

Michael Adams

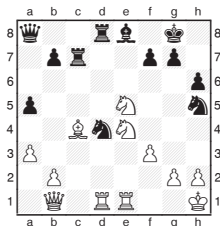


So young and in luck

Chess is not always a young man's game, but the more experienced half of the field in the 17th Univé tournament in Hoogveen had a tough time.

Eighteen-year-old Robin van Kampen, who beat your columnist in the first round, gave a very composed performance which bodes well for his future. Tournament winner Wesley So, who is also less than half my age, has great potential, even though he is currently combining chess with financial studies at Webster University in St Louis. I was particularly struck by his clean calculating ability.

In his first game, he benefited from a small piece of luck which set the tone of the event for him.



W. So - L. Van Wely
Univé Crown Group
Hoogveen 2013

29.Qb1-d3

Allowing his opponent a chance to escape the bind, 29.Rd1-d2 maintains unpleasant pressure.

29... b7-b5

After the retreat 29...Nd4-c6 removing the powerful knight on e5, Black's problems are solved. 30.Qd3-c3 is best (following the tempting error 30.Ne4-d6 Nc6xe5 31.Re1xe5 Nh5-

f6 everything is covered and the White pieces are unstably placed.) 30...Rd8xd1 31.Re1xd1 Nc6xe5 32.Qc3xe5 Rc7xc4 33.Ne4-d6 Qa8-d8 34.Qe5xe8+ Qd8xe8 35.Nd6xe8 is equal.

30.Bc4-a2 b5-b4
31.Ba2-b1 Be8-b5

The precarious 31...f7-f5 32.Qd3-e3 Qa8-d5 had to be tried.

32.Qd3-e3 Nd4-e6

Now 32...Qa8-d5 33.f3-f4 leaves Black struggling to find a move.

33.Ne4-d6

The second knight jumps in with devastating effect.

33... Bb5-a4

There is no defence.

33...Bb5-e8 34.Ne5xf7 is also hopeless.

34.Ne5xf7 Nh5-f4

34...Ba4xd1 35.Qe3xe6 is curtains.

35.Nf7xd8 Qa8xd8

So swiftly wraps up the game with extra material.

36.Rd1-d2 b4xa3

37.Bb1-a2 Qd8-f6

38.Qe3xa3 Ba4-c6

39.Ba2xe6+ Nf4xe6

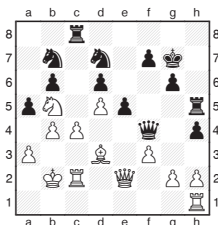
40.Qa3-a2 Bc6xf3

41.g2xf3 Qf6xf3+

42.Rd2-g2

1-0

SOCAR, the Azerbaijani powerhouse, looked all set to retain the Euro Club Cup as they stormed through their first five matches, but a surprise reverse in the following round knocked them out of their stride. This game was crucial for the winners, G-Team Novy Bor.



V. Topalov - R. Wojtaszek
European Club Cup 2013

44.Kb2-b1

It is hard for either side to formulate an active plan as there is little in the way of viable pawn breaks. White's king is more exposed but this is not important at the moment as there is no way to exploit this. Little has happened in the last 10 moves and Topalov begins to drift, 44.Qe2-d2 challenging the Black queen was better.

44... Rh5-h8

45.Qe2-f2 Rc8-a8

46.Nb5-c3

Lulled by a long period of manoeuvring, Topalov allows a snap attack, 46.Rc2-b2 covering the 'b' pawn keeps the game balanced.

46... a5xb4

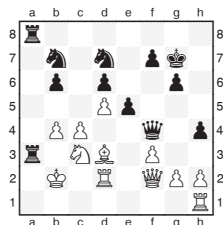
47.a3xb4 Ra8-a3

48.Kb1-b2 Rh8-a8

49.Rc2-d2

49.g2-g3 is met by

49...Qf4-d4.



49... Nb7-c5

Solving the problem of his restricted minor pieces at a stroke. One knight will perish, but his brother will decide the game from the perfect outpost.

50.b4xc5 Nd7xc5

51.Bd3-e4

There is no good defence against the many attacking pieces: 51.Kb2-c2 Ra3xc3+ 52.Kc2xc3 Ra8-a3+ 53.Kc3-c2 Nc5xd3, 51.Bd3-c2 Qf4xc4, or 51.Rh1-b1 Nc5xd3+ 52.Rd2xd3 Qf4xc4 53.Kb2-c2 Ra3-a2+ 54.Rb1-b2 Ra2xb2+ 55.Kc2xb2 Qc4xd3.

51... Ra3-b3+

52.Kb2-c2 Ra8-a3

White resigned, as 53.Nc3-b5 Ra3-a2+ 54.Kc2-d1 Nc5xe4 55.f3xe4 Rb3-b1+ cleans up.