

Michael Adams



London still stuck in the slow lane

When I moved from Cornwall to the Big Smoke and first began participating in the London League, I was confused to learn that games were still adjourned and played to a finish on another day. The Cornish League and most others had already moved on to rapidplay finishes quite some time before.

It is even more surprising to me that, in the London competition, in many games adjournments are still used. Despite these antiquated rules, many strong players participate - notably the perennial 4NCL powerhouse Wood Green. Their main challengers over the last few seasons have been the team with the best name in chess, Drunken Knights.

Games from this competition rarely make it into chess databases, but I was shown this attractive encounter by the winner. We should show a little sympathy for the loser. Playing Black against Gawain Jones is not an easy task at any time, but like many players Jonathan Parker would have rushed directly to the board from the office having already completed one full day's work.

G. Jones - J. Parker
London League 2009

1.e2-e4 **d7-d6**
2.d2-d4 **Ng8-f6**
3.Nb1-c3 **e7-e5**
4.Ng1-f3 **Nb8-d7**
5.g2-g4

A brilliant invention of Alexei Shirov. White often expands on the kingside in this line so he does so immediately.

5... Nf6xg4

Grabbing the pawn is the critical test, but now White's pieces get activated very quickly.

6.Rh1-g1 **Ng4-f6**
7.Bf1-c4 **h7-h6**
8.d4xe5 **d6xe5**
9.Qd1-d3 **c7-c6**
10.Bc1-e3



10... b7-b5

The dangers facing Black are exemplified by the line 10...Qd8-c7 11.Bc4xf7+ Ke8xf7 12.Qd3-c4+ Kf7-e8 13.Qc4-e6+ Ke8-d8 14.O-O-O when he is completely paralysed.

11.Bc4-b3 **Qd8-e7**

It isn't natural to move pieces away from the centre, but 11...Bc8-a6 12.O-O-O Qd8-a5 was worth considering.

12.O-O-O **a7-a6**

Black should have played 12...Bc8-b7, giving his king the option to flee to the queenside. He isn't given another chance, as White takes immediate action, leaving his king left stranded in the centre.

13.Nf3-h4 **g7-g6**
14.Rg1xg6 **f7xg6**
15.Nh4xg6 **Qe7-h7**

After 15...Qe7-g7, White also disdainfully ignores the

Black rook with 16.Ng6xe5.



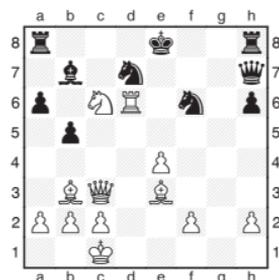
16.Ng6xe5

A great move. Maintaining the initiative is more important than grabbing the rook. 16.Ng6xh8 Qh7xh8 isn't bad for Black, 16.Ng6xf8 Rh8xf8 17.Qd3-d6 was also tempting, but any material reduction is welcome for the defender.

16... Bf8-b4

16...Bf8-e7 was better, but the position is dangerous for Black with most of his pieces slumbering, 17.Ne5-f7 Nf6-g4 18.Nc3-d5 c6xd5 19.Qd3xd5 Ra8-b8 20.Be3-a7 Rh8-f8 21.Qd5-c6 Rf8xf7 22.Ba7xb8 is one entertaining finish, leaving Black helpless.

17.Ne5xc6 **Bb4xc3**
18.Qd3xc3 **Bc8-b7**
19.Rd1-d6



Black resigned. Although this appears premature, his position is completely hopeless despite the extra material, as can be seen by the lines: 19...Ra8-c8 20.Rd6-e6+ Ke8-f8 21.Be3-c5+, 19...Nf6xe4 20.Rd6-e6+ Ke8-f8 21.Qc3-b4+, 19...Bb7xc6 20.Rd6-e6+ Ke8-d8 21.Qc3-a5+ or 19...Qh7xe4 20.Rd6-e6+.