

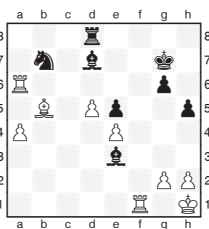
Michael Adams



McShane's smart tactics in Toronto

Luke McShane has continued his successful North American tour, moving on from the World Open in Philadelphia to the Canadian Open in Toronto, and is leading the field as I write.

Here we see him expertly marshalling his two minor pieces as his small but influential army overcomes his opponent's less nimble forces.



Shabalov, A - McShane, L
Toronto 2010

39... **Nb7-c5**

39...Bd7xb5 40.a4xb5 Nb7-c5 was also interesting.

40.Ra6-a7 **Kg7-h6**

41.Bb5xd7 **Nc5xd7**

42.Ra7-c7 **h5-h4**

A crucial move, now White's king will be gasping for air for the rest of the game.

43.Rc7-c3

43.g2-g3 h4-h3 leaves the monarch stuck in the corner, maybe 43.Rf1-e1 was a better idea.

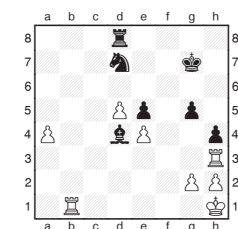
43... **Be3-d4**

44.Rc3-h3 **Kh6-g7**

45.Rf1-b1

After 45.Rh3xh4 Nd7-f6 the awkwardly placed rook will have to spend a lot of time and material to get back into the action.

45... **g6-g5**



46.g2-g3

Another option was

46.Rh3-b3 Nd7-c5

47.Rb3-b8 aiming for the desirable rook swap.

46... **Nd7-c5**

47.g3xh4 **Nc5xe4**

48.Rh3-f3

This was the moment for White's king to make a break for it. 48.Kh1-g2 gave good drawing chances. Not 48.h4xg5 Ne4-f2+.

48... **g5xh4**

49.Kh1-g2

After 49.Rb1-e1 Ne4-c3

50.Kh1-g2 Nc3xd5

51.Kg2-h3 Nd5-f4+

52.Kh3xh4 Nf4-g2+ is an unpleasant sting in the tail.

49... **Kg7-h6**

50.Rf3-d3

50.Rb1-f1 would have been a tougher defence.

50... **Rd8-g8+**

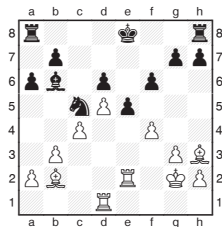
51.Kg2-f3 **Rg8-f8+**

White resigned as

52.Kf3-g2 (52.Kf3xe4

Rf8-f4 is mate) 52...Rf8-f2+

53.Kg2-h1 Rf2-a2 drives the king back into the box.



Betaneli, A - Song, M

Toronto 2010

22... **Ra8-d8**

After 22...a6-a5 securing the post of his well-placed knight, Black wasn't in bad shape.

23.b3-b4 **Nc5-a4**

23...Nc5-d7 24.c4-c5 isn't pleasant, but it's a lot better than the game.

24.f4xe5 **f6xe5**

25.Bb2xe5

With the knight sidelined, this sacrifice runs like clockwork.

25... **d6xe5**

25...0-0 was objectively better, now White forces mate with a series of checks.

26.Re2xe5+ **Ke8-f7**

27.Rd1-f1+ **Kf7-g6**

Or 27...Kf7-g8 28.Bh3-e6 mate.

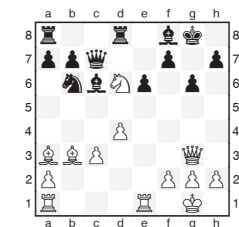
28.Re5-e6+ **Kg6-h5**

29.Rf1-f5+ **g7-g5**

30.g3-g4+

Black resigned as

30...Kh5-h4 31.Re6-h6 is mate.



Ashton, A - Stephens, P

Toronto 2010

19.Re1xe6

This impressive blow caused Black's resistance to collapse, although he still has plenty of defensive resources.

19... **Nb6-c8**

The rook can't be captured as 19...f7xe6 20.Bb3xe6+

Kg8-h8 (20...Kg8-g7

21.Qg3-e5+ Kg7-h6

22.Ba3-c1+ leads to

mate) 21.Nd6-f7+ Qc7xf7

22.Be6xf7 leaves Black with insufficient material, the

bishop can't be taken due

to 22...Bf8xa3 23.Qg3-e5

mate. Black had two good

continuations, both blocking

white's powerful bishop:

19...Bc6-d5 20.Re6-f6

Bd5xb3 21.a2xb3 Nb6-d5

22.Rf6xf7 Qc7xc3 or

19...Nb6-d5 20.Bb3xd5

Bc6xd5 21.Re6-e5 Qc7-c6

give Black an edge. Now

Ashton finishes in style.

20.Re6xg6+ **h7xg6**

21.Qg3xg6+ **Bf8-g7**

22.Nd6-f5

1-0