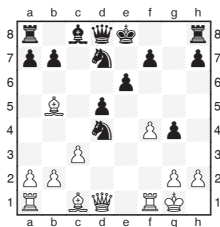


Michael Adams



Fired up by a Kiwi classic

Murray Chandler was for the third time the promoter and sponsor of the Queenstown Classic. The beauty of his native New Zealand inspired the players to a spectacular display of fighting chess.



S. Hansen - E. Schon
Queenstown 2012

15.Qd1xd4

It looks natural to keep queens on, but this recapture enables White to pick up the pace and target Black's king.

- 15...** Qd8-b6
16.Qd4xb6 a7xb6
17.f4-f5 Rh8-g8
18.Bc1-e3 Ke8-e7
19.f5xe6 f7xe6
20.c3-c4

Continuing to chip away at the pawn edifice.

- 20...** Nd7-c5
21.c4xd5

21.b2-b4 was more precise.

- 21...** e6xd5
22.b2-b4 Nc5-e4

Missing the opportunity to complete development with the finesse 22...Bc8-d7.

- 23.Ra1-c1** Ne4-d6
 23...Ra8xa2 24.Rc1-c7+
 Ke7-e6 25.Rc7xh7 was better, although it looks rather hazardous.

- 24.Rc1-c7+** Ke7-e6
25.Be3-d4

Now the king is completely cornered.

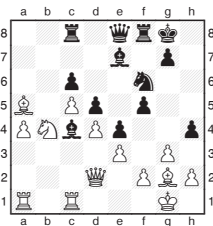
- 25...** Rg8-g6

26.Bb5-d3 Nd6-e4

27.Rf1-f8

Black resigned, as he is losing at least a piece. 27...Ra8xa2 28.Rf8-e8+ Ke6-d6 29.Bd4-e5 mate would have been a pretty conclusion.

A sharp encounter between two of the first-place finishers.



Li, Chao - Zhao, Xue
Queenstown 2012

White would like to push his extra pawn, but with storm clouds gathering on the kingside, first he takes some defensive precautions.

- 24.Rc1xc4** d5xc4
25.Bg2-f1 Nf6-h7
26.Nb4-c2

The knight wasn't doing much on the queenside, so it regroups to cover the vulnerable light squares.

- 26...** Nh7-g5
27.Nc2-e1 Qe8-h5
28.Ba5-b6 c4-c3
 28...Ng5-h3+ 29.Bf1xh3 h4xg3 was another intriguing option.

- 29.Qd2xc3** Kg8-h7
30.a4-a5 Qh5-g4

This feels too slow. 30...Kh7-g6 31.a5-a6 Rf8-h8 32.Ra1-a2 also leaves everything covered. I think the best is 30...h4xg3 31.f2xg3 Ng5-f3+ 32.Ne1xf3 e4xf3 33.Qc3-d2 Be7-g5, keeping up the pressure.

- 31.Qc3-d2** Ng5-e6
 Another step in the wrong direction.

- 32.Qd2-e2** Qg4-g6
33.Ne1-g2 Qg6-h6
34.a5-a6 h4-h3
35.Ng2-f4 Ne6-g5

35...Ne6xf4 36.e3xf4 isn't much better, but White is happy to swap queens.

36.Qe2-h5

37.Kg1-h1

38.Nf4xh5

White's knight has no squares for the moment, but it is not possible to trap the horse.

39.a6-a7

40.Bf1-a6

41.g3-g4

42.Nh5-g3

43.Ba6-c4

Even the last trap 43.Ba6-b7 Be7xc5 44.Bb7xa8 Bc5xb6 45.Ba8xc6 wins for White.

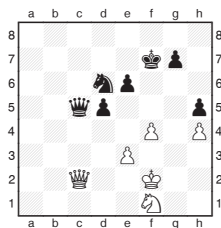
43...

44.Bc4-e6

45.Be6-f5+

1-0

Daryl Johansen had a good event to join the winners.



J. Dive - D. Johansen
Queenstown 2012

38.Qc2-h7

Due to his exposed king, White has more chances after 38.Qc2xc5 Nd6-e4+ 39.Kf2-f3 Ne4xc5.

- 38...** Nd6-e4+
39.Kf2-g1 Ne4-f6
40.Qh7-d3 Qc5-c1
41.Qd3-e2 Qc1-b1
42.Kg1-h2 Qb1-e4
43.Kh2-g3

43.Qe2-g2 was the last hope, now there is a neat finish.

- 43...** Qe4-h1
44.Qe2-g2
 44.Nf1-d2 Qh1-g1+ is also decisive.

- 44...** Nf6-e4+
45.Kg3-f3 Qh1xf1+

White resigned, as 46.Qg2xf1 Ne4-d2+ 47.Kf3-e2 Nd2xf1 48.Ke2xf1 Kf7-f6 49.Kf1-g2 Kf6-f5 50.Kg2-f3 e6-e5 51.f4xe5 Kf5xe5 52.Kf3-f2 Ke5-f5 53.Kf2-g3 g7-g5 wins.