

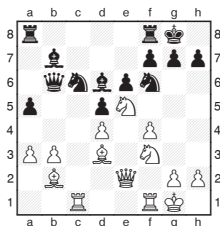
Michael Adams



Tales from Canterbury

I normally enjoy following the British Championship games on the Internet, but this year took a more hands on role: as one of the nine grandmaster participants.

I got off to a fast start with a run of five wins.



Slavin, A - Adams, M
British Championship
Canterbury 2010

17... Bd6xe5

Precise action is required as 17...Ra8-c8 18.Nf3-g5 enables 18...Nc6xd4 to be met with the pinning 19.Qe2-f2 and threatens amongst other things 19.Ne5-d7. Swapping pieces reduces White's attacking potential.

18.f4xe5

It was better to simplify the position 18.Nf3xe5 Nc6xe5 19.f4xe5 Nf6-e4 20.Bd3xe4 d5xe4 21.Qe2-e3 Bb7-d5 22.Rc1-c3 leaves Black a little better, but the position is drawish. With more material remaining, White's structural problems and dodgy dark-squared bishop become more relevant.

18... Nf6-e4
19.Bd3xe4 d5xe4
20.Nf3-g5

Black has massive compensation for the pawn after 20.Qe2xe4 Nc6-e7 21.Qe4-c2 Ra8-c8 22.Bb2-c3 Ne7-f5, but this had to be tried.

20... Nc6xd4
21.Bb2xd4

The discovered check takes the sting out of any initiative: 21.Qe2-h5 h7-h6 22.Rf1xf7 Nd4-f3+ 23.Kg1-h1 Nf3xg5; or 21.Qe2-f2 Nd4-e2+.

21... Qb6xd4+
22.Kg1-h1 h7-h6

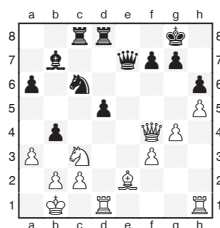
22...Qd4xe5 23.Qe2-h5 h7-h6 24.Rf1xf7 Bb7-d5 also does the job.

23.Ng5xf7

Now the weak back-rank comes back to haunt White, but 23.Rf1-d1 Qd4xe5 24.Ng5-f3 Qe5-h5 was also hopeless.

23... Rf8xf7
24.Rf1xf7 Kg8xf7
25.Rc1-c7+ Kf7-g8
26.Rc7xb7 Qd4-a1+
0-1

This sharp encounter below was one of the most interesting in the first week and featured some very creative play.



Hunt, A - Wells, P
British Championship
Canterbury 2010

As Black's attack is a long way ahead of White's kingside action, Hunt tries an inspired sacrifice.

23.Be2-d3 b4xc3
24.Qf4-f5 Qe7-f6

It looks very dangerous to play 24...f7-f6, but it isn't easy to exploit the weakened white squares, 25.Qf5-h7+ Kg8-f8

26.Rh1-e1 (or 26.Qh7-h8+ Kf8-f7 27.Bd3-g6+ Kf7-e6) 26...Qe7-f7 lead nowhere. 25.g4-g5 is the best chance when 25...f6xg5 26.Rh1-e1 Qe7-f7 27.Qf5-h7+ Kg8-f8 28.Bd3-f5 Qf7-g8 29.Qh7-g6 continues to cause problems. The alternative, 25...h6xg5 26.Qf5-h7+ (26.f3-f4 is also interesting) 26...Kg8-f8 27.h5-h6 would certainly not be easy to meet over the board.

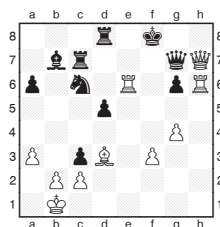
25.Qf5-h7+ Kg8-f8
26.Rd1-e1 g7-g5

If 26...Nc6-e5 27.f3-f4 is very strong.

27.h5xg6 Qf6-g7
28.Rh1xh6 f7xg6

29.Re1-e6
29.Qh7xg7+ Kf8xg7 30.Rh6xg6+ isn't bad, but this introduces another piece into the attack and ramps up the pressure on the defender.

29... Rc8-c7
29...Rd8-d7 should have been preferred.



30.Qh7xg6

Better was the neat tactic 30.Qh7-h8+ Qg7xh8 31.Rh6xh8+ Kf8-f7 32.Re6xc6 winning material and explaining the note above where this variation isn't possible as Black's rook would be defended by his bishop.

30... Qg7xg6
31.Re6xg6 Kf8-f7

A bad blunder after 31...Rc7-f7 Black should hang on for a draw.

32.Rh6-h7+ Kf7-f8
33.Rg6-f6+ Kf8-e8
34.Bd3-g6+
1-0