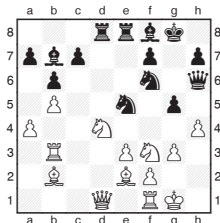


Michael Adams



Green kings of the 4NCL

Wood Green, for whom I played this year, clinched a sixth 4NCL in convincing fashion, winning all our matches and finishing five points ahead of our nearest rivals. The Four Nations league is great for UK chess, with almost all the highest-rated players featuring at some stage during the season.



A. Slavin - M. Turner
4NCL Hinckley 2012

21... Nf6-e4
This move provides superb entertainment, but the simple 21...Bb7xf3 22.Be2xf3 g5xh4 kept a big edge.

22.Nf3xe5 Re8xe5
23.Nd4-f5
White seizes the chance to fight back, exploiting the undefended rook.

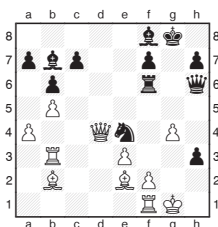
23... Re5xf5
24.Qd1xd8 g5xh4
25.Qd8-d4
White should have played 25.Qd8xh4 Qh6xh4 26.g3xh4 when his king is relatively safe and he is ahead on material. 26...Ne4-d2 27.e3-e4 is an important counter-thrust.

25... Rf5-f6
This looks much more solid than 25...f7-f6, but Black's attack is more potent there

after 26.Qd4-d7 h4xg3 27.f2xg3 Rf5-g5 28.Be2-g4 Rg5-g6.

26.g3-g4
It was very difficult to navigate the complications, best was 26.Be2-f3 Ne4-d2 (26...h4xg3 27.f2xg3 Qh6-g6 28.g3-g4 is unclear) 27.Qd4xd2 (Not 27.Bf3xb7 h4xg3 winning) 27...h4xg3 28.f2xg3 Rf6xf3 29.Rf1xf3 Bb7xf3 30.Qd2-h2 with all to play for.

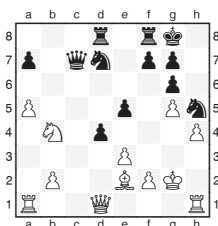
26... h4-h3



27.Kg1-h2
Now there is no defence: 27.Qd4-e5 Bf8-d6 28.Qe5-e8+ Kg8-g7 29.Be2-f3 h3-h2+ 30.Kg1-g2 Ne4xf2 also breaches the barricades.

27... Rf6xf2+
28.Rf1xf2 Bf8-d6+
29.Rf2-f4 Bd6xf4+
30.e3xf4 Qh6xf4+
31.Kh2xh3 Ne4-f2+
32.Kh3-h4
32.Qd4xf2 Qf4xf2 is hopeless so White allows a pretty conclusion.

32... Qf4-h6+
33.Kh4-g3 Nf2-h1 mate



K. Arkell - N. Pert
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White's opening has not been a success, his king is indisposed and Black's forces are well centralised.

25.Nb4-d5
It looks logical to centralise the knight, but 25.Ra1-c1 was a better try.

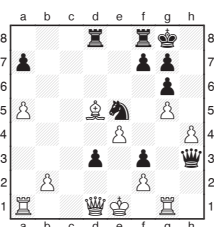
25... Qc7-d6
26.e3-e4 Nh5-f4+
27.Nd5xf4 e5xf4

This is the problem: the exchange has opened a great spot for Black's knight.

28.Be2-c4
It looks tempting to establish the bishop in the centre, but it is required for defensive duties, so the unpleasant 28.Qd1-d2 Nd7-c5 had to be tried.

28... Nd7-e5
29.Bc4-d5 f4-f3+
Establishing such an imposing pawn doesn't bode well for White.

30.Kg2-g1 Qd6-d7
31.Kg1-f1 Qd7-g4
32.Rh1-g1 Qg4-h3+
33.Kf1-e1 d4-d3



34.Qd1-d2 Qh3-h2
35.Ke1-f1

The more natural 35.Rg1-f1 is refuted by the nifty tactical sequence: 35...Rd8xd5 36.e4xd5 Ne5-c4 37.Qd2-c3 (37.Qd2xd3 Rf8-e8+ 38.Ke1-d1 Nc4xb2+) 37...Rf8-e8+ 38.Ke1-d1 Nc4-e3+ 39.Kd1-d2 Ne3xf1+ 40.Ra1xf1 Qh2-f4+ 41.Kd2-d1 Qf4-a4+ 42.Kd1-d2 (42.Kd1-c1 Qa4-a1+) 42...Re8-e2+ 43.Kd2xd3 Qa4-e4 mate.

35... Rd8xd5
36.e4xd5 Rf8-e8
37.Qd2-e3 d3-d2
38.Rg1-g3
and White resigned as 38...Qh2-h1+ 39.Rg3-g1 Qh1-h3+ is a bit awkward.