb5xe5

Black resigned, as with the rooks still on the board, the two knights win the game easily.



Carlsen, M - Radjabov, T Nanjing 2009

16... Nc6-b4

Too optimistic, it was better to withdraw the knight with 16...Nf4-g6, if 17.Rf1-e1 Bf8-b4 the pin creates some difficulties.

17.Nd2-b3 Bb7xe4

18.d3xe4 Nf4-d3

19.Bc1-g5

The bishop develops with tempo increasing the lead in development leaving Black's position looking decidedly shaky.

19... Rd8-c8

20.Nf3xd4 Nd3xb2

21.Qd1-e2 Nb2-c4

22.Rf1-c1 Bf8-c5

23.Nd4xb5 0-0

Black's best chance is 23...Bc5xf2+ 24.Qe2xf2 Qb6xb5 25.Qf2-e2 0-0 26.Nb3-d4 Qb5xe5 27.Rc1xc4 Rc8xc4 28.Qe2xc4 Qe5xg5 29.Qc4xb4 Qg5-e3+ 30.Kg1-h1 Qe3xe4 when it will take some time to exploit the extra piece. Capturing the knight 23...Qb6xb5 is powerfully met by 24.Ra1-a5.

24.Nb3xc5 Nc4xe5

Black is losing serious material in any event for instance 24...Rc8xc5 25.Bg5-e7.

25.Bg5-e7

Black resigned as 25...Rf8-e8 26.Nb5-d6 wins.

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Michael Adams



The mighty Bundesliga kicks off

The new Bundesliga season is underway. This league seems to have been affected less by the credit crunch than many of its European counterparts. Despite the length of the season, which takes place on seven weekends between October and April, it remains the strongest with 13 participants rated over 2700 including World Champion Vishwanathan Anand.

Here is some action from the opening instalment:

- 37.Rc1xc8+
- 38.Qd1-e1
- 39.Kf1-g1
- 40.Kg1-h2

Material is balanced, but the well placed knight, passed 'd' pawn and safer king give black a large advantage.

- 41.Qe1-f2
- 42.Rc8-d8

It looks natural to put the rook behind the pawn, but 42.Qf2-f3 was also worth considering.

- 42... Qe4-e5+
- 43.Kh2-h1 Qe5-c7

It was more precise to play 43...Qe5-e7, as after 44.Rd8xd4 Ne2xd4 45.Qf2xd4+ Qe7-f6 is an effective way to meet the check.

- 44.Rd8-e8
- 44.Rd8xd4 was the best practical chance.

- 44... d4-d3
- 45.Qf2-c5

After 45.Qf2-e3 b7-b5 despite the large amount of material remaining, White is in zugzwang.

- 45... d3-d2
- 46.Qc5-f8+

If one queen is captured Black's new one delivers mate: 46.Qc5xc7 d2-d1Q+ 47.Kh1-h2 Qd1-g1 mate.

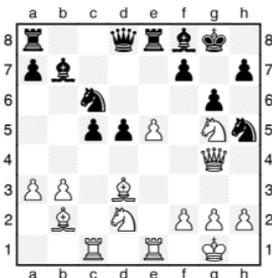
- 46... Kg7-f6
- 47.Qf8-h8+ Kf6-f5
- 48.g2-g4+ Kf5-g5
- 49.Re8-d8

If 49.Re8-e5+ f7-f5 Black's king is perfectly safe.

- 49... Qc7-c1+
- 50.Kh1-g2 Ne2-f4+
- 51.Kg2-h2 Qc1-b2

A pretty way to finish, although 51...Qc1-e1 was equally good.

0-1

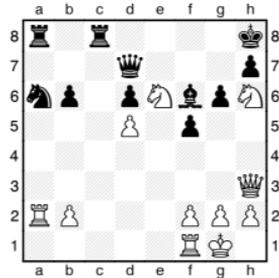


Nyback, T - Von Herman, U
Bundesliga 2009

18... Bb7-c8
Black should have played 18...Bf8-g7, this tees White up for a nice combination.

- 19.e5-e6 Re8xe6
- 20.Qg4xh5

and Black resigned as the queen can't be captured due to 20...g6xh5 21.Bd3xh7 mate.



Shirov, A - Degraeve, JM
Bundesliga 2009

Shirov starts by opening more lines on the kingside where his knights are ominously placed in the vicinity of Black's king.

- 27.g2-g4 f5xg4
- 28.Nh6xg4 Bf6-g7
- 29.Rf1-a1 Na6-c7
- 30.Ra2xa8 Nc7xa8

Degraeve has to capture with the knight as 30...Rc8xa8 31.Ra1xa8+ Nc7xa8 32.Qh3-a3 wins immediately.

- 31.Ng4-h6 Na8-c7

Surprisingly, after 31...Bg7xb2 32.Ra1-b1 Bb2-f6 33.Qh3-f3 Qd7-e7 there is no killer blow, but Black's position remains on the critical list. Now there is a neat conclusion.

- 32.Ne6-g5

Black resigned as 32...Qd7xh3 33.Ng5-f7 is a mate rarely seen in practice and otherwise Black loses his queen.

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Teske, H - Nielsen, P H
Bundesliga 2009

32.Ne2-c3
White should have secured his kingside first with 32.Qd1-d3 before aiming to exchange knights.

