

Michael Adams

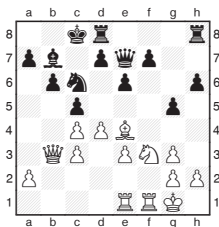


It's London Classic time again

Today sees the first round of the London Chess Classic, which runs from now until December 10. Tickets are available at londonchessclassic.com with free entry for accompanied juniors.

As usual there is a wide range of activities and events, including a simultaneous display by GM Nigel Short and an all-comers Blitz Challenge versus GM John Emms.

Vladimir Kramnik will be back to defend his title, and was in good form leading the Russian team at the Olympiad:



V. Kramnik - A. Naiditsch
Istanbul Olympiad 2012

The position is very complex, with both kings on opposite sides of the board creating the option to mount a pawn storm against the opposing monarch. However with the centre still fluid there are also other factors to consider.

15... f7-f6

It was safer to play 15...Nc6-a5, as the knight would play a handy role preventing Black's queenside becoming undermined as in the game.

16.Be4xc6

In general, parting with White's bishop is not a good plan, but here it proves very strong, as White is able to grab the initiative with Black's forces disorganised.

16... d7xc6

The alternative 16...Bb7xc6 17.d4-d5 Bc6-b7 18.e3-e4 leaves the bishop biting on granite, and White ready to advance his 'a' pawn breaching the queenside.

17.a2-a4 c5xd4

18.e3xd4 c6-c5

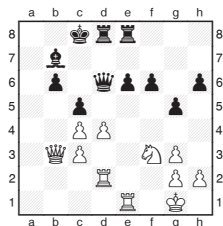
The bishop comes back to life, but the exchanges mean the pawn edifice around the King is being eroded.

19.a4-a5 Qe7-d6

20.a5xb6 a7xb6

21.Rf1-f2 Rh8-e8

22.Rf2-d2



22... e6-e5

The fatal error allowing the bishop to be decisively shut out of the action. Although Black's pawns look shaky, it was better to play the cool 22...h6-h5 trying to create some kingside play.

23.d4-d5 e5-e4

24.Rd2-e2 f6-f5

25.g3-g4

Naiditsch must have underestimated this thrust. Now his position swiftly disintegrates.

25... f5xg4

25...Qd6-d7 26.Nf3-d2 is no better.

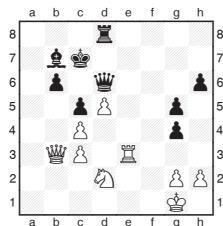
26.Nf3-d2 e4-e3

27.Re2xe3 Re8xe3

28.Re1xe3 Kc8-c7

After 28...Qd6-f4 29.Re3-e2, all the entry squares are

covered and Black is unable to generate any threats.



29.Re3-e6

Accurately calculated, it appears that giving up the queen allows some drawing chances, but the Black king is too exposed for a miracle save.

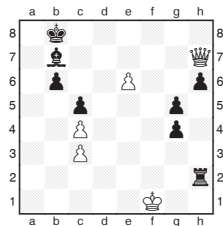
29... Qd6xe6

30.d5xe6 Rd8xd2

31.Qb3-b1 Rd2xg2+

32.Kg1-f1 Rg2xh2

33.Qb1-h7+ Kc7-b8



34.e6-e7

34.Qh7-h8+ Kb8-a7 35.Qh8-e5 also wins simply.

34... Bb7-c6

35.Qh7-g8+ Kb8-b7

35...Kb8-c7 36.Qg8-d8+

Kc7-b7 37.e7-e8Q Bc6xe8

38.Qd8-e7+ is no better.

36.Qg8-f7 Rh2-h1+

37.Kf1-e2 Rh1-h2+

38.Ke2-e1 Rh2-h1+

39.Ke1-d2 Rh1-h2+

40.Kd2-c1 Kb7-a6

More checks only delay the inevitable. Black's loose rook is destined to drop off as in the line 40...Rh2-h1+ 41.Kc1-b2 Rh1-h2+ 42.Kb2-a3 Kb7-a6 43.e7-e8Q Bc6xe8 44.Qf7xe8 Ka6-b7 45.Qe8-d7+ Kb7-a6 46.Qd7-c8+ Ka6-a7 47.Qc8-c7+.

41.e7-e8Q Bc6xe8

42.Qf7xe8

1-0