- 32... Rf6xf2
- 33.Kg1xf2 Qe7xe3+
- 34.Kf2-f1 Nb5xd4

The point of the sacrifice, this calm capture leaves White's king stranded and desperate measures are required to meet the threat of Re8-e6.

- 35.Nc3xd5 c6xd5
- 36.Rc5-c8 Re8xc8

Michael Adams



McShane's massacre

The English team achieved a seeding-busting 12th place in the European team championship. Missing Nigel Short and David Howell, who were at the World Junior Championship, we began fairly well with good results against strong opposition in the first six rounds.

The next two days were less successful, but achieving our biggest win of the competition 3.5-0.5 in the last round versus Macedonia put a positive spin on things once more. Stuart Conquest and Luke McShane were the pick of our players and there was no question that the game of England's event was this spectacularly brief massacre in our match against Bulgaria.

**McShane, L - Cheparinov, I
Novi Sad 2009**



13.Bf3-d1

This idea had been underestimated by Cheparinov, this bishop which was ineffectually locked in behind White's pawns now finds a useful post on b3, aiming towards black's king. As an added bonus the bishop's retreat clears the way for white's rook to swing into action along the third rank.

13...

Qb6-a6

The queen gets sidelined here, 13...Ra8-c8 was stronger.

14.Rf1-f3

Serious storm clouds are already gathering on the kingside so Black has to commit his 'h' pawn, but perhaps it was better to advance it one square; 15...h7-h6 16.f4-f5 g6-g5 17.Bc1xg5 h6xg5 18.Qh4xg5 Nf6-h7 doesn't seem to be that conclusive.

16.f4-f5

Black's king decides to do a runner, but with so much traffic in the middle of the board a nasty accident is inevitable. However, life on the kingside is also hazardous. 17...Rc8-c7 18.Bd1-b3 Kg8-h7 19.Bb3xf7 Ne5xf7 20.f5xg6+ Kh7xg6 21.Bg5xf6 Bg7xf6 22.Qh4xh5+ Kg6-g7 23.Rh3-g3+ is a typical calamity.

18.f5xg6

19...Kf8-e8 doesn't lose at once, but there is not much else to be said for it.

20.Rh3-f3

Cheparinov resigned as 20...Kf8-e8 21.Bb3-a4+ Ke8-f7 22.Ba4-b5 wins a piece and 20...Nd3-e5 21.Bg5xf6 Bg7xf6 22.Rf3xf6+ e7xf6 23.Qh4xf6+ Kf8-e8 24.Nc3-d5 Ke8-d7 25.Qf6-e7+ Kd7-c6 26.Nd5-b4+ picks up the queen.

**Sutovsky, E - Svidler, P
Novi Sad 2009**

20.Bd3-g6

Sutovsky, true to form, heads straight for his opponent's king, but the weakness of the long light-squared diagonal proves problematic for him. The computer suggests the subtle 20.Qh3-h4 Bb7-a8 21.Re1-d1 aiming to meet 21...Qc7-b7 with 22.Bd3-e4.

20...

21.Bg6-h5

Although Svidler plays very accurately after this to reel in the point, the queen and bishop battery prove too strong. The obvious 21.Ne5xf7 Qc7-b7 22.Bg6-e4 Qb7xf7 leaves White short of full compensation for the piece. The best move was 21.Re1-d1 with considerable complications 21...f7xg6 22.Ne5xg6+ Kf8-f7 23.Ng6-e5+ leads to a draw, but Black can also try 21...Kf8-e7 as the tempting 22.Bg6xf7 Bc5xf2+ 23.Kg1xf2 Qc7xc2+ 24.Kf2-e3 Rd8xd1 25.Qh3xe6+ Ke7-d8 works out well for Black, but the stronger 22.Bg6-h5 keeps White in the game.

21...

22.Qh3xh5

The rook can't be captured: 23...Qb7xe4 24.Qh5xf7 mate, but now it can't move due to mate on the other side of the board.

24.Rf1-e1

After safeguarding his king and activating his rook, forcing the white knight backwards, Svidler judges the moment correctly to attack the rook.

26.Nd3-f4

27.Qh5-e8+ Bc5-f8 28.Nf4-g6 e4-e3 28...Qb7-f7 was also good, but Svidler finishes in fine style with a cascade of tactics emphasizing his White square domination.

29.Qe8xf8+

30.Qf8xh8+ Kg8-h7 Kh7xg6 Rd2-g2+

31.f2-f3

32.Kg1-h1 The rook can't be taken due to 32.Kg1xg2 Qb7xf3+ 33.Kg2-h3 Qf3-h5 mate. Now a couple more sacrifices finish the game.

32...

33.Re1-f1

White resigned as 34.Rf1xf3 Ba8xf3+ 35.Kh1-g1 Re2-e1 mate is a neat way to end the game as all Black's remaining forces contribute to the denouement.

See Michael Adams in action against Kramnik and Carlsen at the London Chess Classic on December 8-15. Tickets from londonchessclassic.com

Michael Adams



Howell flatters to deceive

David Howell's near miss in last year's World Junior encouraged greater support for his participation this time around in Argentina, which included seconding from Nigel Short.

Things got off to a good start in his first round game below:



Vishnu, P - Howell, D
World Junior Puerto Madryn 2009

21.Re1-e2

With three major black pieces lined up down the 'f' line, 21.f2-f3 was a sensible consolidation.

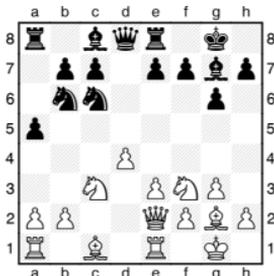
21... Nf6xd5
22.Re2-d2 h7-h5
23.Qg4-h4 Nd5-f4
24.Ne4-g3

A big blunder which David immediately exploits, 24.f2-f3 was now mandatory.

24... Nf4xg2
25.Kg1xg2 Rf5xf2+
26.Kg2-g1 Qf7-f3

White resigned as 27.Rd2xf2 Qf3xf2+ 28.Kg1-h1 Qf2-f3+ wins the other rook as well.

Howell was well-placed after eight rounds, but his uncompromising style rebounded on him in the later rounds, and the following game completed a trio of losses taking him out of contention.



Diamant, A - Howell, D
World Junior Puerto Madryn 2009

11... a5-a4

Black is happy for White to occupy the centre in the Grunfeld and hopes to undermine the foundations later. But in this game, Howell leaves it a little too long, 11...e7-e5 would have been to the point.

12.Re1-d1

This strong rook nudge was possibly underestimated as the rook had only moved to the e1 square a couple of moves ago, the opposition to Black's queen is very annoying.

12... Bc8-f5
13.d4-d5 Nc6-a5
14.Nf3-d4 Qd8-c8
15.Nd4xf5 Qc8xf5
16.e3-e4 Qf5-c8

It's not easy to suggest improvements over the last few moves, but now White's centre is really motoring.

17.e4-e5 e7-e6
18.Bg2-h3 c7-c6
19.d5xe6

19.d5-d6 was also very good, but Diamant plays in more dynamic fashion.

19... f7xe6
20.Bc1-f4 Qc8-c7
21.Rd1-d6 Qc7-f7
22.Nc3-e4 Nb6-d5

White's play has flowed effortlessly and now he makes a timely withdrawal causing a major collapse due to the vulnerable light squares and shaky black king position.

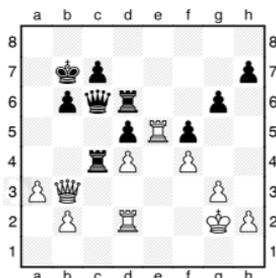
23.Bf4-d2 Bg7xe5
24.Rd6xe6 Re8xe6
25.Ne4-g5 Qf7-f6
26.Bh3xe6+ Kg8-g7
27.Ra1-e1 Be5xb2

27...h7-h6 28.Be6xd5 c6xd5
29.Qe2xe5 Qf6xe5 30.Re1xe5 h6xg5 31.Re5xd5 is an easily winning ending, but now things are even uglier.

28.Be6xd5 c6xd5
29.Qe2-b5 Kg7-h8

30.Qb5-d7 1-0

Maxim Vachier-Lagrave fully lived up to his billing of top seed and made 10.5/13, he was perhaps the highest-rated ever World Junior participant with a rating of 2718. Surprisingly, this was not enough for outright victory as Sergei Zhigalko, one of two strong chess playing brothers, kept up the relentless pace and also carved his way through the field to finish on the same score; an impressive achievement by both.



Rodshtein, M - Zhigalko, S
World Junior Puerto Madryn 2009

31.Qb3-e3

Rodshtein would have been better off keeping control of his second rank with 31.Qb3-d3.

31... Rc4-c2
32.Kg2-h3 Rc2xd2
33.Qe3xd2 Qc6-c4
34.Kh3-h4 h7-h6

It's good to use your king in the endgame, but White's monarch has ventured into a cul-de-sac.

35.Re5-e1 Rd6-c6
36.Qd2-e3

By now, executing a U-turn with 36.Kh4-h3 was recommended.

36... Qc4-c2
37.Re1-e2 Qc2-d1
38.Qe3-d2 Qd1-f1

The black queen has edged closer and White's position is critical, but 39.Re2-e5 would have kept things together for a while.

39.Re2-f2 g6-g5+
40.f4xg5 h6xg5+
41.Kh4xg5 Qf1-h3

White resigned as 42.Qd2-e2 Qh3-h6+ 43.Kg5xf5 Qh6-g6+ 44.Kf5-f4 Rc6-f6+ 45.Kf4-e3 Rf6-e6+ wins the queen.

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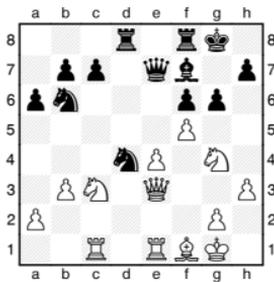
Michael Adams



Nothing's white for Svidler

Chess players operate on a slightly different schedule to most working folk as they are more likely to be playing at the weekend than during the week.

Whilst at tournaments, days tend to blur into a familiar routine, but Peter Svidler may have noticed that his opponents for the first weekend of the Tal Memorial were a challenging double black versus Anand and Kramnik. It wasn't a happy end to the week as in the games below, his favourite Grünfeld defence received a bit of a pummeling.



Anand, V - Svidler, P Tal Memorial Moscow 2009

Anand has unpleasant pressure against Black's loose kingside and there is very little in the way of counterplay.

23... **g6xf5**
The knight is not securely located in the centre, so 23...Nd4-c6, covering the e5 square and keeping his pawn cover intact, for the moment might have been worth a try.

24.Ng4-h6+ **Kg8-h8**
25.Qe3-f2 **f5xe4**

Peter had to try 25...f5-f4, aiming to keep lines closed. Now his position folds like a house of cards.

26.Re1xe4 **Qe7-d6**
26...Nd4-e6 27.Qf2-e3 Rf8-e8
28.Rc1-e1 Rd8-d6 29.Nh6-f5 is no better.
27.Rc1-d1 **c7-c5**
28.Nh6xf7+ **Rf8xf7**
29.b3-b4

The key move after which Black can't keep everything defended.

29... **f6-f5**

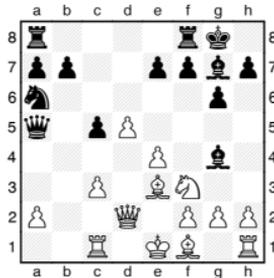
The tactics are all resolved in White's favour 29...Rd8-c8 30.b4xc5 Qd6xc5 31.Re4xd4 Qc5xc3 32.Rd4-d8+ Rc8xd8 33.Rd1xd8+ Kh8-g7 34.Qf2xb6 was another variation.

30.b4xc5 **f5xe4**
31.Qf2xf7 **Nd4-f3+**

Or 31...Qd6xc5 32.Qf7-f6+.

32.Qf7xf3
Black resigned as 32...Qd6xc5+ 33.Qf3-f2 leaves White with the extra piece.

Kramnik seems to have been revitalised since losing his World title. The game below was typical of his very powerful play which resulted in a significant tournament victory for him.



Kramnik, V - Svidler, P Tal Memorial Moscow 2009

12.h2-h4

An interesting new idea cooked up in Kramnik's home kitchen. It looks dangerous to start attacking with White's king still in the middle, but as Black's pieces are situated on the edge of the board it is not easy for Black to exploit this.

12... **f7-f5**

Blocking White's pawn with 12...h7-h5 looks logical, but 13.Nf3-g5 settles White's knight into a handy spot. Peter decides to break open the kingside activating his pieces, but weakening his king's defences.

13.e4xf5 **Bg4xf5**
14.h4-h5 **Ra8-d8**
15.h5xg6 **Bf5xg6**
16.Be3-h6

Another aggressive decision

which is vindicated in the game; the solid 16.Bf1-d3 completing development was less ambitious.

16... **Bg7xh6**
17.Rh1xh6 **Rf8-f6**
18.Nf3-e5 **Qa5-a4**

Svidler hurries to exchange queens as his king is in serious danger; 18...b7-b5 19.Ne5xg6 h7xg6 20.Qd2-g5 Rd8-d6 21.Bf1-d3 Kg8-g7 22.Qg5-h4 with a decisive attack is a good example of the dangers facing Black.

19.Qd2-e3 **Qa4-f4**
20.Qe3xf4 **Rf6xf4**
21.Ne5xg6 **h7xg6**
22.Rh6xg6+ **Kg8-f7**

Kramnik has won a pawn and now demonstrates exemplary technique, co-ordinating his pieces masterfully.

23.Rg6-g5 **Rf4-e4+**

At some stage Black's knight has to get involved in the action, so 23...Na6-c7 seems indicated; in the game it remains a spectator to the end.

24.Bf1-e2 **Kf7-f6**
25.Rg5-h5 **Kf6-g6**
26.g2-g4 **Rd8-f8**
27.Rc1-d1 **Rf8-f6**
28.Rh5-h8

Having drawn Black's rook forward with the idea of d5-d6 Vladimir now seizes the opportunity to create problems on the recently vacated eighth rank.

28... **Kg6-g7**
29.Rh8-d8 **Rf6-b6**
30.f2-f3 **Re4-e3**
31.Rd1-d3 **Re3-e5**
32.Ke1-f2 **Rb6-h6**

Svidler keeps on trying to pose problems with his rooks, but Kramnik gradually defuses the threats.

33.Be2-f1 **Rh6-h2+**
34.Kf2-g3 **Rh2xa2**
35.d5-d6 **e7xd6**
36.Rd3xd6 **Re5-e7**
37.Rd6-d7

Black resigned as 37...Re7xd7 (37...Kg7-f6 38.g4-g5+ Kf6-e6 39.Bf1-c4+ wins the house) 38.Rd8xd7+ Kg7-f6 39.Rd7xb7 is hopeless.

See Michael Adams in action against Kramnik and Carlsen at the London Chess Classic on December 8-15. Tickets from londonchessclassic.com

Michael Adams



Taxing moves: accounts from the archives

I first got to know Michael Stean when he captained the England Olympiad team in Manila in 1992 and we have kept in touch ever since, meeting up regularly for a curry and pint.

While he no longer plays, he remains an active spectator, actually going to tournaments rather than just following online, and it is always a happy surprise when he pops up as a visitor to a tournament, often in some unlikely location.

Most recently he made a shorter journey to the Staunton Memorial where he had a chance to catch up with his old friend Victor Korchnoi, who he once ably seconded. In his chess afterlife he has pursued a successful career as a tax accountant and is a partner with Baker Tilly, where he numbers the odd chess player among his clients.

We start with a game of his on the black side of the Sicilian where some subtle manoeuvring pays dividends followed by a couple of direct attacks.

Earlier in the game White 'won' the exchange for a pawn, which has turned out to be a deeply regrettable decision. With the two bishops raking White's denuded kingside there are lots of good possibilities. Stean exploits his advantages by slowly improving the position of his pieces, probing White's shaky edifice until he brings it to its knees. First of all he transfers his queen over to the kingside.

- 24... Qc6-d7
- 25.Ra1-e1 Qd7-e7
- 26.Qg2-g3 Qe7-h4
- 27.Kh1-g2 g6-g5

Seizing the opportunity to force the knight off its handy post.

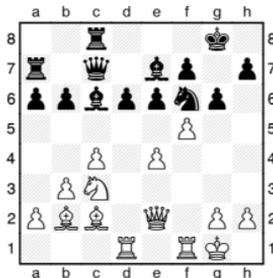
- 28.Nf4-h3 f7-f6
- 29.Re1-e2 Ne5-g6

By now direct action with 29...d6-d5 was also rather appealing, but Stean continues to find even better squares for his knight and bishop.

- 30.Re2-e1 Bb6-d4
- 31.c2-c3 Bd4-e5
- 32.Qg3xh4 Rh8xh4
- 33.Rf1-h1 Rh4xh3

Finally a simple tactic wraps up the game.

- 34.Kg2xh3 Ng6-f4+
- 35.Kh3-g4 Nf4xh3
- 36.Re1-e2 f6-f5+
- 0-1



Stean, M - Filguth, R Sao Paulo 1979

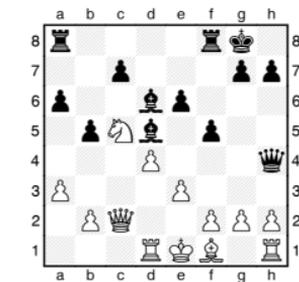
18... g6xf5
Black's position looks rather unhealthy, but 18...Rc8-e8 might have hung on for a bit.

19.Nc3-d5
Filguth was expecting 19.e4xf5 e6-e5 blocking the position, but this thematic sacrifice blocks Black's forces on the queenside, while White's pieces storm the ramparts on the other side of the board.

19... Nf6xd5
The alternative 19...e6xd5 20.e4xd5 Bc6-a8 21.Bc2xf5 Rc8-b8 22.Qe2-d2 leads to

a major discrepancy in the effectiveness of the respective armies.

- 20.e4xd5 Bc6xd5
 - 21.Rd1xd5
- Of course not, 21.c4xd5 Qc7xc2 letting Black's forces into the action.
- 21... e6xd5
 - 22.Bc2xf5 Qc7-c5+
- 22...Kg8-f8 23.Qe2-g4 is still decisive.
- 23.Kg1-h1 d5-d4
 - 24.Qe2-g4+ 1-0



Ilic, Z - Stean, M Lloyds Bank London, 1983

This is the last game I have for Stean on my database, which was an opening triumph for the Queens Indian defence. Having achieved a dream attacking position he finishes the game crisply.

- 17.Rd1-d2 Bd6xc5
- 18.Qc2xc5 f5-f4
- 19.Qc5-c3 c7-c6
- 20.Ke1-d1 a6-a5

The king isn't any safer on the queenside.

21.Qc3-c2
Ilic would have survived a bit longer with 21.e3xf4 Rf8xf4 22.g2-g3 Qh4-f6 23.g3xf4 Bd5xh1 although the shattered pawn structure means the result is not in doubt.

- 21... f4xe3
- 22.f2xe3 a5-a4
- 23.Kd1-c1 Bd5-b3

24.g2-g3
Forced due to 24.Qc2-d3 Qh4-e1+.

24... Qh4-f6
White resigned as 25.Qc2-c3 Qf6xf1+ or 25.Qc2-d3 Bb3-c4 win immediately.

See Michael Adams in action against Kramnik and Carlsen at the London Chess Classic on December 8-15. Tickets from londonchessclassic.com



Sax, G - Stean, M European Team Championship Moscow 1977

Chess

December 5th 2009

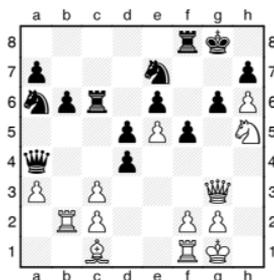
Michael Adams



Anand squares up in Moscow

Viswanathan Anand, who is a renowned speed merchant, set the pace on the opening day of the World Blitz Championships held in the GUM Shopping Centre in Moscow.

Here is his attractive second-round victory against a former winner of this event.



Anand, V - Ivanchuk, V
World Blitz Moscow 2009

21.Qg3-h4

Anand targets the vulnerable dark squares.

21... **Rf8-f7**
22.Nh5-f6+ **Kg8-h8**

Surprisingly, the king would have been safer nearer the centre, 22...Kg8-f8 was correct, preventing the powerful knight transfer Anand now executes.

23.Nf6-e8 **Ne7-g8**
24.Ne8-d6

24.Qh4-d8 inserting White's queen into the heart of Black's position was the simplest way to win.

24... **Rf7-f8**

After 24...Rf7-d7 Anand would have needed to find the beautiful 25.Qh4-d8 Rc6xd6 26.Qd8-f8 when the threat of Bc1-g5 intending Bg5-f6 mate can't be adequately met by Black's entangled army.

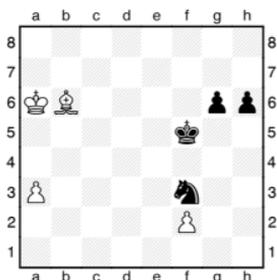
25.Qh4-d8 **Rc6-c8**

If the queen is captured 25...Rf8xd8 26.Nd6-f7 is a rare mate to see in practice.

26.Qd8xc8

Black resigned as 26...Rf8xc8 27.Nd6-f7 is mate.

Anand was gradually overhauled by Magnus Carlsen, and they finished against the option of covering their opponent's passers. Carlsen won both their individual games, which were combative affairs. In their first encounter below, despite the reduced material, the endgame is very complicated, with both sides having to weigh the possibilities of advancing their own passed pawns against the option of covering their opponents passers.



Carlsen, M - Anand, V
World Blitz Moscow 2009

60... **Nf3-d2**

Anand missed his opportunity here: he should have pushed his passed pawn as Black is ahead in the race following 60...h6-h5 61.Bb6-c7 Nf3-e5 62.f2-f4 (62.Ka6-b5 h5-h4 and the pawn can no longer be stopped) 62...Kf5xf4 63.Ka6-b5 h5-h4 64.Bc7-b6 h4-h3 65.Bb6-g1 Ne5-f3.

61.a3-a4 **Nd2-c4**

By now the pendulum had swung the other way and only the very precise 61...g6-g5 62.Ka6-b5 Kf5-e6 63.a4-a5 Ke6-d7 64.a5-a6 Kd7-c8 would save the game. The more natural 61...h6-h5 62.Ka6-b5 Kf5-e6 63.a4-a5 Ke6-d7 64.a5-a6 Kd7-c8 65.Bb6-e3 Nd2-f3 66.Be3-f4 fails as it is essential to control the f4-square.

62.Ka6-b5 **Nc4-d6+**

After 62...Nc4xb6 63.Kb5xb6, White promotes first.

63.Kb5-c6 **Nd6-c4**

64.Kc6-c5 **Nc4-d2**

65.Kc5-d5

Keeping Black's king away from the pawn, but the subtle 65.Kc5-b5 was stronger.

65...Kf5-e6 (65...Nd2-b3 66.Kb5-b4 is the point gaining a crucial tempo.) 66.a4-a5 Ke6-d7 67.a5-a6 Kd7-c8 68.Bb6-e3 Nd2-e4 69.Be3-f4 and the pawn can't be prevented from queening.

65... **Nd2-b3**

66.Kd5-c4 **Nb3-d2+**

67.Kc4-b4

67.Kc4-b5 as above was still possible.

67... **h6-h5**

Black had to play 67...Kf5-e6 68.Bb6-e3 Nd2-e4 69.f2-f3 Ne4-d6 70.Be3xh6 when the battle continues. If 67...Nd2-e4 with precise play White can shepherd his pawn home: 68.a4-a5 Ne4-d6 69.a5-a6 Nd6-c8 70.Kb4-b5 h6-h5 71.Kb5-c6 h5-h4 72.Bb6-c7 Kf5-e6 73.Bc7-h2 g6-g5 74.Kc6-c7 Nc8-a7 75.Kc7-b7 Na7-b5 76.Kb7-b6. Anand's move is a blunder and now the pawn touches down unopposed.

68.a4-a5 **Kf5-e6**

69.a5-a6

1-0

The overall standard of play was very high, but there were inevitably a few accidents such as the game below:



Gashimov, V - Kramnik, V
World Blitz Moscow 2009

14.Bg5xe7

After 14.Qf3-a3 there is all to play for.

14... **Bg7-h6+**

White resigned as he must give up his queen to prevent mate.

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Chess

December 12th 2009

Michael Adams



Kasparov hit by the shock of the new

The Noughties started with a bang and the herald of a new era as, after an extended run as top dog, Garry Kasparov relinquished his World title to Vladimir Kramnik in a match held in London in November 2000.

Almost as big a shock as the result was the fact that Kasparov was not able to win a single game as Vladimir won by the dry score of 2-0 with 13 draws. Vlad confirmed his reputation as a very resourceful match player by completing a couple of successful defences of the title when Topalov blundered in the game below:



Kramnik, V - Topalov, V
World Championship play-off Elista 2006

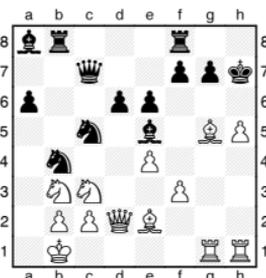
44... **Rc2xc5**
45.Rb6-b7+

Black resigned as he loses a rook after 45..Ra7xb7 46.Ra5xc5+.

Kasparov returned to the business of winning tournaments, at which he remained successful, but, unable to secure the

rematch and running out of goals to kick, he retired from chess in 2005 and turned his full attention to the world of Russian politics.

I had the dubious honour of being the last victim of his serious chess career.



Adams, M - Kasparov, G
Linares 2005

22... **Nb4xc2**
23.Nb3xc5 **Nc2-a3+**
24.Kb1-a2

If 24.Kb1-c1 Qc7xc5 regains the piece.

24... **Qc7xc5**
25.Nc3-a4 **Na3-c2**

Not the only way to win, but a neat finesse.

26.Ka2-b1

The queen is untouchable due to 26.Na4xc5 Rb8xb2 mate.

26... **Qc5-a3**

I resigned as 26...Qc5-a3 27.Qd2xc2 Rf8-c8 28.Qc2-d2 (28.Qc2xc8 Rb8xb2+ 29.Kb1-c1 Qa3-a1 mate) 28..Qa3xa4 is hopeless.

Garry's involvement with chess has increased of late as he has dusted off his database to further boost Magnus Carlsen's unstoppable rise.

At the start of the decade, Carlsen was a nine-year-old schoolboy, totally unknown throughout the chess world, and at the end he has already hit the No.1 spot in the rankings. Many other youngsters also occupy lofty spots, faster time controls and more opportunities to play both online and over

the board having hastened their ascent. Another spur to their advancement has been the growth in strength of computer engines and hardware over the last decade, as well as the refinement of Chess software which has changed the game forever.

The Man-Machine format, which was popular for a while, has been decided in favour of the latter, with Kramnik's defeat against Deep Fritz in 2006 being the last high-profile encounter of this nature.

Paradoxically, the World title is held by 40-year-old Viswanathan Anand, who scored an unusual triple crown culminating in his win against Vladimir Kramnik. He has now won the title in knockout, all-play-all and match formats.

Whilst we can admire this achievement, FIDE's efforts as organisers provoke the opposite reaction. A plethora of short-lived formats, random rule changes and chronic instability have done little to attract commercial sponsors into the game.

The first game given above concluded the long desired unification match, yet the World Championship cycle remains as clear as mud. Whilst it is natural for geographical areas where the game is popular to host more than their fair share of events, for a worldwide game in which more than 100 countries compete in the Chess Olympiad, it is to be hoped that the current glut of events in the Caucasus will expand to the rest of the globe in the future.

See Michael Adams in action against Kramnik and Carlsen at the London Chess Classic, which finishes on Tuesday. Tickets from londonchessclassic.com

Michael Adams



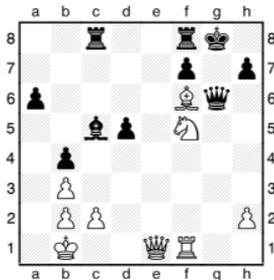
Christmas chess quiz challenge

Afraid that too much Christmas partying has affected your brain function? Gee up your grey matter with this Chess Trivia quiz. The answers will appear here next week. Good luck and have a very Happy Christmas!

1 A controversial picture came to light this year purporting to show two of the world's most infamous men playing each other at chess, who are they?

2 What is the connection between BBC's Eggheads and the English Chess Federation.

3



Stets, D - Oleksienko, M Lvov 2009

How did White to play conclude proceedings?

4 Which charismatic player made front pages worldwide for an incident at a tournament in India this year?

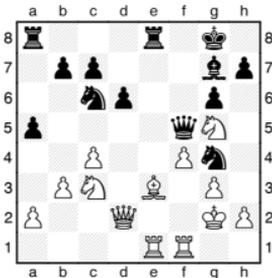
5 One game was played early during the Staunton Memorial tournament in London this year. Whose game was it and why and what is the connection to U2?

6 What was unusual about the match held between Devon and Cornwall earlier this year and who was the winner? Clue: a popular result for your columnist.

7 Which retired player was revealed to be training the unstoppable Magnus Carlsen this year?

- a Eric Lobron
- b Joel Lautier
- c Garry Kasparov
- d Jeroen Piket

8



Jirka, J - Tkachiev, V European Club Cup Ohrid 2009

How did Tkachiev exploit White's loose pieces?

9 One young player had an extremely busy year. He got married to a Ukrainian WGM, changed his federation and also won a super tournament. Who was it?

10 The list of chess players crossing over into the world of poker continues to grow. A chess player known in the poker world as "chessbaby" recently had a big payday in a World Series event in Las Vegas, making all the way to the final table. Was it:

- a Elizabeth Paehtz?
- b Almira Skripchenko?
- c Alexandra Kosteniuk?
- d Viktoria Cmilyte?

11 The World Simul Record has for some time been in dispute, as there were those who claimed that Susan Polgar's tally of 350 boards was not recognised by Guinness which left Andrew Martin the holder at 321.

That is all behind us now as there has been a new successful challenge this year. Who is the new record-holder and what does the record now stand at?

12 Who was David Howell's second at World Junior?

- a Danny Gormally
- b Nigel Short
- c Rybka
- d Jan Timman
- e David Norwood

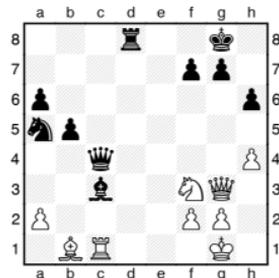
13 Who was the youngest player on the Experience Team in this year's Age versus Experience extravaganza in Amsterdam?

14 Where is the Chess Hall of Fame located?

- a Elista, Kalmykia
- b Moscow, Russia
- c Hastings, UK
- d Miami, USA
- e Linares, Spain

15 FIDE president Kirsan Ilyumzhinov claims to have visited aliens on their spacecraft, but who played a game from space this year in more verifiable circumstances?

16



Babula, V - Rublevsky, S European Club Cup Ohrid 2009

What is Black's best move here?

17 Which of the following is not a chess opening:

- a The Rat?
- b The Hedgehog?
- c The Stoat?
- d The Vulture?

18 Which fictional television character said "...and that's how we can go from a chess computer to the apocalypse in just four years."?

- a Denny Crane - Boston Legal
- b John Connor - The Sarah Connor Chronicles
- c Jack Bauer - 24
- d Benjamin Linus - Lost
- e Lester Freamon - The Wire

Michael Adams



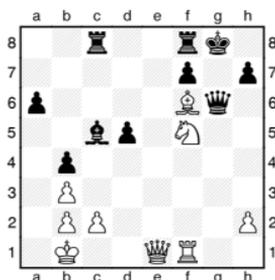
Christmas quiz: the answers

Did you navigate your way safely through last week's questions? No doubt the suspense has been killing you but fear not, now all is revealed! Happy New Year!

1 An image of Hitler playing a game of chess against Lenin in 1909 surfaced this year. It is attributed to Hitler's art teacher Emma Lowerstramm but doubt surrounds its authenticity.

2 CJ de Mooi of BBC's *Eggheads*, became president of the ECF this year.

3



Stets, D - Oleksienko, M Lvov 2009

31.Rf1-g1

Black resigned as after 31...Qg6xg1 32.Qe1xg1+ Bc5xg1 White has a pleasant choice between 33.Nf5-e7 mate or 33.Nf5-h6 mate.

4 Vladislav Tkachiev arrived the worse for wear for a game in the tournament in Kolkata and promptly fell asleep. After a furore he was ejected from the hall and his game forfeited.

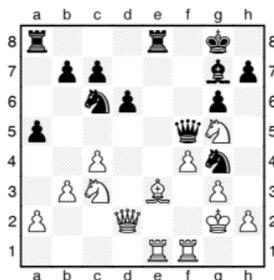
5 The battle of the Lukes, Van Wely v. McShane was played

early during the Staunton as McShane had a job interview to go to. Van Wely took advantage of the predicted early finish to take in a U2 concert in the evening.

6 At the British Championships this year, a publicity match was staged between Devon v. Cornwall in a hot air balloon and was won by Andrew Greet for Cornwall.

7 Multiple ex-champion Garry Kasparov emerged this year as the figure behind the training of Magnus Carlsen.

8



Jirka, J - Tkachiev, V European Club Cup Ohrid 2009

Here Tkachiev gave up the exchange to set up a monster fork following

20... Re8xe3
21.Re1xe3 Qf5-c2
22.Re3-e2 Qc2xd2
23.Re2xd2 Ng4-e3+
White resigned.

9 Sergey Karjakin had a very busy year. He won the super tournament in Wijk aan Zee, changed his federation from the Ukraine to Russia and also found time to get married to WGM Kateryna Dolzhikova.

10 Almira Skripchenko, also known as "Chessbaby" in poker circles, recently made it to the final table at a World Series of Poker event in Las Vegas winning \$76,664. Tremendous effort!

11 In February Kiril Georgiev broke the World Simul Record playing against 360 boards. His score was 284 wins, 70 draws and 6 loses. Another record attempt is already planned so he had better enjoy it while it lasts!

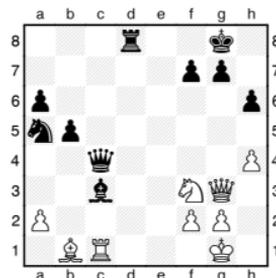
12 Nigel Short was David Howell's second at the World Junior Championships in Argentina.

13 Peter Svidler was the youngest member of the Experience Team at the ripe old age of 33.

14 The chess hall of fame is, slightly improbably, in Miami, Florida.

15 Astronaut Christer Fuglesang took on the people of Sweden in a match played from the International Space Station (he lost). This was the second time that the ISS has been the venue for one side of the board as astronaut Greg Chamitoff also played a match from there last year against... Earth!

16



Babula, V - Rublevsky, S European Club Cup Ohrid 2009

Here Rublevsky used the juxtaposition of major pieces on the 'c' line to his advantage by playing:

26... Bc3-e5
which forced White to resign as 27.Rc1xc4 (or 27.Qg3xe5 Qc4xc1+) 27...Rd8-d1+ 28.Kg1-h2 Be5xg3+ 29.Kh2xg3 Na5xc4 win trivially.

17 The Rat, The Hedgehog and the The Vulture are all openings. The Stoat, so far as I know, is not.

18 In *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*, John Connor says "and that's how we can go from a chess computer to the apocalypse in just four years." Referring to the chess computer The Turk, later becoming Skynet. In the show, the Turk was stolen by an Armenian named Sarkissian... hmm